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TEACHERS' ATTITUDES TO WORK AND PUPILS' PERSONALITY TRAITS DEVELOPMENT IN PUBLIC PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN OGBA/EGBEMA/NDONI LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA, RIVERS STATE

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ABSTRACT

The study examined the relationship between teachers' attitudes to work and pupils' personality traits development in public primary schools in Ogba/Egbema/Ndoni local Government Area, Rivers State. The study adopted correlational research design. Two aims, two research questions and two hypotheses guided the study. The population of the study was 2686 Pupils from 77 public primary schools in Ogba/Egbema/Ndoni Local Government Area, Rivers State. The sample size of 537 primary 5 pupils was drawn using simple random sampling procedure. The instruments for data collection were Teachers' Attitudes to Work Questionnaire (TAWQ) and Pupils' Personality Traits Development Questionnaire (PPTDQ). The two instruments were validated by three experts, two experts in the Department of Early Childhood / Primary Education and one expert in Measurement/Evaluation all in the Faculty of Education, Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, Port Harcourt. The reliability coefficients of the instruments were determined using Cronbach Alpha, the reliability indices of .87 for TAWQ and .76 for PPTDQ were established. Five hundred and thirty-seven copies of the two instruments were distributed; Five hundred and thirty-two copies were returned and were used for the analysis. The data collected were analysed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) to answer the research questions and test the hypotheses at .05 level of significance. SPSS version 20 was used for the analysis. The findings revealed that: teachers' positive attitudes to work significantly relate to pupils' personality traits developments and teachers' negative attitudes to work significantly relate to pupils personality traits development. Based on the findings of the study, it was recommended that teachers should be committed to works in terms of punctuality to work, adopt collaborative/interactive attitudes, create warmth attitude, and avoid negative attitudes to work, such as dishonesty, presenteeism, withdrawal behaviour and lack of dedication to duties.

Keywords: Teachers, Attitude to Work, Personality Traits, Primary Schools, Rivers State.

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INTRODUCTION

In primary schools pupils are expected to learn various aspects of social variables and intellectual behaviours as they develop their characters while preparing for other levels of education and communal life. They learn morals, learn to show self-control, manners, rights of other people, honesty, respect for truth, tolerance, respect for the proper use of time and for their own and other people's property as they interact with teachers and other members of the class. These behaviours are aspects of personality traits subsumed into interest, sociability, emotion, self-insight and ambition (Bilohur, 2019). Interestingly, personality trait refers to type of behaviour an individual displays which is either inherited or acquired through experience, which account for individual identity (Roberts et al., 2010; Bilohur, 2019).

Corroborating the above assertion, personality is used to describe the wholeness and uniqueness of an individual, a term that covers the inherited temperament and acquired/learned characteristics, habits, interests, attitudes, ideals, beliefs, opinions and prejudices which mark out one individual from another, and give to individuals a style of living. It is an internal mechanism that controls behaviour- i.e. how an individual behaves in various situations. Interestingly, personality theorists have classified personality according to origins of behaviour patterns- genetics, learning, culture-society, self-awareness, traits and unconscious mechanism (Roberts et al., 2010; Bilohur, 2019). However, whether personality differences are due to an inborn temperament or an acquired frame of mind, the significant concern of the study is the aspect of personality which the classroom teacher can assess, remedied or influenced by their attitudes.

The classroom teachers, in their interaction with pupils exhibit positive or negative attitudes that shape and guide the development of pupil's personality (Roberts et al., 2010). Teachers who are caring, supportive, concerned about the welfare and have genuine interest in children and respect for their individuality are able to help pupils learn. In any case, teachers' relationships with the pupils and their attitude in class should not contradict the standards that they want in their pupils (Cruickshank et al., 2003; Elliott & Crosswell, 2002; Munro, 2016). Furthermore, teachers' classroom attitudes stand as a model for pupils; hence, teachers' attitudes must be consistent. Nothing can be more confusing to a pupil than to be engaged in working out their behaviour pattern than to have a teacher who is learning to behave in an inconsistent and contradictory way. A teacher's degree of tolerance is highly personal, in which case the teacher takes time to consider the standard behaviour they desire, and then to conform to the standard they desire to encourage their pupils. If the teacher places premium on any behaviour they consider worthwhile, they should be the first to employ such behaviour in their relationship with the pupils. Consequently, teachers' attitudes are the keys to successful guidance of the pupils.

