

Evaluation of Teaching Effectiveness in Higher Education

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Introduction

This paper has been designed to explain the concept of teaching effectiveness in the context of the teaching-learning process, the teacher and teaching effectiveness. It also expounds on the conceptual significance of college/university teaching. It concludes with discussions on various areas and means of evaluating effectiveness in three dimensions, namely teacher competencies, institutional teaching effectiveness and the evaluation of the teaching outcome.

The Concept of Teaching Effectiveness

(a) Teaching

Teaching as a concept is defined by Mbiti (1981:68) as something that "begins when one person deliberately assumes the responsibility of making another person learn something new." Mbiti continues explaining teaching as an activity in which one deliberately accepts the responsibility of making another person learn something desired and new. This activity takes place on the basis of an established system of goals. It is a student centred activity which flourishes through demonstration and guidance procedures.

Balassi(1968:12,13) defines teaching as a process of "planning, securing materials, presenting content, asking and answering questions, guiding or leading discussions, giving assignments, checking work and evaluating achievement."

The above definitions pre-suppose teaching to be an art and a craft of helping someone to acquire knowledge, skills, attitudes

(b)Teacher and Teaching Effectiveness

The term effectiveness has its roots from the business world. It is used in reference to doing the right things (Stoner and Wankel, 1987:9). In this context an effective manager is one who selects the right things to get done in order to meet the objectives of an organisation.

Another important terminology usually linked with effectiveness in an organisation is efficiency. Efficiency is said to be the ability to get things done correctly in the context of the input-output systems process (*Ibid*). Efficiency is following the right procedures step-by-step in order to produce the right product of the right quality. Nevertheless, a manager who selects an inappropriate objective, like the production of large-sized cars when the market demands small-sized ones is highly ineffective regardless of how efficient the car was made, and how efficiently it can perform. The car was efficiently made, but not effectively planned for. It will have no market. It will not bring in much profit to the business sector as was hoped for.

In the world of education nothing can be said about effective teaching without an effective teacher since according to Green (1994/95) "...what a teacher does makes a significant difference in what a student learns..." Teacher effectiveness is mainly used to refer to the results a teacher gets or to the amount of the progress the student makes toward some specified goals of education as a result of instruction (Anderson, 1989:18). This implies that teaching effectiveness can be correctly assessed in terms of student behaviour, but not on the behaviour of the teacher (Medley, 1982).

Teacher effectiveness is contrasted with teacher performance and teacher competence. Teacher performance refers to the behaviour of a teacher while teaching in the classroom environment,

as teacher effectiveness refers to the attainment of school goals and instructional objectives through the resulting behaviour of the learner; teacher competence refers to the set of knowledge, ability and beliefs a teacher possesses as a result of his/her training and brings to the teaching situation. Therefore, "an effective teacher is able to use the existing competencies to achieve the desired results" (Medley, *op. cit.*).

Both Aquino (1983:31) and Ornestein (1990:7) point out that since teaching effectiveness is a function of teacher competencies that are acquired during the pre-service training period, it is the responsibility of institutions of higher learning such as colleges and universities to identify the indicators of effectiveness and to use them in evaluating the schools and teachers.

Ornestein (1990:6) stresses that teachers and schools influence achievement of students. If these had no influence, there would be no need for the following aspects in the educational institutions and ministry:

1. Minimal need for teacher preparation, since they would be of little value in well-prepared teacher;
2. Minimal need for concern about teacher competence since it would not matter much.
3. Little justification for holding teachers accountable for student performance.

As explained by Ornestein (1990: 7) a good number of educators believe that the undergraduate preparation is the "gate-keeping" process for the teaching profession. Prospective teachers need to demonstrate and identify levels of student competencies by the time he graduates. These competencies need to be identified and measured through the process of evaluation.

Evaluation and College/University Teaching

(a) Evaluation

Evaluation is "the process used for determining the value, amount and worth of something, such as a programme, a product, a procedure, or other factors..." (DeRoche, 1981:4). It is a process of deciding quantitatively *how well* we have done or tried to do what we are supposed to do. In order to do a worthwhile evaluation programme, we need to consider three points as outlined by Beane (1986:265-269):

1. **The what** - Educators in any institution of higher learning need to ask themselves a fundamental question - "What are we supposed to do?" This calls for setting of the objectives before hand. In the objective component we need to set goals, general and specific objectives and layout strategies of reaching out to those outcome. These objective should be clearly stated, unambiguous, well understood and attainable. These become the basis of the framework of our programme of study. They should be well understood to teachers, students and other interested parties.

2. **The Trying** - This is the action addressed toward achieving "the what?" We need to measure the extent we are reaching out in implementing our goals and objectives. We need to ask ourselves as to how far we have done; "How far are we achieving our objectives now?"

