

Influence Of Creativity on Primary School Pupils Academic Performance: Case Study of Demonstration School Jigawa State College of Education and Legal Studies, Ringim

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Abstract

This study explores how creativity affects the academic success of primary school students at Jigawa State College of Education and Legal Studies Demonstration Schools. The research revolves around three objectives, one research question, and two null hypotheses. An ex-post facto design was utilized. The study sample included all 1,117 primary school pupils at the demonstration schools in Ringim. Shelley Carson's Creativity Questionnaire (1995) was adapted for this study. Data were analyzed using SPSS, employing descriptive statistics for frequency counts and percentages to address the research question, and t-tests for independent samples to test the hypotheses at a 0.05 significance level. Results showed that most students had low creativity levels, and there was a notable difference in academic performance between students with high and low creativity, with better performance among the more creative students. The study suggests that parents and teachers should encourage creativity, as it boosts academic performance. Moreover, non-governmental and community-based organizations should enhance students' academic achievements through teacher seminars and workshops.

Keywords: Creativity, Academic Performance, Demonstration, Primary Schools

Introduction

In recent times, there has been substantial focus on identifying the factors that impact primary school students' academic achievements, particularly to tackle low performance issues. This research explores the potential influence of creativity on students' academic success. According to Dingleline (2003), a child's environment can either foster or inhibit their creative abilities. Key

elements like family backing, availability of educational resources, and societal pressures play crucial roles in nurturing creativity in children. If educational practices, testing methods, and social settings do not promote creative thinking, students' natural creative abilities might be stifled.

While experts debate whether creativity is a process, product, or inherent trait, there is a consensus that creative work involves generating ideas that are both novel and valuable (Petrowski, 2000). Creativity is defined as the belief in and realization of new ideas through innovative products or services (Kilroy, 1999). It is marked by original and useful ideas, irrespective of their source or intention (Unsworth, 2001). Additionally, creativity can be seen as a mental process that forms new concepts or makes innovative links between existing ideas (Houran & Ference, 2006).

Creativity involves two main components: identifying problems and solving them. It requires various skills and talents, often challenging traditional concepts by altering or discarding established ideas (Herbig & Jacobs, 1996). Dewett (2004) highlighted two key aspects of individual creativity: creative efforts and results. Individual creativity is described as “the ability to think beyond the obvious and produce something novel and suitable” (Nayak, 2008)

Creativity emerges early in life through play and gradually influences other areas. Studies show that creative output typically peaks in a person's thirties before either leveling off or declining due to factors like health issues, family conditions, financial stress, and limited free time. Chukwude (2017), who highlights significant correlations parental socioeconomic status and academic performance. The measurement of socioeconomic status for educational assessments is crucial, as noted by Samuel (2014), who provides a comprehensive framework for understanding these metrics. Nurturing employee creativity is vital for organizational success, as discussed by Houran and Ference (2006), who explore various strategies to foster an innovative workplace environment. This research was drawn to this study by the emphasis on nurturing creativity in primary education in Nigeria, particularly at Jigawa State College Demonstration Schools. Visits to these schools revealed that despite efforts from government bodies and NGOs, students' academic performance was still lacking. Many children began primary school without the ability to perform basic tasks like counting to twenty or recognizing letters from A to Z.

Research Objectives

This study aimed to achieve the following objectives:

1. Analyzing creativity levels in students at Jigawa State College of Education and Legal Studies

Demonstration Schools.

2. Comparing academic achievements of highly creative students with those of less creative ones.
3. Studying academic performance variations between male and female students at these institutions.

Research Questions

The study addressed the following question:

- 1) What are the creativity levels of students at Jigawa State College of Education and Legal Studies Demonstration Schools?
- 2) How do the academic achievements of highly creative students compare to those of less creative students at Jigawa State College of Education and Legal Studies Demonstration Schools?
- 3) What are the variations in academic performance between male and female students at Jigawa State College of Education and Legal Studies Demonstration Schools?

Research Hypotheses

The hypotheses tested were:

- I. There is no significant difference in academic performance between primary school pupils with high and low levels of creativity.
- II. There is no significant difference in academic performance between male and female primary school pupils.

