PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRMME: A VERITABLE TOOL FOR IMPROVING TEACHERS' PRODUCTIVITY IN NORTH CENTRAL ZONE PUBLIC JUNIOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS, NIGERIA

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Abstract. The study was on Professional Development programme: a tool for improving teachers' productivity in junior secondary schools in North Central Geo-political Zone of Nigeria. The design of the study was a descriptive survey carried out ex-post factor. The population of the study comprised all the teachers and principals in public junior secondary schools of the studied Geo-political Zone. The sample of the study was made up of 975 principals and teacher respondents who were randomly selected from 75schools in the studied area. Two research questions were raised and two hypotheses were formulated to guide the study. A self-designed questionnaire titled "Professional Development Programme and Teachers' Productivity (PDPTP)" as well as interview scheduled titled "Approaches to Professional Development" (APD) were used to elicit information from the respondents. The instruments were validated by six experts from two Departments in Faculty of Education of Obafemi Awolowo University. The reliability of the questionnaire was ensured through test re-test method which yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.72. This was considered high enough for use. The data collected was analyzed using percentage and Pearson's Product Moment Correlation statistical method of data analysis. The study revealed that; cluster type seminar, men-

toring, on-the-job training and in-service training approaches among others, were used by the government in teachers' professional training programme. Also, teachers were found to be selected for professional development programme based on their; qualifications, years of experience, subjects taught and areas of specialization. A significant relationship existed between professional development programme and teachers' productivity in junior secondary schools of North Central geo-political Zone of Nigeria (r tab=0.785,r cal.0.195) at 0.05 level of significance. In view of the findings of the study, it was concluded that, teachers' professional development programme improved teachers' productivity in junior secondary schools of North Central geo-political Zone of Nigeria. It was therefore recommended that government should not relented efforts in Professional Development Programme of every teacher as it is germane to their productivity in the geo-political Zone.

Keywords: educational system, professional development, sustainable development, teachers' productivity

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Generally speaking, the development of any given organization where the school belongs is closely tied to the level of educational development of its personnel. For instance, in Nigeria, it is obvious that the higher the level of educational attainment the better the condition of living and overall development of the citizens. This makes education to be a matter of concern to the government, educational institutions and all other stakeholders in order to meet the yearnings and aspirations of the people.

The issue of teachers' productivity is an aspect used to evaluate job performance in Nigeria educational system. This makes the quest for professional development a tool for improving public secondary schools in Nigeria. It is obvious that teachers in the school organization are important instrument due to their significant roles in the educational system. They influence the implementation of the curriculum and educational policies. This can be achieved

through their prompt attendance to classes, good lesson delivery, coverage of syllabus, effective teaching of students and classroom management to improve teaching. Achimugu (2005) perceived teachers as the fulcrum on which the lever of educational system rests. Also, Fadipe (2003) posited that, apart from students, teachers are the largest and most crucial inputs of educational system who influence to a greater extent the quality of educational output.

Incidentally, there are many problems emanating from the educational institutions. For instance, problems such as poor academic performance, moral decadence and other forms of deviant behaviours are of regular occurrence in the educational system. As the problems occur, they constitute impediments to the achievement of meeting the set standards and expectations of the society. One of the presumed causes of these problems can be associated with inadequate professional training for renewal of teachers' competence in the educational system. Thus, it is believed that solution to such problems lies in the acquisition of the right type of skills oriented, knowledge and competencies through organizing professional development programmes that are relevant to solving teachers' problems and educational needs in the educational system. As a result the believe in professional development programme as a potent solution to emerging school problems, government at various levels have been investing on capacity building programmes for teachers to improve their pedagogical skills. This has often been described as a drive to progress in individual career and makes him or her to fit into any given society. This essentially enables the individual to maintain a high level of competence by continually improving in knowledge and skills. Human resource is often described as the wealth and pride of a Nation. This therefore makes the future of any Nation to depend on the teacher that will build such a Nation.

