

Instructional Strategies and the Enhancement of Effective Teaching and Learning in Some Selected Secondary Schools within the Bamenda III Sub Division

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Abstract:

This study investigated the instructional strategies and the enhancement of effective teaching and learning in secondary schools in the Bamenda Three Municipality, Mezam Division of the North West Region. One objective and research question were formulated to guide the study. A sample of one hundred (100) students was selected using the sample random sampling technique among the selected schools for the study. The instrument used for data collection was a questionnaire made up of 20 items.

From the analyses of data collect, it was revealed that instructional strategies significantly enhances teaching and learning in secondary schools within the Bamenda Three Municipality though no single instructional strategy can significantly enhance effective teaching and learning. But rather, a combination of different instructional strategies will enhance effective teaching and learning.

From the above findings it is thus recommended that secondary school teachers should be allowed to be involved in the curriculum planning and implementation, in order to make them bring in students-centered methods/instructional strategies that will make their teaching more lively and interesting.

Keywords: Instructional Strategies, Effective Teaching, Learning.

Introduction

According to Zama & Endeley (2023) one of the key determinants of students' academic success is the teacher. Teachers need to continuously improve teaching effectiveness as a means of enhancing students learning. The instructional strategies the teachers employ during the teaching and learning process has an important role to play in enhancing effective teaching and learning.

Instructional strategies are carefully crafted by teachers to enrich learning experiences for all students. Effective instructional strategies are anchored by curriculum design and formative assessment practices that provide students with choice, voice, and ownership of their learning (Gibbs 2013)

An instructional strategy describes the instructional materials and procedures that enables the achievement of intended learning outcomes. When done right, instructional strategies also support students in reaching their learning objectives

Instructional strategies are all the things the teachers uses to help the learners in their learning process; they are the means used to bring about effective teaching and learning. Obara and Okoh (2005) regard instructional strategies and materials as “all the things the teacher utilizes to interactively enhance, motivate and facilitate teaching and learning in an attempt to ensuring the achievement of a set objectives.”

The effectiveness of instructional materials and strategies depends upon the manner and degree to which they meet the needs of the teacher and students. Instructional strategies and materials are selected based on the principles of provision of accurate materials that will enrich and support the curriculum, taking into consideration the interest, abilities and maturity levels of the students. Teachers should be encouraged in every way to use instructional strategies as it makes learning more concrete and meaningful (Buseri and Dorgu 2011).

Teaching brings about understanding; it involves a teacher, a learner and subject matter and teaching materials. Therefore to bring about learning, the teacher engages in certain activities such as talking, demonstration, and give instruction etc, all these are the various strategies to bring about learning (Adediran 2014).

Teachers need to use different instructional strategies to enhance students centered method in the classroom for creativity, innovative and critical thinking purpose in students. Classroom teaching is likely to be more effective when it is informed by an understanding of how students learn. It is therefore important that, the major implications of instructional strategies be reflected in classroom practice. In recent times, emerging research findings seem to show that oriented instructional strategies are becoming increasingly popular in the teaching of various subjects in the secondary school level of education in Nigeria (Ogundare, 1985), (Osakwe 2009). These instructional strategies involve resolution of problems, active practice participations of learners in the teaching process and emphasis on process rather than products of learning. Some of these strategies and approaches according to Osakwe (2009) are categorized under conventional and innovative appraises, instructional strategies which are classified under conventional are mostly those routine, well-knowing ones which teachers use predominantly. They are usually teacher-centered with little or no activities for students. These include teaching method like lecture, story-telling, recitation, etc, on the other hand, the innovative strategies include those ones that are much more recent which are predominantly learner-centered. These include questioning, inquiry/problem solving, role-play and dramatization (Adediran 2014).

