

EXPLORING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TEACHERS' SELF-EFFICACY AND PUPILS' ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE IN NSUKKA LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA, ENUGU STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

The study investigates the relationship between teachers' self-efficacy and pupils' academic achievement in English Language in Nsukka Local Government Area of Enugu State, Nigeria. Two research questions and two hypotheses guided the study. The design of the study was correlational survey design. The population of the study was 3,206 comprising 2,100 primary five (5) pupils and 1,106 teachers. The sample size was 440 respondents comprising 400 pupils and 40 teachers drawn from the target population using simple random sampling technique. The instruments for data collection were Teachers' Self-Efficacy Scale (TSES) and English Language Achievement Test (ELAT) which were validated by 3 experts. Two from Language Education unit while one from Science Education unit, all from the Faculty of Education, University of Nigeria, Nsukka. The Teachers' Self-Efficacy Scale (TSES) was constructed by the researchers while English Language Achievement Test (ELAT) was adopted from the past questions of primary five (5) promotion examination of 2022 and 2023 session, Enugu State Examination Development Centre. The ELAT and TSES were trial tested and subjected to reliability testing using Kuder Richardson 20 and Cronbach Alpha and the reliability coefficient were 0.89 and 0.89 respectively. Pearson correlation was used to answer the research questions while Regression analysis was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. It was discovered that a significant positive but weak relationship exists between teachers' self-efficacy and pupils' academic achievement in English Language. Also, it was found that school location has no significant moderation influence on the relationship between teachers' self-efficacy and pupils' academic achievement in English Language. Based on the findings, it is recommended that school administrators and policymakers should provide regular professional development opportunities to enhance teachers' confidence and competence in teaching the English Language. It is also recommended that schools in the rural areas like their urban counterparts be equipped with the needed school infrastructural facilities.

Keywords: English Language, Academic Achievement, Teachers Self-efficacy

Introduction

The importance of English Language in academic and professional settings cannot be overstated. As a global language, English plays a critical role in shaping individuals' prospects and opportunities. In Nigeria, English Language is a core subject in the primary and secondary school curriculum and proficiency in the language is essential for academic success and future career advancement (Aleke, 2019). Despite its importance, many pupils in Nigeria, including those in Nsukka Local Government Area of Enugu State, struggle with achieving optimal grades in English Language. Various factors contribute to this trend, including teacher-related variables. One crucial factor that has received significant and urgent attention in recent years is teacher self-efficacy. A

teacher needs confidence, high self-esteem and boldness to discharge his or her professional duties adequately.

Teachers' self-efficacy deals with teachers' beliefs in their capacity and ability to fulfill the educational responsibilities. In other words, teachers' self-efficacy refers to the teachers' beliefs in the performance of their skills that would allow them to carry out the proposed tasks successfully and achieve the goals of the class. In this same vein, Downes, Crawford, Seibert and Campbell (2021) state that teachers' self-efficacy refers to the judgments teachers make about themselves and their opportunities to flexibly organize their cognitive, social and behavioral skills taking actions that enable them to face situations with positive results. It is important to note that perceived teachers' self-efficacy affects teachers' behavior, thinking and emotions which leads them to choosing different courses of action, thereby influencing the activities and environments in which they live. In this study, teachers' self-efficacy refers to a teachers' confidence in their ability to promote learning and achievement among their pupils. Research has shown that teachers with high self-efficacy tend to be more effective in the classroom, exhibit greater enthusiasm and motivation and are better equipped to support pupils' learning needs. Conversely, teachers with low self-efficacy may struggle to engage pupils, manage classroom dynamics and deliver instruction effectively which is geared towards a better academic achievement.

