

TEACHER'S ATTITUDE AND SKILL DEVELOPMENT OF PRIMARY SCHOOL CHILDREN IN EMOHUA LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA, RIVERS STATE.¹Obindah, Fortune (Ph.D) and ²Gloria Matthews (Ph.D)^{1&2}Department of Educational Psychology, Guidance and Counseling, Faculty of Education. Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

The second-most important institution for a child's fundamental socialisation is their school. In terms of the pupil's personality development and academic and social performance, apart from the parents, the instructor occupies the driver's seat. This study's aim was to investigate the attitude of teachers towards the pupil's social skill development of primary school children in Emohua local government area of Rivers state. The research design was descriptive. All 620 secondary school teachers from the 23 primary public schools in the Emohua Local Government Area of Rivers State made up the study's population. The study's sample size is 186 secondary school teachers, or 30% of the population. The study employed the use of primary data which was collected through an self- structured questionnaire titled "Teachers attitude and social skill development Questionnaire" (TASSDQ) designed by the researcher. The data gathering tool underwent face and content validity testing. In two distinct schools in the Ikwerre local government region, a pilot study was conducted to determine the instrument's reliability. While independent sample t-tests were employed to test hypotheses in order to respond to the research question, descriptive statistics such as mean, standard deviation, and frequency count were utilised to describe the response in each variable. The results of the research demonstrate that although instructors' positive attitudes have favourable impacts on students' development of social skills. Additionally, we discovered in this research that instructors' attitudes regarding the development of social skills were unaffected by their marital status or gender. It concluded that teachers has positive attitude towards the development of social skills. However, it was shown that neither gender nor marital status influenced the development of social skill in Emohua local government area. The research found that instructors should set a positive example for students before class because they influence how they think and behave.

Keywords: Social Skill, Family, Attitude, Development, Teachers .**INTRODUCTION**

Teaching is the method through which a person's abilities—acquired during the educational phase—are developed in proportion to their capability. The instructor is the most crucial element in educational and instructional activities. In the broadest sense, a teacher is a person employed by educational institutions who helps students achieve their cognitive, sensory, and behavioural goals and gains within the bounds set by the educational system (Gundogdu & Silman, 2007). However, A schoolteacher's daily obligations consist of more than just inspiring `pupils to learn about mathematics, history, English and language arts, and science. In addition to having `pupils learn the core academic subjects, researchers have suggested that `pupils whose teachers focus on pro-social behaviors increase `pupil learning and academic achievement (Durlak, Dymnicki, Schellinger, Taylor, & Weissberg, 2011). In other words, a contemporary teacher goes beyond this idea as well. The teacher's responsibilities now include organising, managing, offering counselling, observing, and assessing in addition to the traditional classroom duties of instructing, lecturing, conducting tests, and assigning grades. The teacher has a significant role in shaping society, laying a solid basis for its future, and ensuring that such behaviours are maintained (Temel, 1988).

The second-most important institution for a child's fundamental socialisation is their school. In terms of the pupil's personality development and academic and social performance, apart from the parents, the instructor occupies the driver's seat. According to our current concept of contemporary education, it is the teacher's obligation to be successful in helping children develop both their intellectual and moral selves. The ability of the teacher to cultivate healthy personality values in themselves and to be effective in their interactions with students so that they may freely develop their personalities is necessary for the fulfilment of this task (Can, 2011; Inelmen, 2011). The skills and traits required to be a successful teacher are the same ones that

characterise a good education. A successful teacher has eight fundamental traits, including subject knowledge, decision-making skills, the ability to think critically and solve problems, the capacity for self-awareness and self-correction, reflection, and the ability to recognise and address students' individual learning needs.

