

**EFFECTIVE TEACHING AND LEARNING, TEACHERS-STUDENT RELATIONSHIP:
A RECIPE IN PROMOTING ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF SOCIAL STUDIES
STUDENTS IN JIGAWA STATE COLLEGE OF EDUCATION GUMEL**

BY

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Abstract

Effective teachers are the core change agents in a school system as they translate and implement government educational policies and programmes. Moreover, developing positive relationship between a teacher and students is a fundamental aspect of effective teaching and learning. This paper examines the concept of effective teaching and learning, principles as well as functions of an effective teacher. It focuses particularly on the significance and problems of teacher–student relationship in Nigerian schools. This paper further stated some useful suggestions such as provision of conducive learning environment, adequate learning resources and including teachers to be part of decision making in the educational system of the country have been made in order to make teaching and learning to be effective as well as developing positive teacher-students relationship which greatly help in promoting students’ academic performance.

Keywords: *Effective teaching, Effective learning, Academic performance, Teacher–student relationship*

Introduction

Teaching is the oldest and noblest of all professions. The Engineers, Lawyers, Pharmacists, Medical Doctors and others are all made by the teacher. The teaching profession has more members than any other. In fact these are unique features that make the profession the most indomitable profession in the world. Indeed history of education in Nigeria shows that teachers occupied the position of great honor and influence in their communities. They epitomized integrity, knowledge, leadership, moral rectitude and selfless service, they spear headed the development of their communities and country at large. Teaching according to Ajibola (2016) is a complex set of activities which take place between the learner and the teacher for effective learning. It involves the process of giving out information and monitoring how the information is received or absorbed. It involves activities in which the learners participate fully. Though teaching facilitates learning but learning can take place without teaching.

Learning according to Ingawa (2000) is a relative change in behavior due to experiences. These changes are brought about by experiences planned through the use of human senses i.e. sight, hearing, feelings, touching and testing. However, to effect the art of learning, teaching must have taken place. Teaching and learning are two sides of a coin that depends on one another to produce result. Teaching as a noble profession is bounded by some acceptable practices which can be referred to as principles that can encourage and make learning effective.

The Concept of Effective Teaching and Learning

According to Arogundade (2009) effective teaching refers to the process of stimulating desirable learning outcomes and produce positive student's academic achievement. Jekayinfa (2005) conceptualized effective teaching as polymorphic processes which enable the teacher employed learning outcomes successfully with many different types of activities accruing at different stages, these activities include explaining, reading, writing, evaluation and so on. Moreover, Offorma (2007) defines effective teaching as an intelligent knowledge based activity which is conducted systematically from simple to complex, known to unknown, easy to difficult task, concrete to abstract and general to specific. In addition Fwangle and Dang (2000) perceived effective teaching as the process of making available to learner at the right time, and in the right order, appropriate kind of activities, materials and experiences so that the learners may be helped to learn what is expected of him.

In the light of the above definitions we can understand that effective teaching borders on the kind of activities, materials and experiences which should be put in place organized systematically and participated for the acquisition of knowledge and skills. The definitions also emphasized that teaching is carried out in various dimensions but not all teaching activities are considered as effective because effective teaching must be conducted in a systematic way, involve somebody making it possible for somebody else to learn simple thing, it should be objective based and also improve the continuous assessment of students.

The Principles of Effective Teaching

Ayodele (2015) identified the following as the principles of an effective teaching:

- i. **Clear and well Defined Objectives:** The aim of teaching is for a learner to learn at the end of a lesson. To achieve this aim, there should be some set objectives that must be clearly stated and well defined. These set objectives are the guidelines of the teaching process.
- ii. **Arousing Learners Readiness:** Teachers should always arouse learner's interest toward subject matter by asking questions or giving thought provoking statements on the topic to be taught for learners to ponder out.
- iii. **Building on Learner's Previous Experiences:** The teachers should always build in what the learners know already i.e. there should be a link between previous experience and new lesson.
- iv. **Awareness of Individual Differences:** Learners in any class have individual differences. There are different individuals such as the extroverts, introverts, gifted, slow learners etc. in a class. It is the duty of an effective teacher to be aware of this situation by recognizing these differences and to select method and materials to teach. He should also be ready to attend to their individual problems with interest.
- v. **Make Teaching Systematic and Procedural:** Teaching is step by step processes which proceed from known to unknown, simple to difficult, concrete to abstract and general to specific. It is the dynamic trend of teaching that makes it procedural.