The curriculum of secondary school education is so enormous that it prepare young people for full adult's lives in the complex and dynamic world. This kind of preparation falls in line with, (2004), dispositive curriculum that the global requirements for education in recent times include promoting life-long education, re-emphasizing the quality of learner experiences, reorganizing subjects into

key learning areas so as to develop broad knowledge base, and developing in the learner the ability to think critically and be innovative. This kind of education, according to Enu and Esu (2010), afford the products of the system the ability to respond to social goal economic realities and future life-challenges. It is universally accepted that students needs the chance to develop faith, self-expression and confidence in them. They also need the ability and skill to learn about themselves; the societal problem and about the wider communities in which the live.

Effective teaching in secondary schools should emphasize the use of activity-oriented method and instructional strategies that will make students achieve their learning objectives (Adediran 2014). The production of a functional and productive citizenry which is a major focus of secondary school education entails that secondary school education concerns itself with inculcating creative reflective, competence relational, analytic and decision-making skills and competence in the learner (Mezieobi and Mezieobi 2008).

Teaching according to Kanno (2001) should not connote sheer passing on of, or imparting of desirable knowledge to a passive learners recipient who must or demand regurgitate the rote memory acquired and stored knowledge.

BACKGROUND

Effective teaching and learning in secondary schools should be predominantly students directed interactive learning achievement oriented activities inside and outside the formal classroom situation in which the learner actively participates and makes a conscious and deliberate effort to induce and acquire significant learning under the teacher serving as a learning collaborator, director, guide a catalyst, a helper. Hence, Kanno (2001) noted that teaching it helping other persons (the learners) to learn. The teacher in the teaching-learning setting is not a task master or an autocrat, dishing out encyclopedia knowledge. Meaningful leading according to Akinlaye (2002) is students activity headed such that the students is given a provide democratic latitude to learns by doing it himself through his activity participation commitment and display of his intellectual integrity and capacity for independent judgment.

Educational researcher and developments according to Mezieobi and Mezieobi (2008) have unveiled a number of innovative instructional strategies in secondary schools which apply with equal facility in the classroom. A number of these strategies according to Bransford, Brown and Cockry (2000) as include: learning cycle-based instructional strategy, project-based learning approach, case-based teaching strategy, just-in-time teaching instructional strategy etc. all these strategies make students work through sequences of activities that involves complementary thinking and problem-solving approaches. In most of these instructional strategies, the different activities are designed to appeal to different learning style preferences when the teacher teach based on the strategies; all students are taught partly in a manner they prefer, which leads to an increased comfort level and willingness to learn.

On the whole, scholar of teaching methodology and instructional strategies (Oyetunde, 1990, Mezieobi 1994 and Mbakwem, 2001) are agreed that there is no best method of teaching an no singular method will be appropriate to all school subject, in all situations, Mabkwem (2001) was of the view that each teaching subject has its own peculiarities and emphasis procedures. In like manner, each school subject has its own declared objectives and expected outcomes which may be from other subjects

Zama & Endeley (2023) has identified a continuum of instructional strategies in which there are different approaches. These instructional strategies and approaches include the Teacher Centered instructional strategy where the main approaches here are the Direct Approaches, Teacher Assisted instructional strategy that focuses on inductive approaches ,Peer Assisted instructional strategy and the main approaches here are social approaches and lastly, the Student Centered instructional strategy which uses the independent approaches

According to **Sasha Blakeley (2020)** any teacher education program will tell you, there are many different kinds of instructional strategies that have been developed and implemented in classrooms over the years. In contemporary pedagogical research, some of these methods are considered more effective than others at engaging students, helping everyone absorb information, and creating positive learning spaces. The following are a few instructional strategies that can work for students of all ages.

Differentiated Instruction

Differentiated instruction is a method where an instructor will alter their teaching style to be more accessible for all members of a classroom. This usually means presenting the same information in different ways or providing learning activities that are tailored to students' individual levels and needs. Differentiated instruction can be particularly effective in classrooms with multiple English language learners (ELLs) to ensure that all students can understand the content being presented, regardless of their English abilities.

Classrooms where students are at multiple grade levels, or classes with students who have learning disabilities, can also benefit from differentiated teaching.

Culturally Responsive Teaching

As a teacher, chances are you are working with students from a diverse range of backgrounds and cultures. Culturally responsive teaching is a relatively new teaching style that seeks to integrate students' cultures and experiences into the classroom in a positive and respectful way.

