

## **RE-TRAINING OF TEACHERS FOR EFFECTIVE STUDENTS SKILLS ACQUISITION IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN ANAMBRA STATE, NIGERIA**

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### **Abstract**

*The study examined re-training of teachers for effective students' skills acquisition in public secondary schools in Anambra State, Nigeria. Three research questions were answered and a null hypothesis tested. The population was 5,560 teachers out of which 200 were used for the study. The research design used was descriptive survey while the reliability score of the study was .87 and considered appropriate. A self-developed structured questionnaire was used for data collection. Data generated were analyzed with mean and t-test at 0.05 alpha. Major findings of the study included factors that impede effective students' skills acquisition in secondary schools, impact of teacher effectiveness on effective students' skills acquisition, strategies towards promoting effective students' skills acquisition in secondary schools. The conclusion of the study was that if teachers are re-trained, the goals of education at this level will be realized to a great extent. Based on this conclusion, it was recommended that in-service training is vital for teachers, teachers' welfare must be upgraded if education at this level will significantly improve among others.*

**Keywords:** Re-training of teachers, skills acquisition, secondary schools.

### **Introduction**

The fact that education is very important to human development cannot be doubted. As the years go by, the need for education becomes more pressing. This fact was well articulated by Watson (2017) who asserted that the modern dividends of education include economic reforms, moral revival, cultural awareness, national integration, democratic government, rural regeneration and manpower development. Supporting the above assertion, Briggs in Emenike (2018) asserted that education is a long-term investment by the State to make itself a better place in which to live and a better place in which to make a living. However, it should be noted that it is only through a functional and qualitative system of education that the above-mentioned dividends of education can be harvested.

Basically, Nigeria's education system is far from perfect according to some commentators. Animasaun in Kolade (2019) observed that a state of emergency should be declared on Nigeria's educational system and for three years, let other sectors be ignored so that all efforts are made to restructure the entire school system. In the same vein, Osuji in Agbaje (2019) contended that time had come for schools formerly under the various church missions to be handed back to them. He explains that this move will not only ensure the emergence of a qualitative system of education but take care of the incessant teachers' industrial actions in addition to the constant menace of cultism in schools. Further, Obinna (2020) stated that certain negative characteristics of our educational system are truancy, cultism, examination malpractice, indiscipline, robbery, alcoholism and incompetent teachers. The last point is our focus in this investigation in view of the need to re-train teachers and make them more effective as regards to skill acquisition. There are many approaches to re-training of teachers so that they can achieve short-term and long-term goals of education at the secondary school level.

Skill acquisition is defined as an internet source contends that it is a type of learning in which repetition results in enduring changes in an individual's capability to perform a specific task. It explains that with enough repetition, performance of the task eventually may become automatic with little need for conscious oversight for the fact that any behavior that needs to be learned and which is improved by practice can be considered as skill. At this stage, it is pertinent to highlight the type of skills that will benefit students in more ways than one. Craig in Dimkpa (2015) enumerated five major lessons here:

- i. an education that gives the student an advantage for supporting his family or secure a middle class lifestyle such as an essential post-secondary education or technical training;
- ii. an acquisition of traditional skills in subjects like Mathematics Language, Arts and Science not being displaced by a new set of skills;
- iii. students' learning to apply to what they have learnt in those subjects to deal with real world challenges rather than simply reproducing the information on tests for academic excellence; and
- iv. students who develop an even broader set of in-demand consequence, the ability to think critically about information, solve novel problems, communicate and collaborate new products, processes and adapt to change.

For a teacher to deliver in terms of helping students to acquire requisite skills, he must be trained and re-trained from time-to-time. There are many approaches to this phenomenon. First, he must be familiar with a new teaching paradigm known as Peer Instruction (P.I.) which is an instructional strategy for engaging students

during class activities through a structured questioning process that involves every student according to Crouch, Watkins, Fagen and Manzur (2017). According to them, Peer Instruction is a co-operative learning technique that promotes critical thinking, problem solving and decision-making skills. Further, it is an interactive approach that was designed to improve the learning process according to Rosenberg, Lorenzo and Manzur (2018). They affirmed that Peer Instruction has the advantage of engaging the student in interaction among themselves and with the teacher. According to them, the effectiveness of peer instruction is centered on being able to encourage students' interaction in the classroom within themselves and with the teachers.

There is also Continuous Professional Development (C.P.D.) which is necessary if teachers are to successfully impart effective knowledge and skills to students in the process of realizing the lofty goals of education. Sywelem and Wittel (2013), Speck and Knipe (2012) and Padwad and Dixit (2011) defined C.P.D. respectively. Sywelem and Wittel (2013) views it as the process of appraising staff performances and identifying their key skills and competences that need development or training to improve the skills for better performance. Speck and Knipe (2012) defined C.P.D. as a sustained collaborative learning process that systematically nourishes the growth of educators (individuals and teams) through adult learner-centred, job-embedded processes. It focuses on educators attaining the skills, abilities and deep understanding needed to improve student achievement. Finally, Padwad and Dixit (2011) viewed teachers' Continuous Professional Development as a planned, continuous and lifelong process whereby teachers try to develop their personal and professional qualities and to improve their skills and practice leading to their empowerment, the improvement of their agency and the development of their organisation and their students.

