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# Facilitation of Learning in the University: What Really Makes an Effective University Teacher?

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**ABSTRACT** Discourse on effective teaching and learning has changed remarkably from the traditional transmission model to the modern transformative model of teaching. In the present paper, the researchers engage in a critical examination of elements that constitute an effective university teacher. The researchers examine the purpose of teaching in the university and explore the concept "effective teaching" in the university by addressing issues related to understanding (of the) subject matter, basing facilitation of learning on learning theories, and the use of different and appropriate facilitation techniques. The importance of student-centered learning, reflective practice, assessment, andragogy and use of information and communication technologies (ICTs) to ensure learning effectiveness is also explained. The researchers conclude that an effective teacher in the university is one who engages in scholarly teaching and recommend vibrant continuous professional development programs in universities to ensure that university teachers are equipped with knowledge, skills and values necessary for effective teaching.

## INTRODUCTION

Calls for professionalization of teaching and scholarly teaching are more pronounced in the universities today as the drive towards excellence in teaching grows (Richlin 2001; Fernández 2013; Maphosa and Mudzielwana 2014). Such calls are made against the realization that teaching in the university should be improved to ensure enhanced teaching and learning processes. Fenstermacher and Richardson (2005) and Berliner (2005) describe effective and successful teachers as those that are able to bring about student learning. Successful teaching happens when a 'learner actually acquires some reasonable and acceptable level of proficiency from what the teacher is engaged in teaching' (Fenstermacher and Richardson cited in Berliner (2005). This simply means that successful teaching should result in meaningful learning. Braun (2005) states that student achievement is an accurate measure of teacher effectiveness hence the importance of judging teacher effectiveness through learner attainment.

Discipline experts without formal training in teaching are mostly hired as university teachers. This is always a cause for concern as to the effectiveness of learning in such scenarios. Teaching is a professional exercise based on research and theory. University teachers should be in a position to ensure that meaningful learning takes place in classrooms. Cochran-Smith (2001) and Shoukat et al. (2013) accept that there is a relationship between teacher's qualification and student attainment. Such observations show that teachers should be adequately prepared for their role in teaching by possessing the requisite teaching qualifications. University teachers, who are mainly discipline experts, should be prepared for teaching by way of undergoing training on teaching.

### The Purpose of Teaching in the University

The purpose of teaching in university should be based on creating knowledge-producers who can solve problems and contribute to the economic good of society. Yorke (2009) observes that:

*Around the world, governments indicate that national economies rely, to a large extent, on higher education for success. The emphasis on the economic value of higher education has become more asserted in recent years …*

Teaching done in line to equip students with knowledge, skills and values necessary for economic development in society should follow a 'hands-on' approach. Students do not necessarily need to acquire knowledge for knowledge's sake; they should be able to apply what they learn in real life situations. Yorke and Knight (2006) list some of the desirable graduate attributes economy for the knowledge economy such as self-confidence, indepen-dence, emotional intelligence, reflectivity, disciplinary

knowledge and understanding, communication skills, and problem-solving abilities. This calls for teaching that is consistent with the inculcation of such graduate attributes.

Watkins (1998) advocates a student-conception to high quality learning which requires 'active construction of meaning and the possibility of conceptual change on the part of the learners.' This shows that students' active involvement in learning is very important in ensuring high quality learning. Varnava-Marouchou (2007) asserts that the teacher's role, in this regard, is to facilitate and to encourage the student to exercise responsibility for their own development. The purpose of teaching in a university should not be to only transmitting knowledge to students, but to provide opportunities for them to learn and to be responsible learners. A comparison is drawn to learning, based upon understanding the meaning of course materials and a surface approach, based upon memorising the course materials for the purposes of assessment (Biggs 2003). The latter should be the focus of university teaching and learning.

