An Examination of the Impact of Teaching Strategies on Students' Learning Outcome; A Case Study of W.V.S Tubman and G.W. Gibson High Schools in Monrovia (2012-2013)

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ABSTRACT

This thesis provides a comprehensive examination of the impact of teaching strategies on students' learning outcomes, specifically analyzing two MCSS schools: W.V.S Tubman High School and G.W. Gibson High School during the 2012-2013 academic year. Utilizing a descriptive research design, the study employed a systematic sampling technique to gather insightful data from 187 respondents through thoughtfully crafted questionnaires. The findings reveal that discussion, identified by 82 respondents (43.85%), is the most commonly utilized teaching strategy, while lectures were cited by 73 respondents (39.04%) as another principal method implemented in teaching sessions. Direct instruction was recognized by 28 respondents (14.97%) as a significant approach employed during lessons. Additionally, a substantial majority of 129 students (78.18%) and 21 teachers (95.45%) acknowledged that the teaching strategies applied by educators have profoundly influenced students' learning outcomes. Notably, 104 respondents (55.62%) affirmed that they rated the overall performance of both teachers and students as commendable. The recommendations put forth by the researcher are crucial; if diligently applied, they could lead to remarkable enhancements within the Liberian educational system, equipping students for meaningful success beyond secondary school. By prioritizing these recommendations, we can foster a positive and holistic environment that enhances teaching and learning experiences for all.

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

Teachers play a crucial role in the rebuilding of educational systems, especially in contexts undergoing early reconstruction following conflict or disaster. Schools have the potential to create safe environments that provide structure, stimulation, and opportunities for healthy socialization among peers and adults, which are vital for mitigating the trauma associated with war. However, it is the teachers who consistently influence the availability and quality of these supportive learning experiences (UNESCO, 2005). In the aftermath of war or disaster, teachers can provide not just knowledge but also care and leadership, fostering an environment where students can thrive academically and socially. The Education for All Global Monitoring Report (UNESCO, 2005) emphasizes that “teachers are the strongest influence on learning” (p. 18). As such, educators have a profound effect on the overall quality of education and are integral to uplifting student achievement both directly and indirectly.

Teaching and learning are inherently intertwined, much like two sides of the same coin. The primary measure of effective teaching is often the degree of student learning achieved. Numerous studies have shown a strong correlation between students’ perceived learning and their overall satisfaction with a course and its instructor (Cohen, 1981; Theall & Franklin, 2001). This idea was further articulated by Thomas Angelo, who stated, “teaching in the absence of learning is just talking.” Doyle. T. Thus, a teacher's effectiveness must be assessed in terms of student learning outcomes.

Reflecting on the context of Liberia, it is evident that students' achievements across various educational levels rely heavily on the skills and knowledge of their teachers. The teaching methods and strategies employed by educators are crucial in determining the overall success of learners. Liberia's educational infrastructure has faced significant challenges due to prolonged conflict. From 1989 to 1997, approximately 80 percent of the country's 2,400 schools were destroyed, and even after remarkable efforts to restore some of these institutions, subsequent conflicts led to further devastation, leaving many schools looted, burned, or abandoned by 2003. The civil unrest over fourteen years caused extensive damage to Monrovia, with over 75 percent of the educational infrastructure either destroyed or compromised. Many school buildings were repurposed for military use during the conflicts (HDI, 2006). Consequently, the long-lasting civil strife severely disrupted the educational training processes within the country, resulting in an influx of individuals into teaching roles despite many lacking formal training, simply to bridge the gap left by the chronic shortage of qualified educators. Currently, a significant proportion of teachers in Liberia are underqualified. According to the Education for All National Action Plan for Liberia (2004), about 65 percent of children in primary schools are taught by unqualified teachers, and approximately 41 percent of teachers have not completed high school (UNICEF, RALS Report, 2004 in UNDP, 2006).

Furthermore, the Liberia Education Sector Master Plan 2000–2015 (MOE, 2000) highlights that "one of the most critical issues in Liberian education relates to the quality of teachers" (p. 57), estimating that nearly 75 percent of teachers in the school system lack the necessary qualifications (p. 58). Due to years of conflict and limited resources, precise educational data is scarce; however, estimates from 1999 (MOE, 2000) indicate that only 24 percent of primary teachers and 17 percent of secondary teachers were female (p. 58). Given the widening gap between the number of teachers and their qualifications in light of increasing student enrollment, there remains a significant need for more trained educators—especially female teachers. The status of teachers in Liberia significantly influences how education is delivered in classrooms nationwide. The capabilities and preparedness of students—reflected in their knowledge, attitudes, and skills—often raise questions about the effectiveness of current teaching methods and the broader educational framework in place. Addressing these challenges requires focused efforts to enhance teacher training, recruitment, and support to foster a quality educational experience for all learners.

Statement of the Problem

According to Black & Wiliam (1998), teachers who engage in effective professional learning cycles take greater responsibility for the learning of all students. They do not dismiss learning difficulties as an inevitable consequence of a student's home or community environment. As they assume more responsibility and see that their new professional knowledge and practices positively impact their students, they begin to feel more effective as educators. Heightened expectations and responsibility are developed most effectively when teachers observe that their new teaching practices yield positive results. In stark contrast, the poor performance of many Liberian students, from primary through secondary levels, raises serious questions for educators—both Liberian and foreign—regarding the preparation of students in various schools. A significant concern is the lack of requisite training for many teachers in our school system across the country. The absence of fundamental teaching methods, strategies, and educational principles necessary for effective teaching may hinder teachers' ability to engage learners and stimulate their interest in learning. Moreover, many concerned parents and individuals often wonder why our students struggle with analytical and writing skills, as well as speaking and creativity, when they are outside the classroom. While there may be underlying issues that are not widely recognized, the researcher is eager to uncover these potential factors. Given the numerous assumptions, revelations, and doubts held by many Liberians, including the researcher himself, this study aims to examine the impact of teaching strategies employed by multi-status post-war teachers on student learning outcomes in Liberian schools, specifically the MCSS.

Theoretical support

Based to the intend of this research which is critically looking at the teaching and learning activities in our various schools with the use of various teaching strategies, learning-centered theories such as creativity and motivation theory are supportive of this study. Learner-centered theories focus on what the learner brings to

the Instructional environment. They provide strategies for instructors and instructional designers to work with while considering an individual's characteristics. Additionally, in 1968, Siegfried Engelmann developed the Direct Instruction (DI) model under the trade name DISTAR. Grounded in Skinner's behaviorist strategy, Engelmann's theory of instruction states that learning can be greatly accelerated if instructional presentations are clear, rule out likely misinterpretations, and facilitate generalizations (Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory (NREL), 2005).

Significance of the Study

Findings of this study will be made public or be circulated among relevant authorities, Ministry of Education, schools authorities and other partners within the educational system with the hope that recommendations made will be acted upon appropriately.

This study also educates, presents a clearer picture to consumers basically on how teaching strategies use by teachers in our various schools affect the learning outcome of students.

It also serves as resource material for partners in the educational system to ascertain the facts regarding the true usage of conventional teaching strategies or not in the selected Liberian schools

Purpose and Objective of the Study

This study seeks to explore the impact of teaching strategies on student learning in Liberian schools, specifically at W.V.S Tubman and G.W. Gibson High Schools in Monrovia. The objectives of the study are as follows:

1. To examine how various teaching strategies influence student learning outcomes in Liberian schools.

2. To identify the most commonly used teaching methods in the Liberian educational context.

3. To gather student opinions on which teaching methods they find most engaging and effective.

Research Questions

The following research questions will guide the study:

1. How do teaching strategies affect student learning outcomes?

2. Are there differences in teaching strategies between trained and untrained teachers, and how do these differences impact learning?

3. Which teaching methods are prioritized in the Liberian school system?

Delimitation of the Study

This research focuses on achieving its objectives by specifically targeting key stakeholders, including school administrators, teachers, and students from two of the most populous schools within the Monrovia Consolidated School System (MCSS). By exploring perspectives both inside and outside of the classroom, this study aims to understand how various teaching strategies influence student learning outcomes during the designated research period.

Limitation of the Study

This research endeavor encountered multiple challenges. Gaining access to crucial information proved difficult due to the bureaucratic processes within the selected institutions, which delayed the release of valuable data

and impeded the use of their facilities for research purposes. Furthermore, the researcher faced constraints stemming from professional commitments, as balancing regular work hours with the demands of this capital-intensive and time-consuming study posed significant obstacles to progress.

Definitions of Acronyms

MCSS - Monrovia Consolidated School System -

NGOs - Non-Governmental Organizations -

EFA - Education for All -

PRS - Poverty Reduction Strategy -

ESP - Educational Strategies and Policies

Organization of the Study

This study is structured into five key chapters for clarity and coherence. The first chapter serves as the introduction, laying out a comprehensive overview of the research. The second chapter offers a theoretical framework, employing scholarly resources to substantiate the study. Chapter three outlines the methodology employed in conducting the research, leading into chapter four, which focuses on data analysis, where collected findings are interpreted. Lastly, chapter five concludes the research, summarizing key findings and providing actionable recommendations for future implementation.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Introduction

A literature review provides an essential overview of both theoretical and empirical studies, revealing the current understanding of specific issues (Burns & Groove, 2003). This chapter explores how classroom teaching strategies impact students' learning outcomes, drawing from professional journals, authoritative educational texts, and relevant documents from NGOs and government agencies. Instructional strategies are methods used to deliver educational content, including discussions, demonstrations, and lectures. These strategies entail a structured sequence of teaching modes aimed at achieving specific objectives (Farrell & Farmer, 1983). Effective instructional strategies identified in research include: - Clearly stating lesson objectives and structure at the outset - Using effective delivery techniques with clarity and engagement - Implementing clear guidelines and routines for smooth classroom management - Actively involving learners in tasks - Monitoring student attention and redirecting when necessary - Moving around the classroom to support students - Connecting with students at their interest level and valuing diverse responses - Starting and ending lessons on time - Fostering a respectful classroom environment - Allowing room for review and repetition of challenging concepts Walker (1998) emphasizes that successful instruction stems from the connections among these behaviors rather than their isolated application. Onasanya (1998) advocates for a systematic approach that views the teaching-learning process as an integrated system of teacher, learner, media, and outcome evaluation. This framework allows for effective teaching by continuously monitoring and adjusting instructional elements to enhance student growth and success.

