



EFFECT OF FLIPPED CLASSROOM APPROACH ON GENDER AND STUDENTS' PERFORMANCE IN READING COMPREHENSION IN ANKPA LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF KOGI STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

The study investigated the effect of Flipped Classroom Approach (FCA) on gender and performance of students in reading comprehension in Ankpa Local Government Area, Kogi State, Nigeria. The study was guided by two research questions and two hypotheses. The pre-test, post-test quasi-experimental design was employed for the study. The population of the study comprised 236 NCE I students of English in the four Colleges of Education in Ankpa Local Government Area of Kogi State in the 2023/ 2024 academic session. Using simple random technique, two colleges of education with mixed population were picked for the study. Seventy four first year English-major students in two intact classes constituted the sample for the study. Two Reading Comprehension Performance Tests (RCPT) with 10 objective items on each developed by the researchers were used for data collection. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions while Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. Findings revealed that students in the experimental group performed better than those in the conventional group and there was no statistically significant difference in the mean performance scores of male and female students taught reading comprehension using FCA. It was therefore recommended among others that lecturers teaching reading comprehension courses be encouraged to use FCA in teaching reading comprehension.

Keywords: *Flipped Classroom Approach, conventional method, reading comprehension, performance, gender*

Introduction

English language in Nigeria is the official language. It is the medium of communication, government, administration and the media. In the education sector, English language plays three prominent roles in formal education. (i) It is a subject of instruction, (ii) medium of instruction, and (iii) medium of examination (Udu, 2017) Hence, to the average Nigerian, mastery of the English language especially the reading skill is important. Reading is a crucial skill needed by learners to be successful in education (Nasri & Biria, 2016; Mkandawire, 2018). It is required of students to read a great deal of literature in order to respond to assignments, class projects and homework. Successful learners are those who can read diverse materials across subject areas with comprehension. Reading is an important skill needed to succeed in education. Udu (2021) maintains that reading comprehension skills have profound influence on students' overall academic outcomes. It is expected that comprehension skills should help students to interpret examination instructions, homework questions, and such common tasks as completion of job application forms or questionnaires. Regrettably, it is common to come across dozens of students in Nigerian schools who face challenges with basic reading comprehension tasks. A similar problem has been investigated in Ghana by Mohammed and Amponsah (2018) who aver that students who can read well perform better in daily school activities since reading is a fundamental skill and a cornerstone for success at school and throughout life while inability to either read or comprehend results in deep sense of detachment and uselessness (Auta, Ibrahim & Ayeace, 2023).

Reading is a process of looking at series of written symbols and getting meaning from them (Mkandawire, 2018). Giving his perspective, Udu (2021) avers that reading is the art of not only interpreting what comes in print but also extracting information appropriate to the context of what is being read. Reading is applied in our daily lives to survive as it is used when reading instructions, newspapers, books, directions and others. According to 95 Percent Group (2024) reading is a lifelong skill that improves memory, builds a robust vocabulary and foundation of knowledge and adds richness and depth of

meaning to life for those who can access real comprehension.

Reading comprehension is a complex process between identifying printed symbols and interpreting the meaning behind the symbols. Barowski, Mclaughlin and Blakeley (2023) define reading comprehension as the ability to understand what one has read and the readers must actively participate in the reading process in order to understand what they are reading. According to Nasri and Biria (2016), reading comprehension is the understanding of a text one acquires from reading. Meaning is constructed as a result of reading instruction and comprehension is the main objective of instruction.

Acquisition of reading comprehension is crucial for successful functioning in society because it enables individuals understand and interpret information effectively. Without reading comprehension abilities, individuals may struggle to comprehend messages, information and texts leading to misunderstandings and confusion (Mohammed & Amponsah, 2018). Despite the importance of reading comprehension, so many learners are still finding it difficult to make meanings from what they read. When learners cannot read, how can they perform well? The Chief Examiners' Reports (Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE), 2022; West African Senior School Certificate Examination (WASSCE), 2023) highlight that students performance in English is negatively affected by reading problems and that students struggle with comprehension and expression due to inadequate reading skills. The Chief Examiner BECE (2022), suggests that addressing these reading difficulties is crucial for improving overall performance in English and recommends implementing strategies and resources to enhance students' reading abilities.

