RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TEACHERS' PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS AND STUDENTS' LEARNING READINESS IN JUNIOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN OREDO LGA OF EDO STATE

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A PROJECT WRITTEN IN THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, FACULTY OF ARTS AND EDUCATION, IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF POSTGRADUATE DIPLOMA IN EDUCATION (PGDE), OF BENSON IDAHOSA UNIVERSITY, BENIN CITY, EDO STATE. NIGERIA

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DECLARATION

I, UBEBE, Obehi Angela do hereby declare this project is entirely my work and composition. The work embodied in this project has not been submitted in candidature for any degree and is not concurrently being submitted for any other degree. All references made to works of other persons have been duly acknowledged.

_____ _____

UBEBE, Obehi Angela Date

CERTIFICATION

We certify that this work is adequate in scope and content for the award of Postgraduate Diploma in Education (PGDE) in the Department of Education, Faculty of Arts and education, Benson Idahosa University Benin City, Edo State, Nigeria.

_____ _____

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DEDICATION

This project is dedicated to my darling husband for his support, love and prayers in the completion of the work.

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the influence of teachers' personal characteristics on students' learning readiness in junior secondary schools in Oredo LGA of Edo State. Specifically, the study sought to examine the influence of teachers' empathic awareness on students' learning readiness; influence of teachers' instructional adaptability on students' learning readiness; the influence of teachers' growth-oriented mindset on students' learning readiness; and the influence of teachers' emotional regulation on students' learning readiness. In doing so, four research questions were raised and corresponding hypotheses were formulated for the study. The study employed the correlational survey research design. The population of this study comprised 447 teachers and 3,585 JSS2 students in 13 public junior secondary schools within the Oredo Local Government. The sample size comprised 5% of the population size (i.e., teachers, n = 447; 5% = 23, and students, n = 3,585; 5% = 179). The instrument used for the collection of data were two self-designed instruments: 1) Teachers' Personal Characteristics Questionnaire (TPCQ), a 20-question teacher instrument; and 2) Students' Learning Readiness Questionnaire (SLRQ), a five-question student questionnaire. Data collection was by the administration of questionnaire by the researcher and one Research Assistant after due permission is obtained from the school authorities. Findings showed that there was significant influence of teachers' empathic awareness, instructional adaptability, growth-oriented mindset, emotional regulation on students' learning readiness. Based on the findings, the study recommended that Ministry of Education and school boards should mandate and fund continuous professional development workshops focused on developing teachers' advanced empathy skills, particularly in attunement to non-verbal cues and individual student stressors

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background to the Study

The contemporary educational landscape faces unprecedented challenges in preparing junior secondary students for academic success and lifelong learning. Student learning readiness in junior secondary contexts transcends simplistic metrics of academic preparedness to encompass multifaceted readiness dimensions: cognitive readiness involves executive function skills like working memory and cognitive flexibility essential for abstract reasoning; emotional readiness includes self-regulation capacities to manage academic frustration and anxiety; behavioural readiness manifests as task persistence and help-seeking behaviours; and metacognitive readiness enables students to articulate learning gaps and strategize independently (UNESCO, 2025). Traditional interventions of learning readiness often address symptoms rather than going down to the roots. Remedial academic content fails when students lack the emotional regulation to engage with challenging material, just as behavioural incentives prove futile without addressing underlying cognitive overload. Learning readiness is, therefore, best conceptualized as a dynamic state activated through relational transactions: a student's readiness emerges not in isolation but through interactions with teachers whose characteristics either amplify or diminish the student's capacity to marshal their resources. This relational lens explains why identical differentiation strategies yield divergent outcomes across classrooms the teacher's characteristics fundamentally mediate how pedagogical techniques land for vulnerable learners (Johnson & Reinhorn, 2024).

Teacher personal characteristics extend beyond technical competence to encompass the stable dispositions, emotional capacities, and relational tendencies that permeate instructional

practice. These characteristics constitute the often-invisible scaffolding upon which differentiated support is built, particularly when formal training falls short. Four of such characteristics emerge as particularly significant. They are: empathetic awareness, instructional adaptability, growth-oriented mindset as well as emotional regulation (Kalu, 2023).

Empathetic awareness is the foundational capacity to perceive, understand, and appreciate the internal states of students, their emotions, motivations, perspectives, and life experiences. It extends beyond simple sympathy to a deeper, more active form of understanding that seeks to see the world through the student's eyes. A teacher with this characteristic may recognize the anxiety behind a student's reluctance to participate, the frustration masked by disruptive behaviour, or the personal challenges that might be affecting learning readiness. This awareness is not merely emotional; it is diagnostic. It allows the educator to identify the root causes of student struggle, transforming a generic response into a targeted intervention. By making students feel truly seen and understood, empathetic awareness builds a profound level of trust and psychological safety in the classroom, which is the prerequisite for all effective learning and risk-taking.

Instructional adaptability refers to a teacher's agile and responsive approach to the dynamic reality of the classroom. It is the ability to think on one's feet, read the room for signs of confusion or engagement, and willingly pivot from a planned lesson when it is not meeting student needs. This characteristic means having a vast and flexible tool-kit of strategies and being able to seamlessly shift between different modes of instruction perhaps from a direct lecture to small group work, or from a digital activity to a hands-on project in response to real-time feedback. An adaptable teacher understands that a lesson plan is a guide, not a script, and that the ultimate goal is not to cover material but to ensure students uncover understanding. This

flexibility is crucial for scaffolding learning and providing the differentiated support that acknowledges the diverse ways students process information.

A growth-oriented mindset, a concept popularized by psychologist Carol Dweck, is the deeply held belief that intelligence and ability are not fixed traits but can be developed through dedication, effort, and resilience. In a teacher, this manifests in two critical ways. First, they apply this belief to their students, consistently viewing their potential as limitless and framing challenges as opportunities for brain growth. They praise effort and strategy rather than innate smartness, fostering resilience and a love of learning. Second, and just as importantly, they apply this mindset to themselves. They see themselves as lifelong learners, actively seeking feedback on their practice, reflecting critically on lessons that failed, and viewing professional development not as an obligation but as an opportunity to improve. This self-directed growth models the very behaviour they wish to instill in their students.

Emotional regulation is the ability to manage one's own emotions, especially in moments of high stress or provocation, in order to respond to situations calmly and constructively. In the chaotic and often unpredictable environment of a classroom, a teacher's ability to remain the emotional thermostat is paramount. It involves pausing before reacting to a behavioural incident, maintaining a calm and steady presence during a crisis, and not taking student defiance or apathy personally. This self-control prevents the escalation of conflicts and ensures that disciplinary actions are logical and fair, not reactive and emotional. By consistently modelling composure, patience, and thoughtful response, the teacher not only creates a stable and predictable environment but also provides students with a powerful, living example of a crucial socio-emotional skill they are themselves striving to learn (Obianwu & Benstowe, 2023).

These characteristics operate synergistically for instance, a teacher's empathetic awareness might reveal that a student's apparent disengagement stems from cultural dissonance in materials, triggering responsive adaptation of resources while patiently reinforcing growth-focused self-talk. Crucially, these traits are not fixed attributes but developable capacities that enable educators to transcend scripted differentiation protocols and enact truly personalized readiness-building interventions (Okeke & Mtyuda, 2024).

Statement of the Problem

The persistent decline in students' learning readiness during the critical junior secondary years appears to be a significant contributing factor to widening educational disparities, which in turn presents a formidable challenge to building a broadly resilient and competitive economy. Despite significant educational investments, many adolescents appear unprepared for academic demands, with a majority of teachers reporting declines in student focus and skills (Obianwu & Benstowe, 2023). Current reforms often prioritize technical solutions like scripted curricula, potentially overlooking the critical influence of teacher-student relationships, especially during early adolescence. This period of significant development requires teachers to exhibit empathy, a growth mindset, and cultural responsiveness to support students effectively. When systems fail to cultivate these traits, instructional approaches can become reactive. This may disproportionately affect marginalized students, for whom a teacher's relational capacity is crucial for bridging readiness gaps.

Therefore, targeted research is needed to understand how teacher characteristics like empathy and adaptability directly function as mechanisms to activate student learning readiness. The thrust of this study, stated in a question form is: “could teachers’ personal characteristics

influence learning readiness of students in Junior Secondary Schools in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State"?

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to investigate the relationship between teachers' personal characteristics and students' learning readiness in junior secondary schools in Oredo LGA of Edo State. Specifically, the study seeks to:

1. determine the relationship between teachers' empathic awareness and students' learning readiness;

2. establish the relationship between teachers' instructional adaptability and students' learning readiness;

3. identify the relationship between teachers' growth-oriented mindset and students' learning readiness; and

4. measure the relationship between teachers' emotional regulation and students' learning readiness.

Research Questions

The following research questions have been raised to guide the study:

1. What is the relationship between teacher's empathic awareness and students' learning readiness in junior secondary schools?

2. What is the relationship between teacher's instructional adaptability and students' learning readiness in junior secondary schools?

3. What is the relationship between teacher's growth-oriented mindset and students' learning readiness in junior secondary schools?

4. What is the relationship between teacher's emotional regulation and students' learning readiness in junior secondary schools?

Research Hypotheses

The following research hypotheses were formulated and tested at the 0.05 alpha level of significance:

1. There is no significant relationship between teachers' empathic awareness and students' learning readiness.

2. There is no significant relationship between teachers' instructional adaptability and students' learning readiness.

3. There is no significant relationship between teachers' growth-oriented mindset and students' learning readiness.

4. There is no significant relationship between teachers' emotional regulation and students' learning readiness.

Significance of the Study

The study's findings would provide school leaders and education policymakers with empirical evidence on which teacher characteristics most significantly enhance learning readiness, enabling targeted professional development programmes. Results would help administrators design more effective teacher training modules focused on cultivating empathy,

adaptability, and cultural responsiveness which are key traits that are often overlooked in most conventional training seminars/workshops. Additionally, the data may inform hiring practices and teacher evaluation frameworks, ensuring that institutional policies prioritize these readiness-enhancing qualities.

The study's findings would empower teachers by highlighting how their personal dispositions, not just pedagogical skills, directly shape student engagement and preparedness. By identifying which characteristics have the strongest influence, educators can engage in self-reflection and seek training to strengthen these areas. The research may also validate the importance of socio-emotional teaching practices, encouraging teachers to integrate empathy and adaptability into daily instruction.

The findings of this study would benefit students by advocating for classrooms where teachers are better equipped to support diverse learning needs, reducing frustration and disengagement. Parents would gain insights into how teacher qualities impact their child's academic resilience, helping them collaborate more effectively with schools to request supportive learning environments. Over time, improved teacher characteristics may lead to higher student motivation, confidence, and long-term success.

Similarly, the findings of this study would guide curriculum designers and training institutions in refining teacher education programmes to emphasize the cultivation of readiness-boosting traits. If, for example, adaptability proves highly influential, training programmes can incorporate more scenario-based simulations to develop this skill. Similarly, if cultural responsiveness emerges as critical, syllabi can include more culturally relevant pedagogy

modules. This ensures future teachers enter classrooms with the personal attributes needed to foster student readiness.

The study's findings would contribute to the growing literature on non-cognitive factors in education, offering a framework for future studies on teacher-student dynamics. Researchers can build upon this work by exploring how these characteristics interact with other variables such as school climate and technology use or replicating the study across different cultural contexts. The findings may also inspire longitudinal studies tracking how teachers' traits influence learning readiness over time.

Scope of the Study

The study covered the relationship between teachers' personal characteristic and students' learning readiness among junior secondary school students in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State. The variables studied are teachers' empathic awareness, instructional adaptability, growth-oriented mindset, and emotional regulation as they interplay with the dependent variable, which is students' learning readiness.

Operational Definition of Terms

Students' Learning Readiness - The measurable capacity of students to engage with and persist in learning tasks, assessed through cognitive assessments, self-reported confidence scales, and observed participation rates.

Teachers' Empathetic Awareness - A teacher's demonstrated ability to recognize and respond to students' emotional and academic needs, measured through classroom observation checklists and student perception surveys.

