

Teachers' Perfectionist Attitude to Learning and Students struggling with Self-stigmatization in Private Secondary Schools in Delta State

Dr. James Urien,

Department of Psychology, Delta State University, Abraka

ORCID Number: 0009-0002-5862-2462

Dr. Peter Urien,

ORCID Number: 0009-009-9148-869X

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ABSTRACT: *The study investigated teachers' perfectionist attitude to learning and Students struggling with self-stigmatization in private secondary schools in Delta State. Three (3) research questions were raised and answered while three (3) null hypotheses were formulated and tested in the study. The variables in the study were reviewed from relevant literature. This research is a correlational study of ex-post facto design. The population comprise all registered private secondary schools in Delta State. The population of the study is 15,951 comprising of 1177 proprietors/principals and 14,774 teachers in private secondary schools in Delta State in the twenty five (25) Local Government Areas of Delta State. The sample for this study comprised 1533 respondents made up of 588 proprietors/principals and 945 teachers in Delta State private secondary schools selected from 12 Local Government Areas. Proprietors/principals represented 50% while teachers represent 10% of the population. A self developed questionnaire titled "Teachers' Perfectionist Attitude to Learning and Students struggling Self-stigmatization Questionnaire' (TPALSSSQ)", validated and its reliability equally determined via a pilot study using test re-test reliability technique with a coefficient index of 0.86 was used. The researcher administered a total of 1,533 questionnaire to randomly selected respondents from the selected private secondary schools in the study area. The research questions raised were answered using simple percentage, Mean score and Standard Deviation while Pearson Product Moment Statistics was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The findings revealed that teachers' perfectionist attitude to learning influence Students struggling with self-stigmatization. Students may feel that they are not good enough or that they will never meet the teacher's expectations. It*

was therefore recommended that teachers should foster a growth mindset and emphasize effort over ability, encourage self-compassion and self-awareness, provide positive role models and representation and promote diversity and inclusion.

Keywords: perfectionist attitude, self-stigmatization, Nigeria

INTRODUCTION

Perfectionism is a process that is relative and serves a purpose. It has no definitive or limitless end since the pursuit of perfection and the instruments used are more significant than the final product. When the emphasis is on attaining the ultimate goal without allowing students to fully express their will and understanding, it can have a significant impact on the entire educational environment between the teacher and the students. There are two ways to reach the desired outcome or perfectionism: either by setting standard and achievable goals based on one's abilities and caliber, or by placing excessively high expectations on oneself. These disparate standards might or might not lead to a successful outcome in an educational context. Establishing high expectations for students is critical for the development of their motivation, thinking, and performance (Flett & Hewitt 2019).

High perfectionism standards, however, have an adverse effect on students' performance since they force them to meet these requirements, which can cause self-stigmatization. One could even concede that every student has a different performance level; for example, a disabled student's performance level will differ from that of a regular student (Adderholdt & Jan, 2019). Furthermore, as some perfectionist tendencies vary in range from good to dysfunctional conduct, creating standards without taking those elements of students into consideration would be impractical and unnatural. Perfectionism is a personality characteristic that some people may even find admirable and view as a possible advantage.

Nonetheless, many people are unaware of how complicated the idea and definition of perfectionism are. Perfectionism is widely understood in psychology to be a personality trait characterized by an inclination to set unreasonably high standards and an unduly critical assessment of one's own behavior (Flett & Hewitt, 2019). This continuum needs to be constantly observed, assessed, and divided into three groups: (a) job and school; (b) play and hobbies; and (c) family and social relationships. The aforementioned classification can aid in the definition and redefinition of perfectionism as well as the knowledge of how, when the perfectionist's expectations are not fulfilled, perfectionism frequently results in marital problems and mood disorders (Burns, 2020).