The teaching of reading comprehension in English in most secondary schools in Nigeria is still done the traditional way. Among the factors responsible for students' poor performance especially in essays and comprehension is the predominant use of the traditional method (Onuoha & Oguji, 2024). Students who study in such circumstances sit listening passively to others doing the reading for them. After that stage,

the class teacher comes in to do some explanation of concepts or to bash the students with questions. Such an approach is not as helpful as when the students are engaged actively. Some researchers are of the persuasion that teaching reading comprehension using flipped classroom approach might significantly help students to achieve better reading outcomes. Flipped classroom approach (FCA) is gaining traction as an innovative pedagogical approach, challenging traditional teaching method (Smith, Chen & Davis, 2022). The FCA represents a shift from teacher centred instruction to a more student-centred learning experience. In the traditional classroom, the teacher delivers lectures during class-time and students complete homework independently. In contrast, FCA requires students to engage with lecture materials – such as video lectures, reading or multimedia presentations – before coming to class (Van Vliet, Winnips, & Brouwer, 2015). Classroom time is then devoted to discussions, problem solving activities and individualized support from the teacher. This restructuring creates a more interactive and personalised environment which can be beneficial for developing reading skills. The traditional classroom has utilized the “I do, we do, you do” as a strategy for teaching for years. The FCA flips the traditional strategy, the teacher in the FCA uses “You do, we do, I do” instead (Stacy & David, 2016).

The flipped classroom is the brainwork of Jonathan Bergmann and Aaron Sams who started practicing using the approach in their chemistry classroom. It is grounded on the belief that evolving technology is the best method to meet the needs of our teachers and students (Fisch, 2011). The approach developed from the weakness of the traditional approach. It is common to encounter students who come to class unprepared to learn; some lack adequate background for the material, are uninterested in the subject, or have simply been disenchanted with the present educational model (Bergmann & Sams, 2012). Flipped classroom approach involves students receiving personalized education tailored to their individual needs. The approach utilizes videos as its major instructional tool. Using this method involves the teacher

prerecording his lectures in the form of the video for the students to watch at home. In the process, the students are to take notes of what they have learned through the videos. According to Bergmann and Sams (2012), the classroom is called flipped because, “that which is traditionally done in class is now done at home, and that which is traditionally done as homework is now completed in class.”(p.13) This technique according to Millard (2012) aims to retain standardised modules while fostering students' involvement, group-based skill reinforcement, individualised student coaching, classroom debate and faculty led creative facilities. In class, students work through problems, advance concepts and engage in collaborative learning. By actively participating in the course material, students may be able to develop critical thinking skills needed for comprehension. The in-class time utilised for discussions encourages students to be active participants thus, facilitating their competence (Abeysekera & Dawson, 2015).

The flipped classroom is known by various names including the inverted classroom, blended learning or simply flip (Sams & Bergmann, 2013). In this approach, the traditional practice of spending time on direct instruction and doing content related activities for homework is flipped so that students receive instructional resources at home and class time is freed up for other instructional activities as pointed out by Milman (2012):

The idea is that rather than taking up valuable class time for an instructor to introduce a concept (often via lecture), the instructor can create a video lecture, screencast or podcast that teaches students the concept, freeing up valuable class time for more engaging (and often collaborative) activities typically facilitated by the instructor (p. 85).

In the FCA, students are introduced to the learning material before class as the classroom time is used to deepen understanding through discussion and problem-solving activities with peers and the facilitator. FCA uses technological

tools and devices such as internet, video, computer, mobile phone, iPad, tablet and YouTube to engage students in the learning process. Talan and Gulsecen (2019) posit that FCA is an instructional process where students learn the lesson content or learning material at home or wherever that is convenient for them at their own pace and time through technology using computer or mobile phone before class. While Flores, Del-Arco and Silva (2016) assert that the FCA is a unique educational paradigm that expands on 21st century learning styles by fostering a distinct classroom culture with the aid of technology.

Research by Onuoha and Oguji (2024) has shown that instruction in comprehension strategies is effective for students who exhibit poor comprehension and there are studies that have been carried out on the effect of FCA on students' academic performance. Abdel and Diab (2016) carried out a study on the effect of FCA on students' performance and critical thinking in Mathematics. Findings revealed that the FCA enhanced students' performance more than the traditional method. Al-Ghamdi and Al-Bargi (2017) carried out a study that explored the application of the flipped classroom strategy on EFL Saudi students' speaking skills. The results revealed that students showed positive attitude toward applying the flipped classroom experiment and the instructional videos used. Their speaking skills were also enhanced.