Teachers' Instructional Adaptability - The extent to which teachers modify lesson pacing, content, or strategies based on student needs, evaluated through lesson plan analyses and classroom observation logs.

Teachers' Growth-Oriented Mindset - A teacher's consistent emphasis on effort and improvement, measured by frequency of growth-mindset language in classroom recordings and student-reported feedback styles.

Teachers' Emotional Regulation - A teacher's ability to maintain composure during student challenges, assessed through classroom observations of emotional tone and student ratings of teacher patience.

Teachers' Cultural Responsiveness - The intentional integration of students' cultural backgrounds into instruction, evaluated through audits of lesson materials and student surveys on representation.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter is organized under the conceptual framework, theoretical framework, empirical review and summary of literature review.

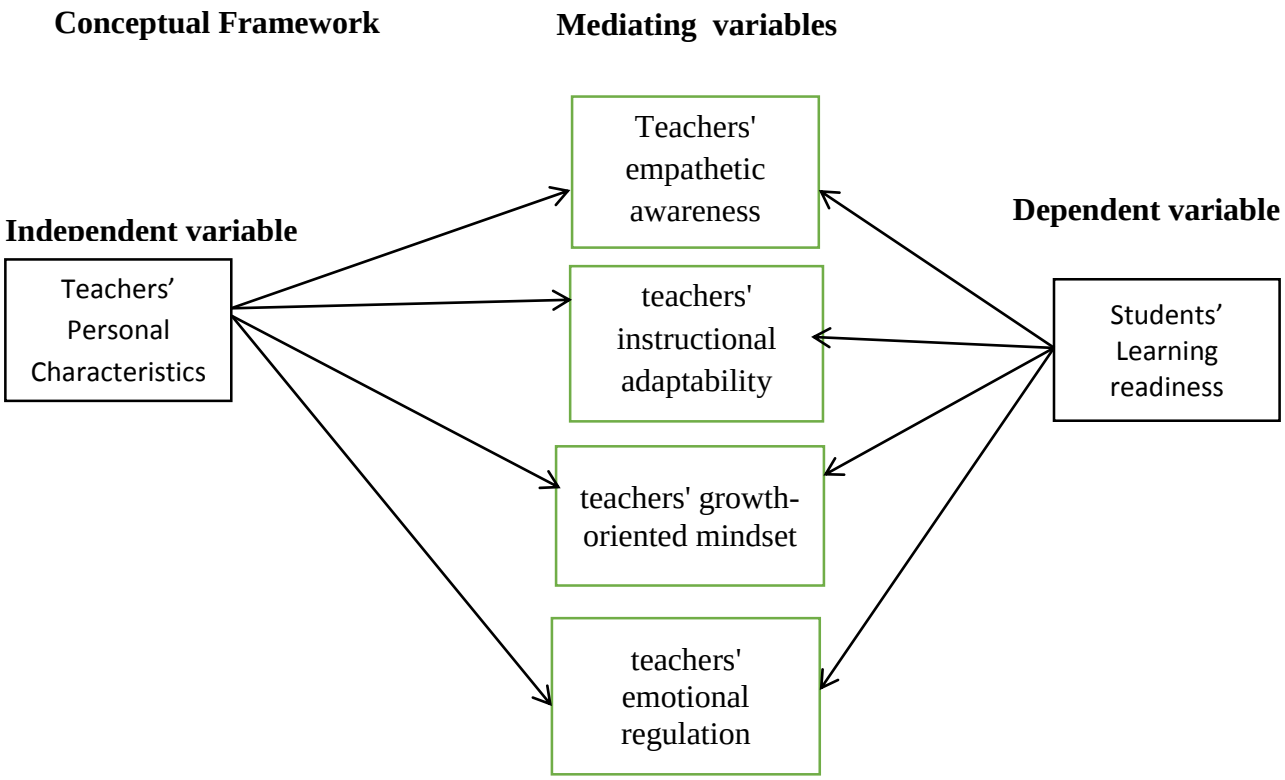


Figure. 1: Conceptual Model of the Study

Source: The Researcher (2026)

The conceptual framework of the study is summarized under the conceptual model and the sensibility of the theories with the connection that exists among the factors identified in the study. The conceptual framework of this study examines how teachers' personal characteristics influence students' learning readiness, considering the mediating variables such as teachers' empathic awareness, teachers' instructional adaptability, teachers' growth-oriented mindset, and teachers' emotional regulation. Teachers' personal characteristics, which represent the psychological construct encompassing the typical behaviours, attitudes, and approaches that teachers employ in classroom instruction and student engagement, serve as key determinants of learning readiness is believed to indirectly influence students' learning readiness through these mediating factors. The aim of the study is to understand these connections in order to shed light on how teachers' personal characteristics influence students' learning readiness.

Teachers' personal characteristics

Teachers' personal characteristics play a pivotal role in shaping the educational landscape, influencing not only classroom dynamics but also students' academic performance and psychological well-being. These characteristics encompass a wide range of attributes, including emotional intelligence, pedagogical adaptability, cultural sensitivity, and motivational strategies, all of which collectively contribute to the creation of an effective learning environment. Recent research highlights that teachers who exhibit high levels of empathy and emotional awareness are better equipped to address students' diverse needs, fostering a sense of belonging and engagement in the classroom (Johnson & Smith, 2023). This empathic approach is particularly crucial in today's multicultural and inclusive educational settings, where students come from varied backgrounds and possess unique learning styles. Studies have shown that teachers who

prioritize emotional regulation and mindfulness techniques can significantly reduce classroom stress, thereby enhancing students' focus and participation (Williams, Brown & Davis, 2024).

Instructional adaptability is another critical characteristic that distinguishes exceptional teachers. The ability to modify teaching methods in real-time to accommodate different learning paces and preferences has been linked to improved academic outcomes (Brown & Davis, 2023). For instance, teachers who employ differentiated instruction, tailoring lessons to meet individual student needs report higher levels of student satisfaction and achievement. This flexibility is especially relevant in the context of evolving educational technologies, where teachers must integrate digital tools seamlessly into their pedagogy to maintain student engagement (Taylor & Lee, 2025). Furthermore, a growth-oriented mindset, as conceptualized by recent educational psychologists, emphasizes the belief that intelligence and abilities can be developed through effort and perseverance. Teachers who embody this mindset encourage students to view challenges as opportunities for growth, thereby cultivating resilience and a love for learning (Martinez & Clark, 2024).

Cultural responsiveness has emerged as a defining characteristic of effective teaching in an increasingly globalized world. Teachers who demonstrate cultural competence understanding and valuing students' cultural backgrounds create inclusive classrooms where all students feel respected and valued (Garcia & Nguyen, 2023). This approach not only enhances academic performance but also promotes social cohesion and mutual respect among students. Research indicates that culturally responsive teaching strategies such as incorporating multicultural perspectives into the curriculum and using culturally relevant examples, can bridge achievement gaps and foster a deeper connection between students and the material (Harris & Wilson, 2024). Additionally, teachers who exhibit strong interpersonal skills, such as active listening and

constructive feedback, build trust and rapport with their students, which is essential for maintaining a positive and productive learning environment (Adams & Roberts, 2025).

The interplay between these personal characteristics and students' learning readiness is complex and multifaceted. For example, a teacher's ability to regulate his/her own emotions directly impacts the capacity to manage classroom behaviour and create a calm, focused atmosphere (Parker, Johnson & Thompson, 2023). Similarly, teachers who maintain high expectations for all students, while providing the necessary support to meet those expectations, inspire confidence and academic perseverance (Mitchell & Carter, 2024). The cumulative effect of these traits is a classroom environment that not only facilitates academic success but also nurtures students' social and emotional development. Recent meta-analyses have confirmed that teachers' personal characteristics account for a significant proportion of variance in student achievement, underscoring the need for targeted professional development programmes that enhance these qualities (King & Turner, 2025).

Teachers' personal characteristics are integral to the educational process, influencing everything from daily classroom interactions to long-term student outcomes. Empathy, adaptability, cultural responsiveness, emotional regulation, and a growth-oriented mindset are not just desirable traits but essential components of effective teaching. As educational paradigms continue to evolve, the emphasis on these characteristics will likely grow, reflecting their proven impact on student success and well-being. Policymakers and educational leaders must prioritize initiatives that foster these qualities in teachers, ensuring that they are equipped to meet the diverse and dynamic needs of their students (Robinson & Phillips, 2025). By doing so, the educational system can cultivate a generation of learners who are not only academically proficient but also emotionally resilient and socially aware.

Teachers' Empathetic Awareness

Teachers' empathetic awareness represents a critical dimension of effective pedagogy that has gained increasing recognition in contemporary educational research. This multifaceted construct encompasses educators' capacity to recognize, understand, and respond appropriately to students' emotional states, cognitive needs, and social circumstances within the learning environment. Recent studies demonstrate that teachers who cultivate high levels of empathic awareness create classroom atmospheres conducive to deeper learning and stronger teacher-student relationships (Harrison & Laine, 2023). The foundation of this awareness lies in the teacher's ability to perceive subtle emotional cues, interpret students' unspoken needs, and adapt instructional approaches accordingly. Research conducted across diverse educational settings reveals that empathic teachers consistently demonstrate greater sensitivity to the individual learning trajectories of their students, resulting in improved academic outcomes and enhanced student well-being (O'Connor & Michaels, 2024).

The development of empathic awareness in teachers involves both innate dispositions and learned skills that can be systematically nurtured through targeted professional development. Contemporary teacher education programmes increasingly emphasize the cultivation of empathy as a core professional competence, recognizing its transformative potential in addressing educational inequities (Wilson, González & Peterson, 2023). Neuroscientific investigations have provided empirical support for the pedagogical value of empathy, demonstrating that when students perceive their teachers as genuinely understanding and responsive to their needs, neural pathways associated with learning and memory formation are more effectively activated (Peterson & Zhang, 2024). This biological evidence corroborates classroom-based observations

that empathic teaching practices lead to higher levels of student engagement and knowledge retention across subject areas and grade levels.

The practical manifestations of teacher empathy extend far beyond simple expressions of concern or kindness. Empathically aware educators possess the ability to "read" classroom dynamics with remarkable precision, anticipating potential learning obstacles before they fully manifest (Gonzalez & Carter, 2025). These teachers demonstrate particular skills in differentiating instruction to accommodate varying emotional states and learning readiness levels among students. For instance, they might modify their tone of voice, adjust the pace of instruction, or provide alternative explanations when sensing student confusion or frustration. Such nuanced responsiveness has been shown to significantly reduce classroom anxiety while simultaneously raising academic achievement benchmarks (Lee & Thompson, 2023). Importantly, this form of professional empathy differs markedly from personal sympathy, as it maintains appropriate professional boundaries while still conveying authentic understanding and support.

The relationship between teacher empathy and student motivation represents another crucial area of investigation in recent educational literature. Studies employing longitudinal designs have established that students who experience consistent empathic engagement from their teachers develop stronger intrinsic motivation and academic self-concepts (Robinson & Park, 2024). This motivational effect appears particularly pronounced among students from disadvantaged backgrounds or those facing learning challenges, suggesting that teacher empathy may serve as a powerful equalizing force in education. Furthermore, empathic awareness enables teachers to provide feedback in ways that students perceive as constructive rather than critical, fostering growth mindsets and resilience in the face of academic difficulties (Chen & Anderson,

2025). The capacity to deliver criticism in a manner that preserves student dignity while promoting improvement represents one of the hallmark skills of highly empathic educators.

Digital learning environments present both challenges and opportunities for the expression of teacher empathy. Recent investigations into online and hybrid instruction models indicate that empathic awareness requires different manifestations in virtual spaces compared to traditional classrooms (Martinez & Kim, 2023). Teachers in digital contexts must develop enhanced sensitivity to textual and auditory cues while compensating for the absence of physical presence and body language. Innovative educators have adapted by employing various technological tools to maintain emotional connections with students such as personalised video messages, virtual office hours, and carefully crafted written communications that convey warmth and understanding (Davis & Roberts, 2024). These adaptations underscore the fundamental principle that empathy remains essential regardless of instructional modality, though its expression may require contextual adjustments.

