TEACHERS' CONTENT KNOWLEDGE AND ATTITUDE AS PREDICTORS OF STUDENTS' ACHIEVEMENT IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE IN SELECTED SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN IBADAN METROPOLIS

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Abstract

Purpose: In spite of the fact that English language is very important in the society the performance of the students in the recent time in English language examination is not encouraging. Several factors have been mentioned as being responsible to students' inability to perform very well, such as teaching strategies and students' attitude. This study therefore examined teachers' content knowledge and attitude as predictors of students' achievement in English language in Ibadan Metropolis

Methodology: Descriptive research design was adopted using forty-four (44) teachers and One thousand seven hundred and sixteen (1716) senior secondary two students selected through random sampling technique. Three research instruments were used to generate data namely: Teachers' attitude to English language teaching questionnaire, Teachers subject mastery scale and English language achievement test. The data collected were analysed using multiple regressive at 0.05 level of significance.

Results: Findings indicated that there is a significant positive relationship between teachers' subject mastery and students' achievement (r=0.614; p<0.05). Also, there is significant positive correlation between Teachers attitude and students" achievement in English language (0.284; p<0.05). There is a composite relationship between the two independent variables and the dependent variable (academic achievement) (R =0.732). The independent variables accounted for 53.6% of the total variance in the students' academic achievement (Adjusted R^2 =0.536) and this composite contribution is significant ($F_{(2,1714)}$ = 28.921; p>0.05. Subject mastery had significant relative contribution to achievement (β = 0.037; t=3.105, p<0.05) and teachers attitude also had significant relative contribution to achievement (β=0.102; t=4.087; p>0.05).

Unique contribution to theory, practice and policy: It was recommended, therefore that teachers should have a good content knowledge to improve students' performance in English language and the government should make sure that teachers employed to teach at various levels of learning most possess the necessary content knowledge.

Keywords: Subject mastery, Academic achievement, Attitude

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INTRODUCTION

English language has assumed the status of a world language as a great deal of the world's cultural, political and technological knowledge is expressed in English language regardless of the mother tongue of the writer. Therefore, proficiency in both oral and written forms of English language is indispensable to the mastery of the subject. As a Language of Wider Communication (LWC), the study and knowledge of English language is important (Fiecha & Soler 2014). Fakeye (2012) stated that the function of English language for educational advancement is the most important of all its functions which include its official, instrumental and integrative functions. It is taught at almost all levels of primary school as a subject and is a medium of instruction at upper level of primary school in Nigeria. Given the role English language plays in Nigeria and around the world at large, it is made a compulsory subject and a medium of instruction in our educational institutions. Ajufo (2007) remarks that

> *English language is the medium of instruction for all school*
> *subjects from the primary school level to the university, in addition*
> *to being a compulsory school subject that must be passed at all*
> *levels of education in Nigeria (p2).*

In spite of the importance of English language in the school curriculum and society at large, students have been experiencing poor performance in the subject as shown in Table 1 below. This failure in English language has the potential of affecting students' academic achievement in other subjects, because English is the medium of instruction in those subjects. Maleki and Zangani (2007) observed that having difficulties in fully grasping the contents and concepts of the various subjects of the curriculum taught in the target language (English language) seems to be one of the most serious problems that EFL students face in their particular course of study. Fakeye (2008) concluded that the extent to which students will fare in academic attainment depends largely on their level of proficiency in English language. Observations and data emanating from research on the performance of learners in achievement tests revealed that they are very poor in English language and other school subjects, (Akinkugbe, 1994; Aaronson & Sander, 2003).

