



RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CONFIDENCE AND KNOWLEDGE OF THE NATURE OF
SCIENCE: STUDENT-TEACHERS PERSPECTIVE IN ZIMBABWE

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ABSTRACT

Student-teachers are students that are undergoing academic courses leading to the teaching profession; the term can also be used to describe professional teachers that are undergoing continuous professional development. The study sought to measure student-teachers' confidence in teaching science and their knowledge of the nature of science (KNOS). We also sought to establish differences in terms of gender and between pre-service and in-service teachers. In the case study employed we made use of questionnaire to collect data. Independent samples t-tests were used to test the differences between groups of students. Correlation coefficients were computed to determine the relationship between confidence in teaching science and knowledge of the nature of science. Results show that there were no statistically significant differences between males and females, between pre-service and in-service teachers. The relationship between confidence in teaching science and knowledge of the nature of science was found to be low and positive, and not statistically significant. We recommend developing more robust ways of measuring confidence, knowledge of natural science, and pedagogical content knowledge for teaching nature of science (NOS) and then use these measures to investigate differences by gender, age and programme. We also recommend that universities must offer NOS courses to all student teachers as a way of improving science literacy.

Keywords: Teaching, Science Subjects, Knowledge of Science, Zimbabwe