There is no gainsaying that, professional development is the unique training and re-training programme for improvement of teaching and learning process in schools. The knowledge, skills, value and traits which teachers ac-

quired from the training will not only complement their efforts but also increase the way the curriculum is delivered in the educational system. This implies that when teachers are frequently trained and are given adequate attention, there is no doubt that, it adds value and quality to the educational system. Teachers' pedagogical renewal would influence some variables like quality output, quality performance, enhanced quality outcomes and instructional delivery (teaching); teachers' job satisfaction and productivity; all which are of great importance to guaranteeing quality assurance in the educational system.

Also, professional development programme can be perceived as a positive programme of improvement in quality of instructions in schools. This however, would aid teachers' growth and development in the educational system.The foregoing and current issues relating to both educational innovations and administration process in schools makes professional development a very important thing in the nations' educational life. It is therefore pertinent at this juncture to provide measures of maintaining and building teachers' pedagogical skills, current competences, thereby making them to be effective educators and leaders. As well, Champion (2003) posited that regular opportunities and experiences for professional development over the past few years had yielded systematic growth and development in teaching profession. In consonance, Brookfield (2005) viewed professional development and in-service training as simply consisted of workshops or short-term courses that offered teachers new information on specific aspect of their work.

Teachers' productivity is perceived by the researchers as that aspect of teacher evaluation standards which focuses on what teachers and schools do towards the attainment of educational goals for sustainable development. This productivity according to Musibau (2010a; 2010) is concerned with the overall efficiency and effectiveness of getting things done. Teachers' productivity may be determined by several factors as: good students' academic performance, enhanced students' moral standard, students' active participation in

exra-curricular activities, smooth transition in schooling just to mention but a few. This productivity may not be easily achieved without teachers' adequate professional development. High productivity is the hall mark of growth and development of nations all over the world; for educational system to achieve its set goals teachers are expected to be up and doing in the performance of their defined roles (Eduese, 1996). Teachers have shown to have an impact on students' achievement and also play crucial roles on educational attainment of students in the nation (Llord et al., 2000).

Productivity of an organization is defined as the ratio of outputs produced by the organization and the resources consumed in the process. Teachers' productivity is therefore the ratio of output produced by the teachers (quality and quantity students) in the educational system. Schacter & Thum (2004) in assessing teachers' performance, quality tools such as standardized test scores of students have been used. Wenglishky (2001) suggested that teachers' productivity level may be evaluated in terms of what the teacher control and actually do in the classroom such as teaching effectiveness and classroom performance of students.

In most developing countries of the world including Nigeria, teacher professional development is changing rapidly and frequently. This has brought about a growing awareness on professional development which is the key to ensuring teachers' quality outcome (productivity) or delivery and high standards in the educational system. Therefore, this paper investigated professional development as a tool for enhancing teachers' productivity in North Central Geo-political zone of Nigeria.

Research questions

(1) What are the approaches of the government to professional development programme of teachers in public junior secondary schools in the North central zone of Nigeria?

(2) What are the modes of selecting teachers for professional development programme in public junior secondary schools in the North central zone?

Hypothesis

Ho_1: There is no significant relationship between professional development and teachers' productivity in public junior secondary schools in North central zone, Nigeria.

Methodology

The study was a descriptive survey carried out ex-post factor because it basically studied a phenomenon after they have occurred. The population of the study comprised all the principals and teachers in public junior secondary schools in North-central zone, Nigeria. The sample consisted of 75 principals and 900 teachers in the sampled public junior secondary schools. A multi-stage sampling technique was used in the study. From the north-central zone, a simple random sampling technique was used to sample three States out of the existing six States. Equally, simple random sampling technique was used to select 75schools and 12 teachers per school across the three sampled States (Kwara, Kogi and Niger). All the 75 principals of the selected public junior secondary schools were sampled.

