IMPACT OF SELF-ASSESSMENT AND PEER ASSESSMENT IN HIGHER EDUCATION: POST-GRADUATE STUDENTS' AND LECTURERS' PERSPECTIVES

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Abstract

The relationship between learning and assessment has been re-evaluated over time, prompted by the increasing need for critical and reflective thinkers who are committed to lifelong learning. The purpose of this study is to investigate, using data from 10 lecturers and 18 postgraduate students at Nnamdi Azikiwe University in Awka, Nigeria, the impact of peer assessment (PA) and self-assessment (SA) procedures and their consequences on learning in higher education. Through the use of in-depth interviews and the distribution of questionnaires (Self-Assessment and Peer-Assessment Questionnaire-SAPAQ), a mixed method research strategy was used. In order to provide the students a practical understanding of the strategies, SA and PA procedures were conducted for them. The students were then given a questionnaire to fill out regarding how they felt about SA and PA. To learn more about the lecturers' opinions on the two approaches, interview sessions were also conducted with them. A thematic method was used to analyze the themes and sub-themes that emerged from the interview questions and responses, and descriptive statistics were used to analyze the quantitative data. A number of intriguing discoveries were found, including that: both PG students and their lecturers agreed that SA and PA were effective learning strategies that would increase students' motivation to learn if and when they were designed for formative assessment. Therefore, there will be more positive outcomes from SA and PA with theory-based (qualitative) courses than numerical-based courses because qualitative aspects of the courses would be easier for students to assess. Additionally, according to both sets of participants, SA and PA aid in the development of students' critical thinking abilities. They also recommend that the results of SA and PA be included in the final (summative) assessment so that students will take both strategies more seriously.

Keywords: Education, Self-Assessment, Peer-Assessment, Learning, Perceptions

Introduction

Any educational system's learning objectives are globally correlated with the effectiveness of the procedures used for student performance evaluation and assessment. The purpose of classroom assessments, which include formative evaluation, is to enhance students' learning in the classroom (Hopfenbeck et al., 2023). In order to monitor students' learning outcomes during the formation stage of learning, teachers provide feedback to the class, which is known as formative assessment. Formative assessments, due to this reason, are usually described as teacher- and classroom-based rather than summative exams that are used for advancement or extensive examinations conducted outside of the classroom. Formative assessment can occur at any point during a class and is sometimes referred to as "assessment for learning" (Leenknecht et al., 2020). It highlights the learner's capability and shortcomings with the goal of improving the learner's overall performance. This indicates that it is utilized as a support for both teaching and learning. Emphasis is placed on "assessment for learning" as a means of

enhancing instruction and learning as well as an essential component of the learning, teaching, and assessment cycle. Formative assessment to Borte et al. (2023), are those activities that are utilized to enhance student learning. The authors claim that whether or not these exercises are assessed, what matters is that they give students knowledge and abilities they may use to reflect on, adjust, and eventually enhance their learning.

It is anticipated of teachers to conduct assessments as part of the teaching and learning process; in other words, assessment is integrated into the process (Ghazali et al., 2020). Thus, feedback given to students is intended to enhance their learning as well as give teachers the opportunity to adjust their pedagogical approaches (Iqbal et al., 2016). For instance, teachers could assess students' knowledge, abilities, and values by using questioning techniques. The knowledge acquired could be put to use by teachers to adjust their lesson plans for the next class, or by students to assist with their practical teaching. Peer assessment (PA) and self-assessment (SA) are two of the recommended assessment methods in the literature.

It is widely acknowledged that self-assessment refers to a student's capacity to evaluate his performance, or to make judgments about oneself and one's capabilities. If formative evaluation is to be utilized to enhance student learning, self-assessment is a crucial component. According to Yan et al. (2023), teaching students how to assess themselves is a skill that they should acquire, and this could improve their academic performance. The process of creating, verifying, implementing, and assessing standards that are applied to students' work is how such skill acquisition is perceived. It is possible to educate students to respond to the learning materials at their own developmentally appropriate speed by giving them the freedom to choose how to assess their own work and employ assessment activities.