Attitude is a person's line of action which may be exhibited overtly by actual choice in their interactions with people (Nompumelelo, 2011; Olaleye, 2011). Similarly, teachers' attitudes to work refer to classroom teachers' psychological predisposition to respond to the work ethics or policies guiding teaching profession. These psychological predisposition also include teacher's affective characteristics/social and emotional behaviours that they exhibit as they interact with the pupils in the classroom. Considering that teachers have profound influence on pupils' learning, consequently, teachers' positive attitudes such as warmth, collaboration, commitment, punctuality and honesty may aid the development of acceptable personality traits in pupils. In addition Bandura's (1977) social learning theory attest to the fact that pupils observe, imitate and model their teachers, thus, a lot of changes in their behaviours take place as the pupils keenly observe and imitate their models. Conversely, if teachers' psychological

predispositions display negative/dissatisfactory attitudes such as dishonesty, withdrawal, presenteeism and lack dedication, the pupils may learn/develop questionable personality traits.

Statement of the Problem

The questionable character public primary school pupils display in recent time are so worrisome that people are beginning to doubt teachers' commitment to the ethics of the teaching profession. The society expects that pupils who are taught by honest and committed teachers will exhibit personality traits that will erase doubts in the minds of people. However, the same society that is expecting good result from the teachers has not in any way encouraged them. Could it be that teachers are withdrawn in their commitment and are displaying negative attitudes like dishonesty, lateness, lack of dedication, presenteeism, impatient and other lackerdastical attitudes while they relate with the pupils as a reaction to the unfavourable treatment given to them by the society?

It is not overly known if teachers' work attitude is a determinant factor to public primary school pupils' personality traits development or to primary schools as a whole, it is in that premise that the study intend to investigate teachers' attitude to work and pupils' personality traits in public primary schools in Ogba/Egbema/Ndoni Local Government Area.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of the study is to examine the relationship between teachers' attitude to work and pupils' personality traits development in public primary schools in Ogba/Egbema/Ndoni Local Government Area, Rivers State. Specifically, the study sought to:

- Examine the relationship between teachers' positive attitudes to work and pupils' personality traits development in public primary schools.
- Determine the relationship between teachers' negative attitudes to work and pupils' personality traits development in public primary schools.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

- What is the relationship between teachers' positive attitudes to work and pupils' personality traits development in public primary schools?
- What is the relationship between teachers' negative attitudes to work and pupils' personality traits development in public primary schools?

Null Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance:

- There is no significant relationship between teachers' positive attitudes to work and pupils' personality traits development in public primary schools.

- There is no significant relationship between teachers' negative attitudes to work and pupils' personality traits development in public primary schools.

Significance of the Study

The findings of the study would be significantly beneficial to teachers, pupils, primary schools administrators, further researchers and the society who would have access to the findings and recommendations when it is presented, accepted in conference or published in a reputable journal.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Teachers' Positive Attitudes to Work and Pupils' Personality Traits Development

The interaction that exists in the classroom between teachers and pupils play significant role in pupils' personality traits development. Stressing the significant roles of the teachers, Adeyemo (2000) emphasized that teachers are significant figures to their pupils. Consequently, majority of the pupils in the classroom see their teachers as their role models and are ready to imitate them in whatever attitudes they display. Pupils emulate their teachers in whatever they hear their teachers say or see them do. Teachers' live styles, behaviours or attitudes can further destroy or build the pupils' personality. Adeyemo further stressed that a friendly professional relationship with pupils is capable of stimulating and motivating them to learn and develop positive personality traits in them. Teachers who are committed, whose habits or attitudes to work are motivational, warmth, collaborative, always punctual, sensitive to the needs and problems of the pupils are socially and psychologically healthy (Madukwe et al., 2019). Thus, teachers who adopt positive attitudes attract pupils' confidence and interest in whatever their teachers do. Bilohur (2019) stated that pupils benefits from their teachers positive attitudes as it helps them to reduce stress, develop positive attitude as well, inculcate positive qualities such as punctuality, flexible attitude, willingness to learn, and eagerness to help other pupils.