A self-designed questionnaire titled "Professional Development Programme and Teachers' Productivity (PDPTP)" containing 30 items was used to collect data for the study. The questionnaire was divided into three sections. The first section contained information on the demographic variables of the respondents, the second section comprised information on professional development approaches and the third on teachers productivity. A four liker scale of strongly agree (SA), agree (A), disagree (D), strongly disagree (SD) were used to measure the 30 items in the instrument. Also, interview scheduled ti-

tled “Professional Development and Teachers’ Productivity (PDTP) was used to collect additional information from few respondents. The face and content validity of the instrument were done by six experts in the Departments of Educational Management and Educational Foundations and Counselling of Faculty of Education, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, respectively. They read through the items and made useful suggestions which were incorporated in to the final draft. The reliability of the instrument was established using test re-test method and the coefficient value obtained was 0.72 which was high enough for use. The data collected were analyzed using percentage for the research questions and Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient statistical method of data analysis for the hypotheses. The alpha level of significance was set at 0.05.

Results

Research question 1

The study revealed the various approaches in use by the government to professional development programme of teachers in public junior secondary schools in the North central zone, Nigeria. These were: cluster type seminar with 85.85% agree and 14.15% disagreed; on face-to-face, 62.36% agree, while 37.64% disagree; equally, on mentoring 81.03% of the respondents agree, while 18.97% disagree; on-the-job and in-service 61.64% agree, while 38.36% disagree; and on in-service approaches, 69.64% agreed, while 30.36% disagree. It was concluded through the respondents’ responses that all the approaches in items 1-5 were in use in public junior Secondary Schools in the North central zone, Nigeria.

Table 1. Percentage analysis of the government approaches to professional development programme of teachers in public junior secondary schools in the North Central Zone, Nigeria

S/N	STATEMENTS	YES	%	NO	%
1	Cluster type seminar approach was used in my state during the course of teachers training	837	85.85	138	14.15
2	Face-to-face approach was adopted for capacity building of teachers in my state	608	62.36	367	37.64
3	Mentoring approach was introduced for experienced teachers to train newly recruited teachers	790	81.03	185	18.97
4	On-the-job-training approach is a veritable method used in my state when teachers training is required	601	61.64	374	38.36
5	In-service training approach is used in my state for teachers to increase their pedagogical skills	679	69.64	296	30.36
	Mean total		72.10	27.90	

Source: Field Work

Research question 2

In Table 2, it was revealed that 41.59% agree on selection of teachers based on their qualifications, while 58.05% disagree; 44.41% of the respondents agree on years of experience, while 55.59 disagree; 16.31% of them agree that all teachers in their schools were opportune to attend teacher professional development programmes as at when due, while 83.69% disagree. Equally, the results showed that, 72.72% of the teachers were selected based on the subjects taught in schools, while 23.18% disagree. Thirty-six percent (36.21%) of them agree that, teachers were selected based on their areas of specialization and teachers' efficiency, while 63.79% disagree. The above findings implies that, not all the teachers in public junior secondary school in the North central zone, Nigeria have equal opportunities to attend professional development programme.

Table 2. Percentage analysis on the mode of selecting teachers for professional development programme in public junior secondary schools in North Central Zone, Nigeria

S/N	STATEMENTS	YES	%	NO	%
1	Teachers were selected in my school based on their Qualifications	409	41.95	566	58.05
2	Years of experience were used to select teachers for professional development programme	433	44.41	542	55.59
3	All teachers in my school were opportuned to attend professional development programme as at when due	159	16.31	816	83.69
4	Teachers are selected based on the subjects taught in schools	709	72.72	226	23.18
5	Teachers were selected in my school for professional development programme based on their area of specialization and teachers' efficiency	353	36.21	622	63.79

Source: Field Work

Hypothesis

Table 3. Pearson's product moment analysis of professional development programme and teachers' productivity in public junior secondary schools in North Central Zone

Variables	N	Mean	SD	df	Cal.value	Cri.value
Decision						
Professional Development Programme	975	7.19	8.49			
				973	.785	.195
Rejected						
Teachers' Productivity	975	9.32	13.17			

Table 3 reveals the relationship between professional development and teachers' productivity. It could be observed that r-calculated value of 0.785 is greater than r-table (0.195) at 0.05 level of significance. Therefore the null hypothesis is rejected. That is, there was a significant relationship between professional development programme and teachers' productivity in North central geo political zone of Nigeria. The finding implies that professional development programme is a veritable tool for improving teachers' productivity in North Central geo-political zone public junior secondary schools.