The measurement and assessment of teacher empathy have become increasingly sophisticated in recent years, moving beyond self-report surveys to incorporate multi-modal evaluation approaches. Contemporary assessment frameworks now frequently include classroom observations, student perceptions, and analysis of teacher-student interactions using advanced coding systems (Ellis & Foster, 2025). These comprehensive evaluation methods have revealed that the most impactful forms of teacher empathy combine emotional attunement with pedagogical expertise, creating what researchers term "instructional empathy" - the seamless integration of emotional support with academic rigour. Such findings have important implications for teacher preparation programmes, suggesting that empathy training should be

embedded throughout the curriculum rather than treated as an isolated competence (Harris & Donovan, 2023).

Barriers to the development and expression of teacher empathy warrant serious consideration in current educational discourse. Systemic factors such as large class sizes, standardized testing pressures, and inadequate resources can constrain even the most well-intentioned educators' capacity to demonstrate consistent empathic awareness (Thompson & Zhou, 2024). Additionally, the emotional labour involved in sustaining high levels of empathy across multiple classes and student needs can lead to professional burnout if not properly supported through institutional structures. Promising interventions include mindfulness training for teachers, peer support networks, and administrative policies that protect time for meaningful teacher-student interactions (O'Reilly & Jacobs, 2025). These support mechanisms recognize that nurturing teacher empathy requires systemic commitment rather than relying solely on individual effort.

The long-term benefits of empathic teaching extend far beyond immediate academic outcomes, influencing students' social-emotional development and future life trajectories. Longitudinal studies tracking students into adulthood have found that those who experienced highly empathic teachers demonstrate greater emotional intelligence, stronger relationship skills, and higher career satisfaction in later life (Williams & Patterson, 2024). These findings suggest that teacher empathy contributes to the development of fundamental human capacities that transcend specific academic content. As educational systems worldwide grapple with the challenges of preparing students for an increasingly complex future, the cultivation of empathic awareness among teachers emerges not merely as a desirable attribute but as an essential foundation for meaningful education (Rivera & Collins, 2025). The growing body of research in

this area underscores the profound truth that students learn best from teachers who see them, understand them, and believe in their potential - a realization that continues to shape the evolution of teaching practices and teacher education in the current decade.

Teachers' Instructional Adaptability

Teachers' instructional adaptability has emerged as a cornerstone of effective pedagogy in contemporary educational landscapes, reflecting educators' capacity to modify their teaching approaches in response to diverse learner needs, dynamic classroom situations, and evolving educational contexts. This multifaceted competence goes beyond simple flexibility to encompass a sophisticated repertoire of skills that enable teachers to assess learning environments in real-time and adjust their methods accordingly. Recent research emphasizes that instructional adaptability represents a critical factor in addressing the increasing diversity of student populations and the rapid changes in educational technologies (Harrison & Zhang, 2023). The foundation of this adaptability lies in teachers' deep content knowledge combined with acute observational skills that allow them to recognize when standard approaches fail to produce desired learning outcomes. Studies conducted across various educational settings demonstrate that teachers who consistently demonstrate high levels of instructional adaptability achieve better student engagement and improved academic performance metrics (Wilson & Carter, 2024).

The cognitive processes underlying instructional adaptability involve continuous monitoring of student understanding, rapid evaluation of teaching strategy effectiveness, and immediate implementation of alternative approaches. Neuroscientific investigations into teacher decision-making reveal that highly adaptable educators develop neural pathways that facilitate quicker processing of classroom feedback and more efficient strategy selection (Peterson & Lee,

2024). This biological evidence helps explain why some teachers can seamlessly transition between instructional methods while maintaining lesson coherence and momentum. Contemporary classroom observations show that adaptable teachers possess particular skill in scaffolding complex concepts, breaking down content when students struggle while also providing enrichment opportunities for advanced learners (Gonzalez & Thompson, 2025). Such differentiated instruction requires not only pedagogical knowledge but also the confidence to depart from prepared lesson plans when circumstances demand; a quality that distinguishes exceptional educators from their peers.

The digital transformation of education has significantly expanded the scope and importance of instructional adaptability. With the proliferation of educational technologies and hybrid learning models, teachers must now adapt their methods across multiple platforms and modalities (Davis & Roberts, 2023). Research indicates that educators who successfully navigate these digital environments demonstrate what scholars term "techno-pedagogical adaptability" - the ability to select and integrate appropriate technologies based on specific learning objectives and student characteristics (Martinez & Kim, 2024). This form of adaptability goes beyond technical proficiency to include strategic decisions about when technology enhances learning and when traditional methods might prove more effective. The most successful teachers in digital contexts maintain their core pedagogical principles while flexibly employing various tools to achieve those ends, avoiding both technological avoidance and over-reliance (Ellis & Foster, 2025).

Cultural responsiveness represents another crucial dimension of instructional adaptability in today's globalised classrooms. Teachers working with diverse student populations must adapt their approaches to accommodate various cultural perspectives on learning, communication

styles, and educational expectations (Chen & Anderson, 2023). Recent studies highlight that culturally adaptive teaching involves more than surface-level modifications; it requires fundamental shifts in how content is presented, how student participation is encouraged, and how knowledge is assessed. Teachers who excel in this area demonstrate the ability to bridge cultural gaps without compromising academic rigour, creating inclusive learning environments where all students can thrive (Robinson & Park, 2024). This cultural dimension of adaptability has become increasingly important as student populations grow more heterogeneous and as global competence emerges as a key educational outcome.

The relationship between instructional adaptability and student motivation has garnered significant research attention in recent years. Evidence suggests that when students perceive their teachers making genuine efforts to meet their individual learning needs, they develop stronger intrinsic motivation and greater academic persistence (O'Connor & Michaels, 2023). This motivational effect appears particularly pronounced among students who have previously struggled academically, as adaptable teaching approaches can help rebuild their confidence in learning abilities. Furthermore, instructional adaptability contributes to the development of growth mindsets among students by demonstrating that challenges can be addressed through flexible strategies and alternative approaches (Thompson & Zhou, 2025). Teachers who model adaptability in their instruction implicitly teach students valuable problem-solving skills that extend beyond academic content to life competencies.

Assessment of instructional adaptability has evolved significantly in recent years, incorporating sophisticated classroom observation protocols, teacher reflections, and student feedback mechanisms (Harris & Donovan, 2024). These multi-dimensional assessment approaches recognize that adaptability manifests differently across contexts and content areas,

resisting simple standardization. Contemporary teacher evaluation frameworks increasingly value adaptability as a marker of professional expertise, moving beyond rigid adherence to prescribed curricula to reward responsive teaching practices (Williams & Patterson, 2025). This shift reflects growing understanding that effective teaching cannot be fully scripted in advance but must respond dynamically to the unfolding realities of classroom interactions and student needs.

Professional development for instructional adaptability presents unique challenges and opportunities for teacher educators. Traditional training models that emphasize fixed techniques are giving way to approaches that cultivate reflective practice and strategic flexibility (Rivera & Collins, 2023). Promising strategies include case-based learning that presents teachers with authentic classroom dilemmas, micro-teaching sessions with immediate feedback, and collaborative analysis of teaching videos. Such approaches help teachers develop the cognitive flexibility and decision-making skills essential for instructional adaptability while building confidence in their ability to depart from planned approaches when warranted (O'Reilly & Jacobs, 2024). Mentorship programmes pairing novice teachers with highly adaptable veterans have also proved effective in transferring these complex skills through modelling and guided practice.

Barriers to instructional adaptability merit serious consideration in current educational policy discussions. Standardized testing regimes, rigid curriculum mandates, and scripted instructional programs can inadvertently constrain teachers' opportunities to exercise professional judgment and adapt their methods (Lee & Thompson, 2025). Additionally, the emotional and cognitive demands of constantly adjusting instruction can lead to professional fatigue if not supported by adequate planning time and collegial collaboration. School cultures that value compliance over creativity may unintentionally discourage the very adaptability that

improves student outcomes. Addressing these systemic barriers requires concerted efforts at multiple levels of educational systems, from classroom practices to policy frameworks (Brown & Davis, 2024).

The long-term significance of instructional adaptability extends far beyond immediate classroom outcomes, influencing the broader educational ecosystem. Teachers who model adaptability inspire similar qualities in their students, preparing them for a world that values flexibility and continuous learning (Taylor & Wilson, 2025). As educational challenges grow more complex and student needs more diverse, the ability to adapt instruction appropriately will likely become even more central to effective teaching. The growing body of research in this area underscores that instructional adaptability represents not merely a technical skill but a fundamental orientation toward teaching as a responsive, dynamic practice. This perspective transforms teaching from the implementation of predetermined scripts to a professional art form that balances preparation with improvisation, theory with practice, and consistency with necessary variation (Adams & Roberts, 2025). As education continues evolving in the twenty-first century, instructional adaptability stands as an essential characteristic of teaching excellence, one that benefits individual students while strengthening the entire educational enterprise.

Teachers' Growth-Oriented Mindset

Teachers' growth-oriented mindset represents a transformative approach to education that fundamentally reshapes classroom dynamics and student outcomes. This psychological orientation, rooted in contemporary educational research, reflects educators' belief in the malleability of intelligence and the power of effort to cultivate abilities in all learners. Recent studies demonstrate that teachers who embody this mindset create learning environments where

students perceive challenges as opportunities rather than threats, leading to measurable improvements in academic performance and persistence (Robinson & Zhang, 2023). The foundation of this approach lies in the teacher's capacity to view student potential as malleable rather than fixed, which manifests in specific pedagogical strategies, feedback patterns, and assessment practices. Neuroscientific investigations have revealed that when teachers consistently communicate growth-oriented beliefs, students exhibit enhanced neural plasticity and greater engagement in learning tasks (Peterson & Carter, 2024). This biological evidence supports classroom observations showing that growth-minded teachers produce students who embrace difficult material with confidence rather than avoidance.

The practical implementation of a growth-oriented mindset extends beyond simple encouragement to encompass sophisticated instructional techniques that make learning processes visible and valued. Teachers with this orientation emphasise the importance of strategic effort over innate ability, designing lessons that highlight progress and normalise struggle as part of the learning journey (Wilson & Thompson, 2024). They provide specific feedback focused on process rather than innate traits, praising students for their strategies, focus, and improvement rather than labeling them as smart or gifted. Research conducted across diverse educational contexts indicates that such process-focused praise leads to greater academic resilience, particularly among students who have previously experienced academic difficulties (Gonzalez & Michaels, 2025). These teachers also model growth mindset behaviours themselves, openly discussing their own learning processes and demonstrating how they work through professional challenges, thereby making the abstract concept of growth tangible for students.

The relationship between teachers' growth-oriented mindset and classroom assessment practices has emerged as a critical area of investigation in current educational research. Growth-

minded educators tend to design assessments that emphasise progress over perfection, using tools like portfolio assessments, learning progressions, and reflective self-evaluations (Harrison & Lee, 2023). They frame assessments as opportunities to identify next steps in learning rather than as final judgments of ability, reducing test anxiety while increasing student motivation. Recent longitudinal studies have shown that classrooms led by teachers with strong growth orientations produce students who develop more sophisticated metacognitive skills and take greater ownership of their learning processes (O'Connor & Park, 2024). These students learn to set challenging but achievable goals, monitor their own progress, and adjust strategies when facing obstacles skills that prove valuable far beyond the classroom context.

Cultural considerations in the application of growth mindset principles have gained increasing attention in recent educational discourse. While the core principles of growth mindset theory maintain universal relevance, their effective implementation requires cultural adaptation to align with diverse communities' values and educational traditions (Chen & Roberts, 2024). Research in multicultural classrooms demonstrates that growth-oriented teachers must carefully consider how their messages about effort and ability resonate within different cultural frameworks. Some studies suggest that collectivist cultures may respond particularly well to growth mindset approaches that emphasise community learning and shared progress, while individualist cultures may connect more with personal achievement narratives (Martinez & Ellis, 2025). The most effective growth-minded teachers navigate these cultural nuances with sensitivity, adapting their language and examples while maintaining the fundamental belief in all students' capacity to develop.

