



Influence Of Staff Development Programmes On Teachers' Performance In Public Primary Schools In Gokana And Khana Local Government Areas Of Rivers State

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ABSTRACT

This study examined influence of staff development programmes on teacher's performance in public primary schools in Gokana and Khana Local Government Areas of Rivers State. Two objectives and two null hypotheses guided the study. The study adopted descriptive research design. The total population was 648 teachers consisting of 239 males and 409 females in 122 public primary schools in Gokana and Khana Local Government Areas. A sample size of 340 teachers consisting of 166 males and 184 females in 50 out of 122 public primary schools were selected through stratified and simple random sampling techniques. The instrument for the study was a 10 item self-structured questionnaire titled "Influence of Staff Development Programmes on Teacher's Performance Questionnaire", structured on a 4 point rating scale of Very High Extent, High Extent, Low Extent, and Very Low Extent. It was validated by experts in the Departments of Measurement and Evaluation and Educational Management. Cronbach Alpha was used to get reliability indexes of 0.94 and 0.87. Statistical mean and standard deviation were employed to answer the research questions while z-test was used in testing the formulated null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. It was found that staff development programmes such as conference and workshop to a very high extent influence teacher's performance in public primary schools in Gokana and Khana Local Government Areas of River State. Based on the findings, it was recommended that Rivers State Government should frequently organize conferences for teachers in public primary schools in Gokana and Khana Local Government Areas to enable them perform effectively. In addition, the Rivers State Universal Basic Education Board should often organize post-service training for teachers in public primary schools in Gokana and Khana Local Government Areas to enable them gain requisite knowledge to enhance their performance.

Keywords: Staff Development Programmes, Conference, Workshop

INTRODUCTION

Staff development programme is a vital aspect of school administration which enhances teachers' performance. It is a means of updating teachers with skills and knowledge for improving instruction (Lawal, 2014). An effective and efficient performance of teachers depends solely on staff development programmes made available to teachers, since teachers are the school personnel that implement policies towards the achievement of educational goals and objectives. This is the cardinal reason for which countries are improving the quality of their teachers in their educational sector by making available staff development programmes to expose teachers to new and current trends in the educational sector and equally revamping the teaching profession. The Federal Republic of Nigeria in her National Policy on Education (FRN, 2013) stated that primary education is the first stage of formal education which a child receives after nursery education, preceding secondary education. Pupils at this level of education are between the ages of six to twelve years. This level of education is the foundation for inculcating personal habits, skills and creative knowledge which prepares pupils for future education. It is perceived that keeping teachers abreast with current knowledge and skills by providing adequate staff development programmes will definitely foster the realization of primary educational goals.

Similarly, the achievement of the primary education objectives depends on the quality and competence of teachers. In agreement, the National Policy on Education (FRN, 2013) stated under section 8, paragraph 12 (d) unequivocally that educational support services shall make learning more meaningful and realistic for children. This is instructive as the aim of staff development programme is to keep the teachers up-to-date on the current trend in the field of education, ensure the promotion of professional growth, help to improve teachers pedagogical skills, keep teachers abreast with new knowledge and recognize the need of modern teaching methods (Hakan, 2013).

Staff development programme in education is an essential and a systematic approach of assisting teachers in acquiring new skills and knowledge to fit into current trends of the profession and be effective in the classroom. It is a means of assisting poorly prepared, untrained and inexperienced teachers to improve both academically and professionally. Wakama (2017) in agreement stressed that staff development programme provides teachers with new skills, knowledge and attitude on better job performance. Staff development programme comprises the methods used to give old and new teachers added skills and knowledge to perform effectively and efficiently on their job and the Federal and State governments of Nigeria are aware of immense benefits derivable from staff development programmes (Ebong 2006; Hakan, 2013). Based on the aforementioned, this study examined the influence of staff development programmes on teachers' performance in public primary schools in Gokana and Khana Local Government Areas of Rivers State.

