TEACHERS' AWARENESS OF CREATIVITY-RELATED BEHAVIOUR AMONG UPPER BASIC STUDENTS IN ILORIN METROPOLIS IN KWARA STATE

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Abstract

Creativity among students in the classroom remains an important variable and a constantly discussed topic especially among educators. In spite of the importance of creativity in the classroom, studies had revealed that it has received a very little attention from the teachers. This study, therefore, sought to assess teachers' awareness of creativity-related behaviour among upper basic students in Ilorin Metropolis in Kwara State, Nigeria. Descriptive survey research was adopted for the study. Stratified random sampling technique was used to select twenty (20) public and 20 private schools while purposive sampling technique was used to select five science teachers across the forty (40) schools selected in the State bringing the total number of the teachers to two hundred (200). Awareness of creativity-related behaviour assessment scale by Nicolas Holt Creativity Test (NHCT) was adapted to measure teachers' awareness of creativity-related behaviour among upper basic schools in Ilorin South, Kwara State. The instrument contains 29 items rated on 4-Likert scale such as strongly agree = 4, agree = 3, Disagree = 2 and strongly disagree =1. The instrument was validated by two experts in the Department of Social Science Education, University of Ilorin, Ilorin, Nigeria. Reliability coefficient of the instrument was found to be .72 using test re-test reliability technique on students outside of the respondents involved in the study. In order to analyse the data collected from the study, frequency counts and percentage was used to answer the raised research questions while t-test statistical method was used to analyse the formulated null hypotheses. The findings of the study revealed that teachers in Ilorin Metropolis have high awareness of the creativity related behaviour among upper basic school students with 59%, there is significant difference in the male and female teachers' awareness of creativity related behavior and there is significant difference in the less experienced and experienced teachers' awareness of creativity related behaviour among upper basic school students. In conclusion, based on the findings the researcher recommended that continued efforts should be made by the school to organize workshops, seminars and training for secondary school teachers irrespective of the gender to equip them with the needed skills on how to identify early and nurture creative ability of the students.

Keywords: Creativity, Achievement Motivation, Academic Achievement, Mathematics, Kwara State, Nigeria

Introduction

The concept of creativity is a vital and topical issue in education especially in the classroom. Creativity is said to be a unique characteristic that sets apart human being from some forms of artificial intelligence such as computers and robots. Creativity is therefore considered fundamental to all academic activities and disciplines. Creativity, according to Sriraman (2004), is defined as the ability to produce novel, relevant and original work. In agreement with the above statement, Parashar and Pingle (2015) defined creativity as the process of generating new ideas that are relevant and worthwhile with the sole aim of finding lasting solution to a given problem. In essence, creativity brings about new methods of addressing a problem. Attempts have been made by several researchers to identify some of the creativity related behaviours. For instance, Kneller, (2005) posited that idea is said to be creative when it brings a new insight to a given problem and that creativity is demonstrated through an individual's ability to employ varied approach of addressing a given problem in order to produce ideas that are novel, relevant and unusual. It was further affirmed that creative individual sees with the mind and not the eyes alone and equally look beyond the immediate situation in addressing a given problem.

As observed by Williams (2002), creativity is a fundamental factor in both teaching and learning which cuts across all disciplines and there is a general belief that creativity should be supported and nurtured in the classroom. Similarly, Soh and Quek (2007) affirmed that creativity is an integral part of the educational process and therefore adequate attention is expected to be given to it by the teachers to identify students' creative ability early enough so as to nurture it. As observed by Beghetto, (2010), teachers' awareness and convictions about creativity have been reportedly found to be imperative in understanding the creative processes in the classroom situation as this will enable teachers to plan and determine their teaching methods suitable for integrating creativity in the classroom. In spite of the importance of creativity in the classroom, however, there remains a little understanding of how to nurture and encourage creativity in educational settings even though more emphasizes are being persistently placed on classroom creativity. For instance, Hillmann (2006), in his observation, affirmed that placing too much emphasis on cooperative learning is capable of affecting learners' imagination and decision-making capabilities with a resultant effect on their creative ability.

