



Staff Development as Veritable Tool for Secondary School Effectiveness; the Challenge of Secondary Schools in Rivers State

Okai N. Okai and Wali Worlu

Department of Educational Management/ Foundation, Rivers State University of Education, Rumuolumeni Campus, Port Harcourt.

ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Received: 25 October 2015;

Received in revised form:

27 November 2015;

Accepted: 30 November 2015;

Keywords

Staff development,
Staff development programmes,
Fund development
programmes.

ABSTRACT

This study examines staff development as veritable tool for Secondary school effectiveness in Rivers State. The study used a descriptive design. In all, 2 research questions and 2 null hypotheses were posed. The population of the study is 1200 teachers; this consists of 700 teachers drawn from public schools and 500 teachers that were drawn from the private schools. The sample of the study is 480 teachers making 40% of the total population. The collected data were first converted to means and further subjected to Z-test. The means were used to derive answers for the research questions, while the Z-test was used to test the hypotheses of the study at 0.05 level of significance. Findings are that: A significant difference exists between the public and private secondary school teachers of Rivers State in their mean opinion of the type of development programme that are available in Rivers State; there is no significant difference between the opinions of public and private school teachers on the problems of staff development programmes in Rivers State. The recommendations include that government should as a matter of necessity fund development programmes, and teachers should not be reluctant to participate in development programmes.

© 2015 Elixir All rights reserved.

Introduction

Staff development refers to the programmes that are designed for the capacity building of the staff. This is to meet the needs of the organization. It includes seminars, workshops, conferences, sandwich programmes, refresher courses, just to name a few. It is therefore a continuous learning process that helps the staff to adjust to the present situation; it could be seen as those learning opportunities that come in various forms that are targeted at helping the staff to fit into the present condition of work. The society is dynamic. This suggests that new knowledge is gathering momentum and as a matter of fact, educational organizations should be able to provide programmes that will equip the teachers and other staff.

Staff development comprises a set of programmes that can help provide the staff with the right skill at the right time in order to enable him meet the challenges of the present time particularly to meet the relevant needs of the school in this era of globalization. Its roles would be seen in terms of equipping the teacher with the right skills. Human resources are veritable tools of the organization, and as such, they should be well equipped with the necessary skills. This is to ensure the attainment of organizational goals. The activities involved in equipping the teaching and non-teaching staff with the required skills in order to work towards the attainment of educational goals is referred to as staff development. To Gilbert (2010), staff development is a way of building a worker with right skills to meet the relevant needs of the organization. Harrison (2011), supports Gilbert when he asserted that staff development is the process of bringing new knowledge to the worker so as to meet the challenges of the present time.

As a corollary, Jerry (2013), gave a full support of staff development by describing it as a continuing education which is aimed at exposing the staff to new ways of doing things. Thus, he holds that educational organization should organize retraining programmes for the capacity building of the teachers so that they will be able to contribute their quota in the realization of set goals. Teachers can enhance classroom learning by attending seminars, workshops and conferences. What is really most exciting and emerging about staff development is the way in which educational organizations and business organizations are providing development programmes for their workers. Currently, many educational organizations are beginning to organize workshops on the improvisation of instructional materials, use of computer, internet system and other devices. The potential for organizing workshops on educational applications of information and communication technology is a growing concern of stakeholders in education; teachers are taught how to use electronics in the classroom, more so, teachers and students no longer have access only to text books but to content materials located far beyond the walls of the school building. It is pertinent to state that staff development programmes focuses more on the individual members of the organization and their contribution to organizational goal.

The development programmes which provide virtually instantaneous benefits to the staff as well as the organization will in no small measure help the organization (educational and business) to meet the challenges of the present time. Franklyne (2009), states that staff development programme has become a tool for the capacity building of the staff especially in the educational organizations (Egbe 2011). Adetunbi (2004), stated that development programmes such as

seminars, workshops and conferences provide rich learning experiences for the teachers, giving them the power to influence the depth and direction of their teaching and learning process. In other words, because of the fact that the teacher is well equipped, he has the ability to control the classroom, and as well as achieving the specific objectives of the lesson.

