

SUPPLY AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF TEACHERS FOR ENHANCED EDUCATION DELIVERY AND PERFORMANCE: THE ROLE OF SCHOOL MANAGEMENT AT THE MACRO AND MICRO LEVELS

BY

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Abstract

The attainment of quality educational delivery and performance is the pivotal role of school personnel. Teachers' supply and professional development is sacrosanct to the attainment of this objective. The quality and quantity of teachers available in schools must constantly reflect or surpass the benchmark. The task of ensuring that teachers' quality and quantity is as required, rest on the shoulders of school management at the macro and macro levels. The need to ensure the optimal availability of teachers in terms of quantity and quality has been a bane in the educational development of Nigeria. The depressed economy of the nation has greatly affected education. However, educational managers can ameliorate the tide through innovative means. Hence, this paper explores this all important aspect of school management and proposed practical approaches that would help overcome the challenges. It examines the roles of school management at the macro and micro levels in the supply and development of teachers towards the attainment of quality education delivery and performance. Specifically, it examined the concepts, relationship between teachers' supply, professional development and educational delivery, and recommended practical roles or approaches school management at the macro and micro levels can put in place. These include; institutionalizing school-based workshops, providing compulsory orientation for newly employed teachers, teachers should be regularly made to execute innovative tasks and adequately commended when well executed, among others.

KEYWORDS: Teacher Supply, Professional development, School management, Macro and Micro Levels, Role.

Introduction

Teachers play a vital role in imparting knowledge and skills to pupil and students. In our present-day reality, they hold the key to the future. They are important functionaries, which no serious educational planner should underrate. The quality of teachers in any programme must be properly scrutinized before the commencement of any educational programme and continually evaluated during the implementation of the programme.

Teachers are the experts amongst other variables that decide the quality of the education system. The success or failure of any educational programme depends on teachers. On their shoulders lies the future of the next generation; teachers are key in the development of any society. In fact, one can allude that society is a reflection of the teachers living in it. They play a major role in transforming student and pupils into good human beings to pursue excellence.

Quality educational delivery requires teachers of the highest quality and the right quantity. Teachers like any other professionals can only offer what they have or are. Therefore, it is necessary to engage teachers in mandatory continuous professional development programmes. The National Policy on Education pointed out that teacher education will continue to take cognizance of changes in methodology and in the curriculum, that, no matter the efficiency of the pre-service training given to teachers, there will necessarily be areas of inadequacies; in-service education of teachers will, therefore, continue to fill those gaps. In-service education for teachers is essential because pre-service training is inadequate for the making of a complete and fully effective teacher as well as for continued success in teaching. The much pre-service training can do for any teacher, is to expose him to existing knowledge and create in him a desire to seek new knowledge as he progresses in his profession. Professional development programmes have a direct, significant impact on teachers' performance.

Similarly, adequate supply of teachers enhances efficiency and effectiveness in the educational system. The National Policy on Education stipulates minimum benchmarks for teacher/pupil ratio at the various levels of education. When there is short supply of teachers in schools, the available ones would experience stress and strain. This would inadvertently lead to low productivity, poor job satisfaction, and high rate of attrition. Therefore, one can argue that adequate supply of professionally developed teachers is crucial for an improved educational delivery and performance.

Concept of Teachers Supply

Donitsa-Schmidt, and Zuzovsky (2014) defined supply as the number of qualified individuals both able and willing to offer their services in a particular line of work, depending on compensation. Compensation includes wages, bonuses, future earning possibilities and other types of rewards that can be encompassed under the heading of 'working conditions' and incentives, including status in society. Teachers' supply encompasses the recruitment and distribution of teachers to schools. It is the process of engaging individuals with the minimum qualification of NCE, as stipulated in the National Policy on Education, to teach students in schools.

The major determinant of the demand and supply of qualified teachers is enrolment (Igenegbai&Osasuyi, 2021). Hence, an increase in the enrolment of pupils and students would lead to an increase in the demand for qualified teachers. Other factors which determine the supply of teachers include; teacher-pupils ratio, the range of subject taught, number of

classrooms in the school, minimum class size, number of periods per teacher weekly, teaching methods and the size and distribution of schools, among others.

Thus, the number of teachers employed to teach in a school is usually predicated on the number of pupils enrolled in the school. The teacher-pupil ratio is usually stipulated for the various levels of education. At the pre-primary levels (Early Child Care Development and Education (ECCDE centres); crèche is 1:10, nursery 1:25, in primary and junior secondary schools, the teacher-pupil ratio is 1:35, and in senior secondary schools 1:40 (FGN, 2013).

