

A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF THE TEACHING AND EVALUATION PROCESSES IN SANDWICH DEGREE PROGRAMMES IN TWO NIGERIAN UNIVERSITIES

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ABSTRACT: *The training of teachers through the sandwich mode has been perceived by many as a medium for training teachers who cannot compete favourably in the labour market with those trained in the conventional universities. The reasons are attributed to some factors especially, the period stipulated for training in this program. It is against this background that this study compared the teaching and evaluation processes in sandwich B.Ed degree programs at University of Abuja (Uniabuja) and University of Nigeria Nsukka (UNN). A descriptive survey design was employed for the study. The population was made up of 560 and 676 final year students of Uniabuja and UNN respectively. Purposive and simple random sampling techniques were employed to select a sample of 100 students from each university thereby making a total of 200 students. A four-point likert- scale questionnaire was used for data collection. Research questions were analysed with means scores while t-test was used to test the hypotheses. Results of this study show that there was significant difference in the extent to which course contents are covered in both universities and the evaluation and feedback mechanisms were effective. The study inter alia suggests an increase in the staff strength of lecturers in Uniabuja to help in the reduction of workload for more program effectiveness.*

KEYWORDS: Sandwich, Teaching, Content coverage, Assessment, Feedback.

INTRODUCTION

Teacher education in Nigeria over the years, have undergone various stages of reform and development. This is aimed at ensuring that the school system has a formidable and well-motivated workforce that will ensure the realisation of national goals of education as stipulated in the National Policy on Education. One of these reforms and development is the introduction of sandwich degree programs in Nigerian universities to increase teacher quantity, quality and to cater for different categories of candidates who desire to either qualify as teachers or improve their competencies in the teaching profession. Many tertiary institutions have been involved in this program under different management. In Nigerian universities for instance, the sandwich program is usually organised and managed by the Institutes of Education in the Faculty of Education.

Borode (1998), viewed sandwich education as a formal adult education program organised between the off-hours of holidays of the conventional education, notable for the training of workers on the job. On the other hand, Nwagwa (1992) sees it as an aspect of in-service program which is given to people who are already on the job either for their general education and upgrading or to enable them to obtain higher certificate diploma or professional

qualifications. This therefore emphasises that sandwich education program provide teaching competencies for a large majority of adult learners who possess unique characteristics different from students of the conventional universities. The teaching, learning and evaluation processes employed for this category of students require adequate management by the authorities.

Perspectives vary on the quality of education acquired by students who enrol with the sandwich programs of universities. Some scholars have argued that teachers trained through the traditional mode of learning perform better than those trained through the sandwich program while some believe that the quality of teachers depends on the processes involved in their training rather than on the mode of acquiring this training. Many factors we know shape the quality of any learning endeavour. Markwell (2003) rightly noted that the aptitude and motivation of individual students and their own approaches to learning, the quality and diversity of the student body of which they are part, the curriculum they study, the calibre and strategies of those who teach them, the size and nature of their classes, the ways in which learning is encouraged by assessment and feedback processes and the learning resources available to a very large extent influence the quality of teachers produced.

The quality of teachers produced by training institutions no doubt reflects in the performances of the entire products of any countries educational system. It appears that educated elites, parents, the society and even school proprietors have some negative attitudes towards the teachers trained through the sandwich mode. This is indeed worrisome. It is therefore not surprising that Odu et al (2009) stated that in some cases, some employers of labour have been found to discriminate between products of full-time degree and sandwich degree programs. In another vein, Okebukola (2014) stated that 60% of the poor quality teachers in the secondary school system are trained through sandwich/part-time programs. Contrary to this view, Borishade (2006) argued that the sandwich degree program is achieving virtually all its stated objectives such as encouraging continuous academic growth of serving teachers, improve their productivity and competencies and the quality or products of sandwich program were found not to be different from the quality and product of full-time regular degree program.

It is therefore arguable whether all institutions running the sandwich program in Nigeria produce poor quality teachers for the system. However, Aghenta (1992) and Mkpa (2002) identified some shortcomings in the sandwich BA/B.Sc Education programs versus the full-time programs to include, entry qualifications, course duration and reduction in the scope of course content. The duration of the sandwich program raises serious concern as to whether students actually cover required knowledge in their respective areas of specialization. This therefore increases doubt as to whether the sandwich program is achieving its stated objective of promoting teacher effectiveness in Nigeria education system.