Influence of Conference on Teachers Performance

A conference is generally understood as a meeting of several people to discuss a particular topic. It is also a gathering of scientists or academicians, where research findings are presented and critiqued for improvement and contribution to knowledge. Most conferences have keynote address and lead paper presentations which ushers other conferees to present their papers in different panels in course of the conference. The speakers selected are eminent scholars in related field and their presence is meant to attract more people to attend the conference. Conference is a form of teacher re-training programme where obsolete skills and experiences are retooled during subject panel meetings to enhance the performance of participants in terms of subject content knowledge communicating skills, leadership and lesson delivery.

According to Ezenne (2011) conferences are usually used to tackle a single or set of problems. It may involve session of various types; such as lectures, panel discussions, workshops and so forth. A vivid example is the Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics Teachers conference held annually in August in Nigeria. Hamby (2012) defined conference as a large official meeting at which people with same work or interests come together to discuss their views. Conferences are attended by reputable scholars in the educational system with different ideas to enhance teachers teaching performance in their fields. They are a ready media through which teachers have access to a broad range of ideas that lead to enhanced job performance.

Staff development is a key to the success of the educational system as the smooth and efficient running of school depends on how well teachers are equipped with relevant skills to perform their task. The success or failure of the school depends on teachers' performance. Therefore, the educational sector should invest more on staff development programmes. The knowledge, ideas, skills and attitudes of the staff must be developed through integrated and systematic way of attending conferences.

Conferences have been described as having an important place in the work place. The work place is rapidly changing and information needs to be customized in order to meet the current trending subject content delivery. Ofeimu and Eimuhi (2018) outlined some benefits of attending conferences thus:

1. They allow schools to be updated with information on key issues facing the school.
2. They are valuable for delegates who carry heavy workloads.
3. They allow delegates to have issues addressed on a specific topic by recognized experts who are up to date with the latest developments in the field.
4. They are very appropriate in an era in which people do not have time to read a number of books by experts. Conferences can spend a reasonable short period of time and get substantial information on a topic they have an interest in because the speakers, who specialize in these fields, have already done the sifting and selection of information from a wide variety of sources. They can present the delegates with those aspects that are particularly relevant in the current work environment.

5. They create learning communities that bring together delegates from different professionals in the field of education.
6. The learning environment encourages delegates to exchange experience, ideas and practices from different fields of education.
7. It allows delegates to interact with each other staff who may be experiencing similar issues and problems. It allows them to tackle issues together. In turn perspectives will be broadened as a result. This information exchange helps delegates benchmark in their school.
8. Reputable conference organizers add a great deal of value by identifying appropriate speakers who have necessary subject matter expertise, practical experience in implementation, as well as the ability to engage the audience in an interesting way that stimulates thought and debate.

Empirical studies have also revealed the importance of staff development programmes. A study carried out by Akinyele (2017) on staff development programmes and secondary school teachers job performance in Uyo Metropolis of Nigeria revealed in the findings that teachers who were exposed to staff development programmes such as seminars, workshops, educational conferences and symposia were more effective in their jobs.

Influence of Workshop on Teachers' Performance

A workshop is an interactive training where participants carry out a number of training activities rather than passively listening to a lecture or presentation. It is also seen as a re-training exercise not to upgrade qualification but to update knowledge and skills in terms of subject matter delivery. According to Al-Talib (2012), effective workshop is built around what is practiced and relevant to the need of the learner's perspective. The main aim of workshops is to acquire new knowledge and skills that are related to the work of the participants. They identify needed change in behavior, learn new skills, and practice behavior in simulated work environment. Through workshops, teachers are exposed to new skills which they may not necessarily acquire during their pre-service training in higher institutions.