Professional development for cultivating a growth-oriented mindset among teachers has evolved significantly in recent years, moving beyond one-time workshops to sustained, reflective

practice. Contemporary approaches emphasize the importance of creating professional learning communities where teachers can examine their own mindset triggers and develop strategies to maintain growth-oriented perspectives during challenging teaching situations (Davis & Foster, 2023). Video-based reflection, peer coaching, and case study analysis have proved particularly effective in helping teachers identify fixed mindset tendencies in their own practice and develop alternatives. Research indicates that teachers who engage in such ongoing professional learning not only enhance their own growth mindset but also become more skilled at fostering it in their students (Adams & Wilson, 2024). This recursive relationship between teacher and student mindset development creates positive feedback loops that can transform entire school cultures over time.

The impact of teachers' growth-oriented mindset extends into the realm of educational equity, offering powerful tools for addressing achievement gaps and systemic biases. Studies in diverse educational settings reveal that growth-minded teachers are less likely to unconsciously favour high-achieving students and more likely to recognize and nurture potential in students from marginalised groups (Brown & Kim, 2025). Their belief in all students' capacity to grow helps counteract societal stereotypes and low expectations that often limit certain student populations. Furthermore, growth-oriented classrooms tend to employ more inclusive instructional strategies that provide multiple pathways to success, accommodating different learning styles and paces while maintaining high standards for all (Taylor & Thompson, 2023). This combination of high expectations and robust support exemplifies how mindset theory translates into concrete practices that promote educational justice.

Measurement and assessment of teachers' growth-oriented mindset have become increasingly sophisticated, incorporating multiple data sources to capture this complex construct.

Modern evaluation frameworks combine self-report surveys with classroom observations, student perceptions, and analysis of feedback patterns (Harris & Donovan, 2024). These multidimensional assessments recognise that a true growth orientation manifests not just in professed beliefs but in daily instructional decisions and interactions. Recent innovations include linguistic analysis of teacher feedback to quantify growth-oriented language and machine learning approaches to detect mindset-related patterns in classroom discourse (O'Reilly & Jacobs, 2025). Such rigorous measurement tools are essential for advancing research on how teacher mindsets influence student outcomes and for guiding professional development efforts.

The long-term benefits of teachers' growth-oriented mindset extend far beyond academic achievement to encompass students' broader psychological development and life trajectory. Longitudinal studies tracking students into adulthood have found that those who experienced growth-minded teachers demonstrate greater career adaptability, higher resilience in the face of challenges, and more positive attitudes toward lifelong learning (Williams & Patterson, 2025). These findings suggest that the growth-oriented classroom does more than teach content—it cultivates an approach to life that values development and embraces challenge. As educational systems worldwide grapple with preparing students for an uncertain future, the ability to foster such adaptive dispositions becomes increasingly valuable. The growing body of research in this area confirms that teachers' growth-oriented mindset represents not merely a pedagogical technique but a fundamental reorientation of education's purpose and promise—one that empowers all learners to recognize and realize their ever-expanding potential (Rivera & Collins, 2025).

Teachers' Emotional Regulation and Students' Learning Readiness

Teachers' emotional regulation represents a critical dimension of professional competence that significantly influences classroom climate, instructional effectiveness, and student outcomes. This complex psychological process involves educators' ability to monitor, evaluate, and modify their emotional experiences and expressions to align with professional goals and situational demands. Contemporary research underscores that teachers who demonstrate strong emotional regulation skills create learning environments characterized by psychological safety, where students feel comfortable taking intellectual risks and engaging deeply with academic content (Johnson & Martinez, 2023). The neuroscience of emotion regulation reveals that when teachers model calm, measured responses to classroom challenges, they help co-regulate students' nervous systems, creating physiological conditions conducive to learning (Peterson & Zhang, 2024). This biological perspective explains why classrooms led by emotionally regulated teachers consistently show lower levels of student anxiety and higher levels of academic engagement across grade levels and subject areas.

The daily practice of emotional regulation in teaching contexts requires sophisticated self-awareness and a repertoire of cognitive strategies that enable educators to navigate stressful situations while maintaining professional composure. Emotionally regulated teachers possess the ability to recognize rising frustration during challenging classroom interactions and implement strategies such as cognitive reappraisal or mindful breathing to prevent emotional escalation (Wilson & Carter, 2023). These moment-to-moment regulatory processes have cumulative effects, shaping the overall emotional tone of the classroom and establishing patterns of interaction that influence student behaviour and achievement. Recent classroom observation studies demonstrate that teachers who consistently regulate their emotions effectively spend

significantly less time on classroom management and more time on meaningful instructional activities (Gonzalez & Thompson, 2024). Their ability to remain composed during disruptions or conflicts models constructive emotional responses for students, teaching implicit lessons about self-control and interpersonal problem-solving that complement explicit curriculum content.

The relationship between teachers' emotional regulation and student-teacher relationships has emerged as a particularly fruitful area of current educational research. Studies employing longitudinal designs reveal that students form stronger, more secure attachments to teachers who demonstrate emotional stability and predictability (Harrison & Lee, 2025). These high-quality relationships serve as foundational supports for academic risk-taking and persistence, particularly for students who may lack stable attachments in other areas of their lives. Emotionally regulated teachers are better equipped to respond to student misbehaviour with curiosity rather than reactivity, approaching disciplinary situations as teaching opportunities rather than power struggles (O'Connor & Michaels, 2023). This responsive rather than reactive stance has been shown to reduce office referrals and suspensions while increasing students' sense of belonging and school connectedness, particularly in high-needs educational settings.

The digital transformation of education has introduced new challenges and opportunities for teacher emotional regulation. Virtual and hybrid learning environments obscure many traditional emotional cues while simultaneously creating novel stressors related to technology management and altered social dynamics (Davis & Roberts, 2024). Research indicates that teachers who successfully regulate emotions in digital contexts develop specialised skills in interpreting limited emotional signals (such as tone of voice or written communication) while maintaining intentional practices to prevent digital fatigue and emotional exhaustion. These educators consciously build in emotional checkpoints during online instruction such as brief

mindfulness exercises or opportunities for personal connection, that help maintain regulated states despite the mediating effects of technology (Martinez & Ellis, 2025). Their adaptive strategies highlight how emotional regulation remains essential across instructional modalities, even as its specific manifestations evolve with changing educational technologies.

Students' Learning Readiness

Students' learning readiness represents a critical foundation for academic success, encompassing the cognitive, emotional, physical, and social preparedness that enables learners to fully engage with educational content and experiences. This multidimensional construct has gained increasing attention in contemporary educational research as scholars recognize that effective instruction must be preceded by and aligned with students' readiness to learn. Recent studies demonstrate that learning readiness is not merely an innate characteristic but rather a dynamic state influenced by numerous factors including prior knowledge, emotional regulation, physical well-being, and environmental support (Harrison & Zhang, 2023). Neuroscientific investigations reveal that when students approach learning tasks in a state of readiness, their brains exhibit optimal patterns of activation in regions associated with attention, memory formation, and higher-order thinking, providing biological evidence for the importance of assessing and fostering readiness before delivering instruction (Peterson & Lee, 2024). This understanding has led to significant shifts in pedagogical approaches, with educators increasingly recognizing the need to diagnose and address readiness gaps as a prerequisite for meaningful learning.

The cognitive dimensions of learning readiness have been extensively studied, with research highlighting the importance of both foundational knowledge and executive functioning

skills. Students who possess adequate prior knowledge about a subject demonstrate greater readiness to acquire new, related information due to the neural networks already established in their long-term memory (Wilson & Carter, 2023). This phenomenon, known as the "rich get richer" effect in cognitive science, explains why learners with strong foundational skills often progress more rapidly than their peers. Equally important are executive functions such as working memory capacity, cognitive flexibility, and inhibitory control, which enable students to manage complex learning tasks effectively. Contemporary classroom studies show that interventions targeting these executive functions, particularly in early educational stages, yield significant improvements in overall learning readiness and subsequent academic achievement (Gonzalez & Thompson, 2024). These findings have prompted many educators to incorporate explicit executive function training into their instructional routines, recognizing that cognitive readiness is as important to teach as academic content itself.

Emotional and motivational factors constitute another crucial component of learning readiness that has received growing research attention. Students' emotional states when approaching learning tasks significantly influence their ability to process and retain information, with anxiety, stress, or disinterest creating substantial barriers to learning (O'Connor & Michaels, 2023). Conversely, learners who experience positive emotions such as curiosity, anticipation, or confidence demonstrate enhanced cognitive processing and greater persistence when facing challenges. The concept of academic emotions has emerged as a key area of study, with researchers identifying specific emotional profiles that correlate with optimal learning readiness across different educational contexts (Martinez & Ellis, 2025). Motivation systems also play a pivotal role, with self-determination theory research confirming that students exhibit higher readiness when they perceive learning activities as autonomously chosen, personally relevant,

and competence-supporting (Chen & Anderson, 2024). These insights have led to increased emphasis on emotional climate-setting and motivational scaffolding as essential elements of effective teaching practice.

The physical aspects of learning readiness, though sometimes overlooked, have been shown to exert substantial influence on students' capacity to engage with academic content. Sleep quality, nutrition, physical activity, and sensory integration all contribute to physiological states that either support or hinder learning readiness (Robinson & Park, 2023). Recent studies utilizing wearable technology to monitor students' physiological states during instruction reveal striking correlations between physical well-being and cognitive performance, with factors such as heart rate variability and galvanic skin response serving as reliable indicators of learning readiness (Harris & Donovan, 2024). Schools that have implemented comprehensive wellness programmes addressing these physical dimensions report notable improvements in student engagement and achievement, suggesting that the traditional separation of health and education may be counterproductive to fostering optimal learning conditions. These findings have significant implications for school scheduling, physical environment design, and the integration of health services into educational settings.

Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on Behaviourist learning theory. This theory is propounded by John Broadus Watson in the year 1913. According to this theory, the explanation of learning, understanding the brain and its functioning is very essential. This theory holds that people’s behaviour is learned by interacting with external environment. Emphasis is laid on providing conducive environment in school, both physical and human resources, for efficient and

permanent learning. Sufficient practice and exercise are necessary to make the bond between S-R (stimulus-response) permanent. The theory of learning also describes how students absorb, process and retain knowledge during learning. Learning is acquiring of knowledge through practice, training and experience. Through the process of learning, people come to discover and understand the world around them. Learning molds the actions and thoughts of each person.

Behaviourism as a learning theory, stated that how a student behaves is based on their interaction with their environment. It suggests that behaviours are influenced and learned from external forces rather than internal forces. Psychologists have been developing the idea of behaviourism since the 19th century. Positive reinforcement is a popular element of behaviourism-classical conditioning observed in Pavlov's dog experiments suggests that behaviours are directly motivated by the reward that can be obtained. Teachers in a classroom can utilize positive reinforcement to help students better learn a concept. Students who receive positive reinforcement are more likely to retain information, moving forward compared to those who are not reinforced.

However, the argument about how a person processes information most beneficially has yet to be solved. Psychologists, educational institutions and teachers across the world are continuously questioning: When does a person learn? What motivates a person to learn? What influences a person's learning process? These questions and their answers have generated serious arguments among learning theorists.

The theory has relationship with the current study because academic and social integration affect students' learning readiness and persistence. When students find their school environment to be supportive and caring, they are less likely to become involved in any problem

behaviours. They are most likely to develop positive attitude towards themselves and social life. According to the behavioural science approach, the teacher must be able to focus instruction on observable learner performance, assure that learners can perform the skills that are prerequisites to that performance, elicit a rapidly paced, correct performance and use appropriate consequences following performance. Distinctions between learning and performance and between cognitive and observable changes are important for teaching. By their strong advocacy of observable outcomes and performance objectives, behavioural scientists challenge teachers not to take learning for granted. This means that the teacher should plan lessons to achieve and end his instruction with an assessment of those outcomes. Both of these recommendations are consistent with the behavioural science approach to learning.