This kind of teaching can manifest in a wide variety of different ways.

Active Teaching and Learning

Active learning requires students to take an active role in their education rather than just listening to their teachers. Whether you are teaching writing strategies, mathematics, or science, there are ample opportunities in every subject for students to get actively engaged in the learning environment.

With some students, encouraging active learning is easy: teachers can give students the chance to answer questions, present on various topics, and participate in activities. For students who are not as naturally enthusiastic or interested in the subject matter at hand, active learning requires active teaching.

Varied Teaching Aids

As a teacher, your presentation style is one of the most important ways that you can engage with students. There are several ways that you can optimize your teaching style to make your lessons as engaging and interesting for students as possible. The first important way to do this is to present information using a variety of teaching aids.

In addition to presenting lessons by speaking to your class, make sure to incorporate visual references whenever possible. Other forms of teaching aids that can be helpful include examples, gestures and kinesthetic instruction, tactile learning aids, and audiovisual presentations like videos or slideshows.

Varied teaching aids are helpful for a wide variety of subjects, from literacy to biology to fine arts. Some students learn best by listening, some by watching, some by writing, and some by tactile or kinesthetic experiences. Many students also find it easier to retain information that has been provided through multiple memorable formats rather than just one. Try to switch up your methods to keep your presentation style interesting and effective. Talk to your students in a personable way to engage them, and don't be afraid to make mistakes. All of these factors can help you build a stronger relationship with your students while also providing them with a rich and varied learning experience whenever possible.

Project-Based Learning

Project-based learning is an educational style that encourages in-depth student engagement. It goes beyond just doing projects in a classroom environment and instead focuses on long-term projects that have real-world applications. This is a method that encourages students to participate in the local community and have educational experiences that really make a difference.

Project-based learning can help students gain a better understanding of how the world works, their place in the community, and the methods involved in the practical application of what they are learning. Project-based learning can be applied to many different subjects, though some kinds of projects may require teachers and school administrators to get in touch with community organizations to set up learning opportunities.

Experiential Learning

Experiential learning is often confused with project-based learning, but in fact the two teaching techniques have different applications and goals. Experiential learning is a broad term for any learning style that allows students to get hands-on experience that enriches their learning, whether or not that experience is part of a community-based project. Many pedagogical theories recommend incorporating experiential learning as it can help with retention of information, improve student interest, and give students a better understanding of the applicability of what they are studying.

Inquiry-Based Learning

Traditional teaching techniques have sometimes required students to follow a narrow learning path that fits into specific curriculum criteria without focusing very much on students' individual interests and skills. Inquiry-based learning is a technique that allows students to expand on what they are learning based on their own particular interests. It encourages students to ask questions and pursue their own lines of exploration and inquiry to produce new results.

Imagine a class that is learning about, for example, ancient Mesopotamia. A teacher who was focusing on inquiry-based learning might start by delivering one or several lectures on ancient Mesopotamia, covering broad-ranging topics and an overarching timeline of events. Once this material had been delivered, the teacher would talk to students about their particular interests and the kinds of questions that they had about the material.

Students would each choose a research topic and do their own inquiry-based learning. The teacher would provide support for students as they researched their topic and would offer a variety of formats for the final results, like a project or an oral presentation of students' findings. Some students might learn about food production and agriculture, some about tool use or trade, and others about culture and social structure.

Inquiry-based learning has the benefits of not only improving student interest in a topic but also providing more breadth and depth of information to a class. It can teach students to be self-sufficient in their research and to take initiative. It can also be rewarding for students who ask questions and who want to go above and beyond what is taught in class.

Cooperative Learning

Teachers have long recognized the importance of teamwork and collaboration in the classroom, and cooperative learning is a great way for you to emphasize teamwork among your students. Cooperative learning teaches students to value each other and to value their own unique skills and contributions to the learning environment. In many cases, you can use cooperative learning as an alternative to the traditional, more individualistic way that students are encouraged to learn. Rather than emphasizing individual achievement, cooperative learning teaches students to work together to find solutions and to share those solutions so that everyone benefits.

