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# Relationship between Universal Basic Education Training and Teachers' Quality in Public Primary Schools in Nigeria

By

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## Abstract

*The study is a correlation study that unveiled the relationship between UBE training and teachers' quality in Nigerian Public primary schools using Kwara State as a case study. It was the State that championed education reform in the country. All the 24 members of State School Improvement Team (SSIT) and 50 members of Quality Assurance Bureau (QAB) constituted by the Kwara State Government were used as samples. The Questionnaire tagged UBE Training and Teachers Quality Questionnaire (UTTQ) was used. Three (3) research hypotheses raised were analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation and chi-square statistics. The findings of the study were that there was a significant relationship between SUBEB training workshop and teachers' quality; a significant relationship between training resources and quality of workshop training organized by State Universal Education Board (SUBEB), but there was no significant difference between the perceptions of SSIT and QAB on teachers' quality in Kwara State. However, the programme was not without its attendant challenges which include: delayed and inadequate supply of the training materials and poor remuneration of the trainers and trainees. It was suggested that more funds should be committed to the training programme, training materials supplied promptly and adequately. Indeed, training and re-training of teachers is a sine qua non for quality teaching in schools.*

**Keywords:** *Universal Basic Education, Training, Teachers' Quality, Public Primary Schools*

## 1. Introduction

Universal Basic Education launched in 30th September 1999 at Sokoto by former Nigerian President Chief Olusegun Obasanjo laid the foundation for a more functional education for all citizenry. The scheme did not take off until November, 2002. The desire for mass education was recognized in Nigerian constitution of 1999 in chapter 2 paragraphs 18 which stated inter alia:

> Government shall direct its policy towards ensuring that there are equal and adequate educational opportunities at all levels: government shall promote science and technology; government shall as and when practicable provide free, compulsory and universal primary education....

Basic education is meant to provide education for all Nigerians to fully explore and utilize their potentials. It aimed at installing sound moral values and attitudes into the young ones as well as developing their intellectual capacity and recognition. It lays the foundation upon which all other levels of education rest and a key to the success of the whole educational system.

One of the fundamental problems identified by Inikori (2001) was lack of in-service training or professional development schemes for teachers. This has been the major focus of Kwara State Universal

Basic Education Commission in recent years and this accounted for the reason why education reform agenda was introduced by Bukola administration.

Federal Republic of Nigeria (2000) highlighted the objectives of Universal Basic Education as follows:

- Developing in the entire citizenry a strong consciousness for education and strong commitment to its vigorous promotion.
- Provision of free, universal basic education for every Nigerian child of school going age
- Reducing drastically the incidence of drop outs from the formal school system through improved relevant, quality and efficiency.
- Catering for the learning needs of young persons who for one reason or the other

In 2009, the State Universal Basic Education Board supported public primary schools in improving delivery of quality education at the level of education by providing sanitation facilities, learning materials and play items. The state's goal with regard to equipping the physically challenged children resulted in the training of itinerant teachers in 2009 to assist children with low vision; while 4 million Naira was given to private schools that have children with special needs. This is to help them provide a supportive environment. Again, the state in a bid to ensure quality education in primary schools resolved in one of its capacity building workshops to harmonize primary schools' subjects and timetable, thus scaling down subjects to be offered in primary schools. Today, subjects like Home-Economics, Computer, Agricultural science, French and Physical and Health education are no longer offered in Kwara State primary schools so that pupils can focus on a manageable number of subjects. In spite of all the efforts of the State Government, it becomes essential to examine the extent to which the quality of teaching has been enhanced. This is the focus of the study.

Since the inauguration of SSIT in July 14th,2009 it has executed series of capacity building activities mandated by the Ministry of Education and Kwara State Basic Education Board (SUBEB) with much emphasis on numeracy, literacy and school leadership The crux of this study is the efficacy of this training at the primary level of education.

***Statement of Problem***

Quality of teachers in the nation's education sector has been a major concern of all stakeholders in the sector. This is evident in the poor performance of pupils/students at all levels of education in the country. Thus, there exists a synergy between the UBE Commission of the Federal Government and State UBE Boards for the improvement of the standard of teaching at the foundation level. The standard is assumed at various quarters, to be in doubt and that probably that the two commissions constitute another means of draining the national resources. This prompted the study that examines the relationship between the training of teachers to which much funds has been committed by the Commission and the quality of teachers in Public Primary Schools in Kwara State.

***Purpose of the study.***

The study aimed at:

- Finding out whether or not resources provided for training of teachers are adequate to effect teachers quality in classroom;
- Finding out whether or not training workshops organized for UBE teachers actually effect the teaching quality in classroom;
- Finding out the perceptions of SSIT and QAB on noticeable changes in teachers quality in the past two years of UBE training.