Growing Importance of Student Learning Outcomes

In recent decades, there has been a growing demand from employers, parents, accrediting agencies, state legislators, the federal government, and students for post-secondary institutions to be held accountable for the education and training they provide. Student learning outcomes (SLOs) have become the primary measure of

the effectiveness of higher education (Ruhland & Brewer, 2001). However, empirical studies examining the impact of SLOs on student learning and attitudes have been scarce. Critics argue that the current focus on student-centered learning often relies more on rhetoric than on evidence-based pedagogical practices (Maclellan & Soden, 2007).

The accuracy of conclusions regarding student achievement is closely tied to the assessment methods employed. Poor assessment instruments can yield unreliable results and lead to erroneous conclusions about student learning. 2.2 Demands of the Learning Environment and Learning Outcomes Hodgson (1984) emphasizes that learning occurs within various social contexts and is influenced by the demands placed on students, such as assignments and tests. Motivation to learn can sometimes become narrow, driven solely by the information needed for testing. Conversely, the right techniques in a social learning context can enhance understanding and engagement, promoting deeper learning (Hodgson, 1984; Hounsell, 1984; Marton & Säljö, 1984; Tuckman, 2001).

The debate around whether students can effectively judge teaching efficacy continues. While research suggests that students are rational expectants and reliable sources of evidence regarding the quality of instruction (Arreola, 1995; Braskamp & Ory, 1994; Pratt, 1997), it remains contested. Students are exposed to various instructional experiences and can therefore evaluate quality and engagement with the material (Montgomery, n.d.). As informed consumers of education, students have a legitimate voice in assessing their learning experiences (Ory, 2001, p. 12). The global conversation around education quality has escalated, as the provision of education expands. Countries nearing the achievement of Education for All (EFA) goals acknowledge that while access to education has increased, quality has often been neglected. Serious concerns arise about low student learning levels in under-resourced environments, characterized by overcrowded classrooms and poorly prepared teachers (UNESCO, 2004).

Evidence is mounting that even in countries with high primary education participation rates, actual student learning frequently falls short of expected standards. Many parents withdraw their children from school when they perceive inadequate learning outcomes (UNESCO, 2010). Overall, education quality—defined as student learning aligned with national standards—is influenced by numerous factors, among which the quality of teachers and teaching is paramount. The 2004 EFA Global Monitoring Report concludes that the dynamics within classrooms and the influence of teachers are crucial for improving learning outcomes.

Growing Importance of Student Learning Outcomes

In today's educational landscape, there is an increasing demand from employers, parents, accrediting bodies, state legislators, and students for post-secondary institutions to demonstrate accountability for the education and training they provide. Student learning outcomes (SLOs) have emerged as the primary metric for evaluating the effectiveness of higher education (Ruhland & Brewer, 2001). However, there is a notable scarcity of empirical research investigating how SLOs influence student learning and attitudes.

Many scholars have pointed out that the prevalent concept of student-centered learning often leans more on ideology than on substantiated educational practices (Maclellan & Soden, 2007). The ability to derive accurate conclusions about how well students have achieved expected outcomes hinges significantly on the assessment methods employed. Ineffective assessment tools can lead to unreliable findings and distort perceptions of student learning, undermining the very goals educators aspire to meet.

Demands of the Learning Environment and Learning Outcomes

As articulated by Hodgson (1984), learning is not an isolated experience; it unfolds within diverse social contexts and is shaped by the demands placed on learners, including assignments and exams. When the focus of motivation becomes narrowly defined by what is needed for testing, the richness of learning diminishes. On the other hand, well-designed educational approaches that foster an engaging social learning environment can significantly enhance understanding and enthusiasm for the material, promoting deeper and more meaningful learning (Hodgson, 1984; Hounsell, 1984; Marton & Säljö, 1984; Tuckman, 2001).

The question of whether students serve as effective judges of teaching quality remains an active point of discussion. Although some research suggests students possess rational judgment capabilities and can provide reliable feedback regarding instructional quality (Arreola, 1995; Braskamp & Ory, 1994; Pratt, 1997), opinions are divided. Students encounter various instructional experiences and thus have a unique standpoint from which to evaluate quality, relevance, and engagement (Montgomery, n.d.). As valid consumers of their education, students command the right to express their views on their learning experiences (Ory, 2001, p. 12).

The issue of educational quality has grown increasingly critical as educational provisions expand globally. Many countries that are close to achieving their Educational for All (EFA) goals recognize that, while access has improved, quality suffers significantly. Alarmingly low levels of student learning are prevalent in under-resourced schools, where overcrowding and poorly trained teachers exacerbate the problem (UNESCO, 2004). Evidence indicates that even in nations with high enrollment rates in primary education, actual student learning often falls considerably below established standards, resulting in parents withdrawing their children from school when they perceive insufficient educational value (UNESCO, 2010).

Ultimately, education quality—defined as students' learning experiences that align with national educational standards—derives from numerous factors. Among these, the quality of teachers and teaching stands out as the most influential. The 2004 EFA Global Monitoring Report decisively asserts that the critical dynamics of classroom interactions and the role of educators are pivotal in enhancing learning outcomes.

The Liberian Educational System and Its Challenges

The quality of education in Liberia continues to be alarmingly poor, largely due to several key factors including poorly trained teachers, an outdated curriculum, and a scarcity of instructional materials (GoL, 2008). This situation has been exacerbated by the devastating effects of the civil war, which damaged school facilities, destroyed resources, and resulted in the loss of many educators. The war disrupted essential educational processes, making recovery even more challenging. The government recognizes these educational challenges, as highlighted in the Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS), which identifies inadequate funding, outdated curricula, and a shortage of qualified teachers among its top concerns (GoL, 2008).

As noted in the Education Sector Plan (ESP), teacher quality is crucial for educational effectiveness. Unfortunately, as of 2007, around 62 percent of teachers were unqualified, a problem worsened by the war's impact on the teaching workforce. The destruction of Rural Teacher Training Institutes (RTTIs) has also contributed to this crisis, as the system has come to rely heavily on untrained and volunteer educators. This highlights the urgent need for enhanced teacher training and standardized programs (GoL, 2009).

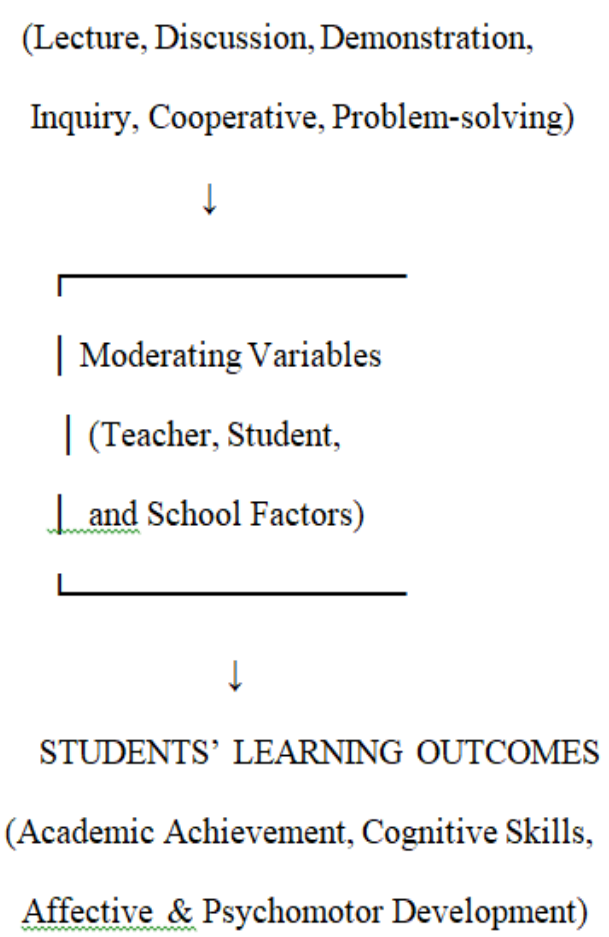
In response, the PRS set a goal to train 50 percent of Liberian teachers by 2010, estimating the need for about 1,000 new teachers annually to meet the demand for free, compulsory primary education (GoL, 2009). This initiative aims to improve the quality of education by equipping teachers with effective strategies and professional skills, ultimately benefiting students' learning outcomes.

Conceptual Framework

According to Gagne, R. M. (1985), the conceptual framework in this study is grounded on the assumption that the teaching strategies employed by teachers directly and indirectly influence students' learning outcomes. The conceptual framework illustrates the relationship between independent variables (teaching strategies) and dependent variables (students' learning outcomes), as well as the intervening variables (school and student-related factors) that may affect this relationship.

The framework assumes that effective teaching strategies—when implemented appropriately—enhance student engagement and comprehension, leading to improved learning outcomes. However, this relationship is moderated by contextual and personal factors such as teacher competence, student motivation, and school environment.

