

TEACHERS' PEDAGOGICAL CONTENT COMPETENCES AS CORRELATE OF SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS' ACHIEVEMENT IN ENGLISH READING COMPREHENSION IN ENUGU EDUCATION ZONE

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Abstract

The study investigated the correlation between teachers' pedagogical content competences and students' achievement in English language reading comprehension in Enugu Education Zone of Enugu State. Three research questions and three hypotheses guided the study. Correlational research design was adopted for the study. The population of the study was 4,382 comprising 224 (54 male and 170 female) English language teachers and 4,158 (1,586 male and 2,572 female) SSS2 students in all the 31 public secondary schools in the zone. The sample of the study was 150 consisting of 41 (15 males and 26 females) English language teachers and 109 (41 males and 68 females) students drawn from 12 public secondary schools in Enugu Education Zone using multi-stage sampling procedure. Data were collected using two validated instruments: English Language Teachers' Pedagogical Competences Questionnaire (ELTPCQ) and English Language Reading Comprehension Achievement Test (ELRCAT) administered to teachers and students respectively. The internal consistency of the instruments were determined using Cronbach's Alpha method and they yielded reliability indexes of 0.83 and 0.82 respectively. Data were analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation to answer the research questions. Hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance using Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). Findings of the study indicated that there was a strong relationship between English language teachers' content knowledge, assessment skills and students' achievement in reading comprehension. It was also revealed that gender was not a significant factor in the relationship between teachers' pedagogical content knowledge and students' achievement in reading comprehension. The study, therefore, recommended among others that, teachers should upgrade their pedagogical content knowledge through regular training, peer coaching and workshops on reading comprehension teaching strategies. This will help to equip them with knowledge of how to simplify complex texts using appropriate teaching strategies that can improve students' literal, inferential and evaluative comprehension skills. Improved competences in these areas could foster a predictive relationship with students thereby enhancing their achievement in English language reading comprehension.

Keywords: English language teachers, pedagogy, competence, pedagogical content competence

Introduction

English language is one of the languages of high influence in the world today and it is used as a lingua franca in many countries of the world. Parupalli (2019) notes that English has become a global language and although it is a native language to many countries, it has acquired an official language status. In Nigeria, English is the official language; taught as a second language; language of instruction at all levels of education and spoken as the nation's lingua franca due to her multilingual nature. Given that English is the language through which academic contents are delivered in Nigerian schools, students' proficiency in the language determines their ability to comprehend instruction and perform academically. Therefore, students' academic achievement, especially in English language examinations, depends greatly on their proficiency in the four basic

linguistic skills of English language, which are listening, speaking, reading and writing skills. This study focused on reading.

Reading is one of the basic language skills. It is the next skill pupils learn after listening and speaking. Dewi, Fahrutozi, Uswatun & April (2020) state that reading is an activity that enables one to get the information or message that is delivered in written language. By implication, reading is the process of extracting information from a passage. Eze (2017) opines that reading involves a lot of reasoning, interpretations and evaluation of words in a passage. According to Ogbu-Odibe (2016), a good reader can understand individual sentences and organizational structure and determine meaning from words in a text. Ogbu-Odibe further explains that reading is the most important activity in any language class because it is not only a source of obtaining information and pleasurable activities, but also a means of consolidating and extending one's knowledge of the language. Reading in this study is operationally defined as the ability of students to decode printed words, comprehend literal and inferential meanings of words from passages or secondary school texts and correctly answer comprehension questions from the texts. It, therefore, means that reading cannot be said to be effective without comprehension.

Comprehension simply means ability to understand. Reading comprehension is a fundamental skill to understand what is being read. Ogbu-Odibe (2016) is of the opinion that reading comprehension is the process in which readers construct meaning by interacting with the text. Ginger, Laura and Anisa (2016) identify reading comprehension as fundamental to the development of students' overall reading and academic success. Reading comprehension is useful and relevant to students because it enables them engage and learn from printed or written materials. Codjo (2017) explains that a lot of emphasis is placed on reading comprehension in schools because it enables readers to interpret texts and go beyond the print.

