

## The Influence of Creativity in Teaching Skills among Secondary School Teachers in Benue State: Implications for Managers of Secondary Education

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### **Abstract**

*The study examined Influence of Creativity in Teaching Skills among Secondary School Teachers in Benue State: Implications for Managers of Secondary Education. To achieve the purpose of the study, the researcher formulated three (3) objectives of the study, research questions and null hypotheses that guided the study. The study made use of descriptive survey design. The population of the study consists of 2,800 teachers in public senior secondary schools in Benue State. The sample size of the study is 480 teachers. The instrument used for data collection was self-structured questionnaire. The data gathered were analyzed using mean and standard deviation for the research questions while the null hypotheses were tested using z-test statistical tool at 0.05 level of significance. Based on data analysis, the findings of the study revealed that Students learning with fun, have emotional development, enhancing thinking capability, boosts problem solving skills, and improves focus and attention are importance of creativity in the classroom thereby influencing or enhancing students' academic performance. Teachers developing creative skills influence the managers of secondary education. Teachers' creativity in the classroom has positive influence on the academic performance of senior secondary school students. However, the researcher recommends that: Government through Ministry of Education should organize workshop programme for all the teachers to enlighten them on the role and importance of creativity on these students' academic performance. The school management should subject all the teachers to in-service training on how to develop creative skills hence it enhances the students' academic performance. Government and Non-Governmental organizations should organize awareness and enlightenment programme for the teachers and students on the needs of creativity in the classroom hence creativity influence the students' academic performance.*

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**Keywords:** *Influence, Creativity, Teaching skills, Secondary School Teachers, managers of secondary education*

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Teachers' creativity is a cluster of skills that are needed to produce ideas that are both original and valuable (Sternberg, 2012) and teaching creatively has been described as teachers using imaginative approaches to make learning more interesting, exciting and effective. Creative classrooms give an opportunity for students to learn with fun. The teaching activities such as storytelling and skits help them to learn without the pressure of learning. Teachers should encourage this quality in students from the lower class itself and inspire them to believe in one's own creativity. Creativity is often paid lip service, but in reality, most schools are currently experiencing a creativity occurring outside of school. Numerous psychologists argue that creativity is not just an enrichment or add-on in the classroom. It is a definable, measurable, set of psychological skills that enhance learning and will necessarily in the 21<sup>st</sup> century workforce.

According to Nwankwo (2018), a well-accepted definition of creativity is the generation of a new product that is both novel and appropriate in a particular scenario (A product could be an idea, an artwork, an invention, or an assignment in your classroom). There is not just one way for a person to be creative or one set of characteristics that will differentiate the creative person. Instead, many experts think of creativity as a set of skills and attitudes that anyone is capable of tolerating ambiguity redefining old problems, finding new problems to solve, taking sensible risks, and following an inner passion. Amadi (2016) observed that many experts in psychology and education argue that creativity skills are psychological skills needed for success in school and in the future workforce. As such, schools have a duty to teach them and value them.

Creativity also directly enhances learning by increasing motivation, deepening understanding, and promoting joy. Intrinsic motivation is essential to the creative process and relies on students pursuing meaningful goals. Startho (2018) points out in the book *creativity in the classroom*, the strategies that support creativity solving problems, exploring multiple options, and learning inquiry also support depth of understanding. Sternberg (2012) has argued that creativity can predict college success above and beyond academic achievement, creativity can predict college success above and beyond just what we get from standardized test scores. Beyond academic achievement, creativity can make learning more fun, leading to joy and positive emotional engagement in students. Creativity is not just about innovating or making art, it is about living creatively. Teachers who can model creative ways of thinking, playfully engage with content, and express their ideas will beget creative students. Students need to see teachers who have passions, whether it is drawing, mathematics, painting, biology, music, politics, or theater, that contagion of passion and positive emotion is a noted for creative thought. Sternberg (2012) suggests that engaging in a creative activity doodling, playing a musical instrument, knitting, designing just once a day can lead you into a more positive state of mind. This positive state of mind will sustain you and spread to the students.

Academic performance implies the extent to which a student, teacher or institutions has attained their short or long term educational goals. Completion of educational bench marks such as senior secondary school, diplomas and bachelor degree represent academic performance. Academic performance is commonly measure through examination or continuous assessments but there is no general agreement on how it is best evaluated or which aspects are most important, procedural knowledge such as skills or declarative knowledge such as facts (Annie, 2016).

