

DEVELOPMENT OF TEACHERS' ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN ETCHE LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA, RIVERS STATE OF NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

The project reflects on professional development on teachers academic performance in secondary schools in Etche Local Government Area. It is a survey study. Two research questions were formulated for the study. The population sample of the study consists of 399 teachers from seventeen (17) secondary schools in Etche Local Government Area. The sampling technique used was random sampling method. The instrument utilized was questionnaire coded professional development and teachers' academic performance questionnaire (PDTAPQ). Out of 399 copies of questionnaire distributed 378 were retrieved for analysis of the research questions. The result of the findings indicated that professional development of teachers refocusing the status quo of the school system hence contributing to high level of academic standard; in-service training fully integrates teachers' talents and potentiality towards realizing the objectives and goals of the school system; workshops/conferences/seminars provide the medium for sharing assumptions, values, beliefs as well as engendering inter institutional resources and exchanging scholarly ideas. It is therefore concluded that enabling environment and opportunities be created for consistent acquisition of knowledge, skills and potentialities to pursuit the academic excellence. Hence, it is recommended that sufficient resources should be provided to assure effectiveness during the programme; there should be provision for positive reinforcement after training for transmission of the acquired knowledge and skills; varieties of development programme or activities should be provided to accommodate the interest of non-academic staff; teachers should be allowed to use research/publication as a yardstick for their promotion as in the universities system.

Introduction

Professional development according to Yemmy (2010) is a process engaged in to enhance the knowledge, skills and attitudes of the teachers. This implies the responsibility to create, preserve, evaluate and transmit knowledge through continuing learning. Development programme have the ingredient of fostering and preserving the scholarly values, curiosity and integrity to nurture these values through inculcation. Chukwu (2009) states that basic aims of professional development are to improve quality of the teaching and learning as well as to improve the performance of those with teaching and management responsibilities. So the ideas for academic development can be said to conceived from the organizations acknowledgement that efficiency and effectiveness to a large extent depend on training and re-training of the work force.

Moreso, Obodegbulam (2007) categorized professional development into three components which are:

- Instructional development that under pins evaluation methods, technologies and curriculum development.
- Organizational development that reflects on team building, decision-making and management.
- Personal development that incorporate interpersonal skills, training and career development as a focus.

The implication therefore is that professional development is conceived in term of partnership between individual and organization.

Research Questions:

- 1) To what extent does professional development contribute to teachers’ academic performance?
- 2) To what extent does in-service training promote teacher academic performance?

Design of the Study:

This is a survey design method to examine influence of professional development on teachers’ academic performance in secondary schools in Etche Local Government Area. This method was used by the researcher to ascertain the current status of the problem by studying the entire population.

Research Question 1

To what extent does professional development contribute to teachers’ academic performance?

Table1: Mean responses on professional development and teacher academic performance (N=378).

| S/NO | ITEMS | SA | A | D | SD | X | Remarks |
|------|--|-----|-----|----|----|-----|----------|
| 1 | Teachers’ idea is shifted towards increasing knowledge, skills and technical rationality. | 166 | 156 | 34 | 22 | 3.2 | accepted |
| 2 | Developing a sophisticated workforce through application of valid approach to learning and teaching. | 130 | 178 | 41 | 29 | 3.1 | accepted |
| 3 | Orientating of teachers’ focus for attainment of high quality of academic performance. | 159 | 165 | 29 | 25 | 3.2 | accepted |
| 4 | To accelerate academic relationship among peers in similar area of specialization. | 195 | 132 | 22 | 29 | 3.3 | accepted |
| 5 | To increase work quality and waste reduction. | 142 | 133 | 55 | 48 | 2.9 | accepted |

The table1. indicated that professional development of teachers accelerate academic relationship among peers in similar area of specialization(X=3.3), teachers idea are shifted towards increasing knowledge, skills and technical rationality and orientating of teachers’ focus for attainment of high quality of academic performance (X=3.2) respectively. Developing a sophisticated workforce through application of valid approach to learning and teaching (X=3.1) and to increase work quality and waste reduction (X=2.9). Thus, it is generally accepted that professional development contributes to teacher academic performance with the average mean scores of (X=3.1).