The above statement is in agreement with Oduolowu (2001) who submitted that the importance of creativity is not well appreciated in educational setting in Nigeria especially at secondary school level as students who display creativity in the classroom are often regarded as being unruly by the teachers. This might be as a result of inability of the teachers to identify some of the creative behaviours commonly found among the students. Some of these characteristics were identified by Johnson (2004) who, in his study, observed that creative individuals prefer and pursue complicated issues. Thus, they are interested in complex activities so as to discover new things that are useful and relevant to the world. MacKinnon (2005), in a related manner, emphasized that creative individuals display persistence, willingness and determination in order to complete a given task and they are known for their willingness to face failure. Similarly, Clarkson in the same year (2005) highlighted some of the traits of creativity which include:

a. Tolerance for ambiguity
b. Willingness to take risks with behavioral flexibility
c. Ability to work independently.

In realization of the importance of creativity in the classroom, several studies have been conducted. For instance, Parashar and Pingle (2015) carried out a study on the assessment of creativity among both teachers and students in Tier II management institutes in Western India. A total of 21 management teachers and 31 management students were involved in the study. Creative Assessment Inventory which contained 24 questions was used for the study. The findings revealed that creativity scores for both teachers and students were found to be low. In a related manner, Mastuti, Purwanto, Subanji and Susiswo (2016) investigated interpretation awareness of creativity of mathematics teacher in high school. The sample for the study consisted of two high school math teachers who had a different teaching experience. The finding revealed that teachers did aware of students' creativity. Similarly, Areti and Georgia (2014) carried out a study on teachers' awareness of creativity in mathematical teaching and their practice. The sample of the study was a group of pre-service teachers who were attending a bachelor degree program and had a special interest in the teaching of mathematics. The findings revealed that teachers' awareness of creativity was affected by their initial understanding. Teaching experience, however, was emphasized as a factor that affects teachers' awareness of creativity-related behaviour among students. If teaching experience is considered important in the discussion of the teachers' awareness of creativity among students, school type might equally play a significant role. In a related study, Al-Dababneh and Al-Zboon, (2017) found that teachers from private schools were found to have a more creative personality and awareness of creativity related behaviour compared to teachers from government schools.
It is on the basis of the foregoing that the researcher sought to investigate teachers' awareness of creativity-related behaviour among upper basic students in Ilorin South, Kwara State

Statement of the problem

Literatures had revealed that students who are able to repeat what teachers taught them in the class in the same way the knowledge was presented to them, are often commended, rewarded and regarded as brilliant ones at the expense of their counterparts who attempted using another approach to reproduce what teacher taught them. It was equally observed that there is little understanding of how to nurture and support creativity in current classroom environment today as observed by Oduolowu (2001). Students who deviated from the usual stated rules often regarded as being disobedient and as a result they are discouraged from making attempt which consequently resulted to killing their creative ability. This lack of awareness of creativity related behaviour on the part of the teachers had been partly traced to teachers' experience and school ownership variations, (Panaoura and Panaoura 2014; Parashar and Pingle, 2015; Mastuti, Purwanto, Subanji and Susiswo, 2016).

From the foregoing, it can be inferred that there is a dearth of studies on this identified variable especially on the teachers and the available ones were carried out outside this present locale. This study, therefore, sought to investigate teachers' awareness of creativity related behaviour among upper basic school students in Ilorin South, Kwara State.

Purpose of the study

The main purpose of this study is to investigate the level of teachers' awareness of creativity-related-behaviour among upper basic schools. Specifically, the study examined

a. teachers' awareness of creativity-related behaviour among upper basic students based on school type
b. teachers' awareness of creativity-related behaviour among upper basic students on the basis of teaching experience

Research Questions

The following research questions were raised to sharpen the focus of this study:

a. there is no difference in the teachers' awareness of creativity-related behaviour among upper basic students based on school type
b. there is no difference in the teachers' awareness of creativity-related behaviour among upper basic students based on teaching experience

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated to guide the focus of this study:

a. there is no significant difference in the teachers' awareness of creativity-related behaviour among upper basic students based on school type
b. there is no significant difference in the teachers' awareness of creativity-related behaviour among upper basic students based on teaching experience.

