

Preservice Teachers' Instructional Preferences and Approaches to Learning in Conventional University Teaching

Oginni Aderonke Margaret (Ph.D), Saibu, Sakibu Olajide, Olude, Adebisi Sylvester

College of Science Education
Lagos State University of education, Otto/Ijanikin, Lagos

Abstract: *Despite repeated and overlapping attempts to resolve it, the teacher's teaching methodology has not improved, according to the Ministry of Education (MOE, 2019). Thus, this study aimed at examining preservice teachers' instructional preference and approaches to learning in conventional university teaching. A descriptive survey research design was used for this study. The population of this study comprised all Universities in Lagos State, Nigeria. One University in Lagos State was randomly selected for the study; one hundred and twenty (120) pupils from faculty of education were selected randomly from all departments in the faculty. The instrument used to collect data was a researcher's designed checklist, titled "preservice teachers' instructional preference and approach to learning in conventional university checklist (PTIPALCUC). The instrument had three sections; section A contains the demographic information of respondents, while section B is a 2 likert scale format (Yes and No) which contains 10 items regarding the preservice teachers preference, while the third section comprised of preservice teachers approach used in learning on a 2 likert scale: yes and No. The instrument was validated and reliably tested at ($r=0.75$) using the Pearson product moment correlation (PPMC). Data gathered was analyzed using frequency count, mean and standard deviation for the research question. Findings of the study revealed that Preservice teachers' instructional preferences to learning in Conventional University teaching are lecture approach, flipped approach, project-based, peer-led approach also, the study further revealed that Preservice teachers' instructional approach to learning in Conventional University teaching is lecture method among others. According to the study's findings, it is clear that preservice teachers prefer different learning strategies than those practiced at traditional universities. This leads to the conclusion that traditional universities teach using the lecture technique, forcing preservice teachers to study using a manner that is different from what they anticipate the preservice teachers will do in the classroom. According to the study's findings, conventional institutions should be encouraged to employ a learner-centered approach while instructing future teachers in order to prepare them for the real world of practice.*

Keywords: Preservice teachers, Instructional approach, Learning, Preference

Introduction

Constructivism has gotten a lot of attention in the previous forty years in terms of policymaking, teacher development, and education. It has been hailed as a more organic, effective, and powerful framework for training teacher education students so that they will use constructivist teaching techniques in their future classrooms as instructors. Darling-Hammond (2022) also discovered that constructivist teacher education programs have a favorable effect on learner instructors' perceptions of their own teaching competencies, resulting in higher confidence and better teaching practice in schools. Additionally, Khalid and Azeem (2012) noted that the constructivist approach, which places a focus on the creative and innovative processes of knowledge acquisition, is an emerging trend in beginning teacher education. Nigeria has developed a constructivist-focused teacher education program in light of these (Ministry of Education) (MOE, 2019). However, teachers continue to primarily rely on more conventional pedagogies at all levels despite reform initiatives that support learner-centered approaches.

Despite repeated and overlapping attempts to address it, the teaching method of the teachers has not improved, according to the Ministry of Education. Additionally, investigations carried out in Nigerian universities and schools have revealed that the real-world application of constructivist teaching ideas is questionable and does not extend to more than lip service (Biniyam, 2014). In other words, the old, conventional method of teaching—where the teacher speaks and the students listen—remains dominant in the Nigerian educational system. This study's foundation was the claim that teachers' learning styles may be somewhat responsible for Nigeria's existing teacher-centered educational practices at all educational levels. Supporting this argument, Grasha (2010) and Kablan and Kaya (2014) stated that approaches to learning and teaching approaches are mutually dependent meaning a teacher adopt a certain teaching approach that is consistent with his/her approaches to learning.