The term effectiveness in the content of this study is the extent the teacher is able to achieve the specific objectives of his lesson, and well as achieving a desirable learning outcome, hence the students are satisfied that they have been taught and they can pass the subjects in both internal and external examinations. Ukeje, Okorie and Nwagbara in Owhondah (2014), see effectiveness as the extent to which students are achieving, the teachers are satisfied, the staff morale is high, and the students drop out is low. Furthermore, Owhondah (2014), states that effectiveness in public utilities is the extent to which services are rendered promptly and satisfactorily, while in business organizations, it is the extent to which profit is maximized.

From the foregoing, it is necessary that educational organizations should involve teachers and other staff in retraining programmes in an active way so that they can bring their own experience to bear. This is very essential because the learning gives the teacher an opportunity to develop attitude and skills that will be directed towards the school goals.

Secondary schools in Rivers state and Nigeria at large are likely to achieve quality education if staff development programmes are provided for the teachers and other non-teaching staff if other factors are held constant. The benefit of staff development programme cannot be overestimated. The benefits of staff development programme on the everyday life of the teacher can only be effective if it is able to produce a desired learning outcome. In fact, staff development programmes will give the teacher the skills and ability to teach effectively during teaching and learning process, thus, making sure that the specific objectives of the lesson are achieved.

In fact, it has been established that knowledge is power, it is not surprising that educational organizations ability to achieve results is no longer dependent so much on the quality of the educational administrator, or school principal, but more importantly it is also a function of the quality of development programmes that are available to the teachers and the manner in which the teachers and other staff are encouraged to attend this programme. This is to enhance their effectiveness in the classroom. The growing complexities of secondary education in Nigeria, and the need to provide a qualitative education to meet challenges of globalisation makes the provision of staff development programmes indispensable. To this end, the provision of staff development programmes will help to address the challenges that are encountered in the class room especially in the area of class management, use of instructional materials, use of chalk board and preparation of lesson plan etc. The impact of staff development programmes on the teachers and students cannot be over emphasized. This is true because it provides the means through which teaching and learning process can be improved. Ebelogu (2008), stated that by allowing a staff to attend development programme, you have also equipped the staff with the skill that will help him to contribute to the realization of the overall goals of the organization. As a matter fact, the imperative for staff development programmes cannot be overemphasized.

Statement of the Problem

Educational organizations are one of the agents that shape the destiny of man and that of the nation; contemporary society also relies on secondary schools for its development and sustainability because it prepares the individual for jobs in the labour market and it also prepares the individual for higher education and for employment in the labour market. It is not surprising that these laudable objectives of secondary school system can be achieved if the teachers are fully equipped with the skills to meet relevant needs of the society, and many stakeholders in education have attributed the falling standard of education in Nigeria to poor performance of the teachers, especially during teaching and learning process.

The government at all levels has provided staff development programmes for the capacity building of the teachers in Nigeria. This is to ensure that they adjust to the changes in the society. However, despite the provision of development programmes, the question that borders many stakeholders in education is the type of development programmes that are available for teachers and the problems of staff development programmes in Rivers State. This is the crux of the matter because poor participation in the development programmes means that the teachers will not be equipped and it will be a serious threat to the teachers desire to achieve the specific objectives of the lesson and consequently, it will result to poor learning outcome. To this end, the school will not be able to achieve the educational objectives as provided in the national policy on education.

The purpose of this study is to examine staff development with a view to determining the types of development programmes that are available to the teacher, and the problems of staff development. The study used a descriptive survey. The survey sought opinion from academic staff who are believed to be representatives of ten (10) secondary schools, and they are knowledgeable on development programmes. The population of this study was drawn from 10 secondary schools made up of 5 public and 5 private schools in Rivers state. The total population was 1200 teachers, this consisted of 700 teachers drawn from public schools, 500 teachers were drawn from the private schools. The sample of the study was 480 teachers making 40% of the total population. To this end, 280 teachers were drawn from public schools and 200 teachers were drawn from private schools.

Research question 1

What types of development programme are available for secondary school teachers in Rivers state?

Table 1 examines the types of development programmes that are available to secondary school teachers in Rivers State. In this regard, the data on the table vividly reveals that sandwich programmes, workshop, conference, seminars, induction course, in-service training, orientation programmes and refresher courses are the development programmes that are available to secondary school teachers in Rivers state. Items 1-8 in the rank order had mean set of 2.57; this suggests that development programmes are available to the teachers. To this end, both types of schools met a criterion mean of 2.5 in all the indicators except in-service training for private secondary school teachers, here, the mean score was 2.21.

