

Assessment of Effect of Qualitative-Descriptive and Quantitative Evaluation Methods on Mathematics Interest In Primary Schools in Benue-State

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Abstract: The study assessed the effectiveness of qualitative-descriptive evaluation method and quantitative evaluation methods on Mathematics interest of Primary School Pupils in Benue State. The design was non randomized control group, pretest – posted research design. 5463 pupils of primary five formed the population while 201 pupils were sampled using intact class. Three research questions and one research hypothesis guided the study. Mathematics Interest Inventory (MII) was the instrument used for collecting data. Data analysis was carried out using mean, standard deviation and ANCOVA statistics tool. The findings revealed that; there was significant difference in mean interest of pupils when qualitative-descriptive and quantitative evaluation methods were used with qualitative descriptive group having higher mean of the interest rating. The study concluded that, Pupils interest in Mathematics is higher in the group evaluated using qualitative descriptive evaluation method. Primary School Teachers were therefore encouraged to adopt qualitative descriptive method of evaluation.

Key words: Qualitative-Descriptive Evaluation, Quantitative evaluation, interest.

I. INTRODUCTION

Mathematics is a way of thinking and organizing logical proof. It is the science of quantity and space that deals with the calculation and numerical aspect of human life and knowledge. It is also an international language that is essential in almost every field. Mathematics has different dimension and in the context of this study, one such dimension is number and numeration and this is the focus of this study.

Ali (2019) defines numeration as an act or instance of or the process or result of numbering or counting. Its content includes: Whole numbers, numbers, fractions, percentages and ratio. Mathematics plays' fundamental role in Scientific and Technological progress for any nation as such, it is taught at all levels (primary, secondary and tertiary) of education (Nwafor, 2012). According to Abdullahi (2013), greater demand for Scientific and Technological knowledge in the Nigerian development programme has brought about the securing of excellent Mathematical knowledge at all levels of learning. Thus, increasing knowledge in Mathematics of the future Engineers, Physicists, Chemists, Sociologists, Industrial and Medical personnel, as well as other Sciences cannot be over emphasized.

Despite the importance of the subject-Mathematics, it is the same subject that learners tend to respond to with fear among other subjects offered in schools; espoused by Akinoso (2011). Pupils tend to respond to it with less self-confidence and negative feelings, leading to Pupils poor interest in the subject and in the higher level later. Thus, for one to be interested in Mathematics at the Junior Secondary School he/she has to develop interest in the subject at an earlier stage (the Primary School level Mathematics).

Interest has been found to be an important catalyst for the academic achievement. The incessant poor achievement in Mathematics in Nigeria Primary School level may be attributed to students' lack of interest in learning Mathematics. Interest has to do with preparedness or mastery of a subject matter and background knowledge that can enable the learner to cope with further or next higher level of learning of the subject- matter or related learning task as put forward by Idigo (2010). This suggests that, Mathematics test for Junior Secondary School (JSS) has to do with mastering the prerequisite skills in Primary School level Mathematics that can enable the Primary Six pupils cope with further learning of Mathematics at the next higher level of Mathematics teaching in Junior Secondary School (JSS) level. For Students to cope and master Mathematics at this level there must be some requirements. These include Interest, attitude, motivation, teacher characteristics among others. This study shall focus on interest.

Interest is defined as the quality that arouses concern or curiosity, which holds a child attention on an object. Ezike in Yusuf (2011) defined interest as the feeling of intentness, concern or curiosity about an object. This implies that any particular stimulus that is attractive or stimulating will make the child develop interest on it. This is why in a classroom situation, a child will be attentive during lesson if he/she is interested in that particular lesson. According to the author, interest leads individual to make a variety of choices with respect to the activities in which he/she engages. The person shows preference to some and aversion to others. This definition assumes that interest in Mathematics implies the reactions, impression and feelings an individual has towards Mathematics and Mathematics related tasks. This interest when developed at earlier stage (at primary level) will help the pupils to perform better in secondary school. If a student

has developed interest towards a particular subject he/she not only enjoys studying it but would also derive satisfaction from the knowledge of the subject. According to Nworgu (2011), interest is one particular class of attitude that is always positive and one associated with object or activities that are need satisfying and pleasure giving. Interest explains why an organism tends to favour some situations and thus reacts to them in a very selective manner.

