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Students' Perception of Lecturers' Competence and their Academic Performance in Education Political Science: A Case Study of the University of Uyo, Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria

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Abstract: The study determined the relationship between students' perception of lecturers' competence and their academic performance in Education Political Science: A case study of the University of Uyo, Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. Two research questions and hypotheses were formulated to guide the study. Correlational survey design was adopted. The population of the study comprised all the 167 year three and four students in the study area. A sample size of 150 Education Political Science students in the Faculty of Education, University of Uyo were drawn using purposive random sampling technique. A self-structured and validated questionnaire entitled "Students' Perception of Lecturers' Competence and the Academic Performance in Education Political Science (SPLCAPEPS) was used for data collection. Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) was used to answer the research questions, using the rvalue to determine the extent or weight of relationship between variables. The same statistical tool was used to test the null hypotheses by comparing the r-value with critical value, so as to determine the significance of relationship between variables. The study found that students' perception of lecturers' teaching method and communication skill have significant relationship with their academic performance in Education Political Science. Conclusion was drawn and the study recommended among other things that, Lecturers should be given in-service training through organization of workshops, seminars and conferences to enhance their teaching effectiveness through learning of appropriate teaching methods.

Keywords: Perception, Lecturers' competence, Teaching method, Communication skill

1. Introduction

In Nigeria, education is seen as an instrument for national development. As such, education is expected to be of high standard in order to produce sound and productive individuals that could contribute meaningfully to the growth of the country economy. The quality of education of a nation is determined by teachers' competence in the impartation of worthwhile knowledge and skills to the learners. The most important factor in improving students' academic achievement in public schools is by employing seasoned qualified and competent teachers in all schools (Akiri and Ugborugbo 2013). Such consideration fosters the growth and development of the education as well as meeting the yearnings and aspirations of the society.

In the university context, the most important factor in improving students' academic performance in courses offered is by having competent lecturers who plans, organizes, designs, directs, motivates and inspires students to learn using appropriate teaching techniques to impart knowledge (Okolocha and Onyeneke, 2013). Teaching is a purposeful profession useful for individual and economic growth. It is done systematically by professionals who have acquired some skills and knowledge either by training. According to Akinmusire (2012), for teaching to make desirable impact, it must aim at total development of the individual, that is, to enhance intellectual compatibilities, developmental and cognitive intellectuality, foster psychosocial skills, and draw out neuro-physical aptitude of the learners. All education institutions including the university give high priority to developing effective teaching/learning process and solving learning challenges, thus, making lecturers' competence a necessity for improving students' academic performance.

Competence of a lecturer could be measured through high level of creativity in analyzing, synthesizing and grip of the subject matter knowledge in new and effective ways. According to Okolie (2014), lecturers' competence may be assessed through lecturers' ability to instill in the learners the ability to be analytical, intellectually curious, culturally aware, employable and capable of leadership. Competent lecturer is one who uses clearly formulated objectives and illustrated instruction that will enable students to acquire desired knowledge content, apply the knowledge in and outside classroom (Omoifo and Urevbu, 2007).

Adegbile (2008) described a competent lecturer as one who is efficient, reliable and courteously equipped with professionalism, creative in imagination, bustling ingenuity and depth of experience necessary for optimal performance and the achievement of goals. The lecturer as a good manager of instruction should be able to utilize appropriate techniques to gain and maintain the attention of students. A competent lecturer should be able to display requisite pedagogical insight and professional qualities and utilize same to guide the teaching/learning process to the point of achieving stated educational objectives.

Several factors are perceived to influence students' academic performance in Education Political Science courses. One of such factor is lecturers' teaching method. Chang (2010) accentuated that teaching method are those skills, method or techniques a lecturer or teacher uses to impact lesson effectively to the students. The author added that the

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teaching method adopted by a lecturer should be aligned to the subject content and specific outcomes in order to effectively enhance transmission of knowledge and information from the lecturer to the student, for positive performance in courses offered.

