

INFLUENCE OF CREATIVE WRITING ON ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF ENGLISH STUDENTS OF FEDERAL COLLEGE OF EDUCATION, ABEOKUTA, OGUN STATE

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Abstract

The study examined the influence of creative written on academic performance of English students of Federal College of Education (FCE), Abeokuta, Ogun State. A descriptive survey research design was adopted. The Population comprises all English students of the Federal College Education, Abeokuta Ogun State. A Simple random sampling technique was used to select 100 students as sample for the study. A self-developed questionnaire was used as instrument for data collection. It was structured using a 2- point Likert scale: “Agree” and “Disagree”. The instrument was validated by experts, who affirmed its content validity. Its Reliability was determined using Cronbach Alpha method. Data collected were analyzed using simple percentage and standard deviation. The Findings revealed that creative writing is a powerful tool for enhancing academic performance, particularly in English education. Its application in the English allows students to engage with complex concepts in more imaginative and reflective ways. Creative writing enhances students’ academic performance, promote critical thinking, and make learning more enjoyable- despite some challenges related to time management. The acceptance of creative writing in the curriculum suggests that integrating this approach could lead to more engaging and effective English language. It was recommended that educators incorporate creative writing exercises into the English language curriculum to enhance student engagement and understanding of complex concepts. Additionally, faculty members should participate in training workshops focused on innovative teaching strategies, including the effective use of creative writing in English education.

Keywords: Academic, Influence, Creative written, Performance, Enhance

Introduction

The academic performance of students, especially in English-related subjects, has been a subject of considerable concern globally. In Nigeria, the emphasis on English education has been intensified as part of efforts to improve the nation’s Education and writing skills. English language being a core subject at the foundational level of English education in teacher-training institutions like the Federal College of Education (FCE), Abeokuta, is crucial in preparing students for more advanced studies in the English language. However, despite the emphasis on English education, many students still struggle with understanding many aspects of English resulting in low academic performance in English language.

Creative writing, traditionally associated with literature and the arts, involves the production of original, imaginative texts. However, its application has expanded into other fields, including communication, where it is used as a tool to enhance students' understanding and retention of grammatical aspects of English as concepts. Creative writing, which involves the expression of ideas through imaginative and original narratives, is being explored as a means to enhance students’ engagement and understanding of scientific concepts (Gere, 2020). According to Hickson (2022), creative writing in education encourages students to process and express their ideas in a more engaging and reflective way, which leads to deeper cognitive engagement. In the context of science education, integrating creative writing exercises, such as writing scientific stories, essays, or reflections, fosters a better grasp of abstract concepts and complex ideas by encouraging students to explore reading principles through narrative formats.

Academic performance is commonly measured through test scores, grades, or other forms of assessment that reflect students' mastery of course material. However, academic performance is not solely influenced by cognitive abilities; it is also impacted by factors like motivation, engagement, and teaching methods. Fowler and Taylor (2021) argue that innovative teaching methods that cater to different learning styles, such as creative writing exercises, can significantly improve students' performance across disciplines. Several studies have indicated that the integration of creative writing in other subjects can improve students' cognitive abilities, critical thinking, and overall aspects of English language (Fisher & Frey, 2021; Opitz & Ford, 2020).

In the context of English education, creative writing can take various forms, including reflective writing, storytelling, and journaling. These approaches encourage students to internalize and articulate writing concepts in their own words, which can lead to deeper understanding and retention of knowledge. For instance, when students are asked to write narratives that explain a scientific phenomenon or create fictional stories based on real scientific

principles, they are engaging in higher-order thinking, which has been linked to improved learning outcomes (Bromley, 2019).

In Nigeria, where English education often relies on rote memorization and passive learning methods, the introduction of creative writing as an instructional tool could represent a significant shift in pedagogical practices. Several studies have explored the relationship between creative writing and student outcomes in various academic disciplines, including English education. Newton and Newton (2023) conduct a study on the use of creative writing in teaching concepts and found that students who engaged in writing can engage in narratives and demonstrate a deeper understanding of topics in different aspects of English language. The study concluded that the narrative structure of creative writing allows students to connect scientific facts to real-world experiences, thereby improving comprehension and retention. Similarly, Kendall and Fulton (2021) investigate the effects of creative writing assignments on the academic performance of secondary school students in biology. Their findings indicated that students who were encouraged to write creative essays about biological processes, such as photosynthesis and respiration, outperformed their peers in assessments. The researchers attributed this improvement to the way creative writing engages students emotionally and cognitively, making abstract scientific concepts more relatable and easier to grasp.