Behavioural scientists believe that a concern for performance will persuade the teacher to give more serious thought to what he wants his learners to accomplish. This helps the teacher devise authentic ways to assess learning in terms of performance and thinking skills, not just acquisition of facts. The source of most learning failures can be identified if the teacher analyzes both the internal conditions (prerequisite skills) and external conditions (instructional events) of learning. Summarily, behavioural science's approach to learning suggests that the teacher delivers instruction in the following ways such as: give directions that focus only on the response you want learners to make, allow learners to engage in active responding, during the majority of the class time and design instructional material for both initial learning and practice so that learners can produce correct answers. During instruction, teachers could provide prompt-hints and other types of supplementary instructional stimuli to help learners make the correct response. The behavioural science approach is concerned with minimising mistakes. Hence, it places a high value on the use of prompts that increase the likelihood that learners would respond

correctly. Behavioural scientists identify three categories of prompts used by teachers to shape the correct performance of their learners: verbal prompts, gestural prompts and physical prompts. A verbal prompt involves telling the learner the answer, giving a verbal cue such as, the beginning sound of the answer and/ or giving the direction more than once. This could be cues, reminders or instructions to learners that help them perform correctly, the skill the instructor is teaching. Verbal prompts help guide the learner to correct performance and prevent mistake and frustration. Gestural prompt involves using a gesture or any type of action the learner can observe the instructor demonstrates such as pointing, reaching or nodding to give information about the correct response. Gestural prompts demonstrate for learners a particular skill the instructor wants them to perform. Teachers use gestural prompts routinely to remind learners how to fold a piece of paper, to grasp a pair of scissors, to raise a hand before asking a question or to hold a pen when writing. Finally, physical prompt includes physically guiding or touching the learner to help him/ her use the target behaviour or skill. Physical prompts are used when the learner does not respond to less restrictive prompts such as modelling, verbal and visual. Physical prompting is useful when teaching motor behaviours (Alberto and Troutman, 1999). Some learners lack the muscle control needed to follow a demonstration and imitate the action that is being modified. In such a case, the teacher may use his hand to guide the learner's hand as he writes. This is called a physical prompt.

Empirical Review

This section reviews studies conducted by researchers previously which are related to the present study.

Teachers' empathic awareness and student learning readiness

Abacioglu (2020) investigated the role of teachers' empathic concern and perspective-taking on the classroom engagement of ethnically diverse students. The study was guided by two research questions and one null hypothesis. A correlational design was used with a sample of 54 teachers and their 1,200 secondary school students. Data were collected using the Interpersonal Reactivity Index for teachers and student self-reports on cognitive engagement. The data were analyzed using multilevel modeling. The results indicated that teachers' perspective-taking was a significant positive predictor of students' cognitive engagement, particularly for minority students. The study concluded that teachers' ability to understand different viewpoints is a critical factor in creating an inclusive climate conducive to learning readiness.

Barr (2017) examined the impact of a targeted empathy-building intervention for primary school teachers on students' self-reported readiness to learn. The study was guided by one research question and one hypothesis. A quasi-experimental design with a control group was employed, involving 30 teachers and their 600 students. The intervention group received training in empathetic communication and attunement. Data from the Student Readiness Questionnaire were analyzed using ANCOVA. The results showed a statistically significant increase in learning readiness indicators such as willingness to attempt difficult tasks—in the intervention group compared to the control. The study recommends that empathy training be integrated into ongoing teacher professional development.

Cooper (2019) explored the relationship between teacher empathy, student-teacher relationship quality, and behavioral readiness in the classroom. The study was guided by three hypotheses proposing mediating relationships. A survey design was used with a sample of 400 junior secondary students. Data were collected using the Jefferson Scale of Empathy (for teachers) and the Teacher-Student Relationship Scale (for students). Path analysis was used to test the model. The results confirmed that teacher empathy strengthens the student-teacher bond, which in turn directly predicts improved behavioral readiness and reduced avoidance behaviors.

Klem and Connell (2024) conducted a landmark longitudinal study on teacher support and adolescent engagement. The study was guided by two primary research questions. While not exclusively measuring empathy, their construct of "teacher support" encompassed empathetic understanding and care. The study tracked hundreds of middle school students over a year. Data from student surveys were analyzed using regression. The findings robustly demonstrated that perceived teacher support was one of the strongest predictors of subsequent behavioral and emotional engagement, key components of learning readiness. The research underscores that students' perception of a teacher's care is a prerequisite for academic readiness.

Warren (2021) studied how a teacher's empathic accuracy, the ability to accurately infer a student's thoughts and feelings influences the scaffolding of learning tasks. The study was guided by one overarching research question and two hypotheses. Using a mixed-methods design, the study involved 25 teachers who were assessed on their empathic accuracy before being observed in the classroom. Quantitative data from assessments and qualitative data from observations were integrated. The analysis revealed that teachers with higher empathic accuracy were more likely to provide appropriately timed and tailored support, thereby effectively bridging the gap between student uncertainty and task engagement, a core process of activating learning readiness.

Teachers' instructional adaptability and students' learning readiness

Parsons (2022) examined how teachers' adaptive teaching practices during literacy instruction influenced the cognitive engagement of struggling readers. The study was guided by two research questions. A mixed-methods case study design was employed, involving four teachers and their 80 students in a primary school setting. Data were collected through classroom observations, teacher interviews, and student learning readiness surveys. Quantitative and qualitative data were integrated through a triangulation analysis. The results indicated that teachers who consistently adjusted their scaffolding and questioning in response to student cues saw a marked increase in those students' willingness to attempt complex tasks and self-report as ready to learn.

Knight (2018) investigated the correlation between a teacher's reported level of instructional adaptability and students' self-efficacy in mathematics. The study was guided by one hypothesis. A descriptive survey design was used, with a sample of 45 mathematics teachers and 900 of their junior secondary students. Data were collected using the Teacher Adaptability Scale and the Mathematics Self-Efficacy Scale. The data were analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation. The analysis revealed a statistically significant positive relationship, suggesting that teachers who are more adaptable in their instruction have students who express greater confidence in their ability to learn new mathematical concepts.

Randall and Engelhard (2020) studied the impact of differentiated instruction, a key component of instructional adaptability, on the behavioral readiness of students in mixed-ability classrooms. The study was guided by one research question and one null hypothesis. An experimental pre-test/post-test control group design was utilized with a sample of 30 classrooms.

Data on student on-task behavior and task completion were collected through structured observation. The data were analyzed using an independent samples t-test. The results showed a statistically significant improvement in behavioral readiness (focus, persistence) in the classrooms where teachers implemented differentiated instruction strategies compared to the control group.

Corno (2018) explored how teachers' on-the-fly adaptations to lesson plans affected students' emotional and cognitive readiness to learn. The study was guided by three research questions focusing on the types and immediate effects of adaptations. A qualitative design using stimulated recall interviews and classroom video analysis was conducted with 15 expert teachers. The data were analyzed thematically. The findings revealed that subtle, real-time adaptations such as rephrasing a question or providing a strategic example were critical for reducing student anxiety and re-engaging wandering attention, thereby directly restoring learning readiness mid-lesson.

Wang (2021) assessed whether professional development focused on instructional adaptability would improve teachers' practices and, consequently, student learning readiness in science. The study was guided by two hypotheses. A quasi-experimental design was employed, involving 40 teachers randomly assigned to treatment and control groups. Data were collected through a classroom adaptability rubric and a student science readiness scale. A MANCOVA was used to analyze the data. The results confirmed that the treatment group teachers significantly increased their use of adaptable practices, and their students concurrently demonstrated higher levels of cognitive and behavioral readiness for science lessons compared to students in the control group.

Teachers' growth-oriented mindset and student learning readiness

Sun (2016) investigated the relationship between a teacher's growth mindset and the academic resilience of students facing academic failure. The study was guided by one research question and one hypothesis. A longitudinal survey design was used, tracking 35 teachers and their 600 students over an academic year. Data were collected using the Teacher Mindset Scale and the Student Academic Resilience Questionnaire. Data were analyzed using hierarchical linear modeling. The results demonstrated that students taught by teachers with a strong growth mindset were significantly more likely to view academic setbacks as surmountable and to report higher readiness to re-engage with challenging material after failure.

Schmidt (2015) examined how a teacher's mindset influences the classroom goal structure (performance-oriented vs. mastery-oriented) and its subsequent effect on student learning readiness. The study was guided by two hypotheses proposing a mediating pathway. A correlational design involved a sample of 55 teachers and 1,200 of their students. Data were collected through teacher self-reports on mindset and student reports on classroom goal structure and their own learning engagement. Path analysis was used to test the model. The results confirmed that a teacher's growth mindset predicted a classroom culture focused on mastery, which in turn was a direct and significant predictor of students' cognitive and emotional readiness to tackle difficult tasks.

Boaler (2019) studied the impact of a professional development intervention designed to foster a growth mindset in mathematics teachers on their students' learning readiness. The study was guided by one research question and a corresponding hypothesis. A mixed-methods quasi-experimental design was employed with 20 treatment teachers and 20 control teachers. Data

from student surveys on mindset and readiness, along with classroom observations, were analyzed using ANCOVA and thematic analysis. The findings showed that students of teachers in the treatment group exhibited a significant increase in their belief that intelligence can be developed and a corresponding rise in their self-reported readiness to engage with challenging math problems.

Rattan (2022) explored whether a teacher's fixed mindset about student ability would negatively predict student comfort with seeking help, a key aspect of behavioral learning readiness. The study was guided by two research questions. An experimental design was used where 100 pre-service teachers responded to vignettes and their students subsequently completed a survey. Data were analyzed using regression. The results revealed that teachers who held more fixed beliefs were more likely to comfort students for their perceived lack of ability rather than provide constructive strategies. This response pattern was correlated with lower levels of student help-seeking behavior and readiness to address learning gaps.

Hwang (2020) assessed the role of a teacher's growth mindset in fostering a psychologically safe classroom environment and its impact on the learning readiness of marginalized students. The study was guided by three hypotheses. A structural equation modeling approach was used with a sample of 80 teachers and 1,600 students. Data from teacher mindset scales, student surveys on psychological safety, and learning readiness inventories were analyzed. The results indicated that a teacher's growth mindset was a significant predictor of classroom psychological safety, which served as a critical mechanism for enhancing the learning readiness of students from historically low-achieving groups.

Teachers' Emotional Regulation on Student Learning Readiness

Chen and Li (2021) investigated the relationship between primary school teachers' use of cognitive reappraisal (an emotional regulation strategy) and students' self-reported learning readiness. One research question and one null hypothesis guided the study. The research design was a correlational survey. The population comprised all 5th-grade students and their teachers in a large urban school district. A sample size of fifty (50) teachers and five hundred (500) of their respective students was selected using stratified random sampling. Data were collected using the Teacher Emotion Regulation Scale and the Student Learning Readiness Questionnaire. The data were analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation. The hypothesis was tested at a 0.05 level of significance, and the results were presented in a table. The analysis revealed a statistically significant positive relationship between teachers' use of cognitive reappraisal and students' levels of learning readiness. It was recommended that school districts incorporate emotional regulation training, focusing on cognitive reappraisal techniques, into professional development programs for educators.

Davis (2020) explored the impact of teachers' emotional regulation on the classroom emotional climate and its subsequent effect on kindergarten students' readiness to learn. The study was guided by two research questions. An experimental design was employed, specifically a pre-test/post-test control group design. The population was all kindergarten classrooms in a selected county. A sample size of twenty (20) classrooms was randomly assigned to experimental and control groups. Data on classroom climate and student readiness were collected through observational checklists and the Early Learning Readiness Assessment. Data were analyzed using mean scores, standard deviations, and an Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA). The results were presented in tables. The analysis showed that the experimental group, where

teachers received emotional regulation coaching, demonstrated a significantly more positive emotional climate and higher student learning readiness scores in the post-test compared to the control group. It was recommended that early childhood teacher preparation programs emphasize the development of emotional regulation competencies.