Teaching Strategies



History and Theoretical Foundation of Teaching Strategies and Learning Outcomes

From the very beginnings of formal education, the organization of the classroom has played a crucial role in facilitating student interaction and learning. The instructional strategies employed by teachers not only help shape the learning environment but also reflect their professional beliefs about learning and the nature of students. There are strategies that view students as passive recipients of knowledge, while others perceive them as active participants engaged in inquiry and problem-solving (Gagne, 1985).

The roots of today's instructional strategies trace back to ancient civilizations. Socrates, in ancient Greece, exemplified a questioning technique designed to encourage learners to independently uncover significant truths. A similar approach resembling direct instruction was documented by Samuel Griswold Goodrich in the early eighteenth century as he described teaching methods in a rural Connecticut school. As education began to extend beyond the elite classes, there emerged a demand for instructional strategies that could effectively manage larger groups of students. One notable example is the Lancaster Method, widely adopted in the early nineteenth century, which involved gathering up to a hundred students in a single classroom, organizing them into ability-based groups, and utilizing monitors (teacher aides) to facilitate guided recitations from scripted lesson plans.

The instructional approaches of the nineteenth century were predominantly teacher-centered, focusing primarily on the clear transmission of fundamental information. However, a shift began in the early twentieth century with the influence of John Dewey and the principles of Progressive education. This legacy introduced student-centered instructional methods aimed at fostering higher-level thinking and problem-solving capabilities. The project method, in particular, laid the groundwork for contemporary approaches such as cooperative learning and problem-based instruction that prioritize active student engagement and collaborative interaction. The progress initiated by early Progressive educators was bolstered by significant advancements in learning theory from renowned theorists like Lev Vygotsky, Jean Piaget, Jerome Bruner, and Albert Bandura.

Their insights shaped instructional strategies during the educational reforms post-Sputnik in the 1950s and 1960s, bringing cognitive psychology and constructivist perspectives to the forefront. This period saw the rise of strategies like discovery learning and inquiry-based teaching, which became central to curriculum development, while cooperative learning and problem-based methods gained broader adoption.

In the 1960s, Bruce Joyce began to categorize the various teaching approaches that had been developed over time. He formulated a classification system designed to evaluate each approach based on its theoretical foundation, desired learner outcomes, and the corresponding behaviors expected from both teachers and students. Notably, Joyce preferred the term "model" over "teaching strategy" to describe specific instructional approaches. In his earlier work (Joyce and Weil, 1972), more than twenty distinct models were identified. Joyce's framework significantly advanced the understanding of the field and has profoundly impacted educators' perceptions of instructional strategies worldwide.

Theories of Learning

Entwistle (1984) examines early psychological efforts to define learning and memory processes, citing William James' approach from the early 1900s. James emphasized that memory relies on associations between pieces of information; we remember things better when they connect to prior knowledge. The stronger these connections, the easier the information is to recall. Entwistle also introduces the information processing model of memory, likening it to computer functions. This model suggests that learning occurs by focusing on stimuli and encoding that information in the brain, with successful retrieval as evidence of learning. New data is organized into conceptual hierarchies, allowing for easier categorization, and forgetting is linked to errors in encoding or retrieval.

While this model indicates that improving learning techniques can enhance memory, critics like Ausubel, Novak, and Hanesian (1978, as cited in Entwistle, 1984) argue it is too restrictive, particularly for abstract concepts. These thinkers propose that learning should be viewed as a process of constructing meaning, where abstract concepts connect with prior experiences. Recent reviews, such as those by Dietel, Herman, and Knuth (1991), stress that learning is not linear but occurs in various directions and at different paces.

Similarly, Biggs (1987) notes that the context and how students perceive their performance influence the speed of knowledge acquisition, highlighting that the perception of what constitutes acceptable performance affects learning outcomes.

Instructional Strategies and Learner Outcomes

Gagne (1985) defines learning as a process where instruction leads to changes in an individual's knowledge or behavior. Different learning theories offer varied perspectives on how learning occurs. Behavioral theories emphasize changes in behavior due to external environmental factors, while cognitive and constructivist theories focus on internal mental processes. The instructional strategies employed by teachers are grounded in these theories, leading to specific educational outcomes. Throughout the twentieth century, debates arose over which theories and strategies—such as lecture versus discussion or direct instruction versus discovery learning—are most effective. These discussions often remained unresolved because the effectiveness of strategies is contingent upon the teacher's objectives (Gagne, 1985). Gagne also highlights that modern views of instructional strategies recognize education's complexity and the need for diverse approaches to meet varied learner outcomes. Effective teachers now utilize multiple instructional strategies tailored to achieve both behavioral and cognitive goals. The choice of strategy depends on the specific learning objectives the teacher seeks to accomplish.

Frequent and Persistently Used Instructional Strategies in the Classroom According to Cruickshank et al. (1999), the learning environment encompasses both the classroom context and the expected behaviors of teachers and students. One key instructional strategy is direct instruction, which provides structured, teacher-controlled learning. Teachers set clear learning outcomes, present new information, and guide student practice, maximizing academic engagement and success. Simulation is another effective method where students role-play scenarios to develop real-world skills and concepts.

This hands-on approach allows learners to make decisions and learn from their successes and failures in a safe environment. Presentation, or lecture, remains a widely used strategy for knowledge acquisition, requiring more than mere lecturing. Effective presentations involve a structured environment where teachers actively engage students, using advance organizers to help them process new information. While suitable for foundational knowledge, presentations are less effective for fostering higher-level thinking. Concept teaching is vital for developing higher-level thinking skills, helping students understand foundational concepts that support social communication.

Discussions also play a crucial role, allowing students to articulate their thoughts and engage deeply with academic content. Effective discussions go beyond simple Q&A, enhancing student engagement and critical thinking. The case method links classroom learning with real-life experiences, encouraging active student discussion about real-world issues. Lastly, active learning—defined by Meyers and Jones (1993)—includes activities that engage students in applying what they've learned, reinforcing critical thinking and perspective-taking. While lecturing can be appropriate for specific content, a mix of instructional strategies tailored to lesson objectives is essential for maximizing student learning.

Professional Learning Experiences Linking Teaching Activities and Valued Student Outcomes

Cruickshank et al. (1999) highlight that the success of professional learning activities in enhancing student outcomes depends on teachers' understanding of the connections between specific teaching practices and student learning.

Effective professional development focuses not just on mastering strategies but on their actual impact on student outcomes. Clear definitions of desired outcomes—ranging from specific knowledge and skills to broader goals like comprehension and collaboration—are essential for teachers. Without clear targets, professional learning is unlikely to yield meaningful improvements. In situations with persistent achievement problems, positive changes may only become evident over time as teachers modify their practices. When teachers observe students gaining new knowledge, their expectations tend to rise, fostering a greater sense of responsibility for student learning.

However, linking student learning issues to teacher expectations can lead to a blame culture unless teachers feel supported in developing their practices. Thus, ongoing support is crucial for fostering effective educational outcomes.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Introduction

Research methodology focuses on the development of data collection tools such as interviews and questionnaires (Burns and Groove, 2003). This study's methodology includes research design, population, sampling technique, sample, instruments, data collection procedures, and data analysis procedures.

Methods for Data Collection

For this research, a quantitative data collection method was employed to effectively gather the required data.

Target Population

The research population encompasses the entire group of individuals or objects exhibiting specific characteristics of interest to the study (Burns and Groove, 2003). In this context, the population consists of all secondary students, teachers, and administrators at two highly populated MCSS schools: W.V.S. Tubman High School and G.W. Gibson High School. To minimize disruptions, the existing structure of classes was maintained, resulting in a total participation of 1,870 individuals.

Sample and Sampling Technique

According to Burns and Groove (2003), a sample size represents a subset of the population. This study utilized a systematic sampling technique, a probability method that involves selecting participants at regular intervals, to choose 187 participants, primarily from the senior high divisions of both schools, along with a smaller group of teachers and administrators. The following formula facilitated the calculation of the sample size:

K = N/n Where: - K = the interval for selection, N = population size (1,870) , n = desired sample size (190)
Thus: K = 1,870/190, 9.84 (rounded to 10)

Consequently, every tenth student, teacher, and administrator was chosen for the sample. This sample size is believed to be sufficient to address the research questions, particularly concerning the educational system in question compared to other nations.

Research Design

Lobiodo-Wood and Haber (2004) describe research design as the overall plan for a study. This research utilized a descriptive design, which Burn and Grove (2003) state is useful for gathering detailed information about characteristics in a specific area without manipulating variables.

Research Instrument

The study employed structured questionnaires created by the researcher to address specific research goals. Additionally, scheduled interviews guided by an interview framework were conducted to complement the data collection.

Data Collection Procedure

The questionnaires, limited to one or two pages, were distributed to active participants in selected classes. After completion, they were categorized by class and school, and supplemental interviews were conducted to enhance the data.

Data Analysis Procedure

Data analysis was based on the returned questionnaires, with findings organized by school, class, and participant status. Results were presented in tables, charts, and graphs for clearer understanding and interpretation.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations are crucial for responsible research that respects participants and maintains integrity. This study adhered to key ethical principles:

Informed Consent

All participants—teachers, students, and school administrators—were fully informed about the study's purpose and methods. Participation was voluntary, with written consent obtained from teachers and administrators.

Confidentiality and Anonymity

Participants' identities were protected throughout the research. Data remained confidential and used solely for academic purposes. Names were replaced with statuses of participants to ensure anonymity, and school names were used only with permission.