While the discourse on the scholarship of teaching makes emphasis on how to teach certain concepts better, yet not much attention is given to the kinds of learning experiences that students should have during their university years and why we believe certain experiences are more valuable than others (Kreber 2005). Kreber (2005) further states that the meaning of the 'scholarship of teaching' is (more profound) when conceptualized as practical, intellectual and critical work done by university teachers in order to facilitates student development towards significant educational goals. Three such significant educational goals, that have also been linked explicitly to the widely perceived need for lifelong learning are 'self-management' (the capacity to engage in continuous adaptive learning), 'personal autonomy' (critical thinking capacity and intellectual development) and 'social responsibility' (moral development) (Kreber 2005). In addition, there are also other significant goals. It is also important to cultivate, in students, an appreciation for the field they are studying and develop their capacity to solve problems within the discipline (Kreber 2005).

Kreber (2005) further argues that higher education also has a role to play in the promotion of social justice, democracy and civic responsibility. These are to help students acquire a sense of personal autonomy on the one hand (in a sense of critical thinking capacity and intellectual development), and a sense of social responsibility (in a sense of moral development) on the other.

**Effective Teaching**

There are numerous and different ways of conceptualizing effective teaching. However, there is common agreement that effective teaching should result in meaningful learning for learners. Effective teaching and learning takes place when a variety of teaching strategies are provided in the classroom and when the emphasis is on gaining understanding rather than just right answers. Barry (2010:4) states that effective teaching;

*…. involves a deep understanding of subject matter, learning theory and student differences, planning, classroom instructional strategies, knowing individual students, and assessment of student understanding and proficiency with learning outcomes. …also includes a teacher's ability to reflect, collaborate with colleagues and continued on-going professional development.*

***Understanding Subject Matter:*** An effective teacher is one with deep and unquestionable expertise in his or her own discipline. Such is a true discipline expert. Glaser and Chi (1988) cited in Maclellan and Soden (2003) define expertise as;

*…possession of an organized body of conceptual and procedural knowledge that can be both readily accessed and used with superior metacognitive skill.*

An expert in a discipline is one who has been initiated successfully into a discipline and is now able to show expertise by engaging with subject matter to be taught without showing any signs of lack. An expert in a discipline is confident in dealing with the content. Nathan et al. (2005) underscore the importance of discipline expertise by stating that 'expertise in a content area is immensely valuable for effective teaching.'

Gonzalez and Carter (1996) cited in Smith and Strahan (2004) talk of operationalized expertise as a function of experience. Views demonstrate that through accumulated knowledge and through years of experience, expertise is built.

Novice experts in a discipline may not be as knowledgeable as experienced professionals. In a university set-up, the more experienced lecturers may have gathered more content knowledge through experience. However, due to changes in disciplines, experienced lecturers will require to keep abreast of the changes if their knowledge is not to be redundant or obsolete. Ramsden (2011) states six principles of effective teaching as:

***Interest and Explanation:*** The job of every teacher is to make their subject interesting.

Besides, teachers need to make their subject irresistible to students and arouse their curiosity. They also need to explain things clearly and remember to clarify the reasons why a particular fact or skill is essential for understanding the whole.

***Concern and Respect for Students and Student Learning:*** Teachers have to become interested in what students know and do not know. They should also be generous and give students the benefit of the doubt. In addition, teachers need to challenge students, but simultaneously make it easy for them to master the ideas and facts by making the difficult parts easy.

***Appropriate Assessment and Feedback:*** Teachers have to set the right assessments and match them to the material to be learned. This can be done through questioning students in a way that demands evidence of understanding. When giving feedback, teachers must ensure that students appreciate what they still need to study to get it right. In addition, it is essential for the teachers to ensure that it is acceptable to admit that even though they are experts, they still have more to learn.

***Clear Goals and Intellectual Challenge:*** Consistently high academic expectations produce better student performance, and hard work is important. Teachers need to make clear statements of what still needs to be learned and encourage a good fit between student effort and course goals.

***Independence, Control, and Engagement:*** The teacher has to get students engaged with content in a way that enables them to reach understanding. This can be achieved through giving them enough space to learn at their own pace and in their own sequence. Students need to feel in control over what they are doing, as well as feeling that the teacher is directing them – the right balance is important, both for learning well and for enjoying it.