***Significance of the study***

The study hopes to be of benefit to the Federal Government, State government and the parents. It hopes to expose the Federal Government to the extent the extent to which the money expended on training of teachers through Universal Basic Education Commission and State Universal Basic Education Board has achieved its objective of improving the quality of teaching in primary schools.

The parents as a stakeholder shall be exposed to the changes that occurred in the teaching-learning process at the primary level of education as reflected in the teachers' quality.

***Research Hypotheses***

The hypotheses raised for the study were:

Ho1: There is no significant relationship between UBE training and quality of Primary Schools Teachers in Kwara State, Nigeria.

Ho2: There is no significant relationship between training resources and quality of training received by Primary School Teachers in Kwara State, Nigeria.

Ho3: There is no significant difference between the perceptions of SSIT and QAB on the quality of Primary Schools Teachers in Kwara State, Nigeria.

***Abbreviations***

**SSIT:** State School Improvement Team
**SUBEB:** State Universal Basic Education Board
**UBE:** Universal Basic Education
**QAB:** Quality Assurance Bureau

## 2. Literature review

A study was carried out in 2009 by Kwara State Ministry of Education, Science and Technology to assess the extent of the knowledge gained by pupils in primary schools (Emmanuel, 2009). A test referred to as 'Teachers Development Needs Assessment' was conducted on 27,000 teachers of basic education in the state. The outcome of the assessment revealed that only 75 out of the total tested were said to have had a mental grasp of their subject contents delivery of a subject matter in class. According to Emmanuel (2009), the test had apparently thrown up a challenge about the quality of teaching in the state in particular and the nation as a whole. It was also reported that with the Kwara State population stood at about 2,371,089 (as at 2006) with 48 percent of the population under 15 years of age, the situation was seen as precarious.

These various challenges with the sector prompted the reforms undertaken by Kwara State Ministry of Education with the support of the State government and Department of International Development's six year education Sector Support Programme in Nigeria (ESSPIN). Initially the ESSPIN partnered with five states in the country namely Kwara, Kaduna, Kano, Jigawa and Lagos States to provide technical support and material assistance with a view to improving delivery of universal basic education for all children in primary schools (Kwara State Government,2009). The ESSPIN programme is implemented by a consortium led by the Cambridge education and in partnership with the British Council. Subsequently, 24-member State School Improvement Team (SSIT) and 78 -member Quality Assurance Bureau(QAB) were inaugurated by Kwara State Government on 14th July 2009.

According to Kwara State Government (2009), the QAB was to reform the process of inspection in order to concentrate on nationally agreed criteria to assess quality standards. The QAB carries out its inspectorate task through collection of evidence on the impact of schooling on pupils' achievement. The SSIT on the other hands, was set up to develop a highly prescriptive structured programme for teaching literacy and numeracy in primary school to upgrade the teaching of literacy and numeracy to satisfy the learning outcome benchmarks for primary schools. In specific terms, the roles of SSIT are:

- Design and development of training and support in literacy and numeracy

- Development of supplementary materials in literacy and numeracy
- Evaluation of quality training and monitoring of attendance at training
- Offer guidance and practical advice with classroom based training focusing on leadership skills, communication with pupils.

To compliment the efforts of SSIT and QAB in ensuring quality delivery service at the primary schools. School Support Officers were also put in place (Kwara State Government, 2009). They periodically receive trainings from SSIT on how they should offer professional advice to the head teachers and teachers in improving teaching and learning at primary school level, and hold cluster meeting with the head teachers.

Agwumeze (1999) stressed the need for teachers to undergo target oriented training that would make them identify with changes in concepts and principles, modern tools and equipment in teaching, and challenges in their field of specialization as well as new techniques or effective methods of imparting knowledge and skills to the students. In corollary, Appleby (1981) stated the importance of development and training in any organization, among others, as to improve efficiency and morale, introduce new technique and raise the standard of personnel.

The lack of good measures of teacher training and pre-service education is a common shortcoming of the recent literature. Only two of the recent studies include a measure of pre-service training other than highest degree earned. Further, only two studies include a measure of in-service professional development training (Angrist and Victory (2001), Jacob and Lars (2004)). However the two studies exclude any information on teacher pre-service education. There are two additional studies using student fixed effects. Jepsen (2005) was able to measure teachers' characteristics at the teacher level rather than rely on grade-level aggregates. Also, Jepsen includes measures of teacher attitudes and behaviors, such as their enthusiasm and use of computers. While such mea3sures add to the richness of the control variables, there is also a concern that these may absorb some of the training effects. For instance, having more education may make teachers more likely to use computers, which may in turn contribute to their productivity.