Similarly, Uluga et al. (2011) noted that teachers are the second-highest determining factor in the development of pupils; they observe the teachers as their models, which affect their personality development. Cassidy (2008) stated that pupils develop positive attitudes and personality as they observe their teachers. Thus, teachers' positive attitudes to work in terms of commitment, collaboration, warmth, punctuality and positive teacher-pupils interaction have effects on the personality development of the pupils in primary schools (Choi & Tang, 2009). Hughes (2012) opined that teachers who establish warm relationship with their pupils based on understanding, love and genuine concern for the pupils' success and personal development create learning environments that encourage pupils to develop their personality. When a teacher presents a behaviour or attitude which may fascinate, attract, or inspire the pupils, the possibility of impacting the pupils with the right personality trait exist.

Teachers' Negative Attitudes to Work and Pupils' Personality Traits Development

Teachers show varying behaviours when they try to cope with challenging situations, especially when their working environment is not attractive. In most cases, they put up attitudes that are contrary the ethics of teaching profession. Some uncompromising attitudes most teachers express

are irritable, hostile, sarcastic, autocratic, indifferent and impersonal. These negative attitudes teachers resort at dampen pupils' interest to learn thereby hindering the pupils' personal traits development. Interestingly, when teachers lack commitment, enthusiasm, affection, patience, as well as sincere interest and care about their pupils, and they ultimately become disconnected.

According to Onaite (2015) teachers' negative attitudes to work help to predict undesirable behaviours in the pupils. Common negative attitudes most teachers adopt include: dishonesty, withdrawal behaviour, lack of dedication, lateness to school, presenteeism, lack of cooperation and faking of sickness. Koslowsky (2000) explained that lateness is a behaviour/attitude an employee exhibit when there is a decline in job satisfaction. Similarly, withdrawal behaviour is a form of work disengagement which may be either physical or psychological (Cagri, 2013; Ladebo, 2005). It occurs when employees stay at the job but decides to be less participative for some reasons. Similarly, when a teacher is dissatisfied by his perception of the condition of work, the teacher becomes demoralized and uses withdrawal behaviour as a defensive mechanism. The teacher stays on the job with the intention of leaving, with the fear of the possibility of securing another job coupled with a risk of forfeiting a pension plan; therefore their attitude towards the job becomes unproductive (Montalvo et al., 2007). A teacher with withdrawn behaviour stays in the profession unhappy. This teacher may engage in other petty businesses that appeal to him while still in the teaching profession. Osei (2006) confirmed this by stating that teachers in an attempt to sustain themselves combine teaching with other businesses. According to Nakpodia (2011), the lack of interest in the job results to negative attitudes like presenteeism, dishonesty, lateness and other forms of unethical behaviours which reduces the teacher's all round performance and productivity especially when coupled with other duties other than teaching. Nakpodia (2011) further explained that most primary school teachers complained about lack of job satisfaction and loss of interest on their part and agreed that they have not put in their best which led to negative influence on pupils' personality development.

Teacher's withdrawn behaviour is an indicator of relatively poor conditions of work, and low teacher's morale which leads to reinforce inappropriate behaviour of passivity by the teachers (Roorda et al. 2011). However, Choi and Tang (2009) said that physical withdrawal behaviour is the most identifiable withdrawal behaviour which take the form of absenteeism, lateness/tiredness etc. According to Altun (2017) absenteeism is when a teacher misses an extended amount of time from work, usually a day or more. Absenteeism has a very negative impact on teaching profession, it increases pupils' absence and impact negatively on pupils' learning out.

According to Trotter et al. (2009), presenteeism occurs when a teacher shows up for work but work in a limited capacity and possibly sit at their desk chatting. Trotter et al. (2009) further stated that withdrawal behaviour develops when emotional or other stressors become unbearable. Lateness, absenteeism, presenteeism, intent to leave, and other forms of withdrawal behaviour decrease productivity of a teacher which invariably have negative influence on pupils' personality development (Roberts et al., 2010). Teachers' negative attitudes would bring pupils' end point to a sordid state.