In addition, lecturers' communication skills could influence students' performance in courses offered. SngBee (2012) observed that to teach in accordance with the ability and capability of the students requires a teacher to adopt communication skills which motivate the students toward learning process. The author added that if the kind of communication that flows from the teacher is not easy and understandable to the students, the students' would always feel reluctant of entering classes once it is time for the subject, thereby, resulting in poor academic performance.

In addition, another dimension of lecturers' competence is knowledge of subject matter. A lecturer whose knowledge of subject matter, that is knowledge of the course content, pedagogical knowledge of content and general knowledge is high tends to produce students who perform better in their courses (Adediwura and Tayo, 2007). The implication of this is that a lecturer may not teach what he or she does not know. For students to perform well in courses offered, a lecturer must gain accurate knowledge of subject or courses thought. Therefore, based on this premise, the present study sought to examine the relationship between students' perception of lecturers' competence and their academic performance in Education Political Science: A case study of the University of Uyo, Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria.

2. Theoretical Framework

Symbolic Interactionism Theory

The theory of symbolic interactionism is a sociological approach that was developed by notable interactionists, such as, Herbert Mead (1934), Charles Cooley (1902) and William Thomas (1931) and other pragmatists associated, primarily, with the University of Chicago in the early twentieth century. However, the label, "Symbolic Interactionism" was coined by Herbert Blummer (1969), one of Mead's students. With all these people in mind, the principal architect of this theory is George Herbert Mead. The term "Symbolic Interactionism" simply means the interaction which takes place between human beings. A symbol here according to Mead is anything that stands for the meaning of something. Words are symbols whose meanings depend on a consensual agreement. Gestures also are symbols. These could be similes or movements of body parts. Therefore, understanding human behaviour in interaction in any situation depends on the condition and the context in which symbols are used. Interactionism as a theory deals with how people's day-to-day and face-to-face interactions with one another take place and the effect of such interaction on the individuals concerned. In summary, the theory is associated with seven basic principles:

- That human being uses symbols in interaction and the meanings he interprets to construct his social reality.
- That human behaviour or actions at any point in time is a function of his interpretation of the situation in which he finds himself.

- Human beings are assumed to freely make meanings out of the interaction situation.
- These meanings are constantly modified and rearranged in the process of interaction.
- Social behaviour patterns may therefore be modified according to the interacting situation in which one finds oneself, but the situation may be threatening, accommodating, cordial or conducive.
- Meanings have impact on one's personality.
- Meanings or interpretations are made by a process of role-taking. Role taking occurs when an individual literarily places himself in another person's position or situation to feel or understand it as though he is doing it. It is a process of empathy that is, taking the role of the other in the process of making meanings. By assuming the self and role of the other, he is able to understand his mind set and intents to act toward him accordingly (Mead, 1934).

However, interactionism as a sociological approach has been used by people to explain certain interactions and their outcomes in the school system. Such interaction exists between the teacher and the students, student-student, teacher-teacher, parent-teacher and even principal-teacher. Thus, in applying this theory within the school system (Micro-sociology), interactionism stresses that the meanings or interpretations made from interaction among individuals in the school have lasting impact on individual's personality. It also emphasises that human actions towards people or things in the school system are based on the meanings or interpretations they make about those things.

The theory of symbolic interactionism is relevant to this study in that it tells us that meanings or interpretations made by students from interaction or classroom communication with teachers determined the academic performance in courses offered. For instance, some teachers during discussion in the classroom usually tell their students that there would be 'weeping and gnashing of teeth.' Statement of this sort can intimidate the students and could influence their performance negatively. The theory also explains the fact that meanings or interpretations from a student being labeled by the teacher in the process of interaction could influence the students' action or behaviour in examination.

In addition, theory helps to explain the fact that students interpretations of lecturers' competence based on factors like their communication skills, teaching method by Education Political Science lecturers could influence students' performance in Education Political Science courses.

