

TEACHING EFFECTIVENESS OF SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS IN EMOHUA LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF RIVERS STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

This study is a descriptive study which investigated teaching effectiveness of secondary school teachers in Emohua Local Government Area. A sample of 80 secondary school teachers from secondary schools in Emohua Local Government Area of Rivers State was involved in the study. Four research questions were answered and three hypotheses tested at 0.05 level of significance. The instrument for data collection was Teacher Effectiveness Checklist, a 29-item instrument which was validated by three experts in the field of Measurement and Evaluation. Its reliability index as determined through test-retest method and Pearson product moment correlation technique was 0.88. The generated data were subjected to SPSS analysis using mean and standard deviation as statistical tools for research questions, and student's-t-test for hypotheses. It was found that; (1) teaching effectiveness of teachers from secondary schools in Emohua Local Government Area was below average. (2) Of the variables investigated, teaching experience and teachers' qualifications had a significant influence on teaching effectiveness of the secondary school teachers while gender had no significant influence. Based on these findings, it was recommended that only qualified and experienced teachers should be recruited to teach in secondary schools located in Emohua Local Government Area. Besides, in-service training should be conducted for teachers to improve on their efficiency or effectiveness in discharge of their duties.

Keywords: Teaching effectiveness, quality assurance, teaching efficiency, veto power, learning, academic achievement, teaching practices, personality, learning outcome

Introduction

Education is very important for every nation of the world. It is important because the transmission of cultural heritage and technological advancement of any nation depends on it. In recognition of the importance of education, every nation including Nigeria earmarks huge budgetary allocations for it yearly (Nwosu, 2008). Similarly, parents and guardians spend huge amount of money yearly to finance their children's/wards' education. They see the education of their children or wards as a worthwhile investment for future social and economic security of their families. Parents and guardians usually expect accountability from the schools to which they pay huge school fees for the education of their children. In other words, the school proprietors have to justify the money they collect from parents as school fees by ensuring that effective teaching and learning take place in their schools, otherwise, they may risk low patronage as parents may withdraw their children to better schools.

To account for the school fees collected and to maintain appreciable number of students in their schools, the school proprietors strive to provide enabling environment for effective teaching and learning to thrive. A high quality assurance in schools entails providing most of the factors that enhance effective teaching and learning which ultimately affect students' academic achievement. These factors as enumerated by Postlethwaite (2007) include but not limited to teacher-variables, environment/family-variables and school-variables. Of all these factors, the ones that are touted to exact most influence on the learning outcome are the "teacher-variables" as the teacher is the ultimate implementer of the curriculum (Postlethwaite, 2007). One of the teacher-variables which contributes immensely to enhance students' academic achievement is the teaching (teacher) effectiveness. Effective teaching is a term synonymous with teaching (teacher) effectiveness and was defined by Afe (2003) as the type of teaching characterized by the exhibition of intellectual, social and emotional stability, love for children and positive disposition towards the teaching profession and ability to inspire good qualities in students. It was also defined by Vogt (1984) as the ability of instruction to inspire students of different abilities while incorporating instructional objectives and assessing the effective learning mode of the students. According to Evans (2006) teaching effectiveness is a measure of the extent of realization of the instructional objectives. It is a net growth in intellectual aptitude and skills as measured by students' achievements. Sanders' (1999) and Wenglinsky's (2000) work asserted that teacher effectiveness is the single biggest contributor to students' success. Teacher effectiveness outweighs other factors which influence students' performance such as class size, gender and socio-economic background of the students.

Over the years, teaching which used to be a noble profession has been taken over by impostors who have no business teaching in the class. The low employment opportunities prevalent in the country have contributed to inundate the classroom with unqualified teachers who look upon teaching as a stop-gap which should be jettisoned as soon as their dream jobs are obtained. Qualified teachers are teachers who received relevant training in education for their teaching subjects up to a minimum level (Chacko, 1981). For instance, a chemical engineer who teaches chemistry, physics or mathematics in a secondary school is regarded as unqualified teacher as he neither received training in physics education, chemistry education nor mathematics education as the case may be. Such teachers are not familiar with the intricacies of teaching; they have low motivational level and may not bother much about their efficiency or teaching effectiveness. It is in realization of current trend of recruitment of unqualified teachers to teach in secondary schools at Emohua Local Government Area that prompted the researchers to embark on the present study which is geared towards investigating the teaching effectiveness of secondary school teachers in Emohua Local Government Area.

