Lecturers’ Views on and Attitudes to Pedagogical Skills Training: Obafemi Awolowo University as a Case Study.

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Abstract
This paper examines the attitude to, opinion on and knowledge of pedagogical skills training held by university teachers with a view to enhancing knowledge dissemination in the university system of education. The study involved 200 academic staff of the university cutting across male and female, faculties, academic status, years of experience and previous exposure to training in education. A questionnaire was used to collect data. It was found out the selected lecturers had positive attitude to pedagogical training with a mean score of 8.35 (baseline was 6.00) and s.d of 2.25. Lecturers had good opinion on, and knowledge of pedagogical skills. The study found no significant influence of sex, faculty, academic status, years of experience and previous exposure to education on lecturers attitude to and opinion on pedagogical skills training.

Introduction
The primary goal of the Nigerian educational system is to provide functional education for the nation so that the products of the educational system can be employable or be self-employed. Nigerian education, as in other countries, is one with sub-systems reflected in a number of tiers – pre-primary, primary, secondary and tertiary. The Nigerian education system is faced with intractable problems at each of these tiers. One of such is the notable poor academic performance at the various tiers. Researchers, such as Ibidapo-Obe (2007) and Abebe (retrieved, 2010), have written on the prevalent falling standard of Nigerian education and no tier is exempt. Ibidapo-Obe notes the functional relationship between the education sub-systems such that a fault or defect in one affects others. Poor academic performance at various educational levels can be traced to the various components of the program such as goals and objectives, selection and organization of learning experiences, resources and feedback strategies as well as the human agents involved, that is, the learner and the teacher. Some constraining problems identified by UNESCO (1998) are shortage of human, financial and material resources, standard maintenance, relevance, equity, inept managerial and administrative machinery, political turbulence, blind ideological commitments and lack of
direction. Abebe (retrieved, 2010), while identifying brain-drain and lack of vision in staff development as part of the problems of Nigerian education, notes that there are drawbacks to, and hindrances in the development and formulation of possible remedies.

Higher institutions of learning occupy a pivotal position in every society. The university not only receives products from preceding tiers, it is usually the final destination for formal teaching and learning before the ultimate launch into the world of employment or entrepreneurship. UNESCO (1998) explains that higher institutions of learning, as role models of innovation and change at large, are expected to play a critical role in promoting sustainable economic, social and cultural development. This implies that higher institutions of learning are at the forefront of contributing positively and powerfully to the society. According to the Institutional Management in Higher Education (IMHE) (2009), higher education is becoming a major-driver of economic competitiveness in an increasingly knowledge-driven global economy. Unfortunately in Nigeria, higher educational institutions are ill-equipped to play the role expected. Ibidapo-Obe (2007), remarks that there is relatively poor preparation of students prior to their admission into the university, college or polytechnic. If poorly prepared students get admitted into the university by a stroke of luck or due to lapses in the nation’s examination system, the university has much more work to do to be able to fulfill the expected role. Coupled with the problem of poorly prepared students is the lack of human, physical, material and financial resources, the bane of effective teaching and learning in Nigerian universities. The absence of an ideal conducive learning environment in Nigeria, brought about by the aforementioned factors, puts the university in a difficult situation. Recent attempts to incorporate ICT into teaching in Nigerian institutions particularly in universities in spite of already existing and unresolved problems further complicate issues. The IMHE (2009) discusses impacts of quality teaching on teaching, research and institutional quality culture thereby emphasizing the centrality of teaching in educational institutions. For a better understanding of teaching in higher educational institutions, an examination of (i) the purpose of the university, (ii) the nature of university teaching, and (iii) the professional development of university teachers is undertaken in this study.

