

**TEACHER'S YEARS OF EXPERIENCE AS A PREDICTOR OF PUPILS' ACHIEVEMENT IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE: A CASE STUDY OF NSUKKA LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA, ENUGU STATE, NIGERIA**

**Ukoha, E. O., Aleke, P. S., Nnamani, P. A & Ezeah, E. C.**

Department of Arts Education, Faculty of Education  
University of Nigeria, Nsukka

---

**Abstract**

*This study examined the extent to which teachers' years of teaching experience predict pupils' achievement in English Language in Nsukka Local Government Area, Enugu State, Nigeria. The study was guided by two research questions and two hypotheses and employed a correlational survey design. The population consisted of 3,206 respondents, including 2,100 Primary Five pupils and 1,106 teachers. A sample of 440 respondents, comprising 400 pupils and 40 teachers, was drawn using simple random sampling. Data were collected using the Teacher's Years of Teaching Experience Scale (TYTES) and the English Language Achievement Test (ELAT), both validated by three experts from the Faculty of Education, University of Nigeria, Nsukka. The ELAT was trial-tested, and reliability was confirmed using Kuder-Richardson 20, yielding a coefficient of 0.90. Pearson correlation was used to answer the research questions, while regression analysis tested the hypotheses at a 0.05 level of significance. The results indicated a non-significant, negative, and negligible relationship between teachers' years of experience and pupils' achievement in English Language. Furthermore, school location was found to have no significant moderating effect on this relationship. Based on the findings, it was recommended that teachers, particularly those with long years of service, undergo regular in-service training to remain updated on 21st-century teaching innovations. Additionally, teachers in rural schools should be periodically rotated with those in urban schools to enhance teaching effectiveness.*

---

**Keywords:** English language, academic achievement, teachers, school location

---

**Introduction**

The teaching of English Language at the primary school level cuts across the teaching of the four basic language skills which includes reading, writing, speaking and listening. English Language is a core subject at the basic education level. It is taught to build the pupils' ability to communicate effectively in the school and outside the academic setting. A good knowledge and commands of the English Language carries a child through other levels of education in life (Aleke, 2019). Reading is learnt by exposing pupils to different pages of their English Language comprehension. In doing that, the teacher guides the learners to word identification and pronunciation. Writing is taught by engaging the learners in word spelling, dictation and spacing of words. In teaching of writing, learners are also guided on the use of uppercase and lowercase of English letters and the application of punctuation marks where appropriate (Okose and Obinu, 2024). Speaking is taught and built through the classroom interaction, debating and answering of questions in the classroom. Listening skill is taught and developed by engaging the learners to paying attention a stories, comprehension passages and announcements. Learners are therefore requested to summarize or say what they heard. A good and adequate teaching of these

four basic language skills could guarantee the pupils' good achievement in English Language.

Academic achievement is one of the most important goals of the educational engagement. Academic achievement of the primary school pupils could be influenced by factors such as teachers, learners, methods, resources, location, economy, cultural factors etc. Academic achievement is regarded as students' score or grade in a test or an examination. A teacher can only know how much a child has learnt through the achievement of the child in the subject area hence, the need for assessment of the pupils' academic achievement in English Language. Okonkwo (2016) stated that academic achievement is a scholastic position of a student at any given time. Baji and Sarki (2017) see academic achievement as the degree of educational attainment through formal and non-formal programme which is measured and rated against a certain standard within a stipulated period, term or level. Opara (2021) sees academic achievement as the knowledge gained which is assessed by the marks of the teachers or an achievement of educational goals which are laid down over a specific period of time. According Opara, these goals are measured by using continuous assessment or examination results. In this same vein, Ali (2013) asserts that academic achievement is the outcome of education and the extent to which educational goals are achieved. The success or failure of pupils in their school subjects are attributed to the experience of the facilitators among other factors. Some scholars argue that the popular saying that experience is the best teacher applies here. So, they believe that the teachers with many years of teaching experience produce pupils with better achievement in their different subjects. Some scholars believe that the number of years of teaching experience does not matter and therefore does not significant impact the learners' achievement. This is because there are cases of teachers with lesser teaching experience, who teach better than the older teachers. This study therefore seeks to establish the relationship between teacher's years of teaching experience and pupils' academic achievement in English Language.

Teacher's years of teaching experience refers to the number of years of full-time classroom teaching engagement a teacher has in the school setting. Ene, Anyiam and Onoja (2022) pointed out that students under teachers with more teaching experience perform better academically. Experienced teachers draw from their wide range of experiences and offer insight and ideas to the teaching and learning process. Agharuwhe (2013) aligns with the fact that teachers' effectiveness and the years of teaching experience improve the academic achievement of the learners. In contrary, Adewale (2016) argues that the teachers' number of years of teaching experience does not relate significantly with the students' academic achievement. This implies according to Adewale that the number of years a teacher has spent in teaching does not determine the academic achievement of the learners. The achievement of the pupils in English Language could be influenced by others factors such as the environment or the school location.

