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Effects of Powerpoint Presentation as a Teaching Method in Public Administration and the Teaching Style of Lecturers

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ABSTRACT

The teacher's major objective is to enhance performance of students. This is achieved by finding and using the best methods and practices of teaching available. There has been an increasing number of innovations in methods of teaching and learning which includes the use of PowerPoint presentation technology. This paper seeks to find out if the use of PPP improves students' grades in public administration department of Enugu State University of Science and Technology, Enugu State, Nigeria. Secondly, it seeks also to know if the understanding of lectures by students is mainly based on the use of PPP or if the teaching style of the lecturers plays a major part. To answer these questions, comparisons of performance of a seventh semester class in public administration department of the University in courses taught with PPP and courses taught using traditional lecture method were done. The class had higher grades in the courses that PPP was used as a teaching method than in the courses that were taught using the traditional 'white board, marker and talk means. It was found out also that the teaching style of a lecturer is what determines the understanding of the course and eventual high grade performance and not merely the use of PPP. This study therefore gives credence to the premise that PPP has positive and tremendous effects on students of public administration but that the lecturer's style of teaching is equally very vital.

Keywords: PowerPoint Presentation, Traditional Method of Teaching, Teaching Style, Performance.

INTRODUCTION

There has been an ongoing debate on whether the use of PowerPoint technology as a modern teaching tool has an enduring effect on public administration students. PowerPoint is the most often used tool in the information and communication technology (ICT) field and has become rather deeply rooted in educational settings [1]. Traditional means of teaching has dominated our classrooms for a long time,

but with the advent of PowerPoint, researches have indicated that students prefer PowerPoint type presentations to traditional lectures [2]; [3]; [4]. PowerPoint is a software programme that has become a basic means of delivering presentations in both lecture halls and educational centres [1]. Every day more than 30 million presentations are delivered with PowerPoint [5]. PowerPoint is a software tool that has become a presentation staple in lecture halls, conference rooms, and through the application of computer-based training. Its software is on 250 million computers world wide [6]. PowerPoint presentation is a type of presentation software that allows users to show coloured text and images with simple animation and sound. It helps to create audio, visual as well as audio-visual effects in the classrooms while teaching and can be highly effective in attracting and sustaining students' attention [7]. It is a much widely used technology in every field but it actually originated in the world of business. Presently, it has become common place practice in the field of educational technology [7].

In view of the successes recorded in the use of PowerPoint presentation by earlier users, public administration department of Enugu State University of Science and Technology, Enugu, Nigeria has been encouraging its lecturers on the need to embark on the use of the technology as the major tool of teaching and learning. However, the research intends to find out how far the use of PPP has affected students' grades and the extent the teaching style of lecturers contributes to the overall success of the students in their grades. This is salient because we believe that the mere use of PPP without a corresponding sound teaching style by lecturers will not impact the knowledge properly on the students.

STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

Public administration students have always needed an intervention to cushion the shortfall in the use of traditional method of teaching of the course. Research has shown that the teaching of various disciplines in a class has moved beyond the use

of traditional blackboard and chalk to the use of PowerPoint to facilitate the delivery of education [8]. Further research suggest “that teaching with the help of such software as PowerPoint helps students’ understanding of a topic; also, it is considered more fun thereby triggering student attention and resulting ultimately, into better student performance” [8].

Accordingly, [9] opines that the increasing use of computer technology in courses seems to have a positive impact especially as it concerns time savings, the simplification of instrument and the enhancement of the learning process; as well as the development of certain skills including writing communication, interaction, collaborative, critical thinking and consciousness.

[10], added that electronic technology also offers students the necessary knowledge and practical experience required by the market. However, there are inherent limitations associated with PP. [11] highlighted them with these five points: (1) the excessively schematic nature of PowerPoint simplifies or hinders the complexity of certain ideas from being conveyed; (2) the indiscriminate use of colour, animation and sound impede direct comprehension of the contents; (3) PowerPoint is an aid to the speaker but not the audience; (4) due to its low resolution, it is an inefficient tool for displaying tables and graphs; and (5) its set-up imposes a rigid, linear reading order based on bullet points [11] in [1].