Teacher and Student Activities

Some of the best methods a teacher can use in the classroom take the form of specific activities that teachers and students can do in a classroom setting. These activities can improve student learning while also preparing students for further education and a career. Many of these activities and strategies are evolving rapidly because of the changing technologies and cultural environments that students are likely to encounter in today's world. All of them can help you develop stronger teacher-student relationships and create a more innovative and effective classroom environment.

Gamification

Gamification is a term for the process of turning a lesson or learning objective into a game. Some of these games may make use of digital technologies, while others can be played using traditional mediums. Turning a lesson into a game is a great way to boost student engagement and make class more fun for everyone.

Gamification can include class-wide competitions, group games, even single-player games, or micro-learning activities. Almost any subject, from memorizing the rules of the order of operations to spelling difficult words, can benefit from gamification.

Peer Teaching

Peer teaching is a term for any activity where students teach each other to assist with their own learning. Many teacher training programs have recognized the effectiveness of this method for a long time, but it is important to note that some kinds of peer teaching tend to work better than others. In order for students to get the most from peer teaching, they need consistent support from instructors, clear expectations for their roles as teachers and learners, and the ability to work to their own strengths.

One great way to promote peer teaching is through research projects. Have students' research particular topics either alone or in small groups, with each student or group tackling a different subject. Explain to the students that it is their job to teach the rest of their class about their subject. The students will do their own research and structure a lecture for their classmates that goes into detail. Their lecture might include a visual presentation or class activities.

This kind of project can improve students' teaching skills, allow them to become experts in their own topic, and teach them to deliver information clearly and answer their peers' questions. Peer teaching can also be used to provide an extra challenge for students who excel in class while providing extra learning opportunities for students who are struggling. These, are a few examples of instructional strategies that can enhance teaching and learning.

STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

The ongoing socio political impasse in the North West and South West Regions of Cameroon and the so many ghost towns and lockdowns has increased pressure on educational institutions to develop strategies to manage the little time left at the disposal of students and teachers to be able to ensure that effective teaching and learning is taking place within secondary schools in these affected areas. Many factors can affect the effectiveness of teaching and learning in a school. Some of these factors include teacher's knowledge of psychological theories related to teaching and learning, knowledge of subject matter, learning environment and resources, administrative and management strategies of school administrators etc. In the context of this study, it is investigating instructional strategies and the enhancement of effective teaching and learning in secondary schools within the Bamenda Three Municipality.

Objective of the Study

Investigate the extent to which instructional strategies enhances effective teaching and learning in secondary schools.

Research Question

To what extent does the instructional strategies enhance effective teaching and learning in secondary schools.

METHODOLOGY

This research work employed the descriptive survey research design. The sample population of the study consisted of 100 students randomly selected among three public secondary schools within the Bamenda Three Municipality. The instrument for data collection was a twenty item questionnaire. The instrument was structured using a Four-point rating Likert scale of Strongly Agree, Agree Disagree and Strongly Disagree . Data obtained were analyzed using mean scores. The criterion mean was determined at 2.50. In other words, any item that had mean score of 2.50 and above was accepted while any that had a mean score less than 2.50 was reflected

FINDINGS

The findings of this study are presented based on the research question under investigative.