### **Statement of the Problem**

Studies have shown that students' academic performance is very poor now compare to before. This is as a result of lack teacher's creativity in teaching and learning. Some of the teachers lack the necessary skills needed in teaching and learning, some teachers also do not use imaginative approaches to make learning more interesting, exiting and effective. Inability of the teachers to adopt new ideas or technology, the creative or innovative has affected the students' academic performance. Lack of good classroom environment has denied the students some elements of creativity which makes the lessons more interesting and interactive. Teachers are undermining the importance of creativity in the classroom, the ways teachers can develop their own creativity and the creativity in the classroom

### **Purpose of the Study**

The main objective of the study is to assess the Influence of Creativity in Teaching Skills among Secondary School Teachers in Benue State: Implications for Managers of Secondary Education. The specific objectives are to:

1. examine the extent the importance of creativity in the classroom influence the academic performance of senior secondary school students in Benue State.
2. determine the extent that teachers' development of creative skill influence the academic performance of senior secondary school students in Benue State.
3. find out the extent the teachers' creativity in the classroom influence the academic performance of senior secondary school students in Benue State.

### **Research Questions**

The researcher formulated the following research questions that guided the study.

1. To what extent does importance of creativity in the classroom influence the academic performance of senior secondary school students in Benue State?
2. To what extent does teachers' development of creative skill influence the academic performance of senior secondary school students in Benue State?
3. To what extent does teachers' creativity in the classroom influence the academic performance of senior secondary school students in Benue State?

### **Hypothesis**

1. There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of the male and female teachers between the influence of the importance of creativity in the classroom and the academic performance of senior secondary school students in Benue State.
2. There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of the male and female teachers between the influence of the teachers' development of creative skill and the academic performance of senior secondary school students in Benue State.
3. There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of the male and female teachers between the influence of the teachers' creativity in the classroom and the academic performance of senior secondary school students in Benue State.

### **Literature Review**

#### **Social Learning Theory (SLT)**

Albert Bandura is one of the proponents of SLT. However, SLT holds that behaviour is influenced by environmental factors, teachers' initiative and not psychological or cognitive factors. Thus,

SLT assumes that psychological and environmental factors combined influence the development of specific behaviours. SLT stress the importance of attending to and modelling the behaviours, cognitions (e.g. attitudes, and beliefs) and emotions of others. SLT sees an interactive process between cognitive, behavioural and environmental influences (Ackard, 2010). There are three principles that help define SLT; Observational learning is achieved when the modelled behaviour is structured or organized and then rehearsed symbolically, and then overtly enacted. Retention of that behaviour occurs when the modelled behaviour is coded into words, labels or images. The adoption of the modelled behaviour is strengthened when the outcomes of that behaviour are valued, seen as important to the individual or lead to desirable and expected outcome. The modelled behaviour is more likely to be integrated by the observer when the model has characteristics similar to the observer, there is a cognitive-behavioural connection with the model, the model is admired by the observer, and the behaviour that is adopted has practical or functional value.

SLT defines four requirements for learning and modelling behaviour. Attention to the modelling events in the environment and the characteristics of the observed to attend to these events (emotional, perceptual set, arousal level). Retention, which is the cognitive component involving remembering what one observed, coding, organizing and rehearsing it at the cognitive level. Reproduction or the ability to reproduce or copy the behaviour which includes observing the self-reproducing the behaviour and feedback of the accuracy of that reproduction. Motivation or behavioural consequence that justifies wanting to adopt the behaviour which includes self-reinforcement.

### **Conceptual Review**

#### **Creative Teaching and Teaching Creativity: How to Foster Creativity in the Classroom**

**Why schools need to prioritize creativity:** According to Bishop (2013), a well-accepted definition of creativity is the generation of a new product that's both novel and appropriate in a particular scenario. (A product could be an idea, an artwork, an invention, or an assignment in your classroom.) There isn't just one way for a person to "be creative," or one set of characteristics that will differentiate "the" creative person. Instead, many experts think of creativity as a set of skills and attitudes that anyone is capable of: tolerating ambiguity, redefining old problems, finding new problems to solve, taking sensible risks, and following an inner passion.

Some researchers distinguish between several stages of creativity. Most people are familiar with "Big-C" creativity: rare ideas of extraordinary people, like Leonardo Da Vinci's Mona Lisa, or Einstein's paradigm-shifting theories of theoretical physics. But there are also everyday forms of creativity: "Minic" creativity, when a person learns something new and their understanding of the world changes, and "Little-c" creativity, when a person's life become embedded with everyday creative thoughts and actions. Many experts in psychology and education argue that creativity skills are psychological skills needed for success in school and in the future workforce. As such, schools have a duty to teach them and value them. One **2010 survey** found that over 1,500 executives valued creativity as the most crucial business skill in the modern world. In a knowledge economy where rote tasks are can be completed by machines, and almost all information is available with one click, students need to be ready to learn independently, and constantly adapt, innovate, and creatively problem-solve in the workplace.

