

IMPACT OF EFFECTIVE TEACHING AND LEARNING METHOD OF ECONOMICS ON ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF STUDENTS IN ABIA STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

The study explore the extent to which effective teaching and learning method strategies in economics will improve the student academic performance in secondary schools in Arochukwu Local Government Area in Abia State, Nigeria. The study aimed among others to achieve the following objectives: to investigate the gap between teaching and research in economics; to examine the teachers and students attitude towards teaching and learning of the subject; to explore if the method used in teaching economics is responsible to poor learner's performance in the subject, and to make recommendations for the way forward to effective teaching and learning method of the subject and its impact to the academic performance of the students. The study used a descriptive survey approach. Data collected through in-depth interview were analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The research hypotheses were tested while tables were used to summarize the respondents view on the gap between effective teaching and learning method of economics and the impact on students' performance in secondary schools. However, the study indicate the reasons existing between teaching and learning method in economics to include; inadequate number of qualified and experienced economics teachers; none usage of local or modern instructional aids/materials; negative attitude of the teachers and students. The study recommends, that government through Secondary Education Management Board (SEMB), Umuahia shall employ and post qualified economics teachers to secondary schools; SEMB should provide adequate instructional materials for teaching of economics. Economics teachers' should be properly rewarded and motivated.

Webster's New Practical Dictionary (1969), defines economics as the "Science which studies and explains facts about wealth, its production, its distribution and its use". Several 18th century economists such as Adams Smith, Alfred Marshal, T. S. Mill, Davenport and Lionnel Robbins also gave idea of what economics is. But the most widely accepted definition is that of Robbins. He defines economics as a Science that: "Studies the behaviour of man as a relationship between end and scare means which have alternative uses. In order words, economics is concerned with how people and nations try to satisfy their numerous wants out of their limited resources at their disposal. Economics is relevant in our everyday business and social life. The downturn in Nigeria national economy has virtually turned everybody into a student of economics, knowledge of economics which enables us discuss with confidence economic issues such as inflations, unemployment, choice of job and career. It also enables us to be wiser-buyers as well as make sound economic decisions and predict prices.

Owing to the relevance of economics in our society, the subject was introduced into the Nigerian Education Curriculum in the 19th Century (National Policy on Education, 1977). Many students

embraced the study because it was a drastic departure from British Colonial Education of 3R curriculum designed to record low raw materials transactions in Nigeria for British trading companies.

In the same vein, the West African Examination Council (W.A.E.C.) from the 1950's, began to examine candidates as well as award certificate at Senior School Certificate level on the subject. The National Examination Council (NECO) did the same from 2000. These bodies have continued to improve on the examination and on the subject, from essay to multiple choice questions in WASSCE. But the observed poor performance of students on economics drew attention to the teacher and teaching factor. This also necessitates the need for bridging the gap between teaching learning and teaching method.

The teacher factor in the teaching of economics and the student's comprehensiveness is a very important factor and also the concern of this study. Prominent educationalists in Nigeria have pointed out that no educational system can rise above the quality of its teacher. Incompetent teacher leave untaught topics, skip certain areas of the syllabus they found difficult such as economics statistics, to mention some. Tamuno and Atanda posited that 'the level of performance in the Nigerian Secondary School systems since independence has declined far below'. This is attributable to poor construction and labeling of diagrams. Logical presentation of facts, inability to explain identified points and poor coverage of syllabus. Method of teaching economics could be responsible for students' lack of interest, low enrolment and poor performance in school. This assumption is based on research evidence on the importance of rise of relevant methods in facilitating learner's performance in economics subject. This study hypothesises that the methods used in teaching economics in our schools could be responsible for the poor performance of students in the subject therefore, suggests effective teaching and learning to improve the students academic performances.