Fathi and Barkhoda (2021) explored the effect of FCA on EFL learners' reading achievement and self-efficacy in Iran. 48 Iranian EFL students participated in the study, the participants were randomly assigned to two groups, the experimental (25 students) and the control (23 students) groups. The quasi-experimental design was used for the study and the instruments used were the reading component of the Cambridge Preliminary English Text (CEPT) and self-efficacy questionnaire. Outcome of the study revealed that the students in the flipped group performed better than those in the control group.

Ugyen (2022) also carried out a study on the effect of the flipped classroom model on students' reading comprehension. It was carried out with 26

4th grade pupils in Central Bhutan using quasi experimental pre-test, post-test design. Instrument used to gather data was an English reading comprehension text. Data were analysed using t-test for the hypotheses and descriptive statistics for the research questions. Analysis revealed that there was significant improvement in the reading comprehension of students taught using the FCA.

The term gender is often used to describe male and female. Gender is among the elements that significantly influences how well students perform academically. Singh (2010) posits that gender is a sociocultural construct that signifies the distinct tasks and duties assigned to men and women within a given community. This implies that a person's gender influences their functions in the society, even in the context of schooling. It is generally accepted that some courses and technology-related information are viewed as either belonging to either male or female. Owing to the idea that boys and girls differ, gender should be put into consideration while evaluating academic achievement. In this study, gender is assumed to be a factor because it might be that male and female may have differences in academic performance when FCA is used for instructional process. This is said with reference to the study by Odewumi and Yusuf (2018) on the effect of FCA on academic performance of science students where it was found that male students performed slightly better than female students when exposed to FCA. Likewise, Gambari, Bello, Agboola and Adeoye (2016) found out in their study that both males and females exposed to FCA performed equally better. Chiquito, Castedo, Santos and Lopez (2019) in their study found out that female students outperformed their male counterpart when exposed to FCA and there was a significant difference in their performance. The inconclusiveness on the effect of gender on academic performance of students necessitates further research.

The inability of students to read and comprehend the text read gives parents and the society concern. Among the factors responsible for students' poor performance especially in essays and comprehension is the predominant use

of the traditional method (Onuoha & Oguji, 2024). Students poor performance in English and poor attitudes toward the teaching and learning of the subject has been observed and blamed on the way teachers of English dominate the teaching and learning process. The classroom is passive. This is not different in Ankpa, Kogi State. To improve students' reading proficiency and performance therefore, it is necessary to seek for an engaging, involving and effective strategy of teaching reading comprehension. As such, this study seeks to find out what the effect of FCA will be on gender and students' performance in reading comprehension in Ankpa Local Government Area, Kogi State, Nigeria.

Research Questions

1. What is the mean performance score of students taught reading comprehension using the flipped classroom approach and those taught using the conventional method?
2. What is the mean performance scores of male and female students taught reading comprehension using the flipped classroom approach

Research Hypotheses

1. There is no significant difference in the mean performance scores of students taught reading comprehension using flipped classroom approach and those taught using the conventional method.
2. There is no significant difference in the mean performance scores of male and female students taught reading comprehension using the flipped classroom approach.

Method

Quasi-experimental pre-test, post-test design was adopted for this study using intact classes. The experimental group was taught using FCA while the control group was taught using conventional lecture method. The study was carried out in two Colleges of Education in Ankpa Local Government Area of Kogi State. The population consisted of 236 NCE 1 English-major students in the 4 Colleges of Education in Ankpa Local Government Area of Kogi State. The sample size for the study was 74 first year students of English

in two intact classes of the colleges randomly picked through simple random technique. The experimental group comprised 32 students (15 males and 17 females) and the control group had 42 students (19 males and 23 females). Data were collected using two Reading Comprehension Performance Tests (RCPT) developed by the researchers. Each has ten objective items. The researchers also prepared lesson plans for both the experimental and control groups and marking guides for the RCPT. The instruments were validated by three experts, two from the Department of Language Education and one from the Department of Measurement and Education, Prince Abubakar Audu University, Ayingba, Kogi State. The reliability of the instrument was ascertained using Kuder-Richardson (KR-21) reliability measure which yielded a coefficient of 0.78.

Before the experiment, the course facilitators of Reading Comprehension Course of both classes used for the study were trained on how to use the pre-planned lessons. Thereafter, a pre-test was administered on both the experimental and control groups to establish the learners' entry behaviour. After the pre-test, the experimental group continued to receive treatment which lasted for 6 weeks. Treatment was held once a week for one hour. During the 6 weeks, the control group continued with the lecture method.