The topic of teacher perfectionism is hotly contested since perfectionists' methods of instruction do not prioritize the qualitative development of their students. Additionally, it could lead to a one-

sided and homogenous learning environment, particularly for students who struggle with self-stigmatization (Knight 2023). The learning experiences and self-perceptions of pupils can be significantly impacted by teachers' perfectionist attitudes. Teachers who place a strong emphasis on perfectionism may unintentionally foster a culture of dread in their students, making them feel that making mistakes is unacceptable and making them less willing to take risks. Students who worry that their mistakes will be punished or judged and that their failures will be a reflection of their own value.

Students who relate their academic success with their own self-worth may become less motivated and more prone to self-criticism. Students may concentrate entirely on getting good grades, believing that this is the primary indicator of success, rather than pursuing their interests or cultivating a love of learning (Knight 2023). On the other side, the process through which students assimilate unfavorable ideas and preconceptions about themselves results in a bad self-image and self-concept is known as self-stigmatization in students. This can be especially detrimental to pupils who are marginalized or already at risk. Self-stigmatization comes when students despite their efforts are not able to meet the expectations of teachers and parents. Since they do not feel encourage, they develop low self-esteem that affect other aspect of their lives and learning.

Statement to the Problem

Teacher perfectionist attitudes towards learning can have a profoundly negative impact on students, leading to self-stigmatization, decreased motivation and a fixed mindset. When teachers emphasize perfectionism, students may feel that mistakes are unacceptable and failure is a reflection of their worth. This can lead to self-criticism, anxiety and a fear of taking risks or seeking help. To create a more supportive and inclusive learning environment, teachers must recognize and challenge their own perfectionist tendencies and instead foster a growth mindset and emphasizes progress, effort and learning from mistake.

Purpose of the Study

1. Examine teachers' perfectionist attitude to learning and Students struggling with self-stigmatization in private secondary schools in Delta State
2. Find out the causes of teachers' perfectionist attitude to learning in private secondary schools in Delta State
3. Establish the strategies for overcoming perfectionist in private secondary schools in Delta State

Research Questions

The following research questions were raised to guide the study:

1. How does teachers' perfectionist attitude to learning influence Students struggling with self-stigmatization in private secondary schools in Delta State?

2. What are the causes of teachers' perfectionist attitude to learning in private secondary schools in Delta State?
3. What are the strategies for overcoming perfectionism in private secondary schools in Delta State?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated to guide the study:

1. There is no significant relationship on teachers' perfectionist attitude to learning and Students struggling with self-stigmatization in private secondary schools in Delta State
2. There is no significant relationship on the causes of teachers' perfectionist attitude to learning in private secondary schools in Delta State
3. There is no significant relationship on the strategies for overcoming perfectionism in private secondary schools in Delta State

REVIEW

Concept of Perfectionism

Perfectionism is a personality trait characterized by a person's striving for flawlessness and setting extremely high standards for themselves and others. Perfectionists believe that anything less than perfect is unacceptable and may feel like they're failing or not good enough if they don't meet these high standards (Ward, 2022). In psychology, perfectionism is commonly conceived as a personality trait with the tendency to set excessively high standards accompanied by overly critical evaluations of one's actions (Flett & Hewitt, 2012). Perfectionism can manifest in various areas, such as:

1. Academic performance: Believing that only the highest grades or achievements are acceptable.
2. Work: Striving for flawless performance, excessive attention to detail, and setting unrealistically high goals.
3. Appearance: Believing that one must look perfect or have a flawless physical appearance.
4. Relationships: Expecting oneself or others to be perfect partners, friends, or family members.
5. Personal qualities: Believing that one must be perfect in terms of personality, behavior, or character.

According to Harris (2021) while striving for excellence can be beneficial, perfectionism can lead to; unrealistic expectations, self-criticism and self-doubt, anxiety and stress, fear of failure, difficulty accepting mistakes or imperfections, missed opportunities due to fear of not meeting high standards, burnout and exhaustion and impacting relationships due to unrealistic expectations. It is essential to recognize that perfection is subjective and often unattainable and teachers' perfectionist attitude to learning often impact on students struggling with self-stigmatization.

