

Focusing Quality Teaching in the 21st Century: Perspective of Teachers on Student-Teacher Ratings as Evaluation Tools in Nigerian Secondary Schools

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Abstract: - Student Perception Surveys are being used for feedback and evaluation of teacher effectiveness in places like United Kingdom and United States of America. In 2009 the Federal Ministry of Education of Nigeria included students in the school self-evaluation committees of secondary schools. This is an innovation. The main purpose of this study was to investigate the attitude of secondary schools teachers in Bauchi state towards inclusion of student- teacher ratings as potential tools for teacher evaluation and feedback in secondary schools. Two research questions and one hypothesis were formulated to guide the study. The study adopted the survey research design. A sample of 230 teachers was selected as respondents through proportionate stratified random sampling technique from 23 secondary schools in Bauchi metropolis. Researcher-developed structured questionnaire was used for data collection. Two Measurement and Evaluation experts validated the instrument. A test retest procedure was used to determine the reliability of the questionnaire, while Pearson product correlation coefficient was adopted to find the correlation between the two results which yielded 0.78. The data analysis was done by frequency count and simple percentages. Chi-square test was conducted to determine whether there were no significant differences in the views of novice and veteran teachers regarding their opinions on student-teacher ratings in secondary schools. Findings of the study portrays that secondary school teachers in Bauchi state have positive attitude towards student-teacher ratings as potential tool for teacher evaluation and feedback. However, the study revealed that school self-evaluation committees in which students are represented were either absent or not functioning properly in most schools. Results of chi-square test showed there was no significant difference in the response of novice and veteran teachers regarding their opinions on student-teacher ratings in secondary schools.

Key words: Student-teacher ratings, Evaluation, Classroom observation, Teacher effectiveness.

I. INTRODUCTION

Teacher evaluation is undertaken for both formative and summative purposes. The former seeks to enhance professional development by identifying strengths and weaknesses and providing teacher with opportunity to improve. While the later may result into promotion, pay rise, disciplinary action or even dismissal. In other words, teacher evaluation plays the improvement function and the accountability function. Though using student ratings with the

sole aim of measuring teacher effectiveness appears recent development, Burniske, J. and Meibaum, D., (2012) observed that collecting students' feedback to provide input on effective teacher qualities was practiced as far back as 1896 in Iowa, US. Balch (2012) confirmed that results from students' surveys and feedback have helped teachers to identify their weaknesses and improve upon their teaching strategies.

Given the complexity of measuring the act of teaching, Ronald (2005) opines that multiple sources can provide a more accurate, reliable, and comprehensive picture of teaching effectiveness than just one source. However, the researcher warned '... the decision maker should integrate the information from only those sources for which validity evidence is available.' Accordingly, Appling, S. E., Naumann, P. L., & Berk, R. A. (2001) observed that using three or more sources of evidence, the strength of each source can compensate for weaknesses of the other sources thereby converging on a decision about teaching effectiveness that is more accurate than the one based on any single source. In view of the foregoing arguments, inclusion of student-teacher ratings as potential tools for feedback and evaluation of teacher effectiveness is a positive innovation in teacher evaluation processes.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

In recent times educational researchers have emphasized the utilization of student perception surveys as potential tools for providing feedback and evaluation of teacher effectiveness. McKeachie (1997) opined that student ratings are the single most valid source of data on teaching effectiveness (p. 1219). Ronald (2005) observed that recent estimates in United States 88 percent of all Liberal Arts colleges use students' ratings for summative decisions. Hanover Research (2013) reported that over 300,000 students have been engaged in student-teacher ratings in various schools in China, United States and Canada. Nahed study (2012) study on evaluation of teachers in Egypt indicated that majority of teachers have positive attitude towards student-teacher ratings as potential tools for feedback and evaluation of teacher effectiveness. In Kenya, Wanzare (2012) study of instructional supervision portrayed a sizeable number of

teachers suggesting a need to involve students in the practices and procedures of supervision of instruction. Njogu (2016) successfully engaged 80 pupils in student-teacher ratings in the study of Head teacher's instructional supervision and its impact on performance of Kenya Certificate of Primary Education. Concerning the level at which student ratings can be applied; Peterson (2000) contends that student perception surveys are very effective for teacher evaluation at elementary, middle and high school levels.