Therefore, schools experience issues with teachers' supply when demand exceeds supply, which could be the result of an increase in demand, a decrease in supply or both occurring simultaneously (Guarino, Lucrecia & Glenn, 2006). It could equally be based on the number of unfilled teaching positions or the number of under-qualified teachers hired to fill the empty positions (Santiago, 2002). These include both unqualified teachers as well as teachers who were trained to teach other school subjects or class levels (out-of-field).

Studies have indicated that the total number of teachers available in Nigerian secondary schools is far below the number needed for efficiency and effectiveness in the delivery of instructions. UNESCO (2014) reported that the total number of teachers available in Nigeria in 2009 was 466,800 while in 2015, 688,200 teachers will be needed. This shows that Nigeria need to increase its teaching workforce by 6.68% yearly to meet the teachers demand by 2015.

UNESCO (2019) in its first ever estimate of teachers shortage across the world revealed that Africa continent has the world's greatest teacher shortage. To shore up the deficit and achieve universal primary and secondary education by 2030, one of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) 19.6 million primary and secondary school teachers need to be hired in Africa. The shortages are more severe in Sub-Saharan Africa, which accounts for 17 million of the total number of teachers required than anywhere else.

Concept of Teachers' Professional Development

Teachers' professional development broadly refers to the professional training provided for teachers to enhance their job delivery. It is the professional growth made available for teachers to gain an increase in their experience and systematically examine their teaching. This involves formal experiences such as attending workshops and professional meetings, conferences, mentoring, among others, and informal experiences like reading professional publications, watching television documentaries related to academic discipline, school visitation and peer review, among others (Ganser, 2000). Teachers must be carefully recruited and developed professionally throughout the course of their career for enhanced job performance (Burns & Lawrie, 2015).

Teachers need to be kept abreast with modern methods of teaching, new techniques of assessment and evaluation of students, classroom organization and management, lesson planning and presentation, co-curricular activities, preparation and utilization of instructional materials, students' disciplinary actions, among others. It equally provides teachers with opport unities for critical reflection on their practice; acquire new knowledge and beliefs about content, pedagogy, and learners. Through this medium they gain exposure and adopt innovative pedagogical practices that are expressed by experiential learning (Robert, 2012). Professional development is equally necessary to fill in the skill gap of new teachers and to continue to develop the expertise of teachers. It helps keep teachers up-to-

date with the ever-evolving practices and needs of students. Teachers are required to be active learners under well-planned professional development activities.

Teachers' professional development programmes address three types of learning situations. These are; function (knowledge enhancement on how learning is produced); process (about what happens when people learn); product (participants develop new knowledge and skills as teachers and administrators); hence, effective development programmes become vehicles for learning as well as an active process of transmitting new knowledge, values and skills into behaviour (Smith, 2002). Fareo (2013) classified teachers' professional development into two main phases: initial preparation and continuing professional development. The initial teacher training usually occurs as full-time residential pre-service programmes offered in teachers' colleges or universities or through distance learning for serving unqualified teachers, sandwich programmes during vacations or on study leave.

This comes in the forms of weekend courses, departmental interaction, committee findings, and exchange of views on crucial educational issues. Continuing teachers' professional development usually entails collaborations from other agencies and in various forms. These include; orientation of teachers on curriculum or examination changes, upgrading qualification levels, donor-funded projects, professional teachers' associations in developing subject teaching (e.g. Science Teachers' Association of Nigeria 'STAN'), or sometimes teachers' unions, school-based improvement initiatives, or individual teachers working to improve their qualifications, career prospects or teaching skills. Continuing professional development could be formal or informal, structured or unstructured, teacher-initiated or system-initiated, accredited or not (Mohammed, 2006).

On their part, Sparks and Loucks-Horsley (1990) suggested five types of professional development models used for teachers. They are; individually guided professional development (individuals identify, plan and pursue activities they believe will support their own learning); observation/assessment (teachers are observed directly and given objective data and feedback about their classroom performance). Others are; involvement in a development/improvement process (teachers develop curriculum, design programmes, or become involved in school improvement processes to solve general or specific problems); and training (teachers engage in individual or group instruction in which they acquire knowledge or skills). Finally, inquiry (teachers identify and collect data in an area of interest, analyze and interpret the data, and apply their findings to their own practice). The selection of a particular method or methods depends on many considerations such as training content, cost, time, number of trainees, and whether the re-training is to be done by in-house resource person or by a resource person outside.

