

INFLUENCE OF STAFF DEVELOPMENT ON TEACHERS' JOB PERFORMANCE IN ABIA STATE PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS

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Abstract

The study investigated the influence of staff development programmes on teachers' job performance in Abia State public secondary schools. Four research questions guided the study and four null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance. Related literatures were reviewed which helped to highlight more facts necessary for building the study. The study employed descriptive survey research design. The population for this study comprised 3,233 teachers in the three education zones in Abia State. A sample of 679 teachers were selected for the study through stratified, purposive and simple random sampling techniques. A researchers-developed instrument titled: "Staff Development Questionnaire (SDQ)" and "Teachers' Job Performance Questionnaire (TJPQ)" were used to collect data for the study. The instruments were duly validated by experts. The reliability of the instrument was determined by test-retest method using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Statistics and it yielded a reliability coefficient of .82 which was considered highly reliable and suitable for the study. The researcher with the aid of three briefed research assistants administered and collected the instrument from the respondents. The data collected were analyzed using mean and standard deviation to answer the research questions, while the hypotheses were tested with the use of paired sample t-test statistics at .05 level of significance. The study showed that open and distant learning programmes, workshops, seminars and conferences significantly influence teachers' job performance to a high extent in Abia State public secondary schools. The study therefore, concluded that teachers' open and distant learning programmes, workshops, seminars, and conferences are the staff development programmes that teachers attend that improve their teaching performance. The study in line with the findings, recommended among others, the need for teachers to go for in-service training programmes like open and distant learning, workshops, seminars, conferences since their performance are enhanced through such training programmes.

Introduction

Education has been known as the most dynamic tool for national growth. It is the foundation upon which every other national planning stands. Education involves investment in human capital and it is a labour intensive industry. It helps to develop the full potentials of an individual and also prepares him/her for useful living in the society. The broad goals of secondary education shall be to prepare the individual for useful living within the society and secondly for higher education (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2014). Secondary schools are managed by Principals and teachers who are assigned with the sole responsibility to help and actualize the goals of secondary school education in urban and rural areas. In recent times, secondary school curriculum has been re-designed to remove irrelevant items and include new ones that could march the taste of time, such as new subjects and methodology. Education is dynamic and teachers must be made to cope with the demands of innovation associated with the present day system of education. Teachers are the pillars of the educational process while the child, male or female is the focal point of the education system. The teacher is indispensable in the education process.

According to Obioma (2012), staff development is an organizational effort aimed at helping an employee to acquire basic skills required for the effective execution of the activities of functions for which he/she is hired. The heart of any successful learning programme is the well-informed teacher(s), which means that, teachers' education, their number, training and devotion to duty, their efficiency and capability are essential ingredients for the proper management, growth and development of the entire educational system. Kanu

(2008) stated that in ancient times, the traditional system of education was largely vocational and generally aimed at the acquisition of skills, abilities and attitudes necessary for effective living.

According to Abu (2012), staff development programmes for teachers has been acknowledged as an effective method of growing the knowledge and skills of teachers in order to help teachers teach more effectively. It is the educational process that deals with the art of acquiring skills in the teaching profession. They are fundamental practices that improve subject mastery, teaching tactic and classroom administration. The purpose of staff development programmes is to guarantee the promotion of professional growth, helps to improve tutorial skills, keeps teachers informed with the latest facts, helps staff meet particular needs, such as curriculum development and orientation, helps in leadership task, helps new teachers to easily adapt to teaching field, helps to encourage common respect among teachers and recognizes the need for modern teaching methods (Madumere-Obike, 2007).

Furthermore, Uche and Enukoha (2004) pointed out that teaching is a profession; therefore, all who desire to work as teachers should be well groomed in the art of teaching. This therefore implies that staff development applications are powerful motivational strategies for proficiency and knowledge acquisition for improved staff job performance. In most cases, new teachers are being confronted with a number of challenges upon beginning their teaching job; such as: class obligation, classroom control and organization, severe teaching workloads, motivating students, dealing with personality differences among students, assessing student's attitude and output and so on. Hence, the call for the provision of effective staff development programmes which will help beginner teachers as they set in motion their teaching profession.

