

Teacher Expectation and Students' Learning Behaviour: The Role of School Location

Regine Kwaw Nsiah¹, Dennis Offei Kwakye^{2*}, Salomey Appiah³

¹Department of Education, Enchi College of Education, Enchi, Ghana

²Dennis Offei Kwakye, FMS, 402 Iona Street, Fairmont, NC 28340, USA

³New Yakasi M/A School, Enchi, Ghana

Submission: September 09, 2024; **Published:** October 01, 2024

***Corresponding author:** Dennis Offei Kwakye, Dennis Offei Kwakye, FMS, 402 Iona Street, Fairmont, NC 28340, USA.

Abstract

This study aimed at investigating the relationship between teacher expectation and students' learning behaviour. A correlational research design was used for the study. A sample of 225 were selected for the study. A multistage sampling approach was used. Teacher Expectations questionnaire by Gallahar (2009) measured on a five-point Likert-type scale was adapted for the study. Data for the study was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. The study found a negative relationship between teacher expectation and students' learning behaviour suggesting that teacher expectation could affect students' learning behaviour adversely as a result of the pressure it might put on them. However, result of the study indicates a statistically significant difference between the school location of students and their learning behaviour. This presupposes that, students in urban schools are more likely to develop a positive learning behaviour compared to those in the semi urban as well as rural areas. It is therefore recommended that efforts should be made to reduce infrastructural inequity among learners in the basic schools by creating equal and conducive learning environment for all learners. Also, sensitization programs should be organized through educational forums to encourage learners to make maximum use of the school environment available to them. This will help them appreciate the resources they have at their disposal and develop a positive attitude towards it. Teachers should also set expectations not too high or too low but moderate expectations that could challenge students to do put up their best and help them help them achieve their set targets. Future researchers should employ a qualitative approach using interviews to explore the effect of teacher expectations on students' learning behaviour. This will aid them gather first-hand information to authenticate the findings of this study.

Keywords: School Location; Students' Learning Behaviour; Teacher Expectation

Introduction

Junior High School (JHS), serving as a pivotal transition period in a student's academic journey is perceived to be a critical stage where teacher expectations can significantly impact students' intellectual and personal development. Teachers' anticipation and commitment in the field of teaching and learning are but a significant component of the teacher's performance in general. Teachers' expectations are the ideas a teacher hold about students' behaviour that is likely to impact the potential accomplishments of students [1]. Expectation functions as one of the pre-behaviors that determine the understanding of information processing by humans (Eysenck & Keane, 2015). The cognitivists view

expectation as one of the processes that affects perception (Senemoglu, 2009). Adding to this, Sag [2] indicates that teachers' perception of student success could influence their expectations for learners. These expectations could impact the way teachers relate with their students and may subsequently serve as a basis for students to exhibit certain behaviour pattern and performance that conform to teachers' expectations.

As teachers engage students academically, they directly or indirectly set their expectations towards their academic progress. Teachers' expectations can help set much achievable, yet challenging targets for learners [3]. Thus, teachers tend to provide

appropriate learning opportunities and support to their learners if they have higher expectation for them [4]. Teachers with high expectations hold the belief that students will make much more accelerated progress than normal, and that students will progress above their current level of performance [3].

According to Chang [5], teachers' expectation sometimes has a "pygmalion effect" due to its double barrel nature (positive and negative). This suggests that learners whose teachers hold positive expectations towards them are more likely to be granted supplementary learning opportunities, be provided with more detailed feedback, be praised more often following success and be encouraged more often in times of failure and vice versa. Support to students may include scaffolding, chunking of information, motivation, best strategic knowledge and a plan to provide students with extra support systems in school [6].

Ferguson [7] suggests that teachers' expectations, whether high or low, turns to be a self-fulfilling prophecy which makes students learn and perform in ways they can align to such expectations. Meissel et al. [8] indicates that teachers' different levels of expectations lead to different practices of instructions. Teachers with high expectations tend to adopt prudent and effective teaching practices which have the likelihood of influencing learning behaviour of learners [9]. Learners, under the guidance of high expectation teachers exhibit positive learning behaviours which could lead to larger achievement gains, while the learners under the mentorship of low expectation teachers are more likely to develop a negative learning behaviour which may in turn lead to smaller or negative gains and outputs. Trouilloud et al. [10] notes that low teacher expectations could be associated to negative student learning behaviour and poor performance.

