

Teacher Factors and Students' Attitude to Literature in English in Ayedaade Local Government Area of Osun State, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

The study investigated teacher factors and students' attitudes to Literature in English. The research focuses mainly on Ayedaade Local Government Area, Osun State. Two hundred SS II students and 20 teachers of Literature in English participated in the study. Teacher-Student Relationship Observation Schedule, Teacher Motivation Questionnaire, Teacher Teaching Style Observation Schedule, and Students' Attitude to Literature in English Questionnaire were used for data collection. The study showed a negative, insignificant relationship between teacher-student relationships and students' attitudes. The positive, low, non-significant relationship existed between teacher motivation teaching style and students' attitude. Based on the findings of this study, it was recommended that teachers should be trained and equipped with classroom engagement skills that would enable them to communicate effectively with the students.

Keywords:

Teacher-Students' Relationship; Teacher Motivation; Teaching Style, Students' Attitude; Literature in English.

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini menyelidiki faktor guru dan sikap siswa terhadap Sastra dalam Bahasa Inggris. Fokus penelitian khususnya di Wilayah Pemerintahan Daerah Ayedaade, Negara Bagian Osun. Dua ratus siswa SS II dan 20 guru Sastra Inggris berpartisipasi dalam penelitian ini. Jadwal Observasi Hubungan Guru-Siswa, Kuesioner Motivasi Guru, Jadwal Observasi Gaya Mengajar Guru, dan Kuesioner Sikap Siswa terhadap Sastra dalam Bahasa Inggris digunakan untuk pengumpulan data. Penelitian ini menunjukkan adanya hubungan yang negatif dan tidak signifikan antara hubungan guru-

siswa dan sikap siswa. Terdapat hubungan positif dan tidak signifikan antara motivasi guru, gaya mengajar dan sikap siswa. Berdasarkan temuan penelitian ini, direkomendasikan agar guru dilatih dan dibekali dengan keterampilan keterlibatan kelas yang memungkinkan mereka berkomunikasi secara efektif dengan siswa.

Kata kunci:

Hubungan Guru-Siswa; Motivasi Guru; Gaya Mengajar, Sikap Siswa; Sastra dalam Bahasa Inggris.

1. Introduction

Fakeye and Amao (2013) assert that English literature is an essential part of culture and communication medium. The literary aspect of communication is its concern, and language is used for artistic and creative purposes to create intellectual beauty. It is an elevated form of language used uniquely to express ideas, feelings, notions, and emotions (Lawal 2010). It helps students to comprehend and appreciate cultures that are not theirs. Through the literary text, students have access to attitudes and values, collective imaginations, and historical frames of reference that constitute the memory of a people or speech community. So, literature and culture cannot be separated (Kramsch 2006).

Rosenblatt (2016) believed that any definition of literature that expresses the concept as an offshoot of social studies or a subject to be studied for didactic purposes is simply sterile. Instead, she believes that the substance of literature is everything that the human heart has thought, felt, and created. Whatever form- poem, novel, drama, biography, literature- makes the myriad ways human beings meet the infinite possibilities that life offers comprehensible (Rosenblatt 2016). Literature has three genres: Poetry, drama, and prose. Literature is taught for a comprehensive literary experience at the senior secondary school level, which is literary knowledge and understanding, in addition to other vicarious experiences acquired through the study of prose, poetry, and drama (Lawal 2010). It assists in training learners in the four language skills. Literature is connected with all aspects of man and the world. Therefore, it is not astonishing that literature is essential in improving a learner's language and enlarging his awareness of life at home and school. It gives room to understand numerous cultures (Owoeye 2003).

Despite the relevance of Literature in English, students' achievement in the subject still needs improvement. Adija (2002) and Ayanniyi (2009) observed that students' performance in the subject could have been better over the years. Literature in English Chief Examiner's Report of the West Africa Examinations Council (WAEC) said there was a need for students to improve their performance in the subject. The standard of the paper is comparable to that of previous years. Questions were equitably distributed from all areas. Candidates' performance was below expectation. Some candidates misunderstood some of the questions and provided irrelevant answers. Candidates provided sketchy and scanty answers. Most candidates needed better communication skills. Examples

were grammatical errors, wrongly spelled words, incorrect identification of characters and text, and poor punctuation, detracting from the quality of the analyses. Answers to questions mainly were generalised having no bearing on the questions asked.... Failure to use material from text to support points made.

