



LEADING EFFECTIVE TEACHING & LEARNING IN THE CLASSROOM: A PROPOSED MODEL

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Cite This Article: Dr. Michael Marttinson Boakye, "Leading Effective Teaching & Learning in the Classroom: A Proposed Model", Indo American Journal of Multidisciplinary Research and Review, International Peer Reviewed - Refereed Research Journal, Volume 8, Issue 1, January - June, Page Number 1-6, 2024.

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Abstract:

Effective teaching plays a vital role in shaping the future of our society by nurturing the minds of the next generation. It is the responsibility of school leaders to create an environment that fosters effective teaching practices. This paper explores the crucial relationship between school leadership and effective teaching, highlighting the key attributes and strategies that successful school leaders employ to promote effective teaching and enhance student outcome. The discussion points include school leadership and effective teaching, learning orientation philosophy, the effective teacher or facilitator, effective teaching methods and lesson design, the effective learning or lesson, the effective learner, effective feedback and the effective teaching and learning model.

Introduction:

Promoting effective teaching and learning in the classroom has been recklessly handled by schools and school administrators. The issue of learning orientation which is bedrock for academic or human development catalyst has not been given due weight and attention in Ghana.

External factors that impedes Effective Teaching and Learning in schools includes but not limited to:

- The Schools Orientation; Schools with learning orientation philosophy are able to supply, facilitate and motivate both teachers and learners for effective learning. Schools with performance orientation are likely to focus on superficial aspects of learning. They are interested in how students perform.
- Wrong operation of Pre-school concepts; Concepts are ideas of how something exist or works. The concept of pre-school education crèche, nursery, kindergarten, Montessori - have their own philosophies, operation systems, and characteristics. The advocates of these concepts have special reasons and purpose. All can't be same though may have similarities. However, I see Ghanaian educators applying all the concepts at the same time in one school. We see pre-schools having crèche class, nursery class, kindergarten class and others with an excuse of age differentiation. Consider the meaning and features of the pre-school concepts to make an informed decision. If the concepts are not properly understood then it can't be effectively operated. What did Ghana gain or lose in changing secondary schools to High schools? What difference did it make? And what influence did it have on our educational system not considering the number of years 3 or 4 years? What are the concepts, philosophies and operational systems of High school?
- Wrong usage of terminologies; I have seen a number of educational institutions ending with centre or complex. E.g. Michael Educational Centre. I personally think the naming or terms used have a long lasting effect on schools. For instance a Centre is an ambiguous word and so not appropriate to describe an educational institute.
- Wrong operational systems; Most schools have no or qualified governing council or management and that affects Effective teaching and learning. This is possible because most decisions may not favor and promote learning.
- Bad government policies; some educational policies from politicians are detrimental to effective teaching and learning
- Under Estimate of on the job training or In-service training; most schools have no policies in place to upgrade teachers. There is no training and development agenda for most schools and teachers and that affects effective teaching and learning. If the above are critically taken into consideration and mitigated, surely schools can promote effective teaching and learning.

School Leadership and Effective Teaching:

Education leadership revolves around the process of guiding and inspiring individuals within the educational community towards achieving common goals. An educational leader is responsible for setting the vision, mission, and objectives for an institution, as well as developing strategies to achieve them. They possess strong interpersonal skills, effective communication abilities, and a deep understanding of pedagogy. Furthermore, educational leaders are focused on creating a positive culture and climate within the institution, fostering an environment conducive to teaching and learning.

They encourage collaboration among staff members, promote professional growth, and actively engage with the broader educational community. Research indicates that effective leadership positively

impacts student achievement, teacher morale, and overall school improvement (Leithwood et al., 2022). The focus on the creation of positive culture and climate promote effective teaching and learning.

Learning Orientation Philosophy:

The Performance orientation is prevailing. The contrast between learning orientation and performance orientation clearly shows the positive and negative sense of human development being academic, social, intellectual and physical (Beere, 2020). The learning orientation philosophy of Education has the following beliefs: Efforts lead to success, Ability to improve and to learn leads to success, Preference for challenging tasks and Personal satisfaction for success at difficult task.

It is imperative to note that, the above will surely help to improve one's competence - the ability to do something in a satisfactory or effective way. Learning orientation is the best and positive way for human development.

The performance Orientation Philosophy has the following beliefs: Ability leads to success, Concern to be judged as able to perform, Satisfaction from doing better than others Emphasis of competition and public evaluation and Run away from difficult task.