One of the main objectives of school has always been to properly socialise students. The research of school environment and "pupils'" opinions about it is prompted by a comparison of these aims with what is actually occurring in classrooms. It is crucial to pay greater attention to the social, emotional, and cognitive development of the students throughout their educational years since the school environment is one of the most significant variables determining teenagers' social development. Students' social life may be impacted by their school experiences and interactions, thus it is crucial to carefully plan, establish appropriate goals, and make ongoing efforts to develop and train students' social skills. Social abilities also have a role in the growth of human developmental stages. In reality, people may function better in their life after they have social skills. People's mental health is greatly influenced by the development and use of their social skills, especially when they are at the right developmental stage (Personal and social adjustment in life is based on appropriate social actions and other adaptive abilities. Social skills serve a range of purposes, including facilitating social acceptability, avoiding awkward social circumstances, and defining a set of competencies for navigating the demands of everyday social interaction. Negative outcomes for those who lack the necessary social skills include peer rejection, the appearance of psychiatric problems, school dismissal, isolation, criminality, and subpar academic achievement (2). People need specialised talents in areas like arithmetic, reading, and living itself in order to achieve their best achievements in life. If the person lacks the necessary social skills, these abilities do not ensure success. Adolescents who possess the necessary social skills may build solid connections with their peers and succeed in a range of contexts, including the classroom and the job (3). "Pupils with superior social skills are more likely to be accepted by classmates, create friendships, forge stronger bonds, and be seen as good problem solvers. They also exhibit more enthusiasm in learning and do better academically." For a person to have a successful life, effective social and communication skills are crucial. The development of social skills involves several institutions, including schools. The term "school environment" refers to the qualities and features of a particular institution that have an impact on the attitudes, actions, and academic achievement of every person who interacts with it. This includes students, instructors, administrators, and other staff members. Given that it may impact students' learning experiences and personalities, attention to environment, especially social climate, is crucial in schools and other educational institutions.

Due to their authority and influence, the school administrator generally has the most impact on the climate of the institution, whilst instructors are responsible for establishing the environment in their classes. Whether they are conscious of it or not, teachers influence students' attitudes and social skills via their interactions with other students in addition to directly or indirectly imparting knowledge. Attention and positive comments are examples of natural reinforcers that help students develop a good mindset.

Knowing the communication process adequately is a requirement for competent educators in the educational system. The teacher who makes an effort to comprehend the interests, fears, and worries of the "pupils," supports the social activities of the "pupils," and appreciates, approves, and compliments them for their efforts will make the "pupils" feel that they are being thought of, loved, and helped, and that the teacher is working for their benefit. "Students of such a teacher will, adopting the instructor as a role model, in turn, be mindful of others, leaping to their help, keeping good relations and positive attitudes" (Basaran, 1994).

LITERATURE REVIEW

It is impossible to ignore the role that teachers play in helping students improve their social skills throughout this process. The teacher shapes students' lives by communicating with them in a positive or negative way and modelling that behaviour. This can have a positive or negative impact on how students perceive themselves or the public at large, which can affect how well they can communicate, conduct research, and be creative (Ataunal, 2003). The student immediately accepts and imitates the teacher's conduct and approach, which places a lot of responsibility on the instructors. Studies conducted now clearly demonstrate the impact on students of teacher-student interactions, a teacher's approach to students, and particularly the perception of this by students.

For a teacher, the ability to engage with the "student" and exhibit positive conduct, such as asking questions, understanding their viewpoints, expressing interest and gratitude, boosts the "pupils'" motivation and achievement. Teachers serve as role models for students through their conduct and attitude while striving to provide knowledge, experiences, and behaviour on a certain subject to students at a given developmental stage. Success may lead to good ego attitudes while failure can lead to negative ones since positive attitudes promote success while negative attitudes promote failure. For instance, the consequences of a teacher making derogatory remarks about a student because of their failure are unavoidable (Gecer, 2002). Frymier (1993) focused on specific teaching behaviours such as providing feedback for students' work, praising, wanting to listen to students, and showing interest in the research on the impact of good teacher behaviour on students' motivation levels. The study's findings indicate that instructor' nonverbal behaviours, such as smiling, adopting a relaxed posture, and using different gestures and facial expressions, had a greater impact on students' learning than the actual subject matter of the lesson. Therefore, it has become crucial to comprehend how instructors' attitudes in public primary schools in the Emohua local government region may effect students' development of social skills.

According to Agyeman (2013), a teacher who lacks both an academic and professional teaching credential would surely have a detrimental impact on how his or her topic is taught and learned. Other instructors' factors, besides qualification, nevertheless exist and may either favourably or adversely influence students' social skills. However, little is known about them through studies, notably in the Emohua Local Government Area. This research critically investigated teachers' attitudes as determinants of students' social skill development in elementary school against this backdrop. Some teachers by their nature are accommodative while some are not in the same line, some are committed to their duties through test, assignments, daily and weekly exercises with immediate feedback while others do not disturb their students with such activities, as such they instead came late, avoid classes or absence from the school internationally, despite the fact that both teachers have mastery of the subject and methodology. Findings showed that attitudes about various subjects by teachers had a significant impact on students' academic progress, either favorably or adversely. A person's attitude affects how they think and behave, which has important ramifications for students, teachers, the immediate social groups they deal with and their learning rates, as well as the entire educational system (Yara, 2009).

