

In-Service Education and Professional Development as Tools for Enhancing Geography Teachers' Job Performance in Nigerian Secondary Schools

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Abstract

This paper focuses on In-Service education and professional development as tools for enhancing geography teachers' job performance in Nigerian secondary schools. To achieve this goal the paper looked at the concept of In-Service education and professional development, types, rationale, benefits and challenges of In-Service education. Furthermore, the effectiveness of In-Service education and geography teachers' job performance were also highlighted. Concept of geography, evolution of geography education in Nigeria and the geography teacher were equally discussed. Also, pointed out were the concepts of job performance, In-Service education and geography teachers' job performance. Finally, the need for In-Service education and professional development of geography teachers' in Nigeria were dwelt upon. It was concluded that government should invest on In-Service education and development of teachers' in order to achieve the national objective of education as enshrined in the National Policy on Education. Amongst others it was recommended that government should provide In-Service education opportunities for geography teachers' in Nigeria through a systematic and planned process to enable them update and upgrade their skills and knowledge, also government as a matter of urgency should develop a deliberate training policy that will encourage regular organization of In-Service training aimed at enhancing geography teachers' job performance.

Keywords: In-Service education, professional development, enhancing, geography teachers', job performance.

Introduction

In-Service education is designed for the manpower development of the school system and the educational enterprise as a whole. If teachers are to perform their functions effectively and efficiently, it becomes imperative for them to require training in new skills and modern methodology. The level of education attainment by teachers determines the educational standard in a country. Hence the National Policy on Education (NPE, 2014) pointed out that no level of education can rise above the quality of its teachers. Excellent performance of every institution is dependent on its key human resources. Although there are many other factors that play major role in its success, every educational institution must have quality teachers' in order to improve upon the knowledge, skills and general performance of its students (Dolores and Ernest, 2018). According to Dolores and Ernest (2018) teacher education, training and development are a means for professional upgrading which deals with all developmental functions directed at the maintenance and enhancement of their professional competence. The quality of teachers' that work in a specific educational system helps in the attainment of positive learning outcomes in schools. Performance of teachers' is partly

dependent on their pre-service training in addition to the In-Service training given to the teachers. Pre-service teacher training programs (PSTP) are very crucial in order to upgrade teachers' skills, knowledge and performance and also to enable them to be more effective. Similarly, In-Service training programs (ISTP) are necessary to re-orientate teachers to new goals and values, to train them in new teaching and learning methods, to prepare them to cope with curriculum change and to provide them with the knowledge and skills to teach new learning areas (Al-zoubi, Bani & Ismail, 2010).

According to Raja, Furquan and Khan (2011), In-Service training and development have become the most important factor in the organizational world, because it increases the efficiency and the effectiveness of both employees and the organization. Aligning himself with the above assertion, Sarbeng (2013) noted that employee training and development is a major force in the economic success of any institution, and therefore, educational institutions cannot afford but to develop the requisite manpower to support both the productive and service industries. Training is a systematic development of the knowledge, skills and behavior required by employees to do adequately a confirmed job or task (Shaheen, Naqvi & Khan, 2013). Similarly, Amin, Rashid-Saeed and Lodhi (2013), viewed training in simplistic term as learning that is provided in order to improve performance on the present job. On the other hand, employee development is aimed at providing employees with competencies for anticipated future jobs and roles. Sims, (2002) while making distinction between training and development emphasized that "training" focuses on present jobs while "development" prepares employees for possible future jobs.

However, Richards and Farrell cited in Gilrado (2014) noted that training is action that teachers perform that have an immediate impact on their context. In their view, training is about preparing teachers for the teaching task itself, that is, techniques that will help them cope with teaching situations such as adapting materials and grouping leaders among others. Professional development in contrast, involves teachers' knowledge of themselves and of their teaching situations. Whereas training is a top-down approach to teacher education-experts decides what comprises training programmes-development is bottom-up because it "often involves examining different dimensions of a teacher's practice as a basis for reflective review" (Richards & Farrell cited in Gilrado, 2014). Training and development can be regarded as processes designed to enhance the professional knowledge skills and attitudes of educators so that they might, in turn, improve the learning of students. In the light of the foregoing, therefore, training and development are important part of geography teachers' preparation programs.

