Perceptions Of Tertiary Students In Ghana About Effectiveness Of Lecturers In Teaching.   (A Case Study of Kumasi Polytechnic)

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Abstract

The main objective of the study is to find out the Perception of tertiary students in Ghana about the effectiveness of lecturers in teaching .Questionnaires were used to collect data from six hundred and three (603) HND students of Kumasi Polytechnic. Data was analyzed using frequencies and percentages. The study reveals two categories of competencies that is personal and professional competencies an effective lecturer should have. On personal competencies it was found out that an effective lecturer is someone who is friendly, patient, pay attention to weak students, dress neatly to lectures, love students, and help students academically. The study also reveal that an effective lecturer is someone who has the following professional competencies, good communication skills, have good knowledge of the subject matter they teach, always punctual to lectures, teach with teaching materials, and motivate students. Recommendations were made to improve on the effectiveness of lecturers teaching in tertiary institutions in Ghana.

Keywords: Perception, Effectiveness, Competencies, Professional, Personal, Punctual, Reveal

1. Introduction

Education is a key to the development of every individual, the society and the nation as a whole. Barrow and Wood (1998) describe education as a process that involves the transmission of worthwhile things to individuals in a morally accepted manner. Oke, and Brown (1985) state that the main objective of education is to bring positive change to learners and the society in general. Societies expect all individuals to be educated and to use what they acquire through education to earn a living as well as contribute to the national development. In Ghana the highest terminal point of education is the tertiary level. Tertiary education also referred to as third stage, third level, or post-secondary education, is the educational level following the completion of a school providing a secondary education. For this reason, lecturers teaching in the tertiary institutions are expected to equip students with key skills and knowledge that will make their graduates employable. Brown et al (1985) attests that the principal stakeholders involved in the teaching and learning activities are the lecturer and the learner. It is the lecturer who imparts the knowledge, skills and competencies to students, and it is the students' duty to acquire these and make meaningful use of them. Hence, the lecturer's ultimate task is to influence and facilitate effective learning in students.

According to Crawford and Bradshaw effective teaching describes the extent to which the teacher is able to encourage and promote student understanding to develop study skills, to model desirable attitudes towards the ideals of education and to contribute to the emotional adjustment of the pupil/student. Bastick (1995) defines effective teaching as maximizing students' academic attainment and teacher and students course satisfaction. Effective teaching was also considered from the perspective of learning experiences that reach out to students' different learning styles and preferences (Bender, 2003).

Effective lecturing/teaching is lecturing that creates an environment in which deep learning outcomes for students are made possible, where high quality student learning is promoted and where superficial approaches to learning are discouraged (Ramsden 1992). Similarly, Devlin (2003) states that effective lecturing is lecturing that is well organized and presented clearly and enthusiastically with variation and student involvement. The effectiveness of teaching is affected by a number of factors. These include teacher, student and environmental factors (Leung and Wong 2005)

The effectiveness of the lecturer as seen by Cock and Hughes (1995) depends on the application and transfer of technical and professional skills, knowledge and competencies to the learner and the management of the learning environment. The demand for teaching in higher education involves deep-learning processes which require lecturers to set clear and precise aims and objectives with better understanding of the knowledge and skills they transfer. Instructional strategies and materials that lecturers use account for their success. It has been emphasize that, lecturers who use greater variety of instructional techniques and support their teaching with instructional materials are more likely to promote greater learning among students. This suggests that lecturers' variability and clarity are what characterize higher degree of students' learning. It is noted that students are expected to

have learnt when they have experienced permanent change in their understanding, attitudes, knowledge, abilities and skills. Thus, in every learning situation, the student should consciously or unconsciously exhibit competence and capabilities which he did not possess prior to the learning experience. It is evident from the foregoing research that, lecturers must be knowledgeable, have greater understanding of what students should learn, set clear and achievable aims and objectives, choose and use varieties of appropriate and suitable teaching techniques and materials to achieve effective teaching and learning.