Within the context of social psychology, an attitude is described as a subjective or mental preparedness for action. According to Suiza, Barros, and Marcos (2010), attitude shapes our reality and the outward expression of human views. They define attitude as a person's general propensity to react favorably or negatively to an object (person or group of people, institutions or events). It might be either favorable or unfavorable. Additionally, it includes how individuals act and how they hold themselves. An individual's attitude may develop as a consequence of their ideas or through imitating others, such as their parents, teachers, friends, or peers.

In other words, the way the term "attitude" is used here suggests that it refers to a deeply held view, belief, or sentiment that influences how individuals behave. The way the objectives, content, instructional techniques, and assessment processes are put into practice are also impacted by attitude (Mucella, Melis and Ahu, 2011).

In addition, the educational system is driven by the teacher. Some of them are unaware that how they connect with students, behave, and educate can have a longer lasting impact than when they really teach. In the traditional school context, teachers are revered as leaders and the only source of information and knowledge. In a research published in 2014, Kiligat and Gordon looked at the impact of teacher traits and attitudes on the KCSE Economics Exam. The research, which had 42753 students, 224 instructors, and 19 district inspectors, was conducted on the ground at secondary schools that offered economics in Kenya's Rift Valley area. To get a representative sample, simple purposive sampling was utilized. The sample consisted of all five-form economics students from all secondary schools in Kenya's Rift Valley region, school inspectors from districts where economics was provided, and teachers from those institutions. 187 kids, 32 instructors, and 4 director inspectors participated in the activity. Using a questionnaire, information from the sample was gathered. A questionnaire was used to analyze the data that was gathered. Calculating averages, frequencies, percentages, and totals is one of them. These statistical methods were employed to compare the various data that had been gathered. From these comparisons, conclusions about the factors examined were ultimately

formed. According to the study's findings, teachers have a favorable attitude about their studies, thus other reasons outside the teachers' attitudes might be to blame for students' low performance. In a case study of the Ijebu-ode and Odogbolu Local Government Areas of Ogun State, researchers Abedu and Gladamosi (2015) investigated the link between teachers' attitudes and students' academic results in senior secondary school pupils taking chemistry. It was a quasi-experimental study design that was employed. The participants were all 124 SSS Chemistry students and chemistry teachers from the chosen secondary schools in the Ogun State local governments area of Ijebu-Ode and Odogbolu. Males made up 57.3% of the sample while females made up 48.7% of the SSS students in two local government areas. They utilized the Chemistry Achievement Test and the Teacher's Attitude Toward Chemistry Teaching Scale (TATCS) (CAT). 110 students and 14 chemistry teachers participated in the study, and the data were analyzed using the independent sample t-test, analysis of variance (ANOVA), and PPMC. The study's conclusions showed a substantial correlation between teachers' attitudes and SSS pupils' academic performance. It was indicated that the teaching style of chemistry teachers in SSS had a big impact on how well students do in chemistry as a scientific subject.

Statement of the Problem

Although governments make significant investments in public education, it has been shown that the quality of students it produces falls short of what it costs. It has been noted with dismay that students don't exhibit good social values in terms of communication and creativity among other social skills, thereby manifesting poor social skill development. This observation is also in light of government efforts to encourage social values among youths, especially through the provision of quality education. The teacher's attitude is reflected in the observed decline in social skill development as a result. In other words, the high prevalence of social vices in the Emohua Local Government Area, Rivers State, and Nigeria generally might be attributed to the instructors' factors, which is a characteristic of what he is made up of. Numerous variables have typically been shown to be predictors of students' poor social skill development. According to Agyeman (2013), a teacher who lacks both an academic and professional teaching credential would surely have a detrimental impact on how his or her topic is taught and learned. Other instructors' factors, besides qualification, nevertheless exist and may either favourably or adversely influence students' social skills. However, little is known about them through studies, notably in the Emohua Local Government Area. This research critically investigated teachers' attitudes as determinants of students' social skill development in elementary school against this backdrop.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine the attitude of teachers towards the pupils social skill development in Emohua local government area of Rivers state. the specific objectives were to:

1. Examine the attitude of teachers towards the pupils social skill development in Emohua local government area of Rivers state based on gender.
2. Examine the attitude of teachers towards the pupils social skill development in Emohua local government area of Rivers state based on marital status

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What is the attitude of teachers towards the pupils social skill development in Emohua local government area of Rivers state based on gender?
2. What is the attitude of teachers towards the pupils social skill development in Emohua local government area of Rivers state based on marital status?
3. What is the attitude of teachers towards the pupils social skill development in Emohua local government area of Rivers state based on years of experience?

Research Hypotheses

1. There is no significance difference in the attitude of teachers towards the pupils social skill development in Emohua local government area of Rivers state based on gender.
2. There is no significance difference in the attitude of teachers towards the pupils social skill development in Emohua local government area of Rivers state based on marital status.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design: A descriptive research approach was used in this study. Gay (1981) claims that it entails the gathering of information in order to test hypotheses or provide answers to queries about the existing condition of the study's topic. Case studies, surveys, developmental studies, and correlative studies are all examples of descriptive research. All of the aforementioned instances depict the phenomena or variables as they were at the time the research was conducted.

Population of the study: All 620 secondary school teachers from the 23 senior secondary public schools in Rivers State's Emohua Local Government Area comprised the study's population (Rivers State Senior Secondary school board zonal office Emohua, 2021).

Sample and Sampling Techniques: The sample size for the study is 186 secondary school teachers representing 30% of the entire population. Simple random sampling technique by listing in alphabetical orders of 1, 5, 9, 13, 17, 21, 23 was used to select seven schools for the study. The seven schools represent 30% of the total number of public secondary schools in the study area. 186 teachers in the selected schools were randomly selected for the study. The participants were randomly chosen based on their availability and interest to partake in the study during the researchers visit to the school.

Instruments for Data Collection: The study employed the use of primary data which was collected through a self-structured questionnaire titled "Teachers attitude and social skill development Questionnaire" (TASSDQ) designed by the researcher. The instrument has two sections, A and B, the first section captured information on the demographic variables while the second section dealt with the information on teachers' attitude towards social skill development. The instrument contained closed-ended questions (to ensure uniformity) which were designed along the four-point scale of strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD). The responses were scored as follows: Strongly Agree (SA) = 4, Agree (A) = 3, Disagree (D) = 2, and Strongly disagree (SD) = 1 respectively.

Validation of the Instrument: The data gathering tool underwent face and content validity testing. The instrument was validated by the researcher's supervisor, who also made corrections and comments that served as the foundation for the final instrument's amendments and authentication. The validation involved securing the instrument in terms of its clarity, relevance, quality, and appropriateness of the items.

Reliability of the Instrument: A pilot study was conducted in two separate schools in the Ikwerre local government region in order to determine the instrument's dependability. In order to ascertain the instrument's reliability coefficient and the internal consistency of its items, the completed questionnaires were gathered and submitted to statistical analysis. The dependability coefficient, which was 0.89, was sufficient for the investigation.

Method of Data Collection: The researcher sought permission from the state ministry of education for successful administration of the instruments. A letter of introduction was given to the researcher from Senior Secondary School Management Board. The letter helped the researcher in the administration of the test instrument. The collection of data was carried out by the researcher with the help of research assistants and the teachers in the sampled senior secondary schools. Two days were given to each teacher to fill the questionnaire items. The whole exercise lasted two weeks. The process of responding to the questionnaires was explained to the respondents in order to ensure valid data were collected.

Method of Data Analysis: Statistics that are both descriptive and inferential were used to examine the data. While independent sample t-tests were employed to test hypotheses in order to respond to the research question, descriptive statistics such as mean, standard deviation, and frequency count were utilised to describe the response in each variable.

RESULT AND FINDINGS

Research Question One: What is the attitude of teachers towards the pupils social skill development in Emohua local government area of Rivers state based on gender?

Table 4.1: Mean and standard deviation of attitude of teachers towards the pupils social skill development based on Gender.