Montano and Kasprzyk (2008) assert that individual thinking determines whether an individual's attitude is positive or negative. Importance is attached to beliefs through evaluations of traits exhibited in different contexts. So, people with positive beliefs about a particular thing will have a positive attitude about anything and vice versa. Brown (2010) states that positive attitudes towards the self, the native language, and the target language group enhance second language proficiency. A second language learner benefits from a positive attitude, and that negative attitude may lead to a decrease in motivation, input, and interaction. Hence, leads to unsuccessful attainment of proficiency. Students' attitudes to Literature in English can be determined by different factors within the teacher's purview. The teacher factors regarded as independent variables are teacher-student relation, motivation, and teaching style.

Teachers spend a reasonable amount of time with students, and their role is to foster an inclination for learning. Teachers' most potent weapon is creating positive relationships with their students to promote a favorable learning climate. Students who believe their teachers are supportive have better achievement (Boynton and Boynton 2005; Spilt, Koomen, and Thijs 2011; Skinner and Green 2008; Rimm-Kaufman and Sandilos 2012; Gehlbach, Brinkworth, and Harris 2012). So, positive teacher-student relationships must be maintained to assist a student in developing a positive attitude toward school subjects and performing excellently.

Teachers' motivation can account for students' achievement and attitude towards Literature. Most teachers are trained and have explicit goals to guide their teaching, but good motivations for the teachers and teaching/learning materials need improvement (Mukuru). As a result, there has been a public outcry about the poor performance of students in Literature in English at the secondary school level. Dornyei (2001) stresses that the achievement of successful schooling largely depends on the quality of the teaching force. At the center of quality teaching are teachers and students who are supposed to jointly achieve the goals of quality teaching, which is measured by teachers' performance through students' performance in secondary schools. This is an output of many variables, including the teachers' motivation (Adair 2009). According to Alarm and Farid (2011), teachers' motivation is essential as it directly affects students. A teacher's motivation as a teacher factor triggers another factor that cannot be ruled out as far as this study is concerned: the teaching style of the teacher (Kang'ahi, Idosh, and Okwach 2012; Wofford 1971).

The teaching style is a teacher's pervasive qualities that persist even though situational conditions may change. It is a label associated with various acquirable and identifiable sets of consistent classroom behaviors by the teacher regardless of the content (Conti and Welborn 1996). In other words, teaching style is the expression of the totality of one's philosophy, beliefs, values, and behaviors (Jarvis 2004), and it includes the implementation of this philosophy; it contains evidence of beliefs about values related to and attitudes toward all the elements of the teaching-learning exchange.

Even though Literature in English is an essential subject in Nigeria's senior secondary school curriculum, students' performance in the subject yearly is below average. Reports from WAEC and NECO have shown that students' persistence and poor performance in the prose aspect of the subject is mainly responsible for students' failure in Literature in English. As a way of addressing this problem, several intervention studies have been carried out. Still, students' negative attitudes toward reading do not change. Many of them need to comprehend the text they read, which makes their responses to examination questions have wrong answers or fall below average. It was found in the literature that one way to improve student performance is to address teacher factors and students' attitudes to Literature in English among senior secondary students. Still, it has not been given much research focus, especially in Ayedaade Local Government Area, Osun State.

2. Methods

The correlational research design was adopted. This design was used to show the relationship between the independent and dependent variables. The participants of the study were public secondary school students and teachers. Five public senior secondary schools were randomly selected from 14 public senior secondary schools in Ayedaade Local Government Area, Osun State. From each school, 40 SS II students were chosen randomly, making 200. Four Literature-in-English teachers were randomly selected from each school, comprising twenty (20) teachers. 200 SS II students and 20 Literature-in-English teachers participated in the study. Four research instruments were used for data collection in this study: Teacher-student relationship Observation Schedule ($r=0.85$) was used to observe the teacher's relationship with the students in the classroom. Teacher Motivation Questionnaire ($r=0.93$) was used to measure teachers' motivation. The teacher Teaching Style Observation Schedule ($r=0.75$) was used to calculate the teacher's teaching style. Students' Attitude to Literature in English Questionnaire ($r=0.86$) was used to measure students' attitudes to Literature in English. All the instruments were subjected to face and content validity to ascertain clarity, relevance, and adequacy. The instruments were administered to 50 students and 20 teachers not part of the study to confirm their reliability. Data collection for the study lasted four weeks, after which the data were analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation and Multiple Regression Analysis.

3. Results and Discussion

Research question 1: What relationship exists between the independent variables (teacher-student relationship, teacher motivation, teaching style) and students' attitude to Literature in English?