Peer assessment is widely acknowledged as a crucial component of formative assessment, with a slightly different focus than self-assessment. Peer assessment is seen as a supplementary tool to self-assessment; however other experts see it as different from self-assessment (Black & Williams, 2018). While there are many different definitions of peer assessment, most assessors agree that peer assessment is when a student evaluates the performance or achievement of another student. Another way to define peer-assessment is as a method in which students make judgments on the work of other students. This kind of evaluation usually takes place when students collaborate on group projects or educational activities. Peer assessments, which are typically used as formative assessments, are incorporated early in the learning process. They are particularly helpful when group teaching is being provided, as they can improve student progress and the overall learning environment. According to Adesina et al. (2023), scheduling peer evaluation activities as soon as students start learning a subject or skill—preferably before any skill errors become habitual—will maximize their effectiveness.

Teachers use self and peer assessments to improve learning in the following ways: (1) to make students more involved in the process of learning (e.g., by having them take on teaching responsibilities); (2) to foster social interactions and a sense of trust in others; (3) to facilitate one-on-one feedback; and (4) to emphasize the process over the final product (Noonan & Duncan, 2019). The methods (self and peer assessments) may be effective in enhancing one's knowledge and abilities. This is due to the possibility that students may construct learning by reflecting on their learning when they use feedback during self-assessment (Yan & Carless, 2022). Furthermore, feedback from peers during peer evaluation creates an internalized force within them regarding learning objectives and success criteria within the framework of their peers' work, which may have a stronger impact on them. Although they are distinct, self and peer assessments have the potential to be combined because they both call for student judgments, but the subjects of those judgments differ. Literature suggests that self and peer assessments have the potential to yield a number of advantages, opportunities, and affordances,

such as the development of soft-transferable skills (Adachi et al., 2018; Malm et al., 2022), the development of life-long learners and work-ready students (Seema et al., 2023; Dutta et al., 2024), the promotion of active-learning students as assessors (Zhang & Hwang, 2023), a better understanding of standards and assessment criteria (Cheong et al., 2023; Deneen et al., 2023), timely, varied, and appropriate feedback for students (Bozkurt, 2020; Irons & Elkington, 2021; Metu et al., 2024), and skills of providing and receiving feedback (Al-Rashidi et al., 2022; Iglesias Perez et al., 2022; Winston 2017).

The validity and accuracy of students' judgment abilities are among the obstacles and barriers to the use of self and peer assessment, despite the strong evidence of its potential advantages and efficacy (Mumpuni et al., 2022; Sinaga et al., 2024). In other words, some students might not feel confident giving constructive criticism to their peers' work or might lack the knowledge needed to evaluate peers' work objectively (Tai et al. 2017). Once more, students may be prejudiced by interpersonal connections or sentiments of rivalry while evaluating the work of their peers, making them less impartial in the process. Self and peer evaluation may also provide a time-consuming issue, particularly if the procedure is poorly managed (Donia, 2022). Developing an effective peer evaluation method is considered to be a challenging procedure because it is important to understand the limits of the strategy before using it. According to Saveski (2024), there are negative effects on peer-to-peer assessment (PA) when students are biased in their evaluations of their peers. These factors could undermine the idea of PA as a means of fostering a positive learning environment. Prior research has also examined the accuracy of peer evaluation, which is only discernible by contrasting the outcomes with those of the teacher (Opdecam & Everaert, 2018).

The assessment processes underwent a paradigm shift from an ineffective teacher-focused approach to a student-centred framework that emphasizes the value of an independent and long-lasting learning experience (Siow, 2018). Many approaches inspired by feedback, like "feed-forward" or "sustainable feedback," have been introduced in recent years to create an academic framework that promotes the creation of high-quality feedback for students in academia. It is arguable that these new ideas have increased student participation and led to the development of improved learning outcomes (Babu & Barghati, 2020). Positive empirical data on students who completed SA and PA was obtained by Zhang and Hwang (2023), and it is clear that active student participation can be an efficient, reliable, and unbiased method of instruction that benefits students in the long run. According to a Double et al. (2020) study, students who self-assessed during their time in college achieved better academic results and were more inclined to stick with their studies. Sihvonen et al. (2020) discovered in another study that students, who got regular peer assessment, outperformed their peers academically. It has also been found (Lin et al., 2021; Van der Linden et al., 2021; Zhang et al., 2020), that students who got feedback through peer assessment had increased levels of self-regulated learning, satisfaction with their learning experience, and enhanced critical thinking abilities, all of which helped them do better in final exams. Thus, the results of self- and peer-assessment (SA and PA) can be used to analyze the quality of data that will aid in improving the learning experience.