Teachings' qualification is one thing while experience is another with regard to positive impact on students' achievement in school subjects. Here, the experience of a teacher is judged based on the number of years of service. It is believed that the more the years spent service in a particular discipline such as teaching the more you gain experience and become more knowledgeable in all it takes to enhance productivity or achievement of students in their academic work. When teachers have not spent many years in the teaching field, it is likely that their effectiveness in service delivery in the classroom may be adversely affected, and by extension the academic achievement of students probably may be similarly affected. Based on the researchers' observations, secondary schools in Emohua Local Government Area which was the area of the study were replete with all manners of teachers with varying qualifications and experiences. Probably, the variations in their qualifications and experiences might affect their level of effectiveness.

Statement of the problem

Academic achievement of students in Nigeria particularly the students from the study area, on the average has witnessed a steady decline in recent times. Ozordi (2010), reflecting on the state of education in the country lamented that the present-day secondary school pupils, on the average, can no longer do what primary school pupils used to do in those days academic-wise. Poor performance of students may partly be attributed to ineffectiveness of teachers among other factors; hence the necessity to

investigate the teaching effectiveness of secondary school teachers in Emohua Local Government Area. **Research questions**

1. What is the teaching effectiveness of secondary school teachers in Emohua Local Government Area?

2. What is the teaching effectiveness of male and female secondary school teachers in Emohua Local Government Area?

3. What is the teaching effectiveness of secondary school teachers who had five or more years of teaching experience and those who had less than five years of teaching experience in Emohua Local Government Area?

4. What is the teaching effectiveness of qualified and unqualified secondary school teachers from Emohua Local Government Area?

Hypotheses

1. There is no significant difference in teaching effectiveness between the male and female secondary school teachers in Emohua Local Government Area.

2. There is no significant difference in teaching effectiveness between secondary school teachers who had five or more years of teaching experience and those who had less than five years of teaching experience in Emohua Local Government Area.

3. There is no significant difference in teaching effectiveness between qualified and unqualified secondary school teachers in Emohua Local Government Area.

Literature review

The term “effective teaching” and the instruments for its measurement have generated a lot of controversy the world over and hence there has been no consensus definition of teaching effectiveness because there is little or no agreement on what good teaching should be. It has been defined variously by researchers. Effective teaching is synonymous with teaching (teacher) effectiveness and has been defined in three basic ways (Evans, 2006). These include definitions in terms of (1) Teachers’ personalities (2) Teacher-pupil interactions and (3) Teachers’ impact on pupil’s behaviour. The presage, process and product aspects of teaching are well represented in these definitions. The presage and process aspects of teaching bear direct relationship to teachers’ personalities and teacher-pupil interactions (Evans, 2006). Similarly, the product aspect bears direct relationship to teacher impact on pupil’s behaviour (Evans, 2006).

Along teachers’ personality line, Afe (2003) defined teaching effectiveness as the type of teaching characterized by the exhibition of intellectual, social and emotional stability, love for children and positive disposition towards the teaching profession and ability to inspire good

qualities in students. It was also defined by Evans (2006) as a manifestation of knowledge of content, skills in lesson presentation and creating desirable atmosphere for learning. It has been suggested that teachers' good teaching personalities should be able to translate to impartation of quality knowledge to students. However, critics of this line of definition based on teachers' personal qualities have argued that teachers' personalities may not be sufficient to predict actual increase in students' knowledge (Evans, 2006).

Along teacher-pupil interaction line, Evans (2006) also defined teaching effectiveness as a kind of classroom transactions that occur between teachers and students resulting to increase in students' knowledge. This refers to communication skills, use of praises, rewards, motivation, etc during teaching process. This has also been criticized for blurred distinction between it and definitions based on teachers' personalities.

