Teaching Methods and Teachers Conference/Seminar Attendance: The Gateway to Quality Education in Nigeria

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ABSTRACT	Published Online: April 17, 2023
Nigeria is one of the few nations in the world that prioritizes educational excellence. Teachers play an essential role in their students' development both academically and personally; therefore, it is imperative that they possess qualities such as subject matter expertise, ethical and intellectual vigilance, a genuine interest in their students, and the competence to carry out their duties effectively. This is only possible with sufficient training and seminar participation. Teachers may benefit from going to a seminar in many ways, including improving their communication skills, learning new information, making new connections, and becoming re-inspired. In order to ensure that the stated goals are met, a teacher must take on several hats in the classroom. He takes on the responsibilities of a parent and a confidant in addition to those of a boss, depending on the circumstances. All of these can be modified to improve schooling standards. In light of this, this paper investigates how teachers' pedagogical practices and participation in professional development opportunities like conferences and seminars contribute to improving education quality in Nigeria.	**Keywords:** Teachers, Teaching Methods, Conference Attendance, Quality Education

INTRODUCTION

Teachers' delivery of lessons is very vital to educational quality. Instructional methods are ways or modes of how information is presented to students. Such methods falls into two categories; teachers centred approach and students centred approach. The teacher centred approach feature low levels of students' choice, passive students, and power residing primarily with the teacher. Learners or students centred approach does not necessarily cede control of the learning process to students (although some power sharing is often involved) but takes into account the knowledge, skills, attitude and beliefs that learners bring to the educational setting (Akpokiniovo, 2022). There is no one best approach to instructional delivery. Some objectives are better suited to teacher – centred approaches while others clearly need student centred approached (Roff, 2012). The issue of appropriate instructional methods in the teaching and learning field is vital as this constitutes what and how the subject matter could be taught (Arisi, 2004).

Learning is a major concern of educators because teaching itself is all about learning. Teaching is to facilitate learning. It is by learning that the objectives of any given curriculum can be achieved (Akpokiniovo and Anho, 2022). Learning is not necessarily an outcome of teaching. Cognitive research is reveals that even with what is taken to be good instruction, many students, including academically talented ones understand less than we think they do, this comes as a results of students learning outside the school environment. For these reasons subject specialists are now looking out for the best ways to teach students so that their performance will improve. Teaching methods are tools use in in teaching, they are used based on the objectives the teachers hopes to achieved, some of them are like workshops and problem based learning, Questioning and Discussion, Investigation and Problem-solving, Demonstration and Laboratory work methods are being used today to pass instruction to students, thus improving the quality of education (Ajaja, 2013). However, teachers cannot master the various teaching method without adequate training through workshop and conference/seminar attendance.

Conference in education entails the coming together of diverse persona who are experts in education with a view to sharing of ideas. Robinson (2016)'s perception of conferences, which the investigator perceived as a key

rudiments under training, accepted its potency for transmitting a meaning to a large listeners, while striving for opportunity to listen and state ones perception on opinions of renowned authorities. Teachers have 'entrée' to a large range of information via conference which by extension transform to enhanced performance in the school setting. Regularity in attending workshops and seminars is also a pointer to staff improvement. Workshop entails an assemblage of individuals that engaged in a study or undertake task on innovative subject. Emphasis here is that, teachers' knowledge and the sharing of academic ideas is enhanced. Workshop can be planned in school gathering and an invitation extended to renowned and more qualified educationist to deliver a lecture and also serve as a trainer and mentor to the prospective and serving teachers. It is pertinent to state that, such official arrangement for teacher improvement need to be prop up by unofficial exercise like team instruction and sharing of know-how and learning resources among instructors, which can significantly add to self-development (Akpokiniovo and Anho, 2022). This technique has the benefit of stimulating healthy deliberation about diverse reform measures and advances and encouraging partnership, investigation, introspective discussion and action.

The objective of teacher improvement is to abreast staff on the latest innovation in their field in a bid to assist in the improvement of instructive abilities, keep trainers in the school setting informed on new facts in the education setting, meet fastidious requirements, such as course improvement and orientation, assist in management task, lend a hand to improving reciprocal respect among instructors and identify the need of contemporary teaching methods. It is satisfying to state here that the tiers of government in the country are aware of enormous benefits derivable when instructors developed. Institutions charged with undertaking this development in the country abounds. Thus, any workers improvement programme should have the ability to prompt, stimulate and advance the role discernment of workers and also increase a right mind-set in them in the direction of the society. According to Nakpodia (2008), it is evident that ample staff improvement programme in terms of conference attendance for instructors in the country has become apparent overtime. Educating teachers has a multiplying effect; as when they are educated, their pattern of living is likely to improve, since they are empowered to access creative ventures, which will ultimately lead to development in their living. The place of education consequently, is not just to pass on understanding and dexterity that enable the recipient to function as social change instrument in the public, but also to pass on principles, attitude and ambition imperative for the development of the country. This paper therefore x-rays some teaching methods, teacher's conference/seminar attendance on how it has improved the quality of education in Nigeria.