***Learning from Students:*** Effective teaching means seeing the relation between teaching, learning and content as problematic, uncertain and relative. It involves constantly trying to find out how teaching affects learning, and adapting it in the light of the evidence that the teacher collects; this is 'evaluation' of university teaching, which basically entails learning from students and modifying teaching practices in order to make it more effective.

**Importance of Lecturers to Base Teaching on Learning Theories**

To engage in effective teaching, teachers should have their teaching underpinned by theories that inform learning. Learning theories are basic beliefs or assumptions about learning which have been popularized and are used to inform teaching practices. Effective teachers should be aware of handling student diversity as informed by theories of diversity. Diversity refers to 'dissimilarities in traits, qualities, characteristics, beliefs, values, and mannerisms present in self and others' (Sheets 2005). In line with diversity in classrooms, appropriate pedagogies have to be adopted. Sheets (2005) defines Diversity Pedagogy Theory (DPT) as a 'set of principles that point out the natural and inseparable connection between culture and cognition'. In addition, the university teacher should have a clear understanding and appreciation of the role which culture plays in the teaching and learning process. There is need for culturally inclusive teachers who are culturally competent to know how to adapt their instruction to appeal to students of diverse cultures. Rogoff (2003) further observes the need to unite classroom practice with deep understanding of the role culture plays in the social and cognitive development of the learners. DPT places emphasis on the powerful, active roles students play in their learning. In fact, student-centered approaches are a key feature of DPT. Teachers should provide opportunities for social interaction among learners in the learning process; content and resources should be culturally inclusive. Due to internationalization and globalization in higher education, university teachers should be prepared to deal with diversity, hence the importance of sound

understanding of DPT and its practical application.

Teachers may be informed by socio-cultural theories in order to teach effectively. Socio-cultural theories of learning also place emphasis on learner-centred approaches to learning. Wang (2006) observes that:

*…sociocultural learning theories are learner-centred and provide insight into collaborative approaches to student learning. These theories take into account the social and cultural aspects of acquiring knowledge.*

A teaching and learning agenda informed by socio-cultural theories should advocate for and promote collaborative learning approaches.

Informed by socio-cultural theories of learning, effective teachers will maximise interaction in the classroom. This is against the realisation that knowledge is constructed in the midst of students' interaction with others (Bransford et al. 2000). Use of interactive methodologies, as informed by theory, is in contrast to teacher-dominated approaches. Current discourse in teaching in learning calls for more learner-centred interactive approaches, as opposed to extensive use of teacher-centred lectures (Maphosa and Kalenga 2012; Bligh 2000). Orlich et al. (2004) state that lecture-type of instruction does provide opportunities for student-initiated activities. Students should be actively involved in the learning process. It is important to involve them in the learning process. Silver et al. (2003) observe that effective teaching strategies should promote teaching for understanding and not teaching for mastery of content.

Effective teachers should also be informed by theories regarding experiential learning. Silberman (2007:8) explains experiential learning as:

*… the involvement of learners in concrete activities that enable them to 'experience' what they are learning about and the opportunity to reflect on those activities. Experiential learning can be used both on real work/life experiences that stimulate or proximate real work/life.*

To facilitate effective teaching and learning to occur, learning needs to cease to be theoretical and without any practical application to real life and the world of work. It is, therefore important, for teachers to link what is taught to real life situations and also actually involve students in what Pham (2011) terms 'service learning'. This ensures relevance of what is taught and the curriculum in general. Universities are often accused of being ivory towers of knowledge which lacks relevance in solving societal problems. Service or experiential learning becomes the answer to this criticism.

Constructivism is a theory that should inform effective teachers in a university. Brown and Green (2006) contend that constructivism is based on the assumption that 'an individual constructs his or her understanding of the world in which he or she lives by reflecting on personal experiences.' Such a theory places learners at the centre of learning. Learners cease to be passive recipients of knowledge but engage with learning material to create knowledge using experience. The teacher's role becomes that of learning facilitator as opposed to transmitting knowledge to passive recipients.

