

Performance Evaluation and Training of Secondary School Teachers as Tools of Improving Students' Academic Performance

Nonye I. Anele & N. N. Mbah

Abstract

The purpose of this study was to investigate training and performance evaluation of secondary school teachers as tools for improving students' academic performance in Orumba South Local Government Area of Anambra State. One hundred and sixty teachers and thirteen principals made up the population of the study and the entire population were studied. Five research questions were used. The instrument for data collection was a questionnaire. The data collected were analysed using mean. The researcher found out that training and performance evaluation of teachers help to correct teachers' mistakes, enhance their teaching styles and make them to be effective. It was also discovered that students under these trained teachers perform better in their examinations. Finally, based on the findings, the researcher recommended among others that school management should increase the methods of training their staff.

Keywords: Performance Evaluation, Training, Secondary School, Academic

Introduction

The training and performance evaluation of secondary school teachers is truly one of the greatest achievements of any school that wants to improve its students' academic performance. This goes on to facilitate the functions or the roles that the management or the school authority plays in a complex and dynamic establishment. Training is an ongoing process. When the learning situation lasts for more than a few days, we normally say that training is taking place. Training has the distinct role in the achievement of an organisational goal by incorporating the interests of organisation and the workforce (Stone, 2002). The knowledge and skills workers have will not be enough for them to achieve the organisational goal, which is high productivity, therefore, there exists the need for training.

Students' academic performance can be improved through the quality of skills, attitudes, new ideas, quality of character teachers acquired through training. The purpose of training is to give teachers at all level sufficient instructions and guidance to enable them perform their job effectively and prepare them for promotion. A true training situation is required where there is a gap between the standard demanded by a school and that which is

actually achieved by the teachers. The main purpose is to close the gap which pointed to the reason, the human resources of every institution is considered to be most valuable assets which invariably is not reflected in the balance sheet of the organisation (Ugwunna, 2000).

The Ministry of Education or the Administrators of school is responsible for the performance of his teachers and should evaluate these performances to ensure that school objectives are achieved. Evaluation in this context can be seen as a systematic process of determining the extent to which stated instructional objectives have been achieved. Anikweze (2005) opined that evaluation is the process of ascertaining the decisions to be made, selecting related information, collecting and analysing information in order to report summary data useful to decision makers in selecting among alternatives. Thus, performance is the review of the employee's performance based on the objectives or targets agreed on over a given period. Gannon (2000) is of the opinion that performance evaluation is used to evaluate an employee's past performance, reward him for outstanding work and to provide an employee with training and development opportunities that will benefit both him and the school. This implies that when teacher's performance is evaluated, it will assist the school authority to know the areas that need to be developed.

Statement of the problem

The rate of students' poor academic achievement in West African Examination Council (WAEC), National Examination Council (NECO), JAMB, etc, especially in subjects like English language and mathematics in our society is alarming. The root of this problem has always been that teachers do not teach well, students have not been adequately prepared for these examinations. Also, the approaches teachers use to deliver the subject content to students will determine whether the student will understand or not. When the content is poorly delivered, it will tell on the performance of the students. Most teachers lack the required skills needed by their students that will enable them scale through their examinations. Thus, lack of adequate supervision, training and evaluation of teachers existed. It is on this note that the researcher tries to find out whether training and performance evaluation serve as tools for improving students' academic performance in Orumba South Local Government Area.

Objectives of the study

The purpose of this study is to investigate training and performance evaluation of secondary school teachers as tools for improving students'

academic performance in Orumba South Local Government Area of Anambra State. Specifically, the study sought to find out:

- Various types of training programmes given to secondary school teachers in Orumba South Local Government Area.
- What kinds of performance evaluation modes that are used for assessing teachers' competencies in Orumba South L.G.A.
- The adequacy of the training programme used for teachers.
- The adequacy of performance evaluation modes used for the teachers.
- The perception of principals and teachers on the extent the training programme and performance evaluation affect students' academic performance.

Research questions

The study was designed to answer the following research questions:

1. What kinds of training are given to secondary school teachers?
2. What performance evaluation methods are used for assessing teachers' competencies?
3. How adequate are the training programmes used for teachers?
4. How adequate are the evaluation modes used for teachers?
5. What is the perception of principals and teachers on the extent teachers' training and performance evaluation affect students' academic performance?

