

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ON TEACHERS' ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN ETCHE LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA

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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 literature study. 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.*

KEYWORDS: Teachers, Professional Development, Etche Local Government Area

INTRODUCTION

This work provides a review of relevant literature that forms the framework for the study. The review is structurally arranged under the following sub-headings:

- Need for professional development of the teachers
- In-service training and academic performance
- Constraints against professional development of teachers
- Summary of the related literature
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Need for professional development of teachers

The need for professional development can be explained from the growing concern among various institutions of learning. This is because the teachers and other members of the institution are mandated to carry out a heavy load of academic instruction that will propel the development of individual to be useful member of the society and the development of the nation. This made professional development very predominant and imperative for teachers to be developed and made more versatile and competent enough to converge and transform the system in consonance with the societal expectations. Therefore, focus is shifted to an increasing knowledge, skills and technical rationality.

Borrowing from the perspective of Louise (2008), the needs for professional development is obvious because:

- Survival of academic status-quo must be sought through developing a sophisticated academic workforce which can applied individual skills and knowledge.
- Motivating and stimulating the knowledge of teachers implies refine a new approach to human resource development.
- A new global economy reinforced by the information and telecommunication revolution has changed the nature of the role expectations of the academic staff.

As expressed by Peretomode (2004) the orientation of the educational enterprise towards high quality and self-reliance of the system has become key factors. The degree of goodness, worth and usability of the products in the educational systems becomes the most superlative and for teacher to have varieties of skills, task significance and identifications that will help to transform the resources available in the system.

For Delemania (2011) the need is basically directed towards increasing rationality of individuals, embracing on-the-job satisfaction, communicating plans, problems and progress, providing supportive relationship among which individuals can be influence to change. This illustration reflect on the fact that teacher are enhanced to recognize the tasks, developing of team work and maintenance and satisfaction of individuals and organizational needs.

In another development, Adesina (2004) cited that professional development focuses on those with teaching responsibilities, developed perspective in which the predominant focus is in the professional capability of individual partners, thereby ensuring effective and efficient curriculum delivery and implementation. Quality and competency is built into our educational system by embarking on professional development of the teachers which alters individual with improved productivity in its specialization and invariably contributes to the growth of the system as well as vocational capabilities. Ihunda (2004) states that it makes sense to train and develop the academic staff not only because of gains in productivity, work quality, employee morale, waste reduction but an organization that fails to develop its present employees seriously jeopardizes the future of the organization.

In the words of Amadi (2008), the human component forms the most important of all the resources therein. In the absence of adequate human resources, the best infrastructures, sufficiency of finances and other material inputs will produce unsatisfactory results.

The development of any nation depends to a large extent, on the development of the human resources available in that nation. It is therefore an exercise in futility to waste resources on infrastructural development when the human resources are not developed.

In-service Training and Teacher Academic Performance

In-service training is directed towards the improvement of teachers and the focuses are areas where skills are inadequate. It is also for the purpose of upgrading and bridging the gaps with much interest to provide the need 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.

Louise (2008) describe in-service training as includes all professional development activities in which one engages after initial certification and employment and does not conclude until there is a termination of services. It is a development opportunity give to a staff for job enrichment and widens of knowledge, skills and techniques. The programme creates an atmosphere where every individual in the organization strives to be proud of its professions, thereby making interaction proved more fertile field.

Similarly, Broadwell (2006) stresses that the focus of in-service is to bring about curriculum change, innovation in teaching methodologies and provision of quality professional growth and development. Mostly the activities and programme focus on developing and manifesting quality performance by the use of modern visual aids, increasing skills or knowledge in respect of teaching subject. In-service training programme creates an avenue for individuals to work as team in solving problems, which are of common concern to all staff as well as contributing to the development of the educational objectives of the school system. So to encourage growth in performance, other forms of professional development such as workshops, refresher courses, exchanging teaching professional writings and participation in the school programme must be practiced. These will help to complement the already acquired knowledge especially when these processes are brought into reality through the role transition.

Furthermore, Abarikanda (2002) noted that the purpose of in-service training is based specially to upgrade and updating the potentiality and competency of teacher to be more supportive, participative and achievement-oriented. In other words, it is goal-directed activity focusing on changing individuals' values, orientation and attitude towards learning environment. In-service training enhance performance as it provide access to professional growth, which helps to reduce some deficiencies in skills and methodologies in teaching. This scholar assumes that if opportunities are created for teachers to persistently rise in their various transmissions of knowledge there will be innovative change in curriculum, high degree of participation in decision-making as well as standard teaching.

Constraints against professional development of teachers

Teacher development is not only a tool of progress but also a symbol of faith in the improvement of the individual's talents. Conversely, it is unfortunate that teacher development in practice are

often fail to live up to expectations as cited by Yunusa (2008). The following misconceptions were observed:

- Failures to relate teacher development plan to genuine needs of the participants.
- Failure to select appropriate activities to implement programme plans.
- Failure to implement teacher development activities with sufficient staff and other resources to effectiveness.

Nduka (2008) identifies the problems thus:

- The objectives of the training programmes may not be clearly stated to the participants. This means no mental preparedness for the achievement.
- Some staff exhibit lack luster attitudes as they perceive the programme as a few days off meant for relaxation.
- There is no positive reinforcement after training. It is relatively easy to provide opportunity to gain wider experience but at the same time no promotion to higher position.
- The trainee may not have opportunity to put what he learns into practice.
- There is inadequate support from the management and executive.
- Some related programmes are not properly planned and are not evaluated to ascertain the effectiveness.

Okwuanaso (2006) also acknowledge that some of the non-transferability of knowledge learnt from in-service is a big set back to the aims and objectives of the programme. In practice, in-service is an action packed but experience is easily forgotten ones the participants go back to school and settle into the system. This is made worst especially in an environment where the option to practice the new skills, techniques knowledge acquired is optional. Some teachers due to laziness and ease tend to fall back to the old ways of practice because no one in the school cares to know or encourage the new approach.

SUMMARY OF REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Professional development is a process of enhancing the capacity of the teachers to be effective and efficient in their ability to accomplish the predetermined objectives of the school system. Hence varieties of development are initiated in the school system to ascertain the objectives of the national policy on education. For instance, in-service programme represent a veritable medium which aim at correcting certain deficiencies in order to accelerate technological advancement through the educational system. Moreso workshops/conferences/seminars serve as an effective measure of dissemination of information concerning academic practice. It is a form of networking, exchange of ideas and, reflects on others opinions which strengthen inter-institutional collaboration, increase publication records and development of career path endowment. The human component forms the most important of all the resources therein. In the absence of adequate human resources, the best infrastructure, sufficiency of finances and other material inputs will produce unsatisfactory results.

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