**The purpose of the university**

The word ‘university’ is derived from the Latin *universitas magistrorum et scholarium* which is roughly interpreted as ‘community of teachers and scholars.’ The university is a place of scholarship; an institution of higher education and research, which grants academic degrees in a variety of subjects. A university provides both undergraduate and postgraduate education. Traditionally, a university enabled students to receive a general education, study the liberal arts, and prepare for entry into the work industry or further education at the postgraduate level.
According to Stockton (2004), less time is currently being given to the original purpose of education, which has led to the consequent lack of understanding of its all-important purpose on the part of both the teachers and the students.

Bourner and Flowers (1999), while presenting six learning aims of contemporary higher education, highlight the relationship between a lack of knowledge or understanding of aims of education and poor university education. According to them, learning aims of higher education are to:

- disseminate knowledge;
- develop the capability to use ideas and information;
- develop the students' ideas to test ideas and evidence;
- develop the students' ideas to generate ideas and evidence;
- facilitate the personal development of students; and
- develop the capacity of students to plan and manage their own learning.

They express the view that the six aims are all important and do not represent a hierarchy; however, they decry higher education that is only about delivery of knowledge or dissemination of information. According to Hague (1991, p.64), “Academics must believe that acquiring the ability to test ideas and evidence is the primary benefit of university learning.” Bourner and Flowers further state that the more of the aims embraced in the higher education programme, the better the quality of such a program.

Nigeria’s National Policy on Education (2008, section 8, no 59) identifies the following seven goals of universities, colleges of education, polytechnics and monotechnics:

1. Contribute to national development through high level relevant manpower training;
2. Develop and inculcate proper values for the survival of the individual and society;
3. Develop the intellectual capability of individuals to understand and appreciate their local and external environments;
4. Acquire both physical and intellectual skills which will enable individuals to be self-reliant and useful members of the society;
5. Promote and encourage scholarship and community service;
6. Forge and cement national unity; and
7. Promote national and international understanding and interaction.

University education, from both a local and global perspective, is not a ‘consumer’ education but productive in nature. The type of teaching embraced by teachers in higher institutions will determine the realization or non-realization of these aims. It is noteworthy that lecturers’ thinking and beliefs are believed to have an effect on the teaching methods they use. According to Postareff, Lindblom-Ylanne and Nevgi (2007), teachers’ approaches to teaching are influenced by their conceptions of teaching. Teachers who see teaching as transmitting
knowledge are believed to more likely use a teacher-centered approach to teaching while those who see teaching as facilitative are more likely to use a student-centered approach.

**The nature of university teaching**

Once aims are understood, there has to be a strategic move from aims to the means of achieving them, largely realizable through teaching. Traditionally, teaching is taken to be the transmission of knowledge by the teacher to ignorant, unknowledgeable learners who passively receive the information provided. However, the challenges of contemporary society have brought about an acceptance of more constructivist theories in education with emphasis on teaching and learning. A shift in paradigm in learning from ‘consumer’ to ‘producer’ has led to a shift in teaching with emphasis on construction of knowledge and negotiation of meaning. The high correlation between teaching and learning is well noted. If teaching activities do not result in learning, it is usually believed that teaching has been ineffective. Sanders and Rivers (1996) stipulate that students who are assigned to one ineffective teacher after another have significantly lower achievement and learning than those who are assigned to a sequence of several highly effective teachers. In a similar vein, Darling-Hammond (2002) posits that differential teacher effectiveness is a strong determinant of differences in student learning. According to him, this far outweighs the effects of differences in class size and class heterogeneity. If the higher institutions are expected to be at the forefront of innovation with positive, observable impacts on the society therefore, teaching at this level has to be such that will accomplish aims of learning that will ultimately lead to innovations and productivity.

The watchwords in any production-oriented enterprise are quality and quality assurance. In order to have quality education in the university, there has to be quality teaching. The first issue discussed under the findings presented in the review of the Institutional Management in Higher Education (2009), is that teaching matters in higher education institutions. The review discusses a positive correlation between improvement in the quality of teaching and that of the quality of graduates.

Bourner and Flowers (retrieved 2001), postulate that different teaching methods are appropriate for different learning aims even though there could be cases of overlap. They suggest a minimum of ten teaching methods for each of the six learning aims they identified. The methods are reproduced in Table 1.