From the foregoing, though student ratings seem relatively recent innovation, its global acceptability is in no doubts. Many educational researchers hold the view that student-teacher ratings can be reliably used as measures of teacher effectiveness. However, there is a growing consensus that combination of student perception surveys with other strategies like classroom visits, peer observation, self-evaluation and portfolios will ensure a much more valid and reliable evaluation for teacher effectiveness.

Strategies that are repeatedly reported in literatures that can be used to measure teaching effectiveness are: Direct observation of teaching, Students ratings, Self-evaluation, Employer ratings, Peers ratings, teaching portfolios, Sample of students' performance and administrators' ratings (Australia, Kenya, Nigeria, 2013; British, California, Hongkong, Washington, 2015)

III. ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF STUDENT SURVEYS

Advantages of factoring student surveys into teacher evaluation process include: They are cost-efficient; they can be collected anonymously; They are time-efficient; they have the ability to tract changes over time (Goe, L., Bell, C., and Little, O. 2008) According to Hanover Research, (2013) the most important advantage of using student ratings is its ability to provide 'applicable feedback to teachers' Hanover Research, (2013)

Some disadvantages of using student surveys as identified by Goe, et al, (2008), include: students lack the knowledge to rate teachers in curriculum, classroom management, content, knowledge and collegiality

IV. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Utilization of student-teacher ratings as tools for feedback and evaluation of teachers was a recent innovation in teacher effectiveness evaluation in the Nigerian education system. Student-teacher ratings were co-opted in 2009. The Federal Ministry of Education of Nigeria in its supervisory guidelines directed Principals and Head teachers to ensure that School Self-evaluation Committees are established in their schools with representatives from learners, teachers, staff, parents, community leaders, School-Based Management Committees and Parent Teacher Association (MoED, 2015). National Policy on Education (2013) had earlier emphasized involvement of School-Based Management Committees

(SBMC) in supervision and quality control of schools. Students' representation also forms component part of the SBMC. Main aim of the process is to enable the school identify their strength and weaknesses in terms of teaching and learning and improve the quality of education of students in their care.

The main focus of the policy was development of quality teaching for the attainment of qualitative education in line with SDG goal 4 (EFA, 2015). It is hoped, this process will enable the schools identify their strength and weaknesses in terms of teaching and learning and improve the quality of education of students in their care. School heads have been reluctant in implementing the policy. Parents and the general public criticize teachers for being hostile and cynical towards this innovation, leading to its poor take up. However, the criticisms lack empirical evidence. The main purpose of this study therefore was to investigate the attitudes of teachers towards the implementation of student-teacher ratings as potential tools for feedback and evaluation of teacher effectiveness in secondary schools

V. OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

1. Examine the extent to which functional School Self-evaluation Committees exist in secondary schools of Bauchi state.
2. Assess teachers perceptions on student-teacher ratings as tools for feedback and evaluation of teachers in secondary schools
3. Determine if there is a difference in the perceptions between novice and veteran teachers on student-teacher ratings as tools for feedback and evaluation of teachers in secondary schools

VI. RESEARCH QUESTION

1. What is the extent to which functional School Self-evaluation Committees exist in secondary schools of Bauchi state?
2. How do teachers perceive student-teacher ratings as tools for feedback and evaluation of teachers in secondary schools?
3. What are the differences, if any, in perceptions of novice and veteran teachers on student-teacher ratings as tools for feedback and evaluation of teachers in secondary schools?