Table 1: Students performance in English Language in West African Senior Secondary School Certificate Examination (WASSCE) May June 2010-2014

				Pass		Fail	
Year	Total Entry	Total Sat	Credit and above (A1-C6)	D7	E8	F9	Absence
2010	1331381	1307745 98.22	459,404 35.13%	158597 12.13	249125 19.05	405677 31.02	23636 1.78
2011	1540141	1514163 98.31	866,692 57.24%	182709 12.07	183667 12.13	275923 18.22	25977 1.69
2012	1695878	1658887 97.82	970678 58.51%	193015 11.64	183985 11.09	275923 16.44	36991 2.18
2013	1686990	1660056 98.41	898418 51.62%	229491 13.82	178719 10.77	353428 21.29	26934 1.60
2014	1655794	1636103 98.81	647100 39.55	263979 16.13	231700 14.16	460863 28.17	19691 1.91

Source: Statistical Office, WAEC, Lagos, Nigeria (2015)

 In the five (5) years shown in the table above, less than 50% of the candidates that sat for West African Senior School Certificate Examinations (WASSCE) obtained good grades in English language on the average. The English language results of the May/June West African Senior School Certificate Examinations (WASSCE) from 2010 to 2014 show that the number of candidates who wrote the West African Senior School Certificate Examination and obtained credit in English Language is on the decrease. According to West African Examination Council, analyses of English language results in the past five syears are as follows: in 2010, only 35.15% of the candidates had distinctions and credits; in 2011, only 57.24% of the candidates had distinctions and credit; in 2012, only 58.51% of the candidates had distinctions and credits; in 2013, only 51.62 of the candidates had distinctions and credits and in 2014, only 39.55% of the candidates had distinctions and credits.

From the above discussion, one can deduce that 48% of the candidates that sat for WASSCE in the years under review had credit grades and above in English language on the average while a huge percentage had below credit grade. This will in turn affect the percentage of students who are eligible for admission into tertiary institutions since passing English language at credit level is a prerequisite for admission. Educators, trainers, and researchers have long been interested in exploring variables contributing to the quality and performance of learners. These factors, according to Cronsoe, Johnson & Elder (2004), may be termed as student factors, family factors, school factors, teacher factors and peer factors.

Previous studies aimed at addressing the problem of under-achievement in English Language in Nigeria focused on canvassing effective strategies for teaching various aspects of English Language. These strategies include scaffolding and literature circles (Ezenandu, 2011) and exit slips and pair reading (Aiyede, 2002), among others. These strategies enhanced students' performance in different aspects of English Language but they have not solved the lingering problem of poor performance in the subject. The implication of this is that there may be other factors other than teaching strategies that are responsible for students' poor performance. This perhaps confirms the submission of Obanya (2002) that improvement in teaching methods and strategies alone may not solve the problem of poor performance. Therefore, there is the need to shift research focus to other teacher-related factors in the bid to search for lasting solution to the problem of students' achievement in English. In spite of what researchers have done in those variables, that is teachers' variables, nothing much has been done in the area of teachers' content knowledge and attitude.

Teachers' content knowledge entails their knowledge of the subject matter. A teacher's knowledge of the subject matter is a great attribute. Kolawole (2015) explained that knowledge skill is one of the good attributes of a teacher. Rice (2004) explained further that for students to perform well in any examination, one of the prerequisites is that their teachers must be well versed in the content or the subject matter he/she is teaching. Fakeye (2012) concluded that a teacher's ability to teach effectively largely depends on his or her knowledge of the subject matter. No matter the level of enthusiasm displayed by a teacher, he or she becomes limited and at a disadvantage if he or she has a poor mastery of the subject. It is not possible for someone to teach what he or she does not know or understand (Adediwura and Bada, 2007). Ekah and Ukut (2011) averred that the teachers' knowledge of the subject matter should exceed the limits of the curriculum they teach. This is because when teachers possess knowledge of the subject matter in

this way, the likelihood of them explaining it for students to understand is high. Therefore, it is important for teachers to have sound mastery of the subject matter that he/she teaches, and he/she should be able to demonstrate it.