In underlining the importance of basing teaching on learning theories, Pham (2011) informs that:

*there is a strong relationship between learning theories and instructional practices. Effective teaching requires teachers to understand learning concepts and to develop a theoretical orientation combined with practice for efficient instructional design.*

Teachers should, therefore, be aware of the different theories regarding learning and base their instructional practices on such theories. Such is scholarly teaching, which is the hallmark of an effective teacher. In advocating for basing teaching on theory, Biggie and Shermis (2004) crudely observe that teachers who do not base their decisions and practices on a 'systematic body of theory are behaving blindly'.

Effective teachers are also informed by theories relating to teaching and the mediation of student learning**.** Vygotsky (1978) comments as cited in Thompson (2013), the most powerful forms of learning take place when students are working within the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). Vygotsky (1978) cited in Thompson (2013) defines ZPD as:

*the distance between the actual development as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential deve-lopment as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers.*

It is therefore important for facilitators of learning to be aware of their critical role in

mediating student learning to ensure that students reach full potential in their problem solving endeavors. This should also be understood against the need to involve students in problem solving activities as opposed to internalizing content without applying it.

There are numerous ways of mediating student learning to ensure progress within a ZPD, and these include careful use of direct instruction, modeling of behavior, management of feedback to guide performance, questioning to assist performance, joint exploration of meaning with learners, and peer collaboration in critical thinking tasks that serve as scaffolding of tasks (Daniels 2007; Smagorinsky 2008). A successful teaching and learning agenda is hinged on a strong lecturer professional development support system. Through professional development, lectures engage in scholarly teaching and ultimately, professionalization of teaching. This will ensure they are better positioned for their roles in mediation of student learning.

**Use of Different Instructional Strategies to Enhance Teaching and Learning Effectiveness**

Instructional strategies are the techniques or methods that a teacher can adopt to meet the various learning objectives. Such strategies help students to walk on the path of independent learning and become strategic learners. They equip teachers to make learning fun and help students to awaken their desire to learn. Instructional strategies focus on not only the educational content but also on the method and environment of the teaching process. Students' development level, interests and experiences are considered while choosing a particular teaching strategy so that they can self-accomplish their goals (RICHA 2014).

Effective teachers should have solid pedagogical knowledge that enables them to use different instructional strategies to achieve desired learning outcomes. The NSW Quality Teaching Framework (2003), states that 'it is the quality of pedagogy that most directly affects the quality of the learning.' Alexander (2003:3) further states that:

*Pedagogy is the act of teaching together with its attendant discourse. It is what one needs to know, and the skills one needs to command in order to make and justify the many kinds of decisions of which teaching is constituted.*

The issue of pedagogy knowledge shows that teaching is not common-sense business, and one should possess the knowledge, skills, and values regarding teaching. Numerous decisions are taken in teaching, and these should be based on an internalised body of knowledge and skills; these, in turn, influence one's beliefs about learning.

Brant's (2006) pedagogy knowledge involves lesson planning and preparation, understanding how learners learn, motivating learners, and classroom management as the teacher's personal dispositions. Wilson (2008) states that pedagogical knowledge refers to what the teacher knows about how to teach a specific subject matter within a particular context.

**Student- centered Approaches to Teaching**

Tigelaar et al. (2004) and Rutkauksiene et al. (2010) are of the opinion that in modern approaches to teaching, one distinction is very important. This is the distinction between the teacher-centered orientation and the student-centered orientation to teaching. The more active a student is in the learning situation, the more student-centered the teaching orientation is likely to be. In the student-centered orientations, the student must participate actively in the learning process and teachers have to take the students' perspective. Teachers who conceive of teaching as transmitting information to students approach their teaching in a teacher-focused manner.

In support of Tigelaar et al. (2004) and Rutkauksiene et al. (2010) on what student centered approach is, Struyven et al. (2010) state that while lectures should gradually fade into the background, the foreground ought to be increasingly occupied by constructivist, active teaching methods such as problem-based assignments, learning contracts, case-related tasks and collaborative paper assignments. Student-activating teaching methods aim to embody constructivist teaching principles. Besides, student-activating teaching stimulates students to construct knowledge by means of real-life, realistic, practical and relevant assignments that literally require their 'active' involvement to incorporate the available information: that is, to select, to interpret, and to apply knowledge to practical cases and to solve complex vocational problems.