Many scholars, researchers and parents believe that a child's academic performance is significantly shaped by their surroundings including their home environment and the location of their school as noted by Amadi (2018). Ella and Ita (2017) define school location as the environment where schools are sited which are classified to rural and urban place. Ella & Ita further stressed that rural locations are less developed compared to urban locations which are developed to some extent with some basic social amenities. They classified urban locations as the city areas while rural locations are the village areas. In

relating environment and school location to the teaching and learning of the English Language, Aleke (2019) noted that some teachers at the rural areas use their dialect in teaching of the English Language. On the side of the pupils, since they use their dialect at rural areas, they transfer same to the school which affects their understanding of English Language and their performance as well. On the contrary, evidence has shown that some students perform much better in the village than those at the city. Standing on the premises of this dichotomy, the study therefore also seeks to examine the influence of school location on the relationship between teacher's years of teaching experience and pupils' academic achievement in English Language.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Effective mastery of English Language is essential for pupils' academic success, cognitive development, and future career prospects. Ideally, pupils should attain high proficiency in the subject, demonstrating strong communication skills, comprehension, and the ability to apply knowledge across different areas of learning. In Nsukka Local Government Area of Enugu State, however, many pupils consistently underperform in English Language, with low scores in examinations and limited practical use of the language in school activities. This underachievement undermines not only individual academic progression but also the overall quality of education in the area. One factor that may influence pupils' performance is the teacher's years of teaching experience. Experienced teachers are expected to possess a deeper understanding of English Language content, implement effective teaching methodologies, manage classrooms efficiently, and adapt lessons to meet learners' needs. In practice, however, it is unclear whether increased teaching experience translates into higher pupil achievement, or whether other factors—such as instructional resources, school environment and pupil engagement—moderate this relationship. Additionally, school location, class size, and access to teaching aids may further affect learning outcomes, highlighting the complex interplay of factors that determine pupils' success in English Language.

Therefore, the problem this study seeks to address is the limited understanding of how teachers' years of teaching experience predict pupils' achievement in English Language in Nsukka Local Government Area. Addressing this problem is critical for informing teacher professional development, improving instructional strategies, and ultimately enhancing pupils' academic performance in English Language.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The main purpose of the study was to examine the extent to which teachers' years of teaching experience predict pupils' achievement in English Language in Nsukka Local Government Area, Enugu State, Nigeria. Specifically, the study is sought to:

1. determine the relationship between teacher's years of teaching experience and pupils' academic achievement in English Language
2. determine the influence of school location on the relationship between teacher's years of teaching experience and pupils' academic achievement in English Language.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What is the relationship between teacher's years of teaching experience and pupils' academic achievement in English Language?

2. What is the influence of school location on the relationship between teacher's years of teaching experience and pupils' academic achievement in English Language?

### Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance:

**H<sub>01</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between teachers' years of teaching experience and pupils' academic achievement in English language.

**H<sub>02</sub>:** There is no significant influence of school location on the relationship between teacher's years of teaching experience and pupils' academic achievement in English Language.

### Methods

The research design for the study was correlational survey design. The study was conducted in Nsukka Local Government Area of Enugu State. The population of the study consists of 3,206 primary five pupils and teachers in Nsukka Local Government Area of Enugu State in the 2023/2024 academic session (ENSUBEB, Statistics and Records from Nsukka LGEA, 2024). The sample size of the study was 440 respondents comprises 40 teachers and 400 pupils drawn from the target population using simple random sampling technique. The instruments used for data collection were Teacher's Years of Teaching Experience Scale (TYTES) and English Language Achievement Test (ELAT) which were subjected to face validity by three experts from the Faculty of Education, University of Nigeria, Nsukka in order to ascertain the validity of the instruments. The ELAT was trial tested with 20 primary five pupils at Igbo-Eze North Local Government Area which is outside the study area although, they have similar characteristics with the pupils used for the study. It was further subjected to reliability testing using Kuder Richardson 20 and the reliability coefficient was 0.89. The researcher trained the research assistants and the researcher together with the research assistants administered the instruments to the teachers and pupils. The research questions were answered using pearson correlation analysis while regression analysis was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. Regression analysis was used in order to determine the moderation effect of school location on the relationship between the teacher's years experience and pupils' academic achievement in English Language.

### Results

**Research Question One:** What is the relationship between teachers' years of teaching experience and pupils' academic achievement in English Language?