In this part of the globe (Africa), there has not been much use of self and peer assessment by lecturers for formative evaluation. Msiza et al., (2020) and, Malam and Stegmann (2018) decried that self and peer assessment strategies are under- utilised in African higher education. Studies on self and peer assessment in Africa and Nigeria are very few and are mostly experimental studies to determine the efficacy of these two strategies. This means that self and peer assessment have not been included as part and parcel of instructional strategies in the African higher education

curriculum, hence most students in higher institutions in Africa have not been practising these strategies for learning. The present study will form part of the literature that will guide curriculum experts when planning, so that enough time is provided in the curriculum to practice self and peer assessment. The aim of the present study therefore is to find out the impact of self-assessment and peer assessment strategies on learning in higher education.

The purpose of the study is to find out:

(a) the impact of self and peer assessment from the perspective of postgraduate students and their lecturers
(b) the implications of self-assessment and peer assessment on students' learning

Method

This study used explanatory mixed method research design, which combines quantitative and qualitative research. Since the study intended to address the research questions from the perspective of postgraduate students and lecturers, questionnaire and interview were the most acceptable approaches for gathering data. Data was gathered in two phases from two participant groups: ten lecturers and eighteen postgraduate students drawn through purposive sampling. The students participated in the first round of data collection, during which they learned about SA and PA. Through the use of questionnaires intended to add to qualitative data, their opinions about the experience were obtained. With a few modest modifications, Hassan et al. (2014) provided the basis for the Self-Assessment and Peer Assessment Questionnaire (SAPAQ). There are two sections of the SAPAQ. In Section A, for each of SA and PA, four questions were asked, with responses on a 4-point rating scale of "Strongly disagree," "Agree," "Disagree," and "Strongly agree." The responses were analysed using percentages. This allowed for insight into how the two assessment strategies affect students' learning. With response options of "Comfortable," "Neutral," and "Uncomfortable," Section B was utilized to gauge the students' comfort levels in evaluating both themselves and their peers. At 0.78, the SAPAQ reliability coefficient was considered sufficiently high for consistency. The academic staff of Nnamdi Azikiwe University in Awka participated in the second round of data collecting to provide their perceptions of the use of SA and PA strategies in the classroom. A set of predetermined questions was used to interview the lecturers, and the qualitative information obtained from the interviews was coded in order to create themes.

An experiment was carried out to determine the impact of SA and PA among students to obtain authentic responses. The major aim of doing this was to ensure that the students understood the idea of SA and PA and how they are performed. To carry out the study, post-graduate students enrolled in the 2022–2023 academic session were contacted, and their consent was requested. The course material was taken from "Advanced Educational Research" (EDU 821); a general course that is required of all faculty post-graduate students and the total score for the unit used was 20%. The students received the assignment feedback form and test rubrics from their teacher after turning in their coursework. Their lecturer graded their assignment using the same form and test rubrics. It was created in the form of an online questionnaire that asked students to evaluate their own work and give it a worthy grade—that is, self-assessment. The goal of this was to help the students become comfortable with the SA procedure. The students' consent was also requested to distribute their course materials for peer evaluation (even though it remained completely anonymous to them).

Next, using the identical assignment feedback form that the teachers had used, students were asked to evaluate the coursework of their peers at the conclusion of the peer evaluation. The students could then compare their SA and PA ratings with the teacher's after the researchers revealed the final grade. Students who participated in the experiment were asked to complete a survey instrument after the results were released in order to share their opinions and make recommendations regarding how SA and PA affected their learning. Information about the impact of SA and PA on learning from the viewpoint of the lecturers was gathered in the second phase of the experiment. Ten Faculty of Education lecturers were interviewed in order to obtain intuitive information about how well SA and PA might enhance teaching and learning. The data collected were analysed using descriptive statistics and thematic analysis. The themes were decoded into smaller subthemes under each main theme.

Results and Discussion

There are two parts in this section. In the first part, data from a questionnaire survey was analyzed, and in the second, data from interviews was used to analyze lecturers' perceptions on their experiences in teaching education courses. Discussion of findings was done alongside the analysis using themes that emerged from the interview questions and responses of the students.