In-Service education is a fundamental for the enhancement of teachers' professionalism related to the teachers' vision to improve the quality of their work. Various scholars have shown that In-Service training is very important in an organization to function effectively. Ekpoh, Oswald and Victoria (2013), noted that, teachers' who attend In-Service training perform effectively in their work as regards pedagogical knowledge content, classroom management, teaching method and evaluation of students. Similarly, a study conducted by Thompson (1992), showed that after going through In-Service training, there were positive changes in teachers' attitude, increased self-confidence and also follow up with teachers' readiness to face various resistant situations. In addition, Angrist and Lavy cited in Dolores and Ernest (2018) in their submission on the relevance of In-Service training pointed out that a study about In-Service teachers' training in Jerusalem revealed that there was a significant positive relationship between teachers' training and their job performance.

Concept of In-Service Education

In-Service education can be defined as the relevant courses and activities in which a serving teacher may participate to upgrade his professional knowledge, skills, and competence in the teaching profession (Eduwen & Tayo, 2016). It encompasses all forms of education and training given to a teacher who is already on the job of teaching and learning. Harerimana, Ntahobavukira and Adegoke (2017) see In-Service education as a formal process such as a conference, seminar, or workshop, collaborative learning among members of a work team or a course at a college or university. They also, noted that In-Service education can occur in informal contexts such as discussions among work colleagues, independent reading and research, observations of a colleague's work, or other learning from a peer. According to them, people often use other names, including staff development, teacher professional development, training, professional learning, or continuing education. They added that, whatever the term, the purpose is the same-to improve learning for educators and students. Akcamete (2005) opined that In-Service education are educational opportunities to help the staff to improve themselves in their professions for all the personnel in all the work fields (education, health, technology and private sector, all working fields in public organizations).

Generally, the teachers are regarded as the hub of educational development all over the world. In this regard therefore, In-Service training is concerned with the activities and courses in which a serving teacher may participate for the purpose of upgrading his professional skills, knowledge and interest, subsequent to initial pre-service training. This means that In-Service training is principally designed to fill the gap of professional inadequacies of a serving teacher. Fisher (2003) pointed out that the skills appropriate many years ago might not be relevant now to prepare students for the world beyond school, because students are being tasked to be more creative and thoughtful in their daily activities. In a similar vein, In-Service training is viewed as activities and courses aimed at extending the professional knowledge and skills of a serving teacher. It is therefore expected that after acquiring the necessary know-how, a teacher needs to improve on his standard from time to time so as to prevent the quality of his teaching from diminishing and to improve it. He has to update and upgrade his knowledge so that such knowledge may not become out- modeled and stale.

In-Service training according to Maclean (2018) involves equipping organizational workforce with all necessary skills needed for their improved satisfactory job performance. He further noted that In-Service training gives room for workers to develop and enhance their skills. It is indeed, a wonderful tool employed by organization to achieve the best result from their workers. Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) as cited in Musset (2010) opined that In-Service training is geared towards updating, developing, and broadening the knowledge that teachers had acquired during the initial teacher education and provide them with new skills and professional understanding. It in no small measure improves the effectiveness of teachers. Similarly, United Nations Educational Social and Cultural Organization (UNESCO, 2019), asserted that In-Service is a training that is concurrent to official teaching responsibilities to improve teachers' qualifications and skills. It further noted that, In-Service training can be compulsory relating to official professional development activities to maintain or upgrade professional qualifications or it can also be optional with the sole purpose to improve skills.

From the foregoing discussions, it thus means that, In-Service education is the upgrading of the knowledge and skills of employees and modeling and re-orientation of their attitude, so that they can be more effective, efficient and productive in the performance of their jobs. This development becomes necessary because no employee has attained the level of perfection at the time of hiring. They need to be developed right from the time they take up their appointment to the day they retire.