Teachers' Perfectionist Attitude to Learning and Students struggling with Self-stigmatization

According to Delegard (2014) teacher perfectionist attitude to learning impact student's academic performance either negatively or positively depending on the ability of the student. It is of more harm to students struggling with self-stigmatization. When a teacher is a perfectionist, it could be a good thing for learning as long as they can also adapt their standards to fit the circumstances (Hamachek, 2018). Proponents of this idea argue that it is important to distinguish between "healthy" striving and a "unhealthy" extreme that is associated with psychological and physiological problems. Contrary to the benefits of perfectionism, some studies associate it with a variety of issues such as low self-esteem, anxiety, depression, and other personality disorders; in extreme cases, perfectionism has even been linked to suicide (Delegard, 2014). These studies focus especially on students who are experiencing self-stigmatization.

A teacher's perfectionism is solely dependent on his or her temperament, personality, and the methods of instruction they use in the classroom (Tang, Au, Schwarzer, & Schmitz, 2021). Students' success in the classroom is a direct reflection of the approaches used by their teachers (Mustapha et al, 2014). According to Tang et al. (2011), teaching is one of the most demanding jobs in the world, and students may experience significant stress when teachers use strict and meticulous teaching methods. It should be highlighted, Nevertheless, that not every perfectionism approach taken by the teacher would strain the students; some may respond well to it, while others may not. It is the responsibility of the teacher to create a dynamic learning atmosphere and to inspire students to be sincere and motivated, so reducing stress and promoting feasibility on both ends of the learning process (Tang et al., 2021).

According to Knight (2023), certain teachers have a perfectionist approach to teaching and learning. These teachers demand that their students turn in flawless work, believe that errors are unacceptable in the classroom, stress the value of earning good grades, and encourage their students to strive for perfection in their assignments. They also think that students should never give up, even when they are having difficulty, and they expect their students to complete all of their assignments without any errors, expect students to take extra time to ensure their work is perfect, feel that perfectionism is necessary for academic achievement, encourage students to self-criticise their work, think that students should be unhappy with anything less than perfect, and think that respect demands perfection.

Effects of Teachers' Perfectionist to Learning and Students struggling with Self-Stigmatization

The effect of teachers' perfectionist attitude on students' self-stigmatization can be significant. When teachers emphasize perfectionism, students may feel that they are not good enough or that they will never meet the teacher's expectations (Harris, 2021). This can lead to:

1. Increased self-doubt: Students may question their own abilities and feel that they are not capable of achieving their goals.

2. Fear of failure: Students may become reluctant to take risks or attempt new tasks for fear of not meeting the teacher's expectations.
3. Decreased self-esteem: Students may feel that they are not worthy or that they do not deserve success.
4. Anxiety and stress: Students may feel overwhelmed by the pressure to perform perfectly.
5. Self-criticism: Students may be overly critical of themselves and their work.
6. Fixed mindset: Students may believe that their abilities are fixed and that they cannot improve.
7. Decreased motivation: Students may feel that their efforts are not good enough, leading to decreased motivation.
8. Increased dropout rates: Students may feel that they are not able to meet the teacher's expectations and may drop out of school or a particular class.

Causes of Teachers' Perfectionist to Learning

Schruder et al. (2014) asserted that in private schools, the proprietors are putting too much pressure on the teachers; academic performance rather than character is their sell out. Teachers in the bid to retain their job and self image develop this perfectionist attitude (Peng & Wright, 2014). According to Burns (2023) teachers' perfectionist attitude may be higher in private schools due to various factors, including:

1. High expectations: Private schools often have high academic standards, and teachers may feel pressure to meet these expectations.
2. Competition: Private schools may foster a competitive environment, leading teachers to emphasize perfectionism.
3. Accountability: Private schools are often accountable to parents and stakeholders, leading to increased pressure on teachers to deliver high results.
4. Resources: Private schools may have more resources, leading to higher expectations for teacher performance.
5. Parental demands: Private school parents may have high expectations and demands, driving teachers to adopt a perfectionist attitude.
6. School culture: Private schools may emphasize achievement and excellence, creating a culture that values perfectionism.
7. Teacher training and support: Private schools may provide training and support that emphasizes perfectionism.
8. Student selectivity: Private schools may select high-achieving students, leading teachers to expect perfection.
9. Funding and reputation: Private schools may tie funding and reputation to academic performance, increasing pressure on teachers to be perfect.
10. Lack of diversity: Private schools may have less diversity, leading to a more homogeneous student body and increased pressure to conform to perfectionist standards.

