



TEACHER PEDAGOGICAL PROFICIENCY AND ACADEMIC RESILIENCE: AN EMPIRICAL STUDY OF TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS IN EDO STATE NIGERIA

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Abstract

Academic resilience refers to students' ability to cope with and overcome academic challenges and setbacks effectively. Fostering academic resilience is crucial for student success and retention in tertiary institutions. Teacher's pedagogical proficiency plays a significant role in developing and supporting academic resilience among students. This study explores the relationship between teacher practices and academic resilience in tertiary institutions in Edo State, Nigeria. Thus, the present study examined the teacher's pedagogical proficiency as a factor influencing the student's academic resilience in Edo State, Nigeria. Ninety-six undergraduates enrolled in different courses from two higher education institutions in the Edo State of Nigeria participated in the study. A simple percentage score indicates that most students (65.5%) indicated positive academic resilience, while less (34.5%) showed negative academic resilience. Furthermore, a simple regression analysis was performed to test the study hypothesis. The result revealed that teachers' pedagogical proficiency positively predicted students' academic resilience. The findings provide valuable insights for educators, policymakers, and stakeholders in the education sector, helping to create more resilient and successful student.

Keywords: TPP, academics, resilience, students, tertiary institution

Introduction

Resilience is one such attribute that facilitates academic performance and differentiates accomplished persons from their less successful counterparts. Independent of intellectual ability, resilience continues to be a valuable endeavor for educational research and practice (Cassidy, 2016). Academic resilience plays a crucial role in students' success, especially within the demanding realm of tertiary education. It involves the capacity of students to effectively confront and overcome academic challenges and setbacks, thereby sustaining high levels of accomplishment despite hurdles. This concept is increasingly acknowledged as pivotal for the comprehensive growth of students, equipping them not only academically but also emotionally and mentally for forthcoming obstacles.

In the last few decades, academic resilience has gained increasing attention in the school context due to its relation to positive achievement and school-related adjustment (Abubakar et al., 2021; Cui et al., 2023; Lees et al., 2023; Martin et al., 2022; Ramdani et al., 2020; Romano et al., 2021; Tran et al., 2023; Volante & Klinger, 2023; Yang & Wang, 2022). Academic resilience contextualizes the resilience construct and reflects an increased likelihood of educational success despite adversity (Courtney, 2017; Rudd et al., 2023). Thus, it enables students to stay focused, seek help, and persist in their studies. As a result, they overcome these challenges and emerge stronger and more capable of handling future adversities. Students are at particular risk of stress and exposure to adverse events, negatively affecting well-being and performance and leading to increased attrition. Academic resilience has been identified as one factor helping mitigate such negative effects on students (Cassidy et al., 2023). Furthermore, academic resilience is not just about academic performance; it also contributes to students' overall well-being. By developing resilience, students cultivate problem-solving, adaptability, and perseverance skills, which are invaluable in various aspects of life beyond the classroom.

Academic resilience is a pillar of support for students, empowering them to thrive in the face of academic pressures and personal obstacles. It fosters a growth and resilience mindset essential for navigating the complexities of higher education and beyond. Thus, nurturing academic resilience is essential for students' holistic development and success in today's challenging educational landscape.

Pedagogical proficiency is a talent for understanding students and managing educational and dialogical learning. A teacher's pedagogical proficiency (TPP) reflects the teacher's ability to express content knowledge, impart learning, and attract students' attention. It refers to the instructor's capability relative to theoretical mastery and its application

to teaching performance (Nopriyeni et al., 2019). Pedagogical proficiency generally involves knowledge and skills (Ningtiyas & Jailani, 2018), knowledge of learning theory, classroom management, and student motivation (Auerbach & Andrews, 2018), which contributes hugely to achieving quality student learning outcomes (Fadil & Aryani, 2021). Competent teachers can effectively manage to learn, enhance students' passion, and improve learning quality (Amanah et al., 2020). Thus, learners' overall perception of teachers' competence could influence their attitude toward a particular subject and participation in the classroom activity. Nevertheless, students mainly assess their teachers' knowledge of the subject matter, communication ability, teaching method, and general classroom management skills. An instructor rated high on these indices in the students' perception will likely influence the learner's attitude. Indeed, a teacher's pedagogical proficiency could significantly influence a student's attitude toward any subject.