This study is specifically aimed at comparing the instructional process in sandwich degree programs of University of Abuja and University of Nigeria Nsukka. The paper is divided into six sections. The first section is the introduction and rationale for the study. The second section reviews literature on instructional processes (content coverage and evaluation processes) of sandwich programs. The third section presents the methodological procedure while section four presents the results. The fifth section presents the discussion and finally the sixth section gives conclusion and implications for management.

LITERATURE

Sandwich Program and Teacher production

Teacher production over the years has taken a new dimension in Nigeria. In an era when quality education is a concern for government and indeed has dominated national debates, teacher quality must equally be a priority. There have been several efforts by the government to improve the quantity and quality of teachers produced by various institutions for the purpose of raising the quality of education at all levels of our education system. Interestingly, the high demand for education and increasing enrolment in our primary and secondary schools following the response by government as signatory to international agenda such as Education For All (EFA) and Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) necessitated the need for training and re-training of teachers to help achieve these goals. According to Adegbesan and Gbadamosi (2009), the quality, quantity and variety of teachers produced in Nigeria have grown phenomenally. This growth can be attributed to the various institutions and programs available for the training and re-training of teachers.

The institutes of education of various universities are primarily concerned with running part-time and sandwich programs for the production of teachers. The sandwich degree programs are organised and facilitated by lecturers of the faculty of education in each university. However, due to the very large number of students, most times lecturers are recruited outside the university to help in the teaching and learning process. The sandwich degree program has its contact periods defined to be during the holidays for the teachers on the job and other categories of learners who want to qualify as professional teachers. The students in this program are predominantly adult learners who for various reasons find this mode suitable to obtain a university degree in the teaching profession. Unlike the regular students who spend a period of four years, the sandwich students spend a period of five contact periods within five years for this purpose.

According to Poison (1993), adult students are engaged in multiple roles which impact both the time and energy they can devote to their roles as students. University education for this category of learners is often a secondary role to that of being a parent, a spouse, an employee and/or a community leader. He further argued that with these roles, their extensive experiences and their varied developmental tasks provide a new challenge for the lecturers whose teaching experience has been limited to traditional aged students. Teaching approaches that younger undergraduate students might tolerate are frequently rejected by the older adult students. It is also obvious that the number of students admitted for these programs are usually larger in number than what we have in the regular program. This therefore implies that lecturers have the arduous task of coping with very large classes in the teaching learning process. In some cases, the sandwich program is run parallel with the regular program when academic calendar is disrupted. No doubt, this situation would impede on the effectiveness of lecturers and learning ability of students if lecturers lack the skills and strategies of coping with multiple tasks and very large classes.

Curriculum contents in Sandwich Program

Instructional process in any teaching endeavour is very vital to the accomplishment of educational goals. The curriculum provided for students in the regular programs are usually used in sandwich programs. The lecturers are expected to facilitate learning and cover the contents of courses for students within a stipulated time frame of three months. The mastery of

course content and the application of the knowledge and skill acquired are two important aspects of instructional process for quality education. According to Woolvard and Anderson (1998) they pointed out that although all teachers want and need their students to (1) master course content and (2) learn how to use that content in some way, a great many instructors devote their time to the first task and neglect the second. They however argued that focusing too much on coverage ie including too many topics can actually impede students learning.

The sandwich program is designed for students to cover lesson topics required in a particular course in a contact period which their counterparts in the regular mode cover in two semesters. It is indeed worrisome to think of the extent lecturers are expected to effectively cope with the teaching of curriculum contents of two semesters in one sandwich contact. The three months' time frame stipulated for covering all the topics may be a factor that gives the impression that the quality of knowledge acquired by sandwich students might after all not be enough, compared to that for regular or full-time students. More importantly, the commitment of the lecturers in meeting up with this time- frame, couple with the numerous regular activities they contend with might constitute a serious bottleneck in covering the curriculum contents in sandwich degree program. Be that as it may, the principal issue involved in producing quality teachers depends on the extent prospective teachers have mastery of the subject matter in their areas of specialization. The issue of large classes are a fact of life in sandwich programs in most Nigerian universities. However, large class size does not reduce quality. They are not necessarily an impediment to effective teaching, but they do require imaginative strategies. The fundamental question here is how many lecturers and institutions have the skills and facilities to manage very large class sizes for effective teaching and learning?