In the light of the foregoing, it could be seen that programmes for the capacity building of secondary school teachers are provided in both public and private secondary schools of Rivers State.

Table 1. Types of Development Programmes that are Available for Teachers

| S/n | Items | Public schools | Private school | School | | |
|-----|------------------------|----------------|----------------|-------------------------------|-----------------|----------|
| | | X ₁ | X ₂ | X ₁ x ₂ | Rank | Remark |
| 1. | Sandwich programme | 2.71 | 2.61 | 2.66 | 1 st | Accepted |
| 2. | Workshop | 2.63 | 2.52 | 2.58 | 3 rd | Accepted |
| 3. | Conference | 2.50 | 2.53 | 2.57 | 4 th | Accepted |
| 4. | Seminars | 2.67 | 2.51 | 2.59 | 2 nd | Accepted |
| 5. | Induction course | 2.56 | 2.51 | 2.53 | 6 th | Rejected |
| 6. | In-service training | 2.71 | 2.22 | 2.51 | 7 th | Accepted |
| 7. | Orientation programmes | 2.63 | 2.51 | 2.56 | 5 th | Accepted |
| 8. | Refresher course | 2.52 | 2.50 | 2.51 | 7 th | Accepted |

Mean Set = 2.57

Table 2. Problems of Manpower Development in Secondary Schools of Rivers state

| S/n | | Publicschool | Private school | | | |
|-----|--|----------------|----------------|-------------------------------|-----------------|----------|
| | | X ₁ | X ₂ | X ₁ x ₂ | Rank | Remark |
| 1. | Teachers sponsor themselves | 2.63 | 2.51 | 2.57 | 3 rd | Accepted |
| 2 | Teachers are sponsored by their employers | 2.41 | 2.53 | 2.47 | 5 th | Rejected |
| 3 | Inadequate learning materials | 2.52 | 2.50 | 2.51 | 4 th | Accepted |
| 4 | Resource persons are not qualified | 2.21 | 2.12 | 2.20 | 6 th | Rejected |
| 5 | The learning materials do not provide the needed information | 2.11 | 2.22 | 2.17 | 7 th | Rejected |
| 6 | Poor attitude of teachers towards development programmes | 2.52 | 2.50 | 2.51 | 4 th | Accepted |
| 7 | It is not open for all the teachers | 2.71 | 2.63 | 2.67 | 2 nd | Accepted |
| 8 | It was not regular and timely | 3.21 | 2.77 | 2.99 | 1 st | Accepted |

Mean set =2.51

Research Question 2**What are the problems of manpower development in secondary schools of Rivers State?**

Table 2 used a list of 8 activities to examine the problems of manpower development programmes in Secondary Schools of Rivers State. In order to identify the problems of manpower development, no mean scores are indicative that the factors bearing them do not pose serious challenge for manpower development programmes, while those with the high mean scores are representative of the factor that pose a serious challenge to manpower development programme. A cursory look at table 2 clearly shows that 6 out of the 8 factors examined constitute challenges to manpower development programmes in secondary schools of Rivers State. These are item 1, 2 for private secondary schools, 3, 6, 7, and 8. They met the mean criterion of 2.5, however, item 4 and 5 do not constitute constraints to manpower development programme.

Therefore, the answer to the research question 2 is that: the problems to manpower development programmes were:

1. Teachers sponsored themselves
2. learning materials are inadequate
3. Poor attitude of teachers towards training programme
4. The program is not open to all the teachers
5. It was not regular and timely.

Hypotheses 1

There is no significant difference between the public and private secondary schools teachers of Rivers in their mean opinion of the type of development programmes that are available in Rivers State.

