

STUDENTS' PERCEPTION OF TEACHERS ATTITUDE TOWARDS CREATIVITY IN SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN FEDERAL CAPITAL TERRITORY, ABUJA

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Abstract

This study investigated the influence of teachers' Attitude towards Creativity in senior secondary schools in Federal Capital Territory, Abuja. The design of the study was descriptive. A sample of 381 respondents from a population of 70,162 senior secondary school students was used. Research questions were also raised. Students Creativity and Teachers' Creativity Attitude Questionnaire was used for data collection. The findings showed that teachers had a negative attitude towards creativity on senior secondary school students in Federal Capital Territory, Abuja. The study recommends that teachers should improve their attitude towards creativity towards senior secondary school students in the Federal Capital Territory Abuja, Nigeria.

Key Words: Students' Perception, Teachers Attitude, Creativity

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 instudents, 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. 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, 2010). 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.

A creative student is a divergent student. He/she is not conformist to an idea and does not want to be forced into doing what He/she does not want to be or want. A creative child uses his/her 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. Shuaibu (2012) expressed that the negative beliefs associated with creativity by some individuals is rather unfortunate. Teachers are not comfortable in the class with such children; thus, these children are place 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 other hand, a teacher with a low level of education, but with a high level of experience may also favour creativity amongst students. Creative students are often seen by their mates as unserious since they are not too interested in the normal academic procedure, they suffer neglect by society because every parent wants to see the child read, read and read to come out with good grades in cognitive tests.

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. Ideas usually evolve through a creative process whereby imaginative people generate ideas, nurture them, and develop them successfully. Creative ideas are often generated when one discards preconceived assumptions and attempts a new approach or method that might seem to others unthinkable. Teachers while teaching, need to encourage the generation of new ideas as students discard obsolete ones.

Creativity of students 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 may not be allowed chances and spaces to display an innate ability given naturally by God. When a child is inquisitive, most people in the society frowns at such a child, the teacher in the classroom gets irritated by the adventurous nature of such child. 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.

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 been neglected, and the survival of its educands and the larger society is on the brink of disaster. This statement may be true judging from the attitude of some teachers towards creativity and this will in turn affect the creative tendencies of students, especially secondary schools in the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja.

Most schools want to be the best in WAEC and NECO exams, thus, push the students to engage more in cognitive exercise than to explore their God-given talents to solve societal problems. This is worrisome and this prompted the researcher to carry out a study on influence of teachers' attitude towards creativity on creative tendencies of senior secondary school students in Federal Capital Territory, 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 and Nigeria at large.

The following questions were answered to guide the research:

1. What are teachers' attitude towards creative students in senior secondary schools in FCT, Abuja?
2. What are the creativity of students in senior secondary schools in FCT, Abuja?

Methodology

The research design that was adopted for this study is the descriptive survey. The survey technique, according to Oriola (2012), involves large numbers of persons and describes the population characteristics by the selection of sample in which a group of people or items are studied by collecting and analyzing data from only a few people or items considered to be representative of the entire group. This design is a survey using a structured questionnaire to collect the required information. This type of research allows for a variety of methods to recruit participants, collect data, and utilize various methods of instrumentation. Survey research can use quantitative research strategies such as the use of questionnaires with numerically rated items and also qualitative research strategies such as using open-ended questions or both strategies which is referred to mixed methods (Ponto, 2015). The purpose of descriptive research is to describe systematically the facts and characteristics of a given population or area of interest factually and accurately (Akinsola, 2012).

The population of the study comprise all public senior secondary schools students in the six Area Council in Federal Capital Territory, Abuja. According to (ERC, 2019), the total population of the students in senior secondary schools in all public schools in FCT, Abuja is Seventy Thousand One Hundred and Sixty-two (70,162) in 2019/20 academic session. The sample size for the study was 381 respondents from the 62 public Secondary Schools in FCT

based on the Krejcie and Morgan (1970) sample table of specification. Two secondary schools were selected in each Area Councils of FCT. In selecting the student's sample, random proportionate sampling was used to choose the classes. The instrument for data collection was the Teachers' Creativity Attitude Questionnaire (TCAQ). The instrument for this study was based on the variables that form the bases of the research. The questionnaire sought response on whether teachers are creative, have a positive attitude or a negative attitude towards creativity. The questionnaire contained two (2) sections. Section A contained personal data of the respondents while the other section contained 28 items requiring responses from respondents, the questions were structured in 4-Likert format Strongly Agree(SA), Agree(A), Disagree(D) and Strongly Disagree(SD). The assessment of students' creative tendencies involved the use of Students' Creative Questionnaire.