In tertiary institutions in Edo State, Nigeria, teachers not only focus on imparting knowledge but also play a crucial role in shaping their students' academic and personal growth. Beyond the traditional classroom setting, teachers engage in practices beyond the textbooks, such as incorporating real-life examples and interactive activities to enhance student learning experiences. Moreover, teachers in Edo State are known for their dedication to providing constructive feedback to students. They go beyond just marking assignments; they take the time to explain the reasoning behind the feedback, helping students understand their strengths and areas for improvement. This approach enhances academic performance and boosts students' confidence and motivation to excel. By creating a supportive learning environment that encourages perseverance and adaptability, teachers play a pivotal role in shaping the holistic development of their students.

Research shows that resilience is considered a personal attribute resulting from adapting to a challenging environment or situation (Ishak et al., 2020). Despite the importance of academic resilience, more research needs to focus on how specific teacher practices influence its development in the context of Nigerian tertiary institutions. The literature has described the importance of teacher instructional practices when generating positive school climates, characterized, among other things, by developing environments of respect and security with a high quality of social relations. In this regard, some practices within the pedagogical system have characteristics that could be more conducive to the development of academic vulnerability or fragility. This leads to students struggling to cope with academic challenges and setbacks, leading to increased stress, lower self-esteem, and potentially higher dropout rates. It is marked by difficulty bouncing back from failures and a lack of strategies to overcome obstacles. While there is substantial research on academic resilience education, there is limited empirical evidence on the correlation between teachers' pedagogical proficiency and academic resilience in tertiary institutions, particularly in the context of Edo State, Nigeria. This study seeks to fill this gap by examining the relationship between teacher's pedagogical proficiency and academic resilience in this specific context.

Hypothesis: *Teachers' Pedagogical Proficiency will significantly correlate with academic resilience among undergraduates in Edo state, Nigeria.*

Method

Participants

This study was a correlational study with a cross-sectional research design. It examined the correlation between independent variables (teacher practice) and dependent variables (academic resilience). The study was conducted in Edo State, Nigeria, between April and July 2024. The participants were students enrolled in three public tertiary institutions in the Edo State of Nigeria. The participants comprised male and female students in different faculties and all years of study in their respective institutions.

Measures

Academic Resilience

The Academic Resilience Scale-30 was used to measure academic resilience based on student responses to academic adversity. The scale items represent a sample of relevant positively and negatively phrased cognitive affective and behavioral responses to adversity informed by and derived from the published literature on individual psychological

resilience and academic resilience, self-regulated learning, and self-efficacy. All items were formulated into statements that align with accepted good practice for questionnaire design. Responses to the 30 scale items were made by participants along a 5-point Likert scale from likely (1) to unlikely (5) once they had been exposed to (i.e., had read) a short vignette. The vignette was constructed to portray an example of academic adversity, representing significant academic challenges and struggles. A higher score on this scale specifies a favorable resilience. The scale's validity was ascertained following a pilot study .76 Cronbach's alpha was obtained.

Teachers Pedagogical Proficiency

The respondents rated their perceived teacher's pedagogical proficiency with a 10-item Linkert form scale scored in 5-point ratings ranging from 1 (not likable at all) to 5 (very likable). The instrument was validated after a pilot study, and the Cronbach alpha .78 reliability coefficient was recorded in the survey. A higher score shows a high perceived teacher's pedagogical proficiency.

Procedure

undergraduates in Edo state were recruited as participants from various departments in three tertiary institutions located in the state. The researcher sought permission from the departmental authorities, including the representatives of the departments used for the study. The researcher approached many male and female undergraduates between April and July 2024 and asked whether they were current department students. The 232 individuals identified as current students were considered qualified for the study. These students (232) were then asked to participate in a survey to understand their academic resilience. Of the 232 students, 221 consented to participate and were thus handed the questionnaire. All two hundred and twenty-one (221) copies of the questionnaire were completed and collected on the spot. However, only adequately completed questionnaires (i.e., 214) were subjected to statistical analysis. The remaining seven were discarded due to inappropriate completion. In all, the response rate was 92. 86 %.