Strategies for Overcoming Perfectionism

Peterson (2022) identifies strategies for overcoming teachers' perfectionist to learning as follows:

1. Recognize and Challenge Negative Self-Talk: Notice when you're engaging in self-criticism and reframe negative thoughts into more realistic and positive ones.
2. Set Realistic Goals and Expectations: Break tasks into smaller, achievable steps, and prioritize progress over perfection.
3. Practice Self-Compassion: Treat yourself with kindness, understanding, and patience, just as you would a close friend.
4. Embrace Imperfection: Celebrate mistakes and imperfections as opportunities for growth and learning.
5. Seek Support: Share your struggles with trusted friends, family, or a therapist to gain new perspectives and support.
6. Practice Mindfulness: Focus on the present moment and let go of worries about the past or future.
7. Develop a Growth Mindset: View challenges as opportunities for growth and development, rather than threats to ego.
8. Take Breaks and Prioritize Self-Care: Allow yourself time to rest and recharge, engaging in activities that bring joy and relaxation.
9. Teachers should be encouraged to be flexible to other factors that could affect expected standard.

METHODOLOGY

Design

This study is a correlational survey adopting the ex-post-facto research design. The survey attempt to collect data from members of a defined population in order to determine the current status of condition of that population with respect to one or more variables. It aims at having a general assessment of people about a particular problem.

Population

The population for this study comprised all registered private secondary schools in Delta State. The population of the study is 15,951 comprising of 1177 proprietors/principals and 14,774 teachers in private secondary schools in Delta State in the twenty five (25) Local Government Areas of Delta State.

Sample and Sampling Technique

The sample for this study comprised 1533 respondents made up of 588 proprietors/principals and 945 teachers in Delta State private secondary schools selected from 12 Local Government Areas. Proprietors/principals represented 50% while teachers represent 10% of the population. This was done to enable effective administration of the instrument. The sampling procedure used was the

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simple random sampling technique. This involved sampling 12 Local Government Areas from twenty-five (25) Local Government Areas. The sample was random because each proprietor or principal has equal chance of being selected.

Instrument

The instrument that was used for the study was a self-developed questionnaire titled ‘Teachers’ Perfectionist Attitude to Learning and Students struggling Self-stigmatization Questionnaire’ (TPALSSSQ). The questionnaire contains 28 items. The questionnaire is a closed ended one in the form of a four point Likert scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Strongly Disagree (SD) and Disagree (D) will be used in the collection of information from respondents.

Administration

The researcher administered a total of 1533 questionnaire to randomly selected respondents from the selected private secondary schools in the study area.

Data Analysis

Simple percentage, mean scores, standard deviation and coefficient of determination using 2.50 as benchmark to provide answers to the research questions. Pearson Product Moment Correlation Statistic was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

Table 1: Response to teachers’ perfectionist attitude to learning and Students struggling with self-stigmatization

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Std	Remark
1	Expect students to produce perfect work.	615 (40.12%)	333 (21.72%)	269 (19.55%)	316 (20.61%)	2.84	.83	Agreed
2	Believe that mistakes are unacceptable in the classroom.	188 (12.26%)	702 (45.79%)	505 (32.94%)	138 (9.01%)	3.76	.77	Agreed
3	Emphasize the importance of getting high grades.	531 (34.64%)	555 (36.20%)	428 (27.92%)	19 (1.24%)	3.71	.81	Agreed
4	Encourage students to strive for perfection in their assignments.	488 (31.85%)	400 (26.09%)	101 (6.59%)	544 (35.49%)	3.88	.75	Agreed
5	Believe that students should never give up,	333 (21.72%)	615 (40.12%)	316 (20.61%)	269 (19.55%)	3.67	.78	Agreed