Along the line of teachers' impact on pupils' behaviour, Akpan (1996) representing a pragmatic point of view, defined teaching effectiveness as the achievement of all or most of the learning objectives and reduction of differences in cognitive levels among the students. Evans (2006) defined it as the degree to which specific instructional objectives are achieved by the students under the guidance of a given teacher or teachers. This definition is based on the understanding that the desired products of teaching effort include measured achievement gains, growth in intellectual skills, aptitude and improvement in attitude towards learning. Definition of teaching effectiveness based on the effect of teaching on students' performance also has its own share of criticism. This "downstream" definition of teaching effectiveness has been criticized because some researchers believe that teachers' inputs are not the only factors that impact on students' performance (Simon and Boyer, 2010). Simon and Boyer (2010, p.85) categorized the factors that are capable of affecting students' achievement as;

1. Teacher-variables:
 - (a) Qualification
 - (b) Teaching experience
 - (c) Motivation/Dedication
2. Student-variables:
 - (a) Motivation
 - (b) Entry behaviour/previous knowledge
 - (c) Genetic composition
3. Environment/Family-variables:
 - (a) Socio-cultural backgrounds of students
 - (b) Level and the type of education of parents/guardians/siblings
 - (c) Interpersonal relationship among family members.

4. School-variables:

- (a) Quality and quantity of teaching staff
- (b) Remunerations of teachers
- (c) Working conditions of teachers (d) Facilities such as instructional materials, well-equipped libraries and Laboratories.

The Department of Education and Employment in the United Kingdom set six standards for teachers in the country (Department of Education and Employment, 1998) which it believed, if strictly adhered to, might result to increase in achievement gains. These standards which the department called Advanced Skills Teacher (AST) model required excellence in (a) subject knowledge (b) planning (c) teaching, managing pupils and maintaining discipline (d) assessment (e) advising and supporting other teachers (f) students' achievement.

Contributing on possible factors that affect students' achievement, Postlethwaite (2007, p.34) said;

For many years, educators and researchers have debated over which variables influence students' achievements. A growing body of evidence suggests that schools can make a good difference in terms of students' achievement, and a substantial portion of that difference is attributable to the teachers. Specifically, differential teacher effectiveness is a strong determinant of differences in student learning, far outweighing the effects of differences in class size and class heterogeneity (Darling-Hammond, 2000). Students who are assigned to one ineffective teacher after another have significantly low achievement and learning (that is gains in achievement) than those who are assigned to a sequence of several highly effective teachers (Sanders and Rivers, 1996). Thus the impact of teacher effectiveness (or ineffectiveness) seems to be additive and cumulative.

Effective teachers are those who achieve the goals which they set for themselves or which were set for them by others (eg ministry of education, legislators and other government officials, school administrators, etc). The possession of knowledge and skills is what makes a teacher competent, but the use of knowledge and skills in a classroom setting is test of "teacher performance".

The degree to which a teacher is effective also depends, to a large extent on the characteristics of the students taught by the teacher. For teachers who are effective, there is a degree of consistency in their effectiveness vis-à-vis classroom conditions, time and goals.

Teachers who are consistently effective are those who are able to adapt their knowledge and skills to the demands inherent in various situations so as to best achieve their goals. Doing whatever is necessary in order to achieve the goals, rather than doing certain things in a rigid way or

showing preference to some methods or techniques over others is a hallmark of an effective teacher.

Genetic and environmental factors are factors which are often beyond the control of the teacher. Teachers also find it difficult to compel students to learn. In as much as the teachers want the students to learn, they cannot open the heads of the students and stuff them with knowledge. Students must take responsibility of their knowledge. Students learn according to what they do, not according to what their teachers do. They either pay attention or they do not. They either construct their knowledge consistently with the teacher's intended construction of knowledge, or they do not. In the words of Rothkopf (1996, p.94) "a student has a veto power over the success of instruction". Effective teachers must create conditions that reduce the likelihood that the students will use their veto power and increase the probability that the students will put forth the time and effort needed to learn maximally what their teachers intend them to learn. An effective teacher must be creative and make his lesson as interesting as possible if he is to succeed in reducing the burning urge for students to use their veto power.