Types of In-Service Education

There are various types of In-Service training or teacher professional development programmes in organizations. According to Okoro (2001) these include holiday courses which are short in nature but very intensive courses organized during long holidays and vacations. Such courses span over a period of about eight to ten weeks duration. This type of training is usually assisted by professional members of the related disciplines' in higher institutions and or other specialist from related ministries, industries and firms. Other forms of In-Service education include:

1. Study leave is where teachers are permitted to take a year or more to pursue professional improvement courses at least once in five years.
2. Workshops are series of field trips or scientific expedition to undergo intensive study of educational problems.
4. Extramural courses are programmes which are specially directed at improving the competence of teachers for their work, planned and conducted under the supervision of teacher trainers or project supervisor.
5. Industrial experience involves teachers' visiting some industries that use the current and modern equipment and facilities.
6. Vocational teachers' meeting: This refers to teachers' forming themselves into professional bodies. Each teacher participates with other teachers' in a group, which meets regularly over a period of time to study problems relating to vocational education.

The foregoing suggests that, it has become very imperative for education planners and policy implementers in Nigeria to appreciate the need to ensure that geography teachers embark on professional development programmes to enable them fit into the new approach of education in the 21st century. There are many forms and types of professional development programmes available for teachers to enhance their productivity. Therefore, it is the duty of the teachers' and the institutions in which they serve to make themselves available for such programmes.

Rationale for In-Service Education

Teachers' are one of the critical success factors of learning that has a great responsibility in managing learning that includes planning, organizing teaching materials, use of tools and learning methods and assessment of learning outcomes. Teachers' are therefore required to improve their professionalism so as to create an educated human who have high quality life skills to function in the society. Unfortunately, the National Policy on Education (2014) prescribed the National Certificate in Education (NCE) as the minimum teaching qualification in Nigeria. However, to seek for more relevance and professional development, teachers now engage in one form of In-Service training or the other to make up for their inadequacies and extend their professional competencies. It is against backdrop that, Okolo (2013) noted that education is the key to human capital development and the system must be subject to reforms and repositioning as static education system does not transform societies. A well-designed In-Service education could help to revitalize the practicing teacher or teacher educator, hence the need for continuing education of the practicing teacher. According to Kpangbam (1992), the rationale for In-Service education for teachers cannot be overestimated hence he outlined them as follows:

1. It is recognized that however good existing pre-service teacher education programmes are, by their very nature cannot equip intending teachers with all they need for a life-time of work in the classroom.

2. There is increasing awareness of the impact of social, political and technological changes and of the need for teachers' to be conscious of and responsive to such changes.
3. There are clear indications that teachers are members of an under-educated profession, whose working conditions do not encourage the kinds of peer interaction which would improve performance.
4. There is growing expectation that teacher should reform their own practice, as it is only then that meaningful curriculum development could take place in the daily routine of classroom.
5. There is a growing number of specialized administrative roles that teachers' have to take up with passing years in teaching, for example, head of department, head of blocks and counselor and effective performance of the tasks requires specialized training because they involve the exercise of leadership skills and judgment of a high order.

Benefits of In-Service Education in Nigeria

Historically mankind on earth started a life style which is defined as hunter-gatherer. Because of the technological innovations and discoveries, this hunter-gatherer life style has exhibited a continuous shift and improvement throughout history. In these days in which we live through an age of technology and information, these shifts and improvements are experienced more swiftly. Humans, professional bodies and non-governmental organizations and societies have to keep up with these shifts and improvements.

In our world, where the technological shifts are increasing in a very fast manner, these shifts have their effects particularly on the labour market (Can & Kavuncubasi, 2005). In this period which technology changes swiftly, information accumulates rapidly, there are abrupt changes in the social and economic areas and organization, human resources management gains impetus, total quality management applications gain significance, the qualities that are demanded in the staff are also subject to changes. In such an environment, the importance of In-Service training programmes conducted to help the staff to gain the required abilities is increasing everyday (Gultekin & Cubukcu, 2008). In our age, the change which is experienced in all the fields certainly has an effect on the educational organizations. Meaning that educational organizations have to keep with this change and constantly renew themselves. In this process therefore, the role which the teachers will play has a significant importance because the quality of a school is tightly connected to the quality of the education provided by its teachers. In order to help teachers to provide education in such quality, they need to be trained well in the pre-service period, but they also need to improve themselves constantly in In-Service period (Koc, 2013).