Furthermore, Nakpodia (2008) sees staff development programme as a process of continuous updating of the teacher's knowledge, skills and interests in chosen field. It is a means for professional growth, which encourages the extension of teacher educators. Aitken (2004) sees staff development (in-service training) as the ongoing training of practicing teachers, which is typically arranged by school boards that employ them. It is therefore done by teachers that have the need to develop and improve on their professional skills for general upgrading of performance ability. It involves identifying specific areas where the development and improvement are needed and how best to effect the improvement within the practical constraints of limited fund and resources. It helps teachers to cope with increasing new trends and innovation in the education system. Many organizations have used staff development programmes to develop their employee's potentials in order to enhance their performance. In concord with this, Boaduo (2010) explained that teachers are expected to have both managerial and professional skills for growth and development. This he said can be achieved if they do not stop attending development programmes after the initial teacher training. Teachers stand in the interface of the transmission of knowledge, values and skills in the learning process. If the teacher does not have the right skills, the students under the teacher's tutelage will have poor academic performance.

Mohammed (2006) noted that many teachers after graduation have little or no opportunity for re-training and their training ends as soon as they graduate with no opportunity for updating their knowledge and skills by attending seminars, workshops and conferences that will subsequently enhance their knowledge and skills and their classroom teaching. Subscribing to this view, Obanya (2012) observed that a competent teacher is one who has mastered the art of teaching as instructed. An effective teacher is one who applies knowledge of the art of teaching creatively and consequently in maximizing students learning.

Educational growth and development depend to a great extent on the worth and competence of the teacher. Teachers are indispensable in the entire educational system of any nation and through the initiation of in-service training; they gain more knowledge and become more competent in their job performance. They are the pivot on which education wheels revolve. The Federal Republic of Nigeria (2004) stated that no education may rise above the quality of teachers and that teacher education shall continue to be given major emphasis in all educational planning and development. The effectiveness of the school in achieving its objectives is largely dependent upon the professional competence of the staff.

In this dynamic contemporary society, teachers need educational development programmes to expand the scope of their knowledge, skills, behavior, and attitude. Oteb (2008) stated that, "in-service training will then be developed as an integral part of continuing teacher education with opportunities made available for every teacher to undergo such training at a regular interval". Some of the notable staff development programmes are; special courses locally or/and internationally, seminars, workshops, conferences, teacher meeting,

reading/research, open and distance learning and leadership innovative procedure given to employees in connection with their work to help them improve on their skills (Mohammed, 2006). Special courses are special programmes/lectures that is/are related to teacher's profession and identified as courses which can add immediate value to the teachers' present job performance as organized by academicians within or outside the geographical area in which the teachers are domiciled. Seminar on the other hand is a forum for addressing and identifying solutions to prevailing educational problem. Issues like, introduction of new technique, curriculum and technology, as well as examination malpractice, poor academic performance, curbing cultism, classroom management etc, are treated in seminars with distinguished scholars and experts as facilitators.

Statement of the Problem

In recent times, the researcher deduced from experience that teachers of public secondary schools in Abia State are faced with the challenges of coping and keeping abreast with the new trends, innovations and changes in education system and curriculum. This means that there is broad distinction between the professional skills and the knowledge they possess and that of the new trends which they are supposed to acquire and pass on to the students. It is also observed that some teachers cannot implement newly designed curricular and some do not possess the professional skills and competence to teach newly introduced subjects like entrepreneurial subjects and computer courses. These are visible in students' general poor performance in external examinations. According to the on-line post on Nov/Dec. WASSCE 2017, out of 376,827 candidates that sat for the examination, only 29.17 percent passed with credit in five subjects including English and Mathematics as against 38,68 that was recorded in the previous year. This situation has led to loss of confidence in public secondary schools and encouraged mass exodus to private secondary schools in Abia State. All these problems affect the accomplishment of the objectives of secondary school education. This problem however prompted the researcher to carry out this investigation on influence of staff development programmes on teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Abia State.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to determine the influence of staff development on teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Abia State. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. Ascertain the influence of open and distance learning on teacher's job performance in Abia State public secondary schools.
2. Examine the influence of workshop on teachers' job performance in Abia State public secondary schools.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. To what extent does open and distance learning programme influence teachers' job performance in Abia State public secondary schools?
2. To what extent does workshop influence teachers' job performance in Abia State public secondary schools?