Table 3. Test of difference on the type of development programmes that are available for teachers

| School category | N | Mean | Std div. | Df | z-cal | z-tab | Remarks |
|-----------------|-----|-------|----------|-----|-------|-------|--------------|
| Public | 220 | 33.91 | 1.42 | 408 | 6.73 | 1.96 | Significance |
| Private | 190 | 37.42 | 2.37 | | | | |
| P<0.05 | | | | | | | |

Table 3 is the z-test analysis of differences on the type of development programmes that are available for the teachers; the public secondary schools recorded a mean score of 33.91 while the respondents from the private schools recorded a mean score of 37.42. At 408 degree of freedom, the z-calculated value of 6.73 was significant at 0.05 levels. The z-calculated value of 6.73 is greater than the z-tabulated value of 1.96 hence a significant difference exists in the type of development programmes that are available and the alternate hypothesis was accepted.

Hypothesis 2

There is no significant difference between the public and private secondary school teachers of Rivers State in their mean opinion of the problems of manpower development programmes.

Table 4. Test of difference on the problems of manpower development programmes

| School category | N | Mean | Std div. | Df | z-cal | z-tab | Remarks |
|-----------------|-----|-------|----------|-----|-------|-------|------------------|
| Public | 220 | 27.42 | 2.41 | 408 | 1.36 | 1.96 | Not Significance |
| Private | 190 | 31.53 | 2.57 | | | | |
| P<0.05 | | | | | | | |

Table 4 shows that respondents of public schools recorded a mean score of 27.42 while those in private secondary schools recorded a mean score of 31.53, and the degree of freedom was 408. At the degree of freedom of 408 the z-calculated was 1.36, and z-table value was 1.96. The z-calculated value of 1.36 is not significant because it is less than the z-tabulated value of 1.96. Based on this, the null hypothesis is accepted. This implies that there is no significant difference between the public and private secondary school teachers of Rivers State in their mean opinion of the problems of manpower development programmes.

Summary of Findings

Based on the data analysis of this study, the following findings were made:

1. The type of development programmes that are available to teachers are workshop, conference as sandwich and seminars.
2. The problems of development programmes are:
 - a. Teachers sponsor themselves
 - b. Inadequate learning materials
 - c. Poor attitude of teachers towards training programme
 - d. The programme is not open to all the teachers
 - e. It was not regular and timely.
3. A significant difference existed between public and private secondary school teachers in their mean opinion of the type of development programmes that are available for teachers.
4. There is no significant difference between the public and private secondary school teachers of Rivers State in their mean opinion of the problems of manpower development programmes.

Conclusion

Manpower development programme is a veritable resource that could enhance secondary school effectiveness. This is true because development programme is hoped to help the teachers to acquire new knowledge and acquire skills that will put them in the right track during teaching and learning. Both teachers of public and private schools participate in development programmes. This is to ensure the capacity building of the teachers. However, the challenge here is that most teachers sponsor themselves in development programme especially the sandwich programmes, and the implication is that most of the teachers cannot afford the fees or the cost of the programme. In this regard, when their high level of expectation during teaching and learning process is not realized over a considerable length of time, the main benefits of manpower development programme may not be fully realized.

Recommendations

1. The government at all levels should as a matter of necessity fund manpower development programmes to ensure that the secondary school teachers are well equipped to meet the challenges of the present time.
2. The government and employers of teachers should assist the teachers in the sandwich programmes since the programme is capital intensive, in as much as the teachers monthly salary is grossly inadequate such assistance will go a long way in reducing the cost of the programme
3. Teachers should not be reluctant to participate in manpower development programmes because such participation is hoped to develop some necessary skills that will strengthen the teaching and learning process.
4. A general re-orientation on the benefits of manpower development programmes will help the government and other employers of teachers to provide manpower development programmes for the teachers.

References

- Adetuubi, K. S. (2004): *The Place of Staff development in Organization. The case of Nigeria*; Akure: Shoa Publishers Ltd.
- Ebelogu, F. S. (2008): *Education and Resources requirements, the need for staff development*. Calabar: Akpan Printing Press Ltd.
- Erickson, O. M. (2008): *Fundamentals of Business Management and Strategies*. Enugu: Tony Printing Press.
- Egbe, B. N. (2011): *Introduction to Educational Management in Nigeria*. Port Harcourt: Stephen's Printers.
- Frankly, S. E. (2009): *The Place of Staff Development in Tertiary Schools of Nigeria*. Port Harcourt: Charley Printing Press.
- Gibert, G. Y. (2010): *The Pedagogy of Educational Management*. Ilesau: Fumilayo Publisher.