

EFFECTS OF TEACHERS' ATTITUDE ON ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF STUDENTS IN BAMOI LUMA, KAMBIA DISTRICT, SIERRA LEONE

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the students' academic performance in senior secondary schools in order to determine the effect of their teachers' attitudes in the selected senior secondary schools in Bamoi Luma, Kambia District, Sierra Leone. It aims to investigate the differences in academic performance between the students taught by a teacher with a positive attitude and the students taught by a teacher with a negative attitude; and also to determine the difference in academic performance between the students taught by a male teacher and students taught by a female teacher. The target population was 676 students and 18 teachers. The Teachers' Attitude Inventory (TAI) was used as a data collection instrument. An independent sample t-test was used to analyse the data at a 0.05 level of significance. This study identified the most crucial factor influencing students' performance according to existing literature, and it was difficult to know if attitude was an influential factor. But this study eliminated that difficult with structured research. This research will help the management of educational institutions by putting emphasis on teachers' attitudes that help the students achieve a sound education, which is essential for sustainability. The findings revealed that there was a significant difference in academic performance between students taught by teachers with a positive attitude and students taught by teachers with a negative attitude. However, there was no significant difference in academic performance between students taught by male teachers and students taught by female teachers. It was concluded that teachers with positive attitude influenced their students' performances. The study recommended that teachers' personalities, especially teachers' attitudes, should be considered during recruitment of new staff by school management.

Keywords: *Attitude, Academic Performance, Effect, Teacher, Student*

1. INTRODUCTION

Some teachers, by their nature, are accommodative, while others are not. In the same line, some are committed to their duties by giving tests, assignments, and weekly exercises daily with immediate feedback, while others don't disturb their students with such activities. They come late to school, dodge their classes, or abscond from the school intentionally, despite the fact that both teachers have responsibility for their subjects and methodology. The researcher was inspired to notice that the teachers' personal attitudes may have an effect on the academic performance of students.

In considering the academic achievement of students as being greatly influenced by teachers' attitudes toward different subjects, findings revealed that attitudes affect the achievement of students either positively or negatively. Attitude is concerned with an individual's way of thinking and behaving, and this has serious implications for learners, the teachers, the immediate social group with which individual learning relates, and the school system as a whole according to Yara, (2009).

2. BACKGROUND OF STUDY

The word "attitude" is defined within the framework of social psychology as a subjective or mental preparation for action. According to Souza, Barros, and Marcos (2010), attitude defines the outward and visible postures of human beliefs. Attitude determines what each individual will see, hear, think, and do. It can be either positive or negative. It is also the way someone behaves and the position in which they hold their bodies. Attitude can be formed as a result of an opinion or by following the footsteps of others such as parents, teachers, peers, and friends. Attitudes can either be negative or positive.

Also, attitudes impel people to react to objects a situations or propositions in ways that can be called favorable or unfavorable Hanushek et.al, (2004). Nyenwe, E. C. (2009) argues that attitudes generally involve an emotional or affective component (for instance, liking or disliking), a cognitive component (beliefs), and a behavioral component (tendency to act towards these items in various ways). In other words, an attitude as described here indicates that it is a strongly held belief, opinion, or feeling, which is reflected in people's behaviours. Attitude also affects implementation of the objectives, content, methods of teaching, and evaluation procedures Mucella, Melis, and Ahu (2011).

3. SIGNIFICANCE OF STUDY

According to the triadic model of attitudes, attitudes are made up of three parts: cognitive, behavioral, and affective. The triadic paradigm implies that these three systemic components are interrelated. They add that there is proof of the strong connection between the cognitive and affective aspects of attitudes. The affective component includes our feelings and emotions, whether they are favorable or negative about anything. The behaviour element consists of a tendency or desire to behave in a specific way that is connected to our attitude. Last but not least, the cognitive component refers to the attitudes and beliefs we have on the subject of those attitudes, Mucella, Melis, and Ahu (2011).