Statement of Problem

The importance and relevance of economics in our personal, corporate and national life requires that concrete attention should be given to teachers and teaching of economics. Economics teachers are trained professionals in education and play vital roles in the instruction and preparation of students from SS1 – SS3, to face Senior School Certificate Examination. They control the use of instructional resources, possess subject mastery, competence and can positively affect changes in students' performance in the subject, yet the performance of students kept dwindling and this seem to have adverse effect on the student enrolment in S.S.C.E. Also, recording improve performance through effective teaching has not been so, given to Tamuno and Atanda (1989) observations in Umoh's work and also 1996 W.A.E.C., Chief Examiner's Reports.

The students' poor performance in the economic subject has generated mixed reaction both from parents, examiners and stakeholders on its appropriateness to economic students. Given the present academic performance of students in economics; what is the appropriateness of teaching and learning method in economics subjects? There is also the need for empirical evidence on the relationship that exist between effective teaching and learning method and student's academic performance in Abia State, Nigeria.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to explore the impact of effective teaching and learning method of economics on academic performance of students focusing on the following:

- i. To examine the methods used in teaching economics to enhance learner's performance in the subject.
- ii. To investigate whether adequate instructional materials (Text books, diagrams, chalk board, etc.) are used in the teaching of economics.
- iii. To explore the appropriate sustainable strategies for developing teachers and students attitude towards the teaching and learning of the subject.

Research Hypotheses

- i. There is no significant relationship between the method used in teaching and learning economics and students' academic performance.
- ii. There is no significant relationship between use of instructional materials method for effective teaching and learning of economics for students' academic performance.

Significance of the Study

The study will be significant for effective teaching and learning of economics in schools. It will also be of immense benefit to the teachers and researchers that will enable them know their weakness and strength in the teaching of economics. Such negative attitude, non-coverage of syllabus, use of inadequate instructional materials and skipping assuming difficult topics etc will be eradicated. From the study, teachers will know that there are standards set for the teaching of economics. The research will enable the curriculum developers to identify factors that are responsible for teacher's ineffective teaching of the subject. Education policy makers and administrators would also use this study as a feedback from the secondary schools, thereby enable them to reappraise and restructure their educational policies and programmes to meet the challenges of teaching economics in this twenty-first century.

Theoretical Framework:

The major thrust of this study is analyzed within the ambit of the motivation – Hygiene Theory (otherwise known as the two-factor theory).

Motivation – Hygiene Theory was propounded by Fredrick Herzberg (1959). It is also called the dual-factor theory and the motivation – hygiene theory of Fredrick is one of the earliest researchers in the area of job redesign as it affects motivation. The initial study on this work by Herzberg from mid-1950 based on intensive interview with 200 Engineers and Accountants. The survey led Herzberg to discover that two sets of different factors affect job satisfaction and employee motivation: These are intrinsic, which Herzberg refers to as motivators. They include recognition, advancement, growth, challenging work and responsibility. These factors are the motivators since they fulfilled the individual's needs for self actualization and growth.

They are related to the job itself. Conversely, dissatisfying experiences called "Hygiene" factors largely resulted from extrinsic, non-job related factors such as company policies, salary co-workers relations, and supervising style (Nwokocha, 2014). Herzberg contended that a person who is not satisfied is not necessarily motivated; he or she is simply in a relatively neutral state of no dissatisfaction. The implication is that motivation cannot be complete or effective if these hygiene (or maintenance) factors are unavoidable. The satisfiers or job content group on the other hand contains the following achievement, recognition, challenging work, advancement, growth in job, the work itself and responsibility. These are really taken to be the real motivators because they have the potential of yielding a sense of satisfaction. Inspire of the severe criticism of several aspects of this theory on account of faulty methodology and theoretical ambiguity, it has recorded an unprecedented achievement. At least, it draws the attention of management to the fact that teachers of economics can only be truly encouraged through their job content factor by giving them responsibility, challenging task to perform and opportunity to make use of their initiative, original and creative talents.