Reading comprehension is fundamental to academic achievement because it enables students to construct meaning from texts, integrate prior knowledge, and transfer learning across subjects. Conceptually, reading comprehension is the ability to understand, interpret and evaluate written texts to derive meaning. In this study, reading comprehension refers to secondary school students' ability to read and understand texts or examination passages and correctly answer questions that test literal, inferential and evaluative understanding. In Nigeria, where English is the medium of instruction, students' proficiency in English reading comprehension strongly predicts their success in external examinations and eligibility for tertiary education. Yet, the West African Examinations Council (WAEC) has consistently reported comprehension as a critical weakness. The 2023, 2024 and 2025 WAEC Chief Examiners' Report noted that candidates displayed poor skills in answering comprehension questions, with many copying portions of the comprehension passages, which were irrelevant as answers to some questions. While national data showed that English language pass rates rose to 73.11% in 2023, the 2024 WASSCE recorded a 7.69% decline, with only 72.12% of candidates securing credit passes in English Language and Mathematics. In Enugu State specifically, education stakeholders report that fewer than 40% of candidates in Enugu Education Zone obtain credit in English, with comprehension items accounting for the highest proportion of lost marks.

This loss of marks initiated by students' weakness in reading comprehension is a pointer that they lack some of the fundamental skills of reading comprehension which, as noted by Bojovic (2010), include the ability to recognize words and understanding them from a discourse context, drawing inferences from a passage about its contents; identifying

the main thought of a passage; recognizing the mood of the passage; recognizing the literary devices used in the passage and ability to correctly answer questions in the passage. Apart from students' lack of these fundamental skills, teacher variables such as Teachers' pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPCK), Teachers' Management Competence (TMC) and Teachers' Assessment Skills (TAS) have been implicated for students' poor achievement in reading comprehension. Collectively, these three teacher variables constitute what is referred to as teacher quality.

Teacher quality has, therefore, emerged as a central explanatory factor for students' reading outcomes. Shulman's (1987) framework of Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK) posits that effective teaching requires not only subject matter knowledge but also knowledge of how to represent content, anticipate student misconceptions, and select instructional strategies suited to specific topics. For reading comprehension, PCK encompasses teachers' understanding of comprehension strategies, knowledge of text selection, and ability to diagnose barriers to meaning-making. A 2022 systematic scoping review in teaching and teacher education confirmed that PCK research has surged since 2020, though significant disparities in PCK components and their interpretations were evident in the studies and called for more work on how teachers enact and develop their PCK in interaction with students.

Empirical studies from 2020–2024 have directly linked teacher knowledge to reading achievement. For instance, Cabell and Hwang's (2020) study found that teachers' knowledge of reading comprehension instruction significantly predicted fourth-grade students' growth in comprehension, after controlling for prior achievement and socioeconomic status. A study by Zuilkowski and Ong'ele (2021) attributed students' achievement gains partly to teachers' pedagogical practices in literacy. Within Nigeria, recent evidence is emerging. The finding of a recent study carried out by Ogunyemi & Hasan (2024), which examined teachers' PCK as Correlate of students' performance in reading comprehension in Gombe State, Nigeria, indicated that 69.2% of teachers had low PCK for teaching reading comprehension. On the other, Kulgemeyer & Riese (2022) contend that effective teaching and students' learning outcomes is undoubtedly linked to the quality of teachers' PCK.

Despite these developments, research specific to Enugu Education Zone on the relationship between teachers' PCK students' performance in reading comprehension appears to be limited. For instance, most of the studies in the zone investigated relationships between instructional materials (Chukwu, Eze & Agada (2016); class size (Obiakor & Oguejiofor, 2020); students' reading habits (Samuel, 2017 and Udoh & Akwang, 2023), motivation (Oguejiofor, Anyakora & Obiakor (2021) and students' performance, but have not isolated teachers' pedagogical content competence (PCK) as a variable influencing literal, inferential, and critical comprehension. This gap is significant because Enugu State's Teacher Professional Development Programme (TPDP), launched in 2022, targets generic pedagogy rather than subject-specific PCK for reading. Without empirical data on teachers' competence deficits, such programs risk misallocating resources. Again, given that English language remains a core subject at all levels of education in Nigeria, the language of instruction for all subjects except indigenous ones and is compulsory for university admission, there is need to consider some teacher qualities such as Teachers' Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPCK), Teachers' Management Competence (TMC) and Teachers' Assessment Skills (TAS) as factors capable of enhancing students' reading comprehension.

