

INFLUENCE OF TEACHERS' AGE, MARITAL STATUS AND GENDER ON STUDENTS' ACCADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

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ABSTRACT

The paper influence of teachers' age, marital status and gender on the academic achievement of secondary school students in English Language as a subject was the focus of the study. The population for the study was the 304 public senior secondary schools in the three senatorial districts of Edo State, Nigeria. The proportionate sampling technique was well to select 52 senior secondary schools. 52 senior secondary final year (SS III) English language teachers and their 1,689 students consisted the sample for the study. Instruments used for the study are the English Language Teachers' Age, Marital Status and Gender Questionnaire (ELTAMGQ) and the English Language Achievement Test (ELAT). Data was collected and analyzed using the one-way ANOVA and t-test. Alfa level set at 0.05 level of significance. The findings of the study revealed that students' academic achievement is significantly influenced by teachers' age, marital status whereas, teachers' gender did not have a significant influence on students' academic achievement.

Keywords: Teachers' age, teachers' gender and teachers' marital status, Teachers' academic achievement.

INTRODUCTION

Teacher's ability to teach a subject contributes significantly on the achievement or students in schools. Teachers found in schools have their different peculiarities and idiosyncrasies that distinguish one entity from the other. It is on this basis that this researcher decided to find out if the difference in teachers' age, marital status and gender will influence student's achievement in English Language.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Studies on the influence of teachers' age, marital status and gender on students' learning have found a significant connection between teachers' effectiveness and teachers' age, marital status and gender. Few studies, however, exist in literature on teachers' age and academic achievement of students. The reason according to Sloane & Kelly (2003) is that most developed countries such as America do not care about the age of a teacher. A study on teachers' age carried out in Turkey by Martin and Smith (1990), teachers' age was grouped into three levels – young age, middle age and old age. The study revealed that middle aged teachers were perceived by learners to be more effective in classroom organization, motivation, communication and competence. On the other hand, the study of Goebel and Cashen (1979) revealed that old teachers were rated lower on teaching skills than young or middle aged teachers. In Riley and Ryan (1969), younger teachers were rated contrary

however; Dehanty (1977) found no significant difference between the ratings of old and younger teachers. This is also in line with Abrami and d' Appollonia (1999) and d' Appollonia and Abrami (1997). On the variable, teachers' marital status, Kong (2005) discovered that unmarried and married teachers had higher scores than those separated and divorced in the dimensions of job engagement, especially in the dimension of vigor and dedication. According to Zhang and Fang (1991) psychological problems such as separation and divorced affect teachers' dedication to duty. Kong (2009), however, posited that single teachers who do not have any family issues and more dedicated and committed to their jobs. For Ayeop (2003), married teachers have higher job satisfaction compared to single teachers and those in the group of others (that is, separated and divorced).

Studies have shown that teachers' gender has its role on the effectiveness of teachers. According to Norlander – Case, Regan and Case (1999) women tend to perform better in teaching than their male counterparts. This view is also supported by Mwamwenda and Mwamwenda (2002). For Mwamwenda and Mwamwenda, female teachers performed significantly better than pupils taught by male teachers in English Language, Mathematics, Science and Social studies in Botswana. Zuzovsky (2003) also reported that in her study in Israel, students taught by female teachers achieved more than those taught by male teachers. However, Abrami and d' Appollonia (1999) and d' Appollonia and Abrami (1997) opined that teachers' gender characteristics may not influence student's learning. This observation is supported by Centra and Caubatz (2002) and Kite (2001). This finding is also in line with Kong (2008) who declared that no research has connected test results to teacher gender. However, the studies of Arbuckle and Williams (2003) declared that male teachers performed better than female teachers in areas of asserting authority and using meaningful voice tones during teaching. This finding is not different from that of Martin and Smith (1990) who opined that male teachers were rated higher in their performance than their female counterparts.

Purpose of Study

As a result of the above conflicting views, the purpose of the study was to examine the influence of teachers' age, marital status and gender on student's academic achievement in English Language senior secondary school in Edo State of Nigeria.

Research Questions

To address the problem of this study, three research questionnaires raised. They are:

1. Does teachers' age influence students' academic achievement in English Language in Edo State?
2. Does teachers' marital status influence students' academic achievement in English Language in Edo State?
3. Does teachers' gender influence students' academic achievement in English Language in Edo State?