Effective lecturing is lecturing that creates an environment in which deep learning outcomes for students are made possible, where high quality student learning is promoted and where surface approaches to learning are discouraged . Effective teaching is for maximizing student academic attainment and course satisfaction.

 The effectiveness of teaching is affected by a number of factors. These include lecturers, student and environmental factors. A lecturer, the leader of the learning environment should manipulate the student and the environment to make learning effective. Educational institutions are to directly serve students. They can only be responsive to students 'needs and improve the effectiveness of student outcomes if they first establish what the students believe to be effective teaching. Students being at the receiving end of the teaching-learning process should have perceptions of effective teaching as well as an effective lecturer. We have come across students' complaints about their lecturers being ineffective. Some heads of departments, schools or faculties in tertiary institutions have received anonymous letters from students complaining about ineffective lecturers. Some cases of low throughput rate could possibly be attributed to these complaints of lecturer ineffectiveness by students.

Marsh and Roche (1993) examined students' evaluations of teaching effectiveness as a means of enhancing university teaching. Ryan and Harrison (1995) investigated how students weight various teaching components in arriving at their overall evaluation of teaching effectiveness.

Lecturers' attitude has a great impact on the performance of students in Ghana and as a result the study wishes to undertake the perception of students about the effectiveness of lecturers towards teaching in Ghana, taking Kumasi Polytechnics as a case study.

The main objective of the study is to find out how student perceive the effectiveness of lecturers towards teaching in Ghana .To achieve this, other specified objectives have to be attained and they are as follows;

    1. To find out the personal competencies of lecturers in teaching.
    2. To find out how students view the professional attitude of lecturers.
    3. To determine how student perceive the method of teaching by lecturers.

The importance of this research is to bring to the notice of the managers of tertiary institutions and government in Ghana about the effectiveness of lecturers towards teaching.

2. Methodology

A survey design was adopted for the study. It sought to investigate the perception of tertiary students into the effectiveness of lecturers in Ghana, a case study of Kumasi Polytechnic. In this research all HND students of Kumasi Polytechnic constitute the population. Six hundred and three (603) HND students were selected from the Polytechnic to constitute the sample.

 Kumasi Polytechnic is one of the famous, elegant and vibrant Polytechnic in Ghana. It is located at the heart of the garden city of West Africa, the capital city of the Ashanti Region of Ghana (Kumasi). The Polytechnic known earlier as Kumasi Technical Institute (KTI) was established in 1954, but started actual teaching and learning in 1955, dealing mainly with craft courses. It became a Polytechnic on 30th October, 1963 and from then on concentrated on Technician and a few Diploma Programmes. Additionally, a few professional courses were offered. Following the enactment of the Polytechnic Law 1992, PNDC Law 321, and Kumasi Polytechnic ceased to exist in its previous form and became a tertiary institution.

The researcher constructed 26 item questionnaire categorized into three(3) sections .The first section consist questions on the demographic characteristics of the respondents, section two(2) is on the personal competencies of lecturers and section three(3) consist of 14 questions on the professional competencies of lecturers. The questions on the personal and professional competencies of lecturers were structured on a five point scale with 1 being Strongly Disagree,

2 being Disagree, 3 being Neutral, 4 being Agree and 5 being Strongly Agree

3. Empirical Results and Discussions

The data gathered were analyzed using percentages and the results were presented using frequency tables.

Table 1: Demographic characteristics of respondents

Variable	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Sex		
Male	356	59
Female	247	41
Age		
18-23	371	62
24-29	214	35
Above 30	18	3

Table1 shows the demographic characteristics of the respondents. From the table it can be observed that majority (59%) of the respondents are male whiles female are in the minority representing 41% of the respondents. It can also be observed that majority (62%) of the respondents were between 18 to 20 years. Those between 24 to 29 years constituted 35% of the respondents and those aged above 30 years are in the minority that is they constitute only 3% of the respondents.

The responses of respondents regarding the personal competencies of lecturers are illustrated in table 2 below.