Research Methodology

This research employed an ex-post facto design, as described by Cohen et al. (2007), to explore possible cause-and-effect links by examining current conditions. The study focused on all primary school students at Jigawa State College of Education and Legal Studies Demonstration Schools in Ringim. Specifically, all primary six students were included, with 19 selected through purposive sampling for representation. To collect data on students' creativity levels, the Creativity Questionnaire by Shelley (2005) was modified for this study. This tool consisted of nine sections

and sixty-four items to assess creativity. Scores above 45 indicated high creativity, while scores below 44 indicated low creativity. Data analysis was performed using SPSS software. Descriptive statistics such as frequency counts and percentages answered the first research question, and t-tests were applied to test the first and second hypotheses at a 0.05 significance level.

Answering Research Questions

Research Question 1: What are the levels of Creativity among Primary School Pupils in Jigawa State College of Education and Legal Studies Demonstration Schools?

Table 1 depicting the difference in the level Creativity

Variables	N	Percentage
High level of Creativity	35	42.7%
Low level of Creativity	47	57.3%
Total	82	100%

The table reveals that out of 82 pupils surveyed, 35 (42.7%) exhibited high levels of creativity while 47 (57.3%) demonstrated low levels of creativity. Thus, it can be concluded that a majority of primary school pupils in these demonstration schools exhibit low levels of creativity.

Hypotheses Testing

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant difference between Primary School Pupils with high and low Creativity among Jigawa State College of Education and Legal Studies Demonstration Schools.

Table 2, t-test Difference between Primary School Pupils with high and low Creativity

Variables	N	Mean	SD	t-value	Df	P-value (2-tailed)
High level of creativity	35	72.54	12.935	2.088	80	.040
Low level of creativity	47	66.63	12.389			

The analysis indicates that the mean score for academic performance among pupils with high creativity was significantly higher than that for those with low creativity (M=72.54 vs M=66.63), leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant difference in Academic Performance between male and female Primary School Pupils in College Demonstration Schools of Jigawa State.

Table 3, t-test for gender difference in Academic performance

Gender	N	Mean	SD	t-value	Df	P-value (2-tailed)
Male	46	70.34	13.104	.266	80	.773
Female	36	69.57	12.960			

The t-test results reveal no meaningful difference between genders ($t = .266$; $p = .773$), suggesting that boys do not perform significantly better than girls

Summary of Findings

1. A majority of pupils at Jigawa State College Demonstration Schools exhibited low levels of creativity (Low level: $N=47$; High level: $N=35$).
2. Pupils with high creativity tend to perform better academically.
3. Male and female pupils show no notable differences in academic performance.

Discussion of Findings

Previous studies have shown that students with higher creativity tend to excel academically (Shelly, 2005; Abad et al., 2013; Kumar, 2008). Our research also found that gender does not significantly affect academic performance.

In our first research question, we discovered that most students at Jigawa State College Demonstration Schools exhibit low creativity levels (Low level: $N=47$; High level: $N=35$). The initial hypothesis confirmed that students with higher creativity achieve better academic results than those with lower creativity.

Additionally, our second hypothesis revealed no significant academic performance differences between male and female primary school students at these schools.

Conclusion

This research explored how creativity affects the academic performance of primary school students at Jigawa State College of Education and Legal Studies Demonstration Schools. The study found a worrisome trend: 57% of the students showed low creativity, while only 43% had high creativity levels. This gap highlights the urgent need for educational programs to boost creativity among young students

The results also showed that creativity significantly enhances academic performance. Students with higher creativity scored better academically than their less creative peers. This suggests that nurturing creativity in students can lead to better academic results, which is crucial for their overall growth and future prospects.

Interestingly, the study found no major gender differences in academic performance, indicating that boys and girls perform similarly regardless of their creativity levels. This underscores the need to focus on individual student needs rather than relying on gender-based assumptions.

Given these findings, it is crucial for educators, parents, and policymakers to prioritize creativity in education. Strategies should be implemented to create an environment that promotes creative thinking and problem-solving skills. This could include adding creative arts to the curriculum, providing resources for imaginative play, and training teachers to identify and nurture creativity in their students.

Collaborating with NGOs and community groups can also support these efforts. Workshops and seminars for teachers on effective strategies to promote creativity can greatly improve student outcomes.

In conclusion, this study underscores the important connection between creativity and academic performance in primary education. By fostering a creative culture in schools, we can help students reach their potential, leading to better academic performance and a more innovative future workforce. Addressing the low creativity levels found in this study should be a priority for all involved in education, ensuring every child has the chance to succeed academically and personally.

Recommendations

- 1) Parents and educators should actively promote student creativity since it positively impacts academic success.
- 2) NGOs and community organizations should enhance educational outcomes through workshops and seminars aimed at teachers to improve their instructional strategies regarding student creativity development.

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