Afolabi (2oo4) investigated the influence of resource utilization on organizational effectiveness in Kwara State government own tertiary institutions. The study's finding, among others revealed a significant relationship between teaching resources and organizational effectiveness. He identified the resource utilization variables as financial, human and physical while organizational effectiveness was seen as teaching effectiveness, research publication and community service of the academic staff.

According to Harris and Sass (2006), the issue of measuring a teacher's output is controversial, particularly outside the economics literature, thus, it is defined as student achievement measured by standardized tests. Consequently, teacher's productivity is considered as contribution to student achievement, holding other inputs constant. To empirically measure the impact of education and training on teacher productivity, a model of student achievement was developed.

Harris and Sass (2006) carried out a study on the effects of teacher training on teacher value added. Data base from the state of Florida were used. Teachers' productivity was considered as their contribution to student achievement, holding other inputs constant. A Linear model was developed as "educational production function" that relates student achievement to vectors of time-varying student/family inputs, classroom-level inputs, school inputs, and time-invariant student/family characteristics. The results revealed that teachers' training generally has little influence on productivity. One exception is that content-focused teacher professional development is positively associated with productivity in middle and high school mathematics. In addition, more experienced teachers appear more effective in teaching elementary and middle school reading. That there is no evidence that either pre-service (undergraduate) training or the scholastic aptitude of teachers influences their productivity.

However, this study tolls the path of Jepsen's (2005) measure of teachers' quality by taking a look at the teachers' quality in terms of teachers' characteristics, Teachers' method of teaching, improvisation of teaching aids, the use of new lesson plan, and involving pupils in their own lesson.

## 3. Methodology

The study is correlation type that focused on relationship between the training workshop organized for UBE teachers and teachers' quality in Kwara State primary schools. All the existing 24 members of the State School Improvement Team (SSIT) were used as sample. Also, 50 Members of Quality Assurance Bureau (QAB) were randomly selected. Questionnaire tagged UBE Training and Teachers Quality Questionnaire (UTTQ) was administered to elicit the data needed for the study.

There are two main variables namely training workshop and teachers' quality. The training workshop sub variables are: Funding, timing of the workshop, workshop venue, quality of the trainers and training materials made available. The Teacher's quality sub variables are: Teacher's method of teaching. improvisation of teaching aids, the use of new lesson plan, pupils' involvement in lesson and pupils' academic performance.

Pearson Product Moment Correlation and chi-square were used to analyze the data gathered from the respondents and provide answers to the three research hypotheses generated.

## 4. Data Analysis

Data are presented in tables and analyzed using t-test and chi-square. Research hypothesis one: Ho1: There is no significant relationship between UBE training and quality of Primary School Teachers in Kwara State, Nigeria

**Table 1: Correlate of UBE training and teachers' quality in Kwara State Public Primary Schools.**

| Variable | | f | -value | r -critical |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| UBE Training<br>Teachers' quality | 73 | 72 | 67 | 232 |

Level of significance .05

From table one, the relationship between training and teachers' quality in Public primary school was found. The calculated r-value was 0.67 and r-critical value of .232 at degree of freedom (df) of 72 and .05 level of significance level. Thus, the critical value was greater than the calculated r-value. This implies that the training variables (Funding, timing of the workshop, workshop venue, quality of the trainers and training materials) were significantly related to the teachers' quality variables (Teacher's method of teaching, improvisation of teaching aids, the use of new lesson plan, pupils' involvement in lesson and pupils' academic performance).

Ho2: There is no significant relationship between training resources and quality of training received by Primary School Teachers in Kwara State, Nigeria.

**Table 2: Correlate of Training resources and quality of training received by UBE teachers in Kwara State Public Primary Schools.**

| Variable | | f | r-value | r-critical |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Training Resources | | | | |
| Trainers' quality | 3 | 2 | 683 | 232 |

Level of significance= .05

From the table two above, the calculated r-value was .683 while the critical value was .232 at degree of freedom (df) of 72.with the calculated r-value been greater than the critical value, it implies that the hypothesis is rejected. That is, there is a significant relationship between training resources made available for the training of teachers and quality of training received by UBE teachers in Public Primary Schools. In other words, the training resources variables (trainers' remuneration. trainees' remuneration. quality of the trainers, training materials and training venue) are significantly related to trainers' productivity in Public Primary schools.