Hamby (2012) affirms that workshops tend to be smaller and more intense than seminars and often involves participants trying new skills during the event under the watchful eye of the instructors. The goal of an academic workshop is to make participants gain mastery of a subject. It is based on the lecture and demonstration format such that the presenter prepares the concepts, techniques, presents and discusses it through a combination of visual materials, interactive tools or equipment and demonstrations. Workshops are organized to give practical orientation of subjects to teachers with an intent of improving teaching techniques in schools. One important way of enhancing high performance among teachers is by updating their knowledge continually through exposure to latest research in Science and Technology, Arts and the Social Sciences.

According to Harbau (2014) training human resource in organizations for improved output is essential since an improvement in the quality of human factor is as important as investment in physical capital. Advancement in knowledge and the diffusion of new ideas and objectives are necessary to remove economic backwardness and instill human abilities and motivation that are favorable to economic advancement.

Again the importance of workshop was highlighted as a type of activity which is planned, systematic and results in enhanced levels of skill, knowledge and competency that are necessary to perform work effectively (Afshan, Sobia, Kamranand & Nasri, 2012). They were of the view that there exists a positive association between training and employees' performance. Training generates benefits for the teacher as well as for the schools by positively influencing teachers' performance through the development of employee knowledge, skills, ability, competencies and behaviour.

Statement of the Problem

Primary education is the education given to children that are aged between 6 and 12 years (FRN,2013). Its objectives are to: inculcate permanent literacy, numeracy and the ability to communicate effectively; lay a sound basis for scientific, critical and reflective thinking; and provide opportunities for the child to develop life manipulative skills that will enable the child function effectively in the society within the limits of the child's capacity. These objectives will only be attainable when the available teachers in the primary schools are trained and retrained. While most them argue that they are not given the opportunity to have post service trainings; others are of the view that their meager salaries cannot be used to sponsor staff development programmes. It was thus perceived that most primary school teachers do not know the benefits of staff development

programmes in relation to their job performance. Therefore the study investigated influence of staff development programmes on teachers' performance in Gokana and Khana Local Government Areas of Rivers State.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine influence of staff development programmes on teachers' performance in public primary school in Gokana and Khana Local Governments Areas of Rivers State while the specific objectives seek to:

1. examine the extent conference influence teachers' performance in public primary schools in Gokana and Khana Local Governments Areas of Rivers State.
2. determine the extent workshop influence teachers' performance in public primary schools in Gokana and Khana Local Governments Areas of Rivers State.

Research Questions

1. To what extent does conference influence teachers' performance in public primary schools in Gokana and Khana Local Governments Areas of Rivers State?
2. To what extent does workshop influence teachers' performance in public primary schools in Gokana and Khana Local Governments Areas of Rivers State?

Hypotheses

- Ho₁ There is no significant difference between the mean opinion scores of male and female teachers on the extent conference influence teachers' performance in public primary schools in Gokana and Khana Local Governments Areas of Rivers State.
- Ho₂ There is no significant difference between the mean opinion scores of male and female teachers on the extent workshop influence teachers' performance in public primary schools in Gokana and Khana Local Governments Areas of Rivers State.

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted descriptive survey design. The population of the study was 648 teachers consisting of 409 females and 239 males in 122 primary schools in Gokana and Khana Local Government Areas of Rivers State. A sample size of 340 teachers consisting of 166 males and 184 females from 50 out of 122 public primary schools derived through stratified and simple random sampling techniques. A self-structured questionnaire titled: "Influence of Staff Development Programmes on Teachers Performance Questionnaire (ISDPTPQ)" was used to collect data from the respondents. The instrument had two (2) sections; Sections A and B. Section A dealt with demographic information while Section B had 10 questionnaire items based on the objectives of the study. The response scale was structured on a 4-point Likert rating scale of Very High Extent (VHE); High Extent (HE); Low Extent (LE); and Very Low Extent (VLE) with values 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively. Cronbach Alpha was used to obtain reliability indexes of 0.94 and 0.87 while mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions. The criterion mean was 2.50. Questionnaire items with mean values below 2.50 denotes 'Low Extent' while 2.50 and above signifies 'High Extent'. The hypotheses were tested using z-test statistics at 0.05 level of significance. Analyzed data with calculated z-values above the z-critical value of ± 1.96 were rejected and below ± 1.96 were accepted.