METHODS

The study adopted a correlational research design. The population of the study was 2,686 pupils found in public primary schools in Ogba/Egbema/Ndoni Local Government Area, River State. The sample size of the study was 537 primary five (5) pupils of the population. The instruments

used were researcher’s structured questionnaire titled “Teachers’ Attitude to Work Questionnaire (TAWQ)” and “Pupils Personality Traits Development Questionnaire (PPTDQ)”. The two instruments were validated by three experts, two experts in the Department of Early Childhood / Primary Education and one expert in Measurement/Evaluation/Guidance and Counseling Department, all in the Faculty of Education, Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, Port Harcourt. The reliability coefficients of the instruments were determined using Cronbach Alpha, with the reliability indices of .87 for TAWQ and .76 for PPTDQ. The researcher personally administered copies of TAWQ and PPTDQ to the 537 respondents in their schools with the help of three research assistants. The copies returned were 532 and were used for data analysis. The data collected were analysed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) to answer the research questions and test the hypotheses at .05 level of significance. SPSS version 20 was used for the analysis. In testing the hypotheses, the hypothesis with p-value lesser than .05 ($p < .05$) was rejected while the hypothesis with p-value greater than .05 was accepted.

RESULTS

Research Question 1: What is the relationship between teachers’ positive attitudes to work and pupils’ personality traits development in public primary schools?

Table 1: Pearson r. correlational analysis between teachers’ positive attitudes to work and pupils’ personality traits development

Variables	N	\bar{X}	SD	Rxy	Relationship
Teacher’ Positive Attitudes to Work (X)		18.36	1.83		
Pupils’ Personality Traits Development (Y)	532	28.85	1.83	.74*	Strong positive relationship

Table 1 shows a Pearson’s coefficient (r) of .74 which indicates a positive relationship between teachers’ attitudes to work and pupils’ personality traits development. Data in Table 1 further shows there is high relationship between teachers’ attitudes to work and pupils’ personality traits development in Ogba/Egbema/Ndoni LGA, Rivers State. The positive relationship implies that when teachers portray good attitudes, pupils’ personality traits will develop positively.

Research Question 2: What is the relationship between teachers’ negative attitudes to work and pupils’ personality traits development in public primary schools?

Table 2: Pearson r. correlational analysis between teachers’ negative attitudes to work and pupils’ personality traits development

Variables	N	\bar{X}	SD	rxxy	Relationship
Teachers’ negative attitudes to work (X)		16.81	1.98		
Pupils’ Personality traits Development (Y)	532	28.85	1.83	.85*	Strong positive relationship

Table 2 shows a Pearson’s coefficient (r) of .85 which indicates a relationship between teachers’ negative attitudes and pupils’ personality traits development. This is to say that teachers’ negative attitudes to work are predictor of pupils’ personality traits development in public primary schools in Ogba/Egbema/Ndoni LGA, Rivers State. The positive relationship means that teachers’ dishonesty, withdrawal behaviour, lack of dedication, absenteeism, impatience, presenteeism are directly proportional to pupils’ questionable personality traits development.

Test of Hypothesis 1: There is no significant relationship between teachers’ positive attitudes to work and pupils’ personality development in public primary schools.

Table 3: Pearson Product Moment Correlation Analysis of the relationship between teachers’ positive attitudes to work and pupils’ personality traits development

Variables	\bar{X}	SD	df	Rxy	p-value	Decision
Teachers’ positive attitudes to work (X)	18.36	1.83	530	.74*	.000	Rejected
Pupils’ personality traits development (Y)	28.85	1.83				

*p<.05; df = 530; critical r = .74

Table 3 reveals that at 0.05 level of significance and 530 df, the calculated r is .74 with P-value of .000 which is less than 0.05. Therefore, the first null hypothesis is rejected. Thus, there is a significant relationship between teachers’ positive attitudes to work and pupils’ personality traits development in public primary schools. Thus, teachers’ positive attitudes like: cooperative attitude, patience, punctuality, commitment, honesty, good relationship with the pupils are directly proportional to pupils’ personality traits development.