Academic achievement is score and grade obtained by a learner after being exposed to a certain content area over a period of time. A school child can record high or low academic achievement in a subject area depending many factors that may have influence the child. Since many scholars have different opinions of what academic achievement is, one of which is Opара (2021) who sees academic achievement as the knowledge gained which is assessed by the marks of the teachers or an achievement of educational goals which are laid down over a specific period of time. According Opара (2021), these goals are measured by using continuous assessment or examination results. In this vein, Ukoha, Uloh-Bethels and Nnamani (2021) see academic achievement as the degree of educational attainment through formal and non-formal programme which is measured and rated against a certain standard within a stipulated period, term or level. Pupils' academic achievement in English Language is an outcome or result that is influenced by various factors, including teacher self-efficacy. While researchers have explored the relationship between teacher self-efficacy and pupil achievement in other areas, there is a need to investigate this relationship specifically in the context of English Language instruction in Nsukka Local Government Area and also considering the moderating influence of school locations on the relationship between teachers' self-efficacy and pupils' academic achievement in English Language. Furthermore, school location has been identified as a potential moderator of the relationship between teachers' self-efficacy and pupil achievement. Schools in urban and rural areas may differ in terms of resources, infrastructure and access to professional development opportunities which can influence teachers' self-efficacy and pupil academic achievement. Okoro (2017) sees school location as the geographical area where a school is situated. Okoro noted that infrastructure and educational facilities are greatly available at the urban schools than the rural schools and urban schools always have more qualified teachers since most teachers' prefer staying in the cities for better living. Many research findings show that teachers at the urban areas produce learners with higher achievement in English Language. This is in line with Omachonu (2018) who observed that school location had influence on students' achievement in Oral English. On the contrarily, some research findings show

that there is no significant difference in the achievement of the learners in respect to the location of schools. In other words, the location of schools does not influence the pupils' academic achievement in English Language. In support of the above assertion, Adeyemi and Adeyemi (2013) in their study found out that school location does not have influence on students' achievement in English Language and in Social Studies. Investigating the moderating role of school location can provide valuable insights into the complex relationships between these variables. This study aims to explore the relationship between teachers' self-efficacy and pupils' academic achievement in English Language in Nsukka Local Government Area of Enugu State, with a specific focus on the potential moderating role of school location. By examining these relationships, the study seeks to contribute to the existing body of research on teachers' self-efficacy and pupil achievement and provide insights that can inform teacher professional development and educational policy in Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

The persistent underachievement of pupils in English Language in Nsukka Local Government Area of Enugu State, Nigeria is a pressing concern that warrants investigation. English Language is a crucial subject that plays a vital role in shaping pupils' academic and professional prospects. However, many pupils in the area struggle to achieve high level of academic achievement in the subject which can hinder their future opportunities. One potential factor that may contribute to this trend is teachers' self-efficacy, which refers to a teachers' confidence in their ability to promote learning and achievement among their pupils. A teacher needs to have a strong believe on him/herself to enable the teacher discharge his or her duty with confidence without fear. Researches have shown that teachers with high self-efficacy tend to be more effective in the classroom than those with low self-efficacy but the relationship between teachers' self-efficacy and pupils' academic achievement in English Language in Nsukka Local Government Area is not yet well understood. In other words, whether teachers' high or low self-efficacy influences the pupils' academic achievement in English Language in Nsukka Local Government Area Enugu State positively or negatively is not yet known. Furthermore, school location may play a moderating role in the relationship between teachers' self-efficacy and pupils' academic achievement in English Language. Schools in urban and rural areas may differ in terms of resources, infrastructure and access to professional development opportunities which can impact teachers' self-efficacy and pupils' achievement. However, the extent to which school location moderates this relationship is not yet known. This study aims to investigate the relationship between teachers' self-efficacy and pupils' academic achievement in English Language in Nsukka Local Government Area while also focusing on the potential moderating role of school location on the relationship between teachers' self-efficacy and pupils' academic achievement in English Language in Nsukka Local Government Area Enugu State, Nigeria.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to examine the relationship between teachers' self-efficacy and pupils' academic achievement in English Language in Nsukka Local Government Area, Enugu State, Nigeria. Specifically, the study aims to explore the:

1. relationship between teachers' self-efficacy and pupils' academic achievement in English Language.

2. influence of school location on the relationship between teachers' self-efficacy and pupils' academic achievement in English Language.

Research Questions

The following research questions were posed to guide the study.

1. What is the relationship between teachers' self-efficacy and pupils' academic achievement in English Language?
2. What is the influence of school location on the relationship between teachers' self-efficacy and pupils' academic achievement in English Language?

Hypotheses

These hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance.

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between teachers' self-efficacy and pupils' academic achievement in English Language.

H₀₂: There is no significant influence of school location on the relationship between teachers' self-efficacy and pupils' academic achievement in English Language.