In other words, a teacher's preferred teaching method and learning style are related. It is also commonly known that teachers' approaches to teaching and learning are similar (Gilakjani, 2012). These studies claim that educators pass on their methods of learning. According to Dunn and Dunn's (2019) examination of preservice teachers' preferred learning styles, preservice teachers want to learn in a "easy" or "correct" way so that they may guide their learners toward mastering material in a similar way. As a result, Dunn and Dunn continue, the learning strategy tends to match to how each individual learnt, which helps to partially explain why some teachers favor the lecture technique and others the constructivist approach. Similar to this, Campbell et al. (2021) hypothesized that learner-teachers with deep (constructivist) approaches to learning are more likely than those with traditional

learning approaches, who typically focus on the reproductive aspects of learning, to recognize the potential of constructivist teaching strategies for meaningful learning.

Theo (2019) found in earlier studies that university-bound preservice teachers favor lecture-based learning. Theo went on to say that preservice teachers don't want to be taught everything they need to know; instead, they want to be given the information. Additionally, according to Nathan (2022), aspiring teachers favor peer-led learning since it fosters connection and learning. Mbali (2018) does not corroborate the previous findings as it revealed that, preservice teachers prefer learning through demonstration and scientific approach. This study furthered explained that, most preservice teachers prefer learning those means because it enables them learn ways that can promote active learning for learners, critical thinking and creativity. Umar (2017) who revealed that Nigerian Tertiary institution teaching method is mainly lecture-based method. Also, Rufai (2016) showed in his study that, preservice teachers in colleges of education learn through teacher-centered method especially lecture method. The finding of this study does not support Dunmie (2019) which opined that preservice teachers in Owerri are taught using learners centered method. This study reveals that most preservice teachers are taught using the method encouraged to use in practice.

Statement of the problem

Thus, in the Nigerian context, one can argue that the preservice teachers' learning approaches that they have developed over the years as learners might be affecting their teaching styles.

Research Questions

The following research questions were answered in this study:

1. What is the Preservice teachers' instructional preferences to learning in Conventional University teaching
2. What is the Preservice teachers' instructional approach to learning in Conventional University teaching

Methodology

A descriptive survey research design was used for this study. The population of this study comprised all Universities in Lagos State, Nigeria. One University in Lagos State was randomly selected for the study; one hundred and twenty (120) pupils from faculty of education were selected randomly from all departments in the faculty. The instrument used to collect data was a researcher's designed checklist, titled "preservice teachers' instructional preference and approach to learning in conventional university checklist (PTIPALCUC). The instrument had three sections; section A contains the demographic information of respondents, while section B is a 2 likert scale format (Yes and No) which contains 10 items regarding the preservice teachers preference, while the third section comprised of preservice teachers approach used in learning on a 2 likert scale: yes and No. The instrument was validated and reliably tested at (r=0.75) using the Pearson product moment correlation (PPMC). Data gathered was analyzed using frequency count, mean and standard deviation for the research question.

Results

Research Question 1: What is the Preservice teachers' instructional preferences to learning in Conventional University teaching?

Table 1: Table showing the percentage and mean distribution of Preservice teachers' instructional preferences to learning in Conventional University teaching.

| S/N | ITEM | YES | NO | MEAN | RANK |
|-----|---|----------|----------|------|-----------------|
| 1 | I prefer learning through lecture method | 91(75.8) | 29(24.2) | 1.8 | 1 st |
| 2 | I prefer being taught with demonstration approach | 85(70.8) | 35(29.2) | 1.7 | 2 nd |
| 3 | I prefer learning through assignment approach | 77(64.2) | 43(35.8) | 1.6 | 4 th |
| 4 | I prefer learning through discussion method | 56(46.7) | 64(53.3) | 1.5 | 8 th |
| 5 | I prefer leaning though scientific approach | 60(50.0) | 60(50.0) | 1.5 | 8 th |
| 6 | I prefer learning through diffentiated approach | 54(45.0) | 66(55.0) | 1.5 | 8 th |
| 7 | I prefer being taught with game-based method | 71(59.2) | 49(40.8) | 1.6 | 4 th |
| 8 | I prefer being taught with flipped classroom approach | 73(60.8) | 47(39.2) | 1.7 | 2 nd |
| 9 | I prefer learning through peer-led approach | 76(63.3) | 44(36.7) | 1.6 | 4 th |
| 10 | I prefer learning through project-based approach | 72(60.0) | 48(40.0) | 1.6 | 4 th |