**Table 1: Teaching and learning methods for different learning aims**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Disseminate knowledge</th>
<th>Develop capabilities to use ideas and</th>
<th>Develop the student’s ability to test</th>
<th>Develop the student’s ability to</th>
<th>Facilitate the personal development</th>
<th>Develop the capacity of students to</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Learning aims</td>
<td>information</td>
<td>ideas and evidence</td>
<td>generate ideas and evidence</td>
<td>plan and manage their own learning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>--------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Lectures</td>
<td>Case studies</td>
<td>Seminars and tutorials</td>
<td>Research projects</td>
<td>Feedback</td>
<td>Learning contracts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Up-to-date textbooks</td>
<td>Practicals</td>
<td>Supervision</td>
<td>Workshops on techniques of creative problem solving</td>
<td>Experiential learning</td>
<td>Projects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Reading</td>
<td>Work experience</td>
<td>Presentations</td>
<td>Group working</td>
<td>Learning contracts</td>
<td>Action learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Handouts</td>
<td>Projects</td>
<td>Essays</td>
<td>Action learning</td>
<td>Action learning</td>
<td>Workshops</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. 'Guest' lectures</td>
<td>Demonstrations</td>
<td>Feedback on written work</td>
<td>Lateral thinking</td>
<td>Learning logs</td>
<td>Mentors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Use of exercises that require students to find up-to-date knowledge</td>
<td>Group working</td>
<td>Literature reviewing</td>
<td>Brainstorming</td>
<td>Role play</td>
<td>Reflective logs and diaries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Develop skills in using library and other learning resources</td>
<td>Simulations (e.g. computer-based)</td>
<td>Exam papers</td>
<td>Mind-mapping</td>
<td>Structured experiences in groups</td>
<td>Independent study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Directed private study</td>
<td>Workshops</td>
<td>Open learning</td>
<td>Creative visualization</td>
<td>Reflective documents</td>
<td>Work placement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Open learning materials</td>
<td>Discussion and debate</td>
<td>Peer assessment</td>
<td>Coaching</td>
<td>Self-assessment</td>
<td>Portfolio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Use of the Internet</td>
<td>Essay writing</td>
<td>Self-assessment</td>
<td>Problem solving</td>
<td>Profiling</td>
<td>Dissertations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The list reproduced above, which is by no means exhaustive, supports the claim of Bourner and Flowers that the time teaching staff in higher institutions will simply teach students the way they were taught is drawing to a close. They further opine that, given contemporary challenges, increased reliance on mass lectures will lead to disaster. Apart from constant update of teaching methods is the great investment in, great demand for, and increased use of Information, Communication and Technology (ICT) in contemporary education. The introduction of ICT in education underscores the need for the use of new teaching methods by university teachers. Paradoxically, research has shown the importance of human mediating agents such as teachers in the use of ICT. Pyoria (2007) opine that human factor is crucial in the management of knowledge. Expressed in the medium plan for 1993-1996 of The National Council for Educational Technology cited by Robinson is the fact that case studies from commerce and industry show that effective use of IT is accompanied by personal and organizational change. According to Bourner and Flowers (retrieved 2001), the acceptance of an increasing level of technology seems to be dependent on a concomitant increasing level of human interaction. The interplay between technology and human resource forms the basis of the 'high tech/high touch connectivity, which cannot be ignored in any contemporary teaching-learning context. There is the need therefore for constant professional development of the university teacher.