Literature review

In an establishment or organisation, a manager is responsible for the performance of his subordinates, while in schools, principals must ensure that teachers have the required knowledge and skills to do the job. He or she must therefore decide when training is necessary to ensure performance he/she expects. Training involves providing the conditions in which people can learn effectively to be directed towards goals of specific performance standard to grow in ability.

Beardwell and Holden (2001) stated that training is a planned process that is used to change attitudes, knowledge, skills and behaviour through the learning experience in order to achieve effective performance in a specific activity or range of activities. Its purpose, in the work context, is to develop the abilities of individuals and to satisfy the current and future needs of the organisation. Shaheen, Naqvi and Khan (2013) define training as a systematic development of the knowledge, skills and behaviour required by employees to do adequately on confirmed task or job. According to Amin, Rashid-Saeed and Lodhi (2013), training is simply

learning that is provided in order to improve performance on the present job. Thus training is learning to use background knowledge in a specific work situation. It is a learning activity designed to improve job performance.

Avenues/Types of training

Knowledge can come to us through several ways; personal experience, perception or even through the experience of others. However, the following are various avenues through which one can acquire training:

- On-the-job training: this is a situation where you learn while performing the job. It reduces cost and saves time. It is good for organisation to give their employees on-the-job training so that their employees learn in a practical way (Tom and Frances, 2007).
- Vestibule training: this comprises of a school or workshop usually organised in an individual plant to introduce the new workers into the work setting by means of a few weeks of practice for a specific job. Ugwunna (2000) cited that vestibule training is normally conducted in groups and learning is facilitated through individualized instructions where and when necessary without disrupting the normal production process or organisational routines. In school setting, it should be organised in such a way that it would not clash with school time table.
- In-service training: in this case, teachers who are already in the service go on training or course programme in order to update or acquire the intellectual and professional skills that are necessary to discharge their duties more efficiently (Newberry, 2009). Thus, at the end of the course, there must be a certification that qualifies one to a new status. For example, an NCE holder who attends a Degree training course while in the service would later qualify as a Degree holder (a new status), following the completion of the In-service programme.
- Seminars or Workshops: this is one of the most promising ways for improving classroom instructions. It is an attempt to assist the classroom teachers to improve on their teaching strategies, techniques, handle new instructional materials or possessed the necessary information and skills that are required for effective lesson delivery. Seminars help staff to become more familiar with their job functions and more actively involved in them. They also enable them to handle problems that arise on a regular basis (Holladay and Quinones, 2003).

The need for training of workers/teachers

Training as a function of an Administrators of Education or an organisation, has been given much attention because of the benefits, both tangible and intangible therein. In the view of Adewumi (1998), training provides many benefits to the organisation and employee; the employee usually becomes more skilful on the job with training which improves his productivity and morale and for organisation this better skilled worker requires less supervision and thus a reduction in the cost of supervision. This implies that training manpower is to help the employees acquire and maintain the necessary skills, capabilities and personal capacities to contribute more adequately to the attainment of the company's objectives. To meet the organisational needs in terms of skills and knowledge, the roles and capabilities of the trainees can be improved through training. According to Pintrich and Schunk (2002), only trained teachers can set goals for teaching and can organise plans for reaching those goals. Also, Kamalian, Yaghoubi and Moloudi (2010) pointed out that training enables teachers to be more systematic and logical in their teaching styles. Thus, training works as a catalyst which provokes a significant change in a teacher, redefines role, broadens vision and enhances the attribute of a teacher.

Performance evaluation

The term performance evaluation refers to the methods and processes used by organisations to assess the level of performance of their employees. According to DeNisi and Pritchard (2006), the process usually includes measuring employees' performance and providing them with feedback regarding the level and quality of their performance. Clabaugh (1991) identifies some methods of evaluating teachers' performance as; rating scale, check list, free-form essays, interviews, critical incidents, observation, rank order and force distribution.

Teachers' evaluation is usually undertaken with the aim of helping the member of staff to assess his performance and make efforts to improve upon it where necessary. Dittimiya (1998) opines that performance evaluation helps to detect areas of improvement for teachers' effectiveness. It also helps the manager/principal in checking for deviation from standard and determining if those deviations exceed control tolerances. Thus, an effective employee performance evaluation is a means of control, whereby individuals learn of their strengths and weaknesses and are told what they should do to overcome deficiencies (Kaczmarczyk and Murtough, 2002).