Methodology

The research design adopted for this study was descriptive survey research. This is because the researcher makes no attempt to alter or manipulate any variable but to collect data on teachers' awareness of creativity-related behaviour among secondary School Students for the purpose of making description. The population for this study comprised all teachers in kwara State while target population consisted of teachers in upper basic schools in Kwara State. Simple random sampling technique was adopted to select 200 teachers in upper basic schools in Kwara State. Nicolas Holt Creativity Test (NHCT) was adapted to measure teachers' awareness of creativity-related behaviour among upper basic schools in Kwara State. The instrument contains 29 items rated on 4-Likert scale such as strongly agree = 4, agree = 3, Disagree = 2 and strongly disagree =1. The instrument was validated by two experts in the Department of Social Science Education, University of Ilorin, Ilorin, Nigeria. Reliability coefficient of .85 was found for the instrument using test re-test reliability technique on students outside of the respondents involved in the study. In order to analyse the data collected from the study, Frequence counts and percentage was used to analyse the raised research questions while and t-test statistical methods were used to analyse the formulated null hypotheses.

Results

Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

This section describes the demographic information of the respondents using percentage as shown in Table 1 and 2.

Table 1: Percentage Distribution of Respondents by Years of Experience

Variable		Frequency	Percentage
Years of Experience	Less Experience	87 113	43.5
	Experience	200	56.5
	Total		100.0

Table 1 shows that there are 200 teachers that participated in the study. There are 87 (43.5%) and 113 (56.5%) of the teachers with less experience and experience respectively that

participated in the study. This implies that there were more teachers with teaching experience compared to those with less teaching experience in this study.

Table 2: Percentage Distribution of Respondents by Gender

Variable		Frequency	Percentage
School type	Public	97	48.5
	Private	103	51.5
	Total	200	100.0

Table 2 shows that there are 200 teachers that participated in the study. There are 97 (48.5%) and 103 (51.5%) public and private school teachers respectively that participated in the study. This implies that slightly more public teachers compared to private teachers participated in this study.

Results

Research Question 1: What is the level of teachers' awareness of creativity related behaviours among secondary school students?

In order to answer research question one, teachers' responses on teachers' awareness of creativity related behaviours questionnaire were analysed and the summary of the results is as shown:

Table 3: Percentage Analysis of the Level of Teachers' Awareness of Creativity Related Behaviours among Secondary School Students

Teachers' Awareness of Creativity Related Behaviours	Frequency	Percentage (%)
High Level	118	59.0
Average Level	74	37.0
Low Level	8	4.0
Total	200	100.0

Result in Table 3 presents the responses of the participants to teachers' awareness of creativity related behaviours that sought information on the level of teachers' awareness of creativity related behaviours among secondary school students. The result on Table 3 indicated that 118 (59.0%) level of teachers' awareness of creativity related behaviours among secondary school students was high, 74 representing (37.0%) level of teachers' awareness of creativity related behaviours among secondary school students was average, 8 representing (4.0%) level of teachers' awareness of creativity related behaviours among secondary school students was low. This implies that the level of teachers' awareness of creativity related behaviours among secondary school students was high.

H_{O1}: There is no significant difference in the teachers' awareness of creativity related behaviours among students based on school type.

In order to test this research hypothesis, participants' responses on the teachers' awareness of creativity related behaviours were analysed based on gender as shown in Table 4.

Table 4: Mean, Standard Deviation and t-test Analysis of Difference in the Teachers' Awareness of Creativity related Behaviours among Students based on Gender

Gender	No	Mean	Std.	Df	Cal.t-Value	ρ-value	Decision
Public	97	62.48	12.34	198	2.29	.02	Significant
Private	103	58.59	11.75				

ρ < 0.05

Results in Table 4 indicate a calculated t-value of 2.29 and ρ-value of .02 at alpha level of 0.05. The null Hypothesis 1 was rejected since the ρ-value of .01 is lower than 0.05 alpha level (.02 < 0.05). This indicated that there is a significant difference in the teachers' awareness of creativity related behaviours among students based on school type. This is in favour of the public school teacher with a mean score of 62.48 greater than mean score of 58.59 of private students (public = 62.48 > private = 58.59). This implies that school type has statistical influence on teachers' awareness of creativity related behaviours among students.

H_{O2}: There is no significant difference in the teacher's awareness of creativity related behaviours among students based on working experience.

In order to test this research hypothesis, participants' responses on the teachers' awareness of creativity related behaviours were analysed based on gender as shown in Table 5.