3. **The How well** - This is the level of our effectiveness which tries to investigate the level of our performance. "How well are we reaching out to our objectives?" We need to have a determination level of an appropriate norm - the comparative standards being applied in the situation under consideration. We need an evaluation standard derived from the norm. It should be clear and well understood. Our judgement should rest upon the goals and objectives for which we operate the programme of study.

In short, "Evaluation of college teaching is necessary as a means

of knowing how far the goals, the objectives, functions and policies are realised; how effective are the methods of teaching; and how much are the students getting from college instruction. Unless, this is done, there is no way of determining the instructional status of college teaching and formulating plans to its improvement" (Aquino, 1983:248).

(b) **The Significance of College/University Teaching Evaluation:**

Aquino (1983:249) lists out seven points as regards to the significance of college/university teaching evaluation:

1. Evaluation guides lecturers in identifying specific points of strength and weakness in the teaching-learning process. It points out the strong and weak areas of teaching, and explains areas that need improvement.

2. It measures the effectiveness of the process of learning (as you are all aware that the final examination of a course is derived from the course objectives), evaluation gives us a realistic level to how far we have effectively met these objectives. Therefore, if students fail, we as teachers have also failed to reach out to our stated objectives. When our institutional graduates fail to perform, we are also failing to meet the objectives for which our programmes stand. Therefore evaluation is a very significant part of the teaching learning process for the learner, the teacher and the institutions through which the student has gone.

3. Evaluation helps the lecturer to co-ordinate his efforts with the efforts of students, school administrators and other stakeholders in the educational process to put their efforts together in reaching out to the educational goals for the nation.

4. Evaluation helps lecturers to discover and understand student needs. Sometimes we admit students to our colleges and universities assuming that they are homogeneous in the level and degree of understanding the "O" and "A" level materials. Yet, in most cases

some are ahead of others, and still others have never covered certain areas of knowledge, skills and understanding expected of them. And those who covered the information never mastered it to an accepted standard. This cognition helps the lecturer to identify the areas that need more emphasis and extra assignments to be given in order to pull up the weak students to a level of internalising the college information taught. It could even be a basis of advising the student to leave school before completing his/her course of study.

5. Evaluation motivates students to study. Giving students examinations, tests and quizzes stimulates them to study hard and strive to do better as they discover how either weak or strong they are. They seek to either improve or maintain a certain level of performance.

6. Evaluation also helps parents to understand the academic levels of student growth, direction of growth, interests and potentialities. This helps parents to effectively guide and even plan for the future of their children.

7. Evaluation is good for the University administrators to know whether they have the right input, process and output. They look into the process of doing things and identify areas of strengths and weaknesses and seek for ways to correct them.

8. If we could add the eighth point, evaluation is necessary for the Ministry of Education and the entire government in giving the direction of economic, political, social and human power development of a nation. It is the concern of all citizens of a country where the teaching - learning process is being carried out. Education as a social institution is the mentor of workers of all walks of life. No human being could be classified as a professional in any area of study without under-going the teaching process offered by an institution of learning.

Areas and Means of Evaluating Teaching Effectiveness

Evaluation of teaching effectiveness is as broad as the world of teaching. When one thinks of evaluating teaching effectiveness, then a variety of modes come into being, such as (1) Evaluation of teacher competency, (2) Evaluation of institutional teaching effectiveness, and (3) Evaluation of teaching outcome which is also known as class testing and evaluation - still some call it testing and measurements. All these are ways of evaluating teaching effectiveness.

This paper will attempt to describe each of them briefly. We hope that another workshop could be arranged to address each of them separately and at length so that we could have various ways of evaluating our educational outcome in our context.

(a) Evaluation of Teacher Competency

There are four areas basically referred to as teacher competency, namely knowledge, skills attitudes, and technology. According to Muchinsky (1989) these competencies are acquired during the process of teacher training. Therefore deficiency in performance is a result of deficiency in skills, knowledge, and attitude trained for as a result of methods, equipment, and abilities inculcated in the trainee by the institution of high learning.

Done(1986) and Hargreaves(1992) stress this point by explaining that the type of teacher education offered in the pre-service undergraduate curricular programmes through the selection of general education, major and professional subjects determine the performance of teachers as professionals.

1. Knowledge

Most educators all over the world recognise a connection between the knowledge of the subject matter and effective teaching (Green, 1995). Just as Shafer (2985:27) believes that "what the teacher

knows he/she will teach." Knowledge is the material with which the teacher works. The teacher needs to have the ability to recognise knowledge, recall it, describe it and explain it, prove it, illustrate it and apply it.

To Shafer (1985:28) It is hard to teach effectively without full knowledge of the subject matter. Nevertheless, not all who know will necessarily teach effectively, but imperfect knowledge leads to imperfect teaching. In evaluating teacher effectiveness therefore, we need to have an instrument to measure the knowledge of the teacher right from the teacher training institution to the place of work.