It is important to note that evaluation and feedback are very important for the effectiveness of any teaching and learning endeavour. Evaluation is often described as being either formative or summative. Formative assessment is primarily characterised by being continuous with the purpose of helping students improve while summative tends to be end point concerned mainly with making evaluative judgements (Brown 2003). The aim of formative assessment is to monitor students learning throughout the teaching process and to provide feedback. For assessment to be meaningful and useful to the student, it requires quality feedback. As Srivathsan (2009) affirmed, a critical requirement in any good education system is the regular feedback it should provide to learners while engaging them in well-designed learning activities and test. This enables students get better sense of what areas they have mastered, what areas they are weak in and allows them to focus their efforts where they are weakest.

One of the reasons for assessment and feedback is to motivate students, focus their sense of achievement and consolidate students learning. Experience shows that most often, students in sandwich program in some universities do not have early feedback on their summative assessment prior to next contact period. This practice does not meet the principle of effective evaluation. Early feedback on assessment enables students to focus more attention on their weak subjects and be better prepared to cope adequately in the new contact period.

METHODOLOGICAL PROCEDURE

The study made use of descriptive survey design. The undergraduate and final year students of the program made up the population of the study. Two public universities (University of Abuja and University of Nigeria Nsukka) were selected for the study. University of Abuja represented

universities in the Northern part of Nigeria while University of Nigeria Nsukka represented those in the Southern part. There are a total number of 560 and 676 final year students in Uniabuja and UNN respectively. The final year students were purposively selected because they are in a better position to respond to the issues concerned having spent five years in the program. A simple random sample of 100 students was drawn from the population. The study therefore made use of a total number of 200 students. A four-point likert- scale structured questionnaire was administered to the respondents. Issues covered include extent of coverage of course outline and effectiveness of evaluation and feedback mechanism employed in instructional process.

Data were analysed with both descriptive and inferential statistical tools. Mean scores were used to analyse the fundamental research questions, while t-test was used for testing the hypotheses of the study. The analysis of data was organized within the framework of the key research questions. The questions are (a) to what extent do Uniabuja and UNN cover course outlines within the stipulated time frame for sandwich students? and (b) how effective are the evaluation and feedback mechanisms used in Uniabuja and UNN sandwich degree program? Two hypotheses of the study were derived from the research questions.

Decision Rule

A decision rule was made for the research questions. A cut-off point of 2.50 was established as the mean result for the research questions. Any mean from 2.50 and above was regarded as positive while mean scores below 2.50 were regarded as negative.

RESULTS

Research question one:

To what extent do Uniabuja and UNN cover course outline within the stipulated time frame for sandwich program.

To answer this question the data generated was subjected to simple frequency, mean score analysis and standard deviation as presented in table 1 below;

Table 1: Descriptive analysis of extent of course content coverage within stipulated time frame for sandwich students in Uniabuja and UNN

S/N	Statements	Universities	Response Categories				Mean	SD	Decision
			VGE	GE	LE	VLE			
1	Lecturers introduce courses in line with time tabling	Uniabuja	25	28	30	17	2.61	0.104	GE
		UNN	52	24	13	11	3.17	0.101	GE
2.	Lecturers are usually on hand to teach their courses	Uniabuja	16	28	39	17	2.43	0.095	LE
		UNN	31	36	31	2	2.96	0.083	GE
3.	The contents of the course outline is usually followed in lectures	Uniabuja	32	33	26	9	2.88	0.097	GE
		UNN	51	32	12	5	3.29	0.086	GE
4.	Students receive lectures as and when lectures are fixed	Uniabuja	43	28	22	7	3.07	0.097	GE
		UNN	56	29	13	2	3.39	0.079	GE
5.	All lecture topics are covered before final examination starts	Uniabuja	30	21	33	16	2.65	0.107	GE
		UNN	32	30	23	15	2.79	0.110	GE
6.	Lecturers give assignments at the end of the course	Uniabuja	26	40	22	12	2.80	0.096	GE
		UNN	54	23	14	9	3.22	0.103	GE
Grand Mean		Uniabuja					2.74		GE
		UNN					3.13		GE

Interpretation of results

Table one presents the extent to which course contents are covered by sandwich students within the stipulated time frame. The table showed a grand mean of 2.74 for Uniabuja sandwich students while UNN had a grand mean of 3.13. The mean scores of students in the two universities were above the established cut-off point of 2.50. Students from both universities are of the opinion that lecturers cover their course contents to a great extent. However, students from Uniabuja differ in their view regarding the extent to which lecturers are on hand for teaching.