A teacher is one who impacts knowledge, skills, values and attitude to learners in order to modify their behaviour. The teacher recognizes the potentials of learners; helps them to develop these potentials thereby facilitating the blossoming of the potentials to make learners useful members of the society. According to Offorma (2016) and Onuoha-Chidiebere (2016), a teacher provides intervention in schools to ensure that the learners graduate as good products. They plan the learning process, manage and inculcate skills and knowledge into learners. Teachers, are therefore, are expected to have a high degree of competence in the work they are expected to accomplish because teachers have a strong influence on learners especially when they are equipped with the desired knowledge, skills, competence and commitment to teaching. According, to the Teachers Registration Council of Nigeria (2010), a competent English language teacher should have adequate content knowledge in his area of specialization, and adequate communication skills, teacher professional values and conducts, teacher assessment skill, including teaching and management competence.

Competence is the skill or knowledge that enable the teacher to embark on teaching while interacting in a classroom situation. Competence is the ability of a person to apply or use his knowledge, skills, abilities, behaviours and personal characteristics to perform a difficult task in particular roles and position (Jamillah & Siti, 2020). With reference to teaching, Awe (2021) states that teachers' competencies are the abilities, skills, knowledge, strategies, techniques, qualities and experiences that a teacher has which make it possible for him or her to effectively implement curriculum, teach a subject and integrate knowledge such that the pre-planned goals and objectives of that subject are actualized. Jackson (2021) notes that a competent teacher is a person who is professionally qualified and trained to teach, having the necessary qualities or skills and showing adequate skills in the teaching process.

Furthermore, teacher management competence skill is one of the skills that teachers need to have for effective teaching. According to Sadik and Akbulut (2014) teacher management is a process in which teachers make decisions about variable situations such as which teaching methods should be followed; how to ensure motivation and student participation; which materials to use; and how to deal with misbehaviours. Anil, Mehmet and Bahar (2019) are of the opinion that teacher management skill is a broad term including a set of behaviours and methods that are used to manage students' and teachers' behaviours while managing the classroom. Classroom management can be defined as preparing the learning atmosphere where the targeted learning regarding the objectives will take place, determining the direction of learning, using time efficiently, arranging relationships in class within rules, collaboration among students, providing a multidirectional communication and students' being motivated. An English language teacher having these skills brings about effective learning of reading comprehension by structuring a successful classroom environment that encourages students to pay attention and learn.

Within such a well-managed, learner-centred environment, teachers must assess learners continuously for accountability and improved achievement in reading comprehension. Assessment of learning is not a one-time movement; it is a progressive process. Fareo (2020) observes that assessment includes the procedure of checking on, reflecting and modifying the learning techniques in an arranged and continuous way. When assessment is carried out in classroom in an ongoing or continual way by the teacher, it is called continuous assessment (Samiullah & Ajum, 2017). During continuous assessment, observations are made time to time to collect data to determine the level of

students' knowledge, understanding and achievement. Teachers observe the activities of students to decide the level of their achievement in the classroom. Abejehu (2016) states that assessment helps teachers to find out what the learners have learnt hence, assessment is part and parcel of instructional process that has to be taken as a key tool in educational quality assurance endeavour. After a teacher reads and explains a comprehension passage, the students are expected to answer questions on the passage in order to determine their level or depth of understanding. Samiullah and Ajum (2017) note that one of the most important and significant developments in Nigerian education system is the introduction of continuous assessment in evaluation of students at all level of schooling. Assessment helps teachers to understand their students, plan and monitor their teaching to create feasible culture. This means that for professional development, every teacher should understand and practice assessment in the classroom and present the complete number of sources and methods that teacher can apply to collect, interpret and synthesize information about students.

