

Relationship between Teachers' Continuous Professional Development Practices and their Job Performance in Secondary Schools in Ebonyi State, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT--- *The main purpose of this study was to determine the relationship between teachers' continuous professional development practices and their job performance. It was a co-relational study, and was carried out from the three education zones of the state. Population of the study was 4500 teachers' from the state public secondary schools. The sample for the study was 450 teachers' selected from the three education zones of the state representing 10% of the population. Researchers-developed instrument, titled: questionnaire on teachers continuous professional development practices and job performance (QTCPDJP) was used to elicit information from the respondents. The instrument was face-validated by three experts from the department of Educational Foundations of Ebonyi State University, Abakaliki. The reliability of the instrument was established through test retest procedure using twenty teachers in public secondary schools in Enugu State, and the reliability index of 0.87 was obtained using the pearson product moment correlation coefficient. The researcher administered the instrument directly on the respondents with the help of three research assistants. The study was guided by only one research question and one null hypothesis. Data collected were analyzed using pearson product moment correction coefficient. Findings of the study revealed that there is a moderate positive correlation between teachers' continuous professional development practices and their job performance in secondary schools in Ebonyi State. The study among others recommended that teachers should take interests in professional growth and development through regular workshops, seminars and conferences in order to increase their job performance.*

Keywords--- Relationship, Teachers, professional development, practices and job performance

1. INTRODUCTION

The development of manpower or workforce in every organization, education inclusive is very crucial for enhanced workers' productivity. Thus, employers of labour need to provide opportunities for the workers to develop professionally. This then, implies identifying the workers' need skills and competencies for development or training in order to improve their skills for better performance.

In secondary schools, Continuous Professional Development (CPD) has to do with in-service training for teachers. This in-service training could be in form of conferences, seminars and workshops. CPD helps the teachers to keep abreast with new skills, new methods and knowledge about their job.

In order to achieve the goals of secondary schools in Ebonyi State, there is need for teachers to pay serious attention to staff continuous professional development, and for the government to frequently organize in-service training programmes for the teachers for optimal job performance.

Continuous Professional Development (CPD) embraces the idea that individual teachers aim for continuous improvement in their professional skill and knowledge beyond the basic training initially required to carry out their job. In teaching, such development, used to be called "in-service training" with only emphasis on delivery rather than the outcome. Professional development is defined by OECD (2009) as activities that develop an individual's skills, knowledge, expertise and other characteristics as a teacher. Professional development of teachers has been referred to as conscious and systematic steps to ensure teacher up grading and continuous self-improvement. Professional development can also be reviewed as the body of systematic activities to prepare teachers for their jobs, including initial training and a form of continuous on-the-job training located in various school systems.

OECD (2009) viewed continuous professional development of teachers as a body of systematic activities to prepare teachers for their job including initial training, induction courses, in-service training and professional development within school settings. Speck and Knipe (2005) defined teacher (CPD) as a sustained collaborative learning process that

systematically nourishes the growth of educators through adult learner-centered, job-embedded processes. It focuses on educators (teachers) attaining the skills, abilities and deep understanding needed to improve student achievement.

Similarly, Padwad and Dixit (2011) viewed teachers' continuous professional development as a planned continuous and lifelong process whereby teachers try to develop their personal and professional qualities and to improve their knowledge, skills and practices.

Madden and Mitchell in Mehmood (2008) noted that CPD can fulfill some functions, to include updating and extending the professionals' knowledge and skills on new developments and new areas of practice to ensure continuing competence in the current job, training for new responsibilities and for a changing role, developing new areas of competence in preparation for more senior post, developing personal and professional effectiveness and increasing job satisfaction, increasing competence in a wider context with benefits to both professional and personal roles.

The importance of CPD for teachers cannot be over emphasized. As Barber and Mourshed (2007) stated that in high performing systems, ten percent (10%) of working time is used for CPD. Similarly, UNESCO (2005) suggested that professional development of teachers should take cognizance of study opportunities, regular supportive line management meetings and appraisal, support, evaluations and assessment from in-service advisers and inspectors' schools exchange, and peer consultation and experience sharing in subject theme or provincial level groups. In this case, CPD is an end in itself as it motivates teachers, thus, contributing to improved quality of education.

Desimone (2001) classified CPD into three types: (1) Direct teaching- such as courses, workshops etc (2) learning in school – such as peer coaching, critical friendships, mentoring, action research and task-related planning teams. (3) Out of school learning – learning networks visits to other schools, school-University partnerships etc.