**Table 1: Pearson Correlation of teachers' years of teaching experience and pupils' academic achievement in English Language**

Years of Experience	N	Mean Achievement	r	Decision
0-9	110	28.05	-0.051	Negative
10-19	170	27.89		Negligible
20-29	70	28.20		relationship
30-Above	50	26.84		

Data on Table 1 show that pupils with teachers with 0-9 years of teaching experience have a mean achievement score of 28.05. Pupils with teachers with 10-19, 20-29 and 30 and above years of teaching experience have mean achievement scores of 27.89, 28.20, and 26.84, respectively. The Pearson correlation coefficient (r) of -0.051 shows that there is a negative and negligible relationship between teachers' years of teaching experience and pupils' academic achievement in English Language.

**H<sub>01</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between teachers' years of teaching experience and pupils' academic achievement in English Language

**Table 2: Regression analysis of the relationship between teachers' years of teaching experience and pupils' academic achievement in English Language**

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	R	R <sup>2</sup>	F	df	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error							
1	28.43	.616						46.1	.000
(Constant)	7							55	
1	-.268	.262	-.051	.051	.003	1.054	39	-1.02	.305
Experience						4	8	7	

The data on Table 2 reveal that the R is 0.051 while the R<sup>2</sup> is 0.003. This shows that 0.3% of pupils' academic achievement is related to teachers' years of teaching experience. The F value of 1.054 is significant at 0.305 level which is greater than the level of significance at which the hypothesis is tested. This shows that there is no significant relationship between teachers' years of teaching experience and pupils' academic achievement in English Language. Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted.

**Research Question Two:** What is the influence of school location on the relationship between teachers' years of teaching experience and pupils' academic achievement in English Language?

**Table 3 Regression analysis of the influence of school location on the relationship between teachers' years of teaching experience and pupils' academic achievement in English Language**

Model	Correlations			Decision
	Zero-order	Partial	Part	
(Constant)				
Experience	-.051	-.091	-.086	
Location	-.336	-.343	-.343	
Interaction	.019	.013	.012	Negligible effect moderation

The data on Table 3 show that the Zero-order value for interaction (moderator variable - location) is 0.019. This indicates a positive but negligible moderation effect. Therefore, there is a positive but negligible influence of school location on the relationship between teachers' years of teaching experience and pupils' academic achievement in English Language.

**Ho<sub>2</sub>:** There is no significant influence of school location on the relationship between teachers' years of teaching experience and pupils' academic achievement in English Language.

**Table 4: Regression analysis of the influence of school location on the relationship between teachers' years of teaching experience and pupils' academic achievement in English Language.**

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	R <sup>2</sup>	F	df	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta					
1	1 (Constant)	34.046	.963				35.344	.000
	Experience	-.456	.247	-.087			-1.843	.066
	Location	-3.471	.476	-.345	.120	27.156	397	-7.288
2	(Constant)	34.041	.965				35.288	.000
	Experience	-.451	.248	-.086			-1.816	.070
	Location	-3.470	.477	-.345			-7.278	.000
	Interaction	.061	.240	.012	.120	18.083	396	.254

The data on Table 4 show that the R<sup>2</sup> for interaction with location is 0.120. This indicates that location contributed 12% to the variation in the relationship between teachers' years of teaching experience and pupils' academic achievement. The F value (18.083) for the interaction effect (moderator) in model 2 is significant at 0.799 level which is greater than 0.05 level of significance at which the hypothesis is tested. The null hypothesis is therefore, accepted. Hence, there is no significant influence of school location on the relationship between teachers' years of teaching experience and pupils' academic achievement in English Language.

### Discussion

The findings of the study show that there was a non significant and negative relationship between teachers' years of teaching experience and pupils' achievement in English language. The findings of this study indicate that as teachers' years of teaching experience increases, the pupils' academic achievement in English language tends to decrease. This may be that teachers with many years of teaching experience tend to be

complacent, over-reliance on outdated methods instead of innovative methods. This can occur when teachers with many years of teaching experience fail to undergo some required professional development programmes, fail to update their lesson plans and focus on routine rather than innovation and creativity. The findings of the study are supported by Adewale (2016) who found that teachers' years of teaching experience had no significant correlation with pupils' achievement in Mathematics. According to Adewale, the number of years a teacher has spent does not guarantee higher academic achievement of pupils in Mathematics.

However, the result of the study is inconsistent with the findings of Ewetan and Ewetan (2015), they found that teachers teaching experience has significant influence on the students' academic achievement in mathematics and English language as measured by their achievement in SSCE and as perceived by the respondents. The results are also in disagreement with the findings of Ene, Anyiam and Onoja (2020), Itankan (2024) and Okose and Obinu (2024) who found that teachers' years of teaching experience has positive relationship with the students' academic achievement in English Language. These researchers discovered that the higher the years of teaching experience, the higher the achievement of the students in English, Basic Science and Mathematics.