RESULTS

Research Question 1: *To what extent does conference influence teachers' performance in public primary schools in Gokana and Khana Local Government Areas of Rivers State?*

Table 1: Mean Opinion Scores of Male and Female Teachers on the Extent Conference Influence Teachers' Performance in Public Primary Schools in Gokana and Khana Local Governments Areas of Rivers State.

S/N	Item	Male Teachers N=161			Female Teachers N=179		
		\bar{X}	SD	RMK	\bar{X}	SD	RMK
1	Through conferences teachers master their subjects and this improves their performance in class.	3.86	.913	VHE	3.64	.916	VHE
2	Knowledge from conferences are applied by teachers in teaching and learning and this improves their performance.	3.43	.908	VHE	2.55	1.41	HE
3	Through conferences teachers quality is enhanced and this improves their performance in lesson delivery	3.97	.916	VHE	2.89	1.61	HE
4	Through conferences teachers content knowledge increases and this enhances their performance in class.	3.48	1.18	VHE	2.90	1.33	HE
5	Through conferences teachers learn how to control their classes during lesson delivery.	3.37	1.04	VHE	3.03	1.19	VHE
Grand Mean/SD		3.62	0.99		3.00	1.29	VHE

Source: Field Survey, March; 2020

The result on table 1 revealed that all the questionnaire items (1-5) had grand mean values of 3.62 and 3.00 for both male and female teachers which are above the criterion mean of 2.50. This implies that conference to a very high extent influence teachers' performance in public primary schools in Gokana and Khana Local Government Areas of Rivers State.

Research Question 2: *To what extent does workshop influence teachers' performance in public primary schools in Gokana and Khana Local Government Areas of Rivers State?*

Table 2: Mean Opinion Scores of Male and Female Teachers on the Extent Workshop Influence Teachers' Performance in Public Primary Schools in Gokana and Khana Local Governments Areas of Rivers State.

S/N	Item	Male Teachers N=161			Female Teachers N=179		
		\bar{X}	SD	RMK	\bar{X}	SD	RMK
6	Through workshops teachers knowledge increases and this helps to enhance their performance in the class	3.27	1.08	VHE	3.17	1.20	VHE
7	Through workshops teachers are re-oriented and this enhances their performance in lesson delivery	3.33	1.10	VHE	3.53	.915	VHE
8	Workshops help teachers to learn how to plan their lesson which enables them perform better in class	3.10	1.27	VHE	2.11	.251	HE
9	Through attending workshops teachers learn proper use of instructional materials to improve on lesson delivery	3.07	1.08	VHE	2.41	.256	HE
10	Through attending workshops teachers are exposed to new skills which they may not necessarily acquire in pre-service training	3.47	.914	VHE	3.78	.963	VHE
Grand Mean/SD		3.25	1.09		3.00	1.63	VHE

Source: Field Survey, March; 2020

The result on table 2 revealed that all the questionnaire items (6-10) had grand mean values of 3.25 and 3.00 for both male and female teachers which were above the criterion mean of 2.50. This implies that workshop to a very high extent influence teachers' performance in public primary schools in Gokana and Khana Local Government Areas of Rivers State.

Hypotheses

Ho₁ There is no significant difference between the mean opinion scores of male and female teachers on the extent conference influence teachers' performance in public primary schools in Gokana and Khana Local Government Areas of Rivers State.

Table 3: z-test Analysis of Difference Between the Mean Opinion Scores of Male and Female Teachers on the Extent Conference Influence Teachers Performance in Public Primary Schools in Gokana and Khana Local Government Areas of Rivers State.