The above as well is concerned with proving one's ability. Indeed the performance orientation philosophy is a negative way of human development. Every academic expert and human development agent must understand that effort leads to success and not ability. The emphasis of competition in Ghanaian academic cycles has influences the academic assessment procedures in schools right from Basic to Secondary education (Gadsby, 2019). This has accounted for the numerous examination leakages and malpractices. Every student in Ghana is oriented in education for performance and not for learning. As a nation, learning for learning is what would bring about effective human capital progress. Learning to pass examination is good but it is about time learning for learning must be considered so each student can improve his/her competence but not prove competence.

If we can learn for learning, we improve competence but if we learn for performance we prove ability. Proving ability in education has led to wrong assessment procedures hence overall best position are stated in term's report sheets in some schools in Ghana. That is good but it kills the desire for efforts and therefore must be done consciously.

If effective teaching and learning can take place in the classroom there is a need for some key factors to be considered. In this lecture, I shall be unveiling how to promote effective teaching and learning in the classroom. The areas I shall be covering are, and these areas are the conditions necessary for maximizing effective teaching.

- The effective teacher or facilitator
- The effective methodology and design
- The effective learning or lesson
- The effective learner
- The effective feedback.
- Proposed model: Effective teaching and learning in the Classroom

The Effective Teacher or Facilitator:

Ancient day's knowledge impartation was done by teachers. The concept or the orientation philosophy of a teacher is different from a facilitator. A Teacher just teaches and that is giving instructions. A facilitator is someone who helps a person to find solution to a problem. The facilitator directs student's interest in discovering knowledge for themselves. The facilitator has techniques to help students "make sense of" learning or lessons (Gravells, 2010). If a teacher graduates to the level of a facilitator, he/she is able to make student construct meaning out of lessons delivered.

It is not enough to instruct but to help student construct meaning is the bedrock for effective learning. The above must give rise to a teacher facilitator. The above then calls for an effective teacher facilitator who can ensure the optimum satisfaction from the learning process. Therefore, the effective teacher or facilitator must possess the following characteristics and qualification. The effective teacher or facilitator must be competent and the competence must base on: Knowledge, Skills, Experience and Communication ability and personal characteristics.

The competence of a teacher or a facilitator is contingent on his or her Professional training, Practice and experience, Knowledge of context, Personal characteristics and Cognitive ability.

Professional Training:

Teaching and facilitating is a professional activity which requires training. A teacher or facilitator who allows himself or herself to go through vigorous training and intensive practicum experience is likely to be more effective in the teaching and learning process. Professional training brings about professionalism (Betty, 2019). That is, knowing what to do and how to do it to achieve maximum results. It is a great pleasure to see your efforts yield results. This is much possible with professional training.

Practice and Experience:

Practice they say makes perfect. Teaching and facilitating is a hands-on activity. The length of practice gives rise to much richer experience. To be much effective teacher or facilitator has to depend on practice and experience. The level of ones awareness of responsibility in teaching and facilitating brings efficiency.

Knowledge of Context:

The most effective or teacher facilitator has adequate and relevant information in the subject or area of teaching. Such information and knowledge should address the concerns and curiosity of students. The knowledge of the teacher or facilitator should ignite a learning interest in students.

Personal Characteristic:

The teacher or facilitator brings to teaching his or her personal attributes and characteristics which are natural or acquired to enhance effective teaching and learning (Powell, 2018). The most effective teaching or facilitator has the following attributes or traits.

- Affiliated to learning - likes to and used to learning
- Learns about learning - knows and understands how to learn
- Adaptability and flexibility - able to manage the learning process
- Confidence and poise ready and sure to know the learning
- Objective - knows why the learning must be learned.
- Sense of humor making learning a fun
- Broadminded - knows how to bring in different examples to better learning
- Sincerity - knows what he knows and can do
- Understanding - knowing learners and their needs
- Patience - ready to handle student learning process and exercises
- Friendliness - able to identify with learners
- Collaborative - ready to work with others in the learning process.

These traits makes the teacher or facilitator more effective in approach and receptive to teaching and learning.

Cognition:

The teacher must have appropriate level of cognitive ability. Every teacher must have something to offer. The teacher must possess some specialized knowledge in the area of teaching, skills and intervention skills.