The finding of the study indicates that teachers' school location has no significant influence in the relationship between teachers' years of teaching experience and the pupils' achievement in English Language. This means that the school location of teachers be it rural or urban areas does not influence the relationship between teachers' years of experience and achievement of pupils in English Language. The non significant influence of school location of teachers on the pupils' academic achievement in English Language could be that teachers are trained and certified before deployed to their primary place of assignment. Therefore, the location a teacher finds himself or herself does not either deminish or increase the teacher's already acquired knowledge. The findings are consistent with the findings of Adeyemi and Adeyemi (2013) who found that school location did not have influence on the students' achievement in English Language and Social Studies. In contrast, the findings of the study are not in agreement with the findings of Owoye and Yara (2012) who found that students in urban schools have better academic achievement than those in rural schools in the West African School Certificate Examination (WASCE). Also, the findings of the study are not consistent with the findings of Okonkwo, Oko and Agor (2022) who found that there was a significant difference between school location and students' achievement in of favour of urban locations.

### **Conclusion**

From the findings of the study, it was concluded that the number of years a teacher spends in the teaching engagement does not contribute to the academic achievement of the pupils and school location does not also influence the relationship between teacher's years of experience and pupils's achievement in English Language.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the findings of the study, it was recommended that teachers should undergo an in-service training especially the teachers who have being teaching for years in order to be acquainted with the 21st century innovatives in teaching peadagogies. It was also recommended that teachers at the rural schools should from time to time be swapped with those in the urban schools.

## **REFERENCES**

- Adewale, C. (2016). Students' enrollment and achievement in Biology at senior school certificate examination: implications for availability and utilization of instructional resources. *Journal of Education and Practice*, 3 (2), 232-241.
- Adeyemi, B. A. & Adeyemi, B. B. (2013). Comparative study of secondary school students' academic performance in english and social studies in junior secondary school in Osun State, Nigeria. *Journal on Research in Humanities and Social Sciences*, 3(7), 121-125.
- Agharuwhe, A. A (2013). Effect of teachers' effectiveness on students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Delta State, Nigeria. *Journal of Education and Social Research*, 3 (3), 105-111.
- Aleke, P. S. (2019). Factors for improving students' performance on spoken English in senior secondary schools in Isi-Uzo L.G.A of Enugu State. Unpublished undergraduate project, Department of Arts Education, Faculty of Education, University of Nigeria, Nsukka.
- Amadi, E. A. (2018). Effects of two phonics instructional methods on primary school pupils' achievement and interest in reading. Unpublished Ph.D thesis, University of Nigeria, Nsukka.
- Baji, M. I. & Sarki. Y. A. (2017) Relationship among parental education, academic self-efficacy and academic achievements of senior secondary school students in Niger State, Nigeria. *Journal of the Nigeria Council of Educational Psychologists*, 11 (1), 276-287.
- Ella, K. E. & Ita, P. M (2017). Correlational relationship between school location and students' academic performance in English language in Nigerian secondary schools. *International Journal of Scientific and Research Publications*, 7(9), 381-384.
- Ene, C. U., Anyiam, L. I. & Onoja, A. E. (2022). Influence of teachers' years teaching of experience on students' academic achievement in basic education certificate examination in basic science. *AJSTME*, 8(1), 488-494.
- ENSUBEB (2024). Statistics and Records from Enugu State Universal Education, Nsukka Central LGEA Office.
- Ewetan, T. O & Ewetan, O. O. (2015). Teachers' teaching experience and academic performance in mathematics and English in public secondary schools in Ogun state, Nigeria. *International Journal of Humanities Social Science and Education*, 2(2), 241-248.
- Itankan, W. A. (2024). The relationship between teachers' years of teaching experience and the impact on students' academic achievement in senior secondary mathematics in Taraba State, Nigeria. *International Journal of Education and National Development*, 2 (1), 52-69.
- Okonkwo, M. O. (2016). Effect meta-cognitive learning cycle (MLC) on students' achievement and interest in basic science. Unpublished Master's Project, University of Nigeria, Nsukka.

- Okonkwo, W. Oko, N. O & Agor, I. C. (2022). School location as correlates of students' academic achievement in public secondary schools in Ebonyi State. *Journal of Business and Management (IOSR-JBM)*, 24(1), 33-41.
- Okose, N. F. & Obinu, A. E. (2024). Influence of teachers' years of teaching experience and qualification on students' academic performance in Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE) in in Basic Science in Delta State, Nigeria. *International Journal of Innovative Social and Science Education Research*, 12 (1), 17-26.
- Opara, F. N. (2021). Teachers' strategies for improvement of students' academic performance in private schools: The historical imperatives. *International Journal of Studies in Education*, 17 (3), 270-277.
- Owoeye, J.S., and Yara, P.O. (2012). School location and academic achievement of secondary schools in Ekiti State, Nigeria. *Journal of Asian Social Science*, 7(5), 170-175.