In fact, student-activating teaching methods represent the type of teaching practices that students are promoted to use in order to achieve 'active' and 'deep' student learning for their own pupils in class. Therefore, as the 'teach as you preach' principle requires, student-activating teaching methods should be modelled during teacher education. In fact, it is hypothesized that hands-on experiences with these teaching methods, compared with lecturing, have beneficial effects on student teachers' conceptual change/student-focused approaches to teaching and their future use of these methods in practice.

**Reflective Practice**

Kinsella (2010), states that reflective practice is one of the most popular theories of professional knowledge in the last twenty years which has been widely adopted by nursing, health, and social care professions. Ofsted (2004) observes that the distinctive feature of best teachers is that their practice is based on careful reflection, and through reflection, they learn lessons every time they teach. Of importance is the realization that effective teachers do not just teach but reflect on their teaching to gather evidence on strengths and weaknesses on the approaches with a view to improve teaching and learning. Moon (2005) explains reflective practice as meant to gain better understanding of how to do things.

Tummons (2011) poses his concern that there is no conceptual clarity surrounding reflective practice. Tummons (2011) further adds that reflective practice is the systematic analysis and evaluation of what, how and why one is teaching or training. Reflective practice questions and seeks to improve one's professional practice; however, it requires one to go beyond constructing 'personal theories' and relate one's analysis of practice to the knowledge and understanding that one is gaining. Reflective practice will always include critical reflection and may lead to elements of transformative learning.

Reflective practice is encouraged throughout a wide range of professions and increasingly so amongst lecturers. Reflective practice enables individuals to review and improve their own practice and has been identified as a method by which one can become effective and self-directed lecturer. The nature of the job of lecturers necessitates that lecturers, as individuals, accept responsibility for continuing to update their knowledge to maintain their professional standards. Partaking in reflective practice offers a means by which lecturers can identify their strengths and weaknesses and specific learning needs to maintain professional competence and continue the journey of life-long learning.

The process of reflection is a core topic in both undergraduate and postgraduate teaching and forms a significant part of lecturers' portfolios. Evidence has demonstrated that inability to reflect may result in poor insight and poor performance in practice. In order to maintain their professional standards, they must therefore embrace reflective practice and have an understanding of its importance and be proficient at practicing it (Davies 2012).

Davies (2012) states that the reflective practice involves internal exploration and analysis of a problem or situation, assessing what has been learnt from the experience, and how this will influence future experiences and practice. Ultimately, it is a technique that can be used to aid learning and develop professional standards. Many of the concepts and models have been developed from Schon's (1987) work, which promotes two processes to reflective practice and these are reflection in action, which entails the existence of thoughts, feelings and behaviours present while reflecting and reflection on action, which entails thinking about how one could do things differently and how one would deal with similar situations in the future (Davies 2012). University teachers who are effective in teaching engage in reflective practice to improve their ways of teaching.

Davies (2012) further reflects benefits of reflective practice which increases learning from an experience or situation, promotes deep rather than superficial learning, identifies personal and professional strengths and weaknesses, identifies educational needs, results in the acquisition of new knowledge and skills, facilitates practitioners to understand their own beliefs, attitudes and values, encourages self-motivated and self-directed learning, acts as a source of feedback and improves personal and clinical confidence. The importance of reflective practice for the enhancement of teaching and learning transaction cannot be overemphasized.

**Understanding the Adult Learner**

Effective university teachers understand the way adult learners learn. Reece and Walker (2005) observe that andragogy is an approach aimed at helping adults to learn. Knowles (1990) cited in (Bullen 2004) defines andragogy as the art and science of adult learning. Andragogy is therefore a system of ideas, concepts, and approaches to adult learning. Effective university teachers require a clear understanding of how adult learners learn in order to adequately engage them in teaching and learning.

