

RELEVANCE OF FEEDBACK SYSTEM ON IMPROVING TEACHERS' EFFECTIVENESS IN THE SOUTHERN PHILIPPINES

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ABSTRACT

This study describes the relevance of feedback system on improving teachers' effectiveness in the Southern Philippines. It begins by reviewing literatures on teachers' effectiveness and on the important issues associated with feedback in general. Using qualitative research method, the researcher synthesized the data gathered by demonstrating the components of feedback system. The implications of these components on the enhancement of teachers' performance are explored. Further, the strategies needed for the efficient execution of the said system are also discussed.

Key words: Feedback System, Teachers' Effectiveness, Peer-To-Peer Evaluation, Mentoring, Self-Reflection

1. INTRODUCTION

One of the most effective tools for improving individual or group performance is feedback. Feedback is the information given to a person after he or she has undergone a course of behavior or actions. McFadzien (2015) said feedback is the essential element in turning assessment into tool for future learning. In the context of education, feedback allows teachers to determine what needs to be done in order to become effective in teaching. A study by Scheeler, Ruhl & McAfee (2004) claimed that one technique for increasing use of effective practices is providing feedback to teachers on both newly acquired and ingrained teaching behaviors. Unfortunately, most teachers today, especially those from the major parts of the Southern Philippines, do not receive systematic feedback to help them do their jobs better. This then results to deterioration of the quality of teacher education in the country. This phenomenon is reflected on the result of the 2018 Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) which revealed that out 79 countries surveyed, Philippines ranked lowest in reading comprehension and second lowest in both mathematics and science (Philippine News Agency, 2020). In relation to this result, Philippine Senator Sherwin Gatchalian (2020) said the expertise of teachers is another cause of concern. With this, using a feedback system to improve teachers' effectiveness is very critical and important.

This paper is anchored on the view that if the school wants to ensure the quality of education, it needs to focus first on improving the quality of teachers. The purpose of this paper is to demonstrate the components of feedback system for the enhancement of teachers' performance. The strategies needed for the efficient execution of the said system are also outlined and discussed.

Qualitative research method was used in this paper by synthesizing the data gathered from video clips, books and Internet websites. Further, this paper focuses on the relevance of feedback system on improving teachers' effectiveness in the Southern Philippines.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Cleaver, S., Detrich, R. & States, J. (2019) pointed out that feedback is information about performance that improves performance. Feedback summarizes performance across a much shorter time span-performance today. Feedback can be likened to formative assessment, as it provides guidance to improve performance during the year. Feedback informs teachers about how they are performing relative to expectations and worthy educational outcomes. Principals can use feedback as a valuable supervision tool. Principals give feedback to teachers to reinforce work that meets standards or when necessary provide corrective information for improving administrative, instructional, behavior management, and soft skill competencies. Performance feedback may be as simple as giving praise or exacting as when systematically delivered as a part of coaching. For the best results, feedback must meet these four conditions: (1) It is objective, reliable, measureable, and specific; (2) it provides information about what was done well, what needs improvement, and how to improve; (3) it is delivered frequently and immediately following performance; and (4) it is about performance rather than personal characteristics.

Performance feedback is an important part of many organizational interventions. Managers typically assume that providing employees with feedback about their performance makes it more likely that performance on the job will be improved (DeNisi & Kluger, 2000)

Feedback is essential to learning, and recent research suggests that the most effective feedback is immediate rather than delayed. New advances in technology may make the job of supervision more efficient and when used to provide immediate feedback, more effective as well (Scheeler, McKinnon & Stout, 2012).

One-time workshops raise awareness of evidence-based practices, but faculty members are more likely to make significant changes in their teaching practices when supported by coaching and feedback. Currently, most instructional feedback occurs via student evaluations, which typically lack specific feedback for improvement and focus on teacher-centered practices, or via drop-in classroom observations and peer evaluation by other instructors, which

raise issues for promotion, tenure, and evaluation. The goals of this essay are to summarize the best practices for providing instructional feedback, recommend specific strategies for providing feedback, and suggest areas for further research. Missed opportunities for feedback in teaching are highlighted, and the sharing of instructional expertise is encouraged (Gormally, Evans & Brickman, 2014).

3. DISCUSSIONS

This section discusses the definition of feedback system and its components.

3.1. What is feedback system?

A feedback system is a systematic approach that aims at improving teachers' effectiveness in and outside the classroom. It involves a series of actions to be undertaken by the teacher for him or her to develop his teaching skills. These actions include observation, peer-to-peer learning and giving feedback.

3.1.1. Observing Master's Teachers at Work

Observation allows younger teachers to watch the senior ones at the workplace. When teachers observed the good things around them or model a certain teacher's character, they are creating a pathway to personal and professional growth.

One main point about observing teaching concerns what is seen, and what is noticed. Observers do not only 'see' teaching behaviors, they interpret what they see as 'a lecture', 'an innovation', 'traditional method' and so on. The experience and level of expertise of the observer influences what is seen and what is missed and what is thought to be important (Gosling, 2002).

Observation is an important part of learning how to teach. Much of what beginner teachers need to be aware of cannot be learned solely in the university class. Therefore

observation presents an opportunity to see real-life teachers in real-life teaching situations. Teacher observation should be part of a pool of professional development opportunities. One way in which peer observation can be very effective is when teachers acquire new skills or ideas at conferences and then model those new approaches for their colleagues. Teacher observation is most successful when the teacher and observer work together and reflect on the teaching behavior. Teacher observation is least successful when the observer spends hours watching without analysis or dialogue with the teacher (Dela Cruz, 2019).