Anyanwu (2010), noted that Creativity also directly enhances learning by increasing motivation, deepening understanding, and promoting joy. Intrinsic motivation is essential to the creative process and relies on students pursuing meaningful goals. “Create” is at the top of Bloom’s taxonomy for a reason: By noticing broader patterns and connecting material across academic disciplines, creative thinking can facilitate deeper cross-curricular learning. As Alane Jordan Starko points out in the book *Creativity in the Classroom*, the strategies that support creativity solving problems, exploring multiple options, and learning inquiry also support depth of understanding.

Robert Sternberg has argued that creativity can predict college success above and beyond just what we get from standardized test scores: In one study of students taking the GRE, higher scores correlated with higher creativity. Beyond academic achievement, creativity can make learning more fun leading to joy and positive emotional engagement in students. (Watch out for what Jonathan Plucker, a professor in the Johns Hopkins School of Education, calls “Listerine” approach to education that “serious and boring” is the only way towards productive learning.)

### **How to develop your students’ creativity in the classroom**

Creativity requires a safe environment in which to play, exercise autonomy, and take risks. As teachers, it’s up to us to establish this kind of supportive classroom. Here are some suggestions from psychologists and educators for how to develop and nurture your students’ creativity:

1. **Create a compassionate, accepting environment.** Since being creative requires going out on a limb, students need to trust that they can make a mistake in front of you.
2. **Be present with students’ ideas.** Have more off-the-cuff conversations with students. Find out what their passion areas are, and build those into your approach.
3. **Encourage autonomy.** Don’t let yourself be the arbiter of what “good” work is. Instead, give feedback that encourages self-assessment and independence.
4. **Re-word assignments to promote creative thinking.** Try adding words like “create,” “design,” “invent,” “imagine,” “suppose,” to your assignments. Adding instructions such as “Come up with as many solutions as possible” or “Be creative!” can increase creative performance.
5. **Give students direct feedback on their creativity.** Lots of students don’t realize how creative they are, or get feedback to help them incorporate “creative” into their self-concept. Explore the idea of “creative competence” alongside the traditional academic competencies in literacy and mathematics. When we evaluate something, we value it! Creating a self-concept that includes creativity.
6. **Help students know when it’s appropriate to be creative.** For example, help them see the contexts when creativity is more or less helpful—in a low-stakes group project versus a standardized state assessment.
7. **Use creative instructional strategies, models, and methods** as much as possible in a variety of domains. Model creativity for students in the way you speak and the way you act. For example, you could say “I thought about 3 ways to introduce this lesson. I’m going to show you 2, then you come up with a third,” or show them a personal project you’ve been working on.

8. **Channel the creativity impulses in “misbehaviour.”** For students who are often disturbances, see if you notice any creativity in their behaviour. Perhaps that originality could be channelled in other ways?
9. **Protect and support your students’ intrinsic motivation.** Intrinsic motivation fuels creativity. **Several studies** have shown that relying on rewards and incentives in the classroom can undermine intrinsic motivation to complete a task an effect called “over justification.” To avoid this, Beth Hennessey, a professor of Psychology at Wellesley College, suggests that educators try to limit competitions and comparison with others, focusing instead on self-improvement. Experiment with monitoring students less as they work, and provide opportunities for them to pursue their passion when you can.
10. **Explicitly discuss creativity myths and stereotypes with your students.** Help them understand what creativity is and is not, and how to recognize it in the world around them.
11. **Experiment with activities where students can practice creative thinking.** Many teachers have suggestions for creative activities they’ve tried as warm-ups or quick breaks. “Doodles,” or visual riddles, are simple line drawings that can have a wide range of different interpretations, and can stimulate divergent thinking. “Quick writes” and “free writes” can help students to let go of their internal censor. As part of reviewing material, you could have kids use **concept cartooning**, or draw/design/paint visual metaphors to capture the essence of complex academic information.

### **Teachers: Develop and nurture your own creativity**

As creativity scholars Scott Barry Kaufman and Carolyn Gregoire write in their book *Wired to create*: “Creativity isn’t just about innovating or making art, it’s about *living* creatively. We can approach any situation in life with a creative spirit.” Teaching is, through and through, a creative profession. Teachers who can model creative ways of thinking, playfully engage with content, and express their ideas, will beget creative students. Students need to see teachers who have passions, whether it’s drawing, mathematics, painting, biology, music, politics, or theatre. That contagion of passion and positive emotion is a hotbed for creative thought. Creatively fulfilled teachers may also be happier teachers. One study in the Journal of Positive Psychology suggests that engaging in a creative activity doodling, playing a musical instrument, knitting, and designing just once a day can lead you into a more positive state of mind.

