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TEACHERS EFFECTIVENESS AS CORRELATES OF STUDENTS ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT IN CHRISTIAN RELIGIOUS STUDIES IN ONDO STATE

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Abstract

This paper investigated teachers' effectiveness as correlates of students' academic achievement in Ondo State. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The instrument used to elicit information for the study were Teachers' Rating Scale and Christian Religious Studies Achievement Test. Twelve teachers and two hundred and forty students were selected from four local governments in Ondo State. Findings revealed that teachers' effectiveness was low and there was significant difference on students achievement due to teachers gender. It was suggested that government should organize and provide opportunities for training and retraining seminars, workshops and conferences.

Keywords: Teachers' Effectiveness, Academic Achievement, Christian Religious Studies

Introduction

Teaching is an art and the quality of teaching depends on the love, dedication and devotion of the teacher towards the subject of knowledge. It is the art of impacting knowledge with the goal of informing the recipient to make a positive difference in the life of the individual. The most single critical element in the education process is the teacher who plans, organizes, designs, directs, motivates and inspires others to learn using standard teaching techniques to impart knowledge (Okolocha & Onyeneke, 2013). Teaching is a purpose driven profession engaged in human resource development for individual and economic growth (Oyekan, 2000). It is done systematically by professionals who have acquired some skills and knowledge either by training or experience or both. To make desirable impact, teaching must aim at total development of the individual, that is, to enhance intellectual capabilities, developmental and cognitive intellectuality, foster psycho-social skills, and

draw out neuro-physical aptitude of the learners (Akinmusire, 2012). All education institutions emphasize that teaching is important and it gives high priority to developing effective teaching and solving teaching challenges.

Effective teaching may include high level of creativity in analyzing, synthesizing and presenting knowledge in new and effective ways. It should instill in the learners the ability to be analytical, intellectually curious, culturally aware, employable and capable of leadership (Okolie, 2014). According to Omoifo & Urevbu (2007), effective teaching implies the use of clearly formulated objectives by the teacher, illustrated instruction that will enable students to acquire desired knowledge content, apply the knowledge to classroom and other related problem, think and take independent decision and the use of effective evaluation technique by the teacher. Akomolafe (2010) identified the characteristics of effective teaching to include: attention on students achievement, quality teaching responsive to students learning processes, effective and efficient learning opportunities, pedagogical practices that create cohesive learning activities, effective links between school and cultural context of the school, multiple tasks to support learning cycles, aligned curriculum goal effectively, pedagogy scaffolds feedback on students' task engagement among others. The objectives of effective teaching as stated by Adegbile (2008) would include assisting learners to: conceptualize ideas, process thoughts and develop their potentials; contribute to thinking and creativity in the subject; nurture and sustain students' interest; suit the circumstance of teaching and learning; and suit the individual teacher ability and interest.

The quality of any teaching programme cannot rise above the quality of her teachers, teaching is a highly individualized activity, and the student-teacher interaction is an intense human relationship that encompasses a broad range of personalities and behaviours (Okolie, 2014). Adegbile (2008) described an effective teacher as efficient, reliable and courteously equipped with professionalism, creative in imagination, bustling ingenuity and depth of experience necessary for optimal performance and the achievement of goals. The teacher as a good manager of instruction should be able to utilize appropriate techniques to gain and maintain the attention of students. An effective teacher should be able to display requisite pedagogical insight and professional qualities and utilize same to guide the teaching/learning process to the point of achieving stated educational objectives.

Similarly, Babalola (2009) posited that experience in Nigeria has revealed that students academic achievement in secondary schools largely depend on the competence and dedication of the teacher who has a significant

role to play in the reshaping of the creative potentials and ability of students. Lewis (1968) has also confirmed in his study that attitude towards many school subjects can be affected by a host of factors, such as student ability, developmental crisis, teachers, lack of textbooks, and school environment. The above shows that there is need for every teacher to be trained in his subject before teaching.

Christian Religious Studies is a subject that is taught across the three levels of education, it is core subject in the primary and junior secondary school curriculum and elective at the senior secondary school level. Despite the importance of Christian Religious studies to the individual and nation in imparting moral values and behavioural change, it is worthy to note that the performance of students in the subject is diminishing and poor (Lawal, 2002). It has been a source of concern to individual, parents, education administrators and other stakeholders. It is not possible to guarantee a meaningful learning of Christian Religious Studies without effective teachers to translate the laudable objectives of the Christian Religious Studies curriculum into the practice in the classroom.

Teachers are the hub of the educational system. Teachers are the most important factor in students learning next to students themselves (Knapper & Wright, 2001). As such, the importance of teachers, the application of pedagogical knowledge into classroom oriented plan of actions constitute most essential fabric upon which the success of the school, its administration and the entire education system rest upon (Okolocha & Onyeneke, 2013). Christian Religious Studies can bring about the moral and ethical reformation that we clamour for in this country. This can only happen in learners when the teacher possess a good mastery of the subject matter, have a map to follow in terms of well prepared lesson, grab the students attention through effective class control mechanism, recognize student attention span, plan activity for the students by allowing them participate actively in the teaching and learning process. To this end, Ademola (2007) stated that an educational system with low quality teachers will produce students with poor inspiration and aspiration. Such students, Ademola opined will not grasp enough of the subject matter and cannot learn with ambition.