Group	N	\bar{X}	SD	DF	SL	z-cal.	z-crit.	Remark
Male Teachers	161	3.62	0.99	338	0.05	0.74	±1.96	Ho ₁ Accepted No Significant Difference
Female Teachers	179	3.02	1.29					

Source: Field Survey, March; 2020

Data on Table 3 above shows z-test analysis of difference between the mean responses of male and female teachers on the extent conference influence teachers' performance in Public Primary Schools in Gokana and Khana Local Government Areas of Rivers State. At 0.05 level of significance and 338 degree of freedom, the z-calculated value of 0.74 was less than the z-critical value of ±1.96. Since the z-cal.value of 0.74 was less than the z-crit. of ±1.96 the null hypothesis was accepted which states that there is no significant difference between the mean responses of male and female teachers on the extent conference influence teachers' performance in public primary schools in Gokana and Khana Local Government Areas of Rivers State.

Ho₂ There is no significant difference between the mean opinion scores of male and female teachers on the extent workshop influence teachers' performance in public primary schools in Gokana and Khana Local Government Areas of Rivers State.

Table 4: z-test Analysis of Difference Between the Mean Opinion Scores of Male Female Teachers on the Extent Workshop Influence Teachers' Performance in Public Primary Schools in Gokana and Khana Local Government Areas of Rivers State.

Group	N	\bar{X}	SD	DF	SL	z-cal.	z-crit.	Remark
Male Teachers	161	3.25	1.09	338	0.05	0.26	±1.96	Ho ₂ Accepted No Significant Difference
Female Teachers	179	3.00	1.63					

Source: Field Survey, March; 2020

Table 4 above shows z-test analysis of difference between the mean responses of male and female teachers on the extent workshop influence teachers' performance in Public Primary Schools in Gokana and Khana Local Government Areas of Rivers State. At 0.05 level of significance and 338 degree of freedom, the z-calculated value of 0.26 was less than the z-critical value of ±1.9. Since the z-cal. of 0.26 was less than the z-crit. of ±1.96 the null hypothesis was accepted which states that there is no significant difference between the mean responses of male and female teachers on the extent workshop influence teachers performance in public primary schools in Gokana and Khana Local Government Areas of Rivers State.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Findings on research question 1 on Table 1 revealed that male and female teachers opined that conference to a very high extent influence teachers' performance in public primary schools in Gokana and Khana Local Government Areas of Rivers State with a grand mean value of 3.31. Hypothesis 1 on Table 3 showed that there is no significant difference between the mean opinion scores of male and female teachers on the extent conference influence teachers' performance in public primary schools in Gokana and Khana Local Government Areas of Rivers State with z-calculated value of 0.74 which was less than z-critical value of ±1.96. This finding was in agreement with the empirical findings of Akinyele (2017) who carried out a study titled staff development programmes on secondary school teachers' job performance in Uyo Metropolis, Nigeria, which revealed that teachers who were exposed to staff development programmes like conferences, were more effective in their jobs.

Findings on research question 2 on Table 2 showed that male and female teachers opined that workshop to a very high extent influence teachers' performance in public primary schools in Gokana and Khana Local Government Areas of Rivers State with a grand mean value of 3.17. Hypothesis 2 on Table 4 showed that there is no significant difference between the mean opinion scores of male and female teachers on the extent workshop influence teachers' performance in public primary schools in Gokana and Khana Local Governments Areas of Rivers State with z-calculated value of 0.26 which was less than z-critical value of ±1.96. This finding was in tandem with the findings of Lawal (2014) who found that staff development programmes for teachers are important aspects of education process that deals with the art of acquiring skills in the teaching profession.

CONCLUSION

The study concluded that conference and workshop to a very high extent influence teachers' performance in public primary schools in Gokana and Khana Local Government Areas of Rivers State.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The Rivers State Government should frequently organize conferences for teachers in public primary schools in Gokana and Khana Local Government Areas of Rivers State.
2. Rivers State Universal Basic Education Board should often organize post-service training for teachers in public primary schools in Gokana and Khana Local Government Areas to enable them gain knowledge which will increase their performance.

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