

Staff Development Programmes as Strategies for Enhancing Professionalism of Teacher in Secondary Schools in Ekiti State

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Abstract: *This study investigated staff development programmes as strategies for enhancing the professionalism of teachers in secondary schools in Ekiti state, Nigereia. Two research questions and three null hypotheses guided the study. The sample consisted of 362 respondents made up of 334 teachers and 28 school administrators selected using multistage sampling techniques. The research instruments for the study comprised of questionnaire titled "Staff Development Programme Questionnaire (SDPQ)" and "Professionalism of Teacher Questionnaire (PTQ). The face and content validity of the instruments were established by experts in Educational Management. Test-retest method was used to determine the reliability co-efficient of the instrument and co-efficient of 0.90 and 0.81 were obtained for the two instruments respectively. The findings revealed that teachers' perception on the roles of staff development programmes on their professionalism was high and the degree of professionalism among secondary schools teachers in Ekiti state, Nigeria was moderate. The results also showed a significant relationship between staff development programme and professionalism of teachers. It was therefore recommended government should ensure encourage regular and consistent staff development programmes for all teachers in Ekiti state as this can enhance their professionalism.*

Keywords: Development programme, Professionalism, Teachers, Secondary schools. Conference .

INTRODUCTION

Professionalism entails the persistent adherence to elevated standards in behaviour, vocation, and personal growth. Competence, expertise, diligence, suitability, integrity, proficiency, and

confidence are among its fundamental characteristics. Being a professional entail being abreast of contemporary advancements in one's discipline and integrating acquired knowledge into daily responsibilities. The imperative for teachers to engage in active and ongoing learning arises from the rapid obsolescence of existing knowledge. Numerous studies on teacher education have highlighted a critical feature of teacher quality: the provision of ample opportunities to enhance their comprehension of the subjects they instruct and the pedagogical methods learnt during their pre-service training. This is predicated on the premise that our world is evolving rapidly, rendering the information and skills acquired by teachers during their pre-service training obsolete as new challenges and realities integrate into the political and socioeconomic milieu. The staff development programmes aim to strengthen teachers' job performance and establish aspirations for professional advancement (Oyeleye 2023). They allow the teachers to comprehend their professional responsibilities. It is a chance afforded to both novice and seasoned educators to advance their professions. These activities aim to enhance the quality of classroom instruction and facilitate the professional development of educators. Staff development programmes, as defined by Oyeleye (2023), are training initiatives established by school authorities to augment and refine the skills, knowledge, understanding, competencies, and effectiveness of educators. The development programmes for teachers are crucial for enhancing educational quality. They provide teachers with contemporary skills and knowledge, ensuring their ability to fulfil current educational requirements. These programmes entail ongoing education and training, which improve instructional efficacy and students results. They also help to enhance teachers' subject expertise, instructional abilities, and pedagogical methodologies. Staff development programmes encompass workshops, conferences, seminars, and certification courses provided by government entities, educational institutions, and similar organisations. Moreover, these programmes are essential as they promote collaboration among teachers, facilitate the exchange of best practices, and enable mutual learning. Ayodele and Olorunsola (2016) asserted that effective professional development can significantly impact classroom effectiveness. Teachers' natural desire for effective job performance is sometimes heightened by their compulsory engagement in various professional development courses. Lawal (2014) perceives staff development programmes as methods for equipping educators with competencies and technology expertise to improve education. After attaining essential expertise, teachers seek to enhance their standards periodically to prevent the decline of their teaching quality.

Statement of the problem

The researcher observed that certain teachers appeared to employ antiquated teaching methods and possess inadequate expertise of their subject areas. Teachers exhibiting these shortcomings require enhancement through orientation and various development programmes. It is incumbent upon school administrators and government officials to facilitate and encourage teachers to participate in professional development programme that can augment their expertise. Nevertheless, the scenario in which teachers neglect to participate in programmes such as conferences, seminars, training sessions, and workshops appears to have resulted in several issues, including stagnation in professional development, insufficient pedagogical skills, challenges in student engagement, inability to adapt to evolving educational trends, outdated teaching strategies and methods, and restricted career advancement opportunities. The

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professionalism of teachers has been adversely affected by these concerns in the public secondary schools of Ekiti State, Nigeria. Moreover, it was noted that certain secondary school teachers in Ekiti have numerous problems that appear to impede their professionalism. Challenges include inadequate finance, which restricts the availability of training materials and opportunities for educators; a deficiency in administrative and peer support, which dissuades some instructors from seeking further training; and restricted access to training, among others.

Therefore, the purpose of this study is to examine staff development programmes as strategies for enhancing professionalism of teacher in secondary schools in Ekiti state.

