

ASSESSING ADMINISTRATORS' EFFECTIVENESS IN IMPLEMENTING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES FOR TEACHERS IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN CROSS RIVER STATE, NIGERIA FOR PRINT EME JOURNAL

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Abstract

This study surveyed the implementation of professional development programmes for teachers in public secondary schools in Cross River State, Nigeria. Descriptive survey design was adopted for the study. Three research questions were raised to guide the study. The population of the study was made up of 246 male and female secondary school administrators selected through census approach and used for the study. Researchers' designed questionnaire titled: Assessing Administrators' Implementation of Professional Development Programmes for Teachers Scale (AAITPDPTS) was used to elicit information from the respondents. The instrument was validated by three experts in Measurement and Evaluation, and two specialists in Educational Management. Split-half reliability test was employed to determine the reliability of the instrument at 0.91 which showed that the instrument was adequate enough for the study. Data obtained were analysed using descriptive statistics of frequency counts and percentages, and an inferential statistics of independent t-test. Findings revealed that there is a low implementation of professional refresher courses and mentorship training for teachers. It was also found that there is no significant difference between male and female school administrators in implementing professional development programmes for teachers in public secondary schools in Cross River State, Nigeria. Based on the findings, it was therefore recommended among others that the school administrators in Cross River State should encourage the provision of training and re-training programmes for their teachers in order to enhance professional competency in the school system.

Keywords: Administrators, Implementation, professional development programme, teachers

Introduction

Virtually all the stakeholders in education agree that as micro-level practitioners, teachers represent a centripetal force in all the educational systems. This is because the crucial roles of teachers in the task of building students for sustainable national development cannot be underestimated (Jethro, 2015). Teachers are essential in creating school environments that are conducive for instructional processes (Raman, 2011). Willy,

Komba and Nkumbi (2018) found that most teachers are facing tremendous challenges including pandemic outbreak, meager salary, lack of teamwork, minimal personal time, lack of time for planning and working towards long term goals, handling multiple roles in the classroom, lots of paperwork and performance pressure from school administrators among others. These situations have however hampered teachers' professional growth and development and orchestrated disdainful perception of the teaching profession in comparison to other professions in developing countries (Omoogun, Omoogun & Remi, 2013).

According to Ogbulujah (2014), the frequent occurrence of industrial actions in Nigerian school system due to contemptuous and antipathetic treatment of teachers' welfare is not disconnected to poor implementation of professional development programmes. Common observation by the researchers shows that some of the school administrators appear to be unable to adequately implement refreshers' courses, mentorship training and provide relevant training and retraining courses for reviewing and updating previous knowledge of teachers to enhance their performance. The situation in Cross River State is worrisome because many secondary school teachers are not familiar with professional skills for effective teaching (Udida, Okpah, & Wonah, 2015). As a result, many of the teachers are now assuming that a lesson taught is a lesson learned (Willy, Komba & Nkumbi, 2018), not learning from colleagues (Uchendu & Osim, 2015), assessing infrequently (Silver, 2016), failing to diversify instructional delivery (Samkange, 2015), immediately calling on volunteers to answer a question (Raman, 2011) and teaching without empathy (Jethro, 2015). Many teachers in Cross River State are found wanting in their duty posts while others are moving to different job locations (Okey, 2020). The problem has generated a lot of concern among parents, teachers, government and other interested stakeholders. This calls for urgent attention because some scholars have documented also that there seems to be a mismatch between professional teaching skills (that are clearly stated) and the observed dispositions of teachers from schools (Raman, 2011 and Jethro, 2015). The researchers are quite intrigued about this matter and sought to survey the extent of the implementation of professional development programmes for teachers.

Professional development programmes denotes the summation of different varieties of planned educational activities meant to advance the career, transfer or modify knowledge, skills attitudes and enhance the professional acumen of employees through learning experiences (Helsinki, 2016). They are designed to enable teachers respond to the demands of changing circumstances, new pedagogical approaches and technologies. Jethro (2015) sees professional development programmes as training opportunities that are systematically designed and carefully implemented by the educational managers with the implicit purpose of improving effectiveness in the school system. Some of these programmes include refresher courses and mentorship training which are the focus of this study.

One of the essential dimensions of professional development programmes for teachers is refresher courses (Uchendu & Osim, 2015). This programme are short training courses designed for reviewing and updating the previous studies or training undertaken by teachers and learning about new developments that are related to their job (Helsinki, 2016).