2. Skills

Skills are another indicator of teacher effectiveness. Both Callahan (1988) and Azarcon (1990) underscore the point that knowledge of the subject matter alone is not a sufficient indicator of professional effectiveness. To them skills and appreciation may be more important than knowledge itself. Knowledge is said to be changing with time and development. Therefore teachers need not only be trained too much in a particular knowledge but also in the skills to continue acquiring knowledge and passing it on to the learner. Skills and understanding of type of the subject matter should be one of the areas trained to the teachers to be.

3. Technology

Recent studies show that teacher training institutions need to look into the area of technology with more seriousness. Teachers seem to be drilled more and more in the areas of knowledge, skills and attitude but less and less of technology, yet technological advancements are against the teachers. Teaching is becoming more and more complex with the coming in of computer knowledge. Schroeder (1999) and Hope(1997) stress that trained teachers school

have a balanced training integrated with computer knowledge at an efficient level if they have to be effective in the new millennium. More and more schools are emphasising computer work and computer technology in teaching, but less and less teachers even university lecturers know how to use computer packages designed for teaching.

4. Attitudes

The teacher's positive attitude toward teaching is very imperative for those who are trained to be teachers, because teachers "do not work on stones, on canvasses, on marbles or other raw materials. They work with young hearts and minds?" (Elevazo, 1985). They mold the direction of the current and future society.

It is common sense that the most critical change in an educational institution can offer to its graduates is this aspect of attitudes, habits, character and work ethics, because change in attitude serves as the contact point between the learner, skills and values he/she acquires and utilises in transforming society.

Therefore, if we have to develop an instrument to measure teacher effectiveness, it has to emphasise these four areas of knowledge, skills, technology and attitudes. Such instruments could be in form of Questionnaires, interviews, and examinations. This will also seek for a standardised norm and level of interpreting the instruments.

(b)Evaluation of Institutional Teaching Effectiveness

There are basically four areas in which institutional teaching effectiveness could be evaluated. This is in reference to higher academic institutions of learning such as a college or university. These areas are (1) Teaching (giving out instruction), (2) Research, (3) Extension and (4) Accreditation.

1. Teaching

"Teaching is indeed the most important part of the Professor's work."(Balassi, 1968:96). A Professor or college instructor is the most influential person in higher education because he shares the greatest task of higher education with many people for many years who will be of great importance to the development of the knowledge, skills, attitudes and technology of a nation. As such the professor or college instructor, should possess measurable qualities such as mastery of the subject matter, knowledge of the subject matter, knowledge of the aims of higher education and the methods of achieving them, scientific attitude as reflected in the way he/she prepares his/her work for teaching, attending to his/her lectures, marking student work on time and living in the current world of knowledge, (Gregorio, 1983:278-280). College teachers could also be trained to be patient, sympathetic, and cultivate a general love for students. They should think and speak clearly and logically. Should possess a spirit of co-operation and hardworking.

Instruments could also be developed to measure such type of teaching effectiveness to be responded to by students themselves. They are the students who could tell whether the lecturers are really delivering the material.

Student evaluation of a teacher reveals the potentials of teacher competencies which are even hidden to the teacher himself. Such instruments should be quantitatively assessed, and their results communicated to the teachers' concerned. They also reveal the strong and weak areas of the teacher from the stand-point of teaching in the classroom setting. Of course, we should not forget the point that even examinations themselves reveal the effectiveness of a teacher when all other factors such admission procedures, successful completion of "O" and "A" Levels, study habits, intrinsic and extrinsic motivation and intelligence are held constant.

2. Research

Research is another area whereby effective teaching in college is evaluated. University lecturers should be given a reasonable work-load in teaching so that they can develop their academic pursuits through college.

of the people living near the university must be different from that of those living very far from the university. At the same time, university students and lecturers should have programmes of going deep in the country-side to share the knowledge and findings of research done empirically and how they affect people's living. This is what we call education in national development.

4. Accreditation

An accreditation is a process of evaluating schools to measure whether they meet certain standards of excellence. The most basic accreditation process is done by government. The government makes sure that an institution has the minimum requirements to operate. It then offers that institution a certificate of accreditation. This is also known as a Carter or licensing.

In some countries, there are several accrediting agencies that accredit schools besides the one of the government. For example the Roman Catholic Church could have its own accrediting agency to accredit its schools and their programmes and those schools wishing to be accredited by the same; Protestant schools, colleges and universities could also form their own accrediting board; and the Buganda Kingdom could have an accrediting agency to accredit schools in their sphere of influence. The more accrediting agencies accredit one school the better quality education it offers. In most cases the accrediting agencies other than the government one, do accredit programmes but not the entire school. This helps individual programmes of study to be strengthened and reach out to a certain level of excellence. The process is repeated after every five years to update the programme study.