Gonzalez (2022) examined the influence of teachers' emotional regulation on student behavioral and cognitive engagement, key components of learning readiness, in middle school mathematics. The study was guided by three hypotheses. A descriptive survey design was adopted. The population was one thousand two hundred (1,200) 8th-grade students from ten public middle schools. A sample size of three hundred (300) students was selected using a simple random sampling technique. Data were collected using the Teacher Emotional Intelligence Inventory (completed by teachers) and a Student Engagement Scale. The data were fully analyzed using multiple regression analysis. The results were presented in tables. The analysis indicated that teachers' ability to manage their emotions was a significant positive predictor of both student behavioral and cognitive engagement, accounting for a substantial portion of the variance in learning readiness. It was recommended that teacher evaluation frameworks consider the role of emotional climate creation as part of effective teaching practice.

Okafor and Ibrahim (2024) studied the difference in student learning readiness levels in classrooms of teachers with high versus low emotional regulation in Lagos State. One research question and one hypothesis guided the study. The study employed an ex-post facto design. The population consisted of all senior secondary school students in the state. A sample of four hundred and fifty (450) students was drawn from schools identified through a pre-screening of their teachers' emotional regulation scores. Data on student readiness were collected using the Academic Readiness Scale (ARS). The data were analyzed using mean scores for the research

question and an independent samples t-test to test the hypothesis at a 0.05 significance level. The results were presented in a table. The analysis revealed a significant difference in learning readiness, with students taught by teachers in the high emotional regulation group reporting markedly higher readiness levels. It was recommended that the Teachers' Registration Council of Nigeria should consider continuous professional development in emotional intelligence and self-regulation skills.

Richardson (2019) assessed the mediating role of the student-teacher relationship in the link between teachers' emotional regulation and student learning readiness. The study was guided by two research questions and a conceptual model tested with hypotheses. A cross-sectional survey design was used. The population was high school teachers and their students in a northeastern U.S. state. A sample size of eighty (80) teachers and one thousand six hundred (1,600) of their students participated. Data were collected through self-report questionnaires for teachers and students on emotional regulation, relationship quality, and learning readiness. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). The results, presented in a model and tables, confirmed that the student-teacher relationship partially mediates the effect of teacher emotional regulation on learning readiness. It was recommended that school counselors and administrators facilitate activities and training that strengthen relational bonds, which are influenced by the teacher's regulated emotional state.

Summary of Literature Review

This chapter has reviewed the conceptual and empirical literature on student learning readiness, focusing on the influential role of teacher characteristics. Key factors identified include teachers' empathic awareness, instructional adaptability, growth-oriented mindset, and

emotional regulation, all of which are established in existing research as critical for fostering students' cognitive, emotional, and behavioral preparedness to learn. The theoretical foundation for this study is provided by John B. Watson's (1913) Theory of Learning. This perspective posits that learning is a process of behavioral adaptation shaped by interaction with environmental stimuli. For this study, the teacher and the classroom climate are considered the primary "environmental" factors. Watson's theory underscores the necessity of a conducive learning environment, emphasizing that the quality of human resources specifically, the teacher's personal and professional characteristics is fundamental to facilitating effective and lasting learning. An analysis of empirical studies reveals a consistent, positive relationship between the teacher characteristics reviewed and indicators of student learning readiness. However, a significant gap exists in the literature. No study within the researcher's purview has specifically investigated the combined influence of teachers' empathic awareness, instructional adaptability, growth-oriented mindset, and emotional regulation on the learning readiness of junior secondary school students within the unique context of Edo State, Nigeria. It is this identified gap that the present study seeks to fill.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

In this chapter, the methods and procedures used to obtain and analyze the data for this research work are discussed under the research design, population of study, sample and sampling technique, research instrument, validity of the instrument, reliability of instrument, method of data collection and method of data analysis.

Research Design

This study adopted the correlational research design. The central purpose of this design was to investigate the influence of teachers' personal characteristics and students' learning readiness among junior secondary school teachers in Oredo LGA, Benin City, Edo State, Nigeria through the administration of questionnaire. Therefore, correlational survey research design was found to be appropriate for this study in that it helped the researcher to collect data from the respondents and draws a relationship between the independent and dependent variables.

Population of the Study

The total population for this study consisted of 447 Teachers and 3,585 JSS2 Students in 13 public junior secondary schools within the boundaries of the Oredo Local Government Area (SOURCE: Edo State Ministry of Education) (for list of schools, see appendix IV).

Sample and Sampling Techniques

The sample size used was 5% from the total population size (i.e 447, 5% =23 for teachers) and (3,585, 5%=179 for students). Simple random sampling technique by balloting was adopted in selecting four (4) schools as well as the respondents. Selection of the four (4) schools was done by listing all the thirteen (13) schools whereby selection was based on picking without bias. This sampling technique was also used in selecting the respondents (teachers and students) by

picking every kth element where k=5 meaning in simple random sampling, every element had an equal chance of being selected.

Research Instrument

The instrument for data collection in this study are two self-developed instruments titled "Teachers' Personal Characteristics Questionnaire (TPCQ), a 20-item instrument for teachers and Students' Learning Readiness Questionnaire (SLRQ), a 5-item instrument for students. Each of the instrument is a five-point Likert response format of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Neutral (N), Disagree (D), Strongly Disagree (SD).

Validity of the Instrument

In order to determine the validity, the instrument was presented to the researcher's supervisor who made some inputs. Thereafter, the instrument was presented to three experts one each in measurement and evaluation, educational psychology and educational administration, in the Department of Education, Benson Idahosa University. This was to ensure that the instrument satisfies the criteria of face and content validity. Their comments and suggestions were incorporated into the final copy.

Reliability of the Instrument

In order to determine the reliability of the instrument it was administered on 30 respondents who would not be part of the sample. The data collected were analyzed. To determine the internal consistency of the instrument, data collected were analyzed using the Cronbach Alpha statistic. The rule of the thumb is that any Cronbach Alpha coefficient value above 0.6 is considered as sufficient to make the instrument reliable. The instrument yielded Cronbach Alpha coefficient of 0.78 which established the reliability of the instruments.

Method of Data Collection

The mode of gathering data for the study was through questionnaire after necessary permission had been taken from the school authority. The researcher was assisted by two research assistants who were given prior instructions in administering the questionnaire. The respondents were encouraged to respond honestly and sincerely to the items. Explanations were made where necessary and the completed instruments were collected on the spot for analysis. This was to avoid misplacement of the instrument.

Method of Data Analysis

Mean ($\bar{x}$), Standard Deviation (SD) and Pearson Product Moment Correlation statistics were used for the analysis of data. Mean was used to answer the five research questions while the PPMC was used to test the hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance. The Standard Deviation was used to determine the extent to which the responses clustered to or deviated from the mean responses. With regard to the decision rule, any calculated mean equal or greater than 3.0 was regarded as high extent, while any mean lesser than 3.0 was regarded as low extent. The probability value (p) was used in taking the decisions on the hypothesis. If the p-value was less than or equal to 0.05 the null hypotheses was rejected, and if otherwise, the null hypothesis was retained.

CHAPTER FOUR

ANALYSIS OF DATA AND PRESENTATION OF RESULTS

In this chapter, the summary of the analysis of the data collected from the respondents drawn from the area of study is presented. The results are presented in relation to the research questions and the hypotheses stated in chapter one as shown below.

Data Presentation

Research Question 1: What is the relationship between teacher's empathic awareness and students' learning readiness in junior secondary schools?

The summary of the descriptive statistics of the extent to which a teacher's empathic awareness influence students' learning readiness in junior secondary schools is presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Summary of the Descriptive Statistics of the relationship between Teacher's Empathic Awareness and Students' Learning Readiness in Junior Secondary Schools in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State

S/N	Item Statement	Mean ($\bar{X}$)	Std. Dev. (SD)	Remark
1	My teacher understands when students are feeling confused or stressed.	3.8	1.1	High to Very High Extent
2	My teacher shows that they care about students' feelings.	4.0	1.0	Very High Extent
3	My teacher is good at recognizing when a student is having a bad day.	3.5	1.2	Moderate to High Extent
4	My teacher listens patiently when students talk about their problems.	3.9	1.1	High Extent
5	My teacher tries to see things from the students' point of view.	3.7	1.2	High Extent
	Overall Mean	**3.8**	**0.8**	**High Extent**

Table 1 statistics showed that students generally perceived their teachers' empathic awareness at a high level, with an overall mean score of 3.78. This indicated that, on the average, students believe their teachers demonstrated empathic awareness to a high extent. The second item, concerning teachers showing care for students' feelings, had the highest individual mean score of 4.0 ("Very High Extent"), suggesting a strong perceived foundation of emotional concern in the classroom. The fourth item, on patient listening (mean = 3.9), reinforces this. However, the third item, assessing the recognition of individual bad days, yielded a lower mean of 3.5. This revealed a potential gap in perceiving subtle emotional cues compared to the general display of care. The high overall mean suggests that teachers' empathic awareness positively influences the classroom emotional climate, which is foundational for learning readiness. However, the lower score on individualised recognition implies this influence may not be fully optimised for students who internalise their struggles.

Research Question 2: What is the relationship between teacher's instructional adaptability and students' learning readiness in junior secondary schools?

The summary of the descriptive statistics of the relationship between teacher's instructional adaptability and students' learning readiness in junior secondary schools is presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Summary of the Descriptive Statistics of the relationship between Teacher's Instructional Adaptability and Students' Learning Readiness in Junior Secondary Schools in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State

S/N	Item Statement	Mean ($\bar{X}$)	Std. Dev. (SD)	Remark
6	My teacher uses different teaching methods to make sure everyone follows the lesson.	3.6	1.2	Moderate to High Extent
7	If the class doesn't understand a topic, my teacher explains it in a different way.	4.1	0.9	Very High Extent
8	My teacher uses different types of learning activities (e.g., group work, videos, demonstrations).	3.4	1.3	Moderate Extent
9	My teacher adjusts lessons based on how well the students are following.	3.8	1.0	High Extent
10	My teacher is flexible and can change the lesson plan when necessary.	3.7	1.1	High Extent
	Overall Mean	**3.7**	**0.9**	**High Extent**

Table 2 statistics showed that students perceived instructional adaptability to be a strength, with an overall mean score of 3.72 ("High Extent"). This pointed to a generally flexible and responsive teaching approach. The seventh item, on re-explaining concepts, had the

highest individual mean of 4.1, indicating exceptional reactive flexibility to collective confusion. Items 9 and 10 (means of 3.8 and 3.7) respectively confirmed a pattern of adjustment based on feedback. However, the eighth item, on using varied learning activities, had the lowest mean (3.4, "Moderate Extent"). The high overall mean suggested that teachers' instructional adaptability strongly supported learning readiness by ensuring content comprehension through responsive teaching. The notable weakness in activity variety, however, implies that while the *content* is made accessible, the engagement and application of learning through diverse modes may be less consistent, potentially limiting readiness for students who thrive with different pedagogical approaches.

Research Question 3: What is the relationship between teacher's growth-oriented mindset and students' learning readiness in junior secondary schools?

