



Gender Differences in Teachers' Attitudes towards Creative Students in the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja-Nigeria.

Afu, M. O

Department of Counselling and Educational Psychology
Faculty of Education, University of Abuja, Abuja-Nigeria.

ABSTRACT

This study investigated the gender differences on teachers' Attitude towards creative students of senior secondary school students in the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja Nigeria. The study aims to find out the gender differences in teachers' attitude toward creative students in the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja. The study adopted a descriptive survey design. A sample of 381 respondents from a population of 70,162 senior secondary school students was used. A self-structured questionnaire titled: Students Creativity Performance Questionnaire (SCPQ) and Teachers' Creativity Attitude Questionnaire (TCAQ) was used for data collection. The TCAQ and SCPQ is a 28-item instrument designed along a four-point Likert scale. The validity and reliability of the instrument were determined by experts in the field and test-retest technique was used to determine the reliability of the instrument. Data collected were analysed through frequency count and means scores, while the hypotheses were tested using t-test at 0.05 level of significance. The study concludes that the attitude of teacher towards creativity and creative students is negative. The study established also that the creative performance of students is below average which suggests that the attitude of teachers have the effect of students' creative ability. It was recommended that there is a need for the government make creativity an essential aspect of the curricula to come up with creative products and innovations amongst students in the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja; Teachers should improve their attitude towards creative students in senior secondary schools in the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja.

Key Words: Creativity, Attitude, Creative performance

Introduction

Creativity is a phenomenon whereby something new and somehow valuable is formed. The created item may be intangible (such as an idea, a scientific theory, a musical composition or a joke) or a physical object (such as an invention, a literary work or a painting). Omeke (2011) opined that creativity is a mental process involved in the generation of new ideas or an association between existing ideas, and devising alternative ways of solving human problems. Although properly associated with art and literature, creativity is an essential part of innovation and invention and is important in professions such as architecture, industrial design, advertising, sculpture, music, engineering, and humanities.

Although perceived by some teachers as necessary for developing creativity in students, helping them to become independent, and solving problems, creative thinking is not encouraged by most teachers. Makel in Rinkevich, (2011) called this discrepancy a “creativity gap”. One reason for this lack could be that teachers have been pushed to ‘teach to the test’, and tests focus on factual knowledge and rote memorization, not creativity (Rinkevich, 2011).

More interest has been placed on achieving high grades and passing formal tests and less on equipping pupils with lifelong skills like creative thinking (Cheung, 2012). Also, time constraints apply to teachers who are often overloaded with a huge curriculum that they need to finish in a short time (Cremin, 2009). Most importantly, many teachers’ harbour the belief that young children are unable to think productively, which has resulted in teachers emphasizing rote-learning to the neglect of problem-solving and creative thinking (Souza, 2000). Added to this is the fact that most teachers do not know how to foster creative thinking in students as a result of lack of training.

Creativity may not have been given any attention in schools, either from the crèche to a higher institution of learning. The Nigerian society as a whole has paid little or no attention to creativity. In so doing, children with creative minds are not allowed chances and spaces to display an innate ability given naturally by God. When a child is inquisitive, the society frowns at such a child, the teacher in the classroom gets irritated by a creative student. These creative minds diminish immediately students conform to every rules and norm of the society or school, but they may be loved by the teachers and seen as intelligent probably because they have conformed to the teacher’s rules, thereby killing the creativity in them. A creative student is a divergent student. He is not conformist to an idea and does not want to be forced into doing what he does not want to be or want.

A creative child uses his imaginative and critical thinking to create new and meaningful forms of ideas. They are risk taker, they are independent and flexible. They develop the ability to find various solutions to a problem. Adeyauyi in Shuaibu (2012) expressed that the negative beliefs associated with creativity by some individuals this is rather unfortunate. Teachers are not comfortable in the class with such children; thus, place these children at a disadvantage, since their behaviours are most often seen as disruptive and capable of interfering with the classroom lessons.

The level of teacher's education and years of experience may be a major contributor to the attitude of teachers towards creativity. The teachers with a high level of education may understand the importance of creativity within the school more than those with lower qualifications. On the hand, a teacher with a low level of education, but with a high level of experience may also favour creativity amongst students.