Many factors have been identified in literature as reasons associated with Pupils' lack of interest hence poor achievement in Mathematics. An analysis of school base Mathematics assessment carried out by the JETS researchers (2018) in Public Primary Schools in Makurdi showed that 65% of the pupils obtain scores below average, taking grades of D and below with 28% obtaining average scores taking grade of C, while a few number about 7% obtains grades B and above. Also Reports of the 2017 Federal Common Entrance into the Nations Unity Schools showed that about 77,512 Nigerian pupils who registered and sat for the Common entrance examinations, less than 2.0% of the pupils obtained excellent grades, in all only 25.0% obtained the pass mark (Federal Ministry of Education, 2018). The Benue State Examination Certificate of Education (BECE) report for the following years 2015, 2016, and 2017 showed that out of the total number of the candidates that sat for the Mathematics in the BECE examinations, Students achievement at the credit level has not reached 50%. These could be as a result of lack of interest among school children in the subject.

It is a sad reflection that over the years, pupils' interest in Mathematics in Primary Schools and Junior Secondary Schools (JSS) in Benue State has been relatively at low rate. To Ojimba (2013) the persistent failure in Mathematics has remained a major threat to learning and evaluation. When the subject Mathematics is mentioned to the hearing of a Nigerian child, it creates fear in his minds. For some children, the term Mathematics when mentioned alone is capable of bringing a session of discussion to a standstill or a moment of silence. A learners' reaction to a task determines the extent to which he or she will go in the task. Many Nigerian school children today cannot boldly vote for a science course as a future ambition and when done, some do so but reluctantly as compared to the great number of those agitating to study the art courses. This may have been due to the way the subject is presented to the pupils, the fear of the teacher or the way the pupils have been evaluated previously.

Teaching methods have been found to be the major research approach many researchers in the study area have adopted to handle the problem of lack of interest in Mathematics (nevertheless, interest and achievement in Mathematics is found to be relatively low). Such studies yield report that the method adopted by the teacher may promote or hinder learning, it may sharpen mental activities which are the bases of social power or may discourage initiatives and curiosity thus making self-reliance and survival difficult (Ameh & Dantani, 2012). Ogunniyi (2009) asserted that one of the most

persistent and compelling problems besetting interest in Mathematics in Nigeria is poor quality of teaching. However, teaching without evaluation will not complete the educational process and the teacher will not know the status of the pupils in relation to accomplishment of the content presented to them.

Evaluation refers to a systematic process for collecting, analyzing and interpreting data in order to determine whether the set goals are achieved or are being achieved, and to what extent they have been achieved. Emaikwu (2016) defined evaluation as a systematic process of judging the worth, desirability, effectiveness or adequacy of something according to definite criteria and purpose. According to the author it includes obtaining information either quantitatively or qualitatively for judging the worth of a programme. Adikwu, Aduloju and Agi (2016) defined evaluation as procedures used to determine whether the subject (that is the students) meets pre-set criteria such as qualifying for special education services. Thus in evaluation, the element of how goals and educational expectations are achieved and giving feedback for improving the level of learning process is considered. It is in such a way that, the results of evaluations should be applied in the improvement of learning process and educational decision makings. Hence without awareness of evaluation components which includes understanding of goals and educational expectations and signs of the achievement of goals, collecting data, analyzing and interpreting data, judging and making decision, and giving feedback, it is practically impossible to collect and analyze data and judge the achievement of educational expectation and make decision for the guidance of learning towards the achievement of those goals (Hasani, 2009).