Objectives of the Study

The following are the objectives of the study:

1. To examine staff development programmes as strategies for professionalism of teachers in secondary schools in Ekiti state, Nigeria.
2. To examine conference/seminar and professionalism of teachers in Ekiti state, Nigeria.
3. To investigate in-service training programme and professionalism of teachers in secondary schools in Ekiti state, Nigeria

Research Questions

The following research questions were generated to guide the study.

1. What perceptions do teachers hold on the roles of staff development programmes in shaping their professional growth in secondary schools in Ekiti state, Nigeria?
2. What is the degree of professionalism among teachers in secondary schools in Ekiti state, Nigeria?

Research Hypotheses

The following research hypotheses were formulated to guide the study;

- 1) There is no significant relationship between staff development programmes and professionalism of teachers in secondary schools in Ekiti state.
- 2) There is no significant relationship between conference/seminar and professionalism of teacher in secondary schools in Ekiti state.
- 3) There is no significant relationship between in-service training and professionalism of teachers in secondary schools in Ekiti state.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The requirements of contemporary learners can no longer be met through traditional educational methods. Enhancing teacher professionalism could boost students' learning ability and academic success. In light of the aforementioned assumption, it is essential for teachers to

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participate in continuous professional development activities to improve their capacity to deliver relevant knowledge and experiences to students. Recently, professional development for teachers has garnered increasing attention (Craft, 2000). The swift evolution and increasing demand for excellence necessitate the enhancement of teacher quality, as well as the continual updating of their competencies through professional development programmes. Wakama (2017) said that staff development programmes provide teachers with fresh insights, knowledge, and perspectives on effective work performance. To guarantee optimal quality in the teaching workforce, stakeholders must evaluate the interactions between essential variables that influence teacher professionalism, including the promotion of staff development programmes. Teachers must be awarded both local and foreign scholarships to enhance their knowledge and competencies, hence facilitating changes in them. They must also quickly improve their curiosity and creativity and help them fit into the community and society.

A survey conducted by Umoren (Punch 2011) revealed the significance of professional development. The study indicates that companies conducting annual training sessions had an increase in staff productivity. Acheaw (2011) asserted that the objectives of training and development are to enhance knowledge and skills, as well as to promote a shift in viewpoint. The teachers and the institution collectively stand to benefit from this process in various tangible ways. Althassan (2014) asserted that in-service training is a prevalent method by which school administrators can facilitate professional development for their teachers. He emphasised the accessibility of in-service training and opportunities for advanced education in domains such as lesson planning and pedagogical techniques.

Egert et al. (2020) argued that in-service training for teachers constitutes a form of professional development in which practitioners engage to enhance their knowledge, skills, and competencies in the teaching profession. The objective of in-service training is to maintain a high standard of teaching and learning by equipping educators with innovative methodologies, competencies, and information applicable to their classroom activities. Ezenne (2011) asserted that the primary objective of a conference is to address various concerns. A diverse array of activities may be scheduled, including lectures, roundtable discussions, and workshops. An annual conference for educators from several disciplines is conducted in Nigeria. Hamby (2012) contended that a conference is a significant and esteemed assembly of individuals within the same profession or field, convening to share and exchange ideas. However, people perceive a workshop as a structured learning experience that is practical and tailored to meet specific needs. Workshops are intended to enhance teachers' or individuals' knowledge, abilities, and viewpoints in domains directly related to their professions.

Amie-Ogan and Unachukwu (2021) examined the impact of staff development programmes on teacher performance in Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria. The findings indicated a robust and affirmative correlation between coaching/mentoring, computer-based programmes, and teachers' job performance in public senior secondary schools within the Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State. It was advised that principals and other educational stakeholders establish development training mechanisms for teachers. The government should provide

additional computer-based programmes for public secondary school teachers to enhance their professionalism.

Furthermore, Chukwueze (2021) investigated the impact of staff development initiatives on teachers' performance in public secondary schools in Abia State. The findings indicated that teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Abia State dramatically enhanced when they engaged in open and remote learning programs, workshops, seminars, and conferences. The research indicated that teachers' performance improved following their involvement in in-service training programmes such as open and online learning.

Isabirye and Moloi (2016) examined professional development and teacher learning at a South African open distance learning institution. The findings indicated that participants esteemed the establishment of subject-specific communities of practice as a method to sustain their teaching enthusiasm through the exchange of ideas and practices. The researcher recommended providing teachers with access to professional training resources and instructional materials to ensure pupils receive a successful education.