Also generating controversy is the question of who is in a better position to assess the effectiveness of a teacher, the teacher himself (or other teachers) or the students he teaches or independent assessors if the teachers' personalities are to be yardsticks for assessing teachers? The major snag with a teacher assessing himself is the possibility of committing error of self-presentation or self-assessment bias.

Students themselves are in a position to assess the effectiveness of a teacher as at least they know the teachers they understand or "the teachers that explain things well" (Stephens and Evans, 2003). Wragg (2004) cautioned against the involvement of students in the assessment of the teacher effectiveness as their assessment may be tinted by factors not related pedagogy. Less motivated students may base their assessment of the effectiveness of a teacher on his looks, intonation and ability to create fun or tell good stories which may or may not bear any relation to the lesson being taught. The students have to be immensely knowledgeable to know when a teacher has excellent knowledge of the subject matter.

Independent assessors, be they researchers, school managers, personnel from the ministry of education, must have by virtue of their training sufficient experience to recognize the sterling qualities of effective teachers. Whoever is saddled with the responsibility of assessing effectiveness of teachers must have acceptable and well-defined standards of assessment and must be very objective.

A study conducted by Martin, Mullis, Gregory, Hoyle, and Shen (2000) showed that in a situation where experienced teachers were not promoted out of the classroom into management positions, level of

experience had a significant influence on the teaching effectiveness of the teachers. Aiken (1991) also found that teaching experience of teachers is significantly related to their teaching effectiveness.

Monk (1994) reported that beyond certain thresholds, the quantity and quality of Mathematics teachers' training is positively related to their teaching effectiveness. Monk (1994) also found that courses in undergraduate Mathematics education contributed more to teacher effectiveness than did the undergraduate Mathematics courses and that level of subject mastery of Mathematics teachers is related to students' achievement. Akpan (1996) reported that age, sex, marital status, rurality or urbanity did not relate significantly with the effectiveness of the teachers.

Method

Twenty seven (27) registered secondary schools in Emohua Local Government Area (From the Department of Statistics, Rivers State Ministry of Education, 2010) were divided into eight clusters. One school was drawn from each cluster using simple random sampling technique giving a total of eight schools. Ten teachers were drawn from each school also using simple random sampling technique. Hence, a total of eighty teachers participated in the study.

Eight research assistants (one from each participating school) were engaged by the researchers in data collection. These research assistants who were experienced teachers from the participating schools were adequately briefed by the researchers on the exercise of teacher observation using a checklist. That is, they received training on how to make use of a teacher effectiveness checklist to observe and score the teachers as they delivered their lessons in the classrooms.

The effectiveness of the teachers in Emohua Local Government Area was assessed by the use of Teacher Effectiveness Checklist (TEC). It was adopted from Postlethwaite (2007) but modified by the researchers. It contained 29 items and was validated by two experts in the Department of Curriculum Studies and Educational Technology and two experts in Measurement and Evaluation, University of Port Harcourt. Its reliability coefficient index obtained using Pearson product moment correlation technique was 0.88.

Qualified secondary school teachers are those who have at least bachelor degrees in education in their teaching subjects or those who have at least bachelor degrees in their teaching subjects and additional degree(s) in education.

In other to determine the level of teacher-effectiveness, a criterion mean score for effectiveness was determined from their scores on Teacher Effectiveness Checklist (TEC). Teacher-effectiveness score below the

criterion mean was considered below average or low. Similarly, a score greater than the criterion mean was regarded above average or high.

The data generated were analyzed using SPSS. The research questions were answered using mean and standard deviation while the hypotheses were tested using student's t-test at 0.05 level of significance. The results of the data analyses are presented below.

Results

Research question one: What is the teaching effectiveness of secondary school teachers in Emohua Local Government Area?

Table 1: Teaching effectiveness of teachers in Emohua Local Government

	N	Minimum	Maximum	\bar{x}	Std. Deviation	Criterion
Scores	80	59.00	110.00	79.95	12.28	87

Table one shows that the highest and least scores obtained by teachers are 110 and 59 respectively. The mean score of the teachers is 79.95 while the standard deviation is 12.28. When the teachers' mean score was compared with the checklist mean value of 87, the teachers' mean performance was less than the standard. This implied that the teaching effectiveness of these teachers was below average and therefore low.