The feedback from teaching is obtained through proper evaluation which in turn improves the quality of teaching and learning in varying subjects including Mathematics which revolves around Continuous Assessment Test and Final Examinations (traditionally reported in Quantitative form). If the evaluation does not take place in a proper way, it will cause a lot of damage. Some of the consequences of improper evaluation include; loss of interest in learning, increase in test anxiety, negative behavior, increase in rejection rate and grade repetition, impaired emotional growth of students, loss of creativity, increase in unhealthy competition, creation of shame and frustration, and neglect of the individual differences (Ameh & Dantani, 2012). A well planned and delivered lesson may end up in a mess if haphazard approach to assessment and evaluation was undertaken. Evaluation can be qualitatively or quantitatively done. It is Qualitative when test scores are not involved or not basing its judgment on test score but when it involves test with solely scores it is Quantitative.

Qualitative-descriptive evaluation is an evaluation that attempts to pay attention to the comprehensive learning of students and present a description of their learning status to modify, improve and develop students' knowledge, skills and

attitudes. This type of evaluation is a plan in which one of its features is announcing students' results in a descriptive manner. Based on this plan, the teachers seeks information using variety of tools and method for decision making about improving students learning as well as optimizing his teaching method (Hassani, 2009). In Qualitative-descriptive evaluation; if a student answered a question wrong, we do not merely rely by giving him negative mark or low mark, but analyze his wrong answer. The Qualitative-descriptive evaluation is a more complete version of continuous evaluation. It uses Qualitative-descriptive feedback, applying a Qualitative scale (very good, good, acceptable, requiring more effort) instead of Quantitative scale or the grade points (0-20). Thus it employs many instruments to gather and organize the needed information for judgment about the pupils' interest and academic achievement so that it considers some room for self-assessment and peer assessment.

Quantitative evaluation on the other hand is an evaluation that reports pupil's results in figures, for instance 6/10, 3/5, 30% and 70%. The implication is that, when a student takes a test of ten items and he/she receives the score of 6/10 then it Means he/she scored six (6) items correctly out of ten (10) and four (4) items wrongly. If he receives a mark 30% then it implies thirty percent of the task presented to him/her was correctly completed and the rest of the task not correct or completed wrongly. When evaluation is in form of test scores it is Quantitative. This form of evaluation is easy and faster to apply and also common among teachers.

In the Quantitative approach of evaluation, factors other than the students are considered to be more important in the process of learning and the learner does not have an active and effective role in this process (Seif, 2008).

Quantitative or Qualitative-descriptive feedback says to a pupil, "Somebody cared enough about your work to read it and think about it." Evaluation results can be very powerful if done well. Giving good feedback help pupils learn how to formulate new goals for themselves and action plans that will lead to achievement of those goals, it gives pupils information they need so they can understand where they are in their learning and what to do next. Once they feel they understand what to do and why, most pupils develop a feeling that they have control over their own learning. However, this feedback (Quantitative or Qualitative-descriptive) can be the information that drives the process, or it can be a stumbling block that derails the process.

The way an evaluation type ends up leaves the orientation to whether the evaluation is Quantitative or Qualitative-descriptive in nature. There exist types of evaluations as explained by several authors. These types of evaluation among others includes: Formative, Summative, Placement, and Diagnostic evaluation (Alonge, 2004). Evaluation is Formative when pupils are evaluated during instruction, Summative when pupils are evaluated at the end of instruction, it is called Placement if the essence is to

determine where the students should be placed in the course of the study and it is usually in the form of pre-test that measures whether the students possess the necessary knowledge and skills that enable them to succeed in the planned instructions, it is Diagnostic if it is used to diagnose students' strength and weakness in the areas tested. However if any of these types of evaluation ends up in giving scores it is Quantitative but when it does not reflect in scores but does so in words then it is Qualitative-descriptive.

It brings to mind what method expresses weaknesses and strengths in learning, provides suitable solutions to problems. Kiyashmeshki in Ahmed and Taher (2012) outlined that descriptive evaluation reduces the pressure and stress in pupils caused by various examinations, removing the idea of superiority in terms of high or low score among the pupils across gender, eliminating the sense of shyness among the pupils because of obtaining low scores, increasing teachers' understanding of other evaluation methods among others.