Methodology

Survey research design was adopted for the study. The population for the study comprised 13 principals and 160 teachers that teach in Orumba South Local Government Area. Hence the total population is 173 participants. Simple random sampling by balloting was used to select Orumba South Local Government Area. A structured Likert questionnaire and five points structure questionnaire was used to elicit information from the participants. A total of 173 questionnaires were distributed by the researcher and 168 were returned amounting to 97% returned rate.

Data analysis

Mean was used to analyse the research questions. The statistical weights of the questionnaire are as follows: Strongly Agree-5 points, Agree-4 points, Undecided- 3 points, Disagree - 2 points, and Strongly Disagree - 1 point. Thus mean $5+4+3+2+1 = 15/5 = 3.0$

The sample mean is calculated using the formula $\frac{\sum fx}{n}$

The cut-off point to determine whether an item is accepted or rejected was decided by finding the class boundaries of the responses as shown in the table below:

Table 1: Class boundaries of response categories for research questions 1-3

Category of response	Nominal value	Class boundaries
Strongly Agree	5	4.5 – 5.5
Agree	4	3.5 – 4.5
Undecided	3	2.5 – 3.5
Disagree	2	1.5 – 2.5
Strongly Disagree	1	0.5 – 1.5

For research question 5, Very Great Extent, Great Extent, Moderate Extent, Poor Extent and Very Poor Extent were used.

Using the interval of 0.5, the upper limit cut-off point is 3.5. Hence, any response which has a mean score rating of 3.5 and above will be accepted while any response lower than this will be rejected.

Table 2: mean responses on the kinds of training programmes given to secondary school teachers.

S/No	Items	SA	A	UN	D	SD	N	FX	Mean	Remarks
1	The school uses on-the-job training for training of teachers.	69	40	10	20	29	168	604	3.6	Accepted
2		25	28	39	38	38	168	468	2.8	Rejected
3	The school uses vestibule kind of training for training of teachers.	1	30	29	43	65	168	363	2.2	Rejected
4	The school uses in-service training for training of their teachers.	60	68	10	1	5	168	609	3.6	Accepted
	Seminars, workshops and conferences were used by the school to train teachers.									

From table 2 above, items 1 and 4 with the mean of 3.6 and 3.6 respectively scored more than the standard mean score of 3.5. This indicates that the respondents accepted that, the school uses on-the-job training, seminars, workshops and conferences to train their teachers. While, items 2 and 3 with the mean of 2.8 and 2.2 respectively did not score up to the standard mean score. Thus, it implies that the respondent disagreed that, the school uses vestibule and in-service training methods to train their teachers.

Table 3: Mean responses on the performance evaluation methods used for assessing teachers' performance.

S/NO	Item	SA	A	UN	D	SA	N	FX	Mean	Remarks
5	The school normally uses attendance/time book during appraisal.	97	67	2	2	1	168	764	4.5	Accepted
6	The external supervisor from ministry of Education at times observes teachers while teaching.	66	63	1	31	7	168	654	3.9	Accepted
7	Teachers are subjected to thorough interview before promotion.	65	69	9	12	13	168	665	4.0	Accepted
8	The principals evaluate the teachers using rating scale as in performance evaluation form.	65	64	13	14	12	168	660	3.9	Accepted
9	During appraisal, the principal reviews written records and reports concerning each teacher.	35	93	10	14	16	168	621	3.7	Accepted

From table 3 above, items 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9 have their mean scores above cut off point of 3.5. This implies that, school uses attendance book, interview, rating scale, observation and reviewing of written reports and records concerning each teacher as methods for assessing teachers' performance.

Table 4: Mean responses on the adequacy of training programmes used for teachers.

S/N	Item	SA	A	UN	D	SD	N	FX	Mean	Remarks
10	The training programmes used help to enhance the effectiveness of the teachers.	67	75	1	1	-	168	760	4.5	Accepted
11		78	80	1	6	3	168	728	4.3	Accepted
12	The training programmes enhance the teachers' teaching style.	63	76	14	7	8	168	675	4.0	Accepted
13	The training programmes help the teachers to be lively in the class.	30	39	20	65	14	168	510	3.0	Rejected
	The knowledge acquired by the teachers as members/chairmen of a committee has improved their teaching methods.									

From the above table, it could be observed that, items 10, 11, 12 and 13 scored above cut off point of 3.5. This shows that, the respondent accepted that, the training programmes used for the teachers help to enhance the teachers' effectiveness, their teaching styles and also help them to be lively in the class.