Method

This study adopted a descriptive survey design. Descriptive survey design describes in a systematic manner the characteristics, features or facts about a given population. It is interested in describing certain variables in relation to the population. This study therefore used descriptive survey design to identify the influence of staff development on teachers' job performance.

The population of the study comprised 3,233 teachers in the 251 government owned secondary schools in Abia State. The state is made up of 3 education zones namely; Aba zone with 1683 teachers, Ohafia zone with 739 teachers and Umuahia zone with 811 teachers (Source: Abia State Post Primary School Board, Umuahia, 2019). The sample of the study comprised 679 teachers as respondents.

The instruments for data collection were a researcher-developed instrument titled "Staff Development Questionnaire (SDQ)" and "Teachers' Job Performance Questionnaire (TJPQ)". It was categorized into sections A, B and C. Section 'A' contained information on the school of the respondents. Section 'B' elicited information on staff development programmes containing a total of 42-items and which was structured on a four (4) points scale of 1.00 – 1.49 VHE, 2.00 – 2.49 LE, 2.50 – 3.49 HE (LE) and 3.50 – 4.00 VHE. These research instruments were validated by three experts, one in the field of Educational Measurement and

Evaluation and two experts in Educational Management, all in the Faculty of Education, Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University, Igbariam Campus. They are required to assess the suitability of the items, ambiguity of the statement and ensure that the responses from the instrument answered the research questions. All corrections pointed out by the experts were affected and their suggestions were integrated into the final instrument. Reliability of the instrument was determined by test-retest method. By this method, a trial test was done using 20 teachers from Enugu State outside the study area. The exercise was repeated after an interval of two weeks using the same respondents. This shows a test for internal stability. The two sets of scores were computed statistically using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Statistics. The reliability index of .67 for open and distant learning, .86 for workshop, .83 for seminar and .81 for conference were obtained while .95 was obtained for teachers' job performance. The instruments were deemed adequate for the study. A brief letter of introduction explaining the purpose of the study was attached to each of the questionnaire and copies of the questionnaire were distributed to the 679 respondents in the sampled areas. This led to a 91% return rate which was used in the analysis. Thus, the researcher briefed three research assistants to assist in the administration and collection of the completed instrument, to make the data collection faster and easier. This helped to ensure that the instruments were completed correctly by the appropriate respondents and facilitated the data collection due to the large geographical area involved and data collected were analyzed using the mean and standard deviation for research questions while hypotheses were tested at .05 level of significance with paired sampled t-test.

Results

The data obtained from the field by the researcher were presented and analyzed in relation to the research questions and hypotheses in the study. To what extent does open and distance learning programmes influence teachers' job performance in Abia State public secondary schools?

Table 1: Mean ratings of teachers on the extent open and distance learning programmes influence teachers' job performance in Abia State public secondary schools.

S/n	Item statements	N	Mean ($\bar{X}$)	SD	Decision
1	It is an opportunity for teachers to upgrade academically	679	3.16	.81	HE
2	It expose teachers to new academic environment	679	3.27	.64	HE
3	It help teachers to develop a better human relations skills with colleagues	679	3.37	.74	HE
4	It help to acquire new skills in teachers' education such as in science and technology	679	3.32	.73	HE
5	It help to reform teacher's attitude towards teaching and learning	679	3.32	.65	HE
6	It help to improve teacher's research skills and interest	679	3.21	.77	HE
7	It encourage teachers to read further for better qualifications	679	3.32	.73	HE
8	It give teachers the opportunity to research on the immediate classroom challenges	679	3.21	.69	HE
9	It provide the teachers with the opportunity to study more subjects	679	3.37	.74	HE
10	It gives the teacher the opportunity to read wider in their areas of interest	679	3.21	.69	HE
Total Mean			32.76	7.19	
Grand Mean			3.28	.72	HE

Data in table 1 above showed the extent open and distance learning programmes influence teachers' job performance in Abia State public secondary schools. The table revealed that teachers had to a high extent agreed to the facts that open and distance learning programmes influence teachers' job performance in Abia State public secondary schools with the response to all the items falling within the range of 2.50 – 3.49.

On the other hands, the grand mean showed that teachers agreed to a high extent with mean ratings of 3.28. The study therefore concluded that open and distance learning programmes influence teachers' job performance in Abia State public secondary schools to a high extent.

Research Question 2: To what extent does workshop influence teachers' job performance in Abia State public secondary schools?