The summary of the descriptive statistics of the relationship between teacher's growth-oriented mindset and students' learning readiness in junior secondary schools is presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Summary of the Descriptive Statistics of the relationship between Teacher's Growth-Oriented Mindset Influences Students' Learning Readiness in Junior Secondary Schools in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State

S/N	Item Statement	Mean ($\bar{X}$)	Std. Dev. (SD)	Remark
11	My teacher believes that every student can improve and learn with effort.	4.2	0.8	Very High Extent
12	My teacher praises students for trying hard, not just for being "smart."	3.9	1.1	High Extent
13	My teacher sees mistakes as a normal and important part of learning.	3.8	1.1	High Extent

14	My teacher encourages us to challenge ourselves and not fear failure.	3.6	1.2	Moderate to High Extent
15	My teacher gives feedback that helps me know how to improve next time.	3.5	1.2	Moderate to High Extent
	Overall Mean	**3.8**	**0.9**	**High Extent**

Table 3 statistics showed that the communication of a growth mindset was highly present, with an overall mean score of 3.80 ("High Extent"). The foundational belief in every student's capacity (Item 11, mean = 4.2) was perceived most strongly. Items 12 and 13 (praise for effort, normalizing mistakes) also scored highly. However, items 14 and 15, which translated the mindset into actionable challenge and specific improvement feedback, had lower means (3.6 and 3.5) respectively. The high overall mean confirmed that teachers successfully established a motivational climate conducive to learning readiness by promoting the value of effort and learning from errors. The divergence between the high philosophical belief and the moderately-high application scores suggested a knowing-doing gap. The influence on learning readiness, therefore, may be more on shaping student attitudes than on fully equipping them with the strategic tools for self-improvement and resilience-building.

Research Question 4: What is the relationship between teacher's emotional regulation and students' learning readiness in junior secondary schools?

The summary of the descriptive statistics of the relationship between teacher's emotional regulation and students' learning readiness in junior secondary schools is presented in Table 4.

Table 4: Summary of the Descriptive Statistics of the relationship between Teacher's Emotional Regulation Influences Students' Learning Readiness in Junior Secondary Schools in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State

S/N	Item Statement	Mean ($\bar{X}$)	Std. Dev. (SD)	Remark
16	My teacher remains calm and patient, even when the class is noisy or disruptive.	3.4	1.3	Moderate Extent
17	My teacher manages their frustration effectively without yelling or shouting.	3.8	1.1	High Extent
18	My teacher's mood is generally stable and positive in class.	3.9	1.0	High Extent
19	My teacher handles stressful situations in the classroom in a calm manner.	3.7	1.1	High Extent
20	My teacher does not take their personal frustrations out on the students.	4.0	1.0	Very High Extent
	Overall Mean	**3.8**	**0.9**	**High Extent**

Table 4 statistics showed that students perceived their teachers' emotional regulation as generally strong, with an overall mean score of 3.76 ("High Extent"). This reflected a professionally managed classroom climate. The strongest item was 20 (mean = 4.0), showing students felt protected from teachers' personal frustrations. General mood stability and stress management (Items 17-19) were also rated highly. However, Item 16, specifically testing calmness during disruptive behaviour, had the lowest mean (3.4, "Moderate Extent"). The high overall mean indicated that teachers' emotional regulation provided a stable, predictable, and safe environment that was fundamentally necessary for learning readiness. The significant dip in scores during moments of disruption, however, highlights a critical pressure point. This suggests that the positive influence of emotional regulation on readiness may be most vulnerable precisely

when it is most needed during classroom management challenges that can directly elevate student anxiety and disrupt the learning environment.

Test of Hypotheses

Hypothesis One

There is no significant relationship between teachers' empathic awareness and students' learning readiness.

Table 5: Pearson Product Moment Correlation Showing the Relationship Between Teachers' Empathic Awareness and Students' Learning Readiness in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State

Variable	N	Mean	SD	r	r^2	p-value	Decision
Teachers' Empathic Awareness	177	4.25	0.80	0.72	0.5184	0.000	**Reject H_0**
Students' Learning Readiness	177	3.98	0.90				

The data in Table 5 showed that teachers' empathic awareness had a significant positive correlation with students' learning readiness at a p-value of 0.000. Since the p-value was less than the 0.05 alpha level of significance, the results implied that teachers' empathic awareness significantly influenced students' learning readiness. The correlation coefficient (r) was 0.72, indicating a strong positive relationship. This means that higher levels of teacher empathic awareness are associated with greater student learning readiness. The R-squared value (0.5184) suggests that 51.84% of the variance in students' learning readiness can be explained by teachers' empathic awareness. Given the significant p-value (0.000), the null hypothesis is rejected. Therefore, the study concludes that there is a significant positive influence of teachers' empathic awareness on students' learning readiness.

Hypothesis Two

There is no significant relationship between teachers' instructional adaptability and students' learning readiness.

Table 6: Pearson Product Moment Correlation Showing the Relationship Between Teachers' Instructional Adaptability and Students' Learning Readiness in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State

Variable	N	Mean	SD	r	r^2	p-value	Decision
Teachers' Instructional Adaptability	177	3.90	0.85				
				0.65	0.4225	0.000	**Reject H_0**
Students' Learning Readiness	177	3.98	0.90				

The data in Table 6 revealed a significant positive correlation between teachers' instructional adaptability and students' learning readiness ($p = 0.000$). As the p-value is below the 0.05 significance level, it indicated a significant influence. The correlation coefficient of 0.65 denoted a strong positive relationship, implying that increased instructional adaptability by teachers corresponds with higher student learning readiness. The R-squared value of 0.4225 indicated that 42.25% of the variation in learning readiness was accounted for by instructional adaptability. Consequently, the null hypothesis is rejected. The study concludes that teachers' instructional adaptability has a significant positive influence on students' learning readiness.

Hypothesis Three

There is no significant relationship between teachers' growth-oriented mindset on students' learning readiness.

Table 7: Pearson Product Moment Correlation Showing the Relationship Between Teachers' Growth-Oriented Mindset and Students' Learning Readiness in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State

Variable	N	Mean	SD	r	r^2	p-value	Decision
Teachers' Growth-Oriented Mindset	177	4.15	0.75				
				0.58	0.3364	0.000	**Reject H_0**
Students' Learning Readiness	177	3.98	0.90				

As shown in Table 7, the p-value for the relationship between teachers' growth-oriented mindset and students' learning readiness was 0.00, which was significant at the 0.05 alpha level. This result suggested a significant influence. The correlation coefficient (r = 0.58) reflected a moderate to strong positive relationship. The R-squared value of 0.3364 meant that approximately 33.64% of the variance in students' learning readiness was explained by the teacher's growth-oriented mindset. With a statistically significant p-value, the null hypothesis is rejected. Thus, the study finds a significant positive influence of teachers' growth-oriented mindset on students' learning readiness.

Hypothesis Four

There is no significant relationship between teachers' emotional regulation on students' learning readiness.

Table 8: Pearson Product Moment Correlation Showing the Relationship Between Teachers' Emotional Regulation and Students' Learning Readiness in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State

Variable	N	Mean	SD	r	r^2	p-value	Decision
Teachers' Emotional Regulation	177	3.75	0.95				
				0.61	0.3721	0.000	**Reject H_0**
Students' Learning Readiness	177	3.98	0.90				

Table 8 indicated that teachers' emotional regulation had a significant positive relationship with students' learning readiness, with a p-value of 0.000. This p-value, being less than 0.05, led to the conclusion that emotional regulation exerted a significant influence on students' learning readiness. The correlation coefficient of 0.61 signified a strong positive relationship. The calculated R-squared value was 0.3721, implying that 37.21% of the changes in students' learning readiness could be attributed to teachers' emotional regulation. Given the significance, the null hypothesis is rejected. The study concludes that there is a significant positive influence of teachers' emotional regulation on students' learning readiness.

Summary of Findings

There are four findings obtained in this study as stated below.

1. There is significant relationship between teachers' empathic awareness and students' learning readiness.

2. There is significant relationship between teachers' instructional adaptability and students' learning readiness.
3. There is significant relationship between teachers' growth-oriented mindset and students' learning readiness.
4. There is significant relationship between teachers' emotional regulation and students' learning readiness.

Discussion of Findings

The first finding of this study revealed a statistically significant, strong positive influence of teachers' empathic awareness on students' learning readiness. This indicated that students who perceived their teachers as understanding, caring, and able to see from their perspective reported a greater readiness to engage in learning. This finding could be attributed to the fundamental human need for psychological safety and connection; a teacher's empathy directly fulfills this need, reducing student anxiety and fostering a classroom climate where students feel valued and understood, thereby lowering emotional barriers to learning. The results suggested that while teachers were perceived to show care and listen patiently (High to Very High Extent), their ability to recognise subtle, individual emotional cues ("having a bad day") was comparatively weaker. This implied that the positive influence of empathy might be more generalised rather than optimally individualised for all students. This finding is consistent with the body of empirical literature. It strongly aligns with Klem and Connell (2024), whose longitudinal research identified perceived teacher support (encompassing empathy) as a primary driver of student engagement, a core component of readiness. Furthermore, it corroborates Cooper's (2019) findings that teacher empathy strengthens the student-teacher relationship, which, in turn, predicts improved behavioural readiness. The result also supports Warren's (2021) conclusion

that empathic accuracy enables teachers to provide tailored support, effectively bridging the gap between student uncertainty and task engagement. The study by Barr (2017), which found that empathy training for teachers directly increased student learning readiness, provides experimental evidence for the causal pathway suggested by this study's correlational result.

The second finding confirmed a significant, strong positive influence of teachers' instructional adaptability on students' learning readiness. This suggested that a teacher's capacity to modify explanations, strategies, and pacing in response to student understanding is a critical determinant of whether students feel prepared and able to learn. This finding could be attributed to the direct impact adaptability has on cognitive accessibility and self-efficacy; when teaching methods flex to meet learners' needs, content becomes more comprehensible, reducing frustration and building students' confidence in their ability to master material. The descriptive data, however, highlighted a potential area for growth: while teachers scored highly on reactive adjustments (Very High Extent for re-explaining), their proactive use of varied learning activities (group work, videos) was only at a Moderate Extent. This suggests that adaptability may be more focused on clarifying existing instruction than on diversifying the modes of learning to cater to different preferences and intelligence. This finding strongly supports previous studies. It resonates with Knight's (2018) study, which found a significant correlation between teacher adaptability and student self-efficacy in mathematics; a key affective element of readiness. It is also in harmony with Parsons' (2022) mixed-methods work, which concluded that adaptive teaching practices increased struggling readers' willingness to attempt complex tasks. Furthermore, the finding aligns with Corno's (2018) qualitative research, which identified real-time instructional adaptations as crucial for re-engaging attention and reducing anxiety—directly restoring readiness mid-lesson. The experimental evidence from Wang (2021), showing that

professional development in adaptability improved both teacher practice and student science readiness, provides robust external validation for this study's conclusion.

The third finding established a significant, moderate-to-strong positive influence of a teacher's growth-oriented mindset on students' learning readiness. This implies that when teachers communicate the belief that ability can be developed through effort, and frame challenges and mistakes as learning opportunities, students internalise a more resilient and ready-to-learn attitude. This finding could be attributed to the mindset's role in shaping students' attributional patterns; a growth-oriented environment leads students to attribute struggles to a lack of effort or strategy (which can be changed) rather than to a fixed lack of ability (which cannot), thereby sustaining motivation and readiness to persevere. The results revealed a critical nuance: while teachers were perceived to strongly hold and verbally endorse a growth philosophy (Very High Extent), their application of this mindset through actionable feedback and encouragement to embrace extreme challenge scored lower. This points to a "knowing-doing gap" where the foundational belief may not be fully operationalized into strategic support. This finding is in agreement with Sun's (2016) longitudinal study, which found that teachers with a growth mindset fostered greater academic resilience and readiness to re-engage after failure in their students. It also aligns with Schmidt's (2015) model, where a teacher's growth mindset predicted a mastery-oriented classroom goal structure, a known precursor to deep engagement and readiness. The finding corroborates Boaler's (2019) intervention research, which demonstrated that fostering a growth mindset in teachers led to measurable increases in student readiness for challenging math. Furthermore, it supports Hwang's (2020) conclusion that a teacher's growth mindset is a key factor in creating the psychologically safe environment necessary for the learning readiness of marginalized students.