H₀: There is no significant difference in the perceptions between novice and veteran teachers on student-teacher ratings as tools for feedback and evaluation of teachers in secondary schools

VII. METHODOLOGY

The study adopted descriptive survey design because it focused on providing an accurate description of a given situation as it is. Descriptive survey research design gathers data at a particular point in time with the purpose of describing the nature of existing condition or identifying

standards against which existing conditions can be compared (Creswell 2012, Cohen 1994, Orodho 2016).

Population and sample

Population of the study comprised of all the 2053 teachers from the 338 secondary schools in Bauchi state. Proportionate random sampling technique was used to select a sample of 230 teachers from 23 secondary schools selected through systematic sampling.

Instrument for data collection

Researcher-developed instrument titled Student-Teacher Ratings in Secondary Schools Questionnaire (STRSSQ) was used for data collection. It was gauged after a four point scale. The instrument was face validated by two experts at Abubakar Tatari Ali Polytechnic, Bauchi, Nigeria. Twenty teachers were sampled for pilot testing using the test-retest method. The reliability was calculated by Pearson formula which yielded a coefficient of 0.78. The questionnaire comprised of three sections A, B and C. Section sought for personal data of the respondent, section B sought for information on school self-evaluation committees in secondary school while section C sought for teachers' views on student-teacher ratings in secondary schools as potential tools for feedback and evaluation of teachers.

Out of 230 questionnaires distributed, 215 were returned properly filled, indicating 93.5% returning rate. The data collected were analysed using frequency count, simple percentages and chi-square

VIII. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Table 1: Characteristics of respondents

S/N	Items	NO.	%
1	Sex of respondents	Male	64
		Female	36
		Total	100
2	Work experience	1-3 years	27
		4-6 years	23
		Above 7years	50
		Total	100
3	Qualification	NCE	60
		Diploma	3
		1 st Degree	36
		Masters Degree	1

NB: Work experience: 1-3 yrs Novice teachers; above 3yrs, veteran teachers

The data in table 1 shows that out of the 225 secondary school teachers used for this study, 61(27%) of them were novice teachers, while 164(73%) were veteran teachers.

Q1.What is the extent to which functional School Self-evaluation Committees exist in secondary schools of Bauchi state

Table 2: Teachers' Response on Existence of Functional School Self-evaluation Committees

S N	ITEMS	Agree		Disagree	
		Frequen cy	Percent age	Frequen cy	Percenta ge
1	School Self-evaluation Committee exists in my school	45	20%	180	80%
2	Students are effectively represented in the School Self-evaluation committee of my school	19	8.4%	206	91.6%
3	School Self-evaluation Committee of my is functional	10	4.4%	215	95.6%

Table 2 shows the level to which functional School Self-evaluation Committees exist in secondary schools of Bauchi state. 200 (89%) indicated that there were no functional School Self-evaluation Committees in their schools. While 25 (11%) indicated that there were functional School Self-evaluation Committees in their schools.

2. How do teachers perceive student-teacher ratings as tools for feedback and evaluation of teachers in secondary schools?

Table 3: Response on perceptions about student-teacher ratings in secondary schools in Nigeria

SN	ITEMS	Agree		Disagree	
		Frequen cy	Percent age	Frequen cy	Percenta ge
1	Student-teacher ratings are useful in Nigerian secondary schools	199	88.4%	26	11.6 %
2	Student-teacher ratings can help the teacher to understand his students needs	205	91.1%	20	8.9%
3	Student-teacher ratings can help the teacher to discover his weakness areas	208	92.4%	17	7.6%

Table 3 shows views held by teachers on student-teacher ratings as tools for feedback and evaluation of teachers in secondary schools. 204(90.7%) agreed that student-teacher ratings are useful in Nigerian secondary schools, that they can

help the teacher to understand his students needs and that they can help the teacher to discover his weakness areas. 21(9.3%) of the respondents disagreed with these views.