Research Question One: What are teachers' attitude 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 see students who can perform very well in sport are only important during inter-house sport.	2.97	Agree
8	My teachers believe that teachers decision is final	2.80	Agree
Sectional Mean		2.95	

Table 1 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 are the creativity of students in senior secondary schools in FCT, Abuja?

Table 2: The Creativity of Students in Senior Secondary Schools in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Abuja

N = 381			
S/N	Statements	Mean	Decision
9	I jot down thoughts and ideas in a notebook so I can refer to them later.	1.75	Disagree
10	I set time aside each day to think about what the future holds for me.	2.81	Agree
11	I make effort to write down my specific personal and professional goals.	1.76	Disagree
12	Most of the time, when I see a new product or service, it comes to my mind that I have had that same idea.	1.66	Disagree
13	Whenever I see a TV commercial, I feel that I have a better concept/idea.	2.82	Agree
14	I am a good storyteller. I can paint pictures with words to make people laugh, cry or want to hear more.	2.69	Agree
15	I am fascinated with the people, places and ideas around me	2.70	Agree
16	I keep an open mind when listening to new ideas and opinion without passing judgment.	2.66	Agree
17	I can combine small ideas into big ideas as well as modify ideas for use in other ways.	2.50	Agree
18	Whenever I have a big idea or goal in mind, I start right away to do whatever it takes to make it real.	2.59	Agree
19	When I work, I do it for love, not for the money.	2.41	Disagree
20	I make decisions easily. I choose without second-guessing.	2.62	Agree
21	When I start something, I stick with it, even during tough times.	2.65	Agree
22	I take calculated risks for the chance to get a big reward	2.53	Agree
23	I see things as they could be and not as they are. Example. I see a beautiful lush garden from an empty, dirt plot.	2.48	Disagree
24	In the games of chance, I expect to win.	2.62	Agree
25	I always see the positive in any situation.	2.68	Agree
26	I take care of my body and mind, that is, a Healthy Diet, Exercise, Sleep.	2.73	Agree
27	I ask open-ended questions that call for detailed responses instead of a “yes or no” answer.	2.64	Agree
28	I give away ideas about my ideas to help or serve others.	2.52	Agree
Sectional Mean		2.49	

Table 2 shows the mean creative tendencies of students in senior secondary schools in the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja. The mean was computed to find out the level of creative tendencies of senior secondary school students in the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja. The result shows that the students' creative tendencies in senior secondary schools are 2.49 which is less than 2.5 mid point in a four point scale indicating that students' creative tendencies are low.

Discussion of Findings

Findings revealed that teachers have negative attitudes towards creative students in the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja and this in turn influenced the students' creativity. In a related study conducted by Al-Nouh, Abdul-Kareem and Taqi (2014), findings showed teachers' attitudes and perceptions were high.

The findings revealed that there is a positive weak relationship between teacher's attitude and creativity of senior secondary school students in the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja. In a related study, the findings of Olatoye, Akintunde and Ogunsanya (2010) revealed that there was a very low negative insufficient relationship between creativity and CGPA scores of students.

The study found a positive correlation between teachers' attitude and students' creativity showing that the negative attitude of teachers corresponds with low creativity of senior secondary students in Federal Capital Territory, Abuja. This is in line with the findings of Vasudevan (2013), who found that teachers' attitude and teachers' commitment positively and significantly influence the students' proficiency.

Conclusion/ Recommendations

The researcher concludes that there's a low creative tendencies of students in the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja. The creativity of students were influenced by Teachers' attitude towards creativity and creative tendencies of senior secondary students in the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja.

The following recommendations are made based on the results of the findings:

1. Teachers should improve their attitude towards creativity in senior secondary school students in the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja. This can be achieved through collective effort, creating awareness on the importance of positive attitudes, and carry out research on forms of teachers' attitude.
2. Since there is a relationship between teachers' attitude towards creativity and students creative tendencies, there is a need for other stakeholders to be encouraged to have a positive attitude towards creativity to come up with creative products and innovations amongst students in the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja.

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