Methods

The research design for the study was correlational survey design. The study was conducted in Nsukka Local Government Area of Enugu State. The population of the study consists of 3,206. They include 2,100 primary five pupils and 1,106 teachers in Nsukka Local Government Area of Enugu State in the 2023/2024 academic session (ENSUBEB, Statistics and Records from Nsukka LGEA, 2024). The sample size of the study was 440 respondents comprise 40 teachers and 400 pupils drawn from the target population using simple random sampling technique. The instruments for data collection were Teachers' Self-Efficacy Scale (TSES) and English Language Achievement Test (ELAT). The Teachers' Self-Efficacy Scale was constructed by the researchers. The Teachers' Self-Efficacy Scale was used to assess teachers' self-efficacy in discharging their duties in the classroom while English Language Achievement Test (ELAT) was used to measure the pupils' level of achievement in English Language. ELAT was adopted from the past questions of primary five (5) promotion examination of 2022 and 2023 session, Enugu State Examination Development Centre. Both instruments were subjected to face validity by three experts, two from Language Education (English unit) and one from Science Education (Measurement and Evaluation unit); all from the Faculty of Education, University of Nigeria, Nsukka in order to ascertain the validity of the instruments. The ELAT and TSES were trial tested with 20 primary five pupils and 20 teachers at Igbo-Eze North Local Government Area which is outside the study area, although, they have similar characteristics with the pupils and teachers used for the study. They were further subjected to reliability testing using Kuder Richardson 20 and Cronbach Alpha which yielded the reliability coefficient of 0.89 and 0.89 respectively. The researchers trained the research assistants and the researchers together with the research assistants administered the instruments to the teachers and pupils concerned. The research questions were answered using pearson correlation analysis while regression analysis was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. Regression analysis was used in order to determine the moderation effect of school location on the relationship between teachers' self-efficacy and pupils' academic achievement in English Language.

Results

Research Question One: What is the relationship between teachers' self-efficacy and pupils' academic achievement in English Language?

Table 1: Pearson Correlation of Teachers' Self-Efficacy and Pupils' Academic Achievement in English Language

| Self Efficacy | N | Mean Achievement | r | Decision |
|---------------|-----|------------------|-------|----------------------------|
| Low | 100 | 27.95 | 0.114 | Positive weak relationship |
| Moderate | 210 | 27.39 | | |
| High | 90 | 28.86 | | |

Data on Table 1 show that pupils with teachers with low self efficacy have a mean achievement score of 27.95. Those with teachers with moderate self efficacy have a mean achievement score of 27.39 while pupils with teachers with high self efficacy have a mean achievement score of 28.86. The Pearson correlation coefficient (r) of 0.114 showed that there is positive but weak relationship between teachers self-efficacy and pupils' academic achievement in English Language.

HO₁: There is no significant relationship between teachers' self-efficacy and pupils' academic achievement in English Language

Table 2: Regression analysis of the relationship between teachers' self efficacy and pupils' academic achievement in English Language

| Model | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients Beta | R | R ² | F | df | t | Sig. |
|---------------|-----------------------------|------------|--------------------------------|------|----------------|-------|-----|--------|------|
| | B | Std. Error | | | | | | | |
| 1 | 26.338 | .712 | | | | | | 36.979 | .000 |
| (Constant) | | | | | | | | | |
| Self Efficacy | .040 | .018 | .114 | .114 | .013 | 5.208 | 398 | 2.282 | .023 |

The data on Table 2 reveal that the R is 0.114 while the R² is 0.013. This shows that 1.3% of pupils' academic achievement is related to teachers' self efficacy. The F value of 5.208 is significant at 0.023 level which is less than the level of significance at which the hypothesis is tested. This shows that there is a significant relationship between teachers' self efficacy and pupils' academic achievement in English Language. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected.

Research Question Two: What is the influence of school location on the relationship between teachers' self efficacy and pupils' academic achievement in English Language?

Table 3: Regression analysis on influence of school location on the relationship between teachers' self-efficacy and pupils' academic achievement in English Language

| Model | Correlations | | | Decision |
|---------------|--------------|---------|-------|----------|
| | Zero-order | Partial | Part | |
| (Constant) | | | | |
| Self Efficacy | .114 | .044 | .041 | |
| Location | -.336 | -.316 | -.313 | |

| | | | | | |
|-------------|------|------|------|-------------------|------------|
| Interaction | .033 | .047 | .044 | Negligible effect | moderation |
|-------------|------|------|------|-------------------|------------|

The data on Table 3 show that the Zero-order value for interaction (moderator variable-location) is 0.033. This indicates a positive but negligible moderation effect. Therefore, there is a positive but negligible influence of school location on relationship between teachers' self efficacy and pupils' academic achievement in English Language.

HO₂: There is no significant influence of school location on the relationship between teachers' self efficacy and pupils' academic achievement in English Language.