The attitudes, beliefs and teaching practices of teachers change as their expectations increases. Teachers in the process of setting expectations may develop closer bonds with students who are high performers. A positive and friendly relationship between a teacher and a student provides the student with a sense of security which is needed to be active participants in class such as asking questions, taking part in discussions and seeking challenge which subsequently promote learning. Trouilloud et al. [10] notes that low teacher expectations could be associated to negative student learning behaviour and poor performance.

Conversely, it is also evident that when teachers sustain high expectations, learners could habitually do and meet the criteria set for them [11]. Positive expectations lead learners to develop strong self-esteem, sense of urgency and academic motivation which tend to help achieve their potentials in school [12]. Literatures shows that students' learning behaviour is largely influenced by several factors ranging from home to school-factors. For instance, Cho (2013) reiterate that well-resourced schools with conducive teaching and learning environment have substantial number of students who portray negative learning behaviour. To sustain students' learning adventure, teachers

need to take responsibility for their learning and development by adopting fresh ways to learn, give additional support, reflect on best practice and persistence in reacting to problems and challenges [13]. Therefore, teachers' expectations set for students require teachers to consider various methods of knowing and learning, to value students' strengths and weaknesses, individual differences and use them in their assessment and planning for academic activities.

While several studies have explored different elements that influences students learning behaviour [14,15] few of these studies have focused on correlation between teachers' expectation and the learning behaviour of learners. Hence, the need to explore into how teachers' expectation correlates with learning behaviour of Junior High School (JHS) learners in the Aowin municipality.

Relationship between Teachers' Expectation and Students' Learning Behaviour

Teachers' expectations may be low or high with regards to what the teachers wanted them to do. Ali [16] conducted a study to examine how the expectations of teachers formed of their students they teach impact their self-reported behaviours in the school environment and found that, teacher who have low expectation for their learners do not push them to do much beyond their limit. Whereas teachers with high expectations for their learners expected their student to complete series of activities given them. Rubie-Davies et al. (2012) maintains that there exists a relationship between teacher expectations and school context variables like classroom behaviour of the students though the relationship found was weak. The result of a survey conducted among 79 teachers and 1,364 students indicated that there exists a high positive correlation between teacher expectation and student self-efficacy, accomplishment and behaviour (Rubie-Davies et al., 2012). Conversely Rubie-Davies [1] found a contrasting relationship between teacher expectations and students learning behaviour. This suggests that suggest that some teachers importantly and positively influence student learning while other may impact student learning to negatively.

Hornstra et al. [17] also conducted a study on the impact of teacher expectation on the academic accomplishment of students with dyslexia. The study aimed to examine teachers' attitudes towards learners with dyslexia and the influence of these attitudes on their expectations and the academic successes of students living with dyslexia as compared to students who do not possess this disability. The study found teachers' implicit attitudes and expectations as a valuable predictor of students' achievement and learning behaviour. this implies that teacher expectations have the propensity to influence the learning behaviour of learners as well as their as academic attainment. Lane et al. [18] also examined the expectations of teachers pertaining to student behaviour in relation to their social skills required to attain success in elementary school classrooms. The study revealed that regardless of the grade level teachers exhibited similar expectations for their

students. Rodríguez et al. [19] also conducted a study among three hundred and forty-three (343) teachers in Chilean to explore the relationship between their expectations and students learning behaviour. The study findings revealed that there were differences observed in teacher expectations based on the location and status of the school they taught. Thus, teachers who came from high-socioeconomic schools had positive expectations positive for their students. And the opposite holds

Students' Learning Behaviours and location of school

Timmermans and Rubie-Davies [20] in a study also found high levels of differences in teacher expectations in terms of the location of the school in an analysis of data for 42 teachers and 1328 students within the New Zealand area. The findings showed that urban teachers tend to have high expectations for their students compared to teachers in the rural areas. This implies that teacher of learner in urban areas are more likely to set high expectations for their learners compared to teachers in the rural areas. Though most teachers appeared to be convinced that all students could achieve at or above national average in both rural and urban schools, there is the conviction that there are high expectations targeted for students in schools in the urban areas. "Abroampa [21] in a study also found a significant difference between teachers' expectation and students' learning behaviour in a study conducted on how teachers' expectation and students' achievement correlate in Junior High Secondary Schools in the Mfantshipim Municipality in the Central Region of Ghana.

