

PERSPECTIVES ON NATIONAL CAMPAIGN FOR IMPROVED TEACHERS ATTITUDE TO READING

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Abstract

The study explored the perspective of a national campaign to improve teachers' attitudes towards reading in the Afijio Municipal Government area of Oyo State. A descriptive survey research design was chosen for this study. The population consists of all the English teachers from the secondary schools in the Afijio. Five (5) secondary schools were selected, where twenty (20) English teachers were randomly selected, totaling one hundred (100) teachers as a sample. A self-structured questionnaire tagged Teachers' Attitude to Reading Questionnaire (TARQ) was used to collect data. The questionnaire was validated and a reliability coefficient of 0.81 was obtained, which assumes that the instrument was reliable. Three research hypotheses that were guided to study and tested at a significance level of 0.05 using Chi-Square. The results showed that there is a significant difference between reading literacy and teacher skills; there is a significant difference between reading and teachers' interest, and there is a significant difference between reading and teachers' effectiveness in teaching the English language. One of the recommendations based on the results was that government at all levels should empower libraries and information centers to carry out their duties effectively.

Keywords: National Campaign, Perspectives ,Teacher Education, Teacher Attitudes and Reading.

Introduction

The role of teachers in general and English teachers in particular includes: teaching and ensuring that students learn what they are taught in school. It is one of the English teacher's responsibilities to ensure that students understand and use the four language skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing. Reading is a universal phenomenon and tradition; there is practically no profession in the world that does not require reading. In the education system, reading is considered a dependent variable, since no educational endeavor could thrive without the culture of reading (Applegate & Applegate, 2004). Reading for the purpose of this article is identified as the ability to give meaning to printed words or graphic symbols. Today, our understanding of reading has expanded to include the visual and reasoning skills needed to obtain information from digital video, portable data assistants, computers, or other technological learning environments (Hobbs, 2005; Messaris, 2005,

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Daniel, 2013). Added to this broadened definition of reading is the idea that the visual and reasoning skills required to acquire information today are located in and shaped by increasingly diverse social or cultural settings, such as schools, families, communities or ethnic groups (Tracey & Morrow, 2006). As a result, the term reading is currently being interpreted much more broadly to encompass the acquisition of a complex set of skills and knowledge that enable individuals to comprehend visual and printed information. The goal of teaching reading, then, is to empower readers to learn, grow, and participate in a dynamic and rapidly changing information-based world. Reading increases people's quality of life; it provides access to culture and heritage.

Reading is an activity that brings the global world to your doorstep. Reading is not only a fundamental part of existence, it is a fundamental part of education and also a fundamental language development skill and habit required for lifelong achievement and success. A teacher who wants to demonstrate versatility in the profession is expected to study reading extensively. The teacher is the one who can get the reluctant reader to read because the teacher is alive and real. The teacher can influence through the words used and the actions performed. According to Bowas and Susan (2013), a research project found that teachers who read for pleasure have better book knowledge and feel more confident, calm, and less stressed in the classroom. According to former Education Minister Professor Rufai (2012), she identified reading as a tool for national development. The importance and necessity of reviving and promoting reading habits among Nigerian citizens cannot be overstated. The proliferation of satellite television, the internet and social media has dampened Nigerians' enthusiasm for reading, with these institutions reportedly playing a complementary role to reading.

In the Readership Promotion Campaign organized by Edo-State in 2012, some of the objectives of the campaign are:

- i. Encourage reading among Nigerians
- ii. Promote the increase of reading materials in Nigeria and
- iii. Identify major barriers that hinder reading and ways to overcome them.

This is done to improve the culture of up skilling among the working class to increase their productivity despite the challenges of the 21st century work environment (Yusha'u, 2012).

Statement of the problem

There have been high failure rate of English language in the WASSCE and NECO in our Secondary schools in the county and this is usually attributed to effectiveness of English language teachers. For a student to be able to interpret a question meaningfully, comprehension must have taken place and before comprehension fluency in reading is the foundation hence, the necessity for teachers' to develop positive attitude towards reading.

Purpose of the Study

The general purpose of this study is to examine the perspective on national campaign for improved teachers' attitude to reading in Afijio Local Government Area of Oyo State. Specifically, it sought to determine;

1. If there is difference between teachers' proficiency and reading
2. If there is difference between teachers' interest and reading and

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3. If there is difference between reading and teachers’ efficiency in teaching English language.

Hypotheses

Three hypotheses were raised in the course of this study

H₀₁: There is no significant difference between teachers’ proficiency and reading

H₀₂: There is no significant difference between teachers’ interest and reading.