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	even if they are struggling.							
6	Expect students to complete all assignments flawlessly.	400 (26.09%)	510 (33.27%)	306 (19.96%)	317 (20.68%)	2.76	.79	Agreed
7	Believe that perfection is the key to success.	702 (45.79%)	138 (9.01%)	188 (12.26%)	505 (32.94%)	3.76	.79	Agreed
8	Encourage students to focus on details and accuracy.	555 (36.20%)	401 (26.16%)	407 (26.55%)	170 (11.09%)	2.84	.84	agreed
9	Believe that mistakes indicate a lack of effort.	544 (35.49%)	317 (20.68%)	272 (17.74%)	400 (20.09%)	3.05	.76	Agreed
10	Expect students to meet high standards, even if it takes extra time.	98 (6.39%)	832 (54.27%)	512 (33.40%)	91 (5.94%)	2.90	.82	Agreed
Grand Mean Score and Standard Deviation						3.03	.79	Agreed

From table 1, out of 1533 respondents 615 (40.12%) and 333 (21.72%) respondents agreed that they expect students to produce perfect work while 269 (19.55%) and 316 (20.61%) respondents disagreed. Also 188 (12.26%) and 702 (45.79%) respondents agreed that believe that mistakes are unacceptable in the classroom, while 505 (32.94%) and 138 (9.01%) respondents disagreed with the statement. In addition, 531 (34.64%) and 555 (36.20%) respondents agreed that emphasize the importance of getting high grades, while 428 (27.92%) and 19 (1.24%) respondents disagreed. Also, 488 (31.85%) and 400 (26.09%) respondents agreed that they encourage students to strive for perfection in their assignments, while 101 (6.59%) and 544 (35.49%) respondents disagreed.

In another development, 333 (21.72%) and 615 (40.12%) respondents agreed that they believe that students should never give up, even if they are struggling, while 316 (20.61%) and 269 (19.55%) respondents think otherwise. In addition, 400 (26.09%) and 510 (33.27%) respondents agreed that they expect students to complete all assignments flawlessly, while 306 (19.96%) and 317 (20.68%) respondents disagreed with the statement. More so, 702 (45.79%) and 138 (9.01%) respondents agreed that they believe that perfection is the key to success, while 188 (12.26%) and 505 (32.94%) respondents are against the statement. Also, 555 (36.20%) and 401 (26.16%) respondents agreed that they encourage students to focus on details and accuracy., while 407 (26.55%) and 170 (11.09%) respondents are against the statement. In addition, 544 (35.49%) and 317 (20.68%) respondents agreed that they believe that mistakes indicate a lack of effort, while

272 (17.74%) and 400 (20.09%) respondents are against the statement. More so, 98 (6.39%) and 832 (54.27%) respondents agreed that they expect students to meet high standards, even if it takes extra time, while 512 (33.40%) and 91 (5.94%) respondents are against the statement.

Table 2: Response to causes of teachers' perfectionist to learning and Students struggling with self-stigmatization

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Std	Remark
1	Private schools often have high academic standards, and teachers may feel pressure to meet these expectations	303 (19.77%)	620 (40.43%)	326 (21.29%)	284 (18.53%)	3.66	.89	Agreed
2	Private schools may foster a competitive environment, leading teachers to emphasize perfectionism	428 (27.92%)	531 (34.64%)	555 (36.20%)	19 (1.24%)	3.93	.79	Agreed
3	Private schools are often accountable to parents and stakeholders, leading to increased pressure on teachers to deliver high results	250 (16.31%)	689 (44.94%)	220 (14.35%)	374 (24.42%)	3.83	.84	Agreed
4	Private schools may have more resources, leading to higher expectations for teacher performance	811 (52.90%)	19 (1.24%)	160 (10.44%)	543 (35.42%)	3.70	.81	Agreed
5	Private school parents may have high expectations and demands, driving teachers to adopt a perfectionist attitude	333 (21.72%)	615 (40.12%)	316 (20.61%)	269 (19.55%)	2.93	.78	Agreed