Variable	Mean	SD	N
Male	2.99	.605	
Female	3.06	.520	174
Mean Difference	0.07		

Result in Table 4.1 indicates the mean and standard deviation of attitude of teachers towards the pupils social skill development based on gender. The table showed that male teachers has a mean value 2.99 and female teachers has a mean value of 3.06. The mean difference of 0.07 show a very low difference attitude of teachers towards the pupils social skill development based on Gender in Emohua local government area, Rivers State.

Research Question 2: What is the attitude of teachers towards the pupils social skill development in Emohua local government area of Rivers state based on marital status?

Table 4.2: Mean and standard deviation on attitude of teachers towards the pupils social skill development in Emohua local government area of Rivers state based on marital status

Variable	Mean	SD	N
Single	2.89	.721	
Married	3.06	.520	174
Mean Difference		0.17	

Result in Table 4.2 indicates the mean and standard deviation of attitude of teachers towards the pupils social skill development in Emohua local government area of Rivers state based on marital status. The table showed that single teachers has a mean value 2.89 and married teachers has a mean value of 3.06. The mean difference of 0.17 show a very low difference in the attitude of teachers towards the pupils social skill development in Emohua local government area of Rivers state based on marital status.

Test of Hypotheses

Hypotheses One: There is no significance difference in the attitude of teachers towards the pupils social skill development in Emohua local government area of Rivers state based on gender.

Table 4.1b: T-test on the difference in attitude of teachers towards the pupils social skill development in Emohua local government area of Rivers state based on gender

Variable	Mean	SD	N	t-cal	Sig	Remark
Male	2.89	.635	174	.983	.141	Not Significant
Female	3.06	.520				

The result in table 4.4 also demonstrates that, at the 0.05 level of significance, there is no difference in teachers' attitudes about students' development of social skills in Emohua local government area of Rivers state based on marital status. According to the table, t-cal = .983 and p=0.141. This finding indicates that the null hypothesis is true. This is due to the fact that the p-value (.141) exceeds the alpha limit (.05). The outcome of this null hypothesis is that there is no gender-based difference in instructors' attitudes toward students' development of social skills in Emohua Local Government Area of Rivers State.

Hypotheses Two: There is no significance difference in the attitude of teachers towards the pupils social skill development in Emohua local government area of Rivers state based on marital status.

Table 4.2: T-test result Showing the significance in the difference in the attitude of teachers towards the pupils social skill development in Emohua local government area of Rivers state based on marital status

Variable	Mean	SD	N	t-cal	Sig	Remark
Male	2.89	.721	174	1.321	.093	Not Significant
Female	3.06	.520				

The result in table 4.4 also demonstrates that, at the 0.05 level of significance, there is no difference in teachers' attitudes about students' development of social skills in Emohua local government area of Rivers state based on marital status. According to the table, $t\text{-cal} = 1.321$ and $p = 0.093$. This finding indicates that the null hypothesis is true. This is due to the fact that the p -value (.093) exceeds the alpha limit (.05). According to this null hypothesis, there is no discernible difference in teachers' attitudes toward students' development of social skills in Emohua local government area of Rivers state based on marital status.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The results of the research demonstrate that although instructors' positive attitudes have favourable impacts on students' development of social skills. Additionally, we discovered in this research that instructors' attitudes regarding the development of social skills were unaffected by their marital status or gender. Esmailpur and Maleki's (2007) findings are consistent with the findings of the current study, and Daraee and colleagues' (2016) findings regarding some differences between public and private schools regarding the development of social skills in some variables are consistent with the findings of the current study in this regard. The study's conclusions and comments show that gender differences do not significantly affect how instructors assess their students' social skill development. Both male and female instructors have an equal attitude toward their students' development of social skills in classroom settings and work with the students to instil a variety of positive social traits in them so they may develop social traits in their daily lives. Additionally, marital status has little impact on instructors' attitudes regarding students' social skill development. In this research, it was shown that instructors who were not married had a more positive attitude about employing blended learning methodologies in the classroom.

CONCLUSION

The study investigated the attitude of teachers towards the development of social skills in Emohua local government area. It revealed that teachers has positive attitude towards the development of social skills. However, it was shown that neither gender nor marital status influenced the development of social skill in Emohua local government area.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Teachers should be present before courses because they serve as positive role models for students and influence their attitudes and conduct.
2. The government should incorporate the development of social skill as part of grading criteria for pupils as to evaluate their social skill.

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