A study by Baker and Gowda [22] focused on analyzing the differences the rate of disengagement in urban, rural, and suburban high schools. The main objective of the study was to find out the way student behaviours in relation to disengagement is different between different school settings. Data was collected using the PSLC Data shop in three (3) schools to show comparison between students' behaviour within urban, rural, and suburban settings, across a whole school year. The result showed that there is sufficient difference when it comes to the learning behaviours of students. Urban school students tend to be caught off-task and exhibit carelessness more significantly than students located in the rural and suburban school settings. The findings suggested that some of the differences that arise in the achievement by the type of school may arise from differences in way of engagement and behavioural problems. Hope and Bierman [23] also conducted a study to investigate patterns of behaviour problems both in school and in the home in rural and urban settings and found that school children from the urban and rural areas exhibited significant different learning behaviours.

Methods

Correlational research design was used to investigate the relationship that exists between teachers' expectation and Junior High School students' learning behaviour in the Aowin Municipality, in the Western-North Region of Ghana. The

population for the study comprised of all public Junior High School (JHS) teachers and students in the municipality. The sample size for the study was 225 comprising 205 students and 20 teachers from 19 school in the Aowin Municipality. The selection of respondents was based on multistage approach, where simple random procedure (lottery method), systematic, cluster sampling, and proportionate-stratified sampling were used. The main instrument for data collection was adapted Teacher Expectations questionnaire by Gallahar (2009) with reliability coefficient of 0.87.

The instrument is a unidimensional Likert type scale with 14-items weighted on a numerical scale of 1 to 5 with the highest value indicating a strong support for the statement. The adapted questionnaire was reframed and modified for both teachers and student participants to suit the objectives of this study. Data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistical tools based on objectives of the study. Specifically, means and standard deviation were used to address the research question while the Pearson Product moment correlation was used to analyse the hypothesis which explored the relationship between teachers' expectation and students learning behaviour.

Result and Discussions

This section presents the analysis of the research question and hypothesis formulated to guide the study. To explore the relationship between teacher expectation and students' learning behaviour, the Pearson Product moment correlation was used. The outcome of the study indicates a negatively weak correlation between teacher expectation and students' learning behaviour [$r(215) = -.204, p=.403$]. (See Table 2). The results thus imply that setting or having higher or too many expectations for students could affect students' learning behaviour adversely because of the pressure it might put on them. Agreeing with Rubie-Davies et al (2012) this study found no significant relationship between teacher expectations and learning behaviour of students. On the contrary, the findings of this study debunked that of Archambault et al. (2012), and Hornstra et al. [17] who found a significant relationship between teacher expectations and students' learning behaviours.

More so, the assertion by Rosenthal and Jacobson that it is more likely for students to exhibit good learning behaviours and thus improve their performance if the expectations their teachers set or have for them is higher was not supported. The negatively weak relationship recorded suggests that there are other factors such as motivation that could influence students learning behaviour other than teachers' expectation. This supports Ford's motivation system theory of performance that states that achievement is a result of motivation, skill and responsive environment." However, this relationship cannot be ignored. The inverse relationship could suggest that expectations that are high from teachers have the likelihood to adversely affect students' learning behaviours.

Students look up to teachers as models and as motivators in the school and the classroom at large according to the social learning theory by Bandura. Therefore, expectations teachers have for their student could go a long way to either motivate or demoralize students. The kind of environment teachers create for their

students can determine the learning behaviours students portray. Other studies might have had significant relationships probably because they had an evenly distributed sample sizes compared to that of this study. (Table 1)

Table 1: Correlation Results of Teachers' Expectation and Students' Learning Behaviour

	Variable	Teacher Expectation	Students' Learning Behaviour
Correlation (r)	Teacher Expectation	1	-0.204
	Students' Learning Behaviour	-0.204	1
	p = .403	df= 215	N= 217

To determine whether students learning behaviour is influenced by the location of their school, one-way ANOVA was conducted. Result from the study indicates a statistically significant difference between the school location of students and their learning behaviour [F (2, 195) = 4.576, p = .011]. Results from the LSD Post Hoc test shows that, students in urban school are more likely to develop a positive learning behaviour compared to those in the semi urban and rural areas respectively.