In addition, the educational system is driven by the instructor. But it is regrettable that so many teachers are unaware of how important they are to the educational system. Some of them fail to acknowledge the fact that how they engage with students, behave, and teach may have a longer-lasting impact than what they really teach. In the formal classroom context, teachers are viewed by pupils as an authority figure, a good example to follow, and the only source of all knowledge and information. If teachers employ effective teaching strategies and have a positive outlook while instructing, students will learn and be properly trained, Mucella, Melis, and Ahu (2011).

The way a person approaches a subject, task, or circumstance impacts how well they achieve in that particular field of study. A teacher will strive harder to ensure the success of his or her students if they adopt a positive attitude toward their work. When students see that their teachers work hard and care about them, it inspires them, and this leads to strong performance in the topic under discussion, Yara, (2009).

The premise of social acquisition (a cognitive concept and attitude) is that people can learn new behaviours by watching others and modeling them after them. The term "modeling phenomenon" simply denotes the imitation of another person's skillful behaviour through observational learning. The teacher is the main driver of the educational system; therefore, a model simply refers to anyone whose actions act as a trigger for an observer's response. Some of them fail to acknowledge the fact that how they engage with students, behave, and teach may have a longer-lasting impact than what they really teach. Students absorb the attitudes of their teachers, which helps them develop their own attitudes that may ultimately impair their academic performance. Teachers must have a good attitude toward their students in order to support them, Yara, (2009).

One learns behaviours by observing another individual or a role model carry out specific duties or activities. While the learner or student watches and tries to copy, the model performs it. Students view their professors as role models whose behaviour they may easily imitate. Students may be impacted by what teachers like or dislike, admire, and how they feel about learning, Yara, (2009).

According to research, teachers have a significant impact on pupils' academic success. They are essential to educational success since the teacher is ultimately in charge of putting policies into practice and establishing principles based on actual experience while interacting with the students Adediwura & Tayo, (2007). Students in the instructor's care will make insufficient academic development if the teacher is ineffective. This holds true regardless of how similar or dissimilar the individuals' particular academic potential may be.

For the purpose of this study the researcher used mathematics as a subject of study because Mathematics as a subject in Sierra Leone system of education has over the years become least passed even the hard working students. From 2013-2018, in the WAEC results only a dismal average of 7.2 percent of students passed mathematics at credit level. (WAEC Results Statistics 2018). Yet mathematics is considered as compulsory subject and also serves as prerequisite for getting admission in to higher level of education in the country. But fortunately or unfortunately more than 75% of our students failed the subject in their final examination which crippled their chances of getting admission in to higher level of education and a notorious hindrance to social mobility, academic and economic progression of a nation in dire need of socio-economic transformation, Agatha (2015).

As contentious as it may sound, there have been numerous immediate and indirect causes of such widespread failures brought up and discussed, including concerns with teacher training, expertise, the availability of educational materials, supervision, and other matters. The purpose of this study is to examine teachers' attitudes as well as their personality difficulties and personal character from

an internal and psychological perspective. In this regard, the research makes the assumption that the attitude of the teacher may have a significant impact on the level of student achievement in mathematics.

4. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The way a person thinks or behaves, or both, can sometimes make or break how well they perform while carrying out their duties and responsibilities. The phrase "attitude can be positive or negative" is used frequently. Positive attitudes put forth by instructors in the school may result in a positive performance. However, bad attitudes expressed by teachers may result in a negative performance. Students' academic performance is directly or indirectly impacted by the attitude of the teacher, whether deliberately or unconsciously. Numerous studies have gone into detail regarding the impact of teachers' attitudes on students' performance. Scholars like Shittu and Oanite (2015) have demonstrated that teachers' attitudes have a significant impact on their pupils' motivation to learn. Adu and Olatundun's study from 2007 revealed that teacher' personalities have an impact on secondary school pupils' academic achievement. In their study, Adesoji and Olatunbosun (2008) claimed that the relationship between student attitude and instructor attributes was real. According to Wirth and Perkins' (2013) research, teachers' attitudes had a big impact on how attentive their students were in class. In Istanbul, Turkey, Mucella, Melis, and Ahu (2011) looked into how teachers' attitudes affected students' personalities and academic achievement. Their study's findings demonstrated that pupils' personalities and behaviour were positively influenced by teachers' upbeat attitudes.