Secondary Education is the second level of Nigeria's education system. It is the middle ground between primary and tertiary education. At the beginning, secondary education ran a duration of five years (6-5-4 system) but later was modified to six years (6-3-3-4 system) standing for six years of primary education, three years of junior secondary, three years of senior secondary and four years of tertiary education. Presently, the system was further modified to 9-3-4 standing for nine years of primary and junior secondary, three years of senior secondary and four years of tertiary education. Secondary education is a very strategic level of education and due to this fact, the Federal Government of Nigeria took pains to specify its aims, curriculum, and programmes among others. The broad aims of secondary education are two-pronged namely (1) preparation for useful living within the society and (2) preparation for higher education (section 4 (17)). The

focus of this investigation is re-training of teachers for effective skills acquisition in secondary schools in Anambra State, Nigeria.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The overall standard of education in Nigeria has been described as poor by experts. Perhaps, students' poor academic performance in external examinations namely West African Senior Secondary Certificate Examination (WASSCE) and National Certificate Examination (NECO) is significantly responsible for this negative assertion. This is due to the fact that majority of the candidates fail to secure five credits with English Language and Mathematics inclusive. Many factors had been identified as being responsible for this anomaly namely students' laxity, lack of teaching materials, inadequate infrastructure and teachers incompetence. Stakeholders to education are highly disturbed by the current standard of education at the secondary school level. The issue of incompetent teachers may be substantially responsible for this unacceptable state of education. The problem of this study, therefore, is to objectively appraise the re-training of teachers for effective students' skills acquisition in secondary schools in Anambra State, Nigeria.

### **Purpose of the Study**

Generally, the purpose of this study is to examine the re-training of teachers for effective students' skills acquisition in secondary schools. Specifically, the objectives of the study are to:

- 1 Determine the factors that impede students' effective skills acquisition in secondary schools.
- 2 Establish the impact of teachers' effectiveness on effective students' skills acquisition in secondary schools.
- 3 Highlight strategies towards promoting effective students' skills acquisition in secondary schools.

### **Significance of the Study**

The outcome of this investigation will be of great benefits to teachers, principals and government. Data generated from factors that hamper effective students' skills acquisition by students will help teachers to improve rather than hamper realisation of the goals of secondary school education on the short and long-term basis.

Principals will also benefit from data generated from responses concerning the impact of effective teaching on effective students' skills acquisition in secondary schools. Such knowledge will enable them to know the areas of work in the quest to significantly improve teachers' contributions to the realisation of the goals of secondary school education.

Government will further gain from the data generated from strategies towards promoting effective students' skills acquisition. This knowledge will go a long way in restructuring government policy on teacher education so as to promote the full realisation of the goals of education for the good of each and all. This will save millions of funds that would have been spent on the wrong strategies earlier adopted by previous administrations.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions were formulated to guide the study:

1. What are the factors that hamper effective students' skills acquisition in the secondary schools?
2. What are the impact of teachers' effectiveness on effective students' skills acquisition in secondary schools?
3. What are the strategies towards promoting effective students skills acquisition in secondary schools?

### **Hypothesis**

H0 1: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female teachers on the factors that hamper effective students' skills acquisition in secondary schools.

### **Scope of the Study**

The study was delimited to secondary school teachers. It covered factors that hamper effective students' skills acquisition, impact of teachers' effectiveness on effective students' skills acquisition and strategies towards promoting effective students' skills acquisition in secondary schools.

### **Method**

Descriptive survey design was used for the research. Emenike (2018) stated that this type of design examined people's opinions, motivations, interests and perceptions on a subject through the use of questionnaire or interview. As such, survey design was deemed the most suitable for the research.

The population for the investigation consists of all teachers in the public secondary schools in Anambra State numbering 5,560. 200 respondents were selected for the study consisting of 100 male and 100 female teachers from the six educational zones namely Aguata, Awka, Nnewi, Ogidi, Onitsha and Otuocha.

A self-developed, structured questionnaire captioned, "Re-Training of Teachers for Effective Students' Skills Acquisition Questionnaire (RTESSAQ)" was used for data collection. It consisted of 18 items spread over three sections. It was validated by three senior lecturers whose expert opinions were elicited. They were

staff of Faculty of Education, Departments of Educational Management and Planning, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka and Measurement and Evaluation, Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University, Igbariam Campus. Cronbach co-efficient alpha formula was used to analyse the data collected for reliability. A reliability score of .87 was deemed reliable. Hundred percent of the 200 questionnaire administered through on-the-spot method of administration were properly completed and retrieved.