There is no doubt that In-Service training will continue to fill the missing gaps created by the changing society between pre-service training and teachers' effectiveness in the world of work. The National Policy on Education (2014, revised edition), emphasized the significance of In-Service training of teachers, so that education can be advantageously employed to fulfill national philosophy.

In view of this, Akinbode (1996) while expressing his view observed that investment in teachers' in the form of In-Service training was a critical factor in the development of job commitment. The result of the study conducted by Akinbode indicated that teachers who had low commitment to the profession prior to training became highly committed after they were given opportunity to go for In-Service training. Thus, In-Service training served to boost teachers' moral and consequently brings positive job performance.

Challenges of In-Service Education in Nigeria

Effectiveness of teachers' remains the priority of In-Service professional activity in Nigeria. However, so many issues militate against the purpose of professional development of teachers' in Nigeria. Louise cited in Ajani, Samantha and Maluleke (2018), Eduwen and Tayo (2016) noted that teacher professional development activities have failed the purpose in real practice of teaching. They identified these challenges as follows:

1. Inability of In-Service professional development to meet the expectations of the participating teachers, teachers' development activities lamented that most of these activities did not benefit their teaching skills in classroom. Teachers' rated these trainings as mere wasting of their precious time as their key expectations and needs were never met or attended to.
2. Inappropriate professional activities to suit instructional tasks delivery in classroom was also identified as shortfall of professional development by teachers. Various subjects demand varied teaching skills and approaches that promote effective teaching and learning of various subject-contents: these varieties, teachers decried were not considered as teachers of different specialization were hurled together for same professional development activities that did not consider or embed their individual subjects.
3. Another prominent challenge of professional development of teachers was the limited number of teachers that could access In-Service professional development training in Nigeria. Many teachers were not opportune to participate, and those who participated were not frequently trained.
4. Inability of the participating teachers' in professional development activities to apply or adapt the knowledge experienced or acquired in the training to classroom as big challenge to usefulness of in-service professional development. Innovations of new approaches or ideas in teaching do not manifest in classroom teaching after teachers' participation in these elaborated trainings.
5. In-Service training programme is capital intensive and most of the participants are self-sponsored. Meaning that most of them often fail to cope with the exorbitant school fees and other incidental expenses for textbooks and personal upkeeps.
6. The time factor is a major constraint as contact hours for lectures and examinations are inadequate. This raises doubts on the effectiveness, credibility and scope of the programme.

In the light of the foregoing, it is clear that to improve the quality of geography teachers' In-Service training plays a very vital role because education is the figure in building a nation. Thus, In-Service training for teachers has become the backbone of the implementation of all educational development. Good qualities of teachers are determined by constant and continuous In-Service training which leads to the shaping and development of the teachers' professionalism. Teachers' In-Service training gives them opportunity for self-development which enables them to improve the competence of the teaching profession that includes: pedagogical competence, personality competence, social competence and professional competence.

Concept of Professional Development

Professional development according to Zafar and Shazia (2016) is the sum total of all formal and informal learning process and experiences of the teacher. Professional development takes place in a challenging learning environment under condition of complexity and dynamic changes. Professional development is the process through which a successful teacher reviews his teaching and learning

skills and knowledge content matter. Professionalism enables a teacher to renew and extend their changing agent to the moral purposes of teaching. According to Bradson cited in Zafar and Shazia (2016) professional development can be interpreted in three distinct indefinite concepts which are learning, engagement and improved practice. He defined professional development as learning opportunities that engage a teacher in creative and reflective practices in such a way to increase teachers learning and teaching abilities.

Teachers' professional development programmes have immense importance not only for teaching