CONCEPT OF TEACHERS

Teachers are defined by their ability to impart knowledge to their students and by the impact they have on them, says Akpokiniovo (2022). In education, a teacher's responsibilities extend far beyond the classroom. In this study, a teacher is defined as an educated person who provides, organizes, and monitors the instructional materials and procedures used in a traditional classroom setting (Nakpodia, 2008). Today's educators often play multiple roles, including those of a "external parent," "counselor," "mentor," "role model," and more. According to his definition, a good educator knows that memorization isn't the same thing as understanding and education. Communication, listening, teamwork, flexibility, empathy, and patience are also important qualities in a teacher. Effective educators also share a passion for learning and encourage their students to develop a similar outlook on the world and its possibilities.

MEANING OF TEACHING METHODS

Teaching strategies are the means by which we impart knowledge to our students. What we want to teach (content), who we're teaching, and the expected level of competence all influence our method selection (White and Manfred, 2002). To achieve the desired learning outcomes with students, educators employ a variety of different teaching methods (Liu and Shi, 2007). Both the nature of the subject matter and our assumptions and hypotheses about how students learn inform these guidelines for instruction. How am I going to teach? is a crucial question every educator must answer for themselves. This pertains to how the subject matter or learning experiences are presented to the students in order to bring about the desired learning outcomes.

What constitutes a teaching technique are the underlying instructional concepts and practices (Westwood, 2008). Participatory exercises, lectures, demonstrations, recitations, memorization, and even hybrids of these approaches may be employed in the classroom. The material or skill being taught is a major factor in determining the teaching approach chosen, with student ability and interest also playing a role (White and Manfred, 2002). Knowledge is organized into three categories: abilities, perspectives, and ethics.

Importance of Teaching Methods

White and Manfred (2002) outlined the following as the importance of instructional methods:
- motivate students and help them focus attention
- organize information for understanding and remembering
- monitor and assess learning

Ajaja (2013) also stated that instructional method most especially those that involve team work play an important role in increasing students' respect for and understanding of each other's abilities, interests and needs.

Types of Instructional Methods

These methods will be discussed under the teacher-centred and student-centred approaches. These methods

include; lecture, discussion, questioning, problem solving, laboratory and demonstration, peer teaching and cooperative learning etc.

Teacher Centred Approaches:

In the context of this study, the teacher-centred approach is also known direct teaching method or content learning approach. Teacher centred approaches are seen as one way channel of communication. Bellie, (2012) sees teacher-centered pedagogy as a system in which most of the meaningful course information comes from the instructor. This approach places a significant amount of responsibility on the instructor to provide the 'right' information, in the 'right' way, regardless of learning/teaching styles." It's called teachers centred because it's directed by the teacher. The students are seen as passive listeners. There is a growing consensus that direct methods are the most effective for teaching the early stages of foundation skills such as literacy and numeracy, thus preparing learners to participate productively in less structured learning situations later. Direct teaching takes many forms, ranging from the typical chalk-and talk or PowerPoint lecture – where students are mainly passive recipients of information – through to highly structured but interactive classroom sessions. Regardless of the type of direct teaching being used, the teacher or instructor requires a repertoire of skills and competencies that cover:

- planning the content and method of delivery (including appropriate use of audio-visual equipment and ICT)
- managing the available time efficiently
- presenting the content in an interesting and motivating way
- Explaining and demonstrating (Westwood, 2008).

Lecture Method

This approach assumes that the Teacher has all the knowledge and the student has nearly none (Ajaja, 2013). That is to say, the pupils, who are often portrayed as naive and unprepared, learn from the instructor. In a lecture, the instructor speaks directly to the class while the students sit quietly and take notes. Lectures, or the lecture technique, are the most common kind of formal education utilized across the globe. The academic lecture is said to have originated before the printing press as the "sole method that the information held in books could be conveyed to a large number of pupils," as stated by Ajaja (2013).