This positive state of mind will sustain you, and spread to your students.

Here are some ways teachers can develop and nurture their own creativity:

1. **Be aware of your own limiting misconceptions about creativity.** Examine your own attitude toward creativity and help yourself grow by thinking about alternative solutions.
2. **Experiment with new ways of teaching in the classroom** could you try a new arts integration lesson you’ve always been afraid to try? What about trying a new hands-on STEM investigation?
3. **Take a risk to express your creative side.** Often, I’ll doodle something on the board as an attention getter, or to deliver the morning message. Having a meeker or a dragon telling students to put their backpacks away is much more likely to amuse, plus it’s a chance for me to challenge myself artistically every day.

4. **Treat lesson planning as the creative exercise it is.** Every day, you face new constraints in the form of the needs and preferences of the specific learners in your classroom. Have you heard your students debating a certain issue during recess or in the hallway? Have you noticed their attention focused on a particular new gadget, fad, or current events issue? Find a way to weave it into a lesson.
5. **Develop personal creative rituals.** In her classic 1992 book on developing personal creativity, *The Artist's Way*, Julia Cameron writes about the "artist's date": "a block of time, perhaps two hours weekly, especially set aside and committed to nurturing your creative consciousness, your inner artist." As Cameron puts it, "the artist date is an excursion, a play date that you pre-plan and defend against all interlopers. ... A visit to a great junk store, a solo trip to the beach, an old movie seen alone together, a visit to an aquarium or an art gallery these cost time, not money. Remember, it is the time commitment that is sacred."
6. **Try meditation practices that encourage creative thought,** such as "open-monitoring" meditation. One **study** found that those who practiced focused-attention meditation performed better on a test of convergent thinking, while those who practiced open-monitoring meditation performed better on a test of divergent thinking.
7. **Seek solitude.** Spending time in solitude is essential to nourishing your creativity. Set aside some time to be alone, away from the distractions of technology and others who may rely on you?
8. **Travel.** One study found that **cross-cultural experiences** can increase measures of creative thinking.
9. **Switch up your daily routines.** Challenge your conventional ways of thinking by taking a different route to work, listening to a new genre of music, go to a museum and check out a style of art you're unfamiliar with. Changing your environment and breaking out of habitual thought can shake your mind out of its rut.
10. **Embrace ambiguity.** You're probably teaching your students to embrace error, take risks, and learn from failure. See your own teaching as an extension of the same process. Embrace the grey areas, the ambiguities. "Ambiguity tolerance" is a key component of creativity.

### **Creativity in the Classroom**

When designing learning experiences, teachers can plan and frame curriculum and provide tools that give students options, voice, and choice in order to enable them to be creative. In my work in schools, I have found four things that successful teachers do to develop creativity in their students (Esu, 2019).

1. Set up learning activities that allow students to explore their creativity in relevant, interesting, and worthwhile ways. Classroom example: Fourth-grade students are presented with a sample of rocks. They are to devise tests to determine what kind of rocks they have based on the definitions they've studied. Students find their own ways to determine differences in hardness, color, and shapes. Another classroom example: A kindergarten class creates a new illustrated book each week that celebrates a different member of the class or an adult at the school. Each book is full of pages drawn by each student. They have the full liberty of depicting what the person likes and how they perceive him or her.

2. Value creativity and celebrate and reward it. Classroom example: Third-grade students are learning about polygons and to see if they know the concept, the teacher takes them outside and gives each student a sidewalk chalk. Each student is given the task of drawing several examples of polygons on the driveway. Once the students have accomplished this, the teacher tells the students to transform those shapes into something they love. The students want to show everyone their geometric-based kittens, robots, and dragons and then have an opportunity to explain to the whole class why they liked them.

3. Teach students the other skills they need to be creative. Classroom example: A second-grade class is learning about the concept of freezing. The teacher asks one question to get them started, “Does only water freeze?” The students then design an experiment to determine what other things freeze. The limit is that they can only use what they have in the classroom at the time.

The students come up with a list of things that they will leave outside to see if they freeze: water, juice, vinegar, glue, glass cleaner, toothpaste, and paper. Some suggestions they decide are already solids and shouldn't go outside: pencils, erasers, and books (but somehow paper stays on the test list). The next day, they discuss their findings and have engaging conversations about why the paper is stiff and the vinegar has not frozen. The initial discussion among students about what might freeze fosters skills such as advocating for one's ideas and compromising. The follow-up discussion encourages deductive reasoning and active listening.