Today's society is Information and Communication Technology (ICT) driven, therefore, teachers especially those who have long graduated need development programmes to make them aware of the usefulness of Information Technology in Education. ICT training entails upgrading the knowledge of teachers and giving the teacher a professional status in information and communication technology. It is a process by which teachers are trained in the use of computers and the internet to acquire knowledge on their job. Knowledge of ICT exposes teachers to new teaching methods and ideas. It would enable teachers to update learning materials easily and deliver lectures without barriers, facilitate interaction between learner(s) and teacher(s), teacher(s) and teacher(s), and teacher and environment. Therefore,

well-refined graduates who would, in turn, contribute meaningfully to national development would be produced (Bingimlas, 2010).

Many teachers after graduation have little or no opportunity for re-training and their training ends as soon as they graduate with no opportunity for updating their knowledge and skills by attending seminars, workshops, and conferences that will subsequently enhance their knowledge and skills and their classroom teaching (Mohammed, 2006). The 2, 3 or 4 years teachers' preparation programmes in higher institutions of learning cannot be adequate for teachers to perform their job optimally from recruitment to retirement.

Teachers' Registration Council of Nigeria (TRCN) stipulates the Professional Standard for Nigerian Teachers (PSNT) which is expected to cover the annual conference of registered teachers, workshops and seminars as well as other training programmes approved by the TRCN. The objectives of teachers' professional development are:

1. To provide a medium for cross-fertilization of ideas and experiences that would ultimately improve professional competence and commitment;
2. To offer intellectual, social and emotional engagement with ideas, materials, and colleagues.
3. To maintain competence and relevance of the teacher in today's economy. Technological, political and social environments in the country;
4. To keep teachers abreast with the latest innovation in the teaching profession and prevent the setting in of the law of diminishing returns that could crop in without continuous training;
5. To maintain professional excellence at all times;
6. To sharpen skills and knowledge and ensure the continued relevance of teachers in the educational system;
7. To provide the opportunity to supplement the initial training of teachers and improve their knowledge, skills, and attitudes to meet the needs in education service;
8. To serve as an ongoing process of change in order to assist teachers to adapt, contribute and participate actively in the implementation of challenges ahead, and
9. Enhance teachers' commitment to the profession.

Relationship between Teachers' Supply, Professional Development and Educational Delivery

Teachers' supply largely determines the effectiveness and efficiency of teachers in the discharge of their duties and by extension the attainment of educational goals. The students/teacher ratio stipulated by the National Policy on Education is in line with best practices across the globe. It is geared towards ensuring effectiveness and efficiency in teaching and learning, when these benchmarks are strictly adhered to. Therefore, the reverse could be the case, if the situation is otherwise. The demand for more teachers appears to have made administrators opt to recruit and hurriedly train emergency teachers. Nwagwu (2000) is of the opinion that organizers and managers of the UBE programme should phase the implementation and respect the policy's decision in the National Policy on Education that

Nigeria Certificate in Education (NCE) should be the minimum qualification for teaching.

Similarly, education requires teachers of high quality. Research has shown that a highly skilled and professional teaching force does and will continue to make a difference (Osasuyi&Igenegbai, 2019). Teachers' knowledge, an intended outcome of pre-service training, is strongly and consistently related to students' performance. Supovitz and Turner (2000) observed that the number of professional development that teachers participate in has a strong link with both inquiry-based teaching practice and investigative classroom culture. The analysis of their data revealed that teachers with less than 40 hours of professional development were less innovative (had more traditional practices) than did the average teacher. They also observed that teachers with between 40 and 79 hours of professional development had about average teaching practices; while teachers with approximately 80 hours of professional development "reported using inquiry-based teaching practices significantly more frequently – about two-tenths of a standard deviation – than the average teacher. Teacher participation in a sustained and effective professional development and their subsequent use of standards-based instructional strategies has a positive impact on their students' performance.

This implies that teachers' supply and professional development has great consequences for educational delivery. When teachers are in short supply or they lack continuous professional development, those available would either be overworked, or they may not be of the right calibre in terms of training and experience. The recruitment of unqualified or under qualified individuals to teach in schools has great negative implication. When students are exposed to poor learning at a lower level, it creates problem at the higher level for both the learner and teachers. Poor learning is worse than no learning. When students are poorly or wrongly taught, they must first unlearn what they have learnt before they can learn the right things. Therefore, the supply of teachers without the right professional capacity in schools does more harm to the system. At all times only individuals that have what it takes to teach should be given access to our school. Furthermore, it must remain a matter of policy to continually provide them with programmes to keep them up-to-date with reality. What students acquire from school must always be in sync to life.