Research Hypothesis

Below are the hypotheses for this study:

1. There is no significant influence of teachers' age on students' academic achievement in English Language in Edo State?

2. There is no significant influence of teachers' marital status on students' academic achievement in English Language in Edo State?
3. There is no significant influence of teachers' gender on students' academic achievement in English Language in Edo State?

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The descriptive survey was used to carry out this research. The population for the study consists of all final year students and their English Language teachers in the three senatorial districts of Edo State. The sample for the study was the proportionate sampling technique. This sampling technique was used to select 52 teachers (using the bio-data filled by the teachers). 1,689 students taught by their 52 teachers were used for the study.

Instrumentation

In order to elicit information from the teachers, the English Language Teachers Age, Marital Status and Gender Questionnaire (ELTAMSGQ) was designed. The questionnaire consisted of one section, which sought to obtain information on the individual characteristics of the sampled teachers. This section was used to collect the demographic data of the teachers. The second instrument used for the study was the English Language Achievement Test (ELAT) ELAT is made up of one section of fifty questions. Students were expected to supply answer by filling the bank spaces. The cloze test procedure was used to measure ELAT.

Hypothesis One Results

There is no significant influence of teachers' age on students' academic achievement in English language.

Table I: Descriptive of Academic Achievement by Teachers' Age

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std Error
21-34 years	663	26.16	4.97	.19
35-48 years	561	28.06	9.23	.39
49 years and above	465	21.81	8.42	.39
Total	1689	25.60	7.97	.19

Table I indicates that, of the 1,689 students 663 were taught by teachers between the ages of 21-34 years of age. 561 were taught by teachers between the ages of 35-48 years. 465 were taught by teachers between the ages of 49 years and above.

Table 2: Anova of Academic Achievement by Teachers' Age

	Sum of Square	df	Mean square	F	Sig.
Between groups	10282.22	2	5151.11	89.44	.01
Within groups	96918.78	1686	57.48		
Total	107201.00	1688			

The table shows an F-value of 89.44 and a p-value of .01. Testing at in alpha level of .05, the p-value is less than the alpha level. So, the null hypothesis which state that "there is no significant difference between teachers' age and students' academic achievement is rejected. Consequently, where is a significant difference between teachers' teachers' age and students' academic achievement in English language. Since ANOVA only shows difference exist, and

does not show the direction, a post Hoc analysis using Scheffe's least significant difference method was used. The result is presented on table 3.

Table 3: LSD Post HOC multiples comparisons of students' academic achievement by teacher's age

(I)AGE	(J) AGE	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.
21-34 years	35 -48 years above	-1.91	.44	.01
	49 years and above	4.35	.46	.01
35-48 years	21-34 years	1.91	.44	.01
	49 years and above	6.25	.48	.01
49 years and above	21 -34 years	-4.35	.46	.01
	35- 48 years	-6.25	.48	.01

The mean difference is significant at the .05 level

Table 3 indicates that student taught by teachers' between the ages of 21-34 years performed better than those of 49 years and above. Students taught by teachers of 35-48 years performed better than those of 21-34 years and 49 years and above. This shows that maturity in terms of age influenced significantly the students' achievement up to the age 48 years when physical may begin to set in.

Hypothesis Two

There is no significant influence of teacher's marital status on students' academic achievement in English language.

Table 4: Descriptive Of Academic Achievement of Students' In English Language Based On Teachers' Marital Status

The result of the hypothesis is presented below:

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std Error
Single	507	27.37	5.15	.29
Married	600	28.27	8.50	.39
Separated	237	22.53	5.54	.39
Divorced	345	20.44	8.70	.47
Total	1689	25.60	7.97	.19

Table four above indicates that 507 of the 1689 students were taught by single teacher, 600 of them were taught by married teachers, 237 were taught by separated teachers and 345 were taught by divorced teachers.

Table 5: ANOVA of Students' Academic Achievement Based On Teachers' Marital Status

	Sum of Square	Df	Mean square	F	Sig.
Between groups	17264.81	3	5754.94	107.82	.01
Within groups	89936.18	1685	53.38		
Total	107201.00	1688			

The table shows an F value of 107.82 and a p-value of .01. Testing at an alpha level of .05, the p-value is less than the alpha level of .05. so, the null hypothesis which states that “there is no significant influence of teachers’ marital status on students’ academic achievement of the students in English language was dependent on teachers’ marital status. Since ANOVA will only show the difference existed, and not the direction, therefore, to establish the direction of difference, a post Hoc analysis using Scheffe’s least significant difference method was used. The result is presented on table 6.