Amie-Ogan and Deekae (2020) investigated the impact of staff development programmes on teacher performance in public elementary schools within the Gokana and Khana Local Government Areas of Rivers State. The findings indicated that in public elementary schools within the Gokana and Khana local government areas of Rivers State, staff development programmes, including conferences, workshops, and in-service training, significantly influenced teacher productivity. The findings indicated that to enhance the performance of public elementary school teachers in the Gokana and Khana Local Government Areas, the government should regularly conduct development programmes, including conferences and workshops, for the teachers.

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a descriptive design of the survey type. The population of the study consisted of 7,538 teachers and 406 administrators in the secondary schools in Ekiti State. Sample for this study consisted of 362 respondents made up of 334 teachers and 28 school administrators selected from 14 public secondary schools in Ekiti state. The sample was selected using multistage sampling procedure. The research instruments for the study comprised of questionnaire titled "Staff Development Programme Questionnaire (SDPQ)" and "Professionalism of Teacher Questionnaire (PTQ). STPQ consisted of two sections. Section A consisted of background information of the school. Section B which contained ten items was designed to collect information on Staff development programmes. The second instrument, (PTQ) consisted of three sections. Section A consisted of background information of the school, while section B consisted of the background information of the teachers, and section C consisted of well-structured items to elicit responses from two (2) administrators (principals and vice-principals) in each of the selected schools. Likert type 4 point rating scale was used as follows: strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD). The face and content validity of the instruments were established by experts in Educational Management. Test-retest method was used to determine the reliability co-efficient of the instrument and co-

efficients of 0.90 and 0.81 were obtained for the two instruments respectively. The research questions were answered using mean and standard deviation, while, hypotheses 1-3 were tested using Pearson Product Moment Correlation. All the hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significant.

RESULTS

Research Question 1: What perceptions do teachers hold at the roles of staff development programmes in shaping their professional growth in secondary schools in Ekiti state?

In answering the research questions, the score below the mean score was termed as low perception. The moderate perception was determined by the mean score of the responses on staff development programme in secondary schools in Southwest, Nigeria (2.50), while the score above the mean score was termed as high perception. Therefore, the low perception of teachers starts from 0.1-2.49; moderate starts from 2.50-2.99 and the high perception starts from 3.00-5.01.

Table 1: Means and standard deviation showing perceptions of teachers on the roles of staff development programmes in shaping their professional growth.

S/N	ITEMS	Mean	Stand deviation	Remarks
1.	Conferences and seminar improve teaching methods	3.16	2.68	Agreed
2.	Encouraging of part -time studies enhance teachers performance	3.17	2.58	Agreed
3.	Participation in professional examinations improve professionalism of teachers	3.05	2.66	Agreed
4.	Evaluation of training programmes improve teachers effectiveness.	3.45	3.01	Agreed
5.	Enhance the quality of teaching	3.45	3.01	Agreed
6.	Contribute to career progression of teachers	3.16	2.91	Agreed
7.	Provision of in-service training improves teachers performance	3.42	3.21	Agreed
8.	Enable innovative teaching initiatives.	3.11	2.51	Agreed
9.	Foster diversity and inclusion in teaching profession.	3.37	2.62	Agreed
10.	Improves teachers experience	3.28	2.64	Agreed
	Average mean	3.26	2.78	Agreed

Table 1 shows the perceptions of teachers on the role of staff development programmes in shaping their professional growth. The average mean for SDPQ is 3.26; therefore, this result showed high perceptions of teachers on the role of staff development programmes in shaping

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their professional growth. This implied that staff development programmes have significant impacts on professionalism of teachers in secondary schools in Ekiti state, Nigeria.

Research Question 2: What is the degree of professionalism among teachers in secondary schools in Ekiti state, Nigeria?

Table 2: Mean and standard deviation showing the degree of professionalism among teachers in secondary schools in Ekiti state, Nigeria

S/N	ITEMS	Mean	Stand deviation	Remarks
1.	Incorporate technology into teaching methods	2.41	1.92	Disagreed
3.	Collaborate with colleagues to improve teaching strategies.	3.17	2.72	Agreed
3.	Handle challenges related to students behaviour.	2.91	2.51	Agreed
4.	Use various strategies to maintain discipline in the classroom.	3.05	2.54	Agreed
5.	Always seek opportunities to improve educational practices.	3.15	2.79	Agreed
6.	Promote inclusiveness and understanding in the classroom.	3.16	2.78	Agreed
7.	Manage stress and maintain a healthy work-life balance	3.12	2.67	Agreed
8.	Take leadership role within the school.	2.22	1.52	Disagreed
9.	Adapt his/her teaching to accommodate diverse cultural background	3.17	2.92	Agreed
10.	Incorporate students feedback into teaching,	3.08	2.70	Agreed
	Average mean	2.94	2.51	Agreed

Table 2 shows the degree of professionalism among teachers in secondary schools in Ekiti state, Nigeria. The mean of item 1 and 8 are below the mean score of 2.94, implying the disagreement with the statements. The average mean for PTQ is 2.94; therefore, this result showed moderate degree of professionalism among teachers in secondary schools in Ekiti state, Nigeria.