3. Conceptual Framework

Students' Perception of Lecturers' Teaching Method and Academic Performance

Education is an essential and indispensable part of human life. It is therefore, a constitutional right, matter of self-interest and moral principle for a child to receive good quality education. Education needs to be reinforced throughout life because the nation depends on it for a competitive work force and cohesive citizenry (Hettleman, 2007). It has positive impact on human life and the level of educational attainment helps individuals to earn respect and

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recognition. It is on this premise that Nwangwu (2007) stated that what children learn, retain and practice after leaving school has direct impact on the nation's competencies and skills. What is learnt both formally and informally determines the individual's ability to contribute to national development.

Educated human resources constitute manpower and personnel that bring about national development (Aghenta, 2006). It therefore means that the quality of education received by the citizens determines the level of development of any nation. This quality of education is determined by the quality of workforce (teachers). Therefore, the goal of education can only be achieved with a well-organized school system with quality teachers who are expected to inculcate worthwhile knowledge, attitude and practice into the mind of youths.

In the words of Olubor (2004), teachers teaching methods comprise nothing but strategies employed by a teacher in an effort to impart knowledge on the learners, for the purpose of attaining educational goals. Osokoye (2008), sees teaching method as the strategy or plan that teachers intend to take, in order to achieve the desirable objectives. It involves the way the teachers organise and use technique of subject matter, teaching tools and teaching materials to meet teaching objectives. Sometimes, when a teacher teaches and at the end of the lesson, evaluation is conducted, it is discovered that students are unable to carry out the behavioural or instructional objectives, what the teacher needs to do is to examine his teaching methods rather than looking at students as the causes.

Vividly, there are three major classification of teacher teaching method as claimed by (Teo and Wong, 2000). These are teacher-centered, student-centered as well as teacher-students interactive method.

- (i) **Teacher-centred:** Teacher-centred method looked at teachers' preferred teaching mode when teaching in the classroom. Under this method, students simply obtain information from the teacher without building their engagement level with the subject being taught.
- (ii) Student-centred: In a student-centred class, teachers are mere facilitators and students do take on the discussion role. This teaching method promotes active participation of students in classroom activities and encourages students stay in school.
- (iii) Teacher-Student Interactive Method: This teaching method applies the strategies used by both teacher-centered and student-centered approaches. The method encourages the students to search for relevant knowledge rather than the lecturer monopolizing the transmission of information to the learners.

Empirical studies have shown a strong connection between students' perception of Lecturers teaching method and their academic performance in courses offered. One of such study was conducted by Josiah and Oluwatoyin (2017) on teacher quality as determinant of students' academic performance in secondary schools in Edo South Senatorial District of Nigeria. The authors found that there was average level of students' academic performance in secondary schools in Edo South Senatorial District based on teachers teaching method.

Also, Ganyaupfu (2013) investigated the differential effectiveness of teaching methods on students' academic performance. A simple of 109 undergraduate students from the College's Department of Economic and Business Sciences was used for the study. This result showed that the kind of teaching method employed by the teacher or lecturer in teaching the students have strong influence on students' academic performance.

Students' Perception of Lecturers' Communication Skill and Academic Performance

Communication which denotes both interaction and purposefulness is derived from a Latin "communicate", meaning to make common, share, impart, and transmit (Peretomode, 2003). According to the author, communication can be defined as the transfer of information, feelings or transmission of meaning from the sender to receiver to decode the meaning. For one to communicate effectively there must be a goal for communication. Communication can also be seen as all the behaviours and conditions adopted by "any purposive and goal seeking organization, man animal or mechanical, to influence and be influenced by another organization". Communication is the basic ingredient used to influence the performance of organization members to motivate, direct, instruct and evaluate, clarify and express feeling among others.