Table 6: LSD Post- Hoc Multiple Comparisons of Academic Achievement by Marital Status

(I)AGE	(J) AGE	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.
Single	Married	-.90	.44	.04
	Separated	4.84	.57	.00
	Divorced		.51	.00
Married	Single	90	.44	.04
	Separated	5.74	.56	.00
	Divorced	7.83	.49	.00
Separated	Single	-4.84	.57	.00
	Married	-5.74	.56	.00
	Divorced	2.09	.62	.01
Divorced	Single	-6.92	.51	.00
	Married	-7.83	.50	.00
	Separated	-2.09	.61	.01

The mean difference is significant at the .05 level

Table 6 shows that student taught by single and married teachers performed better than those taught by separated and divorced teachers, but no significant difference in the performance of those taught by single teachers and married teachers.

Hypothesis Three: Teachers gender does not influence significant students’ academic achievement in English language.

Table 7: T-Test Analysis of Influence of Teachers’ Gender On Students’ Academic Achievement in English Language

The result of this hypothesis test is presented below:

Sex	N	Mean	Std Deviation	Cal. t	Sig. 2 tailed (p. value)
Male	1047	25.43	8.50	-1.11	.26
Female	642	25.87	7.02		

To do a thorough analysis of this hypothesis, students’ achievement in ELAT vis a’ vis teachers’ gender, was analyzed using the test. The table showed a t-value of 1-11 and a p-value of 26. Testing at an alpha level of .05, the p-value is greater than the alpha level. So, the null hypothesis which states that “there is no significant influence of teachers’ gender on students’ achievement in English language” is retained.

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

From the analysis of data on the influence of teachers' age on the academic achievement of students, it was revealed that students taught by teacher between the ages of 21 and 34 years achieved a higher score than those of 49 years and above, while students taught by teachers between the ages of 36-48 years achieved a higher score than then those of 21-34 years and 49 years and above. The result of this study is in line with Martin and Smith (1990) who categorized teachers' age into three levels – young age, middle age and old age. According to Martin and Smith, the middle aged teachers were found to be more effective than the young and old teacher. This assertion was earlier made by the findings of Goebel and Cashan (1979).

On the factor of marital status, students' achievement was significantly influenced by teacher marital status; students of the married teachers achieved the highest scores, followed by those of the single teachers. However, the difference between the scores of the students was not significant, but the difference between the scores of the single and married teachers on one hand and secondly and divorced on the other hand, was significant. Thus, the separated and divorced teachers negatively impacted on the students' academic achievement in English language, while the single and married teachers positively impacted on students' academic achievement. This finding is supported by kong (2008), who observed that unmarried teachers have more vigorous and are also dedicated to their job. However, Ayeop (2003) posited that married teachers have higher satisfaction in their job. This observation was made in this present study, where the students of the married teachers achieved higher scores than the students of the single teachers.

On the issue of teachers' gender of the effects surrounding academic achievement, it was revealed that there was no significant influence of teachers' gender on student's academic achievement in English language. Thus, there was no difference in the scores of students taught by the male and female teachers. This finding is in line with the student of Fausto-..... (1988); Feildman (1995), Abrami and Appolloma (1990). Kimura (2000), Kite (2001) Kreig (2005). However, there are students that have found contrary results and they include Mwamwenda and Mwamwenda (2002) and Zozovsky (2003). For these above mentioned scholars, female teachers students achieved higher score that those of the male teachers. However, Martin and Smith (1990) and Arbuckle and Williams 2003 submitted that male teachers were than their female counterparts.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

From the findings of this study, it may be concluded that teachers' age and teachers' marital status significantly influenced student's academic achievement in English language. However, teachers' gender does not significantly influence students' academic achievement. Based on these facts the following recommendations were made:

- i. As teachers age, they become cynical and develop a psychological condition of exhaustion, cynicism, and inefficiency which, in most cases is due to poor remuneration, after many years of service. This can however, be reversed if the remuneration teachers, particularly those that have spent long years in service is enhanced.
- ii. As part of the criteria for the appointment of teachers, applicants shall be subject to clinical tests to determine their psychological relevance and balance, such tests should continue at determined intervals while on the job.

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