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PEDAGOGICAL COMPETENCIES AND ECONOMICS EDUCATION LECTURERS' INSTRUCTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS IN UNIVERSITIES IN SOUTH-EAST NIGERIA

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Abstract

This study examined the relationship between pedagogical competencies and Economics Education lecturers' instructional effectiveness in universities in South-East Nigeria. Specifically, the study investigated the extent to which classroom management skills and feedback mechanism relate to lecturers' instructional effectiveness. A correlational survey design was adopted for the study. The population comprised 61 Economics Education lecturers in public universities in Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu, and Imo States, and the entire population was used through the census sampling technique. Two researcher-developed instruments, namely the Pedagogical Competencies Questionnaire (PCQ) and the Economics Educators' Instructional Effectiveness Questionnaire (EEIEQ), were used for data collection. The instruments were validated by experts in Economics Education, Curriculum and Instruction, and Measurement and Evaluation, while their reliability coefficients obtained through Cronbach Alpha were 0.79 for Classroom Management Skills, 0.81 for Feedback Mechanism, and 0.96 for Instructional Effectiveness. Data were analyzed using Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMCC) to answer the research questions and Linear Regression Analysis to test the hypotheses at the 0.05 level of significance. The findings revealed that classroom management skills significantly relate to Economics Education lecturers' instructional effectiveness and that feedback mechanism also significantly relate to lecturers' instructional effectiveness in universities in South-East Nigeria. The study concluded that effective classroom management and constructive feedback practices are essential pedagogical competencies for improving instructional effectiveness among Economics Education lecturers. It was therefore recommended that university management should strengthen pedagogical training programmes with emphasis on classroom management and effective feedback practices in order to enhance the quality of instructional delivery in Economics Education.

Keywords: Pedagogical Competencies, Classroom Management Skills, Feedback Mechanism, Instructional Effectiveness, Economics Education lecturers, South-East Nigeria.

Introduction

The quality of university education depends largely on the effectiveness of lecturers in facilitating learning, guiding students' intellectual development, and promoting the achievement of curriculum objectives. In contemporary higher education, attention has increasingly shifted from what lecturers know to how they teach, interact with students, manage learning environments, and support students' academic progress. This shift has made pedagogical competence a critical factor in determining instructional effectiveness, particularly in professional disciplines such as Economics Education where students are expected to develop analytical reasoning, problem-solving abilities, and the capacity to apply economic concepts to real-life situations (UNESCO, 2021). In this regard, Economics Education occupies an important position in university education because it equips students with the knowledge and skills needed for informed economic decision-making, entrepreneurship, public policy analysis, and effective participation in national development. The discipline involves both theoretical understanding and practical application; consequently, effective teaching requires more than adequate knowledge of economic concepts. Lecturers are expected to plan and organize learning experiences, encourage active student participation, provide constructive feedback, and create classroom environments that promote inquiry, reflection, and critical thinking. When these pedagogical responsibilities are not effectively carried out, students may encounter difficulties in understanding abstract economic concepts, engaging in meaningful classroom discussions, and applying economic knowledge to real-life situations (Biggs & Tang, 2011).

Given these expectations placed on Economics Education lecturers, pedagogical competence has been recognized as one of the major determinants of teaching quality in higher education. It encompasses the knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions that enable lecturers to plan instruction, manage classroom interactions, assess learning, provide feedback, and adapt teaching to students' needs. Caena and Redecker (2019) explained that pedagogical competence involves the ability to design, implement, evaluate, and improve teaching and learning processes in ways that enhance students' learning experiences. Similarly, Darling-Hammond et al. (2020) emphasized that effective pedagogy requires lecturers to create supportive learning environments, engage students actively, and use appropriate assessment and feedback strategies to promote learning.

Based on this understanding of pedagogical competence, researchers have identified several dimensions that directly influence instructional effectiveness. Among these dimensions, classroom management skills and feedback mechanism are particularly important for instructional effectiveness. Scholars have consistently identified these variables as integral components of pedagogical competence because they directly influence the quality of teaching and learning. Caena and Redecker (2019) maintained that pedagogical competence includes the ability of educators to organize learning environments, manage classroom interactions, monitor students' progress, and provide feedback that supports learning improvement. Similarly, Darling-Hammond et al. (2020) argued that effective pedagogy requires lecturers not only to possess subject knowledge but also to create supportive classroom conditions and use assessment feedback strategically to enhance students' understanding and participation. Their position suggests that classroom management and feedback practices are not peripheral teaching activities but core professional competencies that shape instructional effectiveness.