Effective Teaching Methods and Lesson Design:

Teaching Methods:

The effective teacher brings on board diverse teaching methods. Teaching is more likely to have maximum positive impact on a learner if the teacher is aware of methods of teaching and brings into play the essential elements of each method. Different methods may be suitable in different situations, depending on the following: Subject, Topic, and Time constraint, Objective of the lesson, the learner expectations and the environment. The different teaching methods are group into three: Learner centered approach, Teacher centered approach and Collaborative approach

Learner Centered Approach:

This is a teaching method driven by the learner's agency. The learning is designed, delivered according to the learners pace, style and level. This approach leads to sense making of lessons and that propels learners to construct meaning through personal understanding. The learner makes the learning a personal one.

Teacher Centered Approach:

This is where the teacher decides on how to successfully impact instructions to learners through "Best fit Philosophy". This approach unlike the later, leads to instruction. Learners picks the teacher's understanding of the lesson and makes it their own which they are likely to forget if a regular review is not done or lesson application delays.

Collaborative Approach:

This approach involves the teacher, the learner and others (colleagues) discussing, learning and joining knowledge. This approach creates a knowledge community and that helps all learners and teachers to co-construct meaning of lessons. This approach benefits both teacher and learners as it develops diverse technique of knowledge acquisition, application and transfer of knowledge. In this modern era of knowledge acquisition and rapid human development I recommend collaborative centered approach to teaching which seeks the involvement of all learners and the teacher in a collaborative form. This method builds: Team work spirit for each learner, Unity for the group, Sense of belongingness for each learner, Ability of expression for each learner, Socialization and cooperation among learners, Problem solving skills for each learner.

Kinds of Teaching Methods:

The following methodology may be suitable for different occasions for effective teaching and learning: Question and Answer Methods, Group work Methods, Lecture Methods, Project Methods and Montessori Methods etc. The teacher must be well informed about diverse methods and their importance in order to apply it skillfully for learner's optimum satisfaction and understanding of lessons (Wallaces, 2019).

Effective Lesson Design:

Effective lesson is designed on a positive pattern - learning orientation philosophy which has the following beliefs: a belief that efforts lead to success, a belief that one's ability to improve leads to success, a belief that one's ability to learn leads to success, a belief in challenging task and a belief in problem solving through self- instructions leads to success. The above belief contributes to improving upon one's competences. An effective lesson has the following characteristics: Clearly defined Rationale or objective, Relate to previous experience, Reflective in approach, Evaluate present knowledge, and Shape future Action and Formulate new knowledge.

The Effective Learning or Lesson:

The major responsibility of every effective teacher or facilitator is to prepare an effective learning or lesson.

An Effective Lesson Must Meet the Learning Style of the Learners:

Each learner is likely to adopt one or more of the under listed learning styles

- Activist: Needs active way of teaching to make meaning of learning.
- Reflector: Needs adequate experiment and project work to make meaning of lessons.
- Theorist: Needs models, charts, pictures, other visuals etc. to make meaning of lessons.
- Pragmatist: Needs a lot of practical and experiments to do, know and understand lessons.

The Effective Lesson is Prepared on the foundation of Learning Orientation Philosophy:

The activity in the lesson is simplified for easy sense making in meaning construction. Ample time is needed for learner to reflect make meaning and to move forward. The four models of pedagogy is considered paramount. It includes: Learning by being shown e.g. videos, charts, pictures, etc. Learning by being told e.g. using stories, poetry, songs, narratives etc. Learning by constructing meaning e.g. Learners learn to do, know, and understand in their own perspective and the Learning by joining knowledge or community e.g. Group work. Generating

The Effective Lesson is Simple in Structure. Observing the HBT Principle:

HBT stand for Hook, Book and Took.

- Hook: This is the introduction of the lesson. It must cover the objective of the learning. Unveiling of the Topic which can be done by technique of Relevant Previous Knowledge or Demonstration.
- Book: Information or Knowledge to be gained. This covers clearly setting out core points, richer in content based on level of the learner.
- Took: This is what the learner takes with him/her. This is the experience or knowledge to be applied to real life situation now and in future. This stage is where the learner learns to Do or Practice, Know or keeps in Memory and Understand or Construct meaning for use or application.

The Effective Learner:

A learner is an individual who is learning something through study. The learner has needs and that need must be met. However, for the needs of a learner to be realized, the learner must be effective.

Conditions to Becoming an Effective Learner:

Learner Characteristics:

For a learner to be effective, he/she must possess salient qualifications to facilitate effective learning which include: Affiliation to learning; Adoptability to situation; Learner Responsibility; Ability to improve; Skills with ideas, persons and things, Cooperation and Teachability and Open Mindedness and Articulate

Learning Styles:

Students have different learning styles and that facilitate their learning process. Each student must be helped to adopt two or more of the various learning style.