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6	Private schools may emphasize achievement and excellence, creating a culture that values perfectionism	400 (26.09%)	510 (33.27%)	306 (19.96%)	317 (20.68%)	2.76	-.77	Agreed
7	Private schools may provide training and support that emphasizes perfectionism	615 (40.12%)	333 (21.72%)	269 (19.55%)	316 (20.61%)	3.05	.91	Agreed
8	Private schools may select high-achieving students, leading teachers to expect perfection	188 (12.26%)	702 (45.79%)	505 (32.94%)	138 (9.01%)	3.20	.85	Agreed
9	Private schools may tie funding and reputation to academic performance, increasing pressure on teachers to be perfect	67 (4.37%)	800 (52.19%)	466 (30.40%)	200 (13.04%)	2.90	.81	Agreed
10	Private schools may have less diversity, leading to a more homogeneous student body and increased pressure to conform to perfectionist standards	250 (16.31%)	689 (44.94%)	374 (24.40%)	220 (13.04%)	2.88	.82	Agreed
Grand Mean Score and Standard Deviation						3.96	.80	Agreed

From table 2, out of 1533 respondents 303 (19.77%) and 620 (40.43%) respondents agreed that private schools often have high academic standards, and teachers may feel pressure to meet these expectations while 326 (21.29%) and 284 (18.53%) respondents disagreed. Also, 428 (27.92%) and 531 (34.64%) respondents agreed that private schools may foster a competitive environment, leading teachers to emphasize perfectionism, while 555 (36.20%) and 19 (1.24%) respondents disagreed with the statement. In addition, 250 (16.31%) and 689 (44.94%) respondents agreed that private schools are often accountable to parents and stakeholders, leading to increased pressure on teachers to deliver high results e, while 220 (14.35%) and 374 (24.42%) respondents

disagreed. Also, 811 (52.90%) and 19 (1.24%) respondents agreed that private schools may have more resources, leading to higher expectations for teacher performance, while 160 (10.44%) and 543 (35.42%) respondents disagreed.

More so, 333 (21.72%) and 615 (40.12%) respondents agreed that private school parents may have high expectations and demands, driving teachers to adopt a perfectionist attitude, while 316 (20.61%) and 269 (19.55%) respondents disagreed with the statement. In the same vein, 400 (26.09%) and 510 (33.27%) respondents agreed that private schools may emphasize achievement and excellence, creating a culture that values perfectionism, while 306 (19.96%) and 317 (20.68% respondents disagreed. In another development, 615 (40.12%) and 333 (21.72%) respondents agreed that private schools may provide training and support that emphasizes perfectionism, while 269 (19.55%) and 316 (20.61%) respondents think otherwise.

Furthermore, 188 (12.26%) and 702 (45.79%) respondents agreed that private schools may select high-achieving students, leading teachers to expect perfection, while 505 (32.94%) and 138 (9.01%) respondents disagreed. Also, 67 (4.37%) and 800 (52.19%) respondents agreed that private schools may tie funding and reputation to academic performance, increasing pressure on teachers to be perfect, while 466 (30.40%) and 200 (13.04%) respondents opposed. More so, 250 (16.31%) and 689 (44.94%) respondents agreed that private schools may have less diversity, leading to a more homogeneous student body and increased pressure to conform to perfectionist standards, while 374 (24.40%) and 220 (13.04%) respondents disagreed with the statement.