Table 2: Mean ratings of teachers on the extent workshop influence teachers' job performance in Abia State public secondary schools

S/n	Item statement	N	Mean ($\bar{X}$)	SD	Decision
11	It help to update teachers' knowledge on current affairs in their areas of specialization	679	3.1	.85	HE
12	It help teachers to improve on educational ideas	679	3.21	.83	HE
13	It help teachers to interact with their fellow colleagues on issues relating to the teaching profession	679	3.16	.81	HE
14	It help teachers to generate solutions to instructional problems	679	3.37	.74	HE
15	It equip teachers with information on changes in the curriculum at any given time	679	3.21	.61	HE
16	It help teachers gain confidence and boldness	679	3.42	.67	HE
17	It stimulate the teacher quest for a better performance	679	3.21	.69	HE
18	It help teachers to know the right instructional material to use at any time in the class	679	3.27	.71	HE
19	It enhance teacher's ability to adequately cover the scheme of work for each term	679	3.27	.71	HE
20	It help teachers to acquire the required skills to ensure that consistence disciplinary measures are maintained in the classroom	679	3.37	.67	HE
Total Mean			32.59	7.29	
Grand Mean			3.26	.73	HE

Analysis in table 2 above showed the extent workshop influence teachers' job performance in Abia State public secondary schools. The table revealed that teachers had to a high extent agreed to the facts that workshop influence teachers' job performance in Abia State public secondary schools with the response to all the items falling within the range of 2.50 – 3.49.

On the other hands, the grand mean showed that teachers agreed to a high extent with mean ratings of 3.26. The study therefore concluded that workshop influence teachers' job performance in Abia State public secondary schools to a high extent. To what extent does seminar influence teachers' job performance in Abia State public secondary schools?

Test of Hypotheses

Hypothesis One: Open and distance learning programmes does not significantly influence teachers' job performance in Abia State public secondary schools.

Table 3 Paired sample t-test of teachers on the significant influence of open and distance learning programmes (ODL) on teachers' job performance (TJP) in Abia State public secondary schools

Variables	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	df	p-value
ODL – TJP	619	40.50	.716	678	.000

*Significant at $p < .05$

Data in table showed the paired sample t-test of teachers on the significant influence open and distance learning programmes on teachers' job performance in Abia State public secondary schools. The result showed that p-value of $.000 < .05$ level of significance which resulted in the decision to accept the alternative hypothesis at $p(.000) < .05$ and reject the null hypothesis. Therefore, the study concluded that open and distance learning programmes significantly influenced teachers' job performance in Abia State public secondary schools.

Hypothesis Two: Workshop does not significantly influence teachers' job performance in Abia State public secondary schools.

Table 4 Paired sample t-test of teachers on the significant influence of workshop on teachers' job performance (TJP) in Abia State public secondary schools

Variables	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	df	p-value
Workshop - TJS	679	40.67	.802	678	.000

*Significant at $p < .05$

Analysis in Table 4 showed the paired sample t-test of teachers on the significant influence of workshop on teachers' job performance in Abia State public secondary schools. The result showed that p-value of $.000 < .05$ level of significance which resulted in the decision to accept the alternative hypothesis at $p(.000) < .05$ and reject the null hypothesis. Therefore, the study concluded that workshop significantly influenced teachers' job performance in Abia State public secondary schools.

Summary of the Findings

The study findings are summarized as follows:

1. The study showed that open and distant leaning programmes influence teachers' job performance in Abia State public secondary schools to a high extent.
2. The study revealed that workshop influence teachers' job performance in Abia State public secondary schools to a high extent.
3. The study indicated that open and distant programmes significantly influence teachers' job performance in Abia State public secondary schools.
4. The study showed that workshop significantly influence teachers' job performance in Abia State public secondary schools.

