



TEACHERS TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT AS AN OPPORTUNITY FOR KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS ACQUISITION IN NIGERIAN SECONDARY SCHOOLS

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ABSTRACT

Education all over the world can not easily succeed and achieve without teachers, therefore the need for teachers training and development is very important. This paper discusses teachers training and development as opportunity for knowledge and skills acquisition in secondary schools in Nigeria. The paper explains further the standard and practice of teaching. It also identifies skills acquired through training and recommendations were made for effective implementation of skills for teaching and learning. The paper concludes that training of teachers will help them increase their academic status and professional development.

Keywords: teachers, education, training, secondary schools, development

INTRODUCTION

Training is a means of teaching and learning given to trainees so as to acquire a particular skill and become academically fit. Development is the ability to refine trainees' competencies and learn new skills, adapt to new circumstances and to attain excellence in their organization.

Teacher's development is necessary in any institution, since the quality of education is determined mainly by the quality of teachers. The training and continuous development of our teachers is a *sine qua non* to quality of education delivered to the students. The knowledge of teachers must be constantly up-dated in their subject areas as well as in class room management. Igu (2007) emphasizes that staff in the school system are motivated and developed using various staff development schemes, such as study leave, workshops, seminars, conferences, refresher courses, study leave with pay and scholarship awards. These help them to improve their knowledge, skills and acquaint them with the new innovations in the field of education. Awanyi in Ogba (2007) is of the view that any staff who failed to develop through training is most likely to become obsolete.

Okafor (2006) states that staff in public and private schools should be provided with in-service training through work and study programs to enable them acquire more professional qualifications, skills, knowledge and competencies for increased efficiency in performance of their primary functions. This provides an opportunity for staff to make-up for their inadequacies and thereby improves performance. Awopegbe (2003) and Adikpa (2007) pointed out that training, seminars, conferences, workshops afford opportunity for staff to enrich themselves and get abreast of new knowledge and ideas. Igu (2007) advised that administrators of public secondary schools should sponsor their staff to conferences and even organize workshops.

QUALIFIED TEACHERS AND SCHOOL ENROLMENT IN NIGERIAN SECONDARY SCHOOLS

The number of qualified teachers on ground in secondary schools is inadequate to match with the enrolment of students. In support of this fact, Ogba (2008) reports that Parents Teacher Association (PTA) resorted to the employment of part-time teachers on the request of school administrators. Udoh

(2002) noted that many secondary schools today are filled with PTA teachers and National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) members whose devotion to duty can not be guaranteed.

Asanibare (1996) states that the most creative modern curriculum and the most advanced technology will be in little use if weak misguided, incompetent, ignorant and unimaginative teachers are allowed to teach because delinquent behavior will be on the increase.

Mbakwem (2006) support that outside students diligent behavior, other common identified problems emanating from employing unqualified teachers include low academic achievement on the part of students and teachers. Also the National Policy on Education (FRN 2004 : 38) in stating the importance attached to teachers in National development emphatically affirms that “no education system can rise above the quality of its teachers” hence the need to develop them through training such as in-service, conferences, workshops among others is necessary.

Concoran (1996) in a brief policy states that in virtually every state in the country, reforms and efforts are dramatically raising expectations for students and consequently for teachers. In response to these, reforms, initiatives, educators are being asked to master new skills and responsibilities to change their practice. To meet these new expectations, teachers need to deepen their content, knowledge and learn new methods of teaching. They need opportunities to develop, master and reflect on new approaches to working with children, all of these activities fall under the general heading of professional development. However, if today’s teachers are to be adequately prepared to meet the new challenges they are facing, this laissez-faire approach to professional development must come to an end.

HIGHER STANDARDS AND THE PRACTICE OF TEACHING

Concoran (1996) noted that, nearly every state in the nation is involved in the movement to raise academic standards. This movement also calls for a shift from a behaviorist approach to teaching, in which student are often passive recipients of teacher-generated knowledge and drill and practice is primary pedagogy, to approaches which actively engage students in the construction of knowledge .

To make this shift, teachers must enhance their knowledge of subject matters and learn to use new teaching strategies.

Acquisition of Skills through Teachers Training and Development

Training may be use directly to increase the job skills of an individual or a group of individuals by teaching them to perform their tasks more efficiently and effectively. For training to operate efficiently and effectively as an input/output mediator, it must be focused on the individual and the situation as the need arises. Teachers are trained for more skills acquisition for better service delivery (Ogunu, 2000).

Through training, teachers update their knowledge and make abreast innovations in education. Training also equips the teachers to face challenges of teaching-learning process and enhances their professional growth. Agwu (2001) stated that in order to facilitate upward movement and update professional competence, teachers training is necessary.

Odor (2000) highlighted the following as some of the skills needed for teachers training;

- i. Teachers obtain higher academic and professional qualification in order to improve their position in the school organization hierarchy.
- ii. Teachers acquire academic and professional knowledge which help to meet up with the present and futures challenges of their primary function.
- iii. Through training, teachers will keep in touch with their counterpart and new developments within and outside the country in their professional growth. The acquisition of the above skills also improves the social and academic status of teachers in the society. However, it is encouraging for teachers to go for training to make available quality teachers for implementation of educational programs in Nigeria.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- i. Teachers should tend to put in their best by making use of the new ideas, new methods, research skills and changes they acquired during training, for these will help to improve the student academic, curriculum contents and professional development in schools.

- ii. The government and school administrators should provide incentives in form of promotion, allowances and fringe benefits to trainees to boost their morale, and this will also encourage other teachers who are not been trained to go for further training.
- iii. The trained and qualified teachers should be placed properly in the field of their specialization so that they can put in their best.
- iv. The Government, other stake-holders in education, corporate bodies, parents, individuals and all educationists should help in training and retraining of teachers for effective acquisition of skills and knowledge in secondary schools in Nigeria.

CONCLUSIONS

This paper discussed the importance of training and retraining of teachers for effective implementation of skills and knowledge acquired during training. Teachers were encourage to go for further training to acquire news ideas, methods, research skills and new changes that will help them increase their academic status and professional development.

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