Communication skills can be defined as the transmission of a message that involves the shared understanding between the contexts in which the communication takes place (Saunders and Mills, 2009). In addition, lecturer communication skills are important for a teacher in delivery of education to students (McCarthy and Carter, 2001). Communication skills involve listening and speaking as well as reading and writing. For effective teaching, a lecturer needs to be highly skilled in all these areas. Lecturers with good communication always make the things easier and understandable (Freddie Silver). Effective communication skills are really important for a lecturer in transmitting of education, classroom management and interaction with students in the class. Lecturer has to teach the students having different thinking approaches. To teach in accordance with the ability and capability of the students, a lecturer need to adopt such skills of communication which motivate the students toward their learning process (Sng Bee, 2012).

Lecturers' or teachers' communication skills is a predictor to students' academic behaviour. Lecturers who establish good interpersonal communication with students tend to produce students who are often interested in academic activities. Lecturers' interpersonal good communication can also overcome barrier to learning through personal approach to students concerned; and students who received such cordial relationship are most likely to display interest in school attendance than those who do not.

Statement of the Problem

The value and functionality of education in any country depend on the extent to which the goals of education are fully achieved. Once of the goals of education in Nigeria as

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stated in the national policy on Education (FGN, 2013) is to enhance the development of appropriate skills, mental, physical and social abilities and competencies to empower the individual to live and contribute positively to societal growth. This goal can only be achieved if lecturers' exercise full sense of competency in the teaching and learning process.

The parameter commonly used in determining lecturers' competence is students' performance in continuous assessment and examination. As observed by the researcher, much Education Political Science students have been performing woefully in various examinations given to them in the University of Uyo. For instance, in the annual result released by the Department of Educational Foundation, Guidance and Counselling, the Head of the Department stated that from 2014 till 2017, the overall percentage of 38.8 out of 100% attained the cumulative grade level of second class among Education Political Science students. This shows that there is a lot more to be done to encourage pass rate among Education Political Students in the Department.

Also, in a bid to pass examinations, most students have been involving in examination cheating without considering the implications. For many years, educators and researchers have debated on perceived factors that influence students' performance in Education Political Science. Most of them including parents put the blame on poor provision of facilities lecturers teaching method, communication skills and knowledge of the subject matters. Therefore, the present study seeks to investigate the relationship between students' perception of lecturers' competence and their academic performance in Education Political Science: A case study of the University of Uyo, Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria.

4. Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of the study was to investigate the relationship between students' perception of lecturers' competence and their academic performance in Education Political Science: A case study of the University of Uyo, Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. Specifically, the study sought to determine:

- 1) The relationship between students' perception of lecturers teaching method and their academic performance in Education Political Science, University of Uyo.
- The relationship between students' perception of lecturers' communication skill and their academic performance in Education Political Science, University of Uyo.

5. Research Questions

The following research questions were posed to guide the study:

- 1) What relationship exists between students' perception of lecturers teaching method and their academic performance in Education Political Science, University of Uyo?
- 2) What relationship exists between students' perception of lecturers' communication skill and their academic

performance in Education Political Science, University of Uyo?

6. Research Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated to guide the study:

- Students' perception of lecturers teaching method does not have any significant relationship with their academic performance in Education Political Science, University of Uyo.
- Students' perception of lecturers' communication skill does not have any significant relationship with their academic performance in Education Political Science, University of Uyo

Scope of the study

The study was delimited to only students' perception of lecturers' competence and their academic performance in Education Political Science, University of Uyo. Variables considered include students' perception of lecturers teaching method and communication skills. Only year three and year four (2017/2018 academic session) Education Political Science Students in Faculty of Education, University of Uyo were used for the study. This is because these set of students have been in the institution for over two years, so it was assumed that they are well matured and experienced to respond to items in the instrument.