For the flipped classroom where the teaching phase was in the class and the learning phase outside; the e-learning (electronic version) materials were employed whereas the printed form of the materials were used in traditional face to face classroom. However, the chosen reading texts were the same for both groups. The experimental group was provided with a presentation of the teaching resources and exercises and explanations or clarification of the text in the form of pre-recorded videos of the researchers teaching the selected topics. The students were also provided with links to websites on further instructions relating to the topic before attending the class each day. For this study, WhatsApp was used as the platform for posting course materials in the flipped classroom.

The flipped group participants had the opportunity to access the materials and contents

before coming to the class. This provided them with free time to work with their peers in the learning process and carry out their reading tasks. The students in the flipped classroom were asked to go through the posted texts before attending class; they also listened to the audio recordings of the texts as many times as they wanted. As the students came to the class, the teachers took them through the texts by asking them some information on the passage; raised some questions and gave the students activities to do – tested them on the passage, asked them to paraphrase or summarize the passage. The teacher also asked them to read a part of the passage and mention the main idea. The teachers in the flipped classroom facilitated the learning process. The teachers, after initial discussion, grouped the students to carryout tasks as brainstorming on some ideas, simplifying the text/paraphrasing, identifying topics and supporting sentences, looking for inferential meaning et cetera. During

class, the teachers explained new points and information about reading skills sent in the recording to the students and gave a summary of the outcomes and questions/issues raised in every session to the students. After this, the students in groups reviewed what they had learnt.

The students in the non-flipped group were instructed conventionally. All the instructions were carried out inside the class. Prior to the instruction, the teachers activated the students' schema by providing background information for the learners and after the instruction, the students were requested to respond to some questions regarding the text. At the end of the treatment, to assess participants' reading comprehension, a post-test was given to both groups. The data (scores from the pre-test and post-tests) were analysed using mean and standard deviation to answer the research questions while analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

Results

Research Question 1. What is the mean performance score of students taught reading comprehension using flipped classroom approach and those taught using the conventional method?

Table 1: Mean Achievement Scores of Students Taught Reading Comprehension Using FCA and those Taught Using the Conventional Method

| Method Groups | N | Pre-test Mean | SD | Post-test Mean | SD | Mean Gain |
|---------------|----|---------------|------|----------------|------|-----------|
| Experimental | 32 | 15.71 | 3.35 | 35.87 | 5.90 | 20.16 |
| Control | 42 | 13.26 | 2.98 | 26.16 | 5.72 | 12.90 |

Results in table 1 shows the mean achievement scores of students taught reading comprehension using the FCA and those taught using the lecture method (conventional method). The mean scores indicated that the experimental group had higher

mean gain (20.16) than those in the control group (12.90). This shows that the students in the experimental group performed better than those in the control group.

Research Question 2. What is the mean achievement scores of male and female student students what taught reading comprehension using the FCA.

Table 2: Mean Achievement Scores of Male and Female Students Taught Reading Comprehension Using FCA.

| Gender | N | Pre-test | | Post-test | | Mean Gain |
|--------|----|----------|------|-----------|------|-----------|
| | | Mean | SD | Mean | SD | |
| Male | 15 | 16.93 | 3.41 | 38.53 | 5.10 | 21.60 |
| Female | 17 | 14.64 | 2.99 | 33.52 | 5.65 | 18.88 |

Results in Table 2 shows the mean achievement scores of male and female students taught reading comprehension using the FCA. The mean scores indicated that male students had slightly higher mean gain (21.60) than female students (18.88).

Though, there was a slight difference in both male and female reading comprehension performances, the FCA proved to be gender-friendly.

Hypothesis 1

There is no significant difference in the mean performance score of students taught reading comprehension using the FCA and those taught using the conventional method.

Table 3: ANCOVA for Difference in the Mean Performance Scores of Students Taught Reading Comprehension Using FCA and those Taught Using the Conventional Method.

| Source | Type III Sum of Squares | DF | Mean Square | F | Sig |
|-----------------|-------------------------|----|-------------|--------|------|
| Corrected Model | 2945.812 | 2 | 1472.906 | 87.781 | .000 |
| Intercept | 466.511 | 1 | 466.511 | 27.803 | .000 |
| Pre-test | 1233.997 | 1 | 1233.997 | 73.542 | .000 |
| Method | 661.155 | 1 | 661.155 | 39.403 | .000 |
| Error | 1191.336 | 71 | 16.779 | | |
| Total | 72367.000 | 74 | | | |
| Corrected Total | 4137.149 | 73 | | | |

R Squared = .712 (Adjusted R. Squared = .704)

Results in Table 3 shows that there is a significant main effect of treatment in the post test performance of students in the experimental and control groups, $F(1,71) = 39.403, P = 0.000 < 0.05$. This meant that there was significant difference in the mean performance scores of the students who were taught reading comprehension using FCA

and those taught using the conventional method in the experimental and control groups. Therefore, the hypothesis of no significant difference in the mean performance score of students taught reading comprehension using the FCA and those taught using the conventional method is rejected.