OPINION STATEMENT	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Stdev
Teacher practice differentiation of instruction	59(59.0%)	22(22.0%)	11(11.0%)	08(8.0%)	3.32	0.96
Content of lessons is made easier for students to understand	50(50.0%)	31(31.0%)	9(9.0%)	10(10.0%)	3.19	1.01
Teacher ensures effective classroom management	58(58.0%)	22(22.0%)	12(12.0%)	08(8.0%)	3.33	0.94
Making known to the learners the objectives of each lesson early	70(70.0%)	30(30.0%)	00(0.0%)	00(0.0%)	3.69	0.46
Making sure learners are actively participating at each stage of the instructional planning process	40(40.0%)	46(46.0%)	12(12.0%)	02(2.0%)	3.24	0.74
Continuous monitoring of students learning	78(78.0%)	22(22.0%)	00(0.0%)	00(0.0%)	3.76	0.42
Varying of instructional materials	100(100.0%)	00(0.0%)	00(0.0%)	00(0.0%)	4.00	0.00
Ensuring that learners set rules with the teacher	34(34.0%)	62(62.0%)	04(4.0%)	00(0.0%)	3.32	0.51
Engaging learners in collaborative learning	78(78.0%)	21(21.0%)	01(1.0%)	00(0.0%)	3.77	0.44
Making available diverse learning resources to learners	87(87.0%)	13(13.0%)	00(0.0%)	00(0.0%)	3.87	0.33
Giving learners take home assignments	49(49.0%)	41(41%)	07(7.0%)	03(3.0%)	3.35	0.75
Using of effective	100(100.0%)	00(0.0%)	00(0.0%)	00(0.0%)	4.00	0.00

questioning Techniques						
Teachers communication is explicit	76(76.0%)	24(24.0%)	00(0.0%)	00(0.0%)	3.76	0.42
Individual needs are cared for	65(65.0%)	30(30.0%)	05(5.0%)	00(0.0%)	0.42	0.58
Field work activities are used	20(20.0%)	15(15.0%)	50(50.0%)	25(25.0%)	2.30	1.05
Modelling is practiced	35(35.0%)	07(7.0%)	38(38.0%)	20(20.0%)	2.57	1.16
Teacher make classes inclusive	24(24.0%)	35(35.0%)	38(38.0%)	03(3.0%)	2.80	0.84
Teacher doesn't delay feed back	40(40.0%)	56(56.0%)	04(4.0%)	00(0.0%)	3.36	0.55
Teacher vary examples used during teaching	43(43.0%)	57(57.0%)	00(0.0%)	00(0.0%)	3.40	0.49
Learning games are used during teaching	10(10.0%)	18(18.0%)	70(70.0%)	02(2.0%)	2.36	0.68
Total average	55.8	27.2	13.0	4.0	3.20	0.62

The table shows that 59.0% of the respondents strongly accepted that teachers practice differentiation of instruction, 22.0% agreed, 11.0% disagreed while 8.0% strongly rejected the idea with the mean of 3.32 and the standard deviation of 0.96. Similarly, 50.0% of the respondents strongly agreed that content of lessons is made easier for students to understand, 31.0% agreed, 9.0% disagreed while 10.0% strongly opposed the opinion with the mean of 3.19 and the standard deviation of 1.01. Furthermore, 58.0% of the respondents strongly affirmed that teacher ensures effective classroom management, 22.0% agreed, 12.0% refuted, 8.0% strongly opposed the opinion with the mean of 33.3 and the standard deviation of 0.94. An overwhelming majority 70.0% of the respondents strongly accepted that making known to the learners the objectives of each lesson early, 30.0% agreed, and 0.0% disagreed while 0.0% strongly rejected the idea with the mean of 3.69 and the standard deviation of 0.46. To proceed, 40.0% of the respondents strongly agreed on making sure learners are actively participating at each stage of the instructional planning process, 46.0% agreed, 12% disagreed while 2.0% strongly disagreed to the fact with the mean of 3.24 and the standard deviation of 0.74. Moreover, 78.0% of the respondents strongly agreed on continuous monitoring of students learning, 22.0% agreed, 0% disagreed while 0% strongly disaffirmed to the idea with the mean of 3.76 and the standard deviation of 0.42.