Hitherto, organizations, including schools, have always concentrated on the use of hygiene factors like high wages and salary, attractive fringe benefits and good working conditions like teacher's development to encourage employees only to achieve short-lived success. The two-factor theory which provides satisfaction while hygiene factors give dissatisfaction are relevany to this study. Herzberg and

his associates also observe that hygiene needs, although when satisfied eliminates dissatisfaction yet they do not encourage workers for increased work and teaching capacity. That is why school principals are encouraged to employ hygiene factors to provide adequate and regular compensation to teachers.

The significance of this theory generally to this study is that when work environment is rich with motivational factors, the employee will record job satisfaction and increase in productivity. When employee needs are satisfied by their work, then they are free to contribute fully to the organizational growth.

Methodology

The study is a descriptive survey designed to find out the impact of effective teaching and learning method of economics as a perception to academic performance of students in Abia State. The descriptive survey design is adopted because it is centered on the opinion of individual. The workers in Arochuku Local Government Area in Abia State constituted the population from which the sample used for the study were drawn. A total of 200 were selected. The sample size for the study constituted of 100 (40 males and 60 females) teachers selected using the stratified techniques.

Instrumentation

Four research questions were used for data collection. A 20-items questionnaire derived from Literature and titled “IETLMEAPS” was used in the study. Respondents were asked to rate each of the items on a five-point Likert type scale as follows: Strongly Agree (SA) – 5, Agree (A) – 4, Undecided (U) – 3, Disagree (D) – 2 and Strongly Disagree (SD) – 1.

The instrument was validated by three experienced research scholars in the field of social sciences “Economics”, from the Abia State University, Uturu.

Their suggestions and corrections were reflected in the final draft used for this study. A pilot group of 20 Educational Directors that were not part of the main study was arranged for estimating the reliability of the instrument. The reliability of 0.77 was obtained. The instrument was self-administered by the researcher on the whole, the questionnaire that formed 98.8 percent return rate was obtained and used for data analysis.

Data Analysis:

The data gathered were analyzed using the Z-test, the mean and standard deviation. The midpoint of the five-point scale was taken as criterion mean score which was derived by adding the exact upper limit of the scale (4.5) to the exact lower limit (0.5) and dividing by 2, and this is considered to be the hypothetical acceptable level. The mean of 2.5 was taken as the critical value for decision such that a mean response that falls below 2.5 was regarded as “Disagree” while a mean response on the above 2.5 was regarded as “Agree”.

Data Presentation and Analysis

S/N	ITEMS	X	SD	REMARK
	Students effective teaching and learning method of economics, a panacea for academic performance			
1	Curriculum are structured in foundation modules	2.0	1.0	Disagree
2	Economics is the main feather in the curriculum of social science course	1.88	0.98	Disagree

3	Economic statistics form part of requirement in study of economics	2.20	1.10	Disagree
4	Teaching method consists of the techniques used by a teacher to effectively deliver a lesson	2.10	1.06	Disagree
5	Attitudes of teachers and students towards the teaching and study of economics	2.62	1.02	Agree
6	Use and non-use of adequate instructional materials of economics affects the academic performance	2.03	1.12	Agree
7	Students were exposed to equipment and calculations relevant to area of study	1.94	1.05	Disagree
8	The available facilities are properly managed for good instruction during learning	2.10	1.02	Disagree
9	Teachers' factor in the effective teaching and learning methods of economics	1.45	0.72	Disagree
10	Economic students were exposed to economic statistics, diagrams and other instructional resources	2.00	1.00	Disagree
11	Enhance curricula activities equip students to participate actively in study of the subject	1.68	0.97	Disagree
12	Tools, equipment and up-to-date facilities will enhance skills acquisition training and academic performance	2.60	1.16	Agree
13	Government factors affect the teaching and learning method of economics	2.71	1.12	Agree
14	Parental factor in the teaching of economics	3.01	0.96	Agree
15	Lack of qualified economics teachers in number and qualifications	1.14	0.63	Disagree
16	Teachers knowledge of a few method of teaching affect students academic performance	2.44	1.03	Agree
17	Teaching of a large class size by one teacher	2.04	1.06	Disagree
18	Teachers are source of encouragement to the students	2.06	1.03	Disagree
19	Teachers are involved in their method of teaching	1.66	1.01	Disagree
20	Teachers are helpful to students	2.03	1.02	Disagree
	Grand Mean	2.05	1.00	