Divergent findings regarding teachers' PCK and students' academic achievement abound. Olorunsola's (2019) finding revealed that there was a significant relationship between teachers' pedagogical content knowledge variables and students' achievement. In contrast, Awe's (2021) study showed no significant relationship between teachers' pedagogical content knowledge and students' achievement. These conflicting findings suggest that the relationship between teachers' pedagogical content knowledge and students' achievement is not consistent across contexts. This inconsistency creates uncertainty regarding the actual contribution of teachers' pedagogical content knowledge to students' reading comprehension, particularly within the Nigerian secondary school context. There is, therefore, need for further investigation to clarify the nature and extent of this relationship particularly in Enugu Education Zone. The purpose of this study therefore, was to determine the relationship between teachers' pedagogical content competences and senior secondary school students' achievement in English reading comprehension in Enugu Education Zone. To carry out this study, the following research questions were posed:

Research Questions

1. What is the relationship between teachers' content knowledge and students' achievement in reading comprehension as moderated by gender?
2. What is the relationship between teachers' management competence and students' achievement in reading comprehension as moderated by gender?
3. What is the relationship between teachers' assessment skills and students' achievement in reading comprehension as moderated by gender?

Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated to guide the study. Each hypothesis was tested at the level of 0.05 level of significance.

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between teachers' content knowledge and students' achievement in reading comprehension as moderated by gender.

H₀₂: There is no significant relationship between teachers' management competence and students' achievement in reading comprehension as moderated by gender.

H₀₃: There is no significant relationship between teachers' assessment skills and students' achievement in reading comprehension as moderated by gender.

Methods

The study, carried out in Enugu Education Zone of Enugu zone, adopted a correlational research design. The population of the study was 4,382 comprising 4,158

(1,586 male and 2,572 female SSS2 students) and 224 (54 male and 170 female) English language teachers in all the 31 public secondary schools in Enugu Education Zone. The participants of the study 150. This consisted of 41(15 males and 26 females) English language teachers and 109 (41 males and 68 females) students drawn from 12 public secondary schools in Enugu Education Zone using multi-stage sampling procedure. Data were collected using two instruments titled English Language Teachers' Pedagogical Competences Questionnaire (ELTPCQ) and English Language Reading Comprehension Achievement Test (ELRCAT), which were administered to teachers and students respectively. The instruments were validated by three experts: two from the English language Education Unit of the Department of Arts Education and one from the Measurement and Evaluation Unit of the Department of Science Education. All the experts were from the Faculty of Education, University of Nigeria, Nsukka. The ELTPCQ was structured on a 4-point response scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD). The item statements were structured in such a way that some were negatively cued while some were positively cued. ELTPCQ was adopted from professional standards for Nigerian teachers on Teachers Registration Council of Nigeria (TRCN, 2022). ELRCAT was adopted from the Senior School Certificate Examination (SSCE, 2020) English language past question paper. To determine the reliability of the instrument, 20 copies of the ELTPCQ and 20 copies of ELRCAT were administered to 20 English language teachers and 20 students in Nsukka Education Zone which is outside the area of the study. Data was collected and analyzed using Cronbach's Alpha method to determine the internal consistency of the items. The choice of Cronbach's Alpha was because the instrument was polytomously scored. The results of the analysis obtained were 0.83. There was no reliability test for the ELRCAT because it is was a standardized test adopted from Senior School Certificate Examination (SSCE, 2020) past question paper. Regular English language teachers in the selected schools were briefed about the research and they served as research assistants assisted in administering the instruments. The achievement tests were collected from the teachers and students immediately after the test. Data collected were analyzed using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Statistical analysis to answer the research questions while the hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance using Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) at 0.05 level of significance. The decision for the interpretation was guided by Cohen (1988) guidelines for relationship studies, which suggests a guideline of correlation ranging from: .10 -.29, .30 -.49, and .50 - 1.0 should be regarded as small, medium and large respectively. The relationship between teachers' pedagogical content competences and students' achievement was therefore, guided by the above author's suggestion.