Table 2: Personal Competencies of Lecturers

Variables	Percentages (%)				
	SA	A	N	D	SD
Lecturers are friendly	21	41	31	3	4
Are lecturers patient with you	17	43	30	6	4
Lecturers pay attention to weak students in class	17	28	29	15	11
Lecturers Dress neatly to lectures	53	33	10	2	2
Lectures are approachable	19	33	38	6	4
Do lecturer show Love to students	26	42	24	5	3
Are lecturers helpful to students academically	20	37	32	7	4
Is the general attitude to students by lecturer good	19	38	33	6	4

SA - Strongly Agree, **A** - Agree, **N** - Neutral, **D** - Disagree, **SD** - Strongly Disagree

From the table above it can be observed that 21% of the respondents strongly agreed with the notion that lecturers are friendly to them whiles 41% agreed.31% of the respondents were neutral as to whether lecturers are friendly ,3% and 4% disagree and strongly disagree respectively that their lecturer are friendly. As can be seen majority (62%) of the respondents agreed that their lecturers are friendly with them .The general view of the respondents as can be seen is that lecturers are friendly to them. For a lecturer to be effective towards teaching in the view of students that lecturer must be friendly to them. On the variable 'Are lecturers patient with you ' 17% strongly agree while 43% agree. On the other hand 30% were neutral that is they either did not agree or disagree that their lecturers are patient with them. Those who disagree and strongly disagree are in the minority

representing 6% and 4% respectively. This shows that lecturers are patient with their students. Students considers patient as a personal competency of a lecturer to be effective.

Lecturers pay attention to weak students in class was another variable that was responded to by the respondents.11% strongly disagree with the variable, 15% disagree, 29% were neutral. Cumulatively 45% agree and strongly agree with the variable. In the view of students an effective lecturer is the one who pay attention to weak students. The next variable that was considered as can be seen from the table is 'Lecturers dress neatly to lectures.53% of the respondents strongly agree that their lecturer dress neatly to lecturers, 33% agree,10% were neutral ,2% disagree and 2% strongly disagree. For a lecturer to be effective, the dress is also considered as very important as most respondents agree that their lecturers dress neatly to lectures. It can also be observed from the table that 26% of the respondents strongly agree that their lecturers show some amount of love to them whiles 42% agree,24% were neutral in their responses, 5% disagree and 3% strongly disagree. It shows that majority of the respondents are of the view that lecturers are lovely. Are lecturers helpful to students academically was another variable that was considered. It was found out that 20% strongly agree ,37% agree, 32% were neutral, 7% disagree and 4% strongly disagree. Is the general attitude of lecturers good to students was the last variable that was considered .It can be seen from the table that 19% strongly agree,38% agree,33% were neutral 6% disagree and 4% strongly disagree.

Table 3 illustrates the responses of respondents on the Professional Competencies of lecturers.

Table 3: Professional Competencies of lecturers

Variables	Percentages (%)				
	SD	D	N	A	SA
Most of our lecturers have good communication skills	24	43	25	5	3
Our lecturers have good knowledge of subject matter they teach	37	40	17	5	1
Lecturers are always Punctual to lectures	26	38	26	6	4
Our lecturers prepared Lesson before teaching	26	37	25	7	5
Lecturers give enough lecture notes	24	37	25	6	8
Most of our Lecturers teach with teaching materials	21	37	25	10	7
Do Lecturers Motivate students during lectures	24	35	27	9	5
Lecturers adopt proper teaching skills	20	38	33	6	3
Most of our Lecturers are experienced in teaching	28	42	20	7	3
Our Lecturers use modern technology in teaching	27	36	27	7	3
Our Lecturers are dedicated	20	45	28	5	2
Our Lecturers are discipline	30	42	21	5	2
Lecturers give us course outline	37	36	16	6	5
Lecturers are able to complete course outline given	25	34	24	9	8

SD - Strongly Disagree, **D** - Disagree, **N** - Neutral, **A** - Agree, **SA** - Strongly Agree