Hypotheses testing

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant relationship between staff development programmes and professionalism of teachers in secondary schools in Ekiti state.

Table 3: Relationship between staff development programmes and professionalism of teachers in secondary schools in Ekiti state, Nigeria.

Variables	N	Mean	SD	r-cal	p-value
Staff development Programme	362	32.62	27.87	*0.518	0.002
Professionalism of Teachers	362	29.44	25.07		

*P<0.05

Table 3 shows that r-cal value of 0.518 was significant at 0.05 because P-value (0.002) < 0.05. The null hypothesis is therefore rejected. Hence, there is significant relationship between staff development programme and professionalism of teachers in secondary schools in Ekiti state.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant relationship between conference/seminar and professionalism of teacher in secondary schools in Ekiti state.

Table 4: Relationship between conference/seminar and professionalism of teacher in secondary schools in Ekiti state.

Variables	N	Mean	SD	r-cal	p-value
Conference/seminar	362	16.28	13.94	*0.323	0.001
Professionalism of Teachers	362	29.44	25.07		

*P<0.05

Table 4 shows that r-cal value of 0.323 was significant at 0.05 because P-value (0.001) < 0.05. The null hypothesis is therefore rejected. Hence, there is significant relationship between conference/seminar and professionalism of teachers in secondary schools in Ekiti state.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant relationship between in-service training and professionalism of teachers in secondary schools in Ekiti state.

Table 5: Relationship between in-service training and professionalism of teachers in secondary schools in Ekiti state.

Variables	N	Mean	SD	r-cal	p-value
In-service training	362	16.34	13.93	*0.302	0.001
Professionalism of Teachers	362	29.44	25.07		

*P<0.05

Table 5 shows that r-cal value of 0.302 was significant at 0.05 because P-value (0.001) < 0.05. The null hypothesis is therefore rejected. Hence, there is significant relationship between conference/seminar and professionalism of teachers in secondary schools in Ekiti state.

DISCUSSION

The findings revealed that teachers' perceptions of the role of staff development programmes in shaping their professional growth were high. It also indicated that the degree of professionalism among teachers in secondary schools in Ekiti State, Nigeria, was moderate. Furthermore, the researcher discovered a significant relationship between staff development programmes and the professionalism of teachers in secondary schools in Ekiti State. This means, by implication, that staff development programmes aid teachers' professionalism. This conclusion is consistent with the findings of Wakama (2017), who found that staff development programmes help to improve teachers' ideas, skills, knowledge, and job performance. To ensure the highest possible quality in the teaching workforce, teachers should always participate in programmes such as conferences, workshops, seminars, and other educational training that can improve their professionalism.

Furthermore, the research revealed a significant relationship between conferences/seminars and the professionalism of teachers in secondary schools in Ekiti State. This finding implies that conferences and seminars contribute to the enhancement of teacher professionalism. Therefore, teachers in secondary schools in Ekiti State should encourage regular attendance at conferences and workshops. This viewpoint is supported by Ezenne (2011), who claimed that the purpose of the conference is to find answers to several issues. It was also discovered that there was a significant relationship between in-service training and professionalism of teachers in secondary schools in Ekiti State. In other words, in-service training is an important programme that contributes to the professionalism of teachers in Ekiti State, Nigeria. This is supported by the claim of Chukwueze (2021), who revealed that teachers should participate in in-service training programmes such as open and distance learning and seminars because such training improves their performance.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of the study, it could be concluded that the degree of professionalism among secondary schools teachers in Ekiti state were moderate and there was a high impacts of staff development programmes on teachers professionalism. Staff development programmes significantly correlated with professionalism of teachers. Furthermore, it could also be concluded that conference/workshop and in-service training programme have a significant impacts on professionalism of teachers in secondary schools in Ekiti state, Nigeria

Recommendations

The following recommendations were made based on the study's findings and conclusion:

1. Government should ensure encourage regular and consistent staff development programmes for all teachers in Ekiti state.

2. School management should also encourage their teachers to enrol and attend conference/workshop and in-service training programmes regularly.

3. Government should ensure regular appraisal of schools and teachers to know their professional needs.

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