This result affirms the assertions by Lamb (2012), and Baker and Gowda [22] that there are significant differences in students' learning behaviour relating to where they school. This connotes that it is much expected that students in the urban schools put up the best learning behaviours and performance than those in the rural schools. This expectation can be attributed to the fact that given the kind of infrastructure in the urban schools; the

students there have no option than to perform to the zenith. These expectations are much more evident in the end results of the BECE. For instance, an urban school with ICT center and library will be writing the same BECE paper with the rural school without even electricity to study. The infrastructure in the urban schools facilitate some learning behaviours like learning in groups and teams as well as going to the library to do assignments hence helping them develop a positive attitude towards learning. It is therefore imperative that efforts are made to reduce this infrastructural inequity among learners in the pre-tertiary institutions by creating equal and conducive learning environment for all learners. This would substantiate Ford's (1992) motivation system theory that one important and critical element needed for achievement is a responsive and conducive learning environment. (Table 2)

Table 2: One-way ANOVA Results for School location and students learning behaviour.

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between groups	134.523	2	67.261	4.576	0.011
Within groups	2866.23	195	14.699		
Total	3000.753	197			

Result of the study showed that no statistical significance difference exists in teacher expectations with respect to the location of the schools they teach F (2, 16) = 1.662, p = .221. This study finding contradicts with that of Rodriguez et al. [19], Timmermans and Rubie-Davies [20], Yiu and Adams [24], and Abroampa [21] who found significant differences in teacher expectations in relation to the location of teaching. This implies that teachers, regardless of teaching location or place of work could have the same expectations for their learners. Thus, teachers who teach in urban schools, semi-urban schools and rural schools all have similar or same expectations for the students. This finding of this study refutes the general Ghanaian perception that more is expected of students in urban schools than those in the rural areas. For instance, students in urban schools are expected to have high performance and expected to do better than students

in schools in rural areas. Nonetheless, this is not the case with teachers in the Aowin Municipality as they did not differ in their expectations for their students whether in urban, semi-urban or rural school. This could be credited to the fact that teachers in the municipality are often rotated and transferred within and among schools in the area. (Table 3)

Conclusion and Recommendations

Teachers seem to give high expectations to the things that will help the students and the teachers themselves. However, the expectation of teachers does not play any significant role in students learning behaviours in the Aowin Municipality. This indicates that when making decisions concerning student learning behaviours, the expectation of teachers should not be considered because it does not affect the leaning behaviours of students.

Table 3: One-way ANOVA Results for Teacher expectation based on School Location.

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between groups	23.684	2	11.842	1.662	0.221
Within groups	114	16	7.125		
Total	137.684	18			n=217

It is therefore recommended that efforts should be made to reduce infrastructural inequity among learners in the basic schools by creating equal and conducive learning environment for all learners. Also, sensitization programs should be organized through educational forums to encourage and inspire learners to make maximum use of the school environment available to them. This will help them appreciate the resources they have at their disposal and develop a positive attitude towards it. Teachers should also set expectations not too high or too low but moderate expectations that could challenge students to do put up their best and help them help them achieve their set targets.