Sequel to the above principles of an effective teaching one can realized that a teacher is said to be effective if he uses his teaching to cultivate good thinking in students, simulate interest in the subject matter and motivate students to learn through practical application of the said principles.

Functions of Effective Social Studies Teacher

Oke (2004) identified the following as the functions, of an effective teacher

- Provide clear explanations and maintain effective classroom management.
- Stimulating learning problems
- Evaluating, reporting and recording.
- Have a sense of humility, sincerity and honesty.
- Promote teacher – students, school and community relationship.
- Utilization of learning resources to accomplish instructional objectives.
- Use of effective communication skills during lesson delivery.
- Provide enabling environment which is comfortable for students and allow them to speak freely.
- Have a sense of humor.
- Uses non verbal behavior such as gestures, walking around and eye contact to reinforce learning.
- Have a mastery of subject matter
- Have a good method of teaching
- Relate well to students and colleagues
- Punctuality to classroom and neatness in appearance.

The above functions indicated that an effective teacher continually strives to improve on the teaching-learning, processes, improve student's quality both academically and in behavioral terms and acquisition of skills and competencies for man's survival are the cardinal goals of an effective teacher.

Concept of Effective Learning

Effective learning according to Bichi (1998) is a process by which one profits from past experience which results in more or less permanent change in behavior, traceable to exposure to conditions in the environment, experience or practice. Muhammad (2016) perceived effective learning as a change in behavior as a result of experiences brought about in some way by the interaction of the individual with the environment. However, Jekayinfa (2005) defined effective learning as the process by which we acquire and retain attitude, understanding, knowledge, skills and capabilities that cannot be attributed to inherited behavior pattern or physical growth.

Sequel to the above definitions one can deduce that effective learning is a process of acquiring knowledge or skills through study, experience or teaching. It is a process that depends on experience and leads to long term changes in behavior. Effective learning is of different styles which include active, sensing, intuitive, reflective visual, verbal, and sequential and so on. Moreover, to ensure effective teaching – learning, teachers must take note of the different learning styles and know the type of learning that is common with the learners. In fact it is this knowledge that will enable the teacher prepare an adequate lesson which will meet the needs of learners and help to accomplish behavioural objectives.

Process of Effective Learning

Ayodele (2015) opined that effective learning is a change in behavior which occurs through the following processes.

- ✓ **Input Stage:** This is a stimulus which will be captured in the mind. For example you want to learn about a dog. The input is the picture of a dog the teachers brings to the class.
- ✓ **Perception Stage:** It is the response which leads to choose actions. The process involve becoming aware of change through the mind, thinking of the shape, color etc.
- ✓ **Covert Action Stage:** This is the stage which the learners can examine, talk, discuss, draw the dog. At this stage learning has taken place.
- ✓ **Repetitive Action Stage:** The learners should involve in a repetitive action such as reexamine the dog and discuss or ask questions.
- ✓ **Association of Previous and New Experiences Stage:** The learner at this stage interprets things in the light of his previous experiences. For example associating a dog that is moving with the new information he now acquired.
- ✓ **Output Stage:** This is the learning stage after being able to associate previous experiences with the new experiences then learning is taking place.

Sequel to the above process of an effective learning we can understand that before learning takes place people learn by repeating several times. It takes time because it involves interaction between the teacher and learner. It involves ability of the learner to utilize the newly acquired knowledge or experience appropriately. For any change in behavior to be regarded as learning, it must be a permanent change. In fact the result of learning is the capability to perform a certain behavior or task in a given situation.

Ways of Ensuring Effective Learning

Since learning is relatively a permanent change in behavior due to experiences which is continuous, Lange (2008) is of the opinion that the teachers can arouse their learners to learn effectively by.

- ❖ Providing avenues for learning in and outside the classroom such as library, vacant classes etc.
- ❖ Informing learners of the educational facilities around them e.g. resources centers.
- ❖ Giving the learners homework regularly and encouraging them to develop in their area of interest.
- ❖ Organizing discussions, debates and competitions to challenge the student's thought.
- ❖ Giving the learners frequent feed back in their work.
- ❖ Using problems – solving approach to make them learn.
- ❖ Using group and individual methods to stimulate the spirit of independent learning among the students.