Research question two. What is the teaching effectiveness of male and female secondary school teachers in Emohua Local Government Area?

Hypothesis one: There is no significant difference in teaching effectiveness between the male and female secondary school teachers in Emohua Local Government Area.

Table 2: t-test result of teaching effectiveness of male and female teachers

Gender	N	\bar{x}	SD	Criterion \bar{x}	DF	t-cal	t-crit
Male	40	80.38	12.64	87	78	0.31	1.99
Female	40	79.53	12.06	87			

Table two shows that male teachers had a mean score of 80.38 and a standard deviation of 12.64 while the female teachers had a mean score of 79.53 and a standard deviation of 12.06. The mean scores for both male and female teachers were less than 87 implying that both male and female teachers achieved below average in the teaching effectiveness and therefore they had low teaching effectiveness. The calculated t-value is 0.31 while the critical t-value at 78 degrees of freedom and 0.05 level of significance is 1.99. The calculated t-value is less than the critical t-value implying that null hypothesis was accepted. This means that there was no significant difference in teaching effectiveness between the male and female secondary school teachers in Emohua Local Government Area.

Research question three: What is the teaching effectiveness of secondary school teachers who had five or more years of teaching experience

and those who had less than five years of teaching experience in Emohua Local Government Area?

Hypothesis two: There is no significant difference in teaching effectiveness between secondary school teachers who had five or more years of teaching experience and those who had less than five years of teaching experience in Emohua Local Government Area.

Table 3: t-test result of teaching effectiveness of teachers based on their years of experience

Teaching experience	N	\bar{x}	SD	Criterion \bar{x}	\bar{x}	DF	t-cal	t-crit
Five years or above	48	87.23	10.38	87		78	10.99	1.99
Below five years	32	69.03	3.99	87				

Table three shows that the mean and standard deviation of the teaching effectiveness of teachers with five or more years of teaching experience are 87.23 and 10.38 respectively. The teachers with less than five years of teaching experience had a mean score of 69.03 and a standard deviation of 3.99. A mean of 87.23 for teachers with five or more years of teaching experience indicated that they were above average and therefore they had high teaching effectiveness while a mean of 69.03 for teachers with less than five years of teaching experience indicated they were below average and therefore they had low teaching effectiveness. The calculated t-value obtained was 10.99 compared with the critical t-value of 1.99 obtained at 78 degrees of freedom and 0.05 level of significance. Since the calculated t-value was greater than the critical t-value, the null hypothesis was rejected. This implies that there was a significant difference in teaching effectiveness between secondary school teachers who had five or more years of teaching experience and those who had less than five years of teaching experience in Emohua Local Government Area.

Research question four: What is the teaching effectiveness of qualified and unqualified secondary school teachers in Emohua Local Government Area?

Hypothesis three: There is no significant difference in teaching effectiveness between qualified and unqualified secondary school teachers in Emohua Local Government Area.

Table 4: t-test result of teaching effectiveness of teachers based on qualification

QUALIFICATION	N	\bar{x}	SD	Criterion \bar{x}	DF	t-cal	t-crit
Qualified	37	88.57	10.57	87	78	7.51	1.99
Unqualified	43	72.53	8.14	87			

Table four shows that qualified teachers had a mean of 88.57 and a standard deviation of 10.57 while the unqualified teachers had a mean of 72.53 and a standard deviation of 8.14. A mean value of 88.57 for qualified

teachers indicated that they were above average and therefore they had high teaching effectiveness as a mean score of 72.53 for unqualified teachers indicated that they were below average and therefore they had low teaching effectiveness. The calculated t-value is 7.51 and the critical t-value obtained at 78 degrees of freedom and 0.05 alpha level is 1.99. Since the calculated t-value is greater than the critical t-value, the null hypothesis was rejected. This implied that there was a significant difference in teaching effectiveness between qualified and unqualified secondary school teachers in Emohua Local Government Area.