H₀₃: There is no significant difference between reading and teachers’ efficiency in teaching English language.

Methodology

The study adopted descriptive survey research design. The population consists of all secondary schools English Language teachers in the Afijio Local Government Area of Oyo State. Five (5) secondary schools were selected and twenty (20) English Language teachers were randomly selected from each of the schools totaling One hundred (100) teachers as sample. A self structured questionnaire tagged Teachers’ Attitude to Reading Questionnaire (TARQ) was used for the purpose of data collection. The questionnaire was validated by a Senior Lecturer in the Department of English Language and an expert in the field of Test and Measurement, Federal College of Education (Special), Oyo, Oyo State. The validated instrument was administered on twenty English Language teachers in Secondary schools in Atiba Local Government, Area using a test-retest method. A reliability coefficient of 0.81 was obtained which presumed that the instrument is reliable to be used. The questionnaire is divided into two sections (A and B). While section A deals with demographic data of the respondents which include: gender, qualification, year(s) of experience, school type, religion and class taught; section B deals with the items that elicit the teachers’ response. The likert type scale was used in which statements were assigned weight as follows: Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A) Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD).

The completed copies of the questionnaire were collected and analyzed using descriptive statistic and chi square.

Results

The findings of the study were arranged as follows:

Hypotheses Testing

H₀₁: There is no significant difference between reading and teachers’ proficiency

Table 1: Chi square analysis of reading and teachers’ proficiency

Group	Size	Degree of freedom	χ^2 cal	χ^2 tab	Sig	Remark
Agree	70	4	68.57	13.28	0.01	H ₀₁ rejected
Disagree	30					

From table 1 above at the level of significance 0.01, the value of χ^2 cal (68.57) and the χ^2 tab of 13.28, the null hypothesis was rejected since χ^2 cal > χ^2 tab. Therefore, there is significant difference between reading and teachers’ proficiency.

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H₀₂: There is no significant difference between reading and teachers' interest

Table 2: Chi square analysis of reading and teachers' interest

Group	Size	Degree of freedom	χ^2 cal	χ^2 tab	Sig	Remark
Agree	45	4	84.85	13.28	0.01	H ₀₂ rejected
Disagree	55					

At the level of significance 0.01, the value of χ^2 cal which is 84.85 is greater than χ^2 tab (13.28), therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected, that is, there is significant difference between reading and interest of teachers.

H₀₃: There is no significant different between reading and teaches' efficiency in teaching English language.

Table 3: Chi square analysis of reading and teachers' efficiency in teaching

Group	Size	Degree of freedom	χ^2 cal	χ^2 tab	Sig	Remark
Agree	81	4	31.57	13.28	0.01	H ₀₃ rejected
Disagree	19					

At the level of significance 0.01, the value of χ^2 cal (31.57) is greater than, the χ^2 tab (13.28), therefore the null hypothesis was rejected. It implies there is significant difference between reading and teachers' efficiency in teaching English language.

Discussion of findings

From table 1, at the significant level of 0.01, the value of χ^2 cal (68.57) > χ^2 tab (13.28), therefore, H₀₁ was rejected. Therefore, reading has significant effect on English Language proficiency of English Language teachers as argued by Bowas and Susan (2013) that teachers who read for pleasure have better books knowledge and feel more confident. Also in table 2, at 0.01 significant level, the χ^2 cal (84.85) > χ^2 tab (13.28), then the null hypothesis (H₀₂) was rejected while the alternative was accepted. Therefore the result of the finding revealed that reading awakes the interest of teachers in English Language as opined by Applegate and Applegate (2004) that teachers play an important role in motivating children to read, meaning that a lukewarm or task oriented attitude towards reading can be problematic. According to Methe and Hintze (2003) the interest of teachers in reading as role models naturally increases students' on- task reading. Moreover, table 3, revealed that reading determines the efficiency of English Language teachers since χ^2 cal (31.57) > χ^2 tab (13.28) at 0.01 significant level as said by Bowas and Susan (2013) that teachers who read are stress free in the classroom and reading extensively increases teachers' level of creativity.

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Conclusion

The following conclusion was drawn from the study.

- There is difference between reading and teachers' proficiency.
- There is difference between reading and interest of teachers.
- There is difference between reading and teachers' efficiency in teaching English language.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the researcher recommends that

- Government at all levels to empower libraries and information centers to carry out their functions effectively.
- Government to sponsors workshops, seminars and discussions where a National Book Policy (NBP) could be developed and adapted towards specific needs.
- The government should provide incentives for teachers that have good reading habit and sanctions for teachers who fail to read.

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