They are often seen by their mates as unserious since they are not too interested in the normal academic procedure, creative students suffer negligent by society because every parent wants to see the child read, read and read to come out with good grades in cognitive tests.

Several studies have stressed the impact of teaching experience on teachers' attitude, which includes:

Vasudevan, (2013) conducted a study on The Influence of Teachers' Creativity, Attitude and Commitment on Students' Proficiency of the English Language in Kuala Lumpur. The results of this study revealed that creative thinking, creative learning, creative teaching, teachers' attitude and teachers' commitment positively and significantly influence the students' proficiency in the English language. Al-Nouh, Abdul-Kareem & Taqi (2014) conducted a study on Primary School EFL Teachers' Attitudes towards Creativity and Their Perceptions of Practice. Findings showed teachers' attitudes and perceptions were high. Significant differences were shown for age, major, educational zone, teaching experience and in-service training. Kettler, Lamb, Willerson & Mullet (2018) conducted a study on Teachers' Perceptions of Creativity in the Classroom in Alaska. Findings generally review that teachers' grade level, subject, experience, and age do not affect their perception of creative characteristics.

Statement of the Problem

Creativity has been used in the past to solve human problems, like the provision of light, transport, calculator, toilet and bathroom facilities among others. Students in the classroom also need these ideas to pursue their different careers and these ideas can materialize accidentally and or deliberately.

Nigerian institutions of learning, especially in the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja mostly teach for formal wage and salary employment. Nigeria system of education seems to need improvement at all levels, but essentially in all aspects of teaching and learning. The Federal Ministry of Education (FME, 2004) in the educational policy among other things, acknowledged the acquisition of appropriate skills and the development of mental, physical and social abilities and competencies, as equipment for the individual to live and contribute to the development of his society.

Unfortunately, the Nigerian educational goals seem only to be good on paper and theory, with little or no emphasis on creativity. This may be true because the grading system in our education is based on cognition and rudiments. The creative aspect of the Nigerian educational system may have gone to the dogs, and the survival of its educands and the larger society is on the brink of disaster. This assertion may be true judging from the characters of teachers towards creative students, especially secondary schools in the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja.

Most schools want their school to be the best in all forms of public exams, thus, push the students to engage more on cognitive exercise than to explore their God-given talents to solve societal problems through creativity. This is worrisome and this prompted the researcher to carry out a comparative study of the gender differences on teachers' attitude on creative students' academic performance of senior secondary school students in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Abuja to arrive at findings that can inform teachers' perception as well as public policy decisions to improve the level of creativity in the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja- Nigeria and every other educational system that suffers the same fate.

The following questions are raised to guide the research:

1. What are teachers' attitudes towards creative students in senior secondary schools in FCT, Abuja?
2. What is the creative performance of creative students in senior secondary schools in FCT, Abuja?
3. What are variations in teachers' attitudes towards creative students due to students' gender in senior secondary schools in the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja?

The study hypothesized that there is no significant difference in teachers' attitude towards male and female creative students in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Abuja.

Methodology

The research design that was adopted for this study is the descriptive survey. The population of the study comprises of 70,162 students who enrolled in 2018/2019 academic session in all the public senior secondary schools in the six Area Council in Federal Capital Territory, Abuja. The sample size for the study is 381 students based on the Krejcie and Morgan (1970) sample table of specification. The proportionate random sampling procedure was used in selecting the students from different secondary schools to cut across relatively the population. The instrument for data collection titled: Teachers' Creativity Attitude Questionnaire (TCAQ) and Students' Creativity Performance Questionnaire (SCPQ). The TCAQ and SCPQ is a 28-item instrument designed

along a four-point Likert scale. The questionnaire was validated by consulting experts and items that were considered to be vague and irrelevant were removed to ensure validity. To establish the reliability of the instrument, a pilot test was conducted. Using the split-half method of reliability, the two sets of scores obtained from the pilot test were correlated using Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC). The reliability (r) value of 0.74 was obtained for the scores which implied the high reliability of the instrument. The questionnaire was administered directly on the respondents by the researchers. The tools that were used in analysing the collected data include mean scores and t-test.

Results

Research Question One: What are teachers' attitudes towards creative students in senior secondary schools in FCT, Abuja?