Note: The figures in parentheses are in percentages

Table 1 showed the Preservice teachers' instructional preferences to learning in Conventional University teaching. The following shows the Preservice teachers' instructional preferences to learning in Conventional University teaching follows: I prefer learning through lecture method (1.8), I prefer being taught with the demonstration approach (1.7), I prefer learning through assignment approach (1.6), I prefer learning through discussion method (1.5), I prefer leaning though scientific approach (1.5), I prefer learning through differentiated approach (1.5), I prefer being taught with game-based method (1.6), i prefer being taught with flipped classroom approach (1.7), I prefer learning through peer-led approach (1.6) and I prefer learning through project-based approach (1.6). This shows that all the items are the Preservice teachers' instructional preferences to learning in Conventional University teaching such as learning through lecture approach, flipped approach, project-based, peer-led approach.

Research Question 2: What is the Preservice teachers' instructional approach to learning in Conventional University teaching?

Table 1: Table showing the percentage and mean distribution of Preservice teachers' instructional approach to learning in Conventional University teaching.

| S/N | ITEM | YES | NO | MEAN |
|-----|----------------------------|----------|----------|------|
| 1 | Lecture method | 91(75.8) | 29(24.2) | 1.8 |
| 2 | Demonstration approach | 71(59.2) | 49(40.8) | 1.6 |
| 3 | Assignment approach | 54(45.0) | 66(55.0) | 1.5 |
| 4 | Discussion method | 73(60.8) | 47(39.2) | 1.7 |
| 5 | Scientific approach | 85(70.8) | 35(29.2) | 1.7 |
| 6 | Diffentiated approach | 76(63.3) | 44(36.7) | 1.6 |
| 7 | Game-based method | 60(50.0) | 60(50.0) | 1.5 |
| 8 | Flipped classroom approach | 56(46.7) | 64(53.3) | 1.5 |
| 9 | Peer-led approach | 72(60.0) | 48(40.0) | 1.6 |
| 10 | Project-based approach | 77(64.2) | 43(35.8) | 1.6 |

Note: The figures in parentheses are in percentages

Table 1 showed the Preservice teachers' instructional approach to learning in Conventional University teaching. The following shows the Preservice teachers' instructional approach to learning in Conventional University teaching follows: Lecture method (1.8) , Demonstration approach (1.6), Assignment approach (1.5), Discussion method (1.7), Scientific approach (1.7), Diffentiated approach (1.6), Game-based method (1.5), Flipped classroom approach (1.5), Peer-led approach (1.6) and Peer-led approach (1.6). This shows that the Preservice teachers' instructional approach to learning in Conventional University teaching is lecture method among others

Discussion of Findings

The results of this study showed that the lecture approach, the flipped approach, the project-based approach, and the peer-led approach are the instructional preferences of preservice teachers for learning in conventional university teaching. This research suggests that most preservice teachers prefer learning through lectures because it enables the teacher to provide all of the necessary knowledge about a subject with little to no involvement from the students. This result confirms that preservice teachers prefer lecture-based learning in higher education, according to Theo (2019). Theo went on to say that preservice teachers expect to be taught everything they need to know and are not ready to do research, exploration, or discovery. While Nathan (2022) revealed that, teachers in training prefer learning through peer-led approach, as this promotes interaction and learning. Although, the study finding does not supports Mbali (2018) which revealed that, preservice teachers prefer learning through demonstration and scientific approach. This study furthered explained that, most preservice teachers prefer learning those means because it enables them learn ways that can promote active learning for learners, critical thinking and creativity.