A study by Raman (2011) revealed that teachers who never participated in refreshers' programmes lacked positive attitude in classroom situation including actual instruction/academic work, classroom management, evaluation procedures, executing assignments and developing good human relationship with students and principals. Also, Willy, Komba and Nkumbi (2018) conducted an empirical study and found low implementation of teacher refresher courses which did not improve the teachers intellectually, professionally, academically and technically and general pedagogical knowledge about their respective subject areas.

Uchendu and Osim (2015) found that poor implementation of orientation training, refresher courses, and career development training was not significant predictors for task performance efficiency and effectiveness of teachers in the school. Similarly, Udida, Okpa and Wonah (2015) found a low implementation of refresher courses including workshops and conferences in all the sampled schools. Igbineweka (2015) worked on the implementation of the indices of professional development in Calabar municipality public secondary schools in Cross River State, Nigeria. The survey study found that the implementation of refresher courses was significantly low.

Juan (2015) found that the implementation of refresher courses was moderate and that it helped the novice teachers to learn how to teach through two main activities: observing other teachers' lessons and being observed by other teachers. It was also found that beginning teachers were engaged in interacting and collaborating with faculty members constantly. Finding equally revealed that new teachers were trained to develop, refine and master the professional knowledge and skills in a specific subject that they were teaching. The results of the study also indicated that the refresher courses at the three schools were comprehensive, coherent and sustained the whole teachers despite their differences in history, status and culture.

On the contrary, Kumari (2016) found that the implementation of refresher courses engendered a high level of satisfaction towards the performance of Academic Staff College in imparting knowledge to the teachers. There was a positive response by the participants regarding "brushing up of their teaching skills" and "inclination towards learning". Undoubtedly the programmes were found to be effective in promoting the rapid professional growth of the teachers. Fazalur (2012) found that the teachers had a positive attitude towards refresher programmes and their effectiveness in classroom situations including actual instruction/academic work, classroom management, evaluation procedures, assignments, and developing human relationships with students, principal, and society in general.

Ogbulujah, (2014) reported that the refreshing experiences in which teachers were exposed, including Agricultural field trips, extension, Engineering, and animal rearing among others broadened their knowledge of the modern methods of farming. Field trip enhanced their knowledge on Agricultural processing methods, farm product utilization and contributed to species improvement and genetics. Omoogun, Omoogun and Remi (2013) found that teachers' prefer refresher or maintenance training as a mode of professional development to enable them implement Electrical Electronics curriculum. Their subject area also had significant influence on their community of practice training preference in the implementation of environmental education curriculum.

Another dimension of professional development programme is mentorship education. It is an employee training system under which a more experienced individual (the mentor) is assigned to act as a loyal friend, an advisor, counselor or guide to a trainee (the mentee). The mentor is responsible for providing support and feedback on the individual in his or her custody for potential maximization, develop their skills, improve their performance and become the person they want to be. For instance, Samkange (2015) reported that whilst most student teachers appreciated the roles of the mentors, other felt that some mentors were taking advantage of them. It was also observed that some mentors lacked training in mentoring and this compromised their idea in teacher education.

Ngara and Ngwarai (2012) established that there were some differences in the way roles and qualities of mentors were conceived by student teachers and the mentors but the key roles of an effective mentor were conceived as a guide and a helper in purely teaching matters. Silver (2016) found that mentorship was significant in the following instructional competencies: (a) communicating with students, (b) using questioning and discussion techniques, (c) engaging students in learning, (d) using instructional assessments, and (e) demonstrating flexibility and responsiveness. Gertrude (2011) submitted that mentor teachers were willing and fully committed to promote the mentoring partnership agenda. Mentor teachers perceived eclectic teaching techniques and collaborative mentoring strategies to be very effective in promoting mutual teacher development. Some of the perceived benefits included using the best teaching techniques to demonstrate teaching, applying reflective teaching techniques to improve practice and adapting new ways of teaching from the interns.