Studies in the area of teachers' content knowledge have shown that there is a strong link between teachers' subject mastery and students' academic achievement. Ehindero and Ajibade (2000) reported that there was a significant relationship between students' perception of teachers' knowledge of subject matter and students' academic achievement. Also, Kimberly (2009) reported significant influence of teachers' content knowledge on students' achievement and attitude to Mathematics and Chemistry respectively. Teachers must be well versed in the content of the subject matter he/she is teaching. Fakeye (2012) found that teachers' subject mastery contributed significantly to students' academic achievement in English language. Also, Fakeye (2012) is of the opinion that the way the students perceive the teaching in terms of their (teachers) knowledge of content of subject matter may significantly affect the students' academic performance. Knowledge of subject matter is universally considered an essential attribute for effective teaching and successful learning. The most meaningful and lasting learning occur when individuals construct knowledge. The role of the teacher is to help learners build their own knowledge through acting on materials and engaging in meaningful experiences. To create these experiences, teachers must possess an in-depth understanding of major concepts, assumptions, debates, processes of inquiry, and ways of knowing that are central to the disciplines they teach. Kimberly (2009) stated that teachers must be knowledgeable in their area of study. In truth, if a teacher is not enlightened in his/her subject, then any hope of effectiveness goes right out of the window. Hence, effective teaching could be measured by the level of a teachers' subject matter competence which Mullens (1993) regarded as a prime predictor of students' learning.

However, Fakeye (2012) remarked that most teachers do not possess the competence in the subject. It has been established by Eggen and Kauchak (2001) that there is a high correlation between what teachers know and what they teach. Thus the ability to teach effectively depends on the teachers' knowledge of the subject matter. Teachers are handicapped if they are not familiar with the body of knowledge taught and teachers' characteristics is subject specific. The teachers whose understanding of topics is thorough uses clearer expression, their discourse is more connected, and they provide better explanations than those whose background is weaker. Teachers should therefore master the subject matter before teaching commences. Most teachers go into classes to teach unprepared because they do not have a good mastery of the content area or the topics they want to teach. Fakeye (2012) pointed out that pedagogical knowledge is not exactly the same thing as knowledge of subject matter. However, pedagogical knowledge and knowledge of subject matter are linked because teachers' mastery of the content and the method of imparting it to students in the classroom indicate the depth of their knowledge of subject matter. Hence, teachers must be well- versed in the content of the subject matter they are teaching. It can be concluded from the various researches discussed that teachers' subject mastery or content knowledge is a strong determinant of students' academic performance. These variables, to the best knowledge of the researchers, have not been used to predict students' achievement in and attitude to English language, especially in Ibadan metropolis.

Teachers' attitude towards English language teaching is another teacher factor that is of interest in this study. Reeves (2003) observed that attitude to a language plays an important role in the

teaching and learning of that language. Attitude has been defined in different ways by different scholars (Good and Brophy 2003; Griffin and Hattie 2004; Adebiyi 2006; Enaibe 2012). While some consider attitude as an outcome of the process of teaching and learning, others argue that the kind of attitudes that teachers bring into the teaching/learning situations can either enhance or hinder learning outcomes. Attitude could be defined as a consistent tendency to react in a particular way-often positively or negatively–toward any matter. Attitude possesses both cognitive and emotional components. The literature is replete with examples of how teachers' attitude affects their actions and learners achievement (Ojo 2008, Egbokhare 2007; Onukaogu 2002; Richard and Placier 2001; Eggen and Kauchak; 2001). For instance, Eggen and Kauchak (2001) explained that positive teachers' attitudes are fundamental to effective teaching. These could be achieved better when teachers are enthusiastic, caring, firm, and democratic, among others. Olisa (2008) observed that the attitude of teachers could also affect the performance of students in English language. The attitude of teachers towards the teaching of English is significant. Most teachers prefer to teach certain topics and leave out some, owing to attitude. For instance, most teachers concentrate more on teaching comprehension passages than teaching grammar and vocabulary aspects of English.

Kolawole (1997) submitted that whatever attitude a person holds towards a language will go largely to determine how he/she will teach the subject. He submitted further that positive attitude leads to successful teaching and learning and this would result to a positive academic performance of the students. If the teacher is committed and has positive attitude, it is certain that his/her students' performance will be better and his/her efforts will be fruitful. Teachers with strong positive attitudes about teaching will produce students with high self-esteem and good performance.