Research Question two:

How effective are the evaluation and feedback mechanisms used for students in Uniabuja and UNN sandwich program?

To answer this question, the data generated was subjected to simple frequency, mean score analysis and standard deviation, as presented in table 2 below;

Table 2: The effectiveness of the evaluation and feedback mechanism used in Uniabuja and UNN sandwich program.

S/N	Statements	Universities	Response Categories				Mean	SD	Decision
			VE	E	IE	VIE			
1.	There is usually formative Evaluation in sandwich program	Uniabuja	28	42	12	18	2.80	0.10	Effective
		UNN	54	31	11	4	3.25	0.083	V effective
2.	Students are usually allowed time to ask questions	Uniabuja	56	33	6	5	3.40	0.82	Effective
		UNN	65	23	9	3	3.50	0.076	V effective
3.	The teaching process provides time to ascertain students level of understanding	Uniabuja	48	28	16	8	3.16	0.97	Effective
		UNN	52	30	14	4	3.30	0.086	Effective
4.	Students always have detail feed-back on their results prior to next contact period	Uniabuja	32	36	13	19	2.18	0.11	Ineffective
		UNN	27	32	16	25	2.61	0.14	Effective
5.	The summative evaluation reflects all the course contents	Uniabuja	48	23	18	11	3.08	0.10	Effective
		UNN	54	20	18	8	3.20	0.10	Effective
Grand Mean		Uniabuja					2.92		Effective
		UNN					3.19		Effective

Interpretation of results:

Table two above presents the effectiveness of the evaluation and feedback mechanisms used in Uniabuja and UNN sandwich program. The grand mean of 2.92 and 3.19 for Uniabuja and UNN respectively reveals that students of both universities were of the opinion that evaluation and feedback mechanisms employed by their lecturers are effective. This is because the two grand means were above the established cut-off point of 2.50.

TEST OF HYPOTHESES:**Hypothesis one:**

Ho: There is no significant difference in the mean rating of students at Uniabuja and UNN regarding the extent of coverage of course contents by lecturers within the stipulated time frame.

The above hypothesis was subjected to a t-test analysis for two independent samples and the result is presented in table 3 below;

Table 3: t-test result of Uniabuja and UNN students as regards coverage of course contents within stipulated time frame

Variables	N	Mean	S.Deviation	t –calculated	t-critical	DF	p-value
Uniabuja	100	2.74	0.74698	4.14	1.96	198	0.000
UNN	100	3.13	0.59993				

Reject Ho if $t\text{-cal} > t\text{-critical}$ or if $p\text{-value} < 0.05$

Interpretation of Results:

The result in table 3 above shows that there is a significant difference in the opinion of Uniabuja and UNN students regarding the extent of coverage of course contents for sandwich program. This is because the t-cal value of 4.14 is greater than the t-critical value of 1.96 and p-value of 0.00 was less than the level of significance of 0.05 at (198) degree of freedom. This means that the null hypothesis is therefore rejected. The conclusion reached is that there is a significant difference in the mean rating of students at Uniabuja and UNN regarding the extent of coverage of course contents by lecturers within the stipulated time frame.

Hypothesis two:

Ho : There is no significant difference in the mean rating of students at Uniabuja and UNN regarding the effectiveness of the evaluation and feedback mechanisms employed in sandwich program.