**Professional development of the university teacher**

The need for the professional development of teachers in higher education institutions is a very current global issue and such issues relating to teaching and learning methods are becoming of great concern to universities and other higher education institutions. Postareff et al. (2007) submit that the training of university teachers has recently become a widespread trend in many countries due to discussions in recent years about the need to improve university teachers' pedagogical thinking and skills. This submission again reinforces the inter-relatedness of beliefs and use of teaching methods. Not only is it stated in the NPE (2008, section 8, no 6 (c) that goals of tertiary education will be pursued, among others, through "virile staff development programmes", number 61 of the same section stipulates that "all teachers in tertiary institutions shall be required to undergo training in the methods and techniques of teaching". Likewise, in terms of teacher quality as stated in Nigeria’s National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy document (2004) in Ibidapo-Obe (2007), the goals of the educational system include:

1. Ensuring that 80 percent of primary school teachers acquire minimum teaching qualification (the National Certificate in Education);
2. Ensuring that 90 percent of secondary school teachers obtain professional qualifications (B.Ed., B.A.Ed., B.Sc. Ed., and PGDE);
3. Ensuring that 80 percent of teachers in tertiary institutions acquire pedagogical skills; and
4. Ensuring that 80 percent of teachers at all levels are professionals.

In the review of the IMHE (2009), findings reveal that support for quality teaching in the sample used encompasses a wide range of initiatives, which they grouped under three main headings – (a) institution-wide and quality assurance policies, (b) program monitoring, and (c) teaching and learning support. The third category includes initiatives which affect the learning and teaching process and consists of a multiplicity of actions like support for the teaching and learning environment, continuing education and pedagogy enhancement for lecturers, and support for students and student learning (focused on inputs such as the introduction of new pedagogical tools, or on outputs such as development of certain abilities for the students). UNESCO (1998) declares that adequate provision should be made for research and for updating and improving pedagogical skills, through appropriate staff development programs, encouraging constant innovation in curriculum, teaching and learning methods, and ensuring appropriate professional and financial status, and for excellence in research and teaching. The document underlines the importance of setting a vigorous policy of staff development to the well being and healthy functioning of higher learning institutions, which will make them to live up to the expectations of their respective societies. Fook and Sidhu (2010) state that the lecturers interviewed in their research expressed the need for staff development in instruction and assessment for them to be able to introduce innovative forms of assessment. Also, Dearn, Fraser, and Ryan (2002), postulate that many universities have tried to overcome the barriers to the integration of ICT through approaches to policy, quality assurance and evaluation as well as through staff development. Postareff et al (2007) also discuss the widespread trend all over the world of training university teachers in order to improve their pedagogical thinking and skills as evidenced in such countries as Norway, the United Kingdom, Sri Lanka, and Finland. Rifkin and McLoughlin (2004) recognize the focus on the shift in the roles of teaching staff from merely providing information to creating learning environments for students to engage in resource-based and student-centered learning.

It is noteworthy that literature does not just stop at recommending staff development for university staff. Rifkin and McLoughlin explain that a range of strategies for embedding learning technologies into higher education teaching and learning are revealed in literature. According to them, most of these strategies involve institution wide support for professional development with varying models such as collaboration and consultation, a combination of top down and bottom up strategies, and the need for a variety of staff development initiatives to meet different and
changing needs. The IMHE (2009) advises that innovation has to be made attractive to teachers or else they will resist and frustrate movement towards it rather than move towards it. Bourner and Towers postulate that training should involve exposure to the purpose of university education as the interpretation of teaching and what it entails is directly related to the understanding of learning aims. In their view, when there are disagreements about different teaching and learning methods, such disagreements can be traced to differences in the learning aims being assumed. Deam et al (2002) see the professionalization of teaching in higher education as the key to improving university teaching. They recommend several staff development initiatives to foster professionalization such as:

• Required formal, accredited lecturer preparation for new lecturers;
• Support for existing staff to undertake an award course in teaching;
• Sessional staff be expected to undertake a ‘minimal level’ of teaching preparation; and
• Ongoing professional development.

Reid (2002) stresses that while there are many effective approaches to staff development, there needs to be a focus on conceptual change related to teaching and learning within a specific discipline context. This view is supported by Samsonov and Beard (2002) who suggest that ‘local change environment’ is important for the introduction of initiatives.