Kurgat and Gordon (2014) conducted a study to investigate the effects of teacher characteristics and attitudes on students' achievement in the KCSE Economics Examination. The study is a field-based survey carried out in secondary schools in Kenya's Rift Valley province that provide economics courses. There are 42753 students enrolled in these schools; 224 teachers working there; and 19 district inspectors. The representative sample was obtained via simple purposive sampling and consisted of all fourth-year economics students from all secondary schools in Kenya's Rift Valley region, school inspectors in the districts where economics was provided, and economics teachers from those institutions. 187 kids, 32 teachers, and 4 district inspectors participated in the event. Utilizing questionnaires, data from the sample was gathered. Excel software was used to examine the data that was gathered. Various questionnaire items were analysed using fundamental statistical methods. The averages, frequencies, percentages, and totals are some of these. These statistical methods were employed to compare the various data sets that had been gathered.

Finally, conclusions on the factors under study were formed from these comparisons. According to the study's findings, teachers have a favorable attitude about the subject; hence, low performance may be due to causes other than teacher attitudes. It is anticipated that economics teachers will gain from the research on the factors that have been shown to affect teaching strategies and tactics, which will help the subject perform better on national exams. The study suggests that additional research be done to look at other factors that have an impact on how well secondary school students succeed academically in economics.

The relationship between teachers' attitudes and students' academic achievement in senior secondary school chemistry was also the subject of a study by Abudu and Gbadamosi (2015). A case study of Ogun state's Ijebu-Ode and Odogbolu local governments Examine the role of chemistry teachers in some secondary schools and how they impact students' academic performance, among other things. The study's design was of the quasi-experimental variety. The population consisted of 124 SSS chemistry students and all of their chemistry teachers from the chosen secondary schools in the local government areas of Ijebu-ode and Odogbolu in the state of Ogun. Males made up 57.3% of the study's samples from SSS, while females made up 48.7% of them, and they were drawn from two local government areas. They employed the Chemistry Achievement Test and the Teacher's Attitude toward Chemistry Teaching Scale (TATCTS). Two groups, totaling 110 students and 14 chemistry teachers participated in the study. The independent samples t-test, analysis of variance (ANOVA), and PPMC were used to analyse the data. The results show that, among other things, there is a strong correlation between teachers' attitudes and students' academic success in SSS chemistry.

It is inferred that the teaching style of chemistry teachers in SSS has a major impact on students' performance in chemistry as a science subject. Students should be inspired by the fact that chemistry is a very promising, straightforward, and uncomplicated topic. It is also advised that teachers foster good relationships with their students and emphasize the importance of in-class activities that entail active learning and student participation.

To investigate how students' attitudes and self-perceptions affect their performance in mathematics at the senior secondary level in Ogun State, Nigeria. Onoshakpokaiye E. Odiri (2011) looked into how much students' attitudes and self-concept influence their mathematics performance as secondary school students in Ogun State, Nigeria, as well as how the variables affect students' cognitive math achievement at the senior secondary school level. Ex-post-facto and non-experimental research designs were chosen. All pupils in Ogun state's senior secondary school one (SSSI) served as the study's target population. I investigate how students' attitudes and self-perceptions affect their performance in senior secondary school mathematics in Ogun State, Nigeria. In their 2011 study, Ajayi, Lawani, and Adeyanju sought to determine the degree to which students' attitudes and self-concept influence their mathematics proficiency in secondary school in Ogun State, Nigeria, as well as the impact of the variables on students' cognitive mathematics achievement at the senior secondary school level. An ex-post facto research design of the non-experimental variety was chosen. All senior secondary school (SSSI) pupils in Ogun state made up the study's target group.