To begin with, classroom management involves the deliberate actions lecturers take to create an orderly, respectful, and engaging learning environment that maximizes instructional time and minimizes disruptions. Effective classroom management enables lecturers to maintain students' attention, organize classroom activities efficiently, encourage participation, and foster positive lecturer–student relationships. Burden (2020) explained that classroom management is a fundamental pedagogical responsibility through which teachers establish behavioural expectations, maintain classroom order, and create conditions that support active learning. In the same vein, Liu et al. (2023) observed that effective classroom management promotes positive teacher–student relationships, increases students' engagement, and contributes to improved academic outcomes. In university settings, where students come from diverse academic and social backgrounds, lecturers who possess strong classroom management skills are better positioned to facilitate meaningful learning experiences.

Closely related to classroom management is the issue of feedback, which serves as a bridge between teaching and learning. Feedback mechanism is equally recognized as a vital dimension of pedagogical competence. Hattie and Timperley (2021) emphasized that feedback is one of the most powerful influences on learning because it provides students with information about their current performance and the steps required for improvement. Nicol (2021) also viewed feedback as an essential pedagogical process that supports self-regulated learning, encourages reflection, and strengthens students' academic engagement. From this perspective, lecturers who provide timely, constructive, and specific feedback demonstrate an important pedagogical competence that enhances students' understanding of economic concepts and improves the overall effectiveness of instruction.

Beyond supporting students' learning, effective feedback also enables lecturers to evaluate the effectiveness of their instructional strategies and make necessary adjustments. Contemporary educational research suggests that timely, specific, and constructive feedback contributes significantly to students' academic performance, motivation, and self-regulated learning (Darling-Hammond et al., 2020). In Economics Education, where students are often required to interpret data, solve quantitative problems, and analyze economic situations, feedback plays a vital role in deepening understanding and improving performance. Consequently, both classroom management skills and feedback mechanism represent practical expressions of pedagogical competence that can significantly influence Economics Education lecturers' instructional effectiveness in universities in South-East Nigeria.

Having established the relevance of these pedagogical competencies, it becomes necessary to consider the outcome variable to which they are linked. Instructional effectiveness refers to the extent to which lecturers are able to facilitate learning and achieve intended educational outcomes through appropriate teaching practices. It includes effective lesson delivery, student engagement, assessment of learning, classroom interaction, and the ability to help students acquire relevant knowledge and skills. Obi and Uzochukwu (2021) described instructional effectiveness as the demonstration of pedagogical competence that enables students to comprehend, analyze, and apply economic concepts in solving practical problems. Emenike and Ndubuisi (2023) further noted that instructional effectiveness is reflected in lecturers' use of appropriate teaching strategies, assessment practices, and feedback processes that enhance students' participation and achievement.

However, despite the recognized importance of pedagogical competence and instructional effectiveness, concerns have continued to emerge regarding the quality of instructional delivery in some Nigerian universities. Studies have reported challenges such as low student participation, ineffective feedback practices, weak classroom interaction, and unsatisfactory learning outcomes in higher education institutions (Okolie, Igwe, & Elom, 2020; Uzoechina & Nwafor, 2022). These concerns suggest that some lecturers may possess adequate disciplinary knowledge but experience difficulties in translating such knowledge into effective teaching practices that promote active learning and students' engagement. In South-East Nigeria, universities operate under varying conditions of institutional support, class size, workload, and instructional resources, all of which may influence lecturers' pedagogical practices and instructional effectiveness (Eze & Ezeugbor, 2020; Zhou & Xu, 2020). Furthermore, although previous studies have examined factors such as professional development, teaching experience, and institutional support in relation to lecturers' performance (Darling-Hammond et al., 2020; Kraft & Papay, 2016), limited empirical attention has been given to the specific roles of classroom management skills and feedback mechanism as dimensions of pedagogical competence among Economics Education lecturers in universities in South-East Nigeria.

Against this background, the identified gap becomes important because improving instructional effectiveness in Economics Education requires evidence on the pedagogical factors that are most closely associated with effective teaching. Understanding how classroom management skills and feedback mechanism relate to instructional effectiveness can provide useful insights for lecturer development programmes, university administrators, curriculum planners, and policymakers seeking to improve the quality of Economics Education in Nigerian universities. It is against this background that the present study examined the relationship between pedagogical competencies and Economics Education lecturers' instructional effectiveness in universities in South-East Nigeria, with particular focus on classroom management skills and feedback mechanism.

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between pedagogical competencies and Economics Education lecturers' instructional effectiveness in universities in South-East Nigeria. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. assess the extent classroom management skills relate to Economics Education lecturers' instructional effectiveness in universities in South-East Nigeria; and
2. determine the extent feedback mechanism relates to Economics Education lecturers' instructional effectiveness in universities in South-East Nigeria.