INTERPRETATION, PRESENTATION, AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS/RESULTS

Introduction

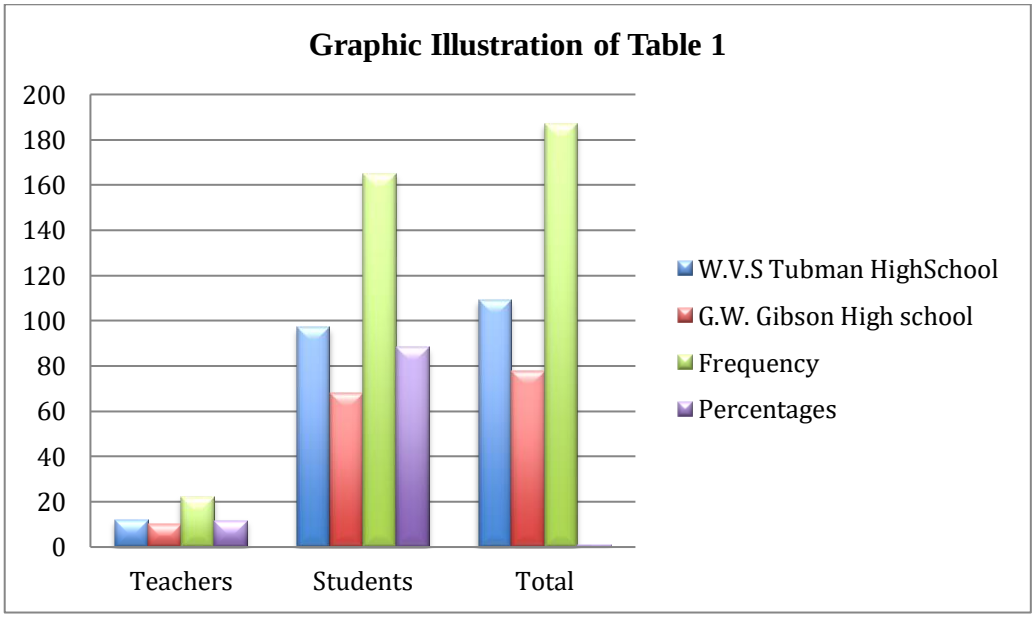
This chapter analyzes data from 187 respondents, including teachers and students from W.V.S. Tubman and G.W. Gibson High Schools in Monrovia. The collected data examines the relationship between teaching strategies and student learning outcomes. We present insights into respondents' opinions and feelings on the study topic. The data, analyzed statistically and presented in tables with corresponding percentages, aims to facilitate a clear and concise discussion of the findings.

Interpretation and Presentation of Data

Table 1: Status of the respondents

Statuses	**W.V.S Tubman High school**	**G.W. Gibson High School**	**Frequency**	**Percentages (%)**
Teachers	12	10	22	11.76%
Students	97	68	165	88.24%
Total	**109**	**78**	**187**	**100%**

Source: Author's field data 2013



Source: Author's field data 2013

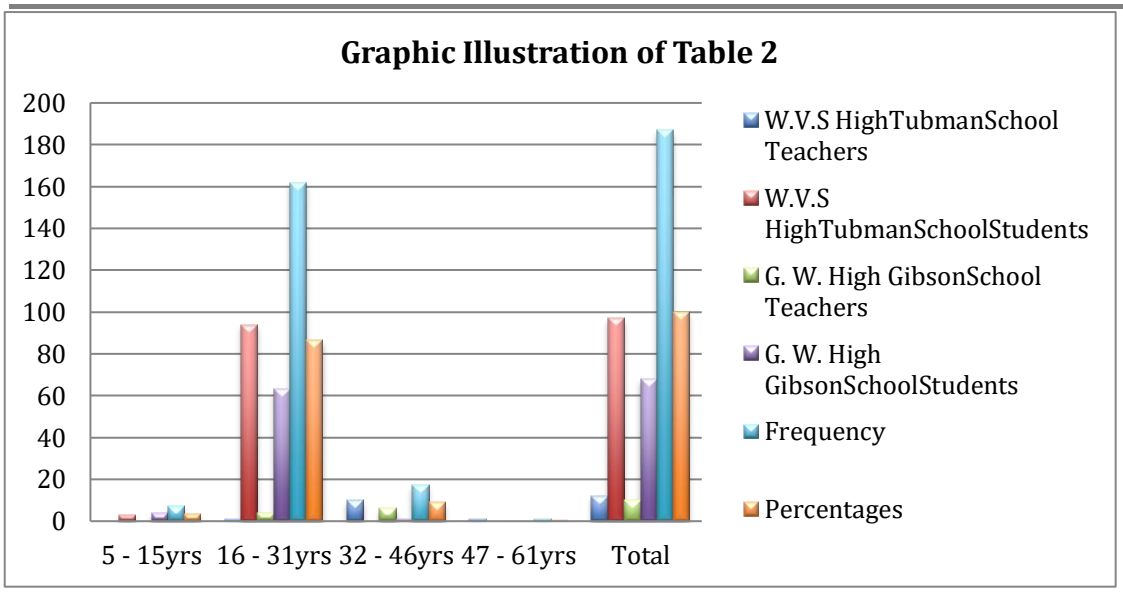
Table 1 and the chart show the statuses of respondents in this research.

Out of 187 participants, 165 (88.24%) were students from W.V.S. Tubman and G.W. Gibson high schools, while 22 (11.76%) were teachers from those institutions.

Table 2: Age distribution of respondents

Age Range	**W.V.S Tubman High School**		**G. W. Gibson High School**		**Frequency**	**Percentages (%)**
	Teachers	Students	Teachers	Students		
5-15yrs	-	3	-	4	7	3.74%
16-31yrs	1	94	4	63	162	86.63%
32-46yrs	10	-	6	1	17	9.09%
47-61yrs	1	-	-	-	1	0.53%
Total	**12**	**97**	**10**	**68**	**187**	**100%**

Source: Author's field data 2013



Source: Author's field data 2013

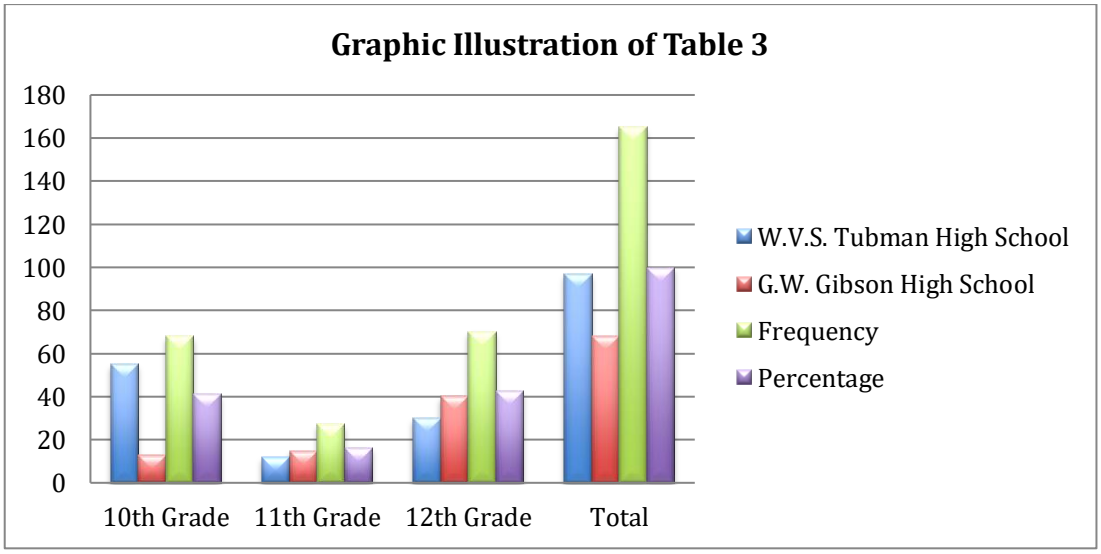
Table 2 and the accompanying chart illustrate the age distribution of respondents, ranging from 5 to 61 years.

A significant portion, 162 respondents (86.62%), fall within the age group of 16-31 years. Meanwhile, 17 respondents (9.09%) are aged 32-46 years, and 7 respondents (3.74%) are between 5-15 years. Lastly, 1 respondent (0.53%) represents the age group of 47-61 years.

Table 3: Class level of Respondents

Responses	**W.V.S. Tubman High School**	**G.W. Gibson High School**	**Frequency**	**Percentage (%)**
10th Grade	55	13	68	41.21%
11th Grade	12	15	27	16.36%
12th Grade	30	40	70	42.42%
Total	**97**	**68**	**165**	**100%**