Helsinki (2016) discovered that teachers require professional knowledge and professional teaching skills, as well as a broad base of general knowledge (e.g., morality, service orientation, professional and institutional survey). Above all, in order to carry out instructional processes effectively, teachers should be both academically and professionally trained. This study revealed that teachers are not however expected to have an extraordinary memory before teaching, but rather be looked upon as persons capable of thinking in the right direction if effectively mentored. Lin (2014) reported that teachers' satisfaction with the initiative, improvement of mentor/mentee knowledge, and the transfer from the programme to support the interns of questioning, problem posing, and anticipating students' solutions were as a result of the well-funded and implemented mentoring programme.

Pihie (2010) results indicated that the implementation of professional development disconnected from mentoring and induction was insignificant at 0.05 level and 98 degree of freedom. The study concluded that mentoring and induction at best, and in many situations as observed, serves to support beginning teachers in the school. McDonald (2014) submitted a significant difference between American teachers who had practicum exercise under the guidance of their field supervisors and those who did not. The teachers who did the exercise were certified as the best teachers (Mentees) with the knowledge and skills for instructional delivery. Therefore it was concluded that there was a significant pedagogical impact of practicum/mentoring of students' teachers in attitudes and characteristics on the U.S student teachers. A statistically significant difference was shown in teaching practice in terms of effective mentoring as the indication that contributed to differentiating teaching experience between groups A & B.

Lord, Atkinson and Mitchell (2010) found that what actually propelled the applicants to apply for teaching was their assurance in the national policy to be mentored and coached during induction. The result also showed that the professional skills for effective teaching significantly correlated with one –to –one versus group approach to mentoring and coaching where the two parties were from different sections. Hudson (2013) found that “enthusiasm” and taking responsibility” which were the outcomes of mentoring practices significantly predicted mentor teachers expectations. It is logical therefore to deduce that effective implementation of professional development programmes is important, not only because of the knowledge and skills teachers may acquire, but also because development programmes provide professional socialization and personal support to facilitate success in service delivery in the school system and beyond. Quality implementation of development programmes greatly enhances teachers’ chances for career success.

Purpose of the study

This study was focused to administrators’ implementation of professional development programmes for teachers in public secondary schools in Cross River State, Nigeria. Specifically, the study intended to examine the extent of:

1. Implementation of professional refresher courses for teachers
2. Implementation of professional mentorship training for teachers

Research questions

The following research questions were posed to direct the study.

1. To what extent are professional refresher courses implemented for teachers in public secondary schools in Cross River State?
2. What is the extent of the implementation of professional mentorship training for teachers in public secondary schools in Cross River State?

Research hypothesis

This null hypothesis was formulated to guide the study

- (1) There is no significant difference between male and female school administrators in implementing professional development programmes for teachers in public secondary schools in Cross River State

Methodology

This research was carried out in Cross River State, Nigeria. The researchers adopted descriptive survey design. This was because the design is capable of exploring and presenting results of a situation as they exist during the period of investigation. Descriptive survey design also employs opinion poll in order to determine the respondents’ preference, attitudes and perceptions. The design allowed the researchers to describe in detail and interpret the findings vis-a-vis information obtained. It was therefore adopted in this research to survey the extent of the implementation of professional development programmes for teachers in public secondary schools in Cross River State, Nigeria. The target population comprised all the administrators in the 246 public secondary schools in Cross River State (Cross River State Education Board, 2020) since all the public secondary schools were used. The sample of this study constituted the entire 246 public secondary schools administrators drawn through the census approach. A structured researchers’ questionnaire with 18 items titled: Implementation of Teachers’ Development Programmes

Survey (ITDPS) was used for data collection. Each of the subscales constitutes a 4-point modified rating scale. The respondents were expected to indicate their extent of agreement or disagreement to the items via Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD). The instrument was validated by three experts in Measurement and Evaluation and two other specialists in Educational Management. They scrutinized the questionnaire items to ensure that the items were properly worded in content without ambiguity after which a trial test was conducted. The split-half reliability co-efficient obtained for the instrument was 0.91. The researchers administered the copies of the questionnaire with the help of three trained research assistants to all the public secondary schools in Cross River State. A coding sheet was developed using Microsoft excel after scrutinizing the retrieved questionnaires, hence codes were assigned to each items accordingly in order to provide answers to the research questions. Therefore, in order to analyse the data, the responses were merged into two categories as follows: Agree and strongly agree were merged as agreed, while disagree and strongly disagree were merged as disagreed. This way, the frequency counts for each category of responses were computed as well as the percentages. A summary of the analytical procedure is presented as follows:

(1) Research question one

To what extent are refresher courses implemented for teachers in public secondary schools in Cross River State?