- To what extent do classroom management skills relate to Economics Education Lecturers' instructional effectiveness in universities in South-East Nigeria?
- To what extent does feedback mechanism relate to Economics Education Lecturers' instructional effectiveness in universities in South-East Nigeria?

The following null hypotheses guided the study and were tested at 0.05 level of significance:

H_{01}: There is no significant relationship between classroom management skills and Economics Education Lecturers' instructional effectiveness in universities in South-East Nigeria.

H_{02}: There is no significant relationship between feedback mechanism and Economics Education Lecturers' instructional effectiveness in universities in South-East Nigeria.

Methodology

The study adopted a correlational survey research design to examine the relationship between pedagogical competencies and Economics Education lecturers' instructional effectiveness in public universities in South-East Nigeria. Pedagogical competencies were operationalized using classroom management skills and feedback mechanism. The study was conducted in the five states of South-East Nigeria: Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu, and Imo. The population comprised 61 Economics Education lecturers drawn from federal and state public universities in the region. Because the population was manageable, the entire population was used through the census sampling technique, thereby ensuring full representation and eliminating sampling error.

Data were collected using two researcher-developed instruments: the Pedagogical Competencies Questionnaire (PCQ) and the Economics Educators' Instructional Effectiveness Questionnaire (EEIEQ). The PCQ contained 16 items arranged into two clusters: Classroom Management Skills

(8 items) and Feedback Mechanism (8 items), while the EEIEQ contained 10 items measuring instructional effectiveness. All items were rated on a 4-point scale of Very Often (4), Often (3), Less Often (2), and Very Less Often (1). The instruments were validated by three experts in Economics Education, Curriculum and Instruction, and Measurement and Evaluation from Michael Okpara University of Agriculture, Umudike. A trial test involving 10 Economics Education lecturers in Rivers State yielded Cronbach Alpha coefficients of 0.79 for Classroom Management Skills, 0.81 for Feedback Mechanism, and 0.96 for Instructional Effectiveness, indicating acceptable reliability.

The questionnaires were administered physically and electronically with the assistance of trained research assistants. Ethical approval and informed consent were obtained, and respondents were assured of confidentiality and anonymity. Data collected were analyzed using Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMCC) to answer the research questions, while Linear Regression Analysis was used to test the null hypotheses at the 0.05 level of significance. The null hypotheses were rejected whenever the p-value was less than 0.05.

Results

The results are presented in tables according to the research questions and hypotheses that guided the study.

Research Question 1

To what extent does classroom management skills relate to Economics educators' instructional effectiveness in universities in South East, Nigeria?

Table 1.1: Correlation matrix between Classroom management skills and Economics educators' instructional effectiveness in universities in South East, Nigeria

		CMS	**EIE**
	Pearson	1	.839
CMS	Sig (2-tailed)		.000
	N	60	60
	R^2	(0.704)	
		70.4%	

EIE	Pearson	.839	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	60	60

CMS = Classroom Management Skills, EIE= Economics Educators' Instructional Effectiveness

The results on Table 1.1 reveal a correlation (r) value of .839 which is positive and within the coefficient limit of range of 0.80 and above, indicating very high extent relationship. This result shows that classroom management skills to a very high extent, relate to Economics educators' instructional effectiveness in universities in South East, Nigeria. The coefficient of determination (R^2) of 0.704 indicates that 70.4% of Economics educators' instructional effectiveness in universities in South East, Nigeria could be accounted for by the classroom management skills.

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant relationship between classroom management skills and Economics educators' instructional effectiveness in universities in South East, Nigeria.

Table 1.2: Regression analysis of extent of relationship between Classroom management skills and Economics educators' instructional effectiveness in universities in South East, Nigeria

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	8419.201	1	8419.201	102.010	$.000^b$
Residual	4869.465	59	82.533		
Total	13288.666	60			

The data in Table 2 indicates a P-value of .000 which is less than 0.05 alpha level. This means that the hypothesis of no significant relationship stated is rejected. Therefore, there is a significant positive relationship between classroom management skills and Economics educators' instructional effectiveness in universities in South East, Nigeria.

Research Question Two

To what extent does feedback mechanism relate to Economics educators' instructional effectiveness in universities in South East, Nigeria?

Table 2.1: Correlation matrix between Feedback mechanism and Economics educators' instructional effectiveness in universities in South East, Nigeria

		FBM	EIE
	Pearson	1	. 803
FBM	Sig (2-tailed)		.002
	N	60	60
	R^2	(0.645)	
		64.5%	
EIE	Pearson	.803	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.002	
	N	60	60

FBM = Feedback Mechanism, EIE= Economics educators' instructional effectiveness

Results in Table 2.1 reveal a correlation (r) value of .803 which is positive and within the coefficient limit of range of 0.80 and above, indicating very high extent relationship. This result shows that feedback mechanism to a very high extent, relate to Economics educators' instructional effectiveness in universities in South East, Nigeria. The coefficient of determination (R^2) of 0.645 indicates that 64.5% of Economics educators' instructional effectiveness in universities in South East, Nigeria could be accounted for by the feedback mechanism.