Source: Author's field data 2013



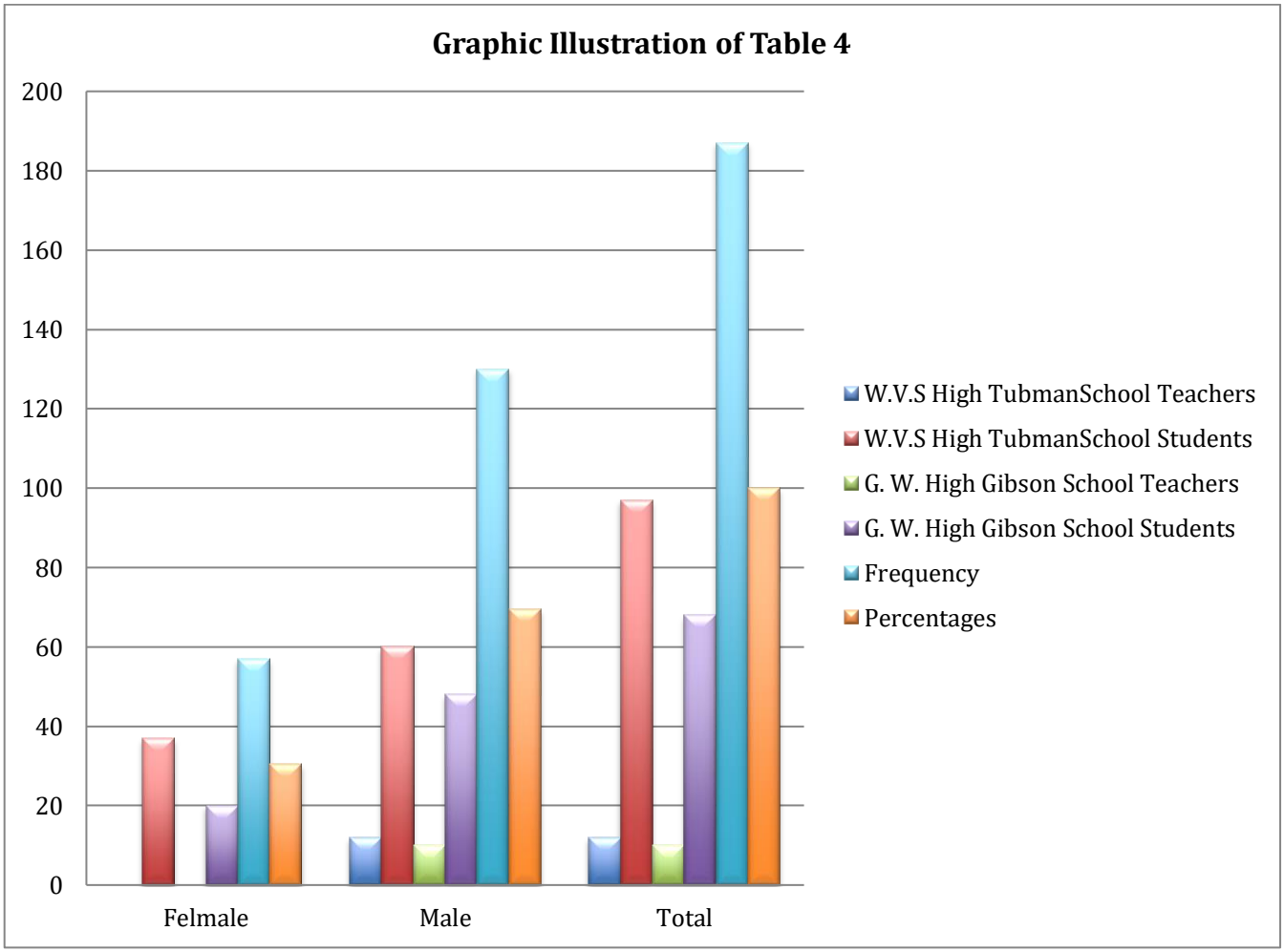
Source: Author's field data 2013

Table 3 and the accompanying chart present the class levels or placements of the students. Among the total sample of 187 respondents, 70 (42.42%) were 12th graders, while 68 (41.21%) were 10th graders. Additionally, 27 respondents (16.36%) were in the 11th grade.

Table 4: Gender distribution of Respondents

Sex Distribution	W.V.S Tubman High School		G. W. Gibson High School		Frequency	Percentages (%)
	Teachers	Students	Teachers	Students		
Female	-	37	-	20	57	30.48%
Male	12	60	10	48	130	69.52%
Total	**12**	**97**	**10**	**68**	**187**	**100%**

Source: Author's field data 2013



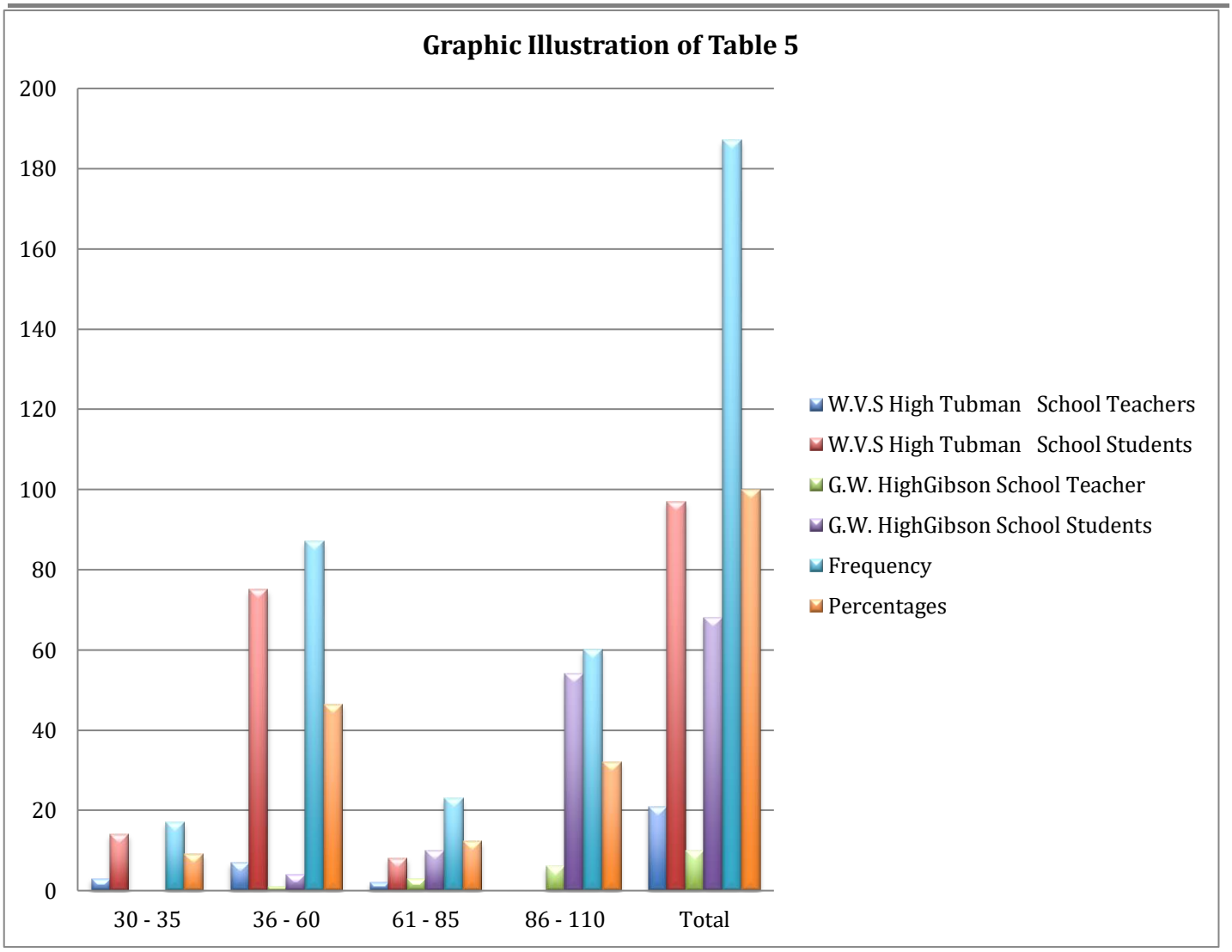
Source: Author's field data 2013

Table 4 and the corresponding chart clearly highlighted the gender differences among respondents. Specifically, 130 individuals, accounting for 69.52% of the sample, identified as male. In contrast, a smaller group of 57 respondents, making up 30.48% of the total studied population, identified as female.

Table 5: Number of students per class

Responses	W.V.S Tubman High School		G.W. Gibson High School		Frequency	Percentages (%)
	Teachers	Students	Teachers	Students		
10-35	3	14	-	-	17	9.09%
36-60	7	75	1	4	87	46.52%
61-85	2	8	3	10	23	12.30%
86-110	-	-	6	54	60	32. 09%
Total	**12**	**97**	**10**	**68**	**187**	**100%**

Source: Author's field data 2013



Source: Author's field data 2013

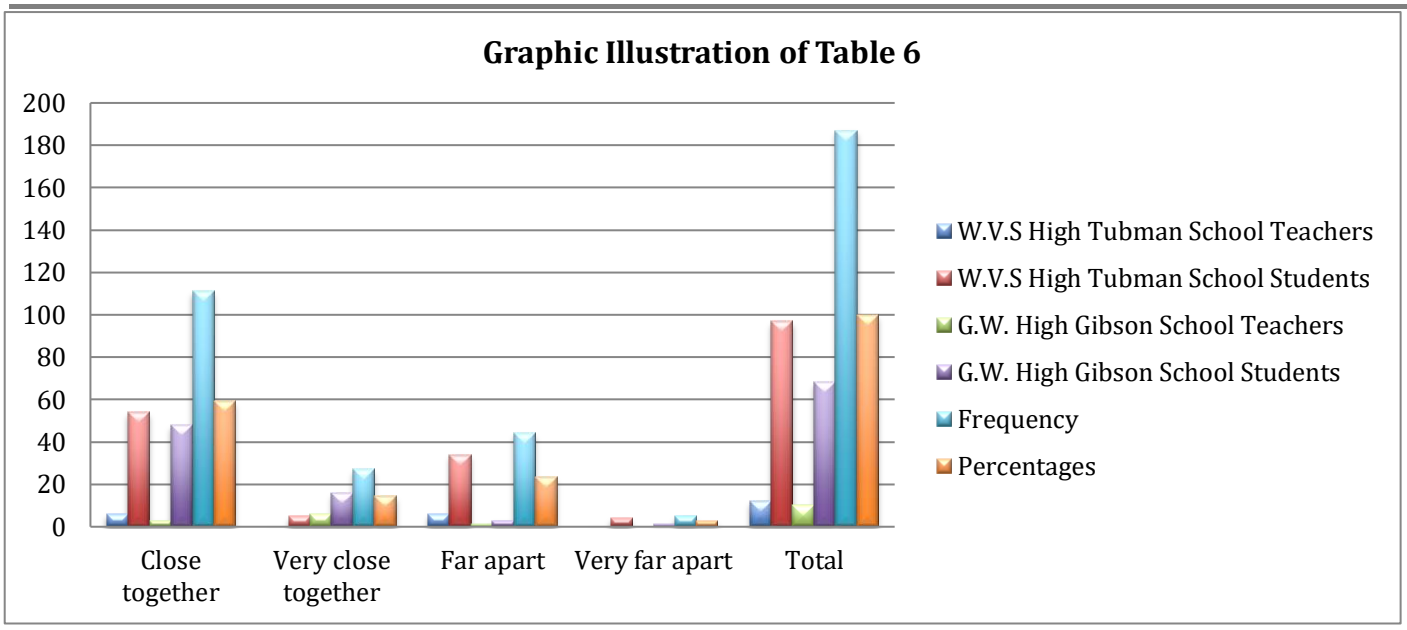
Table 5 and the accompanying chart reveal compelling insights about class sizes within the studied population.