3.1.2. Peer-to-Peer Learning

Learning from peers can maximize the effectiveness of teachers. This can be done if teachers organize weekly study groups where they can discuss what's working and not. By sharing expertise with each other, new learning and skills will be built among the teachers.

Peer-to-peer learning creates a space where the learner can feel safe taking these risks without a sense that their boss is evaluating their performance while they are learning. It helps employees develop management and leadership skills. Group reflection conversations help employees master the difficult skills of giving and accepting honest, constructive feedback. Because feedback flows in both directions, participants in peer-to-peer learning tend to put more time and energy into making sure the feedback they provide is meaningful. They think from the perspective of their peer, consider where each is coming from, and try to get specific about what will be most helpful and constructive. Peer learning gives employees experience in leadership, handling different points of view, and developing skills such as empathy (Palmer & Blake, 2018).

3.1.3. Giving Feedback

The main requirement is that feedback should direct attention to an achievable gap between desired and actual performance. Two other aspects of the feedback also seem important, though the existing literature is less clear about these. Firstly, that it should facilitate genuine task learning. This may be achieved by ensuring the feedback is timely and relates

to outcomes that are central to performance in the task, rather than superficial, but perhaps easily measurable aspects of it that might be improved without genuinely improving performance. Secondly, that it should be perceived as credible, accurate and fair; otherwise it can simply be rejected and produce no change in performance (Visscher & Coe, 2003)

Choi (2021) mentioned that organizations that do not provide continuous feedback cannot expect employees to grow or develop in the areas within which they struggle. Choi (2021) added that the ongoing evaluation and communication process provides a feedback loop that helps employees understand the areas they need more training in, as well as developmental areas to improve employee aptitude and performance.

3.2. Components of Feedback System for Teachers

On the basis of this article, the components of feedback system are the following: self-reflection, assessment from the students, peer evaluation of teaching, feedback from supervisor, and mentoring.

3.2.1. Self-reflection

Knowing your weaknesses is an important step in personal and professional development (Choi, 2021). Self-reflection offers teachers an opportunity to think about what works and what doesn't in their classroom. We teachers can use reflective teaching as a way to analyze and evaluate our own practices so we can focus on what works. It is important because it's a process that makes you collect, record, and analyze everything that happened in the lesson so you can make improvements in your teaching strategies where necessary (Cox, 2014).

Reflective practice encourages teachers to understand their learners and their abilities and needs. Reflection helps teachers to put themselves in their students' shoes, which is something many skilled teachers do. It also allows teachers to create and experiment with new ideas and approaches to gain maximum success (Herbert-Smith, 19).

3.2.2. Assessment from the Students

Student evaluation of teaching is often reviewed as evidence of teaching, but they should not be viewed in isolation. Student evaluation can often be useful for information of how the students respond personally to their instructor, but students are not qualified to assess content knowledge or modality of instruction (Chism, 2007).

The Center for Research on Learning and Teaching of the University of Michigan explained that students are able to report on the extent to which a teacher appears prepared for class sessions, communicates clearly, stimulates interest, and demonstrates enthusiasm and respect for students; research shows that student responses on these dimensions are valid and reliable.

Students are very observant and love to give feedback. You can hand out a simple survey or questionnaire after your lesson to get students' perspectives about how the lesson went. Think critically about what questions you'd like to ask, and encourage your children to express their thoughts thoroughly. It'll not only be a learning experience for you, but also an indirect exercise in writing for them (Cox, 2014).

3.2.3. Peer Evaluation of Teaching

Peer evaluation of teaching consists of the review of teaching performance by colleague, usually in the same or a similar discipline, with the purpose of assessing and improving quality of teaching (Chism, 2007).

The Center for Research on Learning and Teaching of the University of Michigan said "surveys about how teaching is evaluated on college and university campuses demonstrate an increase in use of faculty colleagues as raters of teaching effectiveness. Colleague review of teaching can play as significant a role as does peer evaluation of research. Colleagues who have expertise in the discipline being taught and training in what to observe can provide important evaluative information through classroom visits and review of course materials and

instructional contributions. For a faculty member engaged in interdisciplinary instruction, evaluation may involve colleagues with expertise in similar interdisciplinary instruction and/or with expertise in each of the individual disciplines represented by the faculty member.”

3.2.4. Feedback from Supervisor

Supervisors play a vital role in giving feedback to teachers. By taking a proactive approach to your employee growth and professional development strategies, you can mitigate employee turnover and drive more productivity. If you want to support employee growth and professional development, you must first keep them happy and motivated. That starts by creating a company culture that rewards and recognizes exceptional work. Organizations need to implement processes that help management organize and assess the strengths and weaknesses of their employees on an ongoing basis (Choi, 2021)

Jallorina, Yango & Decena (2021) found out that the higher is the principal’s level of utilization of reinforcement strategies the higher is the teachers’ level of pedagogical competence and job satisfaction, and quality instruction.

3.2.5. Mentoring

Scarlett (2020) said ask a colleague or mentor to review evaluation feedback with you – they can be really helpful in clarifying feedback, and they can help you understand any topics or concepts from the feedback that you’re familiar with.

By supporting new teachers, increasing their effectiveness, and reducing turnover, school districts can give the children most in need of high-quality teaching a real chance at success (Moir, Barlon, Bless & Miles, 2009).

4. CONCLUSION

In order to ensure teachers’ effectiveness, the school administration in the Southern Philippines must apply a feedback system to their teachers. Applying such system will also

ensure a good quality of education in the region. The school head must see to it that the teachers are receiving constant feedback on their teaching performance. The components that were discussed above can only become effective if the administration, teachers and other stakeholders of the school will cooperate towards the goal of improving the effectiveness of the teachers in and outside the classroom.

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