Table 1. Correlation Matrix showing the relationship between teachers' variables and students' attitudes to Literature in English

Variables	Attitude	Teacher-students relationship	Teacher motivation	Teaching style
Attitude	1			
Teacher-students relationship	-0.369	1		
	0.109			

Teacher motivation	0.116	0.474*	1	
	0.625	0.035		
Teaching style	0.329	-0.369	-0.554*	1
	0.156	0.109	0.011	
Mean	57.46	37.25	36.60	42.95
STD.D	12.18	10.53	2.39	5.58

* Denotes significant at $p < 0.05$ level of significant

Table 1 indicates a negative, low, non-significant relationship between teacher-student relationship ($r = -0.37$; $p < 0.05$) and student attitude to Literature in English. There are positive, low, non-significant relationships between teacher motivation ($r = 0.12$; $p > 0.05$), teaching style ($r = 0.33$; $p > 0.05$), and students' attitude to Literature in English. This indicates that the teacher-student relationship, teacher motivation, and teaching style are not significantly related to students' attitudes toward literature in English.

Research question 2: What is the joint contribution of the independent variables (teacher-student relationship, teacher motivation, teaching style) to students' attitude to Literature in English?

Table 2. Multiple Regression Analysis showing the joint contribution of independent variables and students' attitude to Literature in English

Sources of Variance	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Significant
Regression	15.190	3	190.268	3.732	0.033*
Residual	46.610	16	50.984		
Total	61.800	19			
R = 0.642					
R Square = 0.412					
Adjusted R Square = 0.301					
Std. Error of the Estimate = 7.14032					

Table 2 indicates that the teacher-student relationship, teacher motivation, and teaching style jointly predicted students' attitudes ($F(3,17) = 3.73$; $\text{Adj } R^2 = 0.30$; $p < 0.05$). This indicates that when the independent variables (teacher-student relationship, teacher motivation, and teaching style) are taken together, they jointly predict students' attitudes to Literature in English.

Research question 3: What is the relative contribution of the independent variables (teacher-student relationship, teacher motivation, teaching style) to students' attitude to Literature in English?

Table 3. Multiple Regression Analysis showing relative contributions of independent variables and students' attitude to Literature in English

Model	Under standardized Coefficients	Standardize d Coefficient		Rank	t	Sig.
	Beta	Std. Error	Beta (β)			

(Constant)	-40.551	40.589			-0.999	0.333
Teacher-student relationship	-0.389	0.179	-0.480	2nd	-2.178	0.045*
Teacher Motivation	2.204	0.877	0.617	1st	2.513	0.023*
Teaching style	0.757	0.357	0.494	3d	2.124	0.050*

Table 3 indicates that the relative contribution of the teacher-student relationship ($\beta = -0.48$; $t = -2.18$; $p < 0.05$) to students' attitude to Literature in English is significant. A significant relative contribution of teacher motivation ($\beta = 0.62$; $t = 2.51$; $p < 0.05$) to students' attitude to Literature in English is essential. Also, the relative contribution of teaching style ($\beta = 0.49$; $t = 2.12$; $p < 0.05$). This indicates that each independent variable (teacher-student relationship, teacher motivation, and teaching style) predicts students' attitudes to Literature in English.

Table I reported a negative non-significant relationship between the teacher-student relationship and students' attitudes to Literature in English. This aligns with Royal (2018), who found no relationship between teacher motivation and academic achievement among African American male students. This negates the findings of Lee (2012), who found that teacher-student relationships and academic press correlated with behavioral and emotional student engagement, but teacher-student relationships predicted reading performance.

Table II revealed a negative non-significant relationship between teacher's motivation and student attitude to Literature in English. Rozalina (2013) reported a negative, non-significant relationship between teachers' motivation and students' attitudes toward Literature in English. This negates the finding of Kihara and Takeda (2012), who reported that teachers' motivation through rewards and incentives for good performance enhanced work commitment, increasing students' engagement, leading to improved development learning and consequentially enhanced their academic performance.

Table III reported a positive, non-significant relationship between teaching style and students' attitude to Literature in English. This is in line with the study of Pacheco (2005), who revealed that teaching styles and practices could impact the comprehension of what is going on in our classrooms well and result in good student performance. The finding negates the findings of Akbari, Khalighinejad, Hernoro, Mehta, and Mesgarani (2019), who revealed that there needed to be a positive, non-significant relationship between teaching style and students' attitude towards Literature in English.

4. Conclusion

The study has shown that teacher-student relationships correlate to students' attitudes to Literature in English. The study provided a better understanding of teacher factors and students' attitudes to literature in English among senior secondary students in the Ayedaade Local Government Area of Osun State. This study implies that for students to have a positive attitude toward Literature in English, the teacher-student relationship, teacher motivation, and teaching style must be enhanced.

5. References

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