1. Remove constraints for creativity and give the students space and a framework in which they can be creative. Classroom example: A sixth-grade class produces Halloween costume plays. In order to wear costumes to school, the students have to write a play that incorporates each of their characters into a plot and then present the play. For instance, they have to come up with how a giant soda can and the superhero Wonder Woman will interact. The students love the challenge.



## **Role and Importance of Creativity in Classroom**

According to Okwo (2013), good classroom environment always has some elements of creativity which makes the lessons more interesting and interactive. The right mix of creativity along with curriculum helps students to be innovative and also encourages them to learn new things. Students can grow up as good communicators in addition to improving their emotional and social skills. Creative classrooms can really transform the way students acquire education and how they apply it in their real life. In fact, creative expression plays a key role in a student's emotional development.

Let us have a look at how important is the role of creativity in today's classroom and its benefits.

### **1. Learn with fun**

2. Creative classrooms give an opportunity for students to learn with fun. The teaching activities such as storytelling and skits help them to learn without the pressure of learning. Students are always fun loving and including creative activities along with curriculum gains their interest for learning. Teachers should encourage this quality in students from the lower classes itself and inspire them to believe in one's own creativity. Fun team building activities can be organized so as to promote creative thinking in groups and helping them to learn about accepting others' ideas.

### **3. Freedom of Expression**

Unlike the conventional teaching methods, the creative classrooms give them the opportunity to express themselves.

4. Whether it is debate or classroom discussions or field trips, students have the chance to come out of their shells and become a part of it. This freedom of expression gives them a sense of goodness and happiness. Making some contributions in the learning sessions gives them a sense of satisfaction too. A creative approach to learning makes them more open with the puzzles that come their way and gives them a feeling of accomplishment and pride.

### **5. Emotional Development**

Creative expression is important for a kid to trigger up their emotional development. Importantly, this has to happen at their lower classes itself so that they grow up by responding well to the happenings around them. Creativity gives them that freedom to explore the surroundings and learn new things from them. Students would always love a classroom setting that helps them to explore freely without setting them any boundaries. When they can show off their true emotions in a creative manner in their classrooms, they can build up good confidence level.

### **6. Enhances Thinking Capability**

Creativity can stimulate imaginative thinking capability in students. That is why teachers promote activities such as open-ended questions, creative team building activities, brainstorming sessions and debates amidst busy curriculum schedules. Some teachers tactfully use these techniques to teach tough lessons to make children learn with fun and ease. Activities such as puppet shows will keep the students feel interested in the learning sessions and the flow of images in their mind gives them the pleasure of creativity. The open-ended questions will open them a world of imaginative thinking and they can come up with creative responses.

### **7. Reduced Stress and Anxiety**

When some time is set aside for creativity in between all the strenuous study times, it takes a lot of stress away from students. This sense of joy keeps them relaxed and reduces their anxiety which in turn helps them to prepare well for exams and excel in it. Integrating more hands-on learning and making room for visual reflection is really going to make a positive impact. Encouraging productive discussions as well as making the classroom layout more flexible all matters a lot in gearing up a creative classroom atmosphere.

### **8. Boosts Problem Solving Skills**

The brainstorming activities involving puzzles can stimulate the skills of problem-solving in children. Creativity can really alter the way students approach a problem and it can be impressively optimistic once they go through creative teaching sessions. Creative problem solving can be encouraged in classrooms that help students to think out of the box and be more imaginative and innovative. With this way, the problems or opportunities are redefined by the students and the solutions or responses would be more innovative.

### **9. Improves Focus and Attention**

The average attention or concentration span of a lower class kid is just a few minutes. The conventional teaching methods would be boring for them and they may lose their focus in the midway. Including creative teaching strategies such as storytelling and skits are sure to improve their focus and attention and the study time would be more productive. Playing memory games, taking regular breaks and intervals to bring in some creativity and setting a flexible classroom environment can make a lot of improvement in their attention span.

### **10. Better Communicators**

A classroom environment that promotes creativity opens them a world of communication. Students can make better conversation and stimulate innovative thinking and talking sessions in their free time. This also triggers group problem solving and shared learning that gives them a feeling of togetherness. Classroom debates not only help them to think creatively but also understand and welcome others' views. This kind of shared creative experience helps them to open up to one another and grow up as better communicators.