**Problem statement**

There is an alarming call for on-line learning with a consequent requirement for newly developed methods and techniques of teaching. Yet, some developing countries like Nigeria, bedeviled with lack of resources such as electricity, technological equipment, release of financial resources for education cannot boast of appreciable growth in this much needed form of learning. It becomes necessary for the nation, while looking for a way out, to ensure that the face-to-face teaching which is still largely used in the nation’s educational system is effective. One of the ways of ensuring effectiveness in the teaching and learning process is through the effective training of the teachers who facilitate learning. The NPE (2004), in line with principles of professionalism, stipulates pedagogical training for Nigerian teachers. All over the world, there is a growing realization of a need for pedagogical training of university teachers by stakeholders majorly outside the university system. The relationship between such components as views, opinions and attitudes on the one hand and practice on the other is well known. There is a need therefore to find out from university teachers what their views and attitudes are to this important and contemporary issue, addressing such variables as sex, faculty, academic status, teaching background, and previous exposure to education. This will help to not only intimate educational stakeholders with the views and opinions of those who are expected to be the beneficiaries of the program but also help in the preparation and design of the program.
Specific objectives

The specific objectives of the research are to:

(i) examine the attitudes of OAU teachers to pedagogical skills training and its introduction in OAU;

(ii) determine the opinions of university teachers on pedagogical skills training;

(iii) establish the knowledge of university teachers on some basic pedagogical concepts; and

(iv) investigate the influence of demographic variables such as sex, faculty, academic status and teaching background, and previous exposure to education on attitudes to and opinions of university teachers to pedagogical skills training.

Methodology

Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife has 13 Faculties and about 1200 academic staff. Two hundred lecturers, randomly selected from 10 Faculties, were involved in this survey. The sample comprised 34 female and 154 male lecturers. The composition of the lecturers on the basis of Faculties is Education (23), Administration (27), Social Sciences (13), Health Sciences (13), Agriculture (29), Environmental Design and Management (25), Sciences (18), Arts (22), Law (17), Pharmacy (13). In terms of academic status, the lecturers were Assistant Lecturers (21), Lecturer II (30), Lecturer I (27), Senior Lecturer (16), Reader/Associate Professor (18), Professor (8). The years of teaching experience of the lecturers were 1-10 years (59), 10-20 years (67), 20-30 years (37) and above 30 years (37). Lecturers that had previous exposure to education were 32 while those without exposure were 168. A questionnaire titled “University Lecturers’ View on and Attitude to Pedagogical Skills Training in Obafemi Awolowo University” was used to collect relevant data. The instrument had reliability coefficient of 0.73. Administration of the instrument took place within two weeks with the help of trained research assistants. Frequency counts, mean, standard deviation and simple percentages were used to analyze the data collected.

Results

Objective 1.

Examine the attitude of OAU teachers to pedagogical skills training and its introduction in OAU.

Data were generated by scoring the responses of the respondents on a scale of 1 to 4 on three items. This gives a maximum obtainable score of 12 for a positive attitude. Descriptive analysis of mean and standard deviation was used for this analysis. The three items on which the individual respondent’s scores were obtained are contained in
Table 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Lack of university teachers' access to pedagogical skills training has not affected learning output negatively in OAU</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I will enrol in the pedagogical skills training programme of the university if it is introduced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. A university-wide seminar (prior to the introduction of the pedagogical skills training programme) will bring about the much-needed conceptual change in university classroom operations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The distribution of the scores of respondents is presented here

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/N</th>
<th>SCORE</th>
<th>FREQUENCY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X</td>
<td>8.53</td>
<td>s.d = 2.25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This result indicates that the attitude of OAU teachers to pedagogical training is positive since the mean score of 8.53 is above 6.00 which is the average of the maximum score of 12

**Objective 2**

Determine the opinions of university teachers on pedagogical skills training

Data on this objective were obtained by counting the number of responses showing strongly agree and agree on the one hand and disagree and strongly disagree on the other hand.
Depending on the language of the item, either of the two forms of response could represent a positive or negative opinion.