The study is premised on Theory of Nature-Nurture which proposes that language learning is a product of the environment and not an innate ability. The proponents of this theory are Vygotsky (1986), Rousseau (1959) and Piaget (1952). Its function (Nurture Theory of Learning) is to control behavioural pattern. The proponents believed that human behavioural aspects originated mostly from the environmental factors of our upbringing. People are born "tabula rasa" which is also known as a blank slate and become who they are through the course of their lives in environment alone (Ambridge & Lieven, 2011). They advocated that learning could not be genetic, that there is no innate linguistic ability and linguistic evolution. This means that students need to be taught the language in an environment. They believed that environmental factor is the most important factor in the learning of language because it influences what the learner learns. They believed also that learning is a study of observable behaviour. Their assumption is that people learn by receiving stimulus from their teachers or environment, which provokes a response (Sampson, 2005). Teachers direct this process by selecting the stimuli and by reinforcing the approved responses while discouraging the wrong responses.

Empirically, With respect to subject mastery, several studies have found association with students' performance in various subjects. Bangbade (2010) found a significant effect of teacher subject knowledge on students' achievement, drawing on data on reading achievement of 6th grade students and their teachers in Peru. Elaborating the importance of teachers' knowledge as criterion for producing better results in the teaching learning process, Fawn and Nance (1993) stated that teacher knowledge, reason and judgment rather than teaching behaviour should be

emphasized as the basis of an account of exemplary teaching. Betts and Rice (2003) have shown strong correlation between the subject knowledge of the language teacher and the learning outcomes. They argued that a sound command of the target language gives the teacher a high degree of confidence to meet the requirements of the learners ultimately affecting their performance. Fakeye (2012) asserts that it has been established that there is a high correlation between what teachers know and what they teach. Thus, the ability to teach effectively depends on the teachers' knowledge of the subject matter. Teachers are handicapped if they are unfamiliar with the body of knowledge taught and teachers' characteristics is subject specific.

Adediwura and Bada (2007) sees the teacher as one that is interesting and must work his students into such a state of interest in that the teacher is going to teach him that every other object of attention is banished from his mind. The behaviour of the teacher in the class reflects in the way the teacher handles the class. Fakeye (2012) observed that the teachers' classroom behaviour can be exhibited through teachers' attitude towards the subject, the way he or she handles topic taught in class. A teacher who exhibits a good attitude to teaching the English language or any subject should employ a good teaching skills and methods in content delivery that engender optimum learners' learning outcomes. Thus the present study investigates teachers' content knowledge and attitude as predictors of students' achievement in English language in selected senior secondary schools in Ibadan metropolis.

Statement of the Problem

English is an important subject in the school curriculum. Reports from public examination bodies as indicated in the introduction show that students do not perform well in the subject. Previous efforts towards providing lasting solutions to this problem focused more on teaching strategies. Other teacher-related factors, such as content knowledge and attitude of teachers to the teaching of English language, should be examined. The extent to which teachers master the content of the subject they teach goes a long way in determining what students achieve in that subject. Similarly, attitude which teachers carry to classroom could affect their performance or presentation of lessons and by extension determine what students learn in any subject.

Previous studies such as (Bangbade 2010 & Fakeye 2012), have established a strong link between these teachers' variables and academic success, in subjects like social studies, mathematics and the sciences. However, these variables have not been combined in a study for predicting students' achievement in English language in Ibadan Metropolis. The present study explored the relationship and contribution of these factors. This study, therefore, examined teachers' content knowledge and attitude as predictors of students' achievement in English language in Ibadan Metropolis.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study are to:

1. Determine the relationship between teachers' content knowledge and students' achievement in English language.
2. Determine the relationship between teachers' attitude and students' achievement in English language.

3. Ascertain the composite contribution of teachers' content knowledge and attitude to students' achievement in English language.
4. Investigate the relative contribution of teachers' content knowledge and attitude to students' achievement in English language.