Pedagogical approaches have been undertaken over the years to trash out the menace of lack of interest and low achievement in science subjects, Mathematics in particular. Almost every year, research based methods to improving interest and achievement in Mathematics is carried out but the intensity of the outcry seems to remain constant. Most of such studies yielded results of improved achievement and interest in favor of research based pedagogy. For instance, Bala and Musa (2009) in their study on Effect of use of number base game on students achievement revealed that children taught using Number base game develop interest in Mathematics and as such put up greater interest in Mathematics. Also Obayemi (2013) and Odum (2013) from their various studies found out that there is yet massive failure in the subject and interest in Mathematics has been consistently low and unimpressive.

The cause of this could not be ascertained because there are a lot of works that have been carried out to unravel the cause of this problem and this is why the present study is focusing on the Effect of Qualitative-descriptive and Quantitative evaluation methods to verify if there would be any improved interest in Mathematics. Specifically, the study

- i. Determine the Mean rating of pupils' interest in Mathematics when Qualitative-descriptive evaluation method is used.
- ii. Determined the Mean rating of Pupils' interest in Mathematics when Quantitative evaluation method is used.
- iii. Compared the difference in mean rating of pupils interest when Qualitative-descriptive and Quantitative evaluation methods were used.

The Study was guided by three research questions:

- i. What is the Mean rating of pupils' interest in Mathematics when Qualitative-descriptive evaluation method is used?

- ii. What is the Mean rating of pupils’ interest in Mathematics when Quantitative evaluation method is used?
- iii. What is the difference in the Mean rating of pupils’ interest in Mathematics when Qualitative-descriptive and quantitative evaluation methods were used?

The following hypothesis was formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance:

HO₁: There is no significance difference in the Mean rating of pupils’ interest in Mathematics when Qualitative-descriptive and Quantitative evaluation methods were used.

II. METHODOLOGY

The Study adopted Quasi - experimental research design, precisely; Non-randomized Control Group Pretest-posttest Design. Quasi - experimental research Design is a type of design that does not give room for random assignment of subjects to groups. Thus, it becomes necessary to use the groups as they already exist in the schools, hence intact Classes were used to avoid disruption of normal class lessons. The study was carried out in Benue State, precisely in Makurdi the capital City of the state, Benue is a middle belt States in Nigeria with a population of 4,253,641 (2006 Census). The population of the study comprises 5463 primary five Pupils in the 68 Public Primary Schools in Makurdi. (Benue State Universal Basic Education Board, Makurdi 2017/2018 Annual School Summary).

The sample size of 201 primary five pupils out of the population of 5463 was used. This sample was obtained as a result of the number of pupils found in the intact classes in the schools marked out for the study. To arrive at the sample, Purposive Sampling technique was used to select 4 schools from the 68 Public Primary Schools in Makurdi who mate the criteria for selection. The criteria used was that the schools selected are of comparable standards in terms of the quality of staff in each school and the physical facilities available for use by the teachers and pupils in both schools.

The instrument used for data collection was; Mathematics Interest Inventory (MII) developed by the researcher. The MII was used to assess pupils’ interest in Mathematics. The interest inventory was made up of twenty (20) items. Each item rated on a 4-point scale with the response type: Strongly Agree; Agree; Disagree and Strongly Disagree with attached values of 4 points for Strongly Agree, 3 points for Agree, 2 points for Disagree and 1 point for Strongly Disagree. Having $\frac{4+3+2+1}{4} = 2.5$ as a bench mark for acceptance.

The MII was subjected to Face validation. The instrument was trial tested and the Cronbach Alpha which is suitable for both dichotomously scored and continuous items established the Coefficient of 0.84. The data was collected with the assistance of the pupils’ teacher.

The Mean and Standard Deviation were used to answer the research questions while ANCOVA was employed to test the

hypothesis at 5% significant level. Choice of Mean was to know the corrective mean interest rating of each group to help answer the research questions. The standard deviation was used to know if there were deviations in the mean ratings of the groups, while the ANCOVA tested if there was any significant difference in the Means of the groups compared.

III. RESULTS

Research Question One

What is the Mean rating of pupils’ interest in Mathematics when Qualitative-descriptive evaluation method is used?