Discussion of the Findings

Findings from the study revealed that open and distant leaning programmes significantly influenced teachers' job performance in Abia State public secondary schools to a high extent. This finding is as a result of teachers accepting to the fact that it is an opportunity for them to upgrade academically; exposes teachers to new academic environment; helps teachers to develop a better human relations skills with colleagues; helps to acquire new skills in teachers' education such as in science and technology; helps to reform teachers' attitude towards teaching and learning; helps to improve teacher's research skills and interest; encourages teachers to read further for better qualifications; gives teachers the opportunity to research on the immediate classroom challenges; gives the teacher the opportunity to read wider in their areas of interest; and provides the teachers with the opportunity to study more subjects. This finding is in line with the findings of Nwaubani (2005), Bassey (2007), and Abokwara (2010). Nwaubani (2005) opined that teachers, who engage in development programmes like distant learning programmes, update their knowledge with modern techniques and improve on their skills and this most likely result to higher performance on the teaching job. Bassey (2007) argued that most teachers who engage in open and distant learning are involve in order to update their knowledge, skills and teaching habit in line with the changes in technology and techniques for modern

classroom teaching. Also, Abokwara (2010) is of the opinion that providing teachers with distant learning programmes helps them to acquire new skills in teaching and letting them to upgrade their academic ability.

The study showed that workshop significantly influenced teachers' job performance in Abia State public secondary schools to a high extent. This is as a result of the teachers agreeing to the fact that the workshop helps to update their knowledge on current affairs in their areas of specialization; helps teachers to improve on educational ideas; helps teachers to interact with their fellow colleagues on issues relating to the teaching profession; helps teachers to generate solutions to instructional problems; equips teachers with information on changes in the curriculum at any given time; helps teachers gain confidence and boldness; stimulates the teachers' quest for a better performance; helps teachers to know the right instructional material to use at any time in the class; enhances teachers' ability to adequately cover the scheme of work for each term; and helps teachers to acquire the required skills to ensure that consistence disciplinary measures are maintained in the classroom. This study is in consonance with the findings of Mohammed (2006), Imo, Edet and Nkama (2013), and Maclean (2018). Mohammed (2006) explained that teachers participating in workshops help to update their knowledge and skills in the teaching practices. Imo, Edet and Nkama (2013) indicated that teachers who participated in development programmes like workshop, distance learning programmes etc. were more effective in their job performance than those who do engage in such programmes. On the other hands, Maclean (2018) showed that teachers who participate in in-service training programmes, seminars, workshop and conferences have a strong positive and significant relationships between teachers' learning, teachers' growth, teachers' needs, teachers' collaboration and job performance in public secondary schools in the study area. Therefore, the study argued that teachers engaging in workshop programmes will equip teachers with modern knowledge and skills necessary for effective teaching in the teaching profession.

The study showed that workshops significantly influenced teachers' job performance in Abia State public secondary schools to a high extent. This finding could be as a result of teachers attending to conferences. The conferences have helped teachers to correct and advise them on areas of deficiency; helped teachers to measure up to set standard; helped most of the teachers to learn how best to organize students in the classroom; helped teachers to gain more information on the latest practices in the profession; helped teachers to have a monumental access to their performance in relation to other participants in the conference based on their job descriptions; exposed teachers to other ideas that could be of immediate help to them; have enlightened teachers on the new methods of instructional delivery, helped the teachers to understand the government policies that are related to their duties; enhanced teachers' access to appropriate professional development; have provided advice to the teachers in matters pertaining to students attitude change towards class work and relationship others; have helped to create an effective learning environment; and have helped to improve teaching-learning situations in schools. This finding is in agreement with the findings of Bassey (2007), Ogbonna (2010), Imo, Edet and Nkama (2013), and Maclean (2018).

Conclusion

Teachers have crucial roles to play in bringing about improved learning in students. Their ability to effectively carry out these roles would be determined largely by the quality of development programmes made available to, and utilize by them. Thus, the study concluded that teachers' open and distant learning programmes, workshop, seminars, and conferences are the developmental programmes that teachers attend that improve their teaching performance. Such improvement could then lead to marked improvement in content, process, context and outcomes of students' learning in schools.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are made based on the study findings:

1. The study recommended that government should use regular attendance to workshops, seminars, conferences and open and distant learning programmes for teachers to be the benchmark for their promotion and upgrading.
2. There is the need for continuous permission for teachers to go on in-service training programmes like open and distant learning, workshops, seminars, conferences since their performance are enhanced through such training programmes.
3. Adequate funds should be made available by the Ministry of education for staff development programmes such as workshops among others to encourage teachers in their chosen fields in Abia State.

4. Abia State government should ensure that adequate funds are provided for regular seminars so that secondary school teachers within the three education zone of Abia State can benefit.
5. The state Ministry Education should make conference a regular programme for teachers to acquaint them with current educational strategies and methods.

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