

Influence of Qualification Types and Teachers' Attitudes towards Teaching on the Use of Specific Feedback Mechanism in Primary Schools in Edo State, Nigeria

Orluwene, Goodness W. (Ph.D.), Denedo, Margaret E

Department Of Educational Psychology, Guidance, And Counselling, Faculty Of Education University Of Port Harcourt, Port Harcourt, Rivers State

University Staff School, University Of Benin, Benin City Edo State

Corresponding Author; Orluwene, Goodness W

Abstract: *The study investigated the Influence of Qualification Types and Teachers' Attitudes towards Teaching on the Use of Specific Feedback Mechanism in Primary Schools in Edo State. A sample size of 450 public primary school teachers was selected via multi-stage sampling techniques. Two research questions and two hypotheses guided this study. Hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance. Two research instruments, Extent to Teachers Use of Specific Feedback Mechanism Scale (ETUSFMS) and Teachers' Attitudes towards Teaching Scale (TATS) were used to collect data from the 450 primary school teachers. The reliability coefficient of the instruments were 0.92 and 0.75 respectively. Research questions were answered using mean and standard deviation while the hypotheses were tested using independent t-test. The result of this investigation revealed that there is a significant difference in the use of specific feedback based on teachers' qualification types though their usage is at a low extent. Teachers also differ in the use of specific feedback based on their attitude towards teaching. The study also revealed that teachers irrespective of their attitudes use specific feedback at a moderate extent. Based on these findings it was recommended among others that teachers should adopt positive attitudes towards their job. School administrators should also organize workshops and seminars for teachers on the importance of specific feedback and how it can be provided to students. Implications of the study and suggestions for further studies were also made.*

Keywords: *Attitudes, Qualification types and Specific feedback mechanism.*

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I. Introduction

Feedback is the formative and constructive information that is given to a learner regarding his/her academic performance. Feedback allows the learner to know how well he/she is doing in the teaching and learning process and how he/she can achieve academic excellence. Nwankwo (2007) viewed feedback as information given to a learner by a trained instructor on how the learner has performed on a particular task. In addition, feedback involves the provision of information based on the learner's abilities on a particular task. It informs the learner where he has done well and thus keeps it up. It also informs a learner where improvement is required. That is to say, feedback is an information or response from the teacher to the learner that informs both the teacher and the students if they are doing well or not in the teaching and learning process. Feedback is one of the most powerful tools that can be used to enhance students' achievement scores. During the process of the instruction, teachers evaluate the students and it is important that teachers provide students feedback based on the learned task. The response from the students will help the teacher evaluate his/her teaching method.

To this end, feedback can be defined as the remark(s) given to a learner concerning his/her academic performance and how his performance can be improved. The focus of this study is on specific feedback. The role of specific feedback in teaching and learning cannot be overemphasized. Hence Thomas and Robert (2011) averred that teaching without learning is just talking. They also posited that the central aim of all teaching is to help students learn more effectively and efficiently. Specific feedback is an essential part of learning as it helps students to learn effectively and gain a better understanding of the subject under study and it gives a clear direction on how to improve their academic performance. Specific feedback is the information that is given to a learner concerning how he/she has performed during a given task and how he/she can achieve his or her goals.

Specific feedback builds in the students' self-confidence awareness and zeal to learn. Giving specific feedback in the classroom during teaching and learning process is said to enhance learning and improves students' outcome, specific feedback also allow students to be more active in the learning process. It also sends a message to the learner that the teacher cares about their academics. Specific feedback is also said to be

important in teaching and learning as it encourages and enhances the learners' knowledge and skills. Schartel (2012) stated that specific feedback assists learners to improve their performances with the basic aim of helping them actualize their goals in addition to the educational objectives. Specific feedback is a machinery to improve learning outcome (Hattie & Timperley, 2007).

Saurabh, Prateek, and Jegadeesh (2014) reported that specific feedback in medical education is an essential part of teaching as it provides support and promotes the learners' knowledge, skill, and professional performance. In other words, Specific feedback is the bases for all academic success and it is applicable in all fields. Specific feedback is also described as the information given to a learner about the learning goal in relation to the task. It is the information about the correct or incorrect response of the learner. Also, it is that information that specifically states the strength and weakness and how to improve on the weakness. Hence Naomi (2017) opined that teachers should give their students specific feedback on the efforts they have made, what they have achieved and how to improve on their errors. That is to say, specific feedback should focus on the task so that students will not repeat the same mistake. And the use of specific feedback should be employ in the classroom.