The tools employed are the students' mathematical achievement test, the self-concept scale, and the attitude toward mathematics questionnaire (ATMQ) (SMAT). Additionally, the instruments' face and content legitimacy were guaranteed. Additionally, ATMQ and SCM reliability according to Cronbach's alpha were determined to be 0.73 and 0.71, respectively, while the dependability of the test was evaluated to be 0.84. SPSS software was used to encode the results for each item. Multiple regressions were used to analyse the data at a 0.5 level of significance. The results

demonstrate a considerable joint impact of self-concept and mathematical attitude on mathematical performance. The beta values of 0.45 for attitude and 0.01 for self-concept suggest that attitude more accurately predicts mathematics achievement. Both have a beneficial impact on math achievement, although self-concept has less of an impact than attitude in terms of relative effort. As a result, this study is poised to lead an empirical investigation into these pressing problems. Therefore, the first objectives are to find the gender differences in academic performance among senior secondary schools in Bamoi Luma, Kambia District as well as the differences in academic performance between students taught by teachers with a positive attitude and students taught by teachers with a negative attitude.

5. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of this study are to:

1. To investigate the difference in academic performance between students taught by teachers with a positive attitude and those taught by teachers with a negative attitude among selected senior secondary schools in Bamoi Luma, Kambia District, Sierra Leone.
2. To determine the extent to which senior secondary school pupils in Bamoi Luma, Kambia District, Sierra Leone differ academically based on their gender.

6. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

• Research Hypotheses

H₀₁: There is no significant difference in academic performance between students taught by teachers with a positive attitude and students taught by teachers with a negative attitude among selected senior secondary schools in Bamoi Luma, Kambia District, Sierra Leone.

H₀₂: There is no significant difference in academic performance between students taught by male teachers and students taught by female teachers among selected senior secondary schools in Bamoi Luma, Kambia District, Sierra Leone.

The research is quasi experimental; in an experimental study, variables of interest are identified. One or more of these variables, referred to as the factors of the study are controlled so that data may be obtained about how the factors influence another variable referred to as the response variable, or simply the response. The research therefore investigates the effect of Teachers' Attitude (Independent variable) on Academic Performance (dependent variable) of senior secondary students in Bamoi Luma, Kambia District, Sierra Leone. In this study therefore, two classes were purposively selected which comprises of "Group A" (SS2 B) students who were taught by teacher with positive attitude and "Group B" (SS2 E) students who were taught by teacher with negative attitude. Selection of classes into groups "A" (positive Attitude) and group "B" (Negative Attitude) was based on the outcome of the administration and scoring of teachers'

attitude inventory (TAI). Two data instruments were use in collecting data: Teachers' Attitude Inventory (TAI) and Students' Academic performance.

The researcher adapted 20 items from Aik-kwang (2002). Teachers' Attitudes toward Student (TATS) to form Teachers' Attitude Inventory (TAI). The instrument consist of two sections, section "A" Bio data which include name of the school, boarding/day, number of students in your class, age, gender etc., while section "B" is a questionnaire consist of 20 questions testing general teachers' attitude and it is in five (5) Likert scale. All the questions elicit responses from the respondents based on five options provided. The students were subjected to a test by asking the two categories of teachers to teach independently using the same topic and same questions (Post-test). The researcher does face validity of his instruments. The instrument was then taken to experts in the fields of psychology and testing and measurement to ascertain the validity and reliability of the instruments.

The instrument's Cronbach's alpha reliability index was found to be 0.78 following a pilot study at Junior Science Secondary School Bamoi Luma. This demonstrates that the instrument's components have appropriate reliability.

Within a week of administration, the researcher physically administered the Teachers' Attitude Inventory and gathered the results. The Statistical Program for Social Science (SPSS) version 22 was used to examine the data using inferential statistics, specifically the t-test between two groups.

7. RESULTS

H₀₁: There is no significant difference in academic performance between students taught by teachers with a positive attitude and students taught by teachers with a negative attitude among selected senior secondary schools in Bamoi Luma, Kambia District, Sierra Leone.

H₁: There is significant difference in academic performance between students taught by teachers with a positive attitude and students taught by teachers with a negative attitude among selected senior secondary schools in Bamoi Luma, Kambia District, Sierra Leone.

