

LECTURERS' PERCEPTION OF THE EFFECTS OF PEER REVIEW AND STUDENTS' EVALUATION OF TEACHING ON QUALITY TEACHING

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ABSTRACT

The researchers set out to find out if the incorporation of peer review of teaching and students' evaluation of teaching in the assessment for promotion of lecturers in tertiary institution can enhance the quality of teaching and learning. The research was guided by two null hypotheses and a 14 item structured questionnaire was administered on 300 respondents drawn from two tertiary institutions in the south east Nigeria and chi-square was used for data analysis. The finding revealed that the use of peer review and students evaluation of teaching will enhance quality of teaching in our tertiary institutions.

Introduction

The exact definition of quality education has been a subject of controversy among scholars. In the same vein there is no universally agreed yardstick for measuring quality education. While Izuagba and Afurobi (2006) emphasized input- process - output as critical quality dimensions. Beeby (1968) identifies:

- quality of classroom instruction;
- quality of the school's productivity, and
- quality as judged by social and cultural criteria as being crucial indices of quality.

Despite the disagreement on what constitute quality education, it is obvious that what they all emphasize as quality education system is the systems ability to achieve the set goals. The fact remains that quality education is the desire of all

nations as it is the only means they can develop the critical manpower needs for social development. Unfortunately, despite the huge sums of money invested in education in Nigeria, quality education seem to be a mirage as research and anecdotal evidence reveal very poor learners' performance, Falayijo, Makoju, Okebukola, Onugha & Olubudun (1997); UNESCO, (2000); Obanya, (2002); Okebukola, (2005); Alliyu & Oyefunke, (2003); Izuagba, (2008); and Akingbola, (2005). Some of these research reports identify absenteeism, loss of learning time, poor quality teaching, non-coverage of course outline, use of poor assessment techniques and gross indiscipline on the part of students and teachers as being responsible for the poor performance of learners.

It is a truism that at the centre of the education enterprise is the teacher and the extent to which he/she correctly interprets the goals and content of education correctly, using the right methods and materials as well as apt measurement devices determine the extent to which the set goals are achieved. The implication of this is that for quality teaching to be achieved, the focus should be on the teacher who is at the centre of curriculum implementation. This is why the study sets out to find out how accountability can be effectively built into appraisal for promotion of lecturers in order to enhance quality teaching for the achievement of tertiary education goals.

Based on the foregoing, the researchers set out to determine how feedback from peer-evaluation of teaching and students' evaluation of teaching can be used to enhance quality teaching for the achievement of tertiary education goals.

In the light of the above, the purpose of the study was to find out whether lecturers perceive the inclusion of peer-appraisal and students' appraisal of lecturers as criteria for lecturer- assessment as a means through which quality teaching can be enhanced in tertiary institutions. It specifically investigated whether:

1. the number of lecturers who agree that inclusion of peer-appraisal in lecturers' assessment would improve quality teaching in tertiary institutions is significantly greater than the number of lecturers who have a contrary view.
2. there is a significant difference between the number of lecturers who agree that the inclusion of student's appraisal of their lecturers' teaching as a criterion for lecturers' promotion would enhance quality teaching, will be significantly greater than those who disagree with the view point.

Hypotheses

To achieve the purpose of the study these two hypotheses were tested:

1. The number of lecturers who agree that inclusion of peer-appraisal as a criterion for lecturers' promotion would enhance quality teaching would not be significantly more than the number who has a contrary view.
2. There is no significant difference between the number of lecturers who agree that quality teaching by lecturers would be improved if their students' appraisal of their teaching forms part of the yardstick for their promotion and the number that disagree with this assumption.

Significance of the Study

It is hoped that if the commendations given by this study are adopted students, lecturers and the nation at large will benefit in the following ways: students would acquire the expected competences couched in educational goals and hence will be more successful in examinations. Lecturers would be more effective and efficient in their teaching. Universities would produce graduates who have acquired the expected generic skills and consequently quality manpower will be produced to steer all development efforts in the country.

Literature Review

Quality teaching is the focus of effective curriculum implementation but the question is how can quality teaching be determined? The answer to this question is complex, as quality teaching means different thing to different persons. To lecturers it means content coverage, but the fact remains that the course content could be covered but quality teaching would skill be lacking. This is usually reflected in students avoiding some questions in a given examinations which suggest that either the topics were not taught at all, or were not taught well. Most times, the blame is shifted to students as being lazy and unintelligent but the reason for this is that no effort has been made to analyze patterns of answering questions in a course or why some questions are not attempted by even one student. This problem has magnified today as students barely write anything in the examination, which is an indication of poor quality teaching, which has led to shallow knowledge of what is being examined. On the other hand, Izuagba (2006) states that most curriculum specialists believe that quality teaching refers to effective and judicious use of learning time, which hinges on the lecturers ability too blend content knowledge with pedagogical knowledge in order to be able to understand how topics, principles and issues are organizes, interpreted, adapted and represented to suit the diverse interest and ability to learners. However, to the students it means lecturers' ability to communicate the subject matter using the right materials, methods, assessment techniques using apt communication skills and good managerial skills.