Students' perspectives on self-assessment and peer assessment

Table 1 displayed the findings from the survey given to students in order to determine how SA and PA affected their learning objectives. Following an exercise that introduced them to the concepts of SA and PA, the survey instrument was administered, asking each participant to complete SA and PA on their own in accordance with the requirements of the unit, "Approaches to Research" in the "Advanced Educational Research" course. Of the students registered for this course, eighteen volunteered to participate in this activity. The students each received a questionnaire on their Whatsapp profile, which they were asked to respond to, based on their experiences practicing in SA and PA. The following section presented a detailed analysis of the questionnaire results using percentages to shed light on how SA and PA strategies impart learning outcome from the viewpoint of the students. The SA and PA activities they completed before responding to the questionnaire also had an effect on the outcomes that were discussed below.

Table 1: Insights on the Impact of SA and PA on Learning From Students' Perspectives

SELF-ASSESSMENT	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
SA makes me improve my skills to assess my own work	7 (38%)	10(56%)	1(6%)	0
SA is very important for my future career	9 (50%)	6 (33%)	3(17%)	0
With SA I can have control of my learning	6 (33%)	11 (61%)	1(6%)	0
SA gives me motivation for improvement on my learning	3 (17%)	9(50%)	4 (22%)	2 (11%)
PEER-ASSESSMENT	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
PA develops my skills to assess the work of my classmates	6 (33%)	12 (67%)	0	0
PA helps to develop my skills to assess and evaluate my own work	5 (27%)	12 (67%)	1 (6%)	0
With PA scores, I can understand the marks from my teacher	10 (56%)	8 (44%)	0	0
PA gives me motivation for improvement on my learning	6 (33%)	11 (61%)	1(6%)	0

Evaluation of Work

Analysing the responses of the participants, it was discovered that 94% of them (38% and 56%) strongly agreed or agreed respectively that SA will be of great help to them in assessing their work. In comparison with PA, all the students; 100% (33% and 67%) strongly agreed or agreed that PA help them in developing their ability to assess their own work and evaluate their classmates' works. Of importance also is the revelation that 93% of the students (27% and 67%) strongly agreed or agreed that PA helped them to assess their own work. This result showed that SA and PA have positive impact on the students because they believed that SA and PA help them develop critical skills that will yield positive learning outcomes. This result supported the study by Kumar et al. (2023) which posited that one of the benefits of self and peer assessments are that they help learners to develop skills of assessing their own work and that of their peers.

Skills for Future Career

Out of the 18 participants, 83% (15 students) strongly agreed or agreed (50% and 33%) that SA is a valuable skill for their future career as teachers. This implies that the students believe that through

SA, the critical skills for their future career would be enhanced. This finding is in line with the study by Loureino and Gomes (2023) which asserted that self and peer assessment strategies offer useful skills for students' future jobs.

Self-control over Learning
The students were positive that SA will help them to take command of their learning, with 94% (33% and 61%) strongly agreeing or agreeing with the statement. This is in consonance with the findings of Babu and Barghathi (2020) whose result showed that 93.3% of the participants agreed or strongly agreed that SA is an effective method to be implemented to help students take control of their learning. However, only 6% (1 participant) disagreed with the statement.

Motivation
For the item on improved motivation, only 12 (67%) students out of the 18 participants strongly agreed (17%) or agreed (50%) that SA increases their motivation to learn. This result agrees with the work of Dewi et al. (2020) whose findings revealed that peer and self assessment increase the interest and motivation level of students. On the other hand, four (4) of the participants (22%) were of the opinion that SA does not add to their motivation to learn while two (11%) strongly disagreed with the statement. For PA, 17 (94%) of the 18 participants agreed that PA improves their motivation to learn. This implies that the students see PA to be a more useful learning strategy than SA.

Table 2: Assessing Their own Work and That of Their Peers by the Student- Participants

	Comfortable	Neutral	Uncomfortable
How does assessing your own work make you feel?	1 (6%)	9 (50%)	8 (44%)
How does assessing your peer's work make you feel?	12 (67%)	5 (27%)	1(6%)

Comfort
From Table 2, it was observed that many of the participants were not comfortable evaluating their own work; only one participant i.e 6% was comfortable. Half of the participants were neutral on this aspect while 44% (8 participants) were uncomfortable when assessing their own work. For evaluating their peers' work, 12 (67%) out of the 18 participants declared that they were comfortable, 27% was neutral in that regard while 6% was uncomfortable. The implication of this result was that students feel more comfortable assessing their peers' work than assessing their own work.