Notably, 87 respondents (46.52%) indicated that their classes contained 36-60 students, with this issue being particularly significant at W.V.S. Tubman High School. Furthermore, 60 respondents (32.09%) reported their classes housed 86-110 students, a trend markedly pronounced at G.W. Gibson High School compared to Tubman High. Additionally, 23 respondents (12.30%) believed their classes had 61-85 students. Lastly, 17 respondents (9.09%), predominantly from Tubman High School, indicated that some of their teaching sessions included only 10-35 students, highlighting the variability in class sizes and the need for attention to this crucial aspect of educational experience.

Table 6 : Seating arrangement of students in class

Responses	**W.V.S Tubman High School**		**G.W. Gibson High School**		**Frequency**	**Percentages (%)**
	Teachers	**Students**	**Teachers**	**Students**		
Close together	6	54	3	48	111	59.36%
Very close together	-	5	6	16	27	14.44%
Far apart	6	34	1	3	44	23.53%
Very far apart	-	4	-	1	5	2.67%
Total	**12**	**97**	**10**	**68**	**187**	**100%**

Source: Author's field data 2013



Source: Author's field data 2013

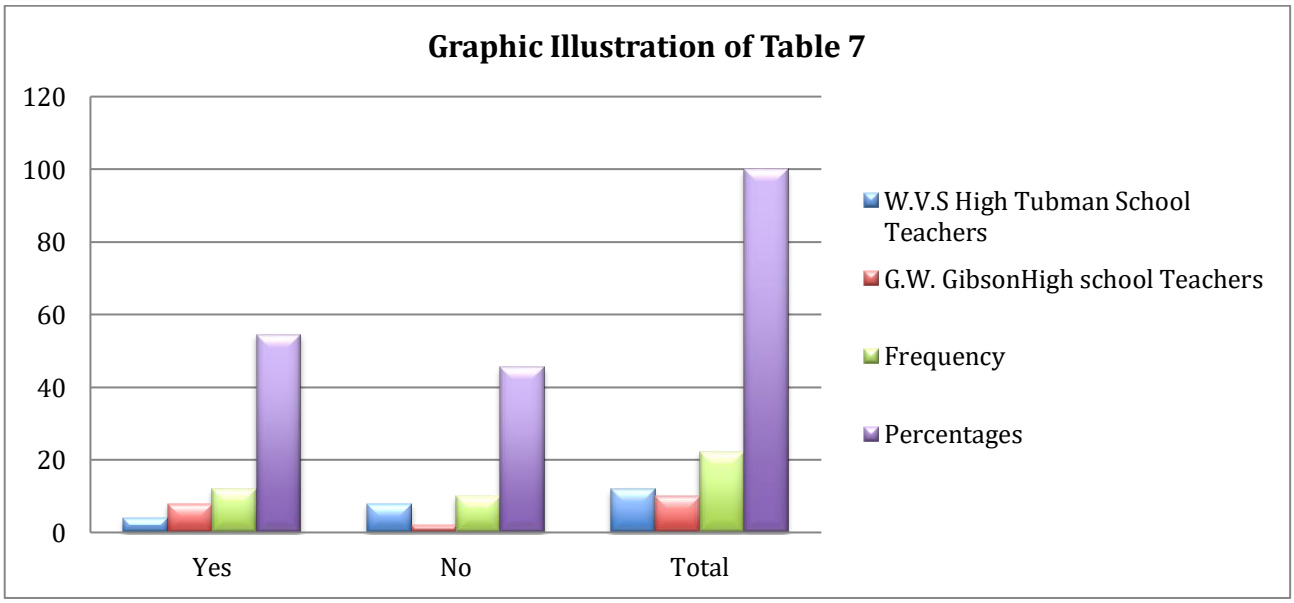
Table 6 and the chart illustrate key insights about classroom seating arrangements.

A majority of 111 respondents (59.36%) indicated that students are seated closely together, which promotes collaboration and engagement. In contrast, 44 respondents (23.53%) reported that students are positioned far apart, potentially limiting interaction. Additionally, 27 respondents (14.44%) noted that students are seated very close together, while only 5 respondents (2.67%) mentioned that students are very far apart. This data highlights the importance of optimizing classroom layouts for enhanced educational outcomes.

Table 7: Do seating arrangement of your students impact or affect your teaching

Responses	**W.V. Tubman High School Teachers**	**G.W. Gibson High school Teachers**	**Frequency**	**Percentages (%)**
Yes	4	8	12	54.55%
No	8	2	10	45.45%
Total	**12**	**10**	**22**	**100%**

Source: Author's field data 2013



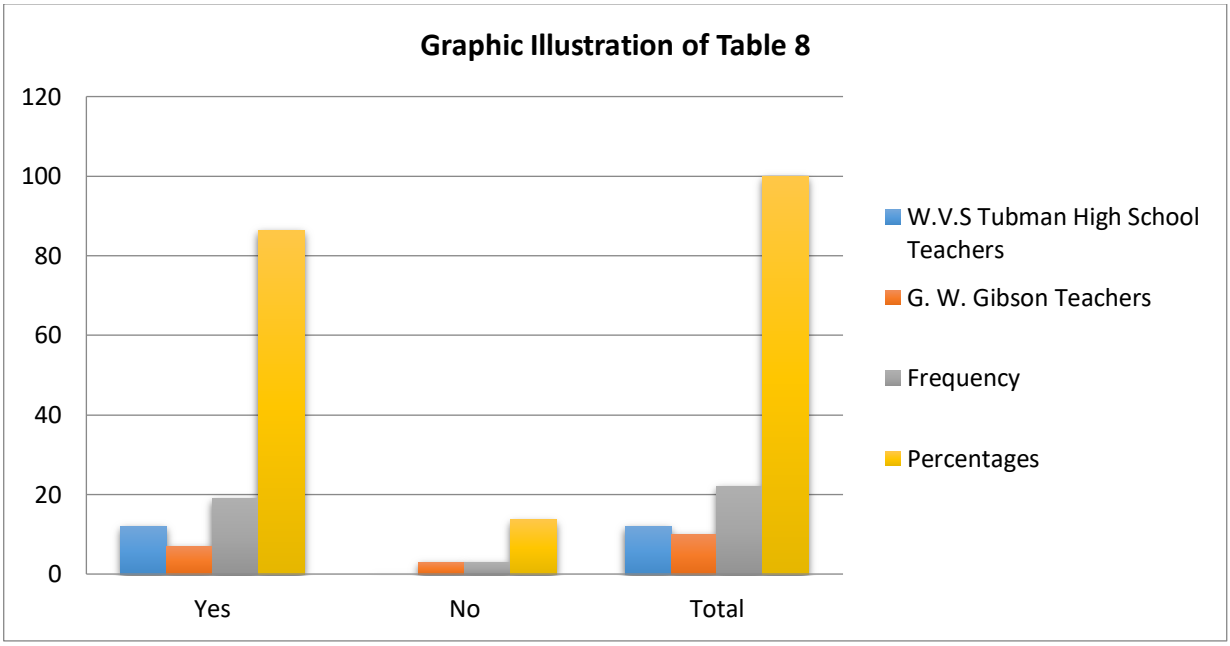
Source: Author's field data 2013

Table 7 and the accompanying chart clearly highlight that a majority of teachers, specifically 12 respondents (54.55%) of the total surveyed, recognize the significant impact that seating arrangements have on their teaching effectiveness. On the other hand, 10 respondents (45.45%) from Tubman High contended that seating arrangements do not influence their teaching or positively affect student learning outcomes. This disparity suggests a critical need to re-evaluate seating strategies to enhance educational experiences.