It has been found that Christian Religious Knowledge tends to be abstract in some situation and to remove the abstractness associated with the subject, the use of instructional resources is essential. Johnson and Rising (1967) were of the opinion that successful and effective teacher is always searching for ways to make his instruments more meaningful. They know that the proper use of audio-visual materials may help build in students the space

perception and imagination to master ideas. Instructional resources therefore helps the effective teacher teaching to enable students learn faster, remember longer, gain more accurate information, receive and understand delicate concepts.

This concept of academic achievement has become a source of concern especially in the wake of the declining standards of education. The decline is largely attributed to the many school and non-school related demands and responsibilities (Ukpong, 2007). There are various factors that contribute to good student academic achievement and these may include: teacher beliefs in relation to their profession, content and pedagogical knowledge, and assessment skills. The manner in which the teacher plans and organizes instruction, to a large extent determines the outcome of students' academic achievement. Therefore, pedagogy and assessment skills are important aspects that contribute to students' academic achievement. It is thus, the teachers' responsibility to employ diverse teaching styles to enhance students' academic achievement since current instruction assessment techniques seem to favour certain learning styles (Damavandi, Mahyuddin, Elias, & Daud, 2011). Besides, there has to be a good match between students' learning preferences and instructor's teaching styles which have been demonstrated to have a positive effect on students' achievement (Harb & El-Shaarawi, 2006).

From the observations made, if the teachers continue varying their teaching methods and involving students, then learning could be fruitful and lead to improvement in students' academic achievement.

From the above, it becomes imperative that Christian Religious Education teachers should be able to cope with the computer and technological age and ensure that students acquire requisite knowledge, skills and values. It should be appreciated that the influence of the teacher on students' personal, social and productive lives is usually the product of the professional training which they received. No wonder the National Policy on Education (FRN, 2013) succinctly stated that no country can develop beyond the quality of its teachers because they are the primary implementers of a nation's education policies. Thus, teachers have to be well prepared for their job through pre- and in-service training. This sound training should at the end help the teachers in the implementation of the curriculum as they engage in effective teaching, which will invariably lead to the achievement of the CRS curriculum, make the students self-reliant and for sustainable development on the long run.

Okolocha & Onyeneke (2013) posited that the success of Nigeria's educational system especially at the secondary school level depends upon a number of factors: the government, the society, students, the teachers', and the

quality of teaching, devotion and effectiveness of the teachers. Christian Religious Studies teachers' effectiveness can be viewed on the ability of the teacher to employ appropriate techniques and strategies to impart in the learners' knowledge, skills and competencies required to bring about desired positive learning outcomes. Teacher effectiveness is a teacher's ability to produce desired results measured in terms of how well the teacher is able to maximize learning in the students (Diamond 2004).

Gender relates to the difference in sex- either male or female and how this quality affects their dispositions and perception towards life and academic activities (Okoh, 2007). Gender has been regarded as an important factor that plays a significant role and influences students learning. The influence of gender as it relates to academic achievement in CRK is therefore worthy of examination. Ademola (2007) compared the achievement of students taught by male with those taught by female teachers and found that female teachers recorded more absenteeism rates than their male counterparts. On the other hand, Akinmusire (2012) found that female teachers tend to be more effective in the teaching profession than their male counterparts. He asserted that female teachers' performance could be determined in terms of their dedication and longer stay in the profession. This study therefore, sought to examine teachers' effectiveness and gender as correlates of students' academic achievement in Christian Religious Studies in Ondo State. The purpose of this study is to find out the level of effectiveness of the teachers teaching CRS in Senior Secondary School.

Research Question

What is the level of general effectiveness of the teachers in the teaching of Christian Religious Studies in senior secondary schools?

Research Hypotheses

1. There is no significant difference between the academic achievement of the students taught by effective Christian Religious Studies teachers and those taught by less effective Christian Religious Studies teachers.
2. There is no significant difference between the academic achievement of students taught by male teachers and those taught by female Christen Religious teachers.