Comments from student participants
The students were asked to comment on the challenges they experienced from engaging in SA and PA learning strategies and how to make improvement. Twelve (12) out of the 18 participants lamented that they are not familiar with the strategies; many of them are having the experience for the first time but according to them, it was worthwhile. Four students suggested that the two strategies should be used more frequently as coursework progresses. Three students commented that the scores they gave themselves were way higher than what they got from their teacher and from PA. One student in his response said *"For the first time, I saw the rubrics (*marking guide*) that is used to grade my scripts and now I can appreciate the scores given to me by my teacher"*. Five students suggested that for SA and PA to be more effective, grades from such strategies should be included in their final score for the course. One said, *"Students will not take you seriously once they know that the grades from SA and PA do not count in the final grading"*.
There were questions raised over the validity of the SA and PA scores. A student expressed dissatisfaction, claiming that his PA score significantly differed from the teacher's. Because peer evaluations may be influenced by biases and personal prejudices, he proposed that this type of scoring be anonymous. Despite that, a large number of students claimed to have learned a great deal from the experience and that SA and PA will aid to deepen their knowledge.

Lecturers' Perspectives on Self-assessment and Peer-assessment

Table 3: Demographics of Lecturer Participants

Lecturer-Participant	Gender	Qualification	Department	Years of Teaching Experience
L1	M	Ph.D	Measurement & Evaluation	5
L2	M	Ph.D	Edu. Curriculum	11
L3	F	Ph.D	Vocational Edu.	13
L4	F	Ph.D	Early Childhood	11
L5	F	Ph.D	Measurement & Evaluation	6
L6	F	M.Ed	Edu. Psychology	4
L7	F	Ph.D	Adult Education	5
L8	M	Ph.D	Guidance & Counselling	4
L9	F	Ph.D	Edu. Management	7
L10	F	Ph.D	Edu. Curriculum	4

Perceptions of the Lecturers about SA and PA as Learning Tools

This theme and its sub-themes were developed by the researchers based on the first interview question, which inquired about the lecturers' overall opinions of SA and PA. The first sub-theme focused on the benefits of SA and PA, with participants believing that these techniques can help students perform better in their studies. The second sub-theme addressed participants' concerns that the genuine goals of SA and PA may be compromised by students' lack of trust. The opinions of the participants were thoroughly deliberated on in order to obtain a general consensus regarding SA and PA among the lecturers.

Tools for Improvement

Eight (8) out of the 10 participants were of the opinion that SA and PA when used as a formative evaluation strategy will help to improve students' learning by making them have deeper understanding of concepts in the various courses they are taught. For L4, *"I see SA and PA strategies as very innovative methods of teaching and learning since as the students are rating themselves and rating each other, they think more critically on the questions they were asked. They can also pick one or two ideas from their peers' work when they rate them, that is, they may see where they veered off from the correct answer"*. This is in consonance with Kusurkar et al. (2023); and Dewi et al. (2020), who asserted that SA and PA improve students' motivation to learn. However, L1, L2 and L9 were of the opinion that though SA and PA improve learning, the strategies should not replace the conventional teachers' grading. According to L9,*"There is no way we should replace these with teachers' assessment. It is just a way of making students think deeply to understand concepts well because it makes them to be more engaging"* This reflects the assertion by Yan et al., (2023) that SA and PA call for deeper rather than surface learning.

Lack of Trust on the Grades Received

For this sub-theme, seven (7) out of the 10 lecturers interviewed were of the opinion that peer assessment scores should not be trusted because some students may be biased and either over score or under mark their mates. L3 said: *"I believe that there may be prejudices when students are allowed to grade their peers' work. Some may assign unmerited scores to their friends while others may assign lower scores to those they do not like so well"* L9 advised thus: *"the rubrics provided by the teacher must be strictly followed by the students, if not, the students may assign unrealistic marks to themselves and to their friends"* This agrees with study by Sinaga et al. (2024); Mumpuni et al, (2022); and Zhou et al. (2020) who questioned the reliability and accuracy of students' judgement skills.