Hypothesis 2

There is no significant difference in the mean performance score of male and female students taught reading comprehension using FCA.

Table 4: ANCOVA for Difference in Academic Performance Scores of Male and Female Students Taught Reading Comprehension Using FCA

| Source | Type III Sum of Squares | DF | Mean Square | F | Sig |
|-----------------|-------------------------|----|-------------|--------|------|
| Corrected Model | 564.671 ^a | 2 | 282.336 | 15.842 | .000 |
| Intercept | 419.012 | 1 | 419.012 | 23.511 | .000 |
| Pre-test | 365.140 | 1 | 365.14 | 20.489 | .000 |
| Gender | 44.196 | 1 | 44.196 | 2.480 | .126 |
| Error | 516.829 | 29 | 17.822 | | |
| Total | 42266.000 | 32 | | | |
| Corrected Total | 1081.500 | 31 | | | |

R Squared = .522 (Adjusted R. Squared = .489)

Results in Table 4 shows that there is no significant main effect of treatment in the post test mean scores of male and female students in the experimental group, $F(1,29) = 2.480$, $P = 0.126 > 0.05$. This is an indication that there was no significant difference in the mean performance scores of male and female students taught reading comprehension using FCA. Therefore, the hypothesis of no significant difference in the mean performance score of male and female students taught reading comprehension using the FCA is not rejected.

Discussion of Findings

The findings of this study revealed that students in the experimental group taught reading comprehension using the FCA had higher mean scores than those in the control group who were taught the same course using the conventional lecture method. Similarly, the result showed that there was a statistically significant difference between the performance of students taught with the FCA and those taught with the conventional method. Videos and recording that accompanied the passages served as powerful tools in activating the students' schema, making the material more interesting and relevant to the students thereby motivating them to learn. The process of using technology (phones and computers) was involving and the personalized learning experience allowed the students to learn at their pace thereby developing self-regulated learning skills. The pre-test scores of the students were poor in vocabulary, paraphrasing and in questions requiring inferential and critical meaning. These

areas recorded significant boosts as seen in the post-test scores of the students taught using FCA. This, therefore is an indication that the flipped classroom is an effective instructional strategy. It also has the capability of improving students' performance in reading comprehension. These findings agree with the results of Al-Ghamdi and Al-Bargi (2017), Fathi and Barkhoda (2021) and Ugyen (2022) who found out that students who were exposed to learning using the FCA performed better than their counterparts taught using the traditional lecture method.

The findings of this study further revealed that male and female students taught with flipped classroom approach improved in their performance. After the treatment, male students did however, performed marginally better than female students especially in answering literal and inferential questions. The female students' scores improved more in critical evaluation questions than their male counterparts. The result of the current study indicated that, though there was a slight difference in the mean performance scores of male and female students, there was no statistically significant difference in the performance scores of male and female students taught reading comprehension with FCA. Therefore, gender did not significantly influence performance gap between males and females using FCA. This study is in line with the findings of Odewumi and Yusuf (2018) whose study revealed that male students performed better than their female counterpart when exposed to the FCA but no significant difference was observed in their performance. Gambari *et al* (2016) supported that

gender is not a significant factor in male and female performance in the flipped classroom. Implication of this is that, FCA is gender friendly.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The results of this study showed that the utilisation of the FCA had positive effects on the College of Education students' performance in reading comprehension. Additionally, gender did not significantly impact students' improvement when this approach to teach reading comprehension was employed. It is therefore recommended that:

Reading comprehension lecturers be encouraged to adopt the use of FCA in the teaching and learning of reading comprehension as it has been found to be efficacious.

Teachers of English as a second language should de-emphasise reliance on lecture strategy and embrace student-centred strategies that involve students' active participation in the learning process.

School administrators and educational stakeholders should organise seminars, workshops and conferences to train English lecturers especially reading comprehension lecturers to acquire the knowledge and skills needed in the use of the FCA for effective teaching and learning process.

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