Research Question 2

To what extent does in-service training promote teacher academic performance?

Table 2: Mean responses on in-service training and teachers academic performance (N=378).

| S/NO | ITEMS | SA | A | D | SD | X | Remarks |
|------|---|-----|-----|----|----|-----|----------|
| 1 | Enhancing high level of productivity and efficiency. | 201 | 117 | 25 | 35 | 3.3 | accepted |
| 2 | Reinforcing desirable teaching/learning methods and procedures. | 121 | 154 | 62 | 41 | 2.9 | accepted |
| 3 | Carrying out detailed and expert delivery of lesson objectives. | 141 | 178 | 32 | 27 | 3.1 | accepted |
| 4 | Enriching teachers' academic focus and interest. | 153 | 134 | 54 | 37 | 3.1 | accepted |
| 5 | Enriching teachers' academic focus and interest | 139 | 164 | 44 | 31 | 3.1 | accepted |

The table 2. revealed that in-service training promotes teachers academic achievement by enhancing high level of productivity and efficiency ($X=3.3$), Carrying out detailed and expert delivery of lesson objectives, enriching teachers' academic focus and interest, contributing to curriculum innovations and technologies ($X3.1$) respectively while reinforcing desirable teaching/learning methods and procedures ($X=2.9$). It is therefore accepted that in-service training promotes professional development of teachers' academic performance with average mean scores of ($X=3.1$).

Discussion of Findings

The findings indicated that professional development of teachers contributes to increasing knowledge, skills and technical rationality. This is because total life of the teachers is changed in respect of learning processes. It is further revealed in the study that professional development of teacher assure the process of developing sophisticated work force through application of valid approach of learning and teaching. This finding agreed with the opinion Delemaina (2011) who cited that when teacher are allowed to participate in any development programme their mode of thinking and imagination under unimaginable changes.

In another development, the finding suggested that professional development contributes immensely by orientating teachers' focus for attainment of high quality of academic performance. This is very necessary because nowadays there are so much knowledge challenges that the teachers need to be acquainted with. In addition, the findings on accelerating academic relationship among peers in similar area of specialization were generally accepted by the respondents. This view agreed with the notion of Okwuanaso (2006) who suggested that professional development stimulate interrelationship among individual's team maintenance and organizational needs. More so, there is evidence that the professional development produced work quality hence reducing waste reduction which can encourage realization of the accomplishment of the organizational goals and objectives.

The study of the findings research question two revealed that in-service training enhancing high level of productivity and efficiency. This view agreed with the opinion of Rioramies (2012) who stated that professional development of teachers provides for creativity and flexibility in academic activities. In other words, ability is stimulated thereby creating an environment in which it becomes easier to explore, becoming more proactive and commands changes in the organization. Further findings suggested that reinforcing desirable teaching/learning methods and procedures. This is because professional training encouraged individuals to be more functional and responsive in their tasks analysis and procedures. Similarly, research study indicated that carrying out detailed and expert delivery of lesson objectives is a significance factor in the

development of the teachers. Understanding of lesson procedures is the bane of teaching and learning processes that must be professionally addressed. In the same vein, enriching teachers' academic focus and interest is found to be paramount in the environment of learning processes to acquire and accomplished the ultimate desired goals.

Summary of the study:

Professional development of teachers refocusing the status quo of the school system hence contributing to high level of academic standard.

- In-service training fully integrates teachers' talents and potentiality towards realizing the objectives and goals of the school system.

Conclusion:

Based on the findings, it is therefore concluded that enabling environment and opportunities be created for consistent acquisition of knowledge, skills and potentialities to pursuit the academic excellence.

Recommendations:

It is therefore recommended that:

- Sufficient resources should be provided to assure effectiveness during the programme.
- There should be provision for positive reinforcement after training for transmission of the acquired knowledge and skills.

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