7. Research Method

Design of the study

The correlational research design was adopted for the study. This design is used whenever the researcher wants to find out the magnitude and direction of relationship that exists between the dependent and independent variables (Udoh and Joseph, 2005). Therefore, this design was considered suitable for this study because it enabled the researcher to measure the interrelationship between variables of this study.

Population of the study

The target population of the study consisted all the 78 year three and 89 year four Education Political Science students in the Faculty of Education, University of Uyo, which gives a total of 167 students (University of Uyo Admission/Records Unit, 2018).

Sample and Sampling Technique

A sample of 150 Education Political Science students was selected from the total population of 167 students in the faculty, using purposive sampling technique. In other to give equal chance of being selected, hat and draw method was used in the selection of the students. This was done immediately after the students have finished one of the Political Science courses.

Instrumentation

The researcher developed questionnaire wasentitled "Students' Perception of Lecturers Competence and Academic Performance in Education Political Science (SPLCAPEPS)" was used for data collection. The items were framed in line with the research questions and

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hypotheses. The instrument has three parts. The bio-data part was section (A), section (B) contained 15 items on students perception of lecturers competence, while section (C) has 15 items on standardized test in the course((POL 221-Nigerian Government and Politics) to measure academic performance in Education Political Science. The respondents were required to tick from a list of options as individuals.

Validation of the instrument

To ensure the content validity of the instrument, three copies of the instrument were given to three experts from the Department of Educational Foundation, Guidance and Counselling, University of Uyo to assess the suitability or otherwise of the items in the instrument.

Reliability of the instrument

To establish the reliability of the instrument, split-half reliability method was used. In this method, the instrument was pilot-tested on 20 year 3 and year 4 students not included in the sample of the study. The test was administered on them once; thereafter, the test scores were divided into two comparable half's for the purpose of scoring. The scores gotten were statistically treated using Cronbach Alpha reliability co-efficient of .87 for students perception of lecturers teaching method, .81 for students perception of lecturers communication skill, and .89 for achievement test in Nigerian Government and Politics respectively, This index according to Udoh and Joseph (2005) is a very high reliability index since reliability coefficient is above 0.50. Therefore, the instrument was deemed reliable for use in the study.

Method of Data Collection

The research instruments were personally administered on the respondents in Faculty by the researcher together with two research assistants.

Method of Data Analysis

Data generated wereanalysed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) in answering the research questions, using the r-value to determine the weight of relationship between variables. The same statistical tool was used to test the null hypotheses by comparing the r-value with the critical value so as to determine the significance of relationship between variables, all at .05 level of significance and at 148 degree of freedom.

Research Question One

What relationship exists betweenstudents' perception of lecturers teaching method and their academic performance in Education Political Science, University of Uyo?

Table 1: Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient Analysis of Lecturers' Teaching Method and Students' Academic Performance, N= 150

Variable	$\sum X$ $\sum Y$	$\sum_{\sum Y^2} X^2$	∑xy	r- cal.	Remark
Students' perception of lecturers' teaching method	1621	4611	5725	0.77	Very High Positive
Students' academic performance	2151	6250			Relationship

Result in Table 1 shows a very high positive and significant relationship between students' perception of lecturers teaching method and their academic performance in Education Political Science, University of Uyo. This is shown on the correlation co-efficient of 0.77. This implies that students tend to perform better in education political science courses if lecturers use appropriate teaching method that interests the students while teaching.

Research Question Two

What relationship exists between students' perception of lecturers' communication skill and their academic performance in Education Political Science, University of Uyo?

Table 2: Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient Analysis of Lecturer's Communication Skill and Students' Academic Performance, N= 150

Variable	$\sum X$ $\sum Y$	$\sum x^2 \sum Y^2$	∑xy	r-cal.	Remark	
Students' perception of lecturer's communication skills	1626	3428	6341	0.85	Very High Positive	
Students' academic performance	2151	6250			Relationship	

Result in Table 2 shows a very high positive and significant relationship between students' perception of lecturers teaching method and their academic performance in Education Political Science, University of Uyo. This is shown on the correlation co-efficient of 0.85. This implies that education political science students are most likely to perform better in courses offer if lecturers communicate freely with them in friendly manner.