At the primary and secondary education levels, the system encourages quality teaching by providing monitoring of teaching through inspection of lesson notes, supervision of teaching by principals, supervisors and inspectors and monitoring of attendance and movement of teachers. These are lacking at the tertiary level and that is why most often lecturers neither attend lectures, nor prepare their lecture notes before teaching. In addition to this is the fact that some lecturers at the tertiary level are not professional teachers and so they do not know much about methods of teaching or the importance of the use of resource materials in teaching neither do they take time to prepare for lecture to enhance quality teaching and learning. This no doubt has led to discrepancies between the prescribed curriculum goal and education practices/ actual curriculum.

In other words at the tertiary level, each lecturer does his/her thing in his/her own way. He adjusts the lectures schedule to suit him, he decides when to go for lecture and when not to and since deans and heads of department are leaders among equals, most of them find it difficult to check and monitor absenteeism and poor quality teaching. This Tembo (1997) notes can degenerate into comradeship devoid of respect to those in authority, the consequences include poor teaching or no teaching and irregular lecture attendance. Since these discrepancies exist one is not surprised at the harvest of failures we now reap in our tertiary institutions, Okebukola, (2006); UNESCO, (2000), National Universities Commission, (2005; 2006); Obanya (2002).

The Present Appraisal System

Presently, the process of evaluating lectures is one directional as this is done by the heads of departments on impression without recourse to assessing the quality of the lecturer's teaching which supposedly is his/her primary task, not the number of quality journal articles he/she has been able to publish. The emphasis on number of journal publications has made most lecturers to spend more time going for conferences and workshops to enhance their professional growth rather than putting in effort to prepare their lectures and teach effectively.

Moreover, since quality teaching is not specifically and consistently emphasized in the assessment proforma, the assessor rarely has evidence to pin lecturers down if their teachings are of poor quality. This development suggests the need to have teaching professors and research professors. Since effective teaching is required to achieve the set goals of tertiary education, lecturers who teach well should be adequately remunerated rather than being denied promotion because they could not publish the required number of papers in journals. The researchers' argue that if our institutions would retain their credibility they must improve the quality of their teaching and to improve the quality of teaching demands that there should be

an in-built system for monitoring daily teachings delivered by lecturers in our institutions and using data emanating from same as yardstick for decision making.

On the other hands, if the same emphasis given to publication of articles in journals as a yardstick for promotion is given to quality teaching, institutions would be able to produce quality graduates. This view is supported by Framerey and Wessler (1994) who see

Educational evaluation above all as a process of dialogue between educators and learners, which is designed too ascertain information and reveal feelings, and students rating can be taken into account in the design of teaching and study programmes.

Importance of Students' Evaluation and Peer Evaluation in Improving Quality Teaching

Student' evaluation can play a crucial role in enhancing quality teaching in the sense that they are in a position to state how learning time is spent, the frequency of teachers' attendance to lectures; the nature of teaching; if supplementary teaching resources are used; level of lecturers' commitment to duties; mode of assessment and the extent to which the predetermine course objectives have been achieved. Lucas (1994) supports the use of students' evaluation in enhancing quality teaching when he asserts that apart from the validity and reliability of student's ratings of quality teaching, students can effectively rate how regular and effective teaching is and even the behaviours of teachers which are critical to effective efficient teaching and learning.. Other variables the students can give apt feedback on are:

- the teachers' regularity to class;
- evidence of lesson preparation;
- how well the teacher has organized materials used in teaching
- logicity of presentation of content;
- if students are treated with respect;
- if questions asked by students are clarified by teacher to avoid misconceptions.
- if assignments given to students reflect the objectives of the course, among other.

On another dimension, peers review as a form of evaluation suggestions collaboration between lecturers in monitoring the effectiveness and consistency of teaching in order to achieve course objectives and institutional goals. This is why peer review as an evaluation mechanism is seen as a collective responsibility

which enables colleagues to help each other in improving the quality of their work.

Peer review uses dialogue not criticism and fault finding and the use of dialogue helps the reviewer to really know what problems the lecturers (evaluatee) have and this would provide feedback which that would give a realistic insight in his level of performance in teaching, and administrative supports needed to be given to enable him/her improve on the task.

Cohen and Mckeache (1990) have identified areas peer review can emphasize in providing useful evaluation of others' quality of teaching and these include:

- 1 the depth and breadth of the lecturers' knowledge in relation to course taught;
- 2 how course content are selected and organized for teaching;
- 3 apt use of Materials and methods;
- 4 quality of students' assessment;
- 5 to what extent the objectives of the course have been achieved;
- 6 if teaching methods are consistent with course substance, and
- 7 if lecturers are committed to teaching and to the growth of the students.