Table 8: Do you have formal training in education or teacher training

Responses	**W.V.S Tubman High School Teachers**	**G. W. Gibson High School Teachers**	**Frequency**	**Percentages (%)**
Yes	12	7	19	86.36%
No	-	3	3	13.64%
Total	**12**	**10**	**22**	**100%**

Source: Author's field data 2013



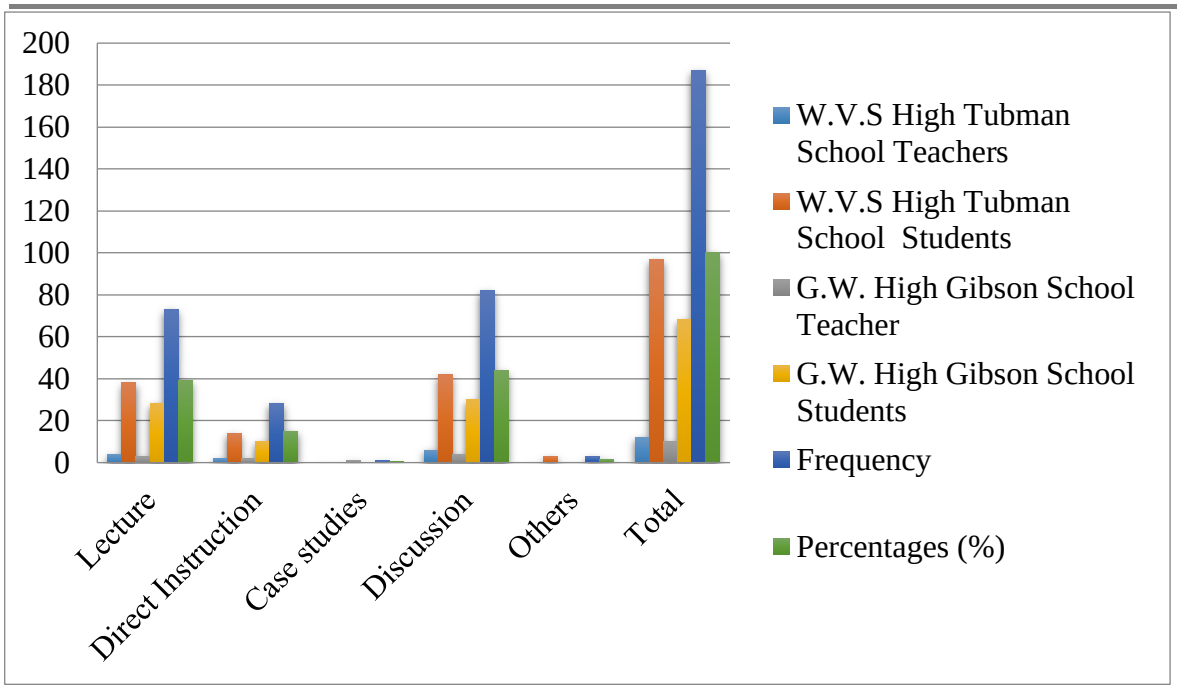
Source: Author's field data 2013

Table 8 and the chart demonstrate that a strong majority of 19 respondents (86.36%) among the surveyed teachers possess formal training in education or relevant teaching skills. This formal background significantly enhances their ability to nurture and guide our students effectively. Conversely, the 3 respondents (13.64%) who admit to lacking formal education training are nonetheless committed to helping shape young minds, showcasing their dedication despite the absence of official qualifications

Table 9: What teaching strategy do teachers use during their teaching sessions

Responses	**W.V.S Tubman High School**		**G.W. Gibson High School**		**Frequency**	**Percentages (%)**
	Teachers	**Students**	**Teachers**	**Students**		
Lecture	4	38	3	28	73	39.04%
Direct Instruction	2	14	2	10	28	14.97%
Case studies	-	-	1	-	1	0.53%
Discussion	6	42	4	30	82	43.85%
Others	-	3	-	-	3	1.60%
Total	**12**	**97**	**10**	**68**	**187**	**100%**

Source: Author's field data 2013



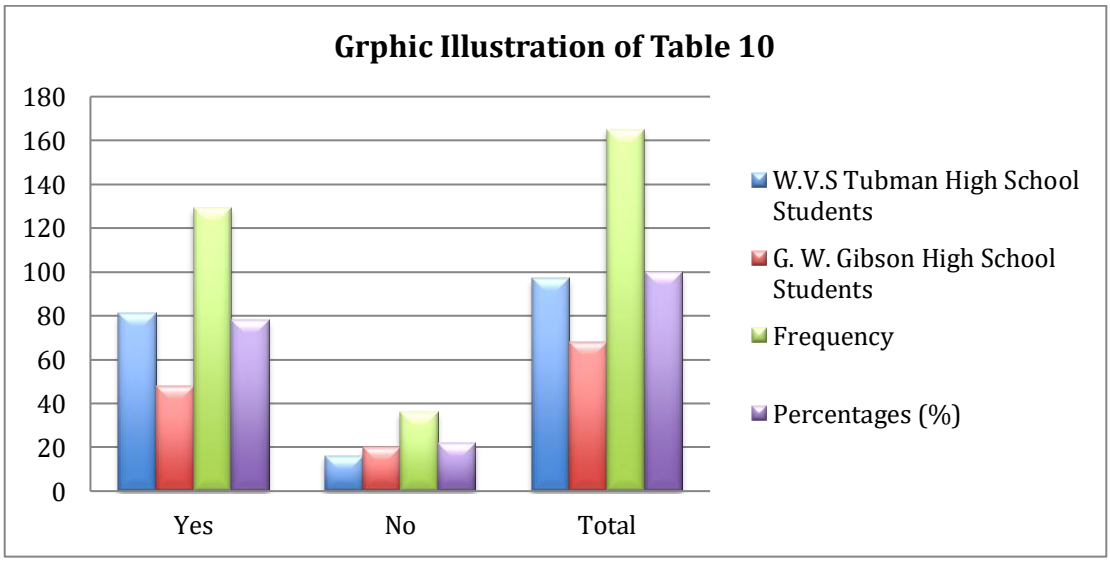
Source: Author's field data 2013

Table 9 and the chart clearly illustrate that 83 respondents (43.85%) identified discussion as the most commonly used teaching strategy, highlighting its engagement value. Additionally, 73 respondents (39.04%) noted that lecturing is also widely used. Direct instruction was chosen by 28 respondents (14.97%) as a key teaching method.Meanwhile, 3 out of 187 respondents (1.60%) mentioned role play as an interactive strategy, which intrigued the researcher. Lastly, just 1 respondent (0.53%) selected case studies as a teaching approach, indicating its limited yet meaningful application.

Table 10: Do you think the way you are taught make you learn easily

Responses	**W.V.S Tubman High School Students**	**G. W. Gibson High School Students**	**Frequency**	**Percentages (%)**
Yes	81	48	129	78.18
No	16	20	36	21.82
Total	**97**	**68**	**165**	**100%**

Source: Author's field data 2013



Source: Author's field data 2013

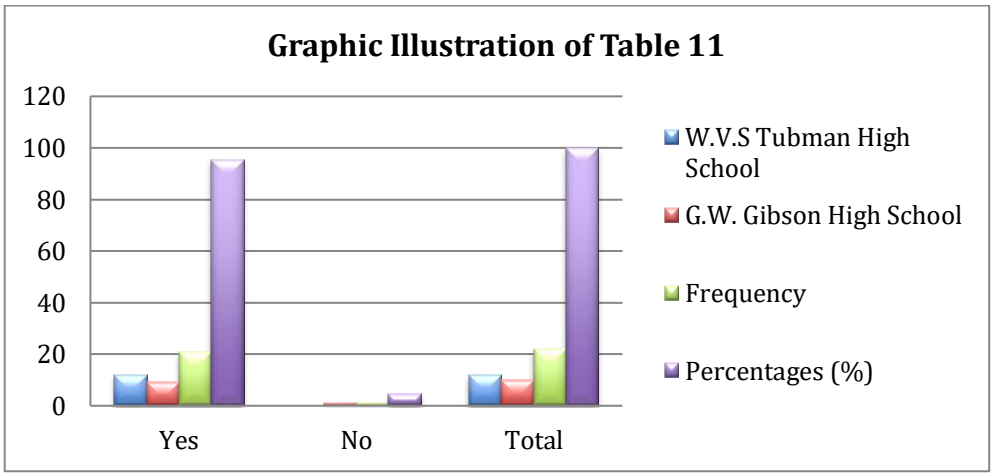
Table 10 and the associated chart highlight a significant connection between the effectiveness of teaching strategies and students' learning experiences.

Remarkably, 129 respondents—representing an impressive 78.18% of our student population—expressed that they find it easy to learn from the current teaching methods employed. Conversely, only 36 respondents, accounting for 21.82%, stated that the teaching approaches hinder their ability to grasp concepts in the classroom. This strong preference underscores the importance of utilizing effective teaching strategies to enhance student learning outcomes.

Table 11: Do you think your teaching strategy implore do impact your students' learning outcome

Responses	**W.V.S Tubman High School** Teachers	**G.W. Gibson High School** Teachers	**Frequency**	**Percentages (%)**
Yes	12	9	21	95.45%
No	-	1	1	4.55%
Total	**12**	**10**	**22**	**100%**