These accrediting agencies develop instruments and validate them to suit their environments. The areas evaluated by any accrediting agency are purposes and objectives of the schools, faculty and staff, curriculum and instruction of particular subjects,

library, laboratories, physical plant and facilities, student personnel services, social and community orientations, organisational chart and administration.

By the end of the accreditation exercise it is usually found out that a certain school has improved its instruction and has better quality graduates. Uganda as a country seems to have been unfortunate, since it had only one institution of higher learning and all programmes of higher learning were offered by government. For this reason, may be, they saw no reason for accrediting their institutions. But in other countries, all schools, including primary schools, government and non-government have to be accredited.

It is high time that we could create such bodies to insure quality education, and improvement on the teaching-learning process of various schools.

(c) Evaluation of Teaching Outcome

The last to be discussed in this paper is the evaluation of teaching outcome, commonly known as class testing and evaluation or measurements and evaluation. In Uganda, this type of evaluation is classified under psychology of learning (Educational Psychology), in some countries it is a separate course besides psychology. Sometimes, lecturers go over it rushing and sometimes make it too mathematical or statistical so much that graduates who were not mathematically oriented do not even want to think about its content after completing the course of study. Nevertheless, we need to remember that this subject area is so important in the real world of teaching because every teacher has to test students and grade them. The question to be asked is "What knowledge do they apply, when they get nervous whenever they both think and talk about the subject matter of class testing and evaluation."

Most of the evaluation in the classroom setting centres around achievement. According to Goetz (1992:717) "achievement tests

are measures of past learning and reflect current knowledge and skills." They include teacher made tests. Teacher made tests are prepared on the basis of behavioural objectives as stated in the course outline, which according to Calmorin (1994:121-124) cover three domains as follows:

i. **Cognitive Objectives** which seek to evaluate knowledge, comprehension, applications, analysis, synthesis and evaluation in a hierarchical order.

ii. **Psychomotor Objectives** - These are concerned with skills by which a task is performed. This domain includes perception, readiness, guided response, mechanisms, complex overt response, adoption, and originality.

iii. **Affective Objectives** - These are concerned with values, interest, appreciation, and attitudes. They centre around receiving, responding, valuing, organising a value system and characterisation by a value complexity.

These types of tests include the essay and objective questions. In the objective type of tests we find such tests as multiple choice, simple recall or filling in, matching, and true and false.

Significance of Class Evaluation

According Gregorio (1983:250) this type of evaluation is used to:

1. Determine the growth of the students in terms of knowledge, habits, skills and attitudes acquired during the teaching learning process.
2. Diagnose the defects or weaknesses of the students in different subjects in college/university curriculum.
3. Measure the effectiveness of the methods of teaching and the needs for teaching.
4. Measure the standard of the school or standard performance of the students or class.
5. Promote students from one school year to the next. They

also become the basis of a student to either be retained in one school year or be told to change school on academic grounds.

6. Measure the efficiency of the teacher for administrative or supervisory purposes.

7. Measure instructional effectiveness to achieve instructional objectives set at the beginning of the course.

8. Select students for scholarship and academic awards or both.

9. Stimulate students to study hard in order to accomplish requirements for a course description and be fitted in the world of work.

10. Used as an integral part of any teaching procedure in order to complete the teaching-learning pattern.

Conclusion

Teaching effectiveness is a goal at which every institution of learning at any level strives to arrive at, and craves to be associated with. No institutional leader, worker or graduate would want his/her institution to be rated as ineffective in performing its projected objectives.

Nevertheless, evaluation has taken a narrow view by associating it with only one aspect of it. That is the rating of our institutions with the level our graduates pass examinations and getting employment opportunities to earn a living. While these are good indicators of instructional effectiveness of a particular institution, the evaluation of teaching effectiveness is greater these. It encompasses periodic evaluation of the teaching learning process by students and school administration, accrediting procedures to various accreditation agencies, the follow-up of graduates to get their feedback and recommendation in relation to the teaching learning process, research work on institutions, character and professional ethics of our graduates and their impact and influence on society and the classroom rating for academic excellence.

Recommendations

We therefore, recommend that: (1) more workshops **like** this **one** be organised periodically to discuss each of these **aspects** at **length** and develop instruments to measure them, so as to have a **meaningful** trend of the movement of the educational enterprise in order to **reach** out to meaningful and effective outcome of institutions of higher-learning;

(2) Instruments for measuring lecturers by both students and teachers I be developed to assess teacher effectiveness in the eyes of both a learner and the school administration; and (3) Private accrediting bodies be set up to help in continuous evaluation of school programmes and improve upon their effectiveness.

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