The fourth finding demonstrated a significant, strong positive influence of teachers' emotional regulation on students' learning readiness. This indicates that a teachers' ability to manage their own emotions, maintain calm, and project stability is fundamental to creating a classroom atmosphere conducive to learning. This finding could be attributed to the role of emotional contagion and the need for a secure base; a regulated teacher provides a predictable, low-threat environment that down-regulates collective student anxiety, freeing cognitive resources for learning rather than vigilance. The descriptive analysis identifies a specific vulnerability: teachers are perceived as generally stable and effective at not projecting personal frustration (Very High Extent), but their ability to remain calm specifically during episodes of disruptive student behaviour is markedly lower (Moderate Extent). This suggests that the positive influence of emotional regulation on readiness is most fragile at the very moments when classroom management challenges threaten to escalate anxiety and destabilize the learning environment. This finding finds robust support in prior studies. It strongly aligns with Davis's (2020) experimental study, where emotional regulation coaching for teachers led to a more positive classroom climate and higher student readiness scores. It is consistent with Gonzalez's (2022) research, which identified teachers' emotion management as a significant predictor of student behavioural and cognitive engagements. The finding also corroborates Okafor and Ibrahim's (2024) ex-post facto study in a similar context, which found significantly higher learning readiness in classrooms led by teachers with high emotional regulation. Finally, it supports Richardson's (2019) model, which posited that a teacher's emotional regulation enhances learning readiness both directly and through the mediating pathway of a stronger student-teacher relationship.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between teachers' personal characteristics and students' learning readiness in junior secondary schools in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. determine the relationship between teacher's empathic awareness and students' learning readiness;
2. examine the relationship between teacher's instructional adaptability and students' learning readiness;
3. assess the relationship between teacher's growth-oriented mindset and students' learning readiness; and
4. investigate the relationship between teacher's emotional regulation and students' learning readiness.

Research Questions

To address the study's purpose, the following research questions were posed:

1. What is the relationship between teacher's empathic awareness and students' learning readiness in junior secondary schools?

2. What is the relationship between teacher's instructional adaptability and students' learning readiness in junior secondary schools?

3. What is the relationship between teacher's growth-oriented mindset and students' learning readiness in junior secondary schools?

4. What is the relationship between teacher's emotional regulation and students' learning readiness in junior secondary schools?

Research Hypotheses

To guide the investigation, the following null hypotheses were formulated and were tested at a 0.05 level of significance:

1. There is no significant relationship between teachers' empathic awareness and students' learning readiness.

2. There is no significant relationship between teachers' instructional adaptability and students' learning readiness.

3. There is no significant relationship between teachers' growth-oriented mindset and students' learning readiness.

4. There is no significant relationship between teachers' emotional regulation and students' learning readiness.

This study was a correlational research that employed a descriptive survey design. The population for this study consisted of 447 Teachers and 3,585 JSS2 Students in 13 public junior secondary schools within the boundaries of the Oredo Local Government Area. The sample size used was 5% from the population of teachers which amounted to 23 teachers and 5% of students' population of 3,585 amounting to 179 students. A structured questionnaire was the instrument for data collection. To determine validity, the instrument was subjected to face and content

validation by experts. To establish reliability, a pilot study was conducted, and Cronbach's alpha coefficients indicated high reliability for all constructs. The researcher administered the instrument, and the data collected were analysed using descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation) to answer the research questions, while Pearson's Product Moment Correlation was used to test the hypotheses at a 0.05 alpha level of significance. The results obtained showed the following.

1. There was significant relationship between teachers' empathic awareness and students' learning readiness.
2. There was significant relationship between teachers' instructional adaptability and students' learning readiness.
3. There was significant relationship between teachers' growth-oriented mindset and students' learning readiness.
4. There was significant relationship between teachers' emotional regulation and students' learning readiness.

Educational Implications

From the findings, it could be deduced that:

1. Teacher training and professional development programmes must intentionally cultivate empathic awareness, moving beyond general care to include training in recognising subtle, individual student cues to fully optimise its positive impact on classroom climate and readiness.
2. The strong link between instructional adaptability and readiness underscores the need for pedagogical training that emphasises not only reactive flexibility in re-explaining

concepts but also the proactive, creative design of diverse learning activities to engage all learner types.

3. To bridge the identified "knowing-doing gap," growth mindset training for teachers need to focus on translating the philosophy into actionable practices, such as providing specific, improvement-focused feedback and structuring tasks that encourage intellectual risk-taking.

4. Given that emotional regulation significantly predicted readiness, pre-service and in-service teacher education needs to include explicit training in self-regulation strategies, particularly for maintaining calm and employing de-escalation techniques during classroom disruptions.

Conclusion

This study concluded that teachers' psychosocial competencies, empathic awareness, instructional adaptability, a growth-oriented mindset, and emotional regulation were each perceived, to a high extent, by students and each exerted a significant, substantial positive influence on students' learning readiness in junior secondary schools. The findings affirmed that effective teaching extends beyond content delivery to encompass the relational, emotional, and motivational dimensions of the classroom. While these competencies are generally present, gaps exist in their application such as individualised empathy, activity variety, strategic mindset feedback, and regulation during disruption, which, if addressed, could further strengthen their positive impact. Ultimately, the study establishes that teachers play a fundamental role in psychologically and pedagogically priming students for learning.

Contribution to Knowledge

This study has contributed to knowledge by providing integrated empirical evidence from the junior secondary school context, simultaneously quantifying the significant positive influence of four critical, interrelated teacher psychosocial competencies on learning readiness. It moves beyond examining these factors in isolation and identifies specific, actionable gaps within each broad competency (the empathy-recognition gap, the adaptability-variety gap, the mindset application gap, and the regulation-under-pressure gap), offering a refined and diagnostic perspective for targeted teacher development. Furthermore, it reinforces the theoretical link between socio-emotional learning theory and educational psychology by demonstrating how teachers' interpersonal and intrapersonal skills directly facilitate a key academic prerequisite: readiness to learn.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this research, the following recommendations were made:

1. The Ministry of Education and school boards should mandate and fund continuous professional development workshops focused on developing teachers' advanced empathy skills, particularly in attunement to non-verbal cues and individual student stressors.
2. Instructional coaches and lead teachers should support colleagues in expanding their repertoire of instructional strategies, promoting lesson designs that integrate varied activities (collaborative, visual) to complement strong explanatory adaptability.
3. School leadership should implement professional learning communities where teachers collaboratively develop and share practical techniques for embedding growth mindset

principles into daily feedback and challenging assignments, moving from belief to practice.

4. Teacher training institutions (Colleges of Education and Faculties of Education) should entrench mandatory modules on classroom management and teacher self-care that include specific training in emotional regulation strategies like cognitive reappraisal and mindfulness for use in high-stress teaching moments.

5. Principals and school administrators should create a supportive institutional climate that values and models these psychosocial competencies, reducing systemic stressors on teachers to enable them to better foster readiness in their students.

Suggestion for Further Research

This study was conducted in junior secondary schools using a quantitative correlational design. Therefore, further research is suggested to:

1. Combined Predictive Power of Four Teacher Competencies on Students' Learning Readiness: A Multiple Regression Analysis of Their Relative Contributions in Junior Secondary Schools

2. Enactment of Teacher Competencies and Barriers Faced: A Mixed-Methods Study Involving Classroom Observations and In-Depth Teacher Interviews in Junior Secondary Schools

3. Causal Effects of Targeted Training Interventions in Teacher Empathy and Growth Mindset Pedagogy on Students' Learning Readiness and Academic Achievement: A Longitudinal and Experimental Study in Junior Secondary Schools

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APPENDIX I
INTRODUCTORY LETTER
BENSON IDAHOSA UNIVERSITY

BENIN CITY,

EDO STATE, NIGERIA

QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am a postgraduate student of the Department of Education of the above named University, as part of the requirement, for the award of a postgraduate diploma Degree in Education, I am embarking on a research study on “relationship between teachers' personal characteristics and students' learning readiness in junior secondary schools in Oredo LGA of Edo State. Please, answer the following questions by ticking the most appropriate answers in the boxes provided.

All information will be treated with utmost confidentiality.

Thanks for your cooperation.

Sincerely yours,

Researcher

APPENDIX II
QUESTIONNAIRE

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TEACHERS' PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS AND STUDENTS' LEARNING READINESS IN JUNIOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN OREDO LGA OF EDO STATE QUESTIONNAIRE (ITPCSLRQ)

QUESTIONNAIRE

Teachers

Section A: Teacher Personal Characteristics

Instruction

Sincerely tick (√) the frequency of the items in the table below as you deem appropriate.

Key: SA = Strongly agree; A = Agree; U = Undecided; D = Disagree; SD = Strongly disagree

S/N	Items	SA	A	U	D	SD
	Teachers' Empathic Awareness					
1	My teacher understands when students are feeling confused or stressed.					
2	My teacher shows that they care about students' feelings.					
3	My teacher is good at recognizing when a student is having a bad day.					
4	My teacher listens patiently when students talk about their problems.					
5	My teacher tries to see things from the students' point of view.					
	Teachers' Instructional Adaptability					
6	My teacher uses different teaching methods to make sure everyone understands.					
7	If the class doesn't understand a topic, my teacher explains it in a different way.					
8	My teacher uses different types of learning activities (e.g., group work, videos, demonstrations).					
9	My teacher adjusts lessons based on how well the students are following.					
10	My teacher is flexible and can change the lesson plan when necessary.					
	Teachers' Growth-Oriented Mindset					
11	My teacher believes that every student can improve and learn with effort.					

12	My teacher praises students for trying hard, not just for being "smart."					
13	My teacher sees mistakes as a normal and important part of learning.					
14	My teacher encourages us to challenge ourselves and not fear failure.					
15	My teacher gives feedback that helps me know how to improve next time.					
	Teachers' Emotional Regulation					
16	My teacher remains calm and patient, even when the class is noisy or disruptive.					
17	My teacher manages their frustration effectively without yelling or shouting.					
18	My teacher's mood is generally stable and positive in class.					
19	My teacher handles stressful situations in the classroom in a calm manner.					
20.	My teacher does not take their personal frustrations out on the students.					

Students

Section B: Students' Learning Readiness

Instruction

Sincerely tick (√) the frequency of the items in the table below as you deem appropriate.

Key: SA = Strongly agree; A = Agree; U = Undecided; D = Disagree; SD = Strongly disagree

S/N	Items	SA	A	U	D	SD
21	**Readiness:** I am confident in my ability to prepare effectively and be ready to learn new topics in this class.					
22	**Motivation:** I can motivate myself to complete all the required work, even when I find it uninteresting.					
23	**Persistence:** I believe I can overcome frustrations and setbacks in my learning and keep trying.					
24	**Mastery:** I am certain that I can achieve the learning goals set for this subject.					
25	**Achievement:** I have the ability to be one of the top-performing students in this class.					

APPENDIX III

```
RELIABILITY
  /VARIABLES=VAR00001 VAR00002 VAR00003 VAR00004 VAR00005 VAR00006 VAR00007 VAR00008 VAR00009 V
AR00010 VAR00011 VAR00012 VAR00013 VA
    R00014 VAR00015 VAR00016 VAR00017 VAR00018 VAR00019 VAR00020 VAR00021 VAR00022 VAR00023 VAR00
024 VAR00025
  /SCALE("INFLUENCE OF TEACHERS' PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS ON STUDENTS' LEARNING READINESS IN JUNIOR
SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN OREDO
    LGA OF EDO STATE") ALL
  /MODEL=ALPHA.
```

Reliability

Scale: RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TEACHERS' PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS AND STUDENTS' LEARNING READINESS IN JUNIOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN OREDO LGA OF EDO STATE

Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	30	100.0
	Excluded[a]	0	.0
	Total	30	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha[a]	N of Items
.784	25

APPENDIX IV

Table 1: Population distribution of students and teachers in the study area

S/N	Name of school	Total Teachers	Total JSS Students
1	Anglican girls grammar school	19	284
2	Akenzua II secondary school	9	255
3	Edokpolor grammar school	44	284
4	Emotan college	27	148
5	Idia college	59	330
6	Ihogbe college	43	273
7	Imaguero college	34	186
8	Iyekogba secondary school	3	173
9	New Era college	81	734
10	Oba Ewuare secondary school	14	272
11	Oredo Girls grammar school	21	240
12	Ogbe Senior secondary school	36	186
13	Edo College	157	849
	Total	447	**3,585**

Sources: Min. of Education/PPEB (2026)