Another finding revealed that Preservice teachers' instructional approach to learning in Conventional University teaching is lecture method among others. This finding implies that, most preservice teachers in university are being taught through the use of lecture approach, as this method involves the teacher solely taking charge of the whole lesson presentation and does not involve learners in the process. This finding supports the finding of Umar (2017) who revealed that Nigerian Tertiary institution teaching method is mainly lecture-based method. Also, Rufai (2016) showed in his study that, preservice teachers in colleges of education learn through teacher-centered method especially lecture method. The finding of this study does not support Dunmie (2019) which opined that preservice teachers in Owerri are taught using learners centered method. This study reveals that most preservice teachers are taught using the method encouraged to use in practice.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, it was evident that, the preservice teachers preferred approach to learning are not the approaches used in their conventional university for learning. Thus, it could be concluded that conventional university uses lecture method as the approach for teaching, thereby making preservice teachers learn through lecture-based approach, which is contrary to what they expect the preservice teachers to use when in practice.

Recommendations

Based on the findings the study recommends the following:

1. Conventional universities should be encouraged to use learners-centered approach in teaching preservice teachers to equip them with necessary skills need for the world of practice.
2. Preservice teachers should be encouraged to learning through approaches that stimulates their learning, encourages active participations, and promotes critical thinking.
3. Tertiary institutions should be encouraged to train preservice teachers on approaches they employ them to practice in field while learning.

References

- Biniyam, A. (2014). The utilization of active learning: The case of nifas silk lafto sub-city governmental upper primary schools (Unpublished Master's Thesis), Addis Ababa University, Ethiopia.
- Campbell, J., Smith, D., Boulton-Lewis, G., Brownlee, J., Burnett, P. C., Carrington, S., & Purdie, N. (2019). Students' perceptions of teaching and learning: The influence of students' approaches to learning and teachers' approaches to teaching. *Teacher and Teaching: Trigwellry and Practice*, 7(2), 173–187. doi:10.1080/1354060012005496
- Darling-Hammond, L. (2022). How teacher education matters. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 51(3), 166– 173. doi:10.1177/0022487100051003002
- Dunmie (2019). The learner-centered classroom in quality of education in Owerri: Vision for the 21st century. College of Teachers Education University.
- Dunn, S., & Dunn, J. (2019). Learning styles/teaching styles: Should they can they be matched?. *Educational Leadership*, 238–244. http://www.ascd.org/ascd/pdf/journals/ed_lead/el_197901_dunn.pdf
- Gilakjani, A. P. (2012). A match or mismatch between learning styles of the learners and teaching styles of the teachers. *International Journal of Modern Education and Computer Science*, 11, 51–60. doi:10.5815/ijmecs.2012.11.05
- Grasha, F., (2010). Integrating teaching styles and learning styles with instructional technology. *College Teaching*, 48(1), 2–10. doi:10.1080/87567550009596080
- Kablan, Z., & Kaya, S. (2014). Preservice teachers' constructivist teaching scores based on their learning styles. *Australian Journal of Teacher Education*, 39 (12), 66–73. doi:10.14221/ajte.2014v39n12.5
- Khalid, A., & Azeem, M. (2012). Constructivist vs traditional: Effective instructional approach in teacher education. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, 2(5), 170–176
- Mbali M. B. (2017). Integrated teaching methods: Theory, classroom approach and field based connections. Nigeria.
- MOE [Ministry of Education]. (2019). Continuous professional development for primary and secondary school teachers, leaders and supervisors in Nigeria
- Nathan, C. (2022). Constructivist/engaged learning approaches to teaching and learning. In J. L. Kincheloe & R. A. Horn Jr (Eds.), *The Praeger handbook of education and psychology* (pp. 283–295). USA: Praeger Publishers
- Rufai. (2016). Lecturers' approaches to teaching and their relationship to conceptions of good teaching. *Instructional Science*, 28, 469–490. doi:10.1023/A:1026569608656
- Trigwell, (2019). Development and use of the approaches to teaching inventory. *Educational Psychology Review*, 16(4), 409–422. doi:10.1007/s10648-004-0007-7
- Umar, T. (2018). Approaches to studying, conceptions of learning and learning styles in higher education. *Learning and Individual Differences*, 21, 288– 293. doi:10.1016/j.lindif.2010.11.015