References

- Rubie-Davies CM (2010) Teacher expectations and perceptions of student attributes: Is there a relationship? *British Journal of Educational Psychology* 80(1): 121-135.
- Sağ R (2014) The Course of Pre-Service Teachers' Expectations in School Practices and the Factors Affecting Their Expectations. *Creative Education* 5(5): 353-371.
- Rubie-Davies C (2016) High and low expectation teachers. *Interpersonal and intrapersonal expectancies* pp. 145.
- Rubie-Davies C, Hattie J, Hamilton R (2006) Expecting the best for students: Teacher expectations and academic outcomes. *British Journal of Educational Psychology* 76(3): 429-444.
- Chang J (2011) A Case Study of the "Pygmalion Effect": Teacher Expectations and Student Achievement. *International Education Studies* 4(1): 198-201.
- Blackburn B (2012) *Rigor Made Easy*. Larchmont, NY: Eye on Education, pp. 128.
- Ferguson RF (2002) What Doesn't Meet the Eye: Understanding and Addressing Racial is parities in High-Achieving Suburban Schools, p. 39.
- Meissel K, Meyer F, Yao ES, Rubie-Davies CM (2017) Subjectivity of teacher judgments: Exploring student characteristics that influence teacher judgments of student ability. *Teaching and Teacher Education* 65: 48-60.
- Harper A (2018) Students' use and understanding of feedback in a university context: How and why students use feedback (Doctoral dissertation, ResearchSpace@Auckland).
- Trouilloud D, Sarrazin P, Martinek T, Guillet E (2002) The influence of teacher expectations on student achievement in physical education classes: Pygmalion revisited. *Eur J Soc Psychol* 32(5): 591-607.
- Khalifa MA (2011) Teacher expectations and principal behavior: Responding to Teacher Acquiescence. *Urban Rev* 43: 702-727.
- Gizir CA, Aydin G (2009) Protective factors contributing to the academic resilience of students living in poverty in turkey. *Professional School Counselling* 13(1): 38-49.
- Saffigna M, Church A, Tayler C (2011) High expectations for every child. *Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework Evidence Paper Practice Principle 3*.
- Mefor C (2014) *Nigeria: Identifying problems of poor performance in mathematics and way out*. NERDC Press.
- Tshabalala T, Ncube AC (2013) Causes of poor performance of ordinary level pupils in mathematics in rural secondary schools in Nkayi District: Learner's attritions. *African Fab Publishers. Nova J Med Biol Sci* 1: 4-14.
- Ali R (2010) The formation and enactment of teacher expectations of student achievement in private schooling. *TEACH J Christian Educ* 4(1): 10.
- Hornstra L, Denessen E, Bakker J, Van Den Bergh L, Voeten M (2010) Teacher attitudes toward dyslexia: Effects on teacher expectations and the academic achievement of students with dyslexia. *J Learning Disabil* 43(6): 515-529.
- Lane KL, Givner CC, Pierson MR (2004) Teacher expectations of student behavior: Social skills necessary for success in elementary school classrooms. *The Journal of Special Education* 38(2): 104-110.
- Rodríguez C, Ferreira RA, Barriga CA (2019) Factors that bias teacher expectations: Findings from Chile. *Revista Latinoamericana de Psicología* 51(3): 101-106.
- Timmermans AC, Rubie-Davies CM (2018) Do teachers differ in the level of expectations or in the extent to which they differentiate in expectations? Relations between teacher-level expectations, teacher background and beliefs, and subsequent student performance. *Educ Res Evaluat* 24(3-5): 241-263.
- Abroampa WK (2010) A correlate of teachers' expectation and students' achievement in Junior High Secondary Schools in the Mfantshipim Municipality in the Central Region of Ghana. *African Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies* 3: 30-39.
- Baker RS, Gowda SM (2010) An analysis of the differences in the frequency of students' disengagement in urban, rural, and suburban high schools. In *Educational Data Mining 2010*.
- Hope TL, Bierman KL (1998) Patterns of home and school behavior problems in rural and urban settings. *J Sch Psychol* 36(1): 45-58.
- Yiu L, Adams J (2013) Reforming rural education in China: Understanding teacher expectations for rural youth. *The China Quarterly* 216: 993-1017.



This work is licensed under Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 License
DOI: [10.19080/OAJELS.2024.02.555588](https://doi.org/10.19080/OAJELS.2024.02.555588)

Your next submission with Juniper Publishers
will reach you the below assets

- Quality Editorial service
- Swift Peer Review
- Reprints availability
- E-prints Service
- Manuscript Podcast for convenient understanding
- Global attainment for your research
- Manuscript accessibility in different formats
(Pdf, E-pub, Full Text, Audio)
- Unceasing customer service

Track the below URL for one-step submission
<https://juniperpublishers.com/online-submission.php>