Table 1 Difference in academic performance between students taught by teachers with positive attitude and students taught by teachers with negative attitude

VARIABLES	N	Mean	SD	Df	t. cal	P
TPASAP	188	72.84	17.91	8.17	4.635	< 0.05
TNASAP	163	49.00	10.83			

Table 1 shows t calculated at 4.635, $p < 0.05$ level of significance. The null hypothesis is rejected since the p-value is less than 0.05, and this confirmed that there is significant difference in academic performance between students taught by teachers with a positive attitude and students taught by teachers with a negative attitude among selected senior secondary schools in Bamoi Luma, Kambia District, Sierra Leone.

H₀₂: There is no significant difference in academic performance between students taught by male teachers and students taught by female teachers among selected senior secondary schools in Bamoi Luma, Kambia District, Sierra Leone.

H₂: There is significant difference in academic performance between students taught by male teachers and students taught by female teachers among selected senior secondary schools in Bamoi Luma, Kambia District, Sierra Leone.

Table 2 Differences in academic performance between students taught by male teachers and students taught by female teachers

VARIABLES	N	Mean	SD	Df	t. cal	P
Stdts taught by male teachers	188	58.31	16.70	-8.45	0.747	> 0.05
Stdts taught by female teachers	163	63.00	21.66			

The table 2 shows t calculated at 0.747 and p is > 0.05 level of significance, thus demonstrating a p-value greater than 0.05 level of significance. Hence the null hypothesis is accepted, inferred that there is no significant difference in academic performance between students taught by male teachers and students taught by female teachers among selected senior secondary schools in Bamoi Luma, Kambia District, Sierra Leone.

8. SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS

The findings are as follows

1. There is significant difference in academic performance between students taught by teachers with positive attitude and students taught by teachers with negative attitude.
2. That there is no significant difference in academic performance between students taught by male teachers and students taught by female teachers.

• Discussion of the Findings

There is significant difference in academic performance between students taught by teachers with positive attitude and students taught by teachers with negative attitude among senior secondary schools in Bamoi Luma, Kambia District. This is in line with a study by Ulug, Ozden, and Eryilmaz (2011) that looked at how teachers' attitudes affect students' personalities and academic performance. They discovered that teachers with positive attitudes had a positive impact on students' academic performance and personality development, while teachers with negative attitudes had a negative impact on both.

Additionally, it was consistent with the research of Afolabi, F. (2009), who evaluated the impact of gender and teachers' attitudes on the academic performance of primary school students and discovered a substantial correlation between teachers' attitudes and students' performance in primary science. It supports the findings of Ogemb, Otanga, and Yaki's (2015) study, which looked at how much students' and teachers' attitudes impede good performance in chemistry among

secondary school students. The study's findings revealed that persistently poor performance in chemistry was strongly correlated with chemistry teachers' negative perceptions of their students' abilities. Last but not least, it was in line with research by Kurgat and Gardon (2014), who looked at the impact of teacher traits and attitudes on students' performance in the Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE) economics examination. They discovered that the more positively a teacher views the subject, the higher the students' performance, which is completely consistent with this study.

Pupils who are taught by male professors and students who are taught by female teachers do not perform academically differently. This is consistent with the findings of Kimani, Kara, and Njagi's (2013) study, which looked at the factors influencing teachers' students' academic achievement in secondary schools and found, among other things, that teacher gender has little bearing on students' academic achievement in secondary schools. However, a different study by Tenaw (2013) that looked at the connection between self-efficacy, academic accomplishment, and gender in analytical chemistry discovered that there is a statistically significant difference in student achievement resulting from the gender of professors. According to research by Antecol, et.al, (2013) using data from a randomized trial, female primary school kids in underprivileged areas perform worse on math tests when their teachers are female.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

The study therefore recommends that:

Based on the findings of this study following recommendations are proffered

1. Education authorities should put more emphasis into teachers' personality more especially attitude when it comes to recruiting new teachers
2. The administration of the schools should be organizing regular workshops of quality assurance to help enlighten the teachers about the significance of their jobs and attitude towards their professional output.
3. Teachers should be involved in key decision making in terms of shaping the attitudes of the students.
4. There should be close collaboration between the school administration and parents for quicker decision making by the school authorities.

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