### **11. Follow Passions**

Working out the passions in addition to excelling in academics is important for a student to come up successful in life. A good classroom environment should give space for students to follow their passions whether it is music, dance, poetry, drawing or other art forms. This gives students a sense of happiness which in turn helps them to approach academics with a free mind. Setting aside time for such activities is really going to help them develop their creative talents in addition to academic brilliance. Students who rightly use these opportunities can come out of the school with flying colours.

### **12. Future Opportunities**

A stimulating classroom can have charts that visualize the goals with timelines that help students to have a look on the go. The classrooms are the place where students get the basement for how successful they can be when they grow up. The skills and the confidence they gain throughout their school days are really going to make an Impact in

the way they prosper the career. In fact, creative persons have an upper hand in triggering future opportunities than those with a "mere academic skill set.

They can express freely during knock out rounds and the way they present themselves really matters in this competitive phase.

### 13. **Innovative Mind-set**

Open-ended questions and classroom discussions are two popular creative teaching strategies that help students to develop an innovative mind-set. Students get opportunity to think more critically

about the question or subject and come up with innovative ideas. The friendly classroom discussions also aid them to think decisively about others' ideas and contributions while thinking critically to produce something innovative; A stimulating classroom setting which is colourful rather than black and white can do the trick to lower class students and teachers can make some effort to bring in some humour between the lessons.

### 14. **Drive Lifelong Learning**

A person with a creative mind-set always has that craving to learn new things every time and this helps them to have that amazing feeling of lifelong learning. This would really keep them engaged and active throughout which in turn helps them to stay young always. A curious mind always loves to learn more and the creative classrooms can build up a curious mind-set in children through unconventional ways. The education apps are on the rise with the growing mobile market and there are some awesome apps such as Doodle Buddy, 123D Sculpt. Audacity and Garage Band that gear up creativity. However, it is the role of a good teacher. To bring in the right mix of creativity in classrooms and bring out the best in the students. The pleasure of creativity also contributes a lot to improved health and this helps them to have a continued growth in academics as well as world of creativity.

During a TED talk, Sir Ken Robinson raised the utmost significance of creativity in today's education when he told "Creativity now is as important in education as literacy, and we should treat it with the same status. Every child has some inbuilt creativity in them and proper guidance from the teacher coaxes and cultivates it to help them grow up as creative individuals.

## METHODOLOGY

**Research Design:** The study made use of descriptive survey design to ascertain the influence of teachers' creativity on the academic performance of students. The design was used because it helped the researcher to elicit information from the respondents.

**Population of Study:** According to Wimmer and Dominick (2011), population is a group or class or subjects, variables, concepts or phenomena within the area or scope of research or study. The population of the study consist of 2,800 teachers in public seniors secondary schools in Benue State.

**Sample Size and Sampling Technique:** The study made use of simple random sampling technique to select a sample size of 480 teachers.

**Instrument for Data Collection:** Structured questionnaire was used for collecting data for study. The questionnaire was divided into four sections. Section A was the bio data of the respondents, section B deals on the respondents' idea on the subject matter. The questionnaire was designed after elaborate study of materials reviewed in the literature. The Likert type four (4) points scale was used as shown: Strongly Agree (SA) = 4, Agree (A) =3, Disagree (D) =2, Strongly Disagree (SD) = 1.

**Data Analysis Technique:** The data collected was analyzed using frequency table, mean score and standard deviation. The criterion decision rule is that any mean score that is from 2.50 and above is accepted while the mean score that is less than 2.50 is rejected while the null hypotheses will be tested using Z-test statistical tool at 0.05 level of significance.

## RESULTS

**Table 1: Mean and standard deviation/analysis on the influence of creativity in teaching Skills among Secondary School Teachers in Benue State**

S/ No	Questionnaire Items	Male Teachers = 180		Remarks	Female Teachers = 300		Remarks
		Mean x̄	SD		Mean x̄	SD	
1.	Creative classroom give an opportunity for students to learn with fun thereby ensure that everybody is participated.	2.89	0.85	Agree	2.95	0.86	Agree
2.	Creativity in the classroom can stimulate imaginative thinking capability in students thereby enhancing the students' capability and performance.	2.86	0.83	Agree	2.86	0.84	Agree
3.	Creative expression is important for a kid to trigger up their emotional development thereby giving the students freedom to explore the surroundings and learn new things.	2.78	0.83	Agree	2.91	0.85	Agree
4.	Leading students in the brain storming activities involving puzzles can stimulate the skills of problem-solving in students thereby enhancing their academic performance	2.83	0.84	Agree	2.82	0.84	Agree
<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>2.84</b>	<b>0.84</b>		<b>2.89</b>	<b>0.85</b>	

**Source:** Field Survey, 2023

The analysis in Table 1 above revealed that the respondents agreed on the view that Creative classroom give an opportunity for students to learn with fun thereby ensure that everybody is participated. The analysis still indicated that the respondents accepted on the point that Creativity in the classroom can stimulate imaginative thinking capability in students thereby enhancing the students' capability and performance. It was also observed in the table that the respondents accepted the fact that Creative expression is important for a kid to trigger up their emotional development thereby giving the students freedom to explore the surroundings and learn new things. The table still showed that the respondents agreed on the view that Leading students in the brain storming activities involving puzzles can stimulate the skills of problem-solving in students thereby enhancing their academic performance.