Discussion

From the findings of the study, it was discovered that, three major approaches to teachers' professional development programme were identified. The approaches were cluster type seminar, face-to-face mentoring and on-the-job-training in public secondary schools of North Central zone, Nigeria. The finding is in line with Ayeni (2010) who identified that cluster type workshops, mentoring, and full time in-service training as the various types of development programmes for teachers.

The study further revealed that not all teachers in the public junior secondary schools in North Central Zone, Nigeria were given equal opportunities to attend professional development programme. The possible reason for this finding is based on the criteria for selection. This conforms with the finding of Ayeni & Akinola (2008) reporting that in Ondo State, 75% of the teachers in secondary schools were not given adequate training opportunities by their principals because facilities to improve their professional competence through in-service training were not adequately provided.

The research also revealed a significant relationship between professional development programme and teachers' productivity in public junior secondary schools in the North Central zone, Nigeria. This is because teachers' pedagogical renewal influences instructional tasks, quality output, quality outcomes and instructional delivery (teaching) and teachers' job satisfaction. In consonance with the finding of Fredrickson (2004) who emphasized that teacher professional development is a key to quality education. He discovered that in developing countries, the influence of school variables like the education of teachers is of great importance. Also, his study revealed that the quality of teacher was one of those factors which made a difference between high and low performance of schools in developing countries.

The interview conducted by the researchers evidently revealed that, 48% of the respondents had benefited from one form of seminar or the other

organized by their various State Ministry of education through universal Basic Education Commission Abuja. The seminar was organized on termly basis to improve their professional competence in job performance.

Furthermore, the viewpoints of respondents interviewed indicated that, not all teachers were opportuned to attend the training because they were selected based on subjects taught in the areas of English, mathematics and Basic Science leaving out other subjects. Also, their work was being hampered by poor condition of infrastructure, lack of necessary equipment for their conveniences, shortage of instructional materials and relevant textbooks. This has hindered them from giving adequate instructions in schools. All these challenges seem to constitute ineffectiveness in their performance in schools. The teachers therefore suggested an improvement in assessing educational needs and selection of teachers for training by the administrator.

Conclusion

The paper concluded that government in North Central Geo-political zone in Nigeria made use of four different approaches in teachers' development programme and that teachers were selected for professional development based on their subject taught or specialization and that professional development programme enhanced teachers' productivity in North Central Geo-political zone of Nigeria.

Recommendation

Professional development programme of teachers in public junior secondary schools in the North Central Zone, Nigeria may not be able to serve its purpose as a veritable tool for enhancing teachers' productivity unless certain measures are taken by the educational managers. The following possible recommendations are therefore worthy of note.

Based on the findings in Table 2, some teachers were given opportunity to attend training based on their subjects taught while some are yet to experience it due to inadequate monitoring on the part of the government. On this note, government at various levels should develop positive attitude to continuous professional development programme of teachers in the studied zone by giving equal opportunities to all teachers working within the school system. Efforts should also be intensify on teachers' selection based on their qualifications, years of experience as well as their areas of specialization. As a corollary to this, teachers who were trained should endevour to train those who are not opportuned to go for the training programme. At the school level, administrators should also intensify efforts on mentoring programme for capacity building of teachers. Through this approach, other teachers will benefit and such will enhance their method of teaching thereby bringing about the desired productivity.

Government in North Central Zone, Nigeria should note the strength and weakness of teachers in terms productivity. Also, Professional development programme should be centred on teachers' and students' educational needs and must be of high quality, relevant to their teaching methodology as well as learning instructions in the schools. This process is germane to enhance teachers' productivity in North Central Geo-political Zone of Nigeria.

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