

**HEY TEACHERS! LISTEN TO HOW YOUR  
STUDENTS ADJUDGE YOU AS EFFECTIVE.**

*BY*

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## **ABSTRACT.**

What a teacher does in the classroom is no doubt a far greater predictor of students' success than anything else and it is a known fact that students who constantly get taught by effective teachers benefit more rapidly from their teaching. Also, considering the fact that these days, many people accidentally find themselves in the classroom as teachers and rather than doing what is expected of them, do what they feel ought to be done, this paper explores the use and benefits of students' rating of an effective teacher hinged on the premise that students have the most extensive experience with teachers. The paper highlights the importance of students as high stake holders in education and projects their voice. The main instrument of this research was a set of questionnaire administered on adult students in four departments out of the seven which make up one of the Colleges of Kaduna Polytechnic, Nigeria, to seek their views as a means to address the situation of ineffective teachers in the classroom. Data obtained from the questionnaire was analysed using the 't' test and ANOVA statistical techniques as well as content analysis. The findings obtained are discussed and recommendations given.

**What is all this about?**

Apparently, this is about teacher evaluation which is certainly not a new activity but continues to be relevant because of the changing values, and beliefs about teachers' effectiveness. The teacher remains relevant for as long as education is relevant to humanity. Teachers do indeed matter in any education situation and are expected to achieve certain effects, all things being equal. According to Elliot and Teddlie (2003 p,22) "recent longitudinal studies of student learning and achievement convincingly document teacher effects as the most powerful predictor of students' achievement." Teacher effectiveness means a teacher's ability to produce higher than expected gains in students' standardized scores (Goe, Courtney and Little, 2008 p.8) which presupposes that an effective teacher should help students learn more than is ordinarily expected. This is however, not to presuppose that teachers are solely responsible for students' learning because although teaching should produce learning, at times, learning does not happen after teaching and at other times, does not happen purely on the basis of teaching because certain considerations were ignored by the teacher.

In Nigeria, formal education has come a long way but much more still needs to be put in place to standardize the teaching profession. For instance, there are still many non professional teachers in the classroom and who by implication may just be "teaching" the way they deem fit without being effective. Such a situation is worrisome because every profession has ethics which may be known only to her members. Also, at the tertiary level of education particularly, teachers operate basically without much supervision in terms of the exact content, context, and methodology of their teaching so long as they turn in the results of their students at the end of the day. This is not to say that they decide on the content (syllabus) to teach but once handed a syllabus, they decide on the context and methodology by themselves, and implement same by themselves. So that in the end it may be possible for the students of such teachers to be said to have gone through school without the school going through them, as a matter of fact. It is therefore, hoped that the discussion in this paper would ignite the consciousness of teachers to be more effective generally, to know some of the practices they should imbibe while teaching and learn to incorporate certain behaviours which they previously probably took for granted in their teaching.

**How did we do this?**

To acquire the data for this study a questionnaire for students' rating of teachers was used. The decision to do so was hinged on the claim that students' opinion of a teacher is an important consideration in any teacher evaluation exercise because students have the most contact with

teacher services. Students, therefore, have an extensive experience with teachers so that it is possible to obtain valuable information about teachers from them in form of survey or rating scale. Although critics affirm that students' rating of teachers may not be considered a valid source of information about teachers because of possible biases that could affect their rating and the lack of knowledge about the full context of teaching, proponents, for example, Goe, Courtney & Little (2008) record that studies of (Worrell & Kuterbach, 2001) focus on whether students rating are influenced by their age, academic level, expected or actual grades and level of course challenges and the conclusion obtained is that the reliability and validity of students' ratings depend to some extent on the instrument used, how it is developed, how it is administered and the level of the detail it attempts to measure. Another proponent of students' rating of teachers is Follman (1992) whose argument is that students are the most direct clients of teachers and thus have a broader and deeper experience with teachers than other potential evaluators like principals, administrators, peer or parents. He further opines that a teacher's first responsibility is to his/her students and students in turn are the most frequent source of feedback on a teacher's performance.

Using students' rating according to Worrell & Kuterbach (2001) has the advantage of being cost efficient, time efficient, can be collected anonymously and can be used to trace changes over time. On the whole, adult ratings are thought to be more capable of providing reliable ratings (Follman, 1992; Worrell & Kuterbach, 2001).

Similarly, Theall and Frankline (2001) assert that, students are the most qualified sources to report on the extent to which the learning experience was productive, informative, satisfying or worthwhile. Marsh (1982) and Gaubatz (2002) add that there are consistently high correlation between students' ratings of the amount learned in a course and their overall ratings of the teacher and course. Generally then, students' ratings of teachers tend to be reliable, valid, relatively unbiased and useful (Murray, 1994) and hence our decision to engage it here. Therefore, a questionnaire which comprised three sections: A B and C was developed. Section A only required respondents to state their department and level of studies, while section B comprised seventeen parameters of teachers' attributes practices and behaviour on a likert scale type questions to which answers were sought...