Discussion of findings

It was found that the teaching effectiveness of secondary school teachers in Emohua Local Government Area was below average and therefore low. This result could be explained from the fact that, these days, it is common for those who are saddled with the responsibility of recruiting teachers for public schools to sacrifice professional qualification to personal interest. It is usual here in Rivers State where Emohua is a local government council for employers of secondary school teachers to recruit their relations who neither have relevant qualifications in their disciplines nor required level of education. The qualified teachers avoid private secondary schools as much as possible because of the poor remunerations inherent in private schools. Sometimes, private schools proprietors deliberately avoid recruiting qualified teachers in order to save cost.

It was found that though, male teachers had better teaching effectiveness than the female teachers, there was no significant difference in the teaching effectiveness between the two groups of teachers. This finding is similar to the finding of Chacko (1981) who found that male and female teachers did not differ significantly in their teaching effectiveness. It is also in line with the findings of Akpan (1996) who reported that age, sex, marital status, rurality or urbanity did not relate significantly with the effectiveness of the teachers. The present finding can be explained from the fact that if the intervening variables are the same, gender does not influence the cognitive abilities of individuals.

It was found that secondary school teachers who had five or more years of teaching experience were significantly more effective than those who had less than five years of teaching experience. This finding is in line with those of Martin et al. (2000) who showed that in a situation where experienced teachers were not promoted out of the classroom into management positions, level of experience had a significant influence on the teaching effectiveness of the teachers, Aiken (1991) who found that teaching experience of teachers is significantly related to their teaching effectiveness and Chacko (1981) who found that teaching experience contributed highest

to variance in mathematics achievement. The possible explanation of the finding is that over the years, a practising teacher can acquire extra skills and aptitude to impart knowledge to the students.

It was also found that the effectiveness of qualified teachers was significantly better than that of unqualified teachers. This finding is similar to those of Chacko (1981) who found that teaching effectiveness of mathematics teachers trained in mathematics education outweighed that of mathematics teachers trained in other disciplines and Monk (1994) who reported that beyond certain thresholds, the quantity and quality of Mathematics teachers' training is positively related to their teaching effectiveness. This present finding can be explained from the fact that in the course of training in a particular discipline, teachers acquire skills, master the subject matter and build up confidence needed in transmitting that knowledge to the students.

Conclusion

Based on the findings in this work, the following conclusions were drawn. The teaching effectiveness of secondary school teachers from secondary schools in Emohua Local Government Area was low. While teaching experience and teachers' qualifications had a significant influence on the teaching effectiveness of secondary school teachers, gender had no significant influence on the teaching effectiveness of secondary school teachers from secondary schools in Emohua Local Government Area.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were made based on the findings in this study. Only teachers who have relevant qualifications and relevant teaching experiences should be recruited to teach in secondary schools in Emohua Local Government Area. The practice of recruiting non-professional teachers who do not have relevant qualifications to teach in secondary schools should be discouraged. In- service training of teachers should be embarked upon periodically by government agencies and private school proprietors to improve the efficiency or effectiveness of teachers.

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Teacher Effectiveness Checklist (TEC) (5 point scale)

S/N	Items	Excellent	V.good	Good	Fair	Poor
1	Appropriateness of dressing					
2	Classroom organization /and management					
3	Availability and use of lesson note					
4	Lesson objectives stated in measurable terms					
5	Appropriateness of lesson introduction					
6	Sequential and logical relatedness of steps/ presentation					
7	Lesson delivery from simple to complex or from known to the unknown					
8	Use of periodic questioning to obtain and retain students' attention					
9	Appropriateness of the choice of words, phrases and clauses in accordance with the students' cognitive level and avoidance of derogatory words					
10	Local contents of examples and illustrations					

11	Appropriateness of communication skills					
12	Use of praises and rewards for encouragement					
13	Students' interest arousal and retention					
14	Ability to inspire the students					
15	Use of ample and varieties of examples					
16	Resourcefulness and creativity					
17	Availability and use of instructional materials					
18	Appropriateness of instructional materials					
19	Improvisation of instructional materials when not available					
20	Subject mastery					
21	Ability to humanize the classroom					
22	Appropriateness of summary and conclusion					
23	Extent of content coverage within the stipulated time frame					
24	Personal relationship with students					
25	Evaluation/feedback					
26	Dedication/passion for teaching					
27	Appropriateness of instructional methods					
28	Expression of empathy					
29	Good sense of humour					