Results

Table 1: Multiple Linear Regression of English Language Teachers' Content Knowledge and Students' Achievement in Reading Comprehension as Moderated by Gender

Model	N	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	SE
1	41	.315a	.099	.051	6.283

a. Predictors: (Constant), TCK, Gender

The results in Table 1 show the regression analysis of English language teachers' content knowledge and students' achievement in reading comprehension as moderated by gender. From the table, there is medium relationship between English language teachers' content knowledge and students' achievement in reading comprehension as moderated by gender as seen in $R = .315$. An extended result from the table shows that an R Square (coefficient of determination between the dependent and non-dependent variables) of ($R^2 = .099$) was obtained. This suggests that 9.9% of the students' achievement in reading comprehension is attributed to teachers' content knowledge and gender.

Table 2: Multiple Linear Regression of English Language Teachers' Management Competence and Students' Achievement in Reading Comprehension as Moderated by Gender

Model	N	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	SE
1	41	.047 ^a	.002	-.050	6.612

a. Predictors: (Constant), TMC, Gender

The results in Table 2 show the regression analysis of English language teachers' management competence and students' achievement in reading comprehension as moderated by gender. The result in the table shows a small relationship ($R = .047$) between English language teachers' management competence and students' achievement in reading comprehension as moderated by gender. Also, an advanced result shows that an R Square (coefficient of determination between the dependent and non-dependent variables) of ($R^2 = .002$) was obtained. This implies that only 0.2% of the students' achievement in reading comprehension is attributed to teachers' management competence and gender.

Table 3: Multiple Linear Regression of English Language Teachers' Assessment Skill and Students' Achievement in Reading Comprehension as Moderated by Gender

Model	N	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	SE
1	41	.063	.004	-.048	6.606

a. Predictors: (Constant), TAS, Gender

The results in Table 3 show the regression analysis of English language teachers' assessment skill and students' achievement in reading comprehension as moderated by gender. The result shows a small relationship ($R = .063$) between English language teachers' assessment skill and students' achievement in reading comprehension as moderated by gender. The R Square (coefficient of determination between the dependent and non-dependent variables) of ($R^2 = .004$) shows that only 0.4% of the students' achievement in reading comprehension could be attributed to have been predicted by teachers' assessment skills and gender.

Table 4: ANOVA Analysis of no Significant Relationship between Teachers' Content Knowledge and Students' Achievement in Reading Comprehension as Moderated by Gender

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	164.726	2	82.363	2.086	.138 ^b
	Residual	1500.518	38	39.487		
	Total	1665.244	40			

a. Dependent Variable: Students' Achievement
Gender

b. Predictors: (Constant), TMC,

NB: Model 1: $R = .047$, $R^2 = .002$, $\Delta R^2 = -.050$

Table 4 is a multiple linear regression calculated to predict students' reading comprehension achievement based on English language teachers' content knowledge and gender. The regression equation was not significant ($F(2, 38) = 2.086$, $p > .05$ (.138) with an R^2 of .099. Gender did not add statistical significant prediction ($t = -.109$, $p = .914$), while teachers' content knowledge added statistical significant prediction ($t = 2.029$, $p = .050$). This means that English language teachers' content knowledge and gender put together do not predict students reading comprehension achievement. However, when

separated, TCK do predict students' reading comprehension achievement. Thus, the null hypothesis that there is no significant relationship between teachers' content knowledge and students' achievement in reading comprehension as moderated by gender was, therefore, not rejected. This implies that there was no significant relationship between teachers' content knowledge and students' achievement in reading comprehension as moderated by gender.

Table 5: ANOVA Analysis of no Significant Relationship between Teachers' Management Competence and Students' Achievement in Reading Comprehension as Moderated by Gender

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	3.710	2	1.855	.042	.959 ^b
	Residual	1661.534	38	43.725		
	Total	1665.244	40			

a. Dependent Variable: Students' Achievement
Gender

b. Predictors: (Constant), TMC,

NB: Model 1: $R = .047$, $R^2 = .002$, $\Delta R^2 = -.050$

A multiple linear regression was calculated, as shown in Table 5, to predict students' reading comprehension achievement based on English language teachers' management competence and gender. The regression equation was not significant ($F(2, 38) = .042$, $p > .05$ (.959) with an R^2 of .002. None of the independent variables such as gender ($t = -.223$, $p = .825$) and teachers' management competence ($t = .186$, $p = .853$) could statistically significantly predict students' reading comprehension achievement. This means that English language teachers' management competence and gender put together do not predict students' reading comprehension achievement. Therefore, the null hypothesis that there is no significant relationship between teachers' management competence and students' achievement in reading comprehension as moderated by gender was not rejected. Hence, there was no significant relationship between teachers' management competence and students' achievement in reading comprehension as moderated by gender.