**Table 3: Opinions of university teachers on pedagogical skills training**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/n</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>S.A/A</th>
<th>D/S.D</th>
<th>U(Opinion not known)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>University lecturers need to be exposed to pedagogical skills training</td>
<td>172</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>There is no need for training in pedagogical skills to be able to teach students effectively</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>182</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Students will achieve more academically if teachers are pedagogically empowered</td>
<td>158</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Teachers will be better teachers if exposed to pedagogical skills training</td>
<td>161</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Greater achievements will be recorded in the University if lecturers are exposed to pedagogical skills training irrespective of discipline</td>
<td>177</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>It has become necessary to start pedagogical skills training in the University</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The result presented in Table 3 shows that all the 200 respondents had positive opinions about pedagogical training. Results show that 86% of the respondents opine that lecturers need the training and 79% agreed that the training will help students to achieve more. The highest percentage score obtained (88%) shows that lecturers are of the view that there is a correlation between pedagogical and higher productivity in the university. These positive opinions are further reinforced by opinions expressing readiness as 84% are of the opinion that the training should start in the university without delay.
Objective 3
Determine the knowledge of university teachers on some pedagogical concepts
Data were also generated by taking a count of S.A/A and D/S.D

Table 4: Knowledge of university teachers on some pedagogical concepts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/n</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>S.A/A</th>
<th>D/S.D</th>
<th>No Knowledge</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>As an expert, I am expected to transmit knowledge to my students</td>
<td>162</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The university classroom is not designed for classroom activities and interaction between teacher and students</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>174</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Pedagogical skills training will adequately empower me to assist my students academically</td>
<td>170</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Pedagogical skills training will adequately empower me to assist my students emotionally and psychologically</td>
<td>170</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Exposure to pedagogical skills training will increase my classroom communication and interaction skills</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Knowledge of the university teachers as reflected in the data presented in Table 4 shows further the need for pedagogical training of the teachers. Responses show a mixture of both misconceptions and proper conceptions of the idea of pedagogy. 82% of the respondents see teaching as mere transmission of knowledge; 87% believe that the classroom is a place designed for activities and interactions between the teacher and the students; 85% of the teachers show their knowledge of the relationship between pedagogical training and adequate empowerment to assist students both academically and psychologically; and 90% express their understanding of the relationship between pedagogical training and communication and interaction skills.
Objective 4
Investigate the influence of demographic variables (sex, faculty, academic status, teaching experience and previous exposure to education)

These factors were taken one after the other. All the items that stood for attitude and opinion were taken together and frequency counts of S.A/A and D/S.D were taken. Chi-Square statistic was used in determining the influence of each factor on the responses of the teachers on attitude and opinion.

Table 5
Influence of demographic variables on teachers’ opinion on and attitude to pedagogical training

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/N</th>
<th>FACTOR</th>
<th>X²</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Remark</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Sex</td>
<td>0.43</td>
<td>0.98</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Not Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Faculty</td>
<td>0.22</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Not Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Academic Status</td>
<td>1.32</td>
<td>0.56</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Not Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Teaching Experience</td>
<td>2.44</td>
<td>0.22</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Not Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Previous Exposure to Education</td>
<td>3.24</td>
<td>0.97</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Not Significant</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Each of these results shows that none of the factors have a significant influence on the teachers’ attitude to and opinion on pedagogical skills training.