From the table it can be seen that 24% of the respondents strongly agree that most of their lecturers have good communication skills, 43% agree, 25% were neutral whiles 5% and 3% disagree and strongly disagree respectively. 37% of the respondents strongly agree with the variable 'Our lecturers have good knowledge of subject matter they teach', 40 % agree, 17% were neutral in their responses while 5% disagree and only 1% strongly disagree. It can also be seen from the table that 26% strongly agree that their lecturers are always

punctual to lectures,38% agree, 26% were neutral,6% disagree and 4% strongly disagree. The next variable that was considered as can be seen from the table was 'Our lecturers prepared Lesson before teaching'. 26% strongly agree that with the variable, 37% agree, 25% neutral ,7% disagree and 5% strongly disagree. The survey also reveals that lecturers give enough lecture notes to their students. This is from the fact that 26% of the respondents strongly agree on the variable 'Lecturers give enough lecture notes', 37% agree, 25% were neutral 7% disagree and 5% strongly disagree. The next variable that was considered as can be seen from the table is 'Most our of Lecturers teach with teaching materials'. As can be seen from the table 24% strongly agree, 37% agree 25% were neutral. Those who disagree and strongly disagree are in the minority. The research also reveal that majority of lecturers motivate students during lectures. As can be seen from the table majority of the respondents agree with the variable 'Do Lecturers Motivate students during lectures' 27% were neutral whiles 9% disagree and 5% strongly disagree. As to whether Lecturers adopt proper teaching skills 20% strongly agree, 38% agree.33% of the respondents were neutral in the their response. Those who disagree and strongly are in the minority. On the variable most of our Lecturers are experienced in teaching cumulatively majority agree, 27% do not either agree or disagree and 7% disagree and only 3% strongly disagree. This shows that majority of the respondents are of the view that most of their lecturers show a high level experience when teaching. It can also be seen from the table 3 that 27% strongly agree that their Lecturers use modern technology in teaching,36% agree 27% were neutral in their response. Another variable that was considered by the respondents as can be seen from the table is "Our Lecturers are dedicated". Majority cumulatively agree that their Lecturers are dedicated. This is because the table reveal that 20% strongly agree whereas 45% agree with the variable. Only 7% cumulatively disagree. One other variable that was considered as can be seen from the table was "Our Lecturers are discipline". Majority (72%) of the respondents cumulatively agree that their Lecturers are discipline.7% of the respondent on the other hand disagree.37% strongly agree that Lecturers give them course outline of the various courses they teach, 36% agree, while 16% were neutral and only 11% disagree. The final variable that was considered as can be seen from table 3 is 'Lecturers are able to complete course outline given'. 25% strongly agree, 34% agree, those who were neutral their response constituted 24% of the respondents whiles 17 cumulatively disagree.

4. Conclusions

The study investigated the perception of tertiary students in Ghana about the effectiveness of lecturers in teaching. Evidence from the study shows that respondents agree with most of the categories of competencies of an effective lecturer. From the study students perceived an effective lecturer as the one who has the following personal competencies. An effective lecturer should be friendly, patient, pay attention to weak students, dress neatly to lectures, approachable, shows love to students and help students academically. On professional competencies students perceived an effective lecturer as someone who have good communication skills, have good knowledge of the subject matter they teach, always Punctual to lectures, prepared Lesson before teaching, give enough lecture notes, teach with teaching materials, Motivate students during lectures, adopt proper teaching skills, use modern technology in teaching, are dedicated, are discipline, give us course outline and are able to complete the course outline given.

5. Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study the following recommendations are made: Lecturers should use the finding of this study as yardstick to understand themselves and the needs of students to better their learning process. New lecturers should be inducted into the perception of students who an effective lecturer is. There should be refresher courses for old lecturers occasionally into the perception of students as to who an effective lecturer is. This is because students are the consumers of the teaching and learning process. Since this study was conducted in Kumasi Polytechnic the results may not be a true representative of all tertiary institutions in Ghana. A further study should be carried out to cover more tertiary institutions in Ghana.

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