In understanding how adults learn, Rogers (2002) classifies adult learners into four categories as activists, observers, theorists and experimentalists. This shows that as activists, adult learners learn best by being actively involved in learning; they learn best by doing. As observers, adult learners also learn by watching demonstrations and then trying out what would have been demonstrated to them. As theorists, adult learners can handle abstract concepts and as experimentalists they also learn very well by being involved in practical investigations and coming up with solutions as well as apply what they learn to different but similar situations (Rogers 2002). It is, therefore, important to analyse that how adults learn to use appropriate approaches to facilitate their learning.

**Use of ICTs in Teaching and Learning**

Lecturers are in charge of designing instructional situations enriched with the use of ICT (information and communication technologies) to improve the effectiveness of learning and of monitoring the learning process mediated by technologies. The use of new technologies should be present in all subjects/course/modules as an integral part of the educational program and even in the very interactions between students and lecturers or among the rest of the members of the educational community (parents, school, and so on) (García-Valcarcel 2010; Vajargah 2010).

Pedro (2005) states that although the use of technology in web-based forms of higher education has grown exponentially in the past decade, it is becoming increasingly obvious that traditional university teaching can also benefit from its advantages. Universities all over Europe invest heavily in course management software, expanded networks, and training and support capabilities to introduce web enhancements to traditional courses. There are, at least, two fundamental reasons that justify this increased investment. One of these reasons is that university education has a responsibility to ensure that future graduates are well versed in the use of ICTs, since, in a knowledge economy, such technologies are an indispensable tool of everyday life in the world of work they hope to enter.

There can hardly be a single profession or area of academic endeavor in which progress is possible without recourse to technology, at some level. This, in itself, would justify efforts made to ensure the omnipresence of ICTs in universities, the incorporation of specific ICT skills, and efforts to ensure a cross-sectional approach by sharing ICT training among all subjects. The reason is obvious: in the knowledge society, ICTs are everywhere, and must therefore be present in university education. The second reason is that ICT may contribute to more and better learning, that is, they may improve the effectiveness of university education. Clearly, this argument meets with a certain amount of skepticism. Part of this skepticism stems from a reasonable strain of educational conservatism that states that, if previously existing methods and resources prove sufficient to turn out well-qualified graduates, why invest additional effort in making changes if there is no incentive to do so? Clearly, the existence or otherwise of incentives is the result of a classical policy decision concerning the distribution of available resources. Change can only come about if policy "incentivates" it.

**Assessment of Student Learning and Handling Student Feedback**

Even though planning time for giving students effective feedback is an important and challenging aspect of the teaching and learning process, it should be understood that the processes of learning and assessment go together. It is considered that students' achievements should be assessed at the beginning of, during, and at the end of the learning process, that is, periodically. When arranging periodic assessment of students' achievements, course content is divided into smaller parts, and students have to study constantly in order to

be prepared for each assessment event (Bartusevicienè et al. 2010).

The need to provide students with regular constructive feedback on their performance is a key component of students assessment. Feedback is central to pedagogic theory, and if feedback is to be effective, students need to engage with it and apply it at some point in the future. Meanwhile Ferguson (2011) states that assessment feedback is vital for promoting lear-ning and motivating students to improve by facilitating reflection and self-evaluation, as well as highlighting errors, deficiencies, and problems.

Duffy (2013) points out that students want consistent, genuine feedback because they do not want to 'carry on doing it wrong'. Students are critical of lecturers who provide generalized, superficial, feedback such as 'you're doing well' or 'you will make a good graduate'. Students want feedback that addresses positive and negative aspects of their study so that they can identify progress and any areas that require further development.

There are many definitions of feedback, and two are offered in this paper. Murray et al. (2010) (in Duffy 2013) describe feedback as 'the situation when output from (or information about the result of) an event from the past will influence the same event in the present or the future'. This definition emphasizes the development opportunities afforded in providing feedback. The Practice Education Group (in Duffy 2013) define giving feedback as 'the process of telling another individual how they are perceived, hinting at the emotional aspects involved in providing feedback'. Words associated with the term 'constructive' include helpful, practical, productive, useful and valuable. Lecturers are required to provide positive and negative feedback to students and this should be constructive and not destructive in nature.