Lecturers' Past Experience

The third interview question, which inquired about the lecturers' prior attempts to incorporate SA and PA strategies into their instruction, led to this theme. Out of the ten participants, three acknowledged that they had never used SA before, but that they had used PA when assigning group projects and switching between groups for grading. The following are sub-themes that stem from the above: nature of the course, time factor, student satisfaction, and large number of students.

Students' satisfaction

Six of the participants were of the view that SA and PA help to exonerate some lecturers who students see as being "very difficult to please". L10 said: *"The experience I got from SA and PA was that any time I use it for formative assessment, I get less complaint about grades from my students. They are usually satisfied with scores they got since they are able to compare scores from their teachers to the one given to them by their peers."* This agreed with the study by Zhang et al. (2020) who stated that students attain higher level of satisfaction with PA because of the quality of feedback they get from their peers.

Student population (Lecturer-student ratio)

This sub-theme came up as a result of complaint by many of the participants. About eight of them are of the opinion that it is nearly impossible to use these strategies where the lecturer-student ratio is high. L3 said: *"these strategies (SA and PA) are not possible to use in a university where a lecturer handles about 300 students in a class even with the use of technology. There is no way a lecturer will have the time to scrutinise all the scores given by the students to themselves and their peers because of the large population."* This is in consonance with Babu & Bargarthi (2020) who stated that large number of students also hinder the use of SA or PA.

Time Factor

Six lecturers' perception of SA and PA was that it takes a lot of time to administer test, and then wait for SA and PA scores even where the lecturer has done his own grading. L5 said: *"It requires a lot of time to use SA and PA effectively because there should be close monitoring. Already, the lecture schedule is choking, not to talk of using these strategies during course work. It can only be possible if time for it has been included in the curriculum"* This agrees with the study by Wanner and Palmer (2018) which revealed that students perceive SA and PA as time consuming. Also, Donia et al. (2022) are of the view that another potential challenge of self and peer assessment is that it may be time-consuming, especially if the process is not well organized.

Nature of courses

Some of the participants were of the opinion that SA and PA strategies will work out better and give more positive results when used for theory-based part of a course and not the numerical aspect. According to L1, *"These strategies may not be possible with practical aspects of some courses or courses that are quantitative-oriented. Such areas require the expertise of professionals."*

Score not part of summative assessment

L5, L6, and L8 were of the opinion that students do not take SA and PA seriously because the scores got are not part of summative assessment. They suggested that the scores be included as part of continuous assessment scores so as to make students have more confidence in the strategies. L6 said: *"These students will not take you seriously unless marks are attached to these assessments; they take it as ordinary exercise which is not compulsory"* This coincides with the work by Gomis et al. (2024) which reflect on the effect of lack of summative feedback and grade on students' satisfaction with peer assessment.

Implications of SA and PA According to the Lecturers

This theme originated from the sixth question on the implications of SA and PA in the lecturers' interview. According to two of the participants, SA and PA imply that students are simply learning how to grade scripts. The sub-themes are: active engagement; additional skills; redundancy; and responsibility.

Active Engagement

Almost all the lecturers who have used SA and PA are of the view that the strategies make students more active in class and more engaging in their learning. According to L4,*"Students knowing that they are going to assess their peers' work get more involved during teaching. Some also brag that they have researched on the units taught and are very ready to critically analyse and grade their peers' scripts".* L7 has this to say: *"Experience from conducting SA and PA in my class is that students learn how to grade scripts by looking at the rubrics provided. With this they no longer feel that lecturers give arbitrary marks or that their teachers want to fail them intentionally."*

Additional Skills

In this sub-theme, some participants have the perception that SA and PA help students to improve their critical thinking skill. L10 said: *"Allowing them (students) to grade their peers' work will enhance deep thinking in them. They will be able to think critically which will lead to deep and lifelong learning."* This collaborated the study by Dutta et al., (2024) and Seema (2023) that posited that SA and PA help to cultivate students who are work ready and life-long learners. The assertion also agreed with that of Iglesias Perez et al., (2022), and Winston (2017) who posited that SA and PA provide students with skills of giving and receiving feedback. It has also been found by Van der Linden et al. (2021) to lead to self-regulated learning.