Discussion
OAU teachers’ positive attitude to and opinions on pedagogical training is rather surprising as the general unsubstantiated notion is that not only are lecturers not ready to undergo any professional training, but that they will sabotage the programme by working against its success. The positive attitude of OAU teachers to and opinions on pedagogical skills training and its introduction is an eye-opener to the university authority. It is also noteworthy that such a positive disposition has led to the institutionalization of effective pedagogical skills training such as the one described by Mandlate (2003). Though he does not inform readers about the pre-training disposition of university teachers probably because his focus is on describing an established staff development programme, he summarizes partially by revealing that many Eduardo Mondlane University academic staff members are now willing to improve their teaching.
practice which has helped to sustain the initiative. Of utmost importance in building on teachers’ positive disposition to the introduction of pedagogical skills training, is the need for careful, systematic and strategic planning and introduction as discussed by Bourner and Flowers (retrieved 2001), Samsonov and Beard (2003), and IMHE (2009). Equally important is the finding on teachers’ readiness to start immediate training thereby backing their desire with immediate proposed action which are sine qua non to success. In educational parlance, readiness is a major pre-requisite to learning. It is interesting to note that while Postareff et al. (2007) note that there have been discussions about academics’ need to participate in pedagogical training, noting as argued by Kember (1997) that enormous efforts are needed to change underlying beliefs, the reverse is the case in this study as respondents do not need much cajoling despite the fact that they have had no informed exposure to pedagogical training. According to Postareff et al., teachers’ desire to participate in pedagogical courses and their wish to become better teachers may be the factors that lead to better teaching outcomes, not just participating in the pedagogical courses.

It is also interesting to note that university teachers, irrespective of discipline, demonstrated a greater level of understanding of pedagogical concepts than they misconstrued them. This further reinforces the veracity of their responses to items on attitudes and opinions as it shows clearly that they provided well informed responses. The majority response concerning the role of the teacher as a transmitter of information is a traditional notion, which has hitherto given way to a more constructivist and meaningful notion particularly considering the monumental constructive tasks expected of universities and their graduates. This misconception of teaching underlines the need for university teachers to be exposed to current trends in education without further delay. These trends will further help to clarify the misuse and the rightful place of the transmission model in teaching as a component, not an aim (Postareff et al. (2007). Even though these university lecturers also view teaching as interactive, informal observations show that transmission of information is the order of the day. As shown in this study, this is probably not due to ignorance but may be due to other challenges such as overcrowding, lack of resources, and inadequate time. This again shows the need for pedagogical training as ways of overcoming such challenges will be discussed and the compromising of meaningful learning which is the order of the day will be a thing of the past.

It is noteworthy that unlike some previous research in which findings revealed a clear-cut dichotomy between the transmission, teacher-centered, and the interactive, student-centered approaches based on teachers’ conceptions of teaching (Prosseer, Trigwell, & Taylor, 1994; Kember & Kwan, 2002), respondents in this study seem to be favourably disposed to both approaches. This finding supports Akerlind’s view (2003) in which he suggests that the ‘either/or’ relationship in the two conceptions (i.e. teacher and learner centered) presented by
some authors should be reconceived as an ‘and’ relationship. According to Samuelowicz & Bain (2001), Gibbs & Coffey (2004), Postareff et al. (2007), shifts in conception from teacher to learner centered are possible. This is also supported by Rifkin & McLoughlin (2004) who recognize the focus on the shift in roles of teaching staff from merely providing information to creating learning environments for students to engage in resource and student-based learning. In addition to this line of thought, this study has shown that it is possible to hold on to the two conceptions at the same time. This dual conception of teaching held by respondents may be useful in the Nigerian context given the unique nature of the challenges faced in the country. However, there is a need to expose those with such dual beliefs to pedagogical training which will expose them to professional ways of maintaining an informed, healthy, useful and meaningful balance.