In the same vein, Fraser, Kennedy, Reid and Mickinney (2007) described nine models of CPD which are outlined below: (i) Training: Focuses on skills, with expert delivery and little practical focus. (ii) Award bearing: usually in conjunction with a higher education institution. This brings the worrying discourse on the irrelevance of academia to the fore. (iii) Deficit: This looks at addressing short comings in an individual teacher. It tends to be individually tailored, but may not be good for confidence and is unsupportive of the development of a collective knowledge base within school. (iv) Cascade: This is relatively cheap in terms of resources, but there are issues surrounding the loss of a collaborative element in the original learning. (v) Standard Based: This assumes that there is a system of effective teaching and is not flexible in terms of teacher learning. It can be useful for developing a common language but may be very narrow and limiting. (vi) Coaching/mentoring: The development of a non threatening relationship can encourage discussion, but a coach or mentor needs good communication skills. (vii) Community of practice: This may inhibit active and creative innovation of practice, although they have the potential to work well through combining the knowledge bases of members. (viii) Action research: This is relevant to the classrooms, and enables teachers to experiment with different practices, especially if the action research is collaborative. (ix) Transformative: The integration of several different types of the previous models, with a strong awareness and control of whose agencies is being addressed.

Kennedy suggested that the first four of these models were essentially transmission methods, which give little opportunity for teachers to take control over their own learning. The following three are more transformational, giving an increasing capacity for professional autonomy, with the action research and transformative models being able to provide even more professional autonomy and giving teachers the power to determine their own learning pathways.

Similarly Hussain (2011) identified two basic approaches underlying CPD. (1) The defects and (2) The growth approach. The defect approach seeks to identify defects observed in the teacher and aims to remove those defects by the strategies and methods devised by the trainer. Those adopting this approach characterize teachers with "obsolescence" and "inefficiency". They believe that obsolescence can be taken care of by organizing traditional courses at college or university whereas teachers inefficiency can be taken care of by improving supervisory practices, competence based teacher education or use of pupil performance test.

According to Mehmood (2008), seminars, workshops, refresher courses, conferences, correspondence courses etc are mentioned by the educationists as methods or strategies of CPD. Mehmood,(2008) revealed positive relationship between continuous professional development and job performance of academic staff in their study.

Donnelly (2002) defined performance as the overall effectiveness and efficiency of getting things done. Teachers' job performance could be described as the duties performed by teachers at a particular period in the school system in achieving school goals.

In secondary education sector in Ebonyi State, no known studies have been carried out to determine the strength of relationship between continuous professional development of teachers and their job performance.

Generally in Nigeria and Ebonyi State in particular, there appears to be a general poor teacher job performance among secondary school teachers. There are reports of low staff morale, staff disciplinary issues, low teacher motivation, poor attitude to work, lack of interest in teaching and low quality of teachers in the system poor instructional planning and delivery. This study therefore determined the relationship between teachers' continuous professional development practices and their job performance in secondary schools in Ebonyi State of Nigeria.

2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

It has been observed by the researcher that majority of secondary school teachers in Ebonyi State are not performing their duties as expected. Many are always late to school, absent from school, not even interested in the job, hardly go to classes among other negative attitudes. These negative attitudes of teachers have contributed to poor students' performance in their examinations and behaviours.

3. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The main purpose of this study was to determine the relationship between teachers' continuous professional development practices and their job performance in Ebonyi State secondary schools.

4. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The outcome of this study will be beneficial to teachers, students, principals and the government. The teachers will immensely benefit from the result of this study in the sense that teachers will be made to acquire more skills, knowledge, new teaching methods through participation in conferences, seminars, workshops etc. thus, teachers will be made to be abreast with modern technology.

The students will also benefit from the findings of this study as their teachers will be exposed to new ideas, skills, methodologies which when applied in teaching will aid students' academic performance. Thus, students will be better taught by their improved teachers.

The school principals will also benefit from the findings of this study as the teachers performance will improve, and this will lead to teachers' productivity and students' performance via, school performance will be attributed to the principal's effective school management.

The government will also benefit in the sense that the school goals and objectives will be achieved through the activities of teachers, students and principal. This will lead less wastage in schools and optimal utilization of school resources.

5. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

One research question guided the study.

- What relationship exists between teachers' continuous professional development practices and their job performance in secondary schools in Ebonyi State?

6. HYPOTHESIS

One null hypothesis guided the study.

HO₁: There is no significant relationship between teachers' continuous professional development practices and their job performance in secondary schools in Ebonyi State.

7. RESEARCH METHOD

This is co-relation study carried out in Ebonyi State. All the three Education Zones of Abakaliki, Afikpo and Onueke were covered. The population of the study comprised all the 4,500 teachers in public secondary schools in Ebonyi State. The sample population for the study was 450 teachers representing 10% of the entire population. The choice of 10% is inline with the recommendation made by Eze (2005) that in a survey involving a population of few thousands, at least 5% of the population should be used as the sample size.