Section C comprised one open ended question that requested respondents to mention any other activity of teachers that aid them to understand his/her course better. In a covering note and a pre

questionnaire administration briefing, respondents were particularly requested to call to mind the best teacher who had ever taught them and to use the questionnaire to evaluate him or her.

**Where was it done?**

The research was carried out in the College of Environmental Studies of Kaduna Polytechnic, Kaduna, a reknown tertiary level institution which offers courses at various levels including certificate, National Diploma, Higher Diploma and Post Graduate Diploma Certificate for the provision of intermediate, middle and high level Man power in technical, science, engineering and business related fields. The researchers chose to utilize the College of Environmental Studies because it is the college in which they teach for ease of access to the respondents. The seven (7) departments in the college, including, Architecture, Building, Environmental Science, Estate Management Quantity Surveying, Urban and Regional Planning and Topography formed the population of the study. Four (4) of them were randomly selected which included Environmental Science, Building, Urban and Regional Planning and Topography, to comprise the sample of the study. Thereafter, from the entire population of the students in the highest levels of the departments being the Higher National Diploma II (HNDII), forty percent (40%) of students was randomly selected and on the whole the sample comprised seventy nine (79) respondents derived as follows:

<b>DEPARTMENT</b>	<b>CLASS SIZE</b>	<b>SAMPLE SIZE</b>
Environmental Science	68	27
Building	43	17
Urban and Regional Planning	54	22
Topography	32	13
<b>Total</b>	<b>197</b>	<b>79</b>

It was on a sample of seventy nine (97) that the questionnaire was administered. To ensure the reliability of the questionnaire, the basic issues raised by critics, about the use of students' ratings were taken into consideration in its administration. Hence, only adult students in the final level (HNDII) of their courses of studies were used as respondents, because of their being more suitable to decide on the parameters of the questionnaire and their supposedly long contact with teachers. To ascertain the validity of the questionnaire it was drawn up with the consultation and ratification of experts of educational measurement and statistics from the University of Benin and Kaduna Polytechnic respectively. Also, the respondents were properly briefed about the use

the questionnaire would be put and educated on how to give precise and meaningful feedback in the questionnaires.

### What Was Discovered?

The data obtained from section B of the questionnaire were analysed using the mean, ‘t’ test and ANOVA statistical techniques while for those obtained from section C, content analysis was engaged. The result obtained is hereby presented:

**Table one: Mean score of responses**

Question	No of Respondent	Mean response (x)	Decision
1	60	3.93	Agree
2	62	3.65	Agree
3	57	2.26	disagree
4	61	3.70	Agree
5	62	3.76	Agree
6	61	3.79	Agree
7	62	3.55	Agree
8	62	4.23	Agree
9	62	4.45	Agree
10	62	4.37	Agree
11	61	3.74	Agree
12	62	3.94	Agree
13	61	4.31	Agree
14	61	3.44	Undecided
15	62	3.84	Agree
16	62	3.84	Agree
17	62	3.77	Agree

From the data above, the mean score of 3.50 and above means agree, while between 2:55 – 3.49 is undecided and below 2.50 is disagree. When interpreted therefore, the means of the responses obtained show that students agree that effective teachers cover the learning objectives set out in the syllabus for the course, give out regular and timely feedback on the learning progress, make it clear as to the time in which students would receive their assignments and tests back and kept to it, always on time to class, available to help outside of the class time, provided a clear explanation for the grades that were assigned to all assignments and tests, spoke clearly and could easily be understood, willing to answer students’ questions during class or provided other opportunities for questions to be answered, offered regular encouragement to students, sought students’ input on issues that directly impacted on their learning, made it clear why students were to do the assignments given both in and outside of class, keep the classroom environment

positive for learning by not allowing sleeping, talking, making noise, making phone calls or doing other works, recommended suitable textbooks and other materials, taught at a reasonable pace and provided a clear set of learning objectives for each topic taught. On the other hand, students disapproved of frequent cancellation of lectures but didn't quite bother about whether or not lecturers knew the names of all of them.

**Table two: 't' test of responses.**

QUESTION	SA/A (X)	D/SD X <sub>2</sub>	X <sub>1</sub>	X <sub>2</sub>
1	50	7	2500	49
2	42	9	1764	81
3	4	39	16	1369
4	43	9	1849	81
5	41	10	1681	100
6	42	7	1764	49
7	39	14	1521	196
8	55	2	3025	4
9	60	1	3600	1
10	60	-	3600	-
11	42	7	1764	49
12	45	3	2025	9
13	55	2	3025	4
14	34	16	1156	256
15	44	7	1936	49
16	50	7	2500	49
17	42	6	1764	36
	748	144	35490	2382

Data obtained from the questionnaires were further analysed using the 't' test whereby the responses were grouped into two thus: strongly agree /agree and disagree/strongly disagree on the premise that if the calculated 't' was less than the tabulated 't' value, we would accept the null hypothesis, other wise we would reject it where the hypotheses were:

Ho: The opinion mean response is the same

HI: The opinion mean response is not the same

Consequently, because the calculated 't' of 9.585 was greater than the tabulated 't' that was 2.042, we rejected the null hypothesis and accepted the alternative hypothesis which means that the opinion mean response of respondents is not the same. In other words, the students agreed over some parameters and disagreed over a categorical one which is the frequent cancellation of classes (students didn't therefore agree on all the parameters stated in the questionnaire).