Coming to techniques for data analysis, the research questions were analysed using the mean and standard deviation. The null hypothesis was tested using t-test. Items that attracted a mean rating of 2.50 and above were accepted and those below the cut-off point were rejected. The t-test was used at .05 level of significance at 198 degree of freedom in testing the hypothesis for the study. The null hypothesis was not rejected if the calculated t-value was less than the table value and was rejected if the calculated t-value was equal or greater than the table value.

## Results

**Research Question 1:** What are the factors that hamper effective students' skills acquisition in secondary schools?

**Table 1:** Mean ratings of respondents on factors that hamper effective students' skills acquisition in secondary schools.

| S/N | Item Description                       | Male Teachers |             | Female Teachers |             | Remarks         |
|-----|----------------------------------------|---------------|-------------|-----------------|-------------|-----------------|
|     |                                        | X             | SD          | X               | SD          |                 |
| 1.  | Lack of infrastructures.               | 3.25          | 0.73        | 3.33            | 0.77        | Agreed          |
| 2.  | Lack of competent teachers.            | 3.95          | 0.43        | 3.5             | 0.46        | Strongly Agreed |
| 3.  | Dependence on examination malpractice. | 3.12          | 0.49        | 3.08            | 0.49        | Agreed          |
| 4.  | Inadequate learning facilities.        | 3.42          | 0.47        | 2.80            | 0.51        | Agreed          |
| 5.  | Poor teachers' welfare package.        | 3.81          | 0.44        | 3.5             | 0.46        | Strongly Agreed |
| 6.  | Unfavourable school location.          | 3.14          | 0.49        | 3.17            | 0.48        | Agreed          |
|     | <b>Grand Mean</b>                      | <b>3.5</b>    | <b>0.46</b> | <b>3.30</b>     | <b>0.47</b> | <b>Agreed</b>   |

The data in table 1 revealed that there is respondents' consensus that these are factors that hamper effective students' skills acquisition in secondary schools. This conclusion was reached due to high agreement rate among the respondents of the study.

**Research Question 2:** What are the impact of teachers' effectiveness on students' skills acquisition in secondary schools?

**Table 2:** Mean ratings of respondents on the impact of teachers' effectiveness on students' effective skills acquisition in secondary schools.

| S/N | Item Description                                | X          | SD          | Remarks       |
|-----|-------------------------------------------------|------------|-------------|---------------|
| 7.  | Enthusiasm for learning.                        | 3.5        | 0.65        | Agreed        |
| 8.  | Improved academic performance.                  | 2.69       | 0.94        | Agreed        |
| 9.  | Positive school tone.                           | 3.25       | 0.22        | Agreed        |
| 10. | Low incidence of truancy.                       | 2.98       | 0.55        | Agreed        |
| 11. | Excellent performance in external examinations. | 2.78       | 0.50        | Agreed        |
| 12. | Non-dependence on examination malpractice.      | 3.59       | 0.95        | Agreed        |
|     | <b>Grand Mean</b>                               | <b>3.1</b> | <b>0.49</b> | <b>Agreed</b> |

The data on Table 2 depicted homogeneity in responses among respondents as regards impact of teachers' effectiveness on effective students' skills acquisition in secondary schools. This was as a result of high agreement rate from the respondents of the study concerning the six items presented to them.

**Research Question 3:** What are the strategies towards promoting effective students' skills acquisition in secondary schools?

**Table 3:** Mean ratings of respondents on the strategies towards promoting effective students' skills acquisition in secondary schools.

| S/N | Item Description                                               | X           | SD          | Remarks         |
|-----|----------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-----------------|
| 13. | Presence of competent teachers.                                | 2.80        | 0.51        | Agreed          |
| 14. | Adoption of Peer Instruction method.                           | 3.12        | 0.49        | Agreed          |
| 15. | Encouragement of Teachers Continuous Professional Development. | 3.83        | 0.37        | Strongly Agreed |
| 16. | Improved teachers' welfare package.                            | 3.33        | 0.77        | Strongly Agreed |
| 17. | Adequate infrastructures.                                      | 3.08        | 0.64        | Agreed          |
| 18. | Provision of learning facilities.                              | 3.12        | 0.49        | Agreed          |
|     | <b>Grand Mean</b>                                              | <b>3.27</b> | <b>0.48</b> | <b>Agreed</b>   |

To a significant extent, information documented on Table 3 showed uniformity in responses among respondents as regards strategies towards promoting effective students' skills acquisition in secondary schools. This conclusion was reached as a result of the high agreement rate among the respondents on the six items presented to them.