Although while lectures are frequently panned since they are teacher-centered and only allow for one-way contact between the instructor and the class, they do have their uses.

- ❖ It creates new ideas.
- ❖ It is good for large class.
- ❖ Teachers are experienced and have mastery of subject, explain all points and can answer all questions raised by students.
- ❖ Students can ask if they need any clarification.
- ❖ Learn through listening

- ❖ Teacher explains all points.
- ❖ Students give their input.
- ❖ Teacher discuss whole topic in the class in easy language so students can easily understand the topic.
- ❖ Teacher provides all knowledge related to topic.
- ❖ Time saving as teacher is supposed to finish lecture in time.

Student-Centred approaches for teaching

In educational circles, the phrase "student-centred approach" is often bandied around. The word "student-centered" has become interchangeable with others, such as "flexible learning." "Student-centered" approaches to education are consistent with the constructivist theory of learning, even though some of these approaches existed before constructivism did. There are a variety of student-centered approaches, each with its own name (e.g., activity-based learning, guided discovery, inquiry approach, problem-based learning, project-based learning, and contextual learning), but all share similar underlying concepts and practices. Most approaches are based on the following principles:

- students should be actively involved in the learning process and intrinsically motivated
- topics, issues, or subject matter should be interesting, relevant and intrinsically motivating
- Whenever possible, learning experiences should take place in real-life situations where the relevant knowledge and skills will really be needed and used as in situated learning.

Inquiry-based techniques, project-based or resource-based learning, computer-assisted learning, and so on are all examples of student-centered approaches that may be applied in a variety of settings. In this analysis, we focused primarily on inquiry-based approaches.

Inquiry-based methods

A publication titled "Why Inquiry?" was published by the North Carolina Department of Education in 2007. While discussing the goals of scientific investigation, the author succinctly stated them as follows: Students of all ages and in all scientific fields should be given enough opportunities to engage in scientific inquiry, from formulating questions to carrying out studies to analysing data to presenting their findings. Discovery learning, problem-based learning, the laboratory and demonstration technique, the discussion and questioning method, peer-to-peer education, project work, and resource-based learning are all examples of pedagogical approaches that fall under this umbrella.

Discovery learning

The most well-known kind of inquiry-based education is "discovery learning." It improves the quality of education by having students actively study a subject, issue, or problem, collect relevant information, understand causes and consequences when applicable, and come to conclusions or solutions (Ormrod, 2000). In the fields of social studies,

science, geography, history, health, environmental education, and mathematics, this approach is especially well-suited to accomplishing crucial goals. The majority of researchers agree that discovery learning is at its most productive when;
-the process is carefully structured
- students' have prerequisite knowledge and skills
- teachers provide any necessary support during the investigations.

There are numerous varieties of discovery learning, from unstructured, teacher-led exploration to more organized, teacher-led "guided discovery," where the instructor still maintains a certain amount of authority. The results suggest that discovery learning is a useful method for reaching certain process-related learning objectives.

Investigation and problem solving

The word "enquiry" is defined as "an inquiry" in the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary International Student Edition (2005). To ask questions, or to inquire, sStudents may benefit greatly from being exposed to inquiry as a teaching strategy since it models the actions taken by scientists while actually doing scientific research (Yager and Akçay, 2010). Inquiry-based science education is a method of teaching students in the natural sciences by having them participate in a variety of hands-on scientific activities and investigations (Olajengbesi, 2006). Greenwald (2000) argues that exposing students to difficult issues and the processes involved in finding solutions is the most effective approach to teach science. The aforementioned literature analysis shows that when pupils are engaged in meaningful activity, they learn more effectively.

Laboratory and Demonstration method

Seeing believes because visual information is more easily retained than textual information while learning something new. Demonstrations are a method of illustrating or clarifying processes or procedures. Providing evidence is an act in itself. Either an inductive or a deductive demonstration is possible. Students utilize specific examples and data to infer broader concepts and norms in an inductive method. Throughout the course of the operation, they are actively involved in a question and answer session. This paves the way for them to do research and form theories about the issue at hand. People are inspired to take action and their curiosity is piqued. Using a deductive approach entails inferring conclusions about a scenario or issue based on what one already knows to be true about it in general. The student's capacity for deductive reasoning is put to use when the instructor takes the role of front-line investigator by asking questions regarding the materials and methods being used. As the inductive style of demonstration gives students more time to "think, do," and offer answers to the teacher's questions, I plan to use it in my science classroom.