Again, all the respondents strongly accepted on Varying of instructional materials 0.0% agreed, 0.0% refuted while 0.0% strongly rejected the idea with the mean of 4.00 and the standard deviation of 0.00. Furthermore, 34.0% of the respondents strongly affirmed on ensuring that learners set rules with the teacher, 62.0% agreed, 4.0% refuted, 0.0% strongly opposed the opinion with the mean of 3.32 and the standard deviation of 0.51. An overwhelming majority 78.0% of the respondents strongly accepted on engaging learners in collaborative learning, 21.0% agreed, and 1.0% disagreed while 0.0% strongly rejected the idea with the mean of 3.77 and the standard deviation of 0.44. To proceed, 87.0% of the respondents strongly agreed that Making available diverse learning resources to learners, 13.0% agreed, 0.0% disagreed while 0.0% strongly disagreed to the fact with the mean of 3.87 and the standard deviation of 0.33. Moreover, 49.0% of the respondents strongly agreed on giving learners take home assignments, 41.1% agreed, 7.0% disagreed while 3.0% strongly disaffirmed to the idea with the mean of 3.35 and the standard deviation of 0.75. Again, all the respondents strongly accepted on using of effective questioning Techniques 0.0% agreed, 0.0% refuted while 0.0% strongly rejected the idea with the mean of 4.00 and the standard deviation of 0.00. Furthermore, 76.0% of the respondents strongly affirmed that Teachers communication is

explicit 24.0% agreed, 0.0% refused, 0.0% strongly opposed the opinion with the mean of 3.76 and the standard deviation of 0.42.

Once more, 65.0% of the respondents strongly accepted that Individual needs are cared for , 3.0% agreed, and 5.0% disagreed while 00% strongly rejected the idea with the mean of 0.42 and the standard deviation of 0.58.

To proceed, 20.0% of the respondents strongly agreed that Field work activities are used, 15.0% agreed, 50.0% disagreed while 25.0% strongly disagreed to the fact with the mean of 2.30 and the standard deviation of 1.05. Moreover,35.0% of the respondents strongly agreed that Modelling is practiced , 0.7% agreed, 38.0% disagreed while 20.0% strongly disaffirmed to the idea with the mean of 2.57 and the standard deviation of 1.16. Again, 24.0% of the respondents strongly accepted that Teachers make classes inclusive 35.0% agreed, 38.0% refused while 3.0% strongly rejected the idea with the mean of 2.80 and the standard deviation of 0.84. In addition, 40.0% of the respondents strongly accepted that the Teacher doesn't delay feedback. 56.0% agreed, 4.0% refused while 0.0% strongly rejected the idea with the mean of 3.36 and the standard deviation of 0.55. Furthermore, 43.0% of the respondents strongly affirmed that Teacher vary examples used during teaching 57.0% agreed, 0.0% refused, 0.0% strongly opposed the opinion with the mean of 3.40 and the standard deviation of 0.49. Once more, 10.0% of the respondents strongly accepted that Learning games are used during teaching, 18.0% agreed, and 70.0% disagreed while 2.0% strongly rejected the idea with the mean of 2.36 and the standard deviation of 0.68.

From the above analyses, the findings revealed that instructional strategies significantly enhances teaching and learning in secondary schools within the Bamenda Three Municipality though no single instructional strategy can significantly enhance effective teaching and learning. But rather, a combination of different instructional strategy will enhance effective teaching and learning

These findings corroborate (Oyetunde, 1990, Mezieobi 1994 and Mbakwem, 2001) who observed that, there is no best method of teaching and no singular instructional strategies will be appropriate to all school subjects in all situations, Mbakwem (2001) was of the view that each teaching subject has its own peculiarities and emphasis procedures.

Finally, the respondents agreed that using of various instructional strategies will promote effective teaching and learning in secondary schools. This will spur the students to participate activity in any lesson being undertaken by any subject teachers in the school. This will give the students room to carry out indepth research which they will share with the teachers and the rest of the students. Bransford, Brobun and Cooking (2000) also agreed that certain instructional strategies like learning cycle-based instructional strategy, project-based learning approach etc. can be used to enhance effective teaching and learning. This will bring the involvement of the students in planning and determine the use of these strategies for effective delivery of lessons in the classroom.

From the findings, it was thus recommended that secondary school teachers should be allowed to be involved in the curriculum planning and implementation, in order to make them bring in students-centered methods/instructional strategies that will make their teaching more lively and interesting.

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