Concept of Students' Academic Performance

Academic performance implies the knowledge and skills which students have mastered in a subject or a course. It is the measurement of students' achievement across various academic subjects. Academic performance according to Nzeribe (2004) refers to observable and measurable behavior of a student in a particular situation. In addition, Yusuf (2002) conceptualized academic performance as the level of individual educational attainment as

determined by comparing his scores with the average scores of other at the same level. A careful look at these definitions indicated that academic performance of students consist of scores obtained from teacher made test, assignment, project, first and second semester examinations and so on. It also implies the ability to study and remember facts and being able to communicate their knowledge verbally or in written form.

Moreover, Prewitt (2008) conducted a study in Kenya on the effects of socio-economic status of parents on students' academic performance. The findings revealed that families with a high socio-economic status prepare their children for school more adequately than those with a low socio-economic status. In addition, the findings of the study conducted by David (2009) on the factors affecting student's academic performance in secondary schools in Ogun State revealed that children who are excelling academically have closer and more mutually supportive families than individuals from the general population. He therefore concluded that students who are performing successfully in school tend to have families who are emotionally closer and have positive relationship with their teachers. In connection to this, the writer is of the opinion that the higher the socio-economic status of family, the more likely it motivates its children to learn at school and consequently to succeed in learning through positive teacher-students relationship.

The Concept of Teacher – Student Relationship

Teaching – student relationship according to Muhammad (2016) refers to academic relationship between teachers and their students. No matter how young a teacher is, he is still considered to be more matured and more experienced than his students. Therefore, a teacher is expected to use his professional skills, maturity and experience in dealing with his students. He should be democratic in dealing with his students and realize that his appointment is based on the availability of the students. He should also be competent and highly knowledgeable in his subject matter. Moreover, academic achievement and students' behavior are influenced by the quality of the teacher and student relationship. The relationship between a teacher and student is the foundation upon which learning rests. In fact the teacher – students' relationship is formalized interpersonal associations which promote students academic performance. Through teacher – students relationship, the teacher exert influence on the learners, this influence and relationship building are directly incorporated in the pedagogy of teaching. Effective Social Studies teachers teach their students with effective strategies, motivate and promote the interest and skills of their students, manage the classroom effectively and efficiently as well as practice effective and positive discipline procedures which equally promote teacher –students relationship (Oyinkepreye, 2010).

In connection to this Khaleduzzaman (2017) conducted a study on the effects of teacher – students relationship on student's academic performance in Bangladesh, the findings of the study reveals that teacher's personal interaction with his/her students made a significant difference on student's academic achievement. Akpanobong and Asuquo (2016) conducted another study on the impact of teacher – students' relationship on students' academic performance, the findings of the study reveals that teacher – student's relationship is an important predictor of academic achievement because the relationship enable the students to be guided toward acquiring the necessary understanding, knowledge and skills aimed at promoting student's academic performance.

The above research findings indicated that the most powerful weapon teachers have when trying to foster a favorable learning climate is positive relationship with their students, in fact students who perceive their teachers as more supportive can have better achievement outcomes.

Conclusion

Effective teaching is a building block of high students' achievement and effective teacher shares with others vital information in a manner that encourages effective communication. He communicates personal thoughts and feeling and can listen to students in an empathetic manner assuring them of confidentiality. In fact it is impossible to be an effective teacher without being competent in both subject matter and pedagogical ability. Mastery of subject matter remains a necessary prerequisite for effective teaching. Moreover, strong relationship between teachers and students have a substantial impact on students academic performance whenever the students views their teachers as a partners in progress, but when teachers have negative relationship with students it can lead to stress and feeling of alienation which affect the student's academic performance.

Suggestions

To enhance effective teaching and learning as well as good teacher–student relationship in Nigerian schools the following recommendations are:

- Teachers should be allowed to be part of decision making in the educational system for quality delivery and quality outcomes in the Nigerian educational system.
- There is a need for clear policies, rules and regulations from the school Management emphasizing on in appropriate, unacceptable and criminal teacher – student relationship and the penalties for these breaches of trust should be attached during recruitment interviews. Prospective teachers should be screened for any tendency to encourage negative or improper relationship with students.
- Teachers are in a position of great trust, therefore school Management must do everything possible in their power to make sure that the teachers – students boundaries do not become blurred.
- School Management should be flexible to some extent and create a good cordial relationship with teachers and students.
- Teachers should be a role model in terms of dressing, punctuality, honesty, committed to work as well as restraining from immoral sexual relationship which will lead to favoritism.

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