Research Questions

The following questions were answered:

1. Is there any relationship between teachers' content knowledge and students' achievement in English language?
2. Is there any relationship between teachers' attitude and students' achievement in English language?
3. What is the composite contribution of teachers' content knowledge and attitude to students' achievement in English language?
4. What is the relative contribution of teachers' content knowledge and attitude to students' achievement in English language?

Theoretical Framework

Theory of Nature-Nurture

The theory of nurture proposes that language learning is a product of the environment and not an innate ability. The proponents of this theory are Vygotsky (1986), Rousseau (1959) and Piaget (1952). Its function (Nurture Theory of Leaning) is to control behavioural pattern. The proponents believed that human behavioural aspects originated mostly from the environmental factors of our upbringing. People are born "tabula rasa" which is also known as a blank slate and become who they are through the course of their lives in environment alone (Ambridge & Lieven, 2011). They advocated that learning could not be genetic, that there is no innate linguistic ability and linguistic evolution. This means that students need to be taught the language in an environment. They believed that environmental factor is the most important factor in the learning of language because it influences what the learner learns. They believed also that learning is a study of observable behaviour. Their assumption is that people learn by receiving stimulus from their teachers or environment, which provokes a response (Sampson, 2005). Teachers direct this process by selecting the stimuli and by reinforcing the approved responses while discouraging the wrong responses.

The nurture theory is related to this study in the sense that it emphasizes modeling and imitation which is applicable in teaching and learning. Children learn words and syntax by imitating others. Teachers enable learners to learn words and syntax by reinforcing correct Speech. Teachers can create classroom conditions that foster learning by modeling, scaffolding and helping students to construct understanding, with the eventual goal of becoming independent thinkers and problem solvers. Therefore, when teachers have good mastery of the subject matter, right attitude and model it in teaching and learning, students imitate it and construct their own knowledge.

METHODOLOGY

A descriptive survey research design of the correlational type was used for the study as it investigated the extent to which the independent variables (teachers' content knowledge and Teachers' attitude) predicted students' achievement in English language. The population of the study consisted all the senior secondary schools English language teachers and senior secondary two (SSII) students in Ibadan metropolis. The eleven local government areas in Ibadan metropolis were involved in this study. Two public senior secondary schools were randomly selected from each of the eleven local government areas making a total of twenty-two (22) public secondary schools. Two teachers of senior secondary English language were randomly selected from each selected school within Ibadan Metropolis. Two intact classes of SSII were randomly selected from each selected school, making a total of forty-four (44) intact classes. One thousand seven hundred and sixteen (1716) students and forty-four (44) teachers were used for the study. The instruments that were used for the collection of data are Teachers' Attitude to English Language Teaching Questionnaire (TAELTQ), Teachers' Subject Mastery scale and English Language Achievement Test. The questionnaire on teachers' attitude towards teaching English language was developed by the researchers and the items were carefully structured to elicit response on teachers' attitude to teaching English language. It consisted of two (2) sections, 'A' and 'B'. Section 'A' for demographic information of the teacher's personal data such as name of school, age, years of teaching experience, and highest qualification obtained while section 'B' which consists of twenty (20) items sought for information on teachers' attitude towards teaching English as a subject. The questionnaire were fashioned along modified 4-point Likert Scale with strongly agree, agree, disagree and strongly disagree. It was scored thus: strongly agree (4), agree (3), disagree (2) and strongly disagree (1). The scores were reversed for negative items. The Subject Mastery Observation Scale was designed by the researchers. The first part were on demographic information like the name of the school, class taught, name of teacher, gender, topic observed, years of teaching experience and date of observation. The second part consists of fifteen (15) items that were centered on the teachers' knowledge of the subject matter. The rating of the scores of the items was satisfactory (1) and not satisfactory (0). The English Language Achievement Test (ELAT) consists of twenty five (25) multiple choice items which covered some of the topics the students have already been taught. Each question has options A - D. Questions were drawn from comprehension, sentence structure, vocabulary development (register), spelling and oral English in order to test their performance in English language. Senior Secondary Two (SS2) English textbooks were used for this. The instruments were given to two lecturers in the field of language education for content and face validity. Their objective criticisms and suggestions on the items of the instruments were considered in the final draft of the instruments. In order to ascertain the reliability of the instruments, the Teachers' Attitude to English Language Questionnaire (TAELQ) were trial tested on two English language teachers from a school that was not be part of the schools to be used in the study. The data collected were analysed using Cronbach's Alpha and the reliability co-efficient was obtained. For the reliability of the Teachers' Subject Mastery Scale, it was trial tested on two English language teachers from one school that was not used in the main study. The English Language Achievement Test was trial tested on fifty (50) SS2 students in one intact class from a school that was not part of the study. The reliability of the instruments was determined through test re-test and was found to be reliable yielding a value of 80. A letters of introduction to the schools used were collected from