The Role of School Management at the Macro and Micro Levels

Ogonor (2019) asserted that the task of ensuring that the goals of education are achieved in schools is the duty of school management both at the board level and at the school level (principal or headmaster/mistress). Therefore, it is expedient for the following strategies to be put in place at the macro level (school management board) and micro level (school level).

Macro Level

The school management board could achieve the task of ensuring quality educational delivery through the following.

- 1. Recruitment:** The process of recruitment of teachers must take cognizance of quantity and quality. It is expedient for only individuals who meet the requirement for teaching to be employed and distributed to schools to teach. Similarly, the benchmark of teachers required for a school to operate and the students/teacher ratio should be the target in the supply of teachers to schools.

2. **Orientation:** When teachers are recruited, they should not be hurriedly distributed to schools to begin their primary assignment. Orientation programmes should be organized for them. This way, they come into the job better prepared for the task that lies ahead. It is the responsibility of the school management board to ensure that this exercise is carried out whether at the central level or at the various local levels.
3. **In-service training:** As enshrined in the National Policy on Education, school management board should constantly provide avenue for teachers to attend seminars, workshops, conferences, acquire higher degrees. This could be achieved through collaborations with the various professional bodies such as Science Teachers' Association of Nigeria (STAN), institutions of learning (National Teachers' Institute, universities and colleges of education), and erudite individuals. Incentives should equally be provided to encourage teachers engage in professional development. This could be in the form of allowances, permission, and opportunity to be upgrade or promoted.

Micro Level

At the school level, the task of achieving quality educational delivery can be attained when school heads put in place the following.

1. **Periodic seminars:** The opportunity to participate in seminars, workshops and conferences organized by school management board, professional bodies and their likes might not be possible for every teacher within a school year. However, it is possible for them to still learn something new every term or session. School heads could organize seminars and workshop within the school for teachers. More experienced teachers or colleagues could be assigned the responsibility to train their colleagues (peer review training). This exercise could be rotational, thereby giving every teacher the opportunity to prepare and share with their colleagues their areas of strength.
2. **Proper supervision:** It is very important for teachers, especially the young ones to be properly supervised. School heads could create departments or units within the school based on subject areas and quantity of teachers to aid supervision. Through this medium, the various heads of departments or units who should be individuals with capacity become responsible for assessing teachers' lesson notes, lesson plans, examination questions and marking schemes, students' examination scripts and classroom note books, among others. By so doing, errors would be nib in the bud, and collaborative learning would always take place.
3. **Innovative tasks:** School heads should come up with innovative ways that would put teachers on their toes, especially in terms of professional improvement. This could be achieved by assigning assembly topics to teachers, which covers different endeavours, teachers should be made to present a well written report at the end of every term, groom students to participate in local, national, and international competitions, task teachers to come up with innovations, among others.

Conclusion

Teachers are vital parts of the school system as they are both inputs, which drive the processing and determine the output, and are part of the environment. Thus, the importance of teachers in any educational programme cannot be over emphasized, especially at the basic and secondary levels of education, where pupils and students are in dire need of guidance, monitoring and mentoring. Teachers' quality greatly influences the quality and standard of education pupils and students acquire. The number and quality must be meticulously planned to ensure adequacy of the teachers quantitatively and qualitatively.

Based on the foregoing, teachers supply and professional development is imperative for educational delivery and performance. Therefore, enhanced educational delivery and performance entails a compelling need for the recruitment, distribution and continuous professional development of exclusively, qualified and competent teachers in our schools.

Recommendations

The supply and professional development of teachers is sacrosanct for enhanced delivery and performance, based on the foregoing, the following recommendations are advanced for school managers at the macro and micro levels.

- i. School principals or head teachers should institutionalizing school-based workshops/seminars. It should be a practice for every school term to beginning with an in-house workshop/seminar, which would afford experienced and young teachers to make presentations and share ideas.
- ii. There should be compulsory orientation for newly employed teachers. This can be done both at the macro and micro level.
- iii. Teachers should be regularly made to execute innovative tasks and adequately commended when well executed. This would stimulate them to embrace personal development and broaden their horizon.
- iv. Teachers should be grouped into subject areas or related subject areas for effective supervision, mentoring and peer learning.
- v. The process of recruitment of teachers should be very transparent and objective. It is important for only persons who are fit and proper as teachers to be recruited into the school. Recruitment of teachers should not be to gratify persons.

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