Methodology

This study adopts a descriptive survey. Descriptive surveys are those studies which aim at collecting data and describing in a systematic manner and characteristics features or facts about a given population. The population for this study consists of 12 Christian Religious studies teachers and 240 students in senior secondary schools in Akoko North Zonal Education Area of Ondo State. Simple random sampling technique was used for the selection of the sample. Two hundred and forty (240) senior secondary school (SSII) students were selected from twelve secondary schools and used for the study. Three secondary schools each were taken from the four local government areas that make up the education zone through simple random sampling. All the CRS teachers in the sampled schools took part in the study as there is only one teacher per school. The instrument used for data collection were: Teachers Rating Scale (TRS) and Christian Religious Studies Achievement Test (CRSAT). The instrument elicited information on teachers lesson note preparation, suitability of classroom, method of teaching and presentation, adequate use of instructional resources, mastery of subject matter, teachers students' activities, creativity and resourcefulness, adequacy of teachers' evaluation of students. Section A of the instrument contained the respondents' bio-data, while section B had 25-item with a three point Likert-type scale ranging from Very Effective -3, Effective-2, and Ineffective -1. The CRSAT is a 25-item Achievement Test designed by the researcher for collection for data collection. The TRS was face validated by two experts from Department of Arts Education and Social Sciences Education of the Faculty of Education, University of Ilorin. Their suggestions and corrections were used in the final study. To determine the reliability of the instruments, test-retest was used. Copies of the instrument were administered on a smaller number of the respondents at an interval of three weeks. The data collected from the two administrations were collated using Pearson's Moment Correlation Statistic. The correlation coefficient of 0.64 was obtained.

Results

Research Question One: *What is the level of general effectiveness of the teachers in the teaching of Christian Religious Studies in Secondary Schools?*

Table 1: Level of General Effectiveness of Teachers of Christian Religious Studies

Variable	Number of Teachers	%
Low Effective Teachers	8	33.3
High Effective Teachers	4	66.7
Total	12	100

Table 1 shows that out of the 12 teachers, 8 (33.3%) scored less than 5marks (low teaching effectiveness) while the remaining 4(66.7%) scored above 5marks (high teaching effectiveness). This implies that majority of the Christian Religious Studies Teachers have low teaching effectiveness.

Hypotheses One: *There is no significant difference between the academic achievement of the students taught by effective Christian religious studies teachers and those taught by less effective Christian religious studies teachers.*

Table 2: Difference between the Academic Achievement of Student Taught by Effective Teachers and those Taught by Non- Effective Teachers

Variables	N	Mean	SD	df	t-value	Sig.	Remark
Students taught by Effective teachers	158	27.4	6.54	238	6.42	0.00	Rejected
Students taught by Non-effective teachers	82	21.9	13.44				

As revealed in Table 2, the t-value 6.42 was obtained with the p-value 0.00. since the p-value 0.00 is less than 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis two is rejected. Thus, There is no significant difference between the academic achievement of the students taught by effective Christian religious studies teachers and those taught by less effective Christian religious studies teachers ($t_{(238)}=6.42$; $p<0.05$).

Hypotheses Two: *There is no significant difference between the academic achievement of students taught by male teachers and those taught by female teachers.*

Table 3: Difference between the academic achievement of students taught by male teachers and those taught by female teachers

Variables	N	Mean	SD	df	t-value	Sig.	Remark
Students taught by Male teachers	101	24.18	10.46	238	0.86	1.96	Not Rejected
Students taught by Female teachers	139	22.44	9.22				

As revealed in Table 3, the t-value 0.86 was obtained with the p-value 1.96. Since the p-value 0.00 is greater than 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis two is retained. Thus, there is a significant difference between the academic achievement of students taught by male teachers and those taught by female teachers ($t_{(238)}=0.86$; $p>0.05$).

Discussion of Findings

Effective teaching and students' academic achievement are important variable in any educational setting. From the finding of Table 1 it was observed that majority of the Christian Religious studies teacher have low 8 (66.7%) while 4 (33.3%) have high teaching effectiveness. That is to show that the Christian Religious Studies teachers do not put in their best in terms of content and pedagogical activities into their teaching. This is contrary with the opinion of Omoifo and Urevbu (2007) who stated that effective teaching implies the use of clearly formulated objectives and the use of effective evaluation techniques among others teachers. This is also in line with Farooq, (2011) low teacher effectiveness can have an impact on the students' academic achievement.

Based on the findings of this study students taught by effective teacher are on top of the academic achievement according to Damavandi, et. al. (2011), the teacher planed and organised instruction to a large extent and employed diverse teaching styles to enhance students' performance. On the other hand Dinama (2010) opined that students taught by non effective Christian Religious teacher could not perform well partly because of their inadequate pedagogical knowledge and poor assessment skills. The findings revealed that gender of Christian Religious Studies teachers had no significant influence on academic achievement of students is in agreement with the study of Lawal (2010).

Conclusion

This study has examined the relationship between teachers' effectiveness and students' academic achievement in Christian Religious Studies and has revealed that Christian Religious Studies teachers' effectiveness is relatively low.

Recommendations

Considering the importance of Christian Religious Studies to the moral and spiritual development of the students researcher recommends as follows:

1. There should be coordination between the Ministry of Education and Teaching Service Commission in order to sensitise teachers on the new techniques and styles as it relates to teaching and learning
2. Government should organize and provide opportunities for training and re-training programmes through seminars, workshops and conference in order to increase teachers effectiveness
3. Teachers student ratio should be revisited to the Ministry of Education so as to balance it with staff and resources available for effective and optima performance by teachers
4. Incentives should be provided like prompt payment of salaries as at when due, promotion , loans and prizes for teachers to boost their morale

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