Nicol and McFarlane (2006) also stated that specific feedback is constructive if it is given immediately and in a delicate manner. In other words, specific feedback enhances learning output when it is not delayed and given adequately. Grant (2012) also reported specific feedback is concrete and it provides useful information about what the learner is expected to do. In addition, the author stated that specific feedback should not only involve clear goals but visible results related to the goal as well as accurate and easily understood by the user. This implies that students' worksheet should be corrected immediately and should be aimed at improving students' learning outcome. To this end, specific feedback is that information given to a learner that points out the area the learner had done well, why the response was correct, areas where the learner was wrong, why he/she was wrong and procedures to improve on his/her error.

Based on the researchers' experience in the teaching profession, many students/pupils do not do well in their examinations even when the same set of questions they were given during class activities is given to them in the examination. One would have thought that repeating questions which the learner has been exposed to during class work in the examination will improve achievement scores of the learner but the reverse is the case. The reason for this could be due to the fact that specific feedback was not properly provided to these learners. If this problem is not given adequate attention, examination malpractice might rise beyond its current level and the rate of school dropout might equally increase.

Based on these, the researchers suspected some factors could be influencing the inadequate use of specific feedback by the teacher. These suspected factors are qualification types and teachers' attitudes towards teaching.

Teacher's Qualification Types: is the teachers' highest level of education attained, which could be TCII, NCE, first, second and terminal degree in education. In many countries, before a person can become a teacher, that individual must first obtain a professional qualification or credentials in a recognized higher Institution. Based on the researchers' observation, there are two categories of teachers based on their qualification types, the professional and non-professional teachers. Professional teachers are those who have been trained and have a professional teaching experience from a University or College (www.support.italki.com). A professional teacher is also a person with pedagogy knowledge of the teaching profession (en.wikipedia.org, 2008). They are also those teachers who have undergone training in educationally related disciplines. To this end, a professional teacher is someone who is knowledgeable in the science of teaching. They are also those persons who have been trained and certified as teachers or have a teaching qualification.

The non-professional teachers are those teachers without the pedagogy knowledge. Such teachers do not have the knowledge of the science of teaching (en.wikipedia.org, 2008). That is, non-professional teachers are those teachers who do not have any teaching qualification or a professional teaching experience even though they graduated from higher education institution. They are also those teachers who do not have any training on any educational course. The question that comes to mind is, are the professional teachers using the teaching qualification they have acquired to improve learning outcome by providing specific feedback to students? Since they have the pedagogy knowledge, will they provide specific feedback to student better than their counterparts who are non-professional teachers? In the same vein, are the non-professional teachers effective in their teaching or not? Do they also know how to provide specific feedback to students? Perhaps they do not, since they do not have the knowledge of the science of teaching.

This study tends to find answers to all these questions. It is a common belief that professional teachers provide better instructions than their counterparts who are not professionals. Hence, Zuzovsky (2008) study revealed that the achievement level of students taught by teachers with pedagogy knowledge was significantly better than those taught by teachers without pedagogy knowledge. This implies that pedagogy knowledge has a great role in students' academic achievement. In another dimension, some individual holds the notion that

teachers are born and not made. This means that teachers may not need to have pedagogy knowledge before they can make a positive impact on their students' academic growth. To this end, teachers' qualification type may likely influence the use of specific feedback positively or negatively among primary school teachers.

In a study carried out by Orluwene (2017) on the influence of teachers' qualification type on classroom assessment by secondary school teachers in River State, it was revealed that teachers differ in the way they practice classroom assessment related activities based on their qualification type. That is qualification types significantly influence the practice of classroom assessment related activities by teachers. Also, another study carried out by Iwuagwu and Omoike (2015) on the influence of qualification on the job performance of public senior secondary school teachers in Edo State. The result shows that there is significant difference implying that teachers differ in terms of their job performance based on their qualification types

Furthermore, another variable investigated here is teachers' attitude towards the teaching job. Attitude is a thing of the mind that affects a person's perception (Shittu & Oanite 2015). In other words, attitude is the reaction of an organism towards other organisms, objects or events. It could either be positive, negative or neutral. Attitude is the mental state of an individual that propel that individual to act in a particular manner (Nwankwo, 2007). That is to say, attitude is the compelling force or drive that makes an individual behave or react to a thing in a particular manner. Teachers' attitude towards teaching job has to do with how teachers perceive their teaching job. Teachers vary in their attitude towards the teaching job and to students as well. Some teachers are conservative and autocratic, while others are liberal and democratic. That is some teachers have positive and negative attitudes toward the teaching job and their students.