Test of Hypothesis 2: There is no significant relationship between teachers’ negative attitudes to work and pupils’ personality traits development in public primary schools.

Table 4: Pearson Product Moment Correlation Analysis of the relationship between teachers’ negative attitudes to work and pupils’ personality traits development

Variables	\bar{X}	SD	df	rxy	p-value	Decision
Teachers’ negative attitudes to work (X)	16.81	1.98	530	.85*	.001	Rejected
Pupils’ Personality traits Development (Y)	28.85	1.83				

*p<.05; df = 530; critical r = .85

Table 4 reveals that at .05 level of significance and 530 df, the calculated r is .85 with P-value of .001 which is less than .05. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. This means that there is a significant relationship between teachers’ negative attitudes to work and pupils’ personality traits development in public primary schools. Thus, teachers’ negative attitudes such as withdrawal behaviour, lateness to work, presenteeism, lack of dedication to duties, are proportionately significant to pupils’ poor personality traits development.

DISCUSSION

Teachers' Positive Attitudes to Work and Pupils' Personality Traits Development

Findings of this study revealed that there is a positive relationship between teachers' positive attitudes to work and pupils' personality traits development in public primary schools. The findings further showed that the relationship existing between teachers' positive attitudes to work in terms of commitment, collaboration, warmth, punctuality and pupils' personality development is significant. The findings of this study agree with the assertion of Adeyemo (2000) and Altun (2017) that one of the most important characteristics of professional teachers is the commitment to the growth need and adjustment of pupils. The findings further revealed that the relationship existing between teachers' positive attitudes to work and pupils' personality traits development is significant. The findings of this study concurs with that of Adeyemo (2000) and Bilohur (2019) who noted that teachers' commitment, punctuality and cordial relationship with the pupils are vital factors or sub-variable of teachers positive attitude to work, which can affect personality development of pupils. In other words, teachers who have these variables can instill such attitude in their pupils, and can result in good personality development of the pupils. Based on the findings of this study, the researcher opined that unacceptable attendance and punctuality rates by teachers to school can lead to poor personality development of pupils. The researcher is of the view that a teacher positive attitude to work significantly contribute to the development of personal characteristics of pupils which are essential ingredients to meaningful living and contribution to the development of the society and nation in which the pupil lives in.

Teachers' Negative Attitudes to Work and Pupils' Personality Traits Development

The findings of the study showed that there is a positive and significant relationship between teachers' negative attitudes to work and pupils' personality traits development in public primary schools. Based on the findings of this study, the researcher was of the opinion that unacceptable attendance and punctuality rates by teachers to school can lead to poor personality traits development in pupils. As a result, there is a need for teachers to take action to improve the existing unsatisfactory rate of teachers' dishonesty, lateness to school so as to improve primary school pupils' personality development. According to Trotter et al. (2009), presenteeism occurs when a teacher shows up for work but work in a limited capacity, they sit at their desk chatting. Trotter et al. (2009) further said that withdrawal behaviour develops when emotional or other stressors become unbearable. Lateness, absenteeism, presenteeism, intent to leave, and other forms of withdrawal behaviour decrease productivity of a teacher which invariably have negative influence on pupils' personality development (Roberts et al., 2010).

CONCLUSION

The findings of the study have revealed that; when teachers exhibit positive attitudes such as punctuality, collaboration, warmth, commitment, the tendency that the pupils will imbibe positive and acceptable personality traits will be high. However, pupils come to school with different personality needs which teachers are expected to develop. When pupils' positive personality traits are developed, their attitudes to life, such as flexible attitude, respect for one another, interest, motivation, eagerness to help other pupils will improve. But, when pupils'

personality traits are poorly developed as a result of teachers' negative attitudes, the society will suffer the consequences.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study and conclusion drawn, the following recommendations are made:

- Primary school teachers should exhibit positive attitudes to work so as to develop acceptable personality traits in their pupils.
- Primary school teachers should avoid negative attitudes to work, because as models they are been observed regularly by pupils whose personality traits would be affected negatively.
- Government should improve the conditions of service of primary school teachers which will help to improve their positive attitudes to work and the development of acceptable personality traits in their pupils.

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