The researchers affirmatively assert that the good teaching does not come by chance, if our graduates must compete favourably in the global job market efforts should be made in enhancing effective teaching in our tertiary education.

Methodology

Opinion survey design was used for the study. The population comprised of all academic staff in two tertiary institutions in Eastern states of Nigeria. The institutions sampled are: Alvan Ikoku College of Education Owerri and Abia State University, Uturu. The population comprises 699 academic staff in both institutions. A sample of 300 lecturers' was randomly selected from the population. One researcher-designed 12-item likert type questionnaire was used for the study. Each response was assigned one mark. Before data analysis the scores for strongly agree and agree were summed up to represent affirmative responses while scores for disagree and strongly disagree were added to stand for disagree. The content validity of the instrument was ascertained by a measurement and evaluation expert in Alvan Ikoku College of Education. Cronbach Alpha correlation coefficient method was used to calculate the reliability of the instrument. The obtained reliability index was 0.83. The two hypotheses tested were analyses with Chi-square and tables' 1a, 1b ; and 2a, below present the data analysis.

Analysis of data obtained for hypothesis.

Table 1: Chi-square analyses of lecturer's different views of influence of use of peer evaluation for lecturers' promotion on quality teaching.

Table 1a

	Agree	Disagree	
Observed	1121	130	1251
Expected	625.5	625.5	

Table 1b

	DF	L.S	Critical Table Val.	Calculated X2	Decision
300	9	0.05	16.9	785	Null Rejected

In table 1b above, the data analysed reveal that the calculated chi value (785) is greater than the chi-critical value (16.9) at 0.05 level of significance, df 9. Based on this the null hypothesis is replaced with the alternative hypothesis which states that the number of lecturers that agree that inclusion of peer evaluation in the appraisal of lecturers for promotion will enhance quality teaching.

Table 2: Chi-square analysis of lecturers' different views about the influence of use of students' appraisal of lecturers for lecturers promotion.

Table 2a

	Agree	Disagree	
Observation	1744	656	2400
Expected	1200	1200	

Table 2b

N	DF	L.S	Critical Table Val.	Calculated X2	Decision
300	9	0.05	16.9	493.2	Null rejected

The data analysed in table 2 above reveal that the calculated x2 (493) is greater than the critical x2 value at 0.05 level of significance, df 9. Based on this the null hypothesis is replaced with the alternative hypothesis, which states that the use of students appraisal of lecturers for promotion will enhance quality teaching.

Discussion and Conclusion

The data presentation in table 1 and 2 above indicate that the two null hypotheses tested were rejected. Table 1b indicates that the calculated Chi-square value is 785

the degree of freedom (df) is 9 and the level of significance used for testing is 0.05 level of significance. With df as 9 the critical Chi-square value is 16.9. Since the calculated value is greater than the table value the null hypothesis was rejected. The assumption then is that there is a significant difference between the number of lecturers who agree that use of peer-appraisal as criterion for lecturers' appraisal for promotion would enhance quality teaching in tertiary institution and the number of lecturers who disagree with that proposition.

From table 1a it can be seen that 1121 lecturers agree that use of peer appraisal would improve quality teaching while only 130 lecturers disagree with the view. Since the number that agrees out of number those that disagree, this paper concludes that use of peer-appraisal as a criterion for promotion of lecturers would enhance quality teaching by lecturers. The result of this study confirms Cohen, and Mckeache (1990) who states that peer review can improve quality teaching.

The figures in table 2b reveal that the Chi-square table value when the df is 9 and the level of significance is 0.05 is 16.9. The obtained Chi-square value is 493.2 which is greater than the table value. The null hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference between the number of lecturers who agree that use of students' appraisal of lecturers as a criterion for lecturers' promotion would enhance quality teaching by lecturers and the number of lecturers who disagree with the view is rejected.

Data presentation in Table 2a unfolds that the number lecturers who agree that the use of students' appraisal of lecturers' teaching for (lecturers') promotion would enhance quality teaching are 1744 while the number of lecturers that disagree with the view are only 656. Following this result, the paper confirms that use of students' appraisal of lecturers as a yardstick for promotion of lecturers would enhance quality teaching by lecturers. This discovery tallies with Lucas, (1994) who argues for the use of students' appraisal of lecturers' teaching for lecturers' appraisal for promotion would enhance quality teaching by lecturers.

Recommendation

The researchers recommend that tertiary institutions should design two promotion appraisal forms for lecturers, one should be for student' appraisal of lecturers' teaching while the other should be peer-appraisal form and feedback from them should be used to determine who should be promoted.

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