Researcher-developed instrument titled: 'Questionnaire on teachers' Continuous Professional Development Practice and Job Performance (QTCPDJP) was used to collect data from the respondents. The instrument was face-validated by three experts all from the department of Educational Foundations, Ebonyi State University, Abakaliki. The reliability of the instrument was established through test-retest procedure in public secondary schools in Enugu State using

20 teachers. The two tests results were correlated using pearson product moment correlation coefficient which yielded 0.87 and this was deemed high enough for the study. The researcher with the help of three research assistants administered the instrument on the respondents directly. But out of 450 of questionnaire administered only 412 were returned and used in analysis.

Pearson product moment correlation coefficient was used to answer the research question while t-test was used to analyze the hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance. Pearson product moment correlation is ideal for ascertaining the extent of relationship, association or co-variation between two or more variables (Nworgu, 2015).

The coefficients (r) of the relationship were interpreted using the Best and Khan (2003) criterion for evaluating the magnitude of a correlation:

Correlation (r)	Relationship
0.00 – 0.20	Negligible
0.20 – 0.40	Low
0.40 – 0.60	Moderate
0.60 – 0.80	Substantial
0.80 – 1.00	High to very high

8. PRESENTATION OF RESULTS

Research Question 1: What relationship exists between teachers' continuous professional development practices and their job performance in secondary schools in Ebonyi State?

Table 1: Pearson correlation between teachers' continuous professional development practices (CPDP) and their job performance.

Variables	N	Teachers CPDP	Teachers Job Performance	Decision
Teachers CPDP	412	1	0.564	
Teachers Job Performance	412	0.564	1	Positive

Table I shows that the Pearson correlation coefficient, $r = 0.564$. This shows that there is a moderate positive correlation between teachers' continuous professional development practices and their job performance in secondary schools in Ebonyi State.

Hypothesis I: There is no significant relationship between teachers' continuous professional development practices and their job performance in secondary schools in Ebonyi State.

The test for hypothesis is presented in table 2.

Table 2: T-test of significance of relationship between teachers' continuous professional development practices and their job performance.

Variables	N	Teachers CPDP	Teachers Job Performance	t-cal	t-crit	Decision
Teachers CPDP	412	1	0.564			
Teachers Job Performance	412	0.564	1	16.43	1.96	Significant

Data analysis in table 2 shows that there is significant relationship between teachers' continuous professional development practices and their job performance, $r = 0.564$, t-cal value of 16.43 is greater than the critical value of 1.96. The null hypothesis was therefore rejected.

9. FINDINGS

- 1) There is a moderate positive correlation between teachers' continuous professional development practices and their job performance in secondary schools in Ebonyi State.
- 2) There is a significant relationship between teachers' continuous professional development practices and their job performance.

10. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

One of the findings of the study shows that a moderate positive relationship exists between teachers' continuous professional development practices and their job performance. This suggests that an increase or decrease in teachers' continuous professional development practices will result in an increase or decrease in teachers' job performance.

Continuous professional development practices help teachers to keep abreast with the current technology, scientific, social and economic changes in the society. The findings of the corresponding hypothesis shows a significant relationship between teachers' continuous professional development practices and their job performance which implies that increased teachers' continuous professional development practices will increase teachers' performance, via students academic performance and school performance.

According to Perotomode (2001) employees may become obsolete if they fail to update themselves with new skills, new work, methods and knowledge about their work, organization and environment.

The finding of this study agrees with the findings of researchers such as Borko (2004); Gabriel (2011) and Poskitt (2005). These researchers were of the view that exposure of teachers to professional development is believed to have positive impact on the teachers' ability to acquire and critically develop the knowledge, skills and emotional intelligence essential for good professional thinking, planning and practice with their students and colleagues through every phase of their teaching lives.

The findings of this study also agrees with Desimone (2009) who asserted that principals' enhancement of teachers' professional development practices impact on the teachers' ability to decide on and implement valued changes in teaching and leadership behaviours so that they can educate their students more effectively, thus, achieving an agreed goal between individuals, schools and nation.

Furthermore, Harris (2010) revealed that most of the teachers' involved in his study perceived their professional development experience as having positive impact on their confidence in teaching and their job performance in general.

The truth from these findings is that teachers' engagement in continuous development programmes is imperative in enhancing their effectiveness in the discharge of their duties in secondary schools and beyond. Thus, teachers need to regularly engage in continuous staff development programmes for them to improve their knowledge of the subject they teach and other areas of their job.

11. CONCLUSION

From the findings of this study, it is the conclusion of the researcher that there is a positive correlation between teachers' continuous professional development practices and their job performance. In sum, it is the belief of the researcher that as teachers engage in continuous professional development practices, their overall performances in schools will definitely improve.

12. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made: Teachers even on their own should take interest in professional growth and development through participation in conferences, workshops and seminars in order to increase their performance level.

Principals should encourage their teachers to attend professional training programmes at least once in a year. Government which is the major stakeholder in education should ensure that both free and subsidized conferences, workshops and seminars are regularly organized for teachers' in order to update their knowledge professionally.

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