Table 1: Teachers' Attitude towards Creative Students in Senior Secondary Schools in FCT, Abuja
N = 381

S/N	Statements	Mean	Decision
1	My teachers query students for drawing a picture on the wall	3.33	Agree
2	My teachers consider singing and dancing as a waste of time in my school.	2.83	Agree
3	My teachers do not encourage craftwork in my school.	2.55	Agree
4	In my school, teachers prefer reading to drawing.	3.07	Agree
5	My teachers consider a student with a high level of intelligence in sports and less in academic as a lazy student	2.98	Agree
6	Between mathematics and dancing competition, my teachers will choose the former and prepare students for it.	3.06	Agree
7	My teachers' sees students who can perform very well in sport are only important during inter-house sport.	2.37	Disagree
8	My teachers believe that teachers decision is final	2.40	Agree
Sectional Mean			2.95

Table 1 above shows teachers' attitude towards creative students in senior secondary schools in the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja. The sectional mean of 2.95 shows that the students agreed that teachers have a negative attitude towards creative students in senior secondary schools in the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja.

Research Question Two: What is the creative performance of creative students in senior secondary schools in FCT, Abuja?

Table 2: Creative Performance of Senior Secondary School Students in FCT, Abuja in 2018/2019 Academic Session.

N=381			
	Minimum	Maximum	Average Score
Creative Performance	22	63	49.82

Table 2 shows that the minimum score in creative performance is 22, while the maximum score is 63 with an

average score of 49.82. This means that the students' creative performance is below average. This poor creative performance can be improved by positive attitudes of teachers towards creativity.

H₀₁: There is no significant difference in teachers' attitude towards male and female creative students in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Abuja.

Table 3: t-test on the Difference between Male and Female Students in Teachers' Attitude towards Students in FCT.

Gender	Number	Mean	S.D.	t-value	df	Sig(2-tailed)	Decision
Male	224	23.57	4.499	-.072	379	.943	Accepted
Female	157	23.61	4.525				

The analysis in Table 3 was carried out to establish whether there is a significant difference in teachers' attitude received by male and female students in FCT secondary schools. With a significant value of .943 (more than the 0.05 level of significance), the hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference in teachers' attitude towards male and female creative students in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Abuja is accepted. Male and female students, therefore, did not differ significantly in the teachers' attitude received by secondary school students in FCT.

Discussion of Findings

The findings revealed that there might a connection between the teachers' attitude and creative performance of senior secondary school students in the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja. The study found teachers' attitude to be negative towards creativity which in turn affected the creative performance of the students in the study area. This finding agrees with Vasudevan, (2013) who found that that creative thinking, creative learning, creative teaching, teachers' attitude and teachers' commitment positively and significantly influence the students' proficiency in the English language.

Findings further revealed that teachers' negative attitude towards creative students is not based on the gender of the students. It may not be unconnected to teacher experience, qualification and or students' creative potentials. Kettler, Lamb, Willerson & Mullet (2018) found student characteristics associated with creativity less desirable than those characteristics contraindicative to creativity ($d = 2.70$). No effects were found based on the grade level ($d = 0.07$) and small effects were found for subjects taught ($\eta^2 = 0.023$). Similarly, no effects were found for the teachers' level of experience ($\eta^2 = 0.004$) or age ($\eta^2 = 0.002$). Teachers' level of personal creativity was related ($r = .248$) to how desirable they rated student characteristics associated with creativity, but the importance with

which teachers ranked creative thinking had small effects ($\eta^2 = 0.04$) on how desirable they found characteristics associated with creativity.

Conclusion and Recommendation

The purpose of this study was to investigate the gender difference in teachers' attitude towards creative students in the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja-Nigeria. The study concludes that the attitude of the teacher towards creative students is negative. The study established also that the creative performance of students is below average which suggests that the attitude of teachers affect students' creative ability.

Given the above findings and conclusion, the following recommendations are made:

1. Teachers should improve their attitude towards creative students in senior secondary schools in the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja.
2. There is a need for the government to make creativity an essential aspect of the curricula to come up with creative products and innovations amongst students in the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja.
3. Because of the low creative performance, teachers should develop a comprehensive way of continuous Assessment to cover those who might be creative but performed poorly due to the teachers' instrument for assessment.

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