The above hypothesis was subjected to a t-test analysis for two independent samples and the result is presented in table 4 below;

Table 4: t-test result of Uniabuja and UNN sandwich students regarding the effectiveness of the evaluation and feedback mechanisms employed in sandwich program

Variables	N	Mean	S.Deviation	t –calculated	t-critical	DF	p-value
Uniabuja	100	3.050	0.66507	1.568	1.96	198	0.118
UNN	100	3.192	0.61425				

Reject Ho if $t\text{-cal} > t\text{-critical}$ or if $p\text{-value} < 0.05$

Interpretation of Results:

The result of the t-test table above shows that there is no significant difference in the mean opinion of Uniabuja and UNN students regarding the effectiveness of evaluation and feedback mechanism's employed in sandwich programs. This is because the t-cal. value of 1.568 is less than the t-critical value of 1.96 and p-value of 0.118 was greater than the level of significance of 0.05 at the (198) degree of freedom. This means that the null hypothesis was accepted. The conclusion reached therefore is that there is no significance difference in the mean rating of students at Uniabuja and UNN regarding the effectiveness of the evaluation and feedback mechanisms employed in sandwich program.

DISCUSSION

The result of the first research question addressing the extent of coverage of course contents by lecturers in sandwich degree programs in Uniabuja and UNN revealed that course contents are covered in both universities to a great extent given the grand means of 2.74 and 3.13 respectively. However, there is a significant difference in the mean rating of both universities regarding the extent of coverage of course contents by lecturers. It is interesting to note that all the items under this research question had mean scores that indicate that course contents are covered to a great extent in both universities except item 2 where lecturers in Uniabuja are not usually on hand to teach their courses. This finding therefore is in agreement with the argument of Borishade (2006), that the products of sandwich programs are not inferior to students of full-time notwithstanding the time-frame and the shortcomings inherent in the program as identified by Aghenta (1992) and Mkpa (2002).

It can further be argued that if lecturers use the curriculum of regular students in teaching sandwich students and are able to cover the course contents to a great extent, there should not be any perceived difference in the quality of teachers produced through both modes. However, a lot depends on the quality of students admitted into the sandwich program. The quality of students admitted into sandwich degree programs is indeed fundamental to the quality of teachers being produced. This is so because there is need for these students to have both intellectual and physical capital to enable them cope with the intensiveness and stress that go with the program, given the fact that for each contact period, they cover courses for two semesters. The low extent to which Uniabuja lecturers are on hand to teach their courses as revealed by the study, no doubt will affect the effective coverage of course contents.

The findings of the second research question revealed that the evaluation and feedback mechanisms employed in the sandwich degree program in Uniabuja and UNN are effective given the grand mean of 2.92 and 3.19 for Uniabuja and UNN respectively. It further revealed that there is no significant difference in the mean rating of Uniabuja and UNN students regarding the effectiveness of evaluation and feedback mechanism employed in sandwich program. It was found out that Uniabuja lecturers are ineffective in giving detail feedback to students as can be seen in table 3 item 4 with a mean score of 2.18. Some factors could be responsible for this. For instance, lecturers in Uniabuja perform multiple teaching tasks. Majority of them contend with the challenge of teaching regular, sandwich and distance learning programs as the university is one of the dual modes university in Nigeria. However the bottlenecks experienced by both lecturers and students in evaluation and feedback could be influenced by the manpower related problems and the very large classes that are peculiar to

sandwich program. Thus, the regular use of formative assessment in teaching and the quick release of examination results to students becomes a problem in the teaching learning process.

CONCLUSION AND POLICY IMPLICATION

This study compared the curriculum implementation of the sandwich programs of both the Uniabuja and UNN drawing out some lessons in the teaching learning process. The study revealed that lecturers cover the contents of courses in both universities to a great extent with UNN having an advantage given the higher mean scored. The interesting factor is that lecturers in both universities show element of commitment in the implementation of sandwich degree program (perhaps due to pecuniary factor) and this might help influence the perception of the public on the quality of teachers produced through this mode. Uniabuja lecturers should however improve on their availability for lecturers.

With respect to the evaluation and feedback mechanisms employed by lecturers in both institutions, the study revealed that the mechanisms were effective and there is no significant difference in the mean rating of students at UniAbuja and UNN regarding the effectiveness of evaluation and feedback mechanism employed by lecturers. This again strengthens the fact that lecturers implementing the sandwich degree program are on course. UNN should endeavour to maintain the high performance recorded in covering course contents while it is important that the management of Uniabuja employs more lecturers in the faculty of education. This no doubt will reduce workload of lecturers involved in both sandwich and distance learning programs thereby eliminating stress that impact negatively on effective teaching, assessment and more importantly immediate feedback on students' performance.

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