There are two types of demonstrations: experimental (from personal experience) and observational. Students seem to have a special fondness for the experimental because of the

agency it affords them. Children's natural curiosity is piqued when a lesson includes an experiment they get to do rather than one they just observe. Educators should place greater emphasis on the experimental process of demonstration than on students' increased observation and verification of materials (Iniomesa, 2010). New studies in this field show that effective use of laboratory and demonstration activities has a beneficial effect on students' performance in scientific courses.

DISCUSSION AND QUESTIONING
Discussion method

The instructor and the students engage more in this setting than in a traditional lecture. The lines of communication begin with the instructor and extend to the students. Although this approach takes care of collaborative learning, it is best used with small groups of students (two to fifteen). Nonetheless, most educators have classrooms of thirty, forty, or fifty students. Most classrooms are fairly big in the lower grades of Nigeria's secondary school (Osakinle, Onijigin and Falaba, 2010).

Teachers utilize inquiry as a means of encouraging student agency and intellectual development. To master the art of communication, one must learn to listen attentively and ask probing questions. Professional educators who encourage student inquiry tend to be great communicators. They pay close attention and ask pertinent questions, allowing others to better formulate their ideas and draw conclusions. Questions like "what have you found out about the pendulum?" might help lead the student's investigation. Do you notice a difference in frequency depending on the length of the thread? In what way might you tell? What the teacher has done here is to let the student draw inferences and utilize their own thoughts via the use of artistic questions. The potentials of questioning as a teaching tool to stimulate thought and learning mean it continues to play an important role in the classroom. Any grammatical construction with the form or function of a question is a question. Teacher questions are characterized as instructional signals or stimuli in a classroom context, conveying to students the material items to be learnt and directives for what they are to do and how they are to accomplish it.

Concept of Quality Education

There are a variety of perspectives on what constitutes an excellent education. According to Obanya (2002), a great education is one that provides students with the tools they need to lead fulfilling and fruitful lives. Coombs (2004) made a similar point, stressing that a good education improves a person's life and gives him the tools to better his community and the country at large. From these definitions, it is clear that quality education refers to a condition in which pupils have acquired the information, skills, and abilities necessary to meet the many technical, economic, and social issues facing the country. In other

words, the primary purpose of schools in Nigeria is to contribute to national development via high-level relevant personnel training, and this goal can only be achieved if schools consistently provide students with a high-quality education (FRN, 2014).

Teaching Methods: the Gateway to Quality Education

Educators at every level have one overarching goal: to help their students become the best versions of themselves possible (Tebabal and Kahssay, 2011). Teachers should use effective pedagogical strategies that are tailored to students' needs and exit outcomes at each level. When comparing teacher-centered and student-centered approaches to education, it is clear that the former was more often used in the classical era. The topic of how well students learn has been a hot topic in the Computer Science education community for quite some time (Hightower et al., 2011). Similarly, studies devoted to education and knowledge are often looking at how much various teaching strategies improve students' learning.

Ayeni (2011) argues that teaching is an ongoing activity focused on facilitating positive growth in students via the use of sound instructional strategies. According to Adunola (2011), effective teaching requires using strategies that are appropriate for the content being taught. As every student perceives and reacts to questions differently, Bharadwaj and Pal (2011) argued that the most successful teaching approaches are those that are tailored to the requirements of the students being taught (Chang, 2010). Hence, students' academic outcomes are impacted when teaching strategies are adapted to meet their individual requirements and the ways in which they learn best (Zeeb, 2004). A teacher's or instructor's teaching strategy is the method through which information is conveyed to students in order to achieve a predetermined learning outcome (Ndirangu, 2007). A number of factors, such as the nature of the material to be covered in class, the instructor's stated goals for the course, the accessibility and availability of relevant teaching and erudite resources, the teacher's creativity and willingness to improvise in the absence of conventional teaching aids or materials, as well as assessment, evaluation, and follow-up activities and student diversity, all play a role in determining the preferred method of instruction (Ndirangu, 2007).

Most classrooms in the world's poorest nations adopt teacher-centered methods that are often regarded as inefficient (Guloba, Wokodola, & Bategeka, 2010). There is no one universally approved method of instruction, despite the wide variety of methods offered in the literature. In underdeveloped nations like Nigeria, where the reasons of low accomplishment in secondary schools are not well recognized, the issue of which of these instructional strategies contributes to failure or success of pupils in test score and achievement still exists.