[12], further highlights the shortcomings of PowerPoint when he states that PowerPoint inhibits presenter-audience interaction, and [13] added that it lowers the communicative quality of the presentations, while [11] collaborated by adding that it limits the number of details that can be presented.

In fact, [14] Erwin & [15] noted that studies have shown that students achieve better results in a teacher-centred class without a PowerPoint presentation. Other scholars simply observed that there are no significant differences between the use of PPP and the traditional means of teaching [16]; [17]; [18]. According to [19] [4] [20], many

courses that adopted multimedia presentations have not shown a corresponding increase in student performance. In view of the above analysis, this research wants answers to the following questions:

1. How does the use of PowerPoint presentation in teaching improve the grades of students of public administration?
2. How does instructor's teaching style affect the effectiveness of PowerPoint presentation?

LITERATURE REVIEW

MEANING AND NATURE OF POWERPOINT PRESENTATION

PowerPoint is a software programme that has become fundamental in lectures, conferences and other educational settings. More than 30 million presentations are delivered on PowerPoint everyday across the world [21]. PowerPoint Presentation is one of the multimedia technologies, and one of the most important uses of this technology is that it makes it easy for instructors to incorporate various multimedia into their teaching and instructions [7]. They went on to elaborate that PowerPoint is a Presentation Software (PS) which is easy to use and easily available and it offers a complete presentation graphics package. [21] added that presentation software is an authoring computer software that makes it possible to combine text, graphics, images, and sound to create sophisticated multimedia presentations.

All these are geared towards making PowerPoint technology the best model of teaching and learning. In that context, [5] argues that PowerPoint presentation enhances instruction and acts as a motivation to students to learn. In that regards, [22] identified three uses of PowerPoint: (a) as a guide for the speaker; (b) as a guide for the listener/reader; and (c) as a text to solely be read independent of oral discourse. Many instructors are enthusiastically embracing PowerPoint presentation as a tool for transforming teaching. It offers infinite benefits and advantages for instructions in attractive, simplified and yet a powerful way [7].

PPP can help in sustaining attention. In that line, [7] explain that “various graphic, visual and audio-visual features embedded in the use of PowerPoint presentation help attract and sustain the much required learners’ attention”. They continued that these audio, visual, and audio-visual features embedded in the use of PowerPoint presentation can surely help a lot in making the ideas simple and easy to grasp. They finally submit that PPP also helps in making a classroom highly interactive, and that course pedagogues advocate for better and meaningful teaching and learning [7].

PowerPoint does not have only positive nature. There are criticisms of its nature and [11] is most prominent with these five points: (1) the excessively schematic nature of PowerPoint simplifies or hinders the complexity of certain ideas from being conveyed; (2) the indiscriminate use of colour, animation and sound impede comprehension of the contents; (3) PowerPoint is an aid to the speaker but not to the listener; (4) due to its low resolution, it is an inefficient tool for displaying tables and graphs; and (5) its set-up imposes a rigid, linear reading order based on bullet points (adapted from Pros et al, 2013, p. 186). [6], concludes that PowerPoint is a convenient prop for inadequate speakers. It helps to reduce complicated messages to simple bullet points and elevates style over substance.

HYPOTHESES

1. There are better students’ grades in public administration department of ESUT using PowerPoint presentation.
2. The lecturers teaching style determines our understanding of the course.

METHODOLOGY

To determine the effectiveness of PowerPoint presentation method of teaching over the white board and marker method in public administration of Enugu State University of Science and Technology, questionnaire and observation methods were used. Questionnaires were shared to the 101 students that make up the fourth year

class. 91 students however returned their questionnaires. The result grades in a public administration course that was taught with PowerPoint was observed and compared with the grades of the result of a public administration course that was taught using the traditional white board and marker. The collected data were arranged, classified and analyzed. The results and discussion of the collected data forms the bases of the next section.

DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

(a) Effects of PPP on students' grades

The chi-square statistical tool was applied to verify whether or not students perform better in courses taught with PowerPoint than courses taught traditionally with marker and white board in public administration department of Enugu State University, Enugu, Nigeria. The table below was generated using answers from our questionnaire which 91 students comprising 45 males and 46 females responded to:

Table 1: Contingency table of Hypothesis I

<i>Response</i>	<i>O_i</i>	<i>e_i</i>	<i>O_i-e_i</i>	<i>(O_i-e_i)²</i>	$\frac{(O_i - e_i)^2}{e_i}$
SA	48	18.2	29.80	888.04	48.790
A	19	18.2	0.80	0.64	0.035
NA	03	18.2	-15.20	231.04	12.695
D	21	18.2	2.80	7.84	0.431
SD	-	18.2	-18.2	331.24	18.200
Total	91				80.151

Source: Field Survey, 2015

This is a case of 4 x 1 contingency. The degree of freedom, $n-1 = 5-1=4$ degree of freedom. The level of significance = 0.05 (5%). The critical value at 4 degree of freedom and 0.05 level of significance is equal to 9.49. The calculated value (80.151) is greater than the critical value (9.49). Therefore, we accept the hypothesis one.

Decision: Students make better grades in courses taught with PowerPoint than traditional marker and board means.

(b) Determining the effect of the teaching style of lecturers on the understanding of courses taught with PPP.

The chi-square statistical tool was also applied to determine if the understanding of courses in public administration of ESUT is based on the use of PPP or on lecturer's style of teaching.

Table 2: Contingency table of Hypothesis 2

Response	O _i	e _i	O _i -e _i	(O _i -e _i) ²	$\frac{(O_i - e_i)^2}{e_i}$
SA	53	18.2	34.8	1211.04	66.54
A	22	18.2	3.8	14.44	0.79
NA	05	18.2	-13.2	174.24	9.57
D	09	18.2	-9.2	84.64	4.65
SD	02	18.2	-16.2	262.44	14.42
Total	91				95.97

Source: Field Survey, 2015

The calculated value = 95.97

The degree of freedom, $n-1 = 4 - 1 = 3$ = degree of freedom. The level of significance = 0.05. The critical value at 3 degree of freedom and 0.05 level of significance = 9.49. The calculated value (95.97) is greater than the critical value (9.49). Therefore we accept the hypothesis two.

Decision: The teaching style of the lecturer determines students' understanding of courses.

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to determine if students of public administration ESUT, do better in courses taught with PPP than with traditional means. We set out also to find out if students follow and understand lectures merely because PP is used or if the teaching style of the instructor plays a part.

Firstly using observation method, we observed that students actually had better grades in their seventh semester result in courses of public administration using PPP. The results of our field survey collaborated this. However, the students were

adamant that the teaching style of their lecturers determines if actually they will understand the lectures. If the lecturer does not teach well and impact the knowledge to enable students do well, PowerPoint will not.

The grades of students of public administration ESUT, in courses taught with PPP were good not just because electronic means was used but also because the teaching styles of their lecturers were equally attractive. If lecturers cannot communicate and use effective teaching styles, PPP on its own cannot achieve much. The task of explanation and driving home the points rests with the instructors. Therefore, bad instructors limit the impact of PPP.

CONCLUSIONS

The teacher's major objective is to enhance performance of students. This is achieved by finding and using the best methods and practices of teaching available. From the result of our study, we conclude that PowerPoint presentation is the best method of delivering lectures if the best in students of public administration are to be brought out. The observed result grades in the present eight semester class and the analyzed results of the questionnaire instrument used in the study prove that. However, it was empirically proved that in the final analysis, the actual understanding of lectures depend on the teaching style of the lecturers. This goes a long way in enhancing teaching and learning and supplements the efforts of PowerPoint technology.

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