Active Approach of Learning:

Active learning approach is where learners get involve in new experiences or lessons. With a lot of energy, desire, and effort active learners tackle problems by brainstorming. Teachers must use more active words and descriptions to benefit such students.

Pragmatist Approach of Learning:

Pragmatic learners involve or emphasis on practical results rather than theories and ideas. These learners like to try out ideas to see if they work in practice. Pragmatic learners take the first chance to experiment and apply. This indicates that teachers must make the lesson more practical and experimental so that pragmatic learners can benefit.

Theorist approach of Learning:

Theorist learning approach makes use of one or more ideas that explains why something happens in order to make meaning. This approach of learning like to try to analyze and synthesis (forming a new idea through the combination of different ideas or styles) this type of learners again focus on assumptions, principles, theorist and models. These learners make use of pictures, charts, videos, demonstrations and illustration to do, know and understand lessons. Teachers must also use charts, pictures, videos, sight-seeing and others to benefit the theorist learner.

Reflective Approach of Learning:

Reflective Learners are serious, careful and thoughtful group who like to stand back and ponder on experiences or lessons. They observe to do, know and understand lessons from many different perspectives. Such learners may need enough time to make sense of learning. The teacher needs to help reflective learners by giving adequate home or project work to enhance reflections on lessons.

Effective Feedback:

Feedback in Education is under- estimated and overlooked in the learning process. Proper and accurate feedback is essential to effective teaching and learning in the classroom.

Getting Feedback from the Teaching and Learning Process:

Initial acceptance or Rejection:

At the point of introducing a learning or lesson in the classroom the effective teacher must watch out for the readiness or unreadiness of the class towards the learning. Learner's readiness indicates the desire to participate and the unreadiness indicates unwillingness to participants.

Facial Expressions, Uncontrollable Fidgeting and Others:

The look on the face of the learner is a powerful feedback to the teacher. A frowned and unpleasant facial look discourages the teaching and learning process. Fidgeting and unnecessary noise - making including walking out of class indicates that the teacher must do something to give learners a break, change the activity or change the teaching method etc.

Low Scores and Poor Performance:

How students perform in class either tells that a lesson must be repeated or progressed. The output of learners over a lesson must be a good feedback for re-strategizing (Avis, 2014). The following are good source of feedback: Class assignment, Project /home assignment; Class Discussions between learners and teachers provide feedback. For instance, Question and Answer discussions of lessons are good feedback technique. One and One discussions. The teacher can call for one on one discussion to find out how individual learners are faring with lessons.

The Effective Teaching and Learning Cycle:

For there to be an effective learning and feedback the Trio (Teacher, Learning, and learner) must be considered and given weightier attention. The teacher must design quality lesson use appropriate methodology in delivery and learner must provide appropriate feedback (Duckworth et al, 2020).

The Effective Teaching and Learning Cycle:

The Effective Learning Impact (outcome). An effective learning builds the character of the learner, increases the skills of the Learner which finally enhances the image of the learner in the long term.

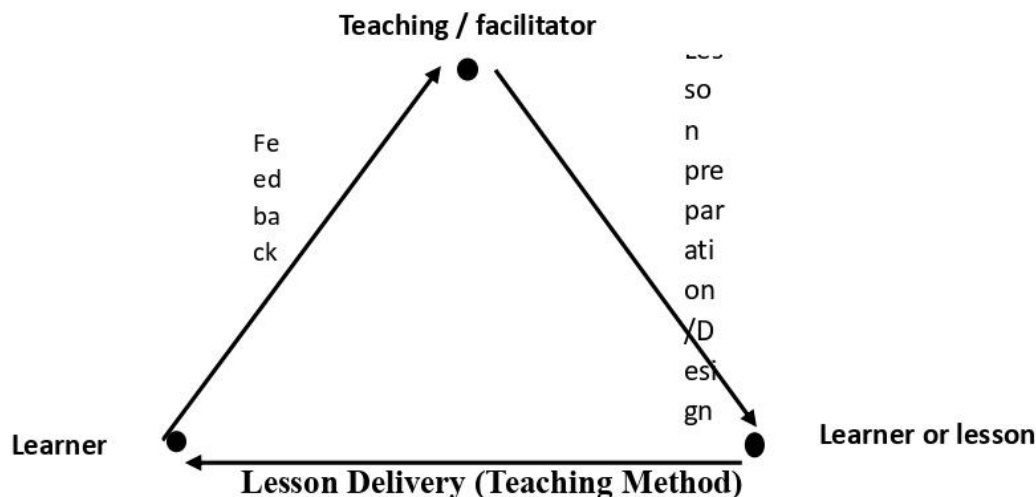


Figure 1: The Effective Teaching and Learning Cycle

The Effective Teaching and Learning Model:

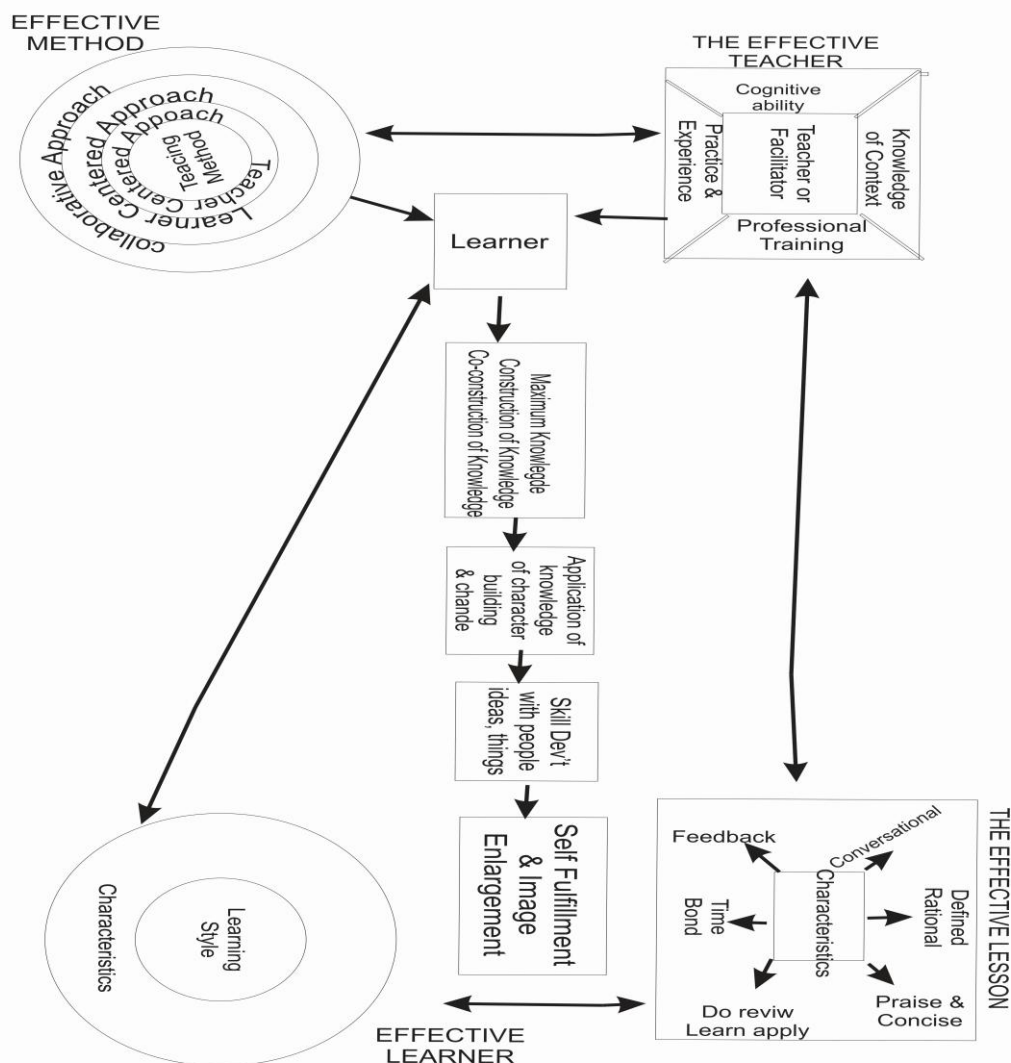


Figure 2: The Effective Teaching and Learning Model

Conclusion:

The success or failure of your school depends upon the sort of leadership you provide. You provide: Leadership in management, Leadership in financial administration and Leadership in Teaching and Learning. To promote learning, you need to use learning dialogue extensively. Dialogue gives the opportunity for people to: Offer contributions to address issues; Pay rapt attention to what other people say and probably change their negativity stance; Learn how to think together during the dialogue process and to come out with collective decision; See beyond issues being discussed and make useful suggestions; Resolve issues based on collective decisions taken and Develop healthy relationships with others.

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