Hypothesis One

Students' perception of lecturers' teaching method does not have any significantly relationship with their academic performance in Education Political science, University of Uyo.

Table 3: Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient Analysis of Lecturers' Teaching Method and Students' Academic Performance. N= 150

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Variable	$\sum X$ $\sum Y$	$\sum X^2$ $\sum Y^2$	∑xy	r-cal.	r-crit	Decision	
Students' perception of lecturers' teaching method		4611		0.77	0.198	*	
Students' academic performance	2151	6250					

^{*}Significant = 0.05, critical r = 0.198, df = 148.

The summary of results presented in Table 3 shows that the calculated r-value of 0.77 is greater than the tabulated r-value of 0.198 at 0.05 level of significance with 148 degrees of freedom. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected while the alternate hypothesis is upheld. This means that, students' perception of lecturers' teaching method have significantly relationship with their academic performance in Education Political Science, University of Uyo.

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Hypothesis two

Students' perception of lecturers' communication skills does not have any significantly relationship with their academic performance in Education Political Science, University of Uyo.

Table 4: Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient Analysis of Lecturer's Communication Skills And Students' Academic Performance. N= 150

Academie i criormanec, 11= 150						
Variable	$\sum X$ $\sum Y$	$\sum_{\sum Y^2} X^2$	∑xy	r-cal.	r-crit	Decision
Students' perception of lecturers' communication skills		3428	6341	0.85	0.198	*
Students' academic performance	2151	6250				

^{*} Significant = 0.05, critical r = 0.198, df = 148.

The summary of results presented in Table 4 shows that the calculated r-value of 0.85 is greater than the tabulated r-value of 0.198 at 0.05 level of significance with 148 degrees of freedom. On this note, the null hypothesis was rejected while the alternate hypothesis was upheld. This means that, students' perception of lecturers' communication skills have significantly relationship with their academic performance in Education Political Science, University of Uyo.

8. Discussion of Findings

Students' Perception of Lecturers' Teaching Method and their Academic Performance in Education Political Science

Result of research questions one and hypothesis one showed a very high positive and significant relationship between students' perception of lecturers' teaching method and their academic performance in Education Political science, University of Uyo. This null hypothesis was rejected on the ground that the calculated r-values obtained from the analysis of data were statistically greater than the critical r-value. The finding of this hypothesis is in line with the earlier position of Ganyaupfu (2013) who found out that teaching methods that involve teacher-students interaction significantly influences students' academic performance positively than those that are not interaction intensive. In the same pattern of findings,

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Result of research question two and hypothesis two revealed a very high positive and significant relationship between students' perception of lecturers' communication skills with their academic performance in Education Political science, University of Uyo. This null hypothesis was rejected on the ground that the calculated r-values obtained from the analysis of data were statistically greater than the critical r-value. The finding of this hypothesis agrees with the position of Batenburg and Smal (2007) that performance of teachers in the classroom totally depends on their language and communication pattern.

9. Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, the following conclusions were made:

- 1) Students' perception of lecturers' teaching method have significantly relationship with their academic performance in Education Political science, University of Uyo.
- 2) Students' perception of lecturers' communication skills have significantly relationship with their academic performance in Education Political science, University of Uyo.
- 3) Students' perception of lecturers' knowledge of the subject matter have significantly relationship with their academic performance in Education Political science, University of Uyo.

10. Recommendations

In line with the finding of this study and conclusion made therein, the following recommendations were made:

- 1) Lecturers should be given in-service training through organization of workshops, seminars and conferences to enhance their teaching effectiveness through learning of appropriate teaching methods.
- Lecturers should be able to interact with students in a friendly and understanding manner so that students will be able to show interest in courses taught and perform better in examinations.

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