Hypothesis 2

There is no significant relationship between feedback mechanism and Economics educators' instructional effectiveness in universities in South East, Nigeria.

Table 2.2: Regression analysis of extent of relationship between Feedback mechanism and Economics educators' instructional effectiveness in universities in South East, Nigeria

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	8642.523	1	8642.523	86.862	.002[b]
Residual	5870.332	59	99.497		
Total	14512.855	60			

Data in Table 2.2 revealed a significant probability (P) - value of 0.002 which is less than the alpha value of 0.05. Since the P-value is less than 0.05 alpha level, the hypothesis of no significant relationship is rejected. Therefore, there is a significant positive relationship between feedback mechanism and Economics educators' instructional effectiveness in universities in South East, Nigeria.

Summary of Findings

The findings of the study revealed that:

1. Classroom management skills significantly relate to Economics Education lecturers' instructional effectiveness in universities in South-East Nigeria.
2. Feedback mechanism significantly relate to Economics Education lecturers' instructional effectiveness in universities in South-East Nigeria.

Discussion of Findings

The study found that classroom management skills significantly relate to Economics Education lecturers' instructional effectiveness in universities in South-East Nigeria. This implies that the extent to which lecturers are able to organize and manage their classrooms determines, to a large extent, the effectiveness of their instructional delivery. In other words, effective classroom management is associated with improved teaching effectiveness, while poor classroom management may hinder effective instructional delivery.

The findings specifically suggest that classroom management skills such as maintaining discipline, managing classroom time efficiently, organizing learning activities, and using interactive strategies to sustain students' engagement significantly relate to lecturers' instructional effectiveness. This finding supports the study by Nwachukwu and Uche (2023), which reported a significant relationship between classroom management skills and teaching effectiveness among university lecturers. It also agrees with Nwokoma and Chukwu (2023), who found that classroom management strategies such as discipline enforcement, classroom organization, and effective lecture pacing were significantly associated with students' academic performance.

The finding is understandable because a classroom environment that is orderly, engaging, and free from unnecessary disruptions provides lecturers with the opportunity to concentrate on instructional delivery and students with the opportunity to participate actively in learning activities. Oyetunde and Mohammed (2022) similarly observed that lecturers with strong classroom management competence are more likely to create learning environments that promote students' engagement, participation, and academic performance.

The study also found that feedback mechanism significantly relate to Economics Education lecturers' instructional effectiveness in universities in South-East Nigeria. This indicates that improvements in feedback practices are associated with corresponding improvements in lecturers' instructional effectiveness.

The finding suggests that practices such as obtaining regular feedback from students, receiving peer reviews on instructional practices, and being assessed by academic leadership significantly relate to lecturers' instructional effectiveness. The result agrees with Ogunyemi and Ekeh (2023), who found that constructive and timely feedback significantly improved students' learning outcomes and enhanced the quality of teaching among university lecturers. The finding also aligns with the studies of Okonkwo and Ezeani (2023), Aliyu and Danladi (2022), and Ibe and Nwosu (2021), all of which reported that effective feedback practices significantly predict lecturers' teaching performance and instructional effectiveness.

This finding is not surprising because feedback provides lecturers with valuable information about the effectiveness of their teaching strategies, students' level of understanding, and areas requiring improvement. As noted by Okonkwo and Nwogu (2021), effective feedback empowers students to take responsibility for their learning while also enabling lecturers to adjust instructional practices to meet learners' diverse needs. Consequently, feedback mechanism serve as an important pedagogical tool for improving both teaching quality and students' learning experiences.

Conclusion

This study examined the relationship between pedagogical competencies and Economics Education lecturers' instructional effectiveness in universities in South-East Nigeria. Based on the findings of the study, it was concluded that pedagogical competencies, particularly classroom management skills and feedback mechanism, significantly relate to lecturers' instructional effectiveness. By implication, lecturers who demonstrate effective classroom management practices and make use of constructive feedback are more likely to achieve higher levels of instructional effectiveness.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. University management should organize regular workshops, seminars, and professional development programmes aimed at improving lecturers' classroom management skills, particularly in the areas of classroom organization, student engagement, time management, and discipline maintenance.

2. Universities should establish structured feedback systems that encourage regular student feedback, peer review of teaching practices, and constructive evaluation by academic leaders in order to help lecturers improve their instructional practices.

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