The need to provide students with regular constructive feedback on their (students) performance is a key component of student assessment. Mentors (lecturers) are required to assess and provide feedback on such aspects as the students' applied knowledge-base, interpersonal skills, attitude, psychomotor skills, professionalism, safety and motivation for professional development. Continuous assessment is an ongoing process throughout the students' practice placement experience where regular 'snapshots' are taken of students' practice and feedback is given frequently. During this time, constructive feedback occurs formally and informally. Constructive feedback aims to promote improvement or development of the person receiving feedback. Regular constructive feedback has many benefits. It helps students maintain and increase their motivation, increase their confidence and self-esteem, improve interpersonal relationships, promote personal development, develop teamwork, and increase competence (Duffy 2013).

Duffy (2013) stipulates five principles of providing feedback. These principles include setting realistic goals, and this is underpinned by making lecturer's expectations on the assessment task clear to students. In gauging students' expectation of feedback, the lecturer should be aware of the different factors that may affect how students receive feedback. The gathering of information on student practice entails providing the student with accurate, detailed constructive feedback. This kind of feedback enables students to identify their strengths and weaknesses regarding the assessment task and how they can improve. The principle of immediacy, according to Duffy (2013), underscores the need for timely and timeous feedback which has to be specific for it to make sense to students.

Effective teachers should also be aware of different forms of assessment ranging from individual, peer, group, and self- assessment techniques. This is consistent with Webber and Tschepikow's (2012) view that assessment of learners' work is a significant component of effective teaching and learning. Assessment should also promote deeper learning since effective teachers do not make use of assessment techniques that promote rote learning. However, if assessment tasks require thinking, on the part of the student, then the deep approach will be developed (Biggs 2003).

In terms of assessment of student learning, effective lecturers should also link their assessment to topics taught, learning activities, and learning outcomes. This is what Biggs (2003) terms 'constructive alignment'. Similarly, Luckett and Sutherland (2000) observe that students want to know what is expected of them, how they will be judged, how they are progressing, and they will want recognition of their achievements. It is, therefore, important for effective

teachers to be aware of means and ways of assessing student learning and handling student feedback

## CONCLUSION

A university teacher deemed effective in facilitating learning is one whose teaching is not based on the common sense discourse to teaching and learning. There is popular misconception that everyone can teach as long as they are discipline experts, however, an effective teacher engages in scholarly teaching.

Scholarly teaching is based on research and theory and is therefore, a more informed approach to teaching. The way teachers' view learning, teaching, subject matter, students and assessment should be scholarly. Most importantly, teachers should reflect on their practice to interrogate the way they facilitate learning and seek to always improve such ways.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

To ensure effective facilitation of learning, deliberate programmes should be put in place to professionally develop university teachers. A large number of university lecturers, hired on the basis of discipline expertise, may not be prepared for their roles in facilitation of learning, curriculum development, and assessment of student learning, hence the importance of preparation. The present paper recommends the following significant points churned out of rigorous investigation and analysis:

***Regular Short Courses:*** There should be regular short courses on teaching and learning, curriculum development, learning material development, assessment and moderation, among others, coordinated by teaching and learning centres. Such courses assist lecturers with knowledge, skills and values to enhance teaching and learning.

***Qualifications in Teaching:*** Academic staff members should also be encouraged to undertake qualifications in teaching. Studying for such qualifications adequately prepares teachers for their ever-changing roles in teaching and ensures that teaching is professionalised. Professionalization of teaching in universities will certainly enhance teaching and learning.

***Action Research into Teaching and Learning:*** Through reflective practice, academic staff members should be encouraged and supported to undertake research into challenges and even successes regarding teaching and learning. Such researches ensure that university teachers are engaged in systematically examining their teaching processes and findings will inform practice.

***Recognising and Rewarding Excellence in Teaching:*** Universities should also recognise lecturers who excel in teaching in the same manner that top researchers in universities are recognised and rewarded. Once teaching is given equal status with research, and academic staff members who excel in teaching are given due recognition, this will go a long way towards promoting teaching effectiveness.

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