Redundancy

Two of the participants L1 and L3 perceived SA and PA methods as unnecessary. L3 was of the opinion that the strategies are redundant and put more stress on the teachers. L1 also said: *"It is better for assessment to be handled by an expert rather than giving it out to students. At the end many of the students may not experience any form of improvement in their learning".*

Responsibility

Some of the lecturers believed that students' participation in SA and PA give them more responsibility and make them more mature in carrying out such tasks. According to L7, *"SA and PA methods are good since they are added responsibility on the students. They see themselves as not just passive learners but are expected to provide constructive feedback to their peers. This will make them take their learning more seriously".*

Suggestions for Improvement

From the opinion of the participants on the implications of using SA and PA, some suggestions were made on ways of improving the use of SA and PA teaching strategies.

Design

The interview item 5 asked how SA and PA could be integrated more effectively and made more interesting to the students. L4 suggested that *"SA and PA scores should be included as part of the continuous assessment scores. Once students discover that scores are attached to these strategies, they take it more seriously".* L10 also suggested that in the design of the curriculum, space should be allotted for time to conduct SA and PA during lectures.

Training

The participants also suggested organising training on implementation of SA and PA for the students. According to L6, *"Some of these students are not familiar with these strategies. The first thing to do is to give adequate training on that by briefing them on what they are expected to do"* supporting this, L5 said: *"Serious training should be given to these students before embarking on the use of SA and PA. Let them learn how to grade scripts. If these students are not guided on how their peers' works should be marked, they may see all these as a waste of time. They should also be made to know how important it is to be fair in scoring by using the marking guide properly"*

Conclusion

This study looked at the impact of peer and self-assessment in higher education from the viewpoints of lecturers and post-graduate students. The influence of SA and PA teaching strategies on students' learning has not received enough attention in Africa, according to the literature, and African teachers rarely employ them. It was found that, in order to support the always evolving pedagogy of education, the majority of universities that employ graduates demand that their staff members have significant subject-matter expertise and critical thinking abilities. However, research from lecturers who used SA and PA learning strategies in their classes demonstrated that their students had profound learning outcomes and improved critical thinking skills. It was also found that lecturers and postgraduate students had differing views on the application of SA and PA in formative assessment. While a portion of the student body feels that SA and PA improve learning outcomes, a portion views it as a time waster because the results of these exercises do not count toward their final grade. By pin-pointing some complications that might affect the outcome, lecturers' responses on the benefits of SA and PA on education and learning was also conflicting; neither fully in agreement nor in disagreement.

The conclusion is that a variety of factors, particularly in relation to the kinds of courses (qualitative or quantitative), influence how well SA and PA help students learn from the ideas of other students and their lecturers. The lecturers concurred that theory-based courses ought to yield more favourable results than those that rely solely on numbers. This is because peer evaluation of qualitative courses may be simpler than that of quantitative or practical courses. The lecturers' doubtfulness stemmed mostly from their lack of faith in the moral character of certain students who could abuse their authority to evaluate their peers in order to further their own agendas. Regarding the issue of openness in understanding the grading from their lecturers' end, lecturers and students share pleasant opinions.

In summary, SA and PA were deemed effective learning strategies when intended for formative assessment, according to the perspectives of both the students and their teachers. Prior to using these strategies, it is important to take into account the maturity of the students' grading as it may have an impact on the final outcome. On the implications of SA and PA on students learning, many of the students were positive about SA and PA helping them to develop more critical thinking skills that will help them in their future careers. They were also of the opinion that the strategies will motivate them to learn more because of their active engagement. Some of the lecturers have mixed conceptions about positivity of the strategies towards students' learning; however they agreed that if enough time is provided in the curriculum to practice the strategies it will have positive effect on students' learning. Both the students and their lecturers were positive about the effect of SA and PA if the scores should form part of students' final assessment. This they say will make students take these strategies more seriously.

Limitations of the Study

Although the result of this study showed revealing perceptions from both lecturers and students, some limitations have been noted. The number of participants from both sets was low. The number of participants could be increased to get more insight from their perspectives. The research was limited to one university; therefore, further research could be carried out in more tertiary institutions in the state and in other geopolitical zones to form bases for comparison of opinions.

Suggestions for Further Studies

Further research could be carried out with a larger number of students in different subject areas and different fields of education to get more insights on the study since some of the lecturers are sceptical about the result of SA and PA in quantitative-based subjects.

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