These different types of attitude exhibited by teachers can have different impact on the learning outcome (Ng, 2002). That is the attitude of the teacher can promote good study habit in the learner. Attitude can influence an individual's ability positively or negatively. Odiri (2011) also reported that teachers' attitude affects the performance of students. This means teachers' attitude can make a learner be passive or active during class activities. This research focused on the positive and negative attitude of teachers toward the teaching job. Teachers with positive attitudes are those who are interested, passionate, dedicated, hardworking and committed to the teaching job. The question that comes to mind is are these categories of teachers using these qualities that they possess to improve teaching and learning by providing specific feedback to students?

Carey (2014) stated that teachers who are uninterested in teaching often turn up late to school and do not bother to give students homework. The author also stated that some teachers' daily jobs finished at 2.40pm and as a result, they do not bother to stay extra hours in school to finish their day's job because they have their personal needs to attend to. This means teachers with a negative attitude are often concerned about themselves, as they do not care about how their students are faring academically.

Shittu and Oanite (2015) carried out a study on "Teachers' Attitude: A good influence on teaching and learning of social studies in the junior secondary school in Ilorin. The result shows that Social Studies teachers have negative attitudes towards the teaching of social studies in junior secondary schools. The implication is that these social studies teachers may not go to class, give class work, give homework or mark students' worksheet regularly and this might be affecting students' performance negatively.

In another study carried out by Klehm (2013) who investigated the effect of teachers' attitude on teaching practices and students with disabilities shows that most teachers prefer to teach students without disabilities than students with disabilities. That is most teachers have negative attitudes towards students with disabilities and positive attitudes towards students without disabilities. This implies that if these teachers are made to teach students with disabilities they may not be able to do that effectively thus providing specific feedback might be a problem. When this happens, it might affect the academic performance of students with disabilities.

Based on the researchers' observation, primary school teachers in Egor Local Government Area of Edo State differ in their qualification types and their attitudes towards the teaching job and these might influence the way they provide specific feedback to students. To this end, teachers' qualification types and attitude towards the teaching job might influence the use of specific feedback mechanism.

Research Questions

1. To what extent do teachers' qualification types influence their use of specific feedback?
2. To what extent does teachers' attitude toward teaching job influence their use of specific feedback?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance.

1. Teachers' qualification types do not significantly influence teachers' use of specific feedback.
2. Attitudes toward teaching do not significantly influence teachers' use of specific feedback.

II. Methodology

The research design used in this study was ex-post facto research design. The population of the study consist of all the public primary school teachers in Egor Local Government Area of Edo State. The population for the study is 912 primary school teachers of which 59 were male and 853 female. A sample size of 450 public primary school teachers drawn via multi-stage sampling methods (simple random sampling, non-proportionate stratified random sampling, and accidental sampling techniques) was used. Taro Yamen's formula for sample size was used to obtain an estimated minimum sample size of 276, in order to obtain a sample size that will be a true representative of the population 174 was added to make a sample size of 450, which forms 49.34% of the entire population. Two instruments were used to collect data for this study which were titled Extent to Teachers' Use of Specific Feedback Mechanism Scale (ETUSFMS) and Teachers' Attitudes towards Teaching Scale (TATS). Two research questions and two hypotheses guided this study and the research questions were answered using mean and standard deviation, while the hypotheses were tested using independent samples t-test.

III. Result

Research Question 1: To what extent do teachers' qualification types influence the use of specific feedback among primary school teachers in Egor L.G.A. of Edo State.?

Hypothesis 1: Teachers' qualification types do not significantly influence the use of specific feedback.

In order to answer this research question and test the corresponding null hypothesis, mean, standard deviation and independent samples t-test of were conducted on professionals and non-professionals teachers. The result is presented in table 1

Table 1: Mean, standard deviation and independent sample t-test of extent teachers' qualification types influence the use of specific feedback.

QT	N	M	MD	SD	df	t	p-value	Result
PT	318	36.16	3.15	9.35	391	2.704	0.040	P< 0.05
NPT	75	39.31		7.66				sig

Note: QT = Qualification Types, PT = Professional Teachers and NPT = Non-Professional

From table 1, the result revealed that the mean scores of professional and non-professional teachers were 36.16 (SD = 9.35) and 39.31 (SD = 7.66) respectively. This produced a mean difference of 3.15. This result also shows that both professional and non-professional teachers use specific feedback to a low extent. Nevertheless, the non-professional teachers use specific feedback more because a mean difference of 3.15 was obtained. When this mean difference was subjected to independent sample t-test, a calculated t-value of 2.704 was obtained at 391 degrees of freedom at 0.040 level of significance ($p < 0.05$). Thus the null hypothesis is rejected. This is to say there is a significant difference between professional and non-professional teachers in the use of specific feedback among primary school teachers in Egor Local Government Area of Edo State.