**Table 2: Mean and standard deviation analysis on the extent teachers' development of creative skill among senior secondary school students in Benue State**

S/ No	Questionnaire Items	Male Teachers = 180			Female Teachers = 300		
		Mean $\bar{x}$	SD	Remarks	Mean $\bar{x}$	SD	Remarks
5.	Experiment with new ways of teaching in the classroom help teachers to develop their own creativity thereby enhancing the students' academic performance.	2.86	0.84	Agree	2.91	0.85	Agree
6.	Teachers taking a risk to express their creative side help them to develop their own creativity thereby enhancing the students' academic performance.	2.83	0.84	Agree	2.95	0.86	Agree
7.	Try meditation practices	2.97	0.86	Agree	2.98	0.86	Agree
8.	Teachers developing personal creative rituals is a way to develop their own creativity thereby enhancing the students' academic performance	2.94	0.86	Agree	2.99	0.86	Agree
<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>2.90</b>	<b>0.85</b>		<b>2.96</b>	<b>0.86</b>	

**Source:** Field Survey, 2023.

The data analysis in Table 2 above indicated that the respondents accepted the point that Experiment with new ways of teaching in the classroom help teachers to develop their own creativity thereby enhancing the students' academic performance. The analysis also showed that the respondents agreed on the view Teachers taking a risk to express their creative side help them to develop their own creativity thereby enhancing the students' academic performance. It was still noticed in the table that the respondents agreed on the fact that Try meditation practices that encourage creative thought by the teachers is a way to develop their own creativity thereby enhancing the students' academic performance. The analysis also revealed that the respondents accepted the view that Teachers developing personal creative rituals is a way to develop their own creativity thereby enhancing the students' academic performance.

**Table 3: Mean and standard deviation analysis on the extent teachers' creativity in the classroom among secondary school teachers in Benue State**

S/ No	Questionnaire Items	Male Teachers = 180			Female Teachers = 300		
		Mean $\bar{x}$	SD	Remarks	Mean $\bar{x}$	SD	Remarks

9.		SD		SD			
	Teachers setting up learning activities that allow students to explore their creativity in relevant, interesting, and worthwhile ways enhance the students' academic performance.	2.83	0.84	Agree	2.91	0.85	Agree
10.	Teachers value creativity, celebrate and reward it, is a creativity in the classroom which enhance the students' academic performance.	2.72	0.82	Agree	2.86	0.84	Agree
11.	Teaching students the other skills they need is itself a form of creativity	2.75	0.83	Agree	2.93	0.85	Agree
12.	Teachers removing constraints for creativity and give the students space	2.69	0.82	Agree	2.95	0.86	Agree
<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>2.74</b>	<b>0.83</b>		<b>2.91</b>	<b>0.85</b>	

**Source:** Field Survey, 2023.

The analysis in Table 3 above showed that the respondents accepted the point that Teachers setting up learning activities that allow students to explore their creativity in relevant, interesting, and worthwhile ways enhance the students' academic performance. The table still revealed that the respondents agreed that Teachers value creativity, celebrate and reward it, is a creativity in the classroom which enhance the students' academic performance. It was also observed from the analysis that the respondents accepted the point that teaching students the other skills they need to be creative is a creativity in the classroom thereby enhancing the students' academic performance. The analysis still indicated that the respondents agreed on the view that Teachers removing constraints for creativity and give the students' space and a framework in which they can be creative enhance the students' academic performance.

### Summary of Major Findings

Based on the data analysis above, the study therefore summarizes that;

1. Students learning with fun, impacts emotional development, enhancing thinking capability, boosts problem solving skills, and improves focus and attention are importance of creativity in the classroom thereby influencing or enhancing students' academic performance.
2. Teachers developing creative skills influence the academic performance of senior secondary school students.
3. Teachers creativity in the classroom has positive influence on the academic performance of senior secondary school students.

## DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The findings of the study in research question 1: To what extent does creativity in teaching influence the academic performance of senior secondary school students in Benue State revealed that the importance of creativity in the classroom has positive influence on the academic performance of senior secondary school students. This finding is in collaboration with Sternberg (2001), who observed that learning with fun, freedom of expression, emotional developing, to enhance thinking capability and boosting problem solving skills are importance of creativity in the classroom that enhance or influence students' academic performance. The findings indicated that the respondents agreed on the view that creative classroom give an opportunity for students to learn with fun thereby ensure that everybody is participated. The analysis still indicated that the respondents accepted on the point that Creativity in the classroom can stimulate imaginative thinking capability in students thereby enhancing the students' capability and performance. It was also observed in the table that the respondents accepted the fact that Creative expression is important for a kid to trigger up their emotional development thereby giving the students freedom to explore the surroundings and learn new things. The table still showed that the respondents agreed on the view that Leading students in the brain storming activities involving puzzles can stimulate the skills of problem-solving in students thereby enhancing their academic performance.

The study in research question 2: To what extent does teachers' development of creative skill influence the teaching skills among secondary school students in Benue State indicated that leaches development of creative skills influence the academic performance of senior secondary school students. This study is in the same view with Nwankwo (2018), who admitted that experiment with new ways of teaching in the classroom, taking a risk to express your creative side and developing personal creative rituals are some ways teachers can develop and nurture their own creativity which enhance or influence the students' academic performance. The study revealed that the respondents accepted the point that experiment with new ways of teaching in the classroom help teachers to develop their own creativity thereby enhancing the students' academic performance. The analysis also showed that the respondents agreed on the view Teachers taking a risk to express their creative side help them to develop their own creativity thereby enhancing the students' academic performance. It was still noticed in the table that the respondents agreed on the fact that Try meditation practices that encourage creative thought by the teachers is a way to develop their own creativity thereby enhancing the students' academic performance. The analysis also revealed that the respondents accepted the view that Teachers developing personal creative rituals is a way to develop their own creativity thereby enhancing the students' academic performance.

The finding in research question 3: To what extent does teachers' creativity influence the Performance of secondary school teachers in Benue State showed that creativity in the classroom influence the students' academic performance in public senior secondary schools in Benue State. This finding is in line with Amadi (2016), who noted that there are four things that successful teachers do to develop creativity in their students. The finding also indicated that the respondents accepted the point that teachers setting up learning activities that allow students to explore their creativity in relevant, interesting, and worthwhile ways enhance the students' academic performance. The table still revealed that the respondents agreed that teachers value creativity, celebrate and reward it, is a creativity in the classroom which enhance the students' academic performance. It was also observed from the analysis that the respondents accepted the point that teaching students the other skills they need to be creative is a creativity in the classroom thereby enhancing the students' academic

performance. The analysis still indicated that the respondents agreed on the view that teachers removing constraints for creativity and give the students' space and a framework in which they can be creative enhance the students' academic performance.

## **CONCLUSION**

The influence of creativity in teachers' creativity in teaching skills among secondary school teachers in Benue State cannot be over emphasized. The researcher concluded that creativity directly enhances learning by increasing motivation, deepening understanding and promoting joy. The study also deduced that the teachers should develop their students' creativity in the classroom by creating a compassionate, accepting environment, be present with student ideas, encourage autonomy, and reword assignments to promote creative thinking, give students direct feedback on their creativity and help the students know when it is appropriate to be creative.

## **Implication for Mangers of Secondary Education**

This study is anchored on theory of vocational development and adjustment. Theory is not defined as an unsubstantiated body of facts or concepts that assist people to forecast determine or control given occurrences (Shertzer & Stone, 1972). A theory guides a practitioner to understand what to look for, what to anticipate and where to proceed. There are varied factors that influence students; choice of career. It is therefore very important for educational mangers, parents, teachers, psychologists, sociologists and counsellors to be abreast of these factors. Theory of vocational development help mangers of secondary education to look at each client differently based on his /her vocational needs. It is useful in bringing out the developmental tasks of students which should be known to teachers and parents. Theory assists mangers of secondary education to determine what type of facts to collect about each client while assisting him/her make realistic vocational choices with regard to his/her interest, aptitudes, values, aspirations and limitations.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Based on the findings of the study, the researcher made the following recommendations to achieve the objectives of the study.

1. Government through Ministry of Education should organize workshop programme for all the teachers to enlighten them on the role and importance of creativity on these students' academic performance.
2. The school management should subject all the teachers to in-service training on how to develop creative skills hence it enhances the students' academic performance.
3. Government and Non-Governmental organizations should organize awareness and enlightenment programme for the teachers and students on the needs of creativity in the classroom hence creativity influence the students' academic performance.



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