Table 3: Response to Strategies for Overcoming Perfectionism

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Std	Remark
1	Recognize and challenge negative self-talk	306 (19.96%)	510 (33.28%)	231 (15.06%)	486 (31.70%)	2.60	.81	Agreed
2	Set realistic goals and expectations	400 (26.09%)	510 (33.27%)	306 (19.96%)	317 (20.68%)	3.11	.77	Agreed
3	Practice self-compassion	67 (4.37%)	800 (52.19%)	466 (30.40%)	200 (13.04%)	3.50	.79	Agreed
4	Embrace imperfection	250 (16.31%)	689 (44.94%)	374 (24.40%)	220 (13.04%)	3.83	.74	Agreed
5	Seek support	400 (26.09%)	400 (26.09%)	400 (26.09%)	333 (21.73%)	2.82	.78	Agreed
6	Practice mindfulness	615 (40.12%)	269 (19.55%)	333 (21.72%)	316 (20.61%)	3.67	.74	Agreed
7	Develop a growth mindset	544 (35.49%)	488 (31.85%)	400 (26.09%)	101 (6.59%)	3.88	.90	Agreed
8.	Take breaks and prioritize self-care	317 (20.68%)	400 (26.09%)	544 (35.49%)	272 (17.74%)	3.05	.79	Agreed
Grand Mean Score and Standard Deviation						2.96	.83	Agreed

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From table 3, out of 1533 respondents 306 (19.96%) and 510 (33.28%) respondents agreed that they recognize and challenge negative self-talk as a way of overcoming perfectionism, while 231 (15.06%) and 486 (31.70%) respondents disagreed. Also, 400 (26.09%) and 510 (33.27%) respondents agreed that they set realistic goals and expectations as a way of overcoming perfectionism, while 306 (19.96%) and 317 (20.68%) respondents disagreed with the statement. In addition, 67 (4.37%) and 800 (52.19%) respondents agreed that they practice self-compassion as a way of overcoming perfectionism, while 466 (30.40%) and 200 (13.04%) respondents think otherwise. Also, 250 (16.31%) and 689 (44.94%) respondents agreed that they embrace imperfection as a way of overcoming perfectionism, while 374 (24.40%) and 220 (13.04%) respondents disagreed.

More so, 400 (26.09%) and 400 (26.09%) respondents agreed that they seek support as a way of overcoming perfectionism, while 400 (26.09%) and 333 (21.73%) respondents disagreed. In addition, 615 (40.12%) and 269 (19.55%) respondents agreed that they practice mindfulness as a way of overcoming perfectionism, while 333 (21.72%) and 316 (20.61%) respondents disagreed with the statement. In another development, 544 (35.49%) and 488 (31.85%) respondents agreed that they develop a growth mindset as a way of overcoming perfectionism, while 400 (26.09%) and 101 (6.59%) respondents think otherwise.

Also, 317 (20.68%) and 400 (26.09%) respondents agreed that they take breaks and prioritize as a way of overcoming perfectionism, while 544 (35.49%) and 272 (17.74%) respondents opposed the statement

Table 4: Pearson “r” on teachers’ perfectionist attitude to learning and Students struggling with self-stigmatization

Variables	N	X	DF	r-Cal.	r-Crit.	Level of Sign	Decision
Teachers' perfectionist attitudes	1533	0.91	1528	0.81	0.78	0.05	Significant
Students' struggle with self-stigmatization		0.86					

Data in table 4 revealed Pearson product moment correlation coefficient analysis on teachers’ perfectionist attitude to learning and Students struggling with self-stigmatization. The mean was 0.90 and 0.85 for teachers' perfectionist attitudes to learning and Students struggling with self-stigmatization respectively. The calculated r - value was 0.81 while the critical r-table value was

0.78 with DF of 1528 at 0.05 level of significance. Since the calculated r - value was greater than the critical r-table value, the null hypothesis is rejected. Thus, there is a significant relationship between teachers' perfectionist attitude to learning and with self-stigmatization in private secondary schools in Delta State.

Table 5: Pearson “r” on Response to causes of teachers’ perfectionist to learning and Students struggling with self-stigmatization

Variables	N	X	DF	r-Cal.	r-Crit.	Level of Sign	Decision
Teachers’ perfectionist to learning	1533	2.96	1528	0.132	0.062	0.05	Significant
with self-stigmatization		2.82					

Data in Table 5 revealed Pearson product moment correlation coefficient analysis on causes of teachers' perfectionist to learning and Students struggling with self-stigmatization. The mean was 2.96 and 2.82 for causes of teachers' perfectionist to learning and Students struggling with self-stigmatization respectively. The calculated r - value was 0.132 while the critical r-table value was 0.062 with DF of 1528 at 0.05 level of significance. Since the calculated r - value was greater than the critical r-table value, the null hypothesis is rejected. Thus, there is a significant relationship between the causes of teachers' perfectionist to learning and Students struggling with self-stigmatization in private secondary schools in Delta State.