Table 4 Regression analysis of the relationship between teachers' self efficacy and pupils' academic achievement in English Language as moderated by school location

| Model | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | R ² | F | df | t | Sig. |
|---------------|-----------------------------|------------|---------------------------|----------------|--------|----|--------|------|
| | B | Std. Error | | | | | | |
| 1 | 32.401 | 1.127 | | | | | 28.743 | .000 |
| Self Efficacy | .011 | .017 | .031 | | | | .630 | .529 |
| Location | -.330 | .491 | -.328 | .114 | 25.467 | 39 | -6.719 | .000 |
| 2(Constant) | 32.227 | 1.143 | | | | | 28.200 | .000 |
| Self Efficacy | .016 | .018 | .044 | | | | .870 | .385 |
| Location | -.326 | .493 | -.325 | | | | -6.629 | .000 |
| Interaction | .239 | .257 | .046 | .116 | 17.259 | 39 | .928 | .354 |

The data on Table 4 show that the R² for interaction (moderator–location) is 0.116. This indicates that location contributed 11.6% to the variation in the relationship between teachers' self efficacy and pupils' academic achievement. The F value (17.259) for the interaction effect (moderator) in model 2 is significant at 0.354 level which is greater than 0.05 level of significance at which the hypothesis is tested. The null hypothesis is therefore, accepted. Hence, there is no significant influence of school location on the between teachers' self-efficacy and pupils' academic achievement in English Language.

Discussion

The findings of the study indicate that there was a significant and a positive relationship between teachers' self-efficacy and pupils' achievement in English language. The findings then mean that teachers who believe in their abilities (high self-efficacy) tend to have pupils with better achievement in English Language than teachers with low self-efficacy. This also indicates that teachers' self-efficacy play important role in pupils' academic success in English Language. The reasons for the positive and significant relationship between teachers' self-efficacy and pupils' achievement in English Language could be that a teacher with confidence and enthusiasm has passion for teaching. It could

also be that a teacher with high sense of self-efficacy always defeats low self-esteem, fear and stage fright which enhance teacher's lesson delivery. The results of the study are in consonance with the findings of Ahmad and Marzieh (2012) and Khan and Rasool (2020) who found that teachers' self-efficacy has positive influence on the students' motivation and achievement in English Language. This means that teachers with high self-efficacy produce students with high academic achievement in English Language and vice versa. The findings are also in corroboration with the findings of Manoranjini and Harwati (2022) who found that there was positive relationship between teachers' self-efficacy and pupils' achievement in English Language reading comprehension. This implies that pupils taught reading by the teachers with high self-efficacy achieved higher than pupils taught by the teachers with low self-efficacy. No studies known to the researcher with contrary view of the finding of the study. In other words, there is no study without significant and positive relationship between teachers' self-efficacy and pupils' academic achievement in English Language. This implies that teachers' self-efficacy is a strong determinant of students' achievement in English Language.

The results of the study show that teachers' school location has no significant influence in moderating the relationship between teachers' self-efficacy and pupils' achievement in English language. The finding of the study, therefore, means that teachers' school location has no meaningful influence on the relationship between teachers' self-efficacy and pupils' achievement. This could be that the school location of a teacher does not negatively influence the teacher's self-efficacy. Both teachers at the urban areas and rural areas can either develop low or high self-efficacy which may in turn affects the achievement of the pupils. Therefore, teachers' self-efficacy is not related to the teachers' school location. Contrarily, the finding of the study is in disagreement with the studies of Akogwu (2020) whose findings indicates that location of schools has influence on students' achievement in essay writing. The result attests that students in the urban schools achieved higher than their counterparts in rural schools. Also, the study is not in line with the study of Eneh and Igiligi (2023) whose findings indicate that there was an influence of school location on the achievement of students in English essay writing. The study further reveals that students in urban areas perform better in English Language essay writing than their counterparts in rural areas.

Conclusion

From the findings of the study, it was concluded that the teachers' with high sense of self-efficacy produce pupils with better academic achievement in English Language. Teachers' confidence in their ability to teach and support learning is a crucial factor in pupils' success, regardless of whether the school is located in an urban or rural area.

Recommendations

Based on the results of the study, it is recommended that school administrators and policymakers should provide regular professional development opportunities to enhance teachers' confidence and competence in teaching English Language. It is also recommended that schools at the rural areas like the urban counterparts be equipped with the needed school infrastructural facilities.

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