Ho3: There is no significant difference between the perceptions of SSIT and QAB on the quality of Primary School Teachers in Kwara State, Nigeria

**Table 3: Contingency table of SSIT and QAB perceptions on the current quality of Public Primary School Teachers in Kwara State**

| Respondents | SA | A | D | SD | TOTAL |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| SSIT | $12_{13.2}$ | $10_{}$ | $1_{1.3}$ | $0_{0.6}$ | 23 |
| QAB | $30_{28.8}$ | $15_{}$ | $3_{1.4}$ | $2_{1.4}$ | 50 |
| Grand Total | 42 | 25 | 4 | 2 | 73 |

The calculated chi-square($\sigma$) of the contingency table 3 above is 3.885 while the table value is 7.815 at the degree of freedom (r-1)(k-1) of 3 and .05 level of significance. Comparing the two values, the calculated value is found to be less than the table value. Thus, the hypothesis is accepted implying that there is no significant difference in the perception of the State School Improvement Team and that of the Quality Assurance Bureau on the Present quality of teachers in Kwara State Public Primary Schools.

However, a question was asked on the problems associated with the training of teachers in the past two years. The respondents identified the common problems as: delayed and inadequate supply of the training materials, poor remuneration of the trainers and trainees, irregular transfer of teachers that have already received training for a particular class, undue political influence in the recruitment of teachers to schools. the use of different textbooks in schools and problem of inadequacy of quality teachers. The Quality Assurance Bureau is not given the much needed supports to execute its supervisory task. In addition, the Local Government Education Authorities do not have vehicles to carry out effective monitoring of teachers in their respective Local governments.

## 4. Discussion

The study revealed fundamental issue on the importance of training and re-training of teachers in the education system. In the first instance, the study's finding showed that there was a significant relationship between UBE training and the quality displayed by the teachers at the public primary schools. This corroborated the views expressed by Agwumeze (1999), Harris and Sass (2006). Also, Appleby (1981) stated the importance of development and training in any organization, as to improve efficiency and morale, introduce new technique and raise the standard of personnel. The finding of this study affirmed the positions of these authors, stressing the importance of training and re-training of teachers in the school system.

Secondly, there was a significant relationship between training resources made available for the training of teachers and quality of training received by UBE teachers in Public Primary Schools. In other words, the training resources variables (trainers' remuneration, trainees' remuneration, quality of the trainers, training materials and training venue) are significantly related to trainers' productivity in Public Primary schools. This finding supported Afolabi's (2004) study that unveiled significant relationship between teaching resources and organizational effectiveness indicators: one of which was teachers' productivity. These two findings therefore stressed the relative importance of all the resources used in the in training and re-training of teachers to enhance their productivity.

The third finding of the study shows that there is no significant difference in the perceptions of the State School Improvement Team (SSIT) and that of the Quality Assurance Bureau (QAB) on the Present quality of teachers in Kwara State Public Primary Schools. This asserts the achievement of the objective the State Government in putting up all structures to give intensive training to the teachers at the primary school level. That is, the SSIT set up to develop a highly prescriptive structured programme for teaching literacy and numeracy in primary school has really upgraded the teaching of literacy and numeracy at public primary schools in Kwara State.

## 5. Conclusion

Training and re-training of teachers is revealed as an important factor in teachers' productivity. Thus, it deserves to be given a much needed attention in the educational system. It is a means through which teachers in Kwara State of Nigeria are acquainted with the new methods of teaching. The impact of intensive training of teachers in the State is being felt at the public primary schools . However, the identified problems which seem to be bottlenecks to the tapping of potential in the training of teachers have to be addressed.

## 6. Recommendations

- There is a need to address the fundamental problems associated with the training of UBE teachers in Kwara State. In view of this, the following recommendations become imperative. Firstly, more funds should be committed to the training programme by the government. This is to ensure the use of adequate and quality instructional materials

- Also, both the trainers and the trainees deserve to be well remunerated in order to bring best out of them. The present allowance been paid to them is not encouraging, there is a need to increase it to avoid apathy on the part of both the trainers and the trainees.

- No effective training can be accomplished without adequate and quality training materials. It is therefore suggested that training materials should be promptly and adequately supplied.

- Discriminatory transfer of teachers needs to be addressed. That is, a teacher that has received training for a particular class or level must be retained or if transferred, he/she must be retained in the same class of the training.

- Quality teachers must be recruited. In other words, teachers' recruitment should not be subjected to political influence.

- The State government should provide the Quality Assurance Bureau and Local Government Education Authorities with adequate vehicles to assist them in carrying out effective monitoring of teachers in schools.

***Acknowledgement***

This is to certify that the article *relationship between Universal Basic Education Training and Teachers Quality in Public Primary Schools in Nigeria* submitted for publication in International Journal of Social Sciences and Education www.ijsse.com is an original work by us based on our research, that we have duly acknowledged in the said paper the work or works of others we used in writing this article, that we have duly cited all such works in the text as well as in the list of references, and that we have presented within quotes all the original sentences and phrases, etc. taken from the sources that we have consulted in writing this article.

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