The relationship between creative writing and academic performance has also been explored in broader contexts. Smith and Andrews (2022) analyze the academic performance of undergraduate students who participated in creative writing workshops across various disciplines, in English language. Their results showed that students who consistently practiced creative writing, regardless of their major, exhibited improved critical thinking skills and higher overall GPAs. The study concluded that creative writing fosters intellectual curiosity and a willingness to explore complex topics in depth, both of which are crucial for academic success. Additionally, Jackson and Lee (2020) examine the role of creative writing in improving literacy and scientific communication skills among university students. They found that students who engaged in reflective writing in other topics in English language demonstrated improved clarity in expressing scientific ideas and better overall performance in written assessments. This supports the notion that creative writing can serve as a bridge between the arts and sciences, enhancing students' ability to communicate complex ideas effectively.

In recent years, there has been a growing recognition of the need to integrate creative approaches into education curricula to foster holistic learning. Gonzalez et al. (2021) conduct a meta-analysis of studies on the integration of creative arts into English education and found that creative writing, along with other artistic approaches, improved student engagement and motivation in other courses. The analysis revealed that students who participated in creative activities, such as writing poems or stories about exploration phenomena, were more likely to enjoy and engage with the material, leading to better academic outcomes. Moreso, Adeniran and Ogunleye (2023) explore the role of creative writing in improving students' understanding of Integrated subjects at the secondary school level. Their studies highlighted the positive effects of creative writing on students' academic performance, especially in areas like scientific vocabulary acquisition and conceptual understanding. They recommended that creative writing be incorporated into the Nigerian Education curriculum to enhance students' learning experiences.

Despite the potential benefits of integrating creative writing into education, there has been limited research on its impact on academic performance, particularly in Nigerian higher education institutions like FCE Abeokuta. This study seeks to fill that gap by exploring how creative writing exercises influence the academic performance of English students. It will examine whether incorporating creative writing into language teaching can foster better understanding, enhance critical thinking skills, and ultimately improve academic performance. As English education continues to evolve in response to the demands of the 21st-century knowledge economy, there is a need to adopt multidisciplinary approaches that not only focus on content delivery but also on developing students' creative and cognitive abilities. By exploring the influence of creative writing on academic performance in English education, this study aims to provide insights into innovative teaching methods that could transform English education in Nigeria, making it more engaging, effective, and accessible to students.

Objective of the Study

The main objective of this paper is to examine influence of creative writing on academic performance of English students of Federal College of Education (FCE) Abeokuta, Ogun State. The specific objectives are to:

- i. examine the role of creative writing in enhancing understanding of English concepts among students of Federal College of Education (FCE) Abeokuta, Ogun State.
- ii. explore the attitudes of English students towards creative writing exercises in Federal College of Education (FCE) Abeokuta, Ogun State.

Research Questions

Based on the study, the research questions are;

- i. How does creative writing influence the understanding of English concepts among students of Federal College of Education (FCE) Abeokuta, Ogun State?
- ii. What are the attitudes of English students towards creative writing in Federal College of Education (FCE) Abeokuta, Ogun State?

Methodology

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. Population comprises of all English language students of Federal College Education, Abeokuta Ogun State. Simple random sampling technique was used to select 100 students of FCE Abeokuta Ogun State as sample for study. A self-developed questionnaire was used as instrument for data collection. It was developed in 2 Likert scale of Agreed and Disagreed. The instrument was moderated by experts who affirmed its validity. Reliability of the instrument was determined using Cronbach Alpha. Data collected were analyzed using simple percentage and standard deviation statistical tool.

Presentation of Data Analysis and Results Discussion

Table 1: How does creative writing influence the understanding of English concepts among students of Federal College of Education (FCE) Abeokuta, Ogun State?

S/N	Items	N	\bar{x}	SD	Rmks.
1	Creative writing activities help me better understand concepts in English language	100	2.97	.998	Accepted
2	Writing creatively about other English topics makes it easier for me to remember writing principles	100	3.04	.758	Accepted
3	I find that using creative writing to explain English concepts improves my overall academic performance in English language.	100	2.87	.926	Accepted
4	Creative writing assignments encourage me to think more deeply about the English concepts taught in class	100	2.96	.683	Accepted
5	Incorporating creative writing into English classes enhances my critical thinking skills related to writing skills.	100	2.87	.784	Accepted
Weighted Mean = 2.97					

The table presents the influence of creative writing on the understanding of English concepts among English students at the Federal College of Education (FCE), Abeokuta. With a total of 100 respondents, the mean scores for all items are above 2.50, indicating that the students generally agreed with the statements provided. For instance, Item 2, which states that "writing creatively about English topics makes it easier for me to remember writing principles," has the highest mean score ($\bar{x} = 3.04$, $SD = .758$), showing strong agreement among students on the effectiveness of creative writing in helping them retain language information. Similarly, students accepted that creative writing activities help them better understand English concepts ($\bar{x} = 2.97$, $SD = .998$), further reinforcing the positive impact of this method in English education. Other items, such as the role of creative writing in enhancing critical thinking skills ($\bar{x} = 2.87$, $SD = .784$) and improving academic performance ($\bar{x} = 2.87$, $SD = .926$), also received high acceptance, suggesting that students believe creative writing assignments contribute positively to their learning. The overall weighted mean of 2.97 signifies a favourable attitude toward the integration of creative writing into English language classes, as it encourages deeper thinking and aids in understanding English concepts.