**Table three: Anova analysis of responses**

S/no	SA	A	U	D	SD	Total
1	13	37	3	7	0	60
2	10	32	11	6	3	62
3	1	3	16	27	10	57
4	12	31	9	6	3	61
5	17	24	11	9	1	62
6	14	28	12	6	1	61
7	12	27	9	11	33	62
8	23	33	5	2	0	62
9	31	29	1	1	0	62
10	25	35	2	0	0	62
11	11	31	12	6	1	61
12	16	29	14	3	0	62
13	27	28	4	2	0	61
14	10	24	11	15	1	61
15	16	28	11	6	1	62
16	10	40	5	6	1	62
17	12	30	14	6	0	62

The two way analysis of variance was further engaged to find out if there was any significant difference between the opinion of the respondents of which the decision was based on the difference between the calculated and tabulated value of  $f$  using the following hypotheses:-

Ho: There is no significant difference between the opinions of the respondents.

Hi. There is significant difference between the opinions of the respondents.

There fore, since, the calculated  $f = 50.96$  and was greater than the tabulated  $f = 2.53$  we rejected the null hypothesis (Ho) above and accepted the alternative (Hi) which means there was significant difference between the opinions of the respondents. However, this difference is not over the parameters which constitute an effective teacher but in the ranking of the opinion means of the responses as shown in the following table:

**Table Four: Ranking of the opinion means in order of magnitude**

$\bar{X}_{SD} = 1.47,$	$\bar{X}_D = 7.0,$	$\bar{X}_F = 8.82.$	$\bar{X}_{SA} = 15.29,$	$\bar{X}_A = 28.71$
A VS SD =	28.71 – 1.47	=	27.24 > 4.591 (R5) STG	
A VS D =	28.71 – 7.0	=	21.71 > 4.033 (R4) STG	
A VS U =	28.71 – 8.82	=	19.89 > 4.3371 (R3) STG	
A VS SA =	28.71 – 15.29	=	13.42 > 4.1377 (R2) STG	
SA VS SD =	15.29– 1.47	=	13.82 > 4.5033 (R4) STG	
SA VS D =	15.29– 7.0	=	8.29 > 4.13771 (R3) STG	
SA VS U =	15.29 – 8.82	=	6.47 > 4.1377 (R2) STG	
U VS SD =	8.82 – 1.47	=	7.35 > 4.3371 (R3) STG	
U VS D =	8.82 – 7.0	=	1.82 < 4.1377 (R2) STG	
D VS SD =	7.0-1.47	=	5.53 > 4.1377 (R2) STG	



The results above reveal that there were significant differences between all pairs of mean response except undecided and disagree. Therefore, it is obvious that majority of the respondents agreed with the questions asked which tallies with the results presented in table one.

### **What Is The Bottom Line?**

The awareness that students are at the core at any education situation should be imbibed and practiced by teachers in order to be effective. Students indeed know and appreciate certain practices of teachers. Teachers on their part, should note such and implement them in order to record the necessary success in their professional practice and as well earn the feat of people to be reckoned with and which would in turn lead to their job satisfaction even in the face of the dearth of physical infrastructure in schools. Indeed, the teacher should be ready at all times to go the extra mile!

### **What more do the students want?**

From the Part C of the questionnaire these suggestions from students emanated and are hereby presented for the further consideration of teachers:-

- Carrying out practical work for practically oriented courses
- Organizing field trips and excursions to make more sense of classroom learning.
- Being always friendly.
- Making students always feel accepted and welcome in class and beyond.
- Being corrective without being harsh.
- Providing as many concrete illustrations as possible while teaching.
- Maintaining a high degree of punctuality to class.
- Showing a genuine personal interest in students' learning activities.
- Making out some time for class work and not only home work.
- Making room for the revision of already taught topics.
- Having a good command of the language of instruction
- Listening patiently to students' complaints and suggesting appropriate solutions.
- Creating the opportunity for class presentations for students in order to teach them public speaking.
- Engaging in practical demonstration where necessary.
- Showing a high level of commitment to work generally.
- Allowing time in between lecture sessions for students to reflect and ask questions if need be.
- Engaging story telling approach where possible or relating classroom teaching to real life situations.
- Being respectful to students.
- Avoiding any form of abuse of students.
- Cracking of jokes occasionally.
- Maintaining a generally cordial relationship with the students rather than the master servant type that instills fear in students.
- Being positively inclined towards students.

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