Table 5: Mean, Standard Deviation and t-test Analysis of Difference in the Teacher's Awareness of Creativity Related Behaviours among Students based on Working Experience

Working Experience	No	Mean	Std.	df	Cal.t-Value	ρ-value	Decision
Less Experience	87	58.90	11.76	198	1.62	.11	Not Significant
Experience	113	61.70	12.39				

ρ >0.05

Results in Table 5 indicate a calculated t-value of 1.62 and ρ-value of .11 at alpha level of 0.05. The null hypothesis two was not rejected because the significance level of .11 is higher than 0.05 (.11 > 0.05). This indicated that there is no significant difference in the teacher's awareness of creativity related behaviours among students based on working experience. This implies that school type did not influence teacher's awareness of creativity related behaviours among students.

Discussion of the Findings

Finding revealed that the level of teachers' awareness of creativity-related behaviours among secondary school students was high. This finding could be attributed to professional development and training programmes which had enhanced teachers' horizon and awareness of creativity related behaviour. Schools and educational institutions may have invested on workshops, seminars, or courses that focus on how to identify and nurture creative ability of the students. These initiatives could have equipped teachers with the knowledge and skills necessary to recognize and appreciate creativity-related behaviours among secondary school students. Additionally, educational policies and curriculum changes may have emphasized the importance of nurturing creativity, prompting teachers to pay more attention to these behaviours in their students' activities and assignments. Overall, the combination of training and institutional support may have contributed to the high level of awareness observed among the teachers in the study.

Furthermore, finding shows that there is a significant difference in the teachers' awareness of creativity related behaviours among students based on school type. This finding is in agreement with the finding of Al-Dababneh and Al-Zboon, (2017) who found, in their study, that teachers from private schools were found to have a more creative personality and awareness of creativity related behaviour compared to their counterparts from government schools. This may be as a result of the competitions that exist among private owned schools to ensure teachers are given the necessary training and skills in order to produce competent students who can compete favourably with their counterparts.

Another finding indicates that there is no significant difference in the teacher's awareness of creativity related behaviours among students based on working experience. This is in agreement to the finding of Mastuti, Purwanto, Subanji and Susiswo (2016) who investigated interpretation awareness of creativity of mathematics teacher in high school and found out that there was no significant difference in the teachers' awareness of the creativity related behaviour among secondary school students. Similarly, Areti and Georgia (2014) carried out a study on teachers' awareness of creativity in mathematical teaching and their practice. The sample of the study was a group of pre-service teachers who were attending a bachelor degree program and had a special interest in the teaching of mathematics. The findings revealed that teachers' awareness of creativity was affected by their initial understanding. However, teaching experience was emphasized as a factor that affects teachers' awareness of creativity-related behaviour among students. Therefore, the absence of a significant difference in teacher awareness based on working experience may indicate that creativity-related behaviours in students are consistent and recognizable by teachers regardless of their years in the profession.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this study sheds light on the profound impact that teachers have on nurturing creativity in secondary school students. The finding that teachers displayed a high level of awareness of creativity-related behaviours underscores the importance of educators in fostering creative potential among their students. However, it is also concerning to note that there was a significant difference in teachers' awareness based on school type, highlighting the need for continued efforts to address and ensure equal attention is given to teachers in private and public schools that may enhance the equitable recognition and encouragement of creativity in the classroom. On a positive note, the absence of a significant difference in teacher awareness based on working experience suggests that teachers, regardless of their tenure, possess a

consistent ability to recognize creativity in their students, emphasizing the universality of creativity-related behaviours across different classroom settings. These findings collectively emphasize the critical role teachers play in nurturing creativity and underscore the importance of ongoing training and awareness programs to promote equitable recognition of creative potential among all students.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, several recommendations were made to further enhance the nurturing of creativity in secondary school students:

i. A culture of creative expression should be actively encouraged and supported in schools. Encourage teachers to keep praising and recognising students' creative behaviours. Acknowledging and appreciating creativity can drive pupils to further explore and develop their creative potential. Additionally, schools might create events, competitions, or exhibitions that promote students' creative work, thereby reinforcing the role of creativity in education.
ii. Educators must participate in diversity and inclusion training programmes in order to address the huge gap between private and public teachers' awareness of behaviour connected to creativity. These initiatives ought to emphasise eradicating unconscious biases and encouraging the fair acknowledgement of the creative potential in every student, regardless of school ownership.
iii. Despite the fact that the study identified no appreciable differences in teacher awareness based on working experience, it is essential to keep and increase chances for professional development for teachers. Teachers can stay current with changing teaching strategies and the most recent creative education research by receiving ongoing training on recognising and promoting creativity. Teachers at all career phases ought to have access to these programmes.

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