Table 1: Summary of simple percentages on the extent of implementation of refresher courses for teachers in public secondary schools in Cross River State (N=246)

S/N	Item description	Agree	Disagree
1	Organising in-house training	53(34.10)	193(65.90)
2	Monitoring usage of social network	66(44.70)	180(55.30)
3	Executing ergonomics training	61(40.11)	185(50.80)
4	Evaluating regulatory compliance	33(38.20)	213(61.80)
5	Implementing refresher courses	63(23.20)	183(76.80)
6	Educating on workplace safety	26(43.90)	220(56.10)

**percentages are in parentheses*

Source: Author's computation of field work on October, 2020

The information displayed on Table 1 showed a list of items on refresher courses that can be implemented for teachers. Strongly agree and agree extents were merged to connote agree, while strongly disagree and disagree were also merged to connote disagree. This way, the frequency and percentage of the subjects that either strongly agreed or strongly disagreed were determined. Table 1 showed that a greater proportion of the subjects (more than 75 percent) disagreed with the descriptions that were used to provide measures of implementation of refresher courses for teachers. For instance, 76.80 percent of the respondents disagreed with the fact that some school administrators implemented refresher courses. This is followed by 65.90 percent who disagreed that the school administrators organised in-house training for new teachers. Also 61.80 percent disagreed that the administrators were not involve in evaluating regulatory compliance and this is followed by 56.10 percent who disagreed that the administrators educated

teachers on workplace safety. From the Table, 55.30 percent disagreed that the administrators adequately monitored the usage of social networks while 50.80 percent did not agree that the school administrators executed ergonomics training for teachers.

On the other hand, a smaller proportion of the respondents (less than 44 subjects) agreed with all the descriptions that provided measures of the extent of implementation of refreshers' courses for teachers. Barely 44.70 percent of the respondents agreed that their administrators adequately monitored the usage of social networks. This is followed by 43.90 percent who agreed that the school administrators educated teachers on workplace safety. Furthermore, 40.11 percent agree that the administrators executed ergonomics training. This is followed by 38.20 percent of the respondents who agree that the administrators did evaluate regulatory compliance, 34.10 percent agree that the school administrators organised in-house training for new teachers while 23.20 agree with implementing refreshers' courses. Therefore, the answer that could be given to the research question seeking to determine the extent of implementation of refreshers courses shows that there is a low implementation of refresher courses for teachers in Cross River State public secondary schools.

(2) Research question two

What is the extent of the implementation of mentorship training for teachers in public secondary schools in Cross River State?

Table 2: Summary of simple percentages on the extent of implementation of mentorship training for teachers in public secondary schools in Cross River State (N=246)

S/N	Item description	Agree	Disagree
7	Executing apprenticeship education	69(5.70)	177(94.30)
8	Encouraging distance mentoring	112(39.80)	134(60.20)
9	Implementing group mentoring	90(48.00)	156(52.00)
10	Boosting mentor-mentee rapport	103(47.60)	138(52.40)
11	Providing mentoring teams	66(32.10)	180(67.90)
12	Promoting one-on-one mentoring	98(37.40)	148(62.60)

**percentages are in parentheses*

Source: Author's computation of field work on October, 2020

The information presented on Table 2 showed a description of mentorship training programmes that can be implemented for teachers' professional development in Cross River State public secondary schools. Strongly agree and agree extents were merged to connote agree, while strongly disagree and disagree were also merged to connote disagree. This way, the frequency and percentage of the subjects that either strongly agreed or strongly disagreed were determined. About 94.30 percent of the respondents disagreed that some of the school administrators executed apprenticeship education for new teachers. This is followed by 67.90 percent who disagree that the school administrators provided mentoring teams. More so, 62.60 percent disagree that the school administrators were promoting one-on-one mentoring while 60.20 percent disagree that the school administrators were encouraging distance mentoring. As 52.40 and 52.00 percent respectively disagree both in the school administrators boosting mentor-mentee rapport and implementing group mentoring. On the other hand, a smaller proportion of the

respondents (less than 48 subjects) agreed with all the descriptions that provided measures of the extent of implementation of mentorship training for teachers. Just 48.00 agree that the school administrators implemented group mentoring for all mentees; 47.60 percent agreed on boosting mentor-mentee rapport; 39.80 agree on encouraging distance mentoring. Also, 37.40 agreed on promoting one-on-one mentoring while 5.70 agreed on providing apprenticeship education for new teachers. Therefore, the answer that could be given to the research question seeking to determine the extent of implementation of mentorship training programmes for teachers in Cross River State public secondary schools is that, there is a low implementation of mentorship training programmes for teachers in Cross River State public secondary schools.