Table 6: Pearson “r” on Strategies for Overcoming Perfectionism

Variables	N	X	DF	r-Cal.	r-Crit.	Level of Sign	Decision
Strategies for overcoming perfectionism	1533	2.94	1528	0.067	0.062	0.05	Significant
Students struggling with self-stigmatization		2.82					

Data in Table 6 revealed Pearson product moment correlation coefficient analysis on strategies for overcoming perfectionism. The mean was 2.94 and 2.82 for strategies for overcoming perfectionism and Students struggling with self-stigmatization respectively. The calculated r -

value was 0.067 while the critical r-table value was 0.062 with DF of 1528 at 0.05 level of significance. Since the calculated r - value was greater than the critical r-table value, the null hypothesis is rejected. Thus, there is a significant relationship between strategies for overcoming perfectionism and Students struggling with self-stigmatization in private secondary schools in Delta State.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Findings revealed that teachers' perfectionist attitude to learning influence Students struggling with self-stigmatization in private secondary schools in Delta State. This is in line with Harris (2021) who asserted that the effect of teachers' perfectionist attitude on students' self-stigmatization can be significant. When teachers emphasize perfectionism, students may feel that they are not good enough or that they will never meet the teacher's expectations. Thus, there is a significant relationship between teachers' perfectionist attitude to learning and Students struggling with self-stigmatization in private secondary schools in Delta State.

It also showed that there are causes of teachers' perfectionist attitude to learning in private secondary schools in Delta State. This is in line with Schruder et al. (2014) asserted that in private schools, the proprietors are putting too much pressure on the teachers, academic performance rather than character is their sell out. Teachers in the bid to retain their job and self image develop this perfectionist attitude. Private schools are often accountable to parents and stakeholders, leading to increased pressure on teachers to deliver high results. Private schools may tie funding and reputation to academic performance, increasing pressure on teachers to be perfect. Thus, there is a significant relationship between the causes of teachers' perfectionist attitude to learning and Students struggling with self-stigmatization in private secondary schools in Delta State.

It also revealed that the strategies for overcoming perfectionism in private secondary schools in Delta State. This is in line with Peterson (2022) who identifies strategies for overcoming teachers' perfectionist to learning. Thus, there is a significant relationship between the strategies for overcoming perfectionism and Students struggling with self-stigmatization in private secondary schools in Delta State.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, teachers' perfectionist attitudes towards learning can have a profound impact on students, leading to self-stigmatization, decreased motivation, and a fixed mindset. When teachers emphasize perfectionism, students may feel that mistakes are unacceptable, and failure is a reflection of their worth. This can lead to self-criticism, anxiety, and a fear of taking risks or seeking help. If this perfectionist attitude is not checked positively in-line with individual abilities of students, it may impact negatively on the behavior of students and their way of life (mental

health challenges, withdrawal, frustration etc). However, to create a more supportive and inclusive learning environment, teachers must recognize and challenge their own perfectionist tendencies and instead foster a growth mindset that emphasizes progress, effort, and learning from mistakes. By doing so, we can help students develop a positive self-image, build resilience, and reach their full potential.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, it is therefore recommended that to address students' self-stigmatization as a result of teachers' perfectionist attitude to learning, educators and policy-makers should:

1. Foster a growth mindset and emphasize effort over ability
2. Encourage self-compassion and self-awareness
3. Provide positive role models and representation
4. Promote diversity and inclusion
5. Offer support and resources for mental health
6. Encourage open communication and feedback
7. Help students reframe negative self-talk and develop a positive self-image

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