Table 5: Mean responses on the adequacy of the evaluation modes used for teachers.

S/N	Item	SA	A	UN	D	SD	N	FX	Mean	Remarks
14	The evaluation programmes help to correct the teachers' mistake.	65	68	20	9	6	168	681	4.0	Accepted
15	Performance evaluation programme is done annually in the school system.	66	98	1	1	2	168	729	4.3	Accepted
16	The evaluation programmes enhance the teachers' effectiveness.	43	73	12	29	11	168	612	3.6	Accepted

From table 5 above, items 14, 15, and 16 scored above the standard cut off point of 3.5. Thus, the respondents accepted that the evaluation modes used for teachers help to correct the teachers' mistake, enhances their effectiveness and it is also done annually.

Table 6: Mean responses on the perception of principals and teachers on the extent teachers' training and performance evaluation affect students' academic performance.

S/NO	Item	VGE	GE	ME	PE	VPE	N	FX	Mean	Remarks
17	Students taught by teachers who participated in the training programmes perform better in the examination.	67	68	19	13	1	168	691	4.1	Very Great Extent
18	Students taught by teachers who participated in the training programmes are better motivated to study.	58	82	9	10	9	168	674	4.0	Great Extent
19	Teachers teach with zeal and joy whenever promotions are released thus, students' academic performance were affected positively.	60	72	15	10	11	168	664	4.0	Great Extent

20	Teachers who are exposed to training programme apply such in the classroom thereby, affects student performance positively.	60	72	15	10	11	168	664	4.0	Great Extent.
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Table 6 above show that, all the items in it scored above the standard mean of 3.5. This implies that, the respondents agreed that, teachers training and performance evaluation of teachers affect students' academic performance positively.

Findings

From the analyses, the following findings were made:

- Secondary schools in Orumba South Local Government Area use on-the-job training or seminar, workshops, conferences to train their teachers.
- It was observed that secondary schools in Orumba South L.G.A. adopt variety of performance evaluation modes during appraisal.
- Training programmes used for teachers in Orumba South L.G.A. are very adequate.
- Also, evaluation modes used for teachers in Orumba South L.G.A. are very adequate.
- Also it was discovered that, principals and teachers agreed that, teachers' training and performance evaluation affect students' academic performance to a great extent.

Discussion of findings

The result of research question one shows that teachers were trained using few methods of training; like on-the-job training, workshops/seminar and conferences. The reason for restraining themselves to these methods may be because of lack of fund from government to build training centre. Also, schools in Orumba South L.G.A. are situated in rural areas, thus making it difficult in respect of cost to attract experts to teach some inexperienced teachers. This is in line with the view of Agbato (1990) which states that training in whatever level is very costly.

The responses of research question two revealed that secondary schools in Orumba South L.G.A. utilize various performance evaluation modes; like inviting external supervisors to observe teachers while teaching,

going through attendance book, interview, rating scale, etc in assessing teachers' competencies. By exploring these methods, it should be very easy to detect areas of improvement for teachers' effectiveness as pointed out by Dittimiya (1998).

For research question three and four, it was observed from the responses that when teachers were trained and appraised objectively, it yields a lot of result like; correcting teachers' mistake, enhancing their teaching styles and making them to be effective. This is supported by Mullins (2006) view that effective training improve efficiency, morale and introduce new techniques. It should also be supported by the saying that, "practice makes perfect".

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are made:

1. Government is encouraged to set up standing committee in various schools with teachers as members, in which ways of improving teaching strategies, methods and skills should be discussed. Members of this committee should be changed biannually in order to accommodate every teacher. This will serve as method of training of teachers.
2. Government should provide adequate fund for the training of teachers.
3. The ministry of Education should endeavour to promote teachers as and when due because it will motivate them and enhance their effectiveness.
4. School management are encouraged to increase the methods of training their staff in the areas like; in-service training.

Conclusion

The role of training and performance evaluation in the life of teachers and student cannot be over emphasized. For teachers to improve in their teaching skills, they need to be trained regularly. No wonder Mullins (2006) sees training as a continuous programme of employee development achieved by formal education and training schemes run or arranged by the personnel department which is mostly given by immediate supervisors. Hence, training and performance evaluation of teachers help to correct teachers' mistakes, enhance their teaching styles and make them to be effective. Also, students under these trained teachers perform better in their examinations.

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