Source: Author's field data 2013



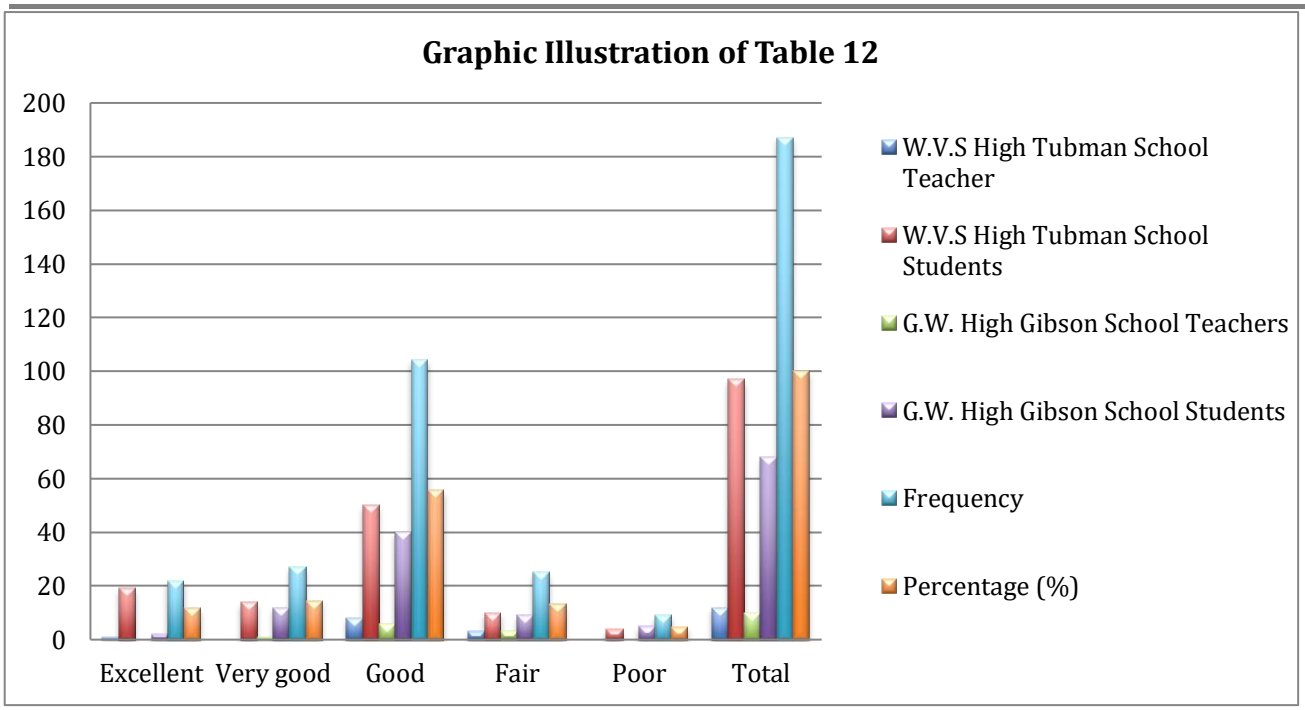
Source: Author's field data 2013

Table 11 and the accompanying chart shed light on teacher responses concerning the effectiveness of their instructional strategies and their impact on student learning. An impressive 21 educators (95.45%) from the surveyed group firmly believe that the teaching strategies they select and employ are instrumental in enhancing student learning outcomes. Conversely, only 1 respondent (4.55%) disagreed, stating that the strategies utilized during teaching sessions lack significant influence on student success. This overwhelming consensus underscores the critical role of effective teaching strategies in fostering student achievement.

Table 12 How can you rate the overall performances of your teachers or students relative to teaching and learning

Responses	**W.V.S Tubman High School** **Teachers**	**Students**	**G.W. Gibson High School** **Teachers**	**Students**	**Frequency**	**Percentage (%)**
Excellent	1	19	-	2	22	11.76%
Very good	-	14	1	12	27	14.44%
Good	8	50	6	40	104	55.62%
Fair	3	10	3	9	25	13.37%
Poor	-	4	-	5	9	4.82%
Total	**12**	**97**	**10**	**68**	**187**	**100%**

Source: Author's field data 2013



Source: Author's field data 2013

Table 12 and the accompanying chart compellingly showcase the performances of both teachers and students in the reviewed institutions.

An impressive 104 respondents (55.62%) rated the overall performance of their teachers and students as good, highlighting a solid foundation in the educational experience. Furthermore, 27 respondents (14.44%) rated the performances as very good, indicating a noteworthy level of satisfaction. While 25 respondents (13.37%) assessed the performance as fair, it's worth noting that 22 individuals (11.76%) rated it as excellent, reflecting moments of outstanding achievement. However, it's also important to address that 9 respondents (4.82%), primarily students, viewed the overall performance of their teachers as poor, signaling areas that require attention and improvement.

DISCUSSIONS OF FINDINGS/RESULTS

This section analyzes the research findings based on empirical data and the researcher's insights, organized through percentage methods and enhanced with graphic representations.

Statuses of the Respondents

Table 1 and the accompanying chart reveal that out of 187 respondents, 165 (88.24%) were students from W.V.S. Tubman and G.W. Gibson high schools, while 22 (11.76%) were teachers. The inclusion of both groups allows for a comprehensive assessment of teaching strategies' impact on learning outcomes.

Age Distribution of the Respondents

Table 2 and the chart show that respondents' ages ranged from 5 to 61 years. Most respondents, 162 (86.62%), were aged 16-31, with 17 (9.09%) aged 32-46, 7 (3.74%) aged 5-15, and 1 (0.53%) aged 47-61. This data indicates that many students in Liberian schools are often older than their class level, a trend evident in post-war educational settings.

Class Level of Respondents

Table 3 and the chart indicate that 70 respondents (42.42%) were in 12th grade, 68 (41.21%) were in 10th grade, and 27 (16.36%) were in 11th grade.

Gender Distribution of Respondents

Table 4 shows a significant gender imbalance among respondents, with 130 males (69.52%) and 57 females (30.48%). Notably, none of the 22 teachers surveyed were female, underscoring male dominance in Liberian schools.

Number of Students per Class

Table 5 reveals class sizes at W.V.S Tubman and G.W. Gibson high schools. Among respondents, 87 (46.52%) reported 36-60 students per class, particularly at Tubman. Additionally, 60 respondents (32.09%) indicated 86-110 students, mostly at G.W. Gibson. Some classes also had 61-85 students (12.30%) or 10-35 students (9.09%), mainly at Tubman. Despite regulations limiting class size to 35-45, overcrowding persists, negatively affecting teaching and learning.

Seating Arrangement of Students in Class

Table 6 outlines seating arrangements, with 111 respondents (59.36%) noting that students sit closely together. Conversely, 44 respondents (23.53%) reported seating far apart, while 27 (14.44%) mentioned very close seating. Only 5 respondents (2.67%) indicated that students were very far apart.

Impact of Seating Arrangement on Teaching

Table 7 shows that 12 teachers (54.55%) believe student seating arrangements significantly affect their teaching effectiveness, particularly at G.W. Gibson High School, which experiences more overcrowding. In contrast, 10 teachers (45.45%) from Tubman High reported that seating does not impact teaching or learning outcomes.

Formal Training in Education

According to Table 8, 19 teachers (86.36%) have formal education or training, while 3 teachers (13.64%) lack formal training but are still teaching. Despite post-civil war challenges, Liberia has made strides in teacher qualifications. The PRS aims to train 50% of teachers by 2010, requiring about 1,000 new educators annually (GoL 2009) to improve educational quality.

Teaching Strategies Used by Teachers

Table 9 indicates that 83 respondents (43.85%) use discussion as their primary teaching method, while 73 respondents (39.04%) prefer lecturing. Direct instruction was chosen by 28 respondents (14.97%), and role play and case studies were mentioned by 3 (1.60%) and 1 (0.53%) respondents, respectively. These methods promote student engagement and help maintain teacher control in the classroom.

Impact of Teaching Strategies on Student Learning

The researcher asked students whether teaching strategies affect their learning. Results showed that 129 respondents (78.18%) felt they learned easily from their teachers, while 36 (21.82%) did not. While most appreciate the teaching methods, it’s important to consider the minority's concerns to improve classroom effectiveness.

Teacher Perspectives on Teaching Strategies' Impact

Regarding their own strategies, 21 teachers (95.45%) agreed that their methods positively impact student learning, while 1 teacher (4.55%) disagreed.

Rating the Performance of Teachers and Students

In rating performance, 104 respondents (55.62%) rated it as good, 27 (14.44%) as very good, 25 (13.37%) as fair, 22 (11.76%) as excellent, and 9 (4.82%) rated their teachers’ performance as poor.

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

This study included 187 participants: 165 students (88.24%) and 22 teachers (11.76%) from W.V.S Tubman High School and G.W. Gibson High School. Key findings include: - Gender Disparity, A significant gap was identified, with 130 males (69.52%) and only 57 females (30.48%) among respondents, and no female teachers present. - Class Size and Seating , Of the respondents, 87 (46.52%) reported class sizes of 36-60 students, while 60 (32.09%) indicated 86-110 students, mainly from G.W. Gibson. Additionally, 111 respondents (59.36%) noted students were seated closely together, with 54.55% of teachers acknowledging that seating arrangements impact teaching. -Teacher Qualifications, Among the teachers, 19 out of 22 (86.36%) had formal training in education. The most used teaching strategies were discussion (43.85%) and lecture (39.04%), with direct instruction cited by 14.97%. - Learning Outcomes:, A majority of students (129 respondents, 78.18%) felt that their teachers' methods facilitated easier learning. Teachers largely agreed, with 21 respondents (95.45%) stating their strategies positively impacted student outcomes. Overall, 104 respondents (55.62%) rated the performance of both teachers and students during the educational process as good, indicating a generally positive view of teaching effectiveness.

Conclusions

This research on the impact of teaching strategies on student learning outcomes at W.V.S Tubman and G.W. Gibson High Schools in Monrovia produced insightful results. While many respondents highlighted effective strategies such as discussions and lectures, concerns about the overall performance of graduates persist. Issues like bribery and improper student placement, which were not discussed by respondents, may also affect outcomes.

Recommendations

To improve the educational sector, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. Enforce Classroom Policies: The Ministry of Education should ensure compliance with regulations to prevent overcrowded classrooms that hinder effective teaching.
2. Promote Female Education: The government should invest in female education and train female teachers for public schools to address socio-emotional challenges faced by students.
3. Monitor School Administrators: Regular supervision of public school administrators by higher authorities is essential to uphold professional standards among teachers.
4. Provide Teacher Training: All teachers in public and private schools should receive training in pedagogy to enhance their teaching effectiveness.

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