The findings from this table are consistent with previous research that has highlighted the positive impact of creative writing on learning outcomes in science education. Fisher and Frey (2021) found that when students engage in creative writing tasks related to English their retention of English concepts improves due to the active engagement of higher-order thinking skills. Additionally, Bromley (2019) noted that creative writing fosters critical thinking, allowing students to reflect deeply on complex topics, which ultimately enhances both understanding and academic performance. These studies support the results of this table, confirming that creative writing is an effective tool for improving students' grasp of English concepts.

Table 2: What are the attitudes of English students towards creative writing in Federal College of Education (FCE) Abeokuta, Ogun State?

S/N	Items	N	\bar{x}	SD	Rmks.
6	I find creative writing to be a valuable tool in improving my academic performance in English language.	100	3.04	.997	Accepted
7	Incorporating creative writing into English classes makes learning more enjoyable for me	100	2.76	.999	Accepted

8	I feel that creative writing exercises in English language are time-consuming and not helpful	100	3.56	.984	Accepted
9	Creative writing motivates me to think more critically about other English topics.	100	3.09	.869	Accepted
10	Creative writing helps me understand English language concepts better	100	2.73	.937	Accepted

Weighted Mean =3.07

Table 2 presents the attitudes of English students at Federal College of Education (FCE) Abeokuta towards creative writing. The results reveal that students generally perceive creative writing as a valuable tool for improving their academic performance, as indicated by a mean score of 3.04 (SD = .997) for Item 6. This suggests that many students find creative writing exercises beneficial in understanding and enhancing their grasp of English concepts. Furthermore, Item 7 shows that incorporating creative writing into English classes makes learning more enjoyable, with a mean score of 2.76 (SD = .999), suggesting that students appreciate the engagement brought by creative methods in English education. However, the perception that creative writing exercises are time-consuming yet helpful is reflected in Item 8, with a mean score of 3.56 (SD = .984), indicating that while students may find the exercises challenging in terms of time, they still recognize their importance. Similarly, in Item 9, creative writing was seen to motivate critical thinking about scientific topics, as reflected by a mean score of 3.09 (SD = .869). Item 10, which examined whether creative writing helped students better understand English concepts, had a slightly lower mean score of 2.73 (SD = .937), though it was still accepted. The overall weighted mean of 3.07 suggests a generally positive attitude among students toward creative writing in English language.

These findings are consistent with studies that have highlighted the benefits of creative writing in enhancing critical thinking and academic performance in science education. Bromley (2019) emphasized that creative writing helps students internalize English knowledge by allowing them to express complex concepts in their own words. Similarly, Fisher and Frey (2021) noted that creative writing fosters engagement and critical reflection, which can improve students' understanding and retention of English concepts. These studies support the idea that creative writing, despite being time-intensive, serves as an effective pedagogical tool in English education.

Conclusion

In conclusion, creative writing is a powerful tool for enhancing academic performance, particularly in English education. Its application in the other topics in English language allows students to engage with complex concepts in more imaginative and reflective ways. Creative writing enhances students' academic performance, promote critical thinking, and make learning more enjoyable, despite acknowledging some challenges related to time management. The acceptance of creative writing in the curriculum suggests that integrating this approach could lead to more engaging and effective English education. These insights highlight the importance of innovative teaching methods in fostering a deeper understanding of English concepts and improving students' academic outcomes. Future research could further explore the long-term effects of creative writing on student performance and engagement in various educational settings.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, it is recommended that;

1. Educators should integrate creative writing exercises into the English curriculum to enhance student engagement and understanding of complex concepts.
2. Faculty members should participate in training workshops focused on innovative teaching strategies, including the effective incorporation of creative writing into English education.
3. Institutions should provide guidance on time management strategies for students to help them balance creative writing assignments with their other academic responsibilities.
4. Educators should encourage collaborative writing projects that allow students to work together, fostering peer learning and critical discussion about other English topics.
5. Teachers should provide regular feedback on creative writing assignments to help students improve their writing skills and better understand scientific concepts.

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