the appropriate authorities to the schools involved. The researchers also sought permission from the authorities of the various schools to be used in the study before proceeding with the administration of the instruments. The researchers with the help of research assistants collected the data for the study in the sampled schools by giving the instruments to teachers and students. The data collected were analysed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation and Regression analysis at 0.05 level of significance.

RESULTS

Answers to the Research Questions

Research question 1: Is there any relationship between Teachers' Content Knowledge and students' achievement in English Language?

Table 2: Correlation Matrix Showing the Relationship between Teachers' Content Knowledge and students' achievement in English Language?

Variables	Teachers' Content Knowledge	Students' Achievement In English Language	Teachers' Attitude
Teachers' Content Knowledge	1	0.614* 0.025	0.327* 0.042
Students' Achievement In English Language	0.614* 0.025	1	0.284* 0.017
Teachers' Attitude	0.327* 0.042	0.284* 0.017	1
Mean	36.54	40.67	52.13
STD.D	3.762	5.822	6.11

*Correlation at 0.05 level of significant.

Table 2 indicates that there is significant positive correlation between Teachers' content knowledge and students' achievement in English language (0.614; $p<0.05$). There is also significant positive correlation between Teachers' content knowledge and Teachers' attitude (0.327; $p<0.05$).

Research Question 2: Is there any relationship between Teachers' Attitude and students' achievement in English Language?

Table 2 shows that there is significant positive correlation between Teachers' attitude and students' achievement in English language (0.284; $p<0.05$). A positive attitude towards English language will bring about positive achievement of students in English language.

Research question 3: What is the composite contribution of teachers' content knowledge and attitude to students' achievement in English language?

Table 3:   Regression Analysis on Composite Contribution of Independent Variables on Students' Achievement in English Grammar

Sources of Variance	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Significant
Regression Residual Total	2537.586 75194.894 77732.480	2 1714 1716	1268.793 43.871	28.921	0.012*
R = 0.732 R Square = 0.536 Adjusted R Square = 0.536 Std. Error of the Estimate = 3.523					

Table 3 shows the composite contribution of Teachers' content knowledge and Teachers' attitude to the prediction of students' achievement in English language. Table 3 indicated that the composite contribution of peer influence, self-efficacy, achievement motivation to students' achievement in English grammar was significant ($F_{(2,1714)}$ = 28.921; $p<0.05$). This indicates that when jointly taken together, Teachers' content knowledge and Teachers' attitude contributes significantly to students' achievement in English language. Table 3 also revealed a regression coefficient of 0.732 (R = 0.732) and adjusted regression coefficient of 0.536 (R^2 = 0.536), This implies that 53.6% of the total variation in students' achievement in English language were due to the joint effect of the Teachers' content knowledge and Teachers' attitude when taken together while the remaining 46.4% may be due to other factors.

Research question 4: What is the relative contribution of teachers' content knowledge and attitude to students' achievement in English language?