Research Questions I: What is the perception of teaching and learning method of economics and their impact on the academic performance of students?

Table: Mean perception of students' performance on economics and knowledge; abilities and comprehensiveness.

Discussion of Findings

Data in table I above indicate that the overall impact of teaching and learning method of economics on students is less than the criterion mean of 2.50. The implication of this is that majority of

students do not have correct perception and impact of the subject in their study. This is to say that the economics students are not confident in themselves with respect to the method of teaching the subject by their teachers. The result agrees with the views of Iheriohanma (2007), who scored the government low on employment of qualified and experienced economics teachers and provision of instructional materials for the teaching and learning: He outscored the schedule of economics a social science subject which he said would be necessary for the development of the country and also for job creation.

The findings also suggest that if government National Policy on Education (2004) implements the goals and objectives of Economics subject, the impact on academic performance of the students will improve. Thus, if effective teaching and learning method improves, academic performance of the students and impact will be apprehensive to the economy of the country. The apprehension have been expressed by Ozoemene (2013) when he observed that in an era where the policies of the government towards effective teaching and learning method for academic performance of students are not fully implemented. The disposition of the government had ignored the encouragement of teachers creativity and students effective participation in learning but focuses on at random formulation of educational polices. Irondi (2015) posited that the qualifications, experience, number and teaching methodology of a teacher determines student's performance in economic subject. On qualified and experienced teachers, Igwe (1982), opined that 'No education system can rise above the quality of its teachers'.

Therefore, the effective teaching and learning method of economics has impact on academic performance of the students. Adetokumbo (2009), firmly supported this assertion when he urged secondary schools teachers in Abia State to place more emphasis on the effective teaching and learning method of economics subject for visible impact on academic performance of students

Conclusion

This paper is on the Impact of Effective Teaching and Learning Method of Economics on Academic Performance of Students. The objectives of this paper is to examine on the basis of empirical evidence, the true relationship between the effective teaching and learning of economics and its impact on the students academic performance in Abia State. This indicate the appropriateness or otherwise of the inefficiency on the teachers and students. The findings both from the review of related literature and data analysis revealed that there is a strong positive correlation between effective teaching, learning and impact on academic performance of the students. In other words, effective and coordinated method of teaching and learning will improve the performance of students in economics. If there is improved teaching methods of the subject, all things being equal, the incidence of mass failures and distressed would also be minimized. One can conclude therefore, that the teaching and learning method of economics in Abia State is not appropriate and justified.

Recommendations

In the light of the above, the following suggestions may be useful:

1. Government through Secondary Education Management Board (SEMB), Umuahia to employ and post qualified economics teachers to secondary schools.
2. SEMB to provide adequate instructional materials and teaching aids for teaching economics in secondary schools.
3. Economics teachers should not be made to teach large class size.
4. Economics teachers to change their negative attitudes towards the teaching of economics through charts, diagrams, graph, appropriate statistics in economic analysis.
5. Teachers of economics subject to be motivated and rewarded.
6. Secondary Education Management Board to organize workshops for economic teachers regularly.
7. Establishment of functional library in the state will facilitate the effective teaching and learning method of economics which will improve the academic performance of the students.

8. The experienced teacher should know the subject situation that requires the use of specific method or varied months.
9. The teachers and students shall exhibit the right attitude in teaching and studying economics thereby achieving positive results and performances.

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