Q3.What differences, if any, exist in perceptions of novice and veteran teachers on student-teacher ratings as tools for feedback and evaluation of teachers in secondary schools

Table 4: Comparison of perceptions of novice and veteran teachers about student-teacher ratings as tools for feedback and evaluation of teachers in secondary schools

S N	Items	Respondents	Agree	Disagree
1	Student-teacher ratings are useful in Nigerian secondary schools	Novice teachers	58 (95.1%)	3(4.9%)
		Veteran teachers	147(89.6%)	17(10.4%)
2	Student-teacher ratings can help the teacher to understand his students needs	Novice teachers	59(96.7%)	2(3.3%)
		Veteran teachers	146(89%)	18(11%)
3	Student-teacher ratings can help the teacher to discover weakness areas	Novice teachers	54(88.5%)	7 (11.5%)
		Veteran teachers	154(93.9%)	10 (6.1%)

3. H₀: There is no significant difference in the perceptions between novice and veteran teachers on student-teacher ratings as tools for feedback and evaluation of teachers in secondary schools

Tables 4.1 and 4.2 Chi-square results on difference in the response between novice and veteran teachers about student-teacher ratings as tools for feedback and evaluation of teachers in secondary schools

Table 4.1

Teacher type	Response		
	Agree	Disagree	Total
Veteran	447	12	459
Novice	171	9	180
Total	618	21	639

Table 4.2

n_{ij}	E_{ij}	$n_{ij} - E_{ij}$	$(n_{ij} - E_{ij})^2$	$\frac{(n_{ij} - E_{ij})^2}{E_{ij}}$
447	443.9155	3.0845	9.5141	0.0214
12	15.0845	-3.0845	9.5141	0.6307
171	174.0845	-3.0845	9.5141	0.0547
9	5.9155	3.0845	9.5141	1.6083

Where:

n_{ij} is the observed frequency of cell ij

E_{ij} is the expected frequency of cell ij

$$\chi_c^2 = \sum_{i=1}^2 \sum_{j=1}^2 \frac{(n_{ij} - E_{ij})^2}{E_{ij}} = 2.3151$$

At $\alpha = 0.05$, the tabular value of chi-square at 1 degree of freedom is $\chi^2 = 3.841$ since the calculated chi-square

$\chi_c^2 = 2.3151 < \chi^2 = 3.841$ (chi-square tabulated), we fail to reject the null hypothesis at $\alpha = 0.05$ level of significance and conclude that there is no significant difference in the perceptions between novice and veteran teachers on student-teacher ratings as tools for feedback and evaluation of teachers in secondary school.

IX. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Findings of the study revealed that very few (20%) secondary schools have established school self-evaluation Committees in Bauchi state. The study portrayed that even the few ones that have been established were not functional and students' representation was not encouraging. Based on these findings, it could be concluded that School Self-evaluation Committees were generally absent in secondary schools of Bauchi state. The study findings discredit the criticisms against teachers for being cynical and hostile towards student-teacher ratings as tools for feedback and evaluation of teachers in secondary schools. Based on the findings of the study, greater percentage (90.7%) of teachers were of the view that Student-teacher ratings are useful in Nigerian secondary schools, that student-teacher ratings can help the teachers to understand their students' needs; that they will enable the teacher to discover his areas of weaknesses in the teaching and learning process.

X. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

In view of the discoveries made, the study concluded that school self-evaluation committees in which students are represented were either absent or not functioning properly in most secondary schools in Bauchi state. The study also concluded that teachers have positive attitudes towards student-teacher ratings in secondary schools of Bauchi state. Finally, the study concluded that there is no significant difference in the views of novice teachers and veteran teachers about engaging student-teacher ratings as tools for feedback and evaluation of teachers in secondary schools.

Ministry of Education should set up an investigative committee to find out why many principals failed to establish school self-evaluation committees. Principals and teachers alike should be encouraged to see the need to include student ratings in measuring the act of teaching. Ronald (2005)

opines that multiple sources can provide a more accurate, reliable, and comprehensive picture of teaching effectiveness than just one source. Further studies may be conducted to find out why principals are reluctant in establishing school self-evaluation committees and implementing student-teacher ratings policy

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