Table 4: Regression Analysis showing Relative Contribution of Teachers' content knowledge and Teachers 'Attitude on Students' Achievement in English language

Model	Under standardized Coefficients	Standardized Coefficient		Rank	T	Sig.
	Beta	Std. Error	Beta (β)			
Constant	32.286	1.854			13.782	0.000
Teachers' Content Knowledge	0.025	0.014	0.037	2nd	3.105	0.003*
Teachers' attitude	0.220	0.023	0.102	1st	4.087	0.000*

*Indicates significant at P<0.05

Table 4 shows the relative contributions of each of Teachers' content knowledge and Teachers' attitude in the prediction of students' achievement in English language. The relative contribution of Teachers' content knowledge (β = 0.037; t = 3.105; p<0.05) and Teachers' attitude (β = 0.102; t = 4.087; p>0.05) to students' achievement in English language were all significant.

Discussion:

The findings of the study showed that teachers' content knowledge had a significant contribution on the academic achievement of students in English language. The findings were consistent with findings of some studies in the area of the effect teachers' content knowledge has on students' academic achievement. Ehindero and Ajibade (2000) reported that there was a significant relationship between students' perception of teachers' knowledge of subject matter and students' academic achievement. Also, Kimberly (2009) reported significant influence of teachers' content knowledge on students' achievement and attitude to Mathematics and Chemistry respectively. Knowledge of subject matter is an essential attribute for effective teaching and successful learning. Effective learning occurs when individuals construct knowledge and change in behaviour as a result of the learning is permanent. The role of the teacher is to help learners build their own knowledge through acting on materials and engaging in meaningful experiences. To create these experiences, teachers must possess an in-depth understanding of major concepts, assumptions, debates, processes of inquiry, and ways of knowing that are central to the disciplines they teach.

Similarly, the finding of the study is also consistent with the finding of Harris and Sass (2008) who observed that teachers' subject mastery has a significant correlation with students' achievement, Ehindero and Ajibade, (2000) who reported a significant relationship between students' perception of teachers' knowledge of subject matter and students' academic performance and Monk and King (1994) who reported that teachers' mastery of subject matter is significant to students' achievement.

The finding could be due to the fact that a good knowledge of the content will enable the teacher to have a good mastery of the subject and hence will present the content in a clear and simple language which will aid learning. The findings also revealed that there is significant relationship between teachers' attitude and students' achievement in English language. This implies that a teacher must have positive attitude towards the subject he/she is teaching so that his/her students can achieve more in the subject. Positive attitude will make the teacher to use best available means to teach the subject effectively, thereby increasing the achievement of students in the subject. This finding corroborates the findings of Adeosun (2003) who asserted that teachers' attitude on learning was very much important if maximum values are to be derived from English learning. The teacher must fully prepare his/her lesson before coming to the class. The teachers' method of teaching, attitude and personality have a great influence on the students' performance, therefore, teachers must be friendly with the students. A positive attitude is a driving force that could make a teacher to go all out to master the content of what he/she is going to teach for students to achieve more. The finding is also in line with the finding of (Ojo 2008, Egbokhare 2007; Onukaogu 2002; Richard and Placier 2001; Eggen and Kauchak; 2001) who in their separate studies found that teachers' attitude greatly influence academic achievement of students.

Conclusion

The study focused on two factors (teachers' subject mastery and teachers' attitude) as predictors of students' achievement in English language in Ibadan metropolis an it was discovered that of all the variables focused on, teachers' subject mastery contributed significantly to students' academic achievement in English language. Therefore, in attempt to find lasting solution to poor

students' performance in English language, efforts should be geared towards ensuring that teachers with good content knowledge are employed are employed. Also, teachers should be competent in their subject areas.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, it is recommended that:
1. The government should make sure that teachers employed to teach at various levels of learning must possess the necessary content knowledge.
2. Also English language teachers should be exposed to refresher courses, seminars and workshop to improve their content knowledge of this subject they teach.
3. In addition, different teachers should be made to handle different aspects of English language. This would enable them to be more efficient as they would be made to handle what they have interest in and capable of doing.

The theory tested in this paper nature-nurture theory, and it is recommended for similar studies in language education.

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