The near unanimity in respondents’ responses shown in the fact that there were no significant differences in opinions as regards sex, faculty, academic status, teaching experience, and previous exposure to education further shows the timely need for the introduction of pedagogical training in OAU. This study confirms that of Bailey (1999) who did not find any differences in beliefs of academics concerning teaching based on their sex, position, faculty and level of appointment. Lindblom-Ylane, Trigwell, Nevgi, & Ashwin (2004) also did not find significant differences between the four disciplinary groups investigated in their study of teachers’ self-efficacy beliefs. Likewise, Postareff et al. (2007) did not find disciplinary differences in self-efficacy and teaching beliefs even after exposure to pedagogical training. However, Lueddeke (2003) and Lindblom-Ylane et al. found out that teachers from hard disciplines (such as chemistry) and applied hard disciplines (such as medicine) were more likely to adopt an information transmission/teacher-focused (ITTF) approach to teaching than those from the soft disciplines (such as history) and applied soft disciplines (such as education) who were more inclined to a more conceptual change/student-focused (CCSF) approach. Furthermore, contrary to the findings of this study, Postareff et al. found teaching experience to be a significant variable on the self-efficacy scale of teachers who had been exposed to pedagogical training. According to them, teachers who had teaching experience of 13 years or more scored highest on the ITTF scale while those whose teaching experience was between eight and 12 years scored highest on the CCSF scale. This finding may have meaning in the light of Kember’s (1997) argument that enormous efforts are needed to change or switch underlying beliefs. Possibly the first group have deeper entrenched views which will take time to be replaced.

The non-significance of previous educational background further reinforces the majority positive attitude and opinion of university teachers to the timely introduction of pedagogical skills training in OAU.

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Conclusion
There have been a lot of misconceptions about university teachers’ attitude to and opinion on pedagogical skills training. Contrary to perceived negative attitudes and opinions, OAU university teachers are mindful of the individual and collective benefits of such training and are ready for its immediate introduction.

References


APPENDIX

UNIVERSITY LECTURERS' VIEWS ON AND ATTITUDE TO PEDAGOGICAL SKILLS TRAINING IN OBAFEMI AWOLOWO UNIVERSITY

Sir/Ma, a survey is being embarked upon in relation to the need or otherwise for pedagogical skills training (which basically exposes one to the methodology of teaching) for university teachers in Obafemi Awolowo University (OAU). Kindly react to the items below by ticking one of the options as honestly as you can (SA=Strongly Agree; A=Agree; U=Undecided; D=Disagree; SD=Strongly Disagree). Thank you.

Section A

1. Sex: Male Female
2. Faculty/College: Administration Agriculture Arts EDM Education
   Health Sciences Pharmacy Science Social Sciences Technology
3. Status: Assistant Lecturer Lecturer II Lecturer I Senior Lecturer Reader Professor
4. Degree/Certificate/Diploma in Education: Yes No
5. Teaching Experience in OAU: 1 – 10 years 10 – 20 years 20 – 30 years Above 30 years

Section B

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>SA</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>U</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I like university teaching.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2. As a university teacher, I need to be exposed to pedagogical skills training.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. As an expert in my teaching subject, I am adequately equipped to teach my students.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>4. As an expert in my discipline, I am expected to transmit knowledge to my students.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. The university classroom is not designed for classroom activities and interactions between the teacher and the students.</td>
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6. I do not need any training in pedagogical skills to teach my students effectively in my subject area.

7. My students will achieve more academically if I am pedagogically empowered.

8. I will be a better university teacher if I am exposed to pedagogical skills training.

9. Pedagogical skills training will adequately empower me to assist my students academically.

10. Pedagogical skills training will adequately empower me to assist my students emotionally and psychologically.

11. Exposure to pedagogical skills training will increase my classroom communication and interaction skills.

12. Greater achievements will be recorded in OAU if lecturers are exposed to pedagogical skills training irrespective of discipline.

13. Lack of university teachers’ access to pedagogical skills training has not affected learning output negatively in OAU.

14. It has become necessary to start pedagogical skills training in OAU.

15. I will enroll in the pedagogical skills training program of the university if it is introduced.

16. A university-wide seminar (prior to the introduction of the pedagogical skills training program) will bring about the much-needed conceptual change in university classroom operations.

17. Once introduced, the following categories of staff should be made to enroll:
   - Assistant Lecturer to Lecturer I
   - Senior Lecturer
   - Associate Professor
   - Professor
18. The pedagogical training program should be:
   10 – 20 hours
   21 – 30 hours
   31 – 40 hours