Research Question 2: To what extent do teachers' attitudes towards teaching influence their use of specific feedback among primary school teachers in Egor Local Government Area of Edo State.

In order to answer this research question and test the hypothesis, mean, standard deviation independent samples t-test of teachers with positive and negative attitudes were used. The result is presented in table 2.

Table 2: Mean, standard deviation and independent samples t-test extent teachers' attitude towards teaching job influence the use of specific feedback.

Attitudes	N	M	MD	SD	df	t	p-value	Result
Positive	222	58.02	14.01	4.32	391	28.45	0.001	P< 0.05
Negative	171	43.98		5.46				sig

From table2, it was shown that the mean scores for teachers with positive and negative attitudes are 58.02 (SD = 4.32) and 43.98 (SD = 5.46) respectively. This yielded a mean difference of 14.04. The result also showed that teachers with positive and negative attitudes use specific feedback at a moderate extent. However, those with positive attitudes use specific feedback more than their counterparts with negative attitudes because a mean difference of 14.01 was obtained. When the mean difference was subjected to an independent sample t-test, a calculated t-value of 28.45 was obtained at a 391 degree of freedom at 0.001 level of significance ($p < 0.05$). Thus the null hypothesis was rejected. That is, attitudes of teachers significantly influence their use of specific feedback mechanism in Egor Local Government Area of Edo State.

IV. Discussion

Qualification Types and Usage of Specific Feedback: From the result in table 1, it was revealed teachers' qualification types significantly influence their use of specific feedback among primary school teachers in Egor Local Government Area of Edo State. The result further showed that professional and non-

professional teachers use specific feedback at a low extent. However, the non-professional teachers have been found to use specific feedback more than the professional teachers. One would have thought that the professional teachers would have been the ones to use specific feedback more effectively because of the pedagogy knowledge they have acquired during their training, but the reverse was obtained as the professional teachers have not been able to put into effective use the teaching skills they have acquired. The present finding is in line with the findings of Orluwene (2017) who found out that the qualification types of the teachers significantly influence the way secondary school teachers practice classroom related assessment activities. Also, the present finding is also in line with the findings of Iwuagwu & Omoike (2015) whose findings revealed that qualification types influence job performance of teachers. That is to say, the qualification type a teacher possesses determines his or her effectiveness in the teaching profession. This finding was surprising because one would have thought that teachers with teaching qualification would have been more effective in the teaching profession since they possess pedagogy knowledge.

Attitude towards Teaching and Usage of Specific Feedback: From table 2, teachers' attitudes towards teaching significantly influence their use of specific feedback among primary school teachers. The result further shows that teachers with both positive and negative attitudes use specific feedback to a moderate extent. However, teachers with positive attitudes use it more. That is their use of specific feedback is above average. Meaning these categories of teachers would be able to improve pupils' learning. The findings of this study do not agree with Shttu & Oanite (2015) whose findings revealed that social studies teachers have negative attitudes towards the teaching of the subject. This means that the negative attitude of these teachers might inhibit them from providing specific feedback that might boost the academic performance of their learners. The present finding is in agreement with the findings of Klehm (2013) who found out that some teachers have positive attitudes towards students without disabilities. This implies specific feedback might be provided adequately to students without disabilities and this will help enhance their performance. This finding is not surprising because the attitude we developed towards a job will determine our interest in that job which in turn will reflect in our productivity. And also teachers are now beginning to see themselves as role models in the society and teaching a profession to reckon with.

V. Conclusion

Teachers in Egor Local Government Area of Edo State have been found to use specific feedback at a low extent in terms of their qualification types. While teachers with both positive and negative attitudes towards teaching used specific feedback to a moderate extent. Little wonder their pupils fail examination questions even when such questions are repeated. It was also found that majority of teachers in the area have positive attitudes towards teaching but why this does not translate into positive attitude in providing adequate specific feedback to their pupils remains an area of further research. Perhaps one possible reason could be that these teachers do not understand what specific feedback is and how to use it or maybe the class size is too large.

Recommendations

Based on the results on the influence of qualification types and teachers' attitude towards teaching on the use of specific feedback mechanism among primary school teachers, it is recommended that:

1. School administrators should organize workshops and seminars for their teachers on the importance and use of specific feedback at the beginning of every academic session.
2. Much emphasis should not be placed on teaching qualification as a yardstick to teach in primary school by the government and school administrators as some teachers who do not have teaching qualification could also teach adequately. As such, such teachers should be provided the opportunity to teach at the primary school level
3. Teachers should endeavor to use specific feedback during class activities.
4. The ratio of teacher/pupil in primary school should be minimal in order for primary teachers to be able to provide specific feedback to their pupils.

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