Teachers Conference/Seminar Attendance: Panacea to Quality Education

Teacher development is a key to the accomplishment of any organization as the smooth and efficient running of any organization depends on how well employees are equipped with relevant skills to complete their task. The achievement or collapse of the organization depends on employee's improvement and achievement. Therefore, organizations are investing enormous amount of funds on staff development. The knowledge, ideas, skills and attitudes of the staff (teachers) must be developed through integrated and systematic way of attending conference. Ezene (2008) noted that "conferences are usually used to tackle a single or set of problems". It may involve session of various types; such as lectures, panel discussion, workshop etc. Conferences consequently, have a very important place in the work place. Information has to be tailored to the unique demands of each firm in today's dynamic workplace. Among the many advantages of attending conferences are the ones listed below:

1.   They allow organization to get updated information on key issues that their organizations are concerned with.
2.   They are valuable for delegates who carry heavy workloads.
3.   They are very appropriate in an era in which people do not have time to read a quantity of books by experts. They can spend a reasonable short period of time and get substantial information on a topic they have an interest in. the speakers, who specialize in these fields, have already done the sifting and selection of information from a wide variety of sources. They can present the delegates with those aspects that are particularly relevant in the current work place environment.
4.   They create learning communities that bring together delegates from like –minded companies.
5.   Delegates are encouraged to share knowledge, ideas, and best practises from their own organisations.
6.   Delegates may network with other business representatives from firms who are going through the same or comparable challenges.

Attending a seminar has several benefits to the organisations including developing communication skills, gaining expert knowledge, networking with other and renewing confidence and motivation (www.education.seattlepi.com) Oral communication seminars can be a comfortable, open environment for practising professional communication techniques. Seminars help staff become a better listeners, present arguments and ideas clearly and be open to others point of view. Group discussion and activities can also help staff practice interpersonal skills, such as dealing with conflicting opinions among group members and working together to accomplish

assignments or task (Stone, 2002). There are various importance of seminar on teaching and learning activities and this include:

1. **Attitude change.** The seminar provides teacher with the resources that enable them to perform at the higher level and achieve academic success.
2. **Empowerment.** The curriculum has helped the teacher realise his or her own potential by providing access to introspective tools. Increased participation in the decision-making process follows empowerment in the sense of structural reforms.
3. **Increased productivity:** Keeping time /stress management in focus, teachers were encouraged to develop an action plan for improvement with accountability and benchmarks. Participants may evaluate the influence of the seminar on their research and teaching by comparing their pre- and post-event action plans.
4. **Integration of personality:** Participants have often cited the seminar's emphasis on developing an integrated self as one of its most valuable outcomes.
5. **Integration of Teaching, Research and Service:** Among the personal changes that teachers ascribe to the positive influence of the seminar is the necessity to effectively incorporate their teaching into their research and service.
6. **Leadership**: Teachers' newfound enthusiasm for leadership is only one of many beneficial outcomes from the conference. One of the recurring themes in the fellow's yearly report is the recognition that leadership is not an individual but a group endeavour. The seminar was designed, in part, to have participants examine and investigate the difficulties and potential rewards of academic administration.
7. **Sense of community:** This node describes the ways in which educators feel a sense of community on the school campus (McMillan and Chavis. 2016). The desire to participate in and take ownership of improving one's neighbourhood is one indicator of a strong feeling of community. As a result, educators who take an active interest in community service recognise the potential rewards of their efforts.
8. **Collegiality**: In the context of a school, "collegiality" refers to the degree to which individual faculty members are able to actively contribute to decision making despite the wide range of perspectives present.

CONCLUSION/POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

The educational atmosphere depends on the extent to which students learn the material being taught. A strong foundation in education is essential for creating a scientifically informed populace. The manner and the content of instruction have a significant impact on students' learning. Hence, children cannot function at high levels without having access to experienced educators who are well-versed in a variety of instructional strategies. Teachers who regularly participate in professional development opportunities like conferences and seminars have an innate sensitivity to the unique learning requirements of diverse student populations. Teachers in Nigeria should attend professional development events like conferences and seminars to learn new teaching strategies and best practises, which are essential if the country is to achieve and sustain a high standard of education. This will aid them in demonstrating dedication, possessing subject-specific content knowledge and knowing their craft, loving children, setting an example of moral conduct, effectively managing groups, integrating new technology into their teaching and students' learning, mastering multiple models of teaching and learning, adjusting and improvising their practise, knowing their students on an individual basis, exchanging ideas with other teachers, reflecting on their practise, and collaborating with other teachers in the classroom.

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