Null Hypothesis

(1) There is no significant difference between male and female school administrators in implementing professional development programmes for teachers in public secondary schools in Cross River State. To test this hypothesis, independent t-test was used. The result is presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Independent t-test analysis of the difference in implementation of professional development programmes between male and female school administrators for teachers

Professional development programmes	Gender	N	Mean	S.D	t	p-value
Refresher courses	Male	187	3.14	0.79	-1.55	.122
	Female	59	3.27	0.72		
Mentorship training	Male	187	2.73	0.78	1.56	.199
	Female	59	2.59	0.74		

$P < .05$; $df = 244$; critical $t = 1.96$

Table 3 shows the independent t-test analysis of the difference in implementing professional development programmes between male and female school administrators for teachers in public secondary schools in Cross River State, Nigeria. Out of the two professional development programmes compared, their p-values were greater than .05 and their t-values were less than the critical t-value of 1.97 and degree of freedom 244. This implies that there is no significant difference between male and female school administrators in implementing professional development programmes for teachers regarding the two variables in public secondary schools in Cross River State.

Discussion of Findings

The result of this study showed that the extent of the implementation of refresher courses for teachers in Cross River State public secondary schools is significantly low. The predisposing factor for this result is that the failure of school administrators to collaborate with the Ministry of Education to adequately fund refreshers' courses and provide short training courses for reviewing and updating previous studies or training connected with the teaching profession will negatively affect the performance of the teachers.

This finding supports Raman (2011) who found that teachers who never participated in refreshers' programmes lacked positive attitude in classroom situation including actual instruction/academic work, classroom management, evaluation

procedures, executing assignments and developing good human relationship with students and principals. Also, the finding is in consonant with Willy, Komba and Nkumbi (2018) who found that low implementation of teacher refresher courses did not improve the teachers intellectually, professionally, academically and technically and general pedagogical knowledge about their respective subject areas. The finding of this study equally agrees with that of Uchendu and Osim (2015) and Udida, Okpa and Wonah (2015) whose studies revealed that poor implementation of refresher courses and career development training was not a significant predictors of task performance efficiency and effectiveness of teachers. The reason behind this kind of finding could be that lack of short training courses (refresher courses) that are designed for reviewing and updating the previous training undertaken by teachers helps them to learn new developments that are related to their professional tasks hence boosts their effectiveness.

Another finding of this study revealed that the extent of the implementation of mentorship training for teachers in Cross River State public secondary schools is significantly low. The implication of this finding is that the lower the implementation of mentorship training for professional teachers, the more ineffective the teachers become in the school. However, this result might be due to the fact that most of the administrators could not implement mentorship training programmes based on lack of commitment on the part of either parties, that is failures to meet by mentors and mentees as scheduled or frequent postponements and unrealistic expectations among others may have quickly eroded the mentorship foundations, thus, wreaked havoc on the mentoring relationship in the school system.

This finding is in consonance with that of Ngara and Ngwarai (2012) and Samkange (2015) who found that some Mentors were significantly marginal because they observed that even though there were some differences in the roles and qualities of mentors. The finding is also supported by Helsinki (2016) who found that teachers require mentoring regarding professional teaching skills, morality, service orientation and institutional survey. This implies that in order to carry out instructional processes effectively, teachers should be both academically and professionally mentored. They should not however be expected to have an extraordinary memory before teaching, but rather be looked upon as persons capable of thinking in the right direction if effectively mentored.

Conclusion

This paper concluded that there is a low implementation of professional development programmes for teachers in public secondary schools in Cross River State, Nigeria.

Recommendations

The followings were recommended thus:

1. The school administrators should encourage the teachers to engage in refresher training courses in order to improve their knowledge and skills about new pedagogical developments and thus improve on their competencies.
2. Experienced teachers should be accommodating in order to improve mentorship training for less-experienced teachers and provide professional guidance for them.

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