Evaluation method	N	Type of test	Mean	Std. Deviation
Qualitative	103	Pre-test	2.44	.89
	103	Post-test	3.00	.66
		difference	.60	
Valid N (listwise)	103			

Table 1 reveals that N = 103, mean rating in interest at pretest = 2.44, mean rating interest at posttest = 3.0, difference = .60 while the SD = .89 and .66 at pretest and posttest respectively

Research Question Two

What is the Mean rating of pupils’ interest in Mathematics when Quantitative evaluation method is used?

Evaluation method	N	Type of test	Mean	Std. Deviation
Quantitative	98	Pre-test	2.20	.80
	98	Post-test	2.26	.94
		difference	.06	
Valid N (listwise)	98			

The result in Table2 shows mean rating interest at pretest = 2.20, with Standard Deviation of .88, mean rating interest at post test = 2.26 with standard deviation = .94

Research Question Three

- i. What is the difference in the Mean rating of pupils’ interest in Mathematics when Qualitative-descriptive and quantitative evaluation methods were used?

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Qualitative-descriptive	103	.60	.66
Quantitative	98	.06	.94
Difference		.54	

Table3 revealed a difference of 0.54 in mean rating interest of Pupils. This is evident in that the mean value of the Qualitative group is .60 while that of the quantitative group is .06.

Hypothesis One: There is no significant difference in the Mean interest rating of pupils in Mathematics when Qualitative-descriptive and Quantitative evaluation methods are used.

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Remark
Corrected Model	35880.82 ^a	2	17940.41	997.60	.000	
Intercept	2743.20	1	2743.20	152.54	.000	
Pretest	28309.51	1	28309.51	1574.19	.000	
Groups	3754.83	1	3754.83	208.79	.000	Significant
Error	3560.74	198	17.98			
Total	441979.00	201				
Corrected Total	39441.56	200				

a. R Squared = .910 (Adjusted R Squared = .909)

Table 4 revealed a significant difference in the Mean rating of Pupils interest. Since Sig. value of .000 is less than Alpha at .05, thus the result is significant hence hypothesis is rejected. It therefore follows; there is a significant difference in Mean interest rating of Pupils.

IV. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Based on the findings of the study the following discussions were made:

Table 1 revealed that Pupils have interest in Mathematics when Qualitative-descriptive evaluation method is used but rather exhibit lack of interest when quantitative method is used as revealed by the Table 2. Similarly, a related test of hypothesis as shown on Table 3 revealed that the difference was significant. This finding corroborates with that of Abah (2013) whose result revealed that pupils' lack of interest in Mathematics in the study area is due to unsuitable teaching and evaluation methods. This could be that the usage of qualitative descriptive evaluation makes the Pupil interested in carrying out the task presented to him/her. The finding could be the reason why Saeed (2015) whose study was to examine the effect of Descriptive Evaluation in decreasing anxiety on sixth grade primary school children in schools using descriptive and those using traditional (Quantitative) evaluation methods in Boroujerd, Lorestan in Iran concluded that students in schools executing Qualitative-descriptive evaluation suffered less anxiety compared to students in traditional schools. The findings also corroborate that of Akram (2015) who comparatively studied the impact of Qualitative-descriptive evaluation and Quantitative evaluation

methods on the academic progress and academic motivation among sixth grade students in Mahidasht region yielding a result which revealed that academic motivation of students in quantitative evaluation group has been lower than qualitative evaluation group. Thus from the finding, it can be concluded that when qualitative descriptive evaluation method is used, pupils tend to have interest in Mathematics but rather exhibits lack of interest in Mathematics when quantitative evaluation method is used.

V. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Based on the findings from the study, the researcher concluded that, there is higher positive effect of Qualitative-Descriptive evaluation method on Mathematics Interest in Primary Schools in Makurdi metropolis. Thus the effect was that the rate of interest was higher in the Qualitative-Descriptive evaluation method than when the Quantitative Evaluation Method was used.

It is therefore recommended that Teachers should imbibe this method of evaluation at least at the Primary School level because it arouse Pupils interest in the content presented in the Subject Matter

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