Result

Firstly, the percentage score of the student's academic resilience was ascertained. Table 1 below shows that most respondents (65.5%) expressed a positive academic resilience, while (34.5%) indicated a negative academic resilience. This outcome presupposes that many of the students have positive academic resilience.

Table 1:

The table shows the percentage score for academic resilience.

	Frequency	Percent
Positive academic resilience	72	65.5
Negative academic resilience	24	34.5
Total	96	100

The teacher's pedagogical proficiency was expected to predict academic resilience positively. To test the hypothesis that pedagogical proficiency will predict students' academic resilience. A simple regression analysis was conducted on the data. The investigation revealed that teachers' pedagogical proficiency statistically significantly influenced the participant's academic resilience, $F(1,94), 279.71, P < .05$. With R^2 of .368, as shown in Table 2 below. The result

indicated that teachers' pedagogical competence accounted for 36.8% of the variation in students' academic resilience. Thus, the expectation that teachers' pedagogical competence will significantly predict students' academic resilience was affirmed.

Table 2:

Table showing the simple regression results on the influence of teachers' pedagogical proficiency on students' academic resilience.

Model	B	SEB	β	R^2	t	Sig.
(Constant)	.431	.084			5.119	.000
TPP	.784	.051	.819	.668	15.241	.000

Note. TPP = Teacher's Pedagogical Competence; B = Unstandardized regression coefficient; SEB = Standardized error of the Coefficient; β = Standardized coefficient; R^2 = Coefficient of determination. *P<.000.

Discussion

The present study aimed to determine the academic resilience of students in Edo state, Nigeria, based on the teacher's pedagogical proficiency. The percentage score outcome revealed that most respondents (65.5%) expressed a positive academic resilience. This result reflects a high rate of favorable academic resilience in the research context. It signifies a student's ability to persist and succeed academically, reflecting their capacity to adapt to changing circumstances and maintain a positive attitude toward learning. This assertion describes attitude's essential components, encompassing cognitive, affective, and behavioral mechanisms.

Furthermore, teachers' pedagogical proficiency was expected to significantly predict students' academic resilience. The simple regression analysis established a statistically significant influence of teachers' pedagogical proficiency on the respondent's academic resilience. The result revealed that teachers' pedagogical proficiency accounted for 63.8% of the respondent's academic resilience variation. Therefore, the result supported the expectations of the study. The finding is aligned with a previous study (Fauth et al., 2019), which found that teacher competence (pedagogical content knowledge and teaching enthusiasm) was positively related to students' interests. In addition, teachers' pedagogic competence has been implicated in student motivation (Saggaf et al., 2018). More so, the study by Florence (2019) found that teachers' pedagogical competence significantly influenced students' attitudes to basic science. This study suggests more elaborate pedagogical practices in higher education institutions.

Practical implication

The present study revealed that teachers' educational and experiential backgrounds influenced the quality of students' academic resilience. This research contributes to understanding how teacher practices can be optimized to support academic resilience in tertiary education. The findings provide valuable insights for educators, policymakers, and stakeholders in the education sector, helping to create more resilient and successful students.

Conclusion

This study focuses on assessing academic resilience in the Nigerian educational landscape. The study revealed a more positive academic resilience based on effective pedagogy. In addition, a positive association was established between teachers' pedagogical proficiency and academic resilience. Thus, the study concludes that a teacher's pedagogical proficiency is vital to a student's academic resilience in a higher education institution. Despite this knowledge, the study's sample size might affect the generalization of the result. However, the study contributes to the literature by revealing teachers' pedagogical competence as essential in academic resilience. Therefore, it is

recommended that academic provider be exposed to regular training to expand their content knowledge, instruction method, use of relevant IT tools, and improvisation approach.

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