**Hypothesis:** There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female teachers on the factors that hamper effective students' skills acquisition in secondary schools.

**Table 4:** shows t-test summary reviewing the difference in the responses of male and female principals on factors that hamper effective students 'skills acquisition in secondary schools.

| Category of | No. of | $\bar{X}$ | SD | Degree of | t-calt | t-calt | Level of |
|-------------|--------|-----------|----|-----------|--------|--------|----------|
|-------------|--------|-----------|----|-----------|--------|--------|----------|

| Teachers        | Respondents | Freedom |      | significa |     |      |     |
|-----------------|-------------|---------|------|-----------|-----|------|-----|
| Male Teachers   | 100         | 3.32    | 0.70 | 198       | 0.7 | 1.96 | 0.5 |
| Female Teachers | 100         | 3.43    | 0.74 |           |     |      |     |

## Findings

1. Factors that hamper effective students' skills acquisition in secondary schools include lack of infrastructures, lack of competent teachers, and dependence on examination malpractice, inadequate learning materials, poor teachers' welfare and unfavourable school location.
2. Impact of teachers' effectiveness on effective students' skills acquisition in secondary schools manifest in terms of enthusiasm for learning, improved academic performance, positive school tone, low incidence of truancy, excellent performance in external examinations and non-dependence on examination malpractice.
3. Strategies towards promoting effective students' skills acquisition in secondary schools manifest in the shape of presence of competent teachers, adoption of Peer Instruction method, encouragement of Teachers Continuous Professional Development, improved teachers' welfare package, adequate infrastructures and provision of learning facilities.

## Discussion

The study revealed factors the that hamper effective students' skills acquisition in secondary schools which include lack of infrastructures, lack of competent teachers, dependence on examination malpractice, inadequate learning materials, poor teachers welfare package and unfavorable school location. Singly and collectively, these factors significantly hamper realisation of goals of secondary education. This tallies with the contention of Ike (2017) who identified the problems of secondary education to include unstable staff, inadequate classroom accommodation, poorly equipped libraries, laboratories and subject rooms, scarcity and prohibitive cost of books, poor preparation and malpractices, exploitation and educational standard. Others are poor parenting/guidance, poverty and fall in standard, politicization and the problem of relating the curricula to national manpower needs.

Also revealed were the impact of teachers' effectiveness on effective students' skills acquisition in secondary schools. These manifest in terms of enthusiasm for learning, improved academic performance, positive school tone, low incidence of truancy, excellent performance in external examinations and non-dependence on

examination malpractice. Undoubtedly, these are authentic impact of teacher education at this level of education. It coincided with the assertion of Odor (2018) who highlighted skills derived from training and re-training of teachers to include:

- a. Obtaining higher academic and professional qualifications;
- b. Acquisition of academic and professional knowledge;
- c. Keeping abreast of new trends in education and with their counterparts;
- d. Improving teachers' social and academic status; and
- e. Facilitating implementation of current educational programmes.

Further, National Policy on Education, N.P.E. (2013) stipulated the aims of teacher training to include:

- A. Production of highly motivated, conscientious and effective classroom teachers;
- B. Encouraging further the spirit of enquiry and creativity of teachers;
- C. Providing teachers with the intellectual and potential background situation; and
- D. Enhance teachers' commitment to the teaching profession.

Finally, the study revealed strategies towards promoting effective students' skills acquisition in the shape of presence of competent teachers, adoption of Peer Instruction (PI) method, encouragement of Teachers Continuous Professional Development, improved teachers' welfare package, adequate infrastructures and provision of learning facilities. These strategies will significantly promote students' acquisition of skills in secondary schools. This tallies with the statement of Okafor in Banka and Okwori (2019) that teaching staff in public and private schools should be provided with in-service training through work and study programmes to enable them acquire more professional qualifications, skills, knowledge and competencies for increased efficiency in performance of their primary functions. He explains that this provides an opportunity for staff make-up for their inadequacies and thereby improves performance. Further, Awopogbwe (2018) and Adikpa (2018) point out that training, seminars, conferences, workshops afford opportunity for staff to enrich themselves and get abreast of new ideas in education.

### **Conclusion**

Based on the results of the findings, it was concluded that the goals of education at the secondary school level cannot be fully realised in absence of competent teachers. To ensure regular supply of such teachers, a comprehensive re-training exercise must be initiated on the long run.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the findings and conclusion of the study, the following recommendations are made:

1. Regular in-service trainings should be mapped out for teachers at the secondary school level;
2. The issue of teachers' welfare scheme should be improved on for increased productivity and morale;
3. Provision of adequate infrastructures in secondary schools for effective teaching and learning for teachers and students.
4. Increased emphasis on moral education so as to shun anti-social activities like cultism, truancy and dependence on examination malpractice; and
5. Recruitment of more teachers to match the large population of students by the state Government.

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