Table 6: ANOVA Analysis of no Significant Relationship between Teachers' Assessment Skills and Students' Achievement in Reading Comprehension as Moderated by Gender

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	6.573	2	3.286	.075	.928 ^b
	Residual	1658.671	38	43.649		
	Total	1665.244	40			

a. Dependent Variable: Students' Achievement
Gender

b. Predictors: (Constant), TAS,

NB: Model 1: $R = .063$, $R^2 = .004$, $\Delta R^2 = -.048$

Data as presented in Table 6 reveal that a multiple linear regression was calculated to predict students' reading comprehension achievement based on English language teachers' assessment skills and gender. The regression equation was not significant ($F(2, 38) = .075$, $p > .05$ (.928) with an R^2 of .004. None of the independent variables such as gender ($t = -.251$, $p = .803$) and teachers' assessment skills ($t = .317$, $p = .753$) could statistically significantly predict students' reading comprehension achievement. This implies that the assessment skills of teachers along with their gender did not predict the

achievement of students in reading comprehension. Therefore, students' achievement in reading comprehension might have been caused by other factors other than teachers' assessment skill and gender. Thus, the null hypotheses that there is no significant relationship between teachers' assessment skills and students' achievement in reading comprehension as moderated by gender was not rejected; meaning that there was no significant relationship between teachers' assessment skills and students' achievement in reading comprehension as moderated by gender.

Discussion

The findings of the study revealed that there was medium relationship between English language teachers' content knowledge and students' achievement in reading comprehension as moderated by gender. The study agrees with Odumosu, Olisama and Arrelu (2018) who reported that teachers' content knowledge affected the achievement of students. This means that the level of English language teachers' content knowledge may determine the level of students' achievement in reading comprehension. Where the teacher has high level of mastery of the content, such teacher may likely possess high tendency of causing high level of achievement in reading comprehension among the students. This finding implies that a teacher who must spur high level of academic achievement in reading comprehension among the students is that teacher with high level of knowledge and mastery of the content irrespective of the teacher's gender.

The findings of the study further revealed that there was a small relationship between English language teachers' management competence and students' achievement in reading comprehension as moderated by gender. What this means is that students' achievement in reading comprehension is basically a product of their cognitive ability and readiness to learn and process information. Therefore, students who are naturally intelligent may likely do well in reading comprehension given any environment they find themselves and whichever gender that is teaching them while those students with a lower cognitive ability may always find it difficult to learn reading comprehension in any environment and when taught by some teachers based on their gender. This finding is at par with that of Annas, Suyanto and Ika (2019) and also not in tandem with the study of Retno, Yahya, Etin and Widyanti (2021) who found that principal and professional teachers' managerial competence affected the academic achievement of pupils in elementary schools in Jeruklegi Cilacap. In their studies therefore, they recommended the importance of teacher competencies development programmes both by the government and schools, because increasing teacher competencies will increase the pupils' learning outcomes.

The study also found out that there was small relationship between English language teachers' assessment skill and students' achievement in reading comprehension as moderated by gender. This means that teachers' assessment skills, along with their gender, do not influence students' achievement in reading comprehension. Students tend to achieve in a normal manner in reading comprehension when taught by any of the genders. This could be because students' readiness to take up assessment responsibility is not really being driven by the gender of their teachers but by their drive to achieve better in reading comprehension. Therefore, this study revealed that the way teachers engage in assessment of the students did not have any significant relation with the achievement of the students. This finding suggests that students' achievement may be a product of their individual effort to thrive and succeed. The finding disagreed with Omondi, Yambo and Ongunya (2020) who revealed that a relative significant relationship exists between teachers' assessment skills and competencies and pupils' academic achievement irrespective of gender of the teachers.

On whether there is a significant relationship between teachers' pedagogical content knowledge and students' achievement in reading comprehension as moderated by gender, the findings of this study revealed that a relationship exists between English language teachers' content knowledge and students' achievement in reading comprehension though the relationship was not statistically significant in the test of the hypothesis. This finding agrees with the study of Odumosu, Olisama and Arrelu (2018) who reported that teachers' content knowledge affected the students' achievement in reading comprehension. However, this finding is contrary to the submission of Muhammet, Harun & Muharrem's (2022) study that some statistically significant differences exist between teachers' pedagogical content knowledge and students' achievement.

The findings of this study also indicated that English language teachers' management competence has a statistically insignificant relationship with students' achievement in reading comprehension. This finding is in disagreement with Sadik and Akbulut (2015) who found out that teachers' classroom management skills had a statistically significant relationship with the way they teach in the class. This study's finding also is at par with the study of Shamina & Mumthas (2018) who reported that mastery of classroom management competence is a critical component of effective teaching and learning thus, teachers are often evaluated based on their management of the classroom. It, therefore, means that even though the competence of various management skills are important and useful in enhancing effective teaching and learning, it does not have a strong relationship with students achievement in reading comprehension.

Finally, the findings of this study further revealed that there was a significant relationship between teachers' assessment skill and students' achievement in reading comprehension, implying that teachers' assessment skills can spur students' achievement in reading comprehension. This finding agrees with Mohammad, Samiullah & Anjum (2017) and Omondi, Yambo & Ongunya (2020) who found out that teachers' assessment competencies had statistically significant relationship and also had positive effects on pupils' academic achievement in reading comprehension. In addition, this study's finding is in line with that of Faleye & Adefisoye (2016). The results of their study showed that students whose teachers conducted continuous assessment (CA) fortnightly improved in their reading comprehension and had positive attitude towards CA. Their Findings also revealed that the CA methods used in private schools were different from that of public schools. Finally, a total of 77.8% secondary school teachers who participated in the study indicated that the failure of government to organize in-service training, seminar, and workshop on continuous assessment at regular interval for teachers is a major challenge to the implementation of continuous assessment. The study, therefore, concluded that there was a gap between policy dictated and actuality of practice among secondary school teachers.

Conclusion

The role of teachers in the education process cannot be overemphasized because they are the engineer of every developmental stride of every nation. Therefore, their professional development is very important. English language, which has remained an official and instructional language in Nigeria, also ought to be taught in an effective manner so that students could better understand and also achieve well in every aspect of the subjects including reading comprehension. This study therefore, revealed that there was a relationship between different teachers' pedagogical competency variables and students' achievement in reading comprehension. While the study revealed that there was medium relationship between the achievement of students in reading comprehension and

teachers' content knowledge, it also reported a small relationship between teachers' management competence as well as teachers' assessment skills and students' achievement in reading comprehension. Furthermore, the study recorded a medium relationship between teachers' content knowledge and students' achievement in reading comprehension as moderated by gender. However, it recorded a small relationship between students' achievement and teachers' management competence; and a small relationship between students' achievement and teachers' assessment skills in reading comprehension as moderated by gender. Therefore, teachers' gender alongside with their content knowledge, management competence and assessment skills did not have predictive influence on students' achievement in reading comprehension.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Teachers should upgrade their pedagogical content knowledge through regular training, peer coaching and workshops on reading comprehension teaching strategies. This will help to equip them with knowledge of how to simplify complex texts using appropriate teaching strategies that can improve students' literal, inferential and evaluative comprehension skills. Improved competences in these areas could foster a predictive relationship with students thereby enhancing their achievement in English language reading comprehension.
2. Teachers should endeavour to show high level of commitment in classroom management and organization. This would help in creating a conducive and organized learning environment that could possibly enhance students' learning outcome in reading comprehension.
3. Teachers should diversify their assessment skills to diagnose students' weaknesses in reading comprehension and also endeavour to give students timely feedback. This aligns with WAEC's call for improved reading comprehension among students and could also have a predictive relationship with their students' achievement in reading comprehension.
4. The Ministry of Education and Teachers Registration Council of Nigeria (TRCN) should make periodic re-certification and in-service training on pedagogical content knowledge, classroom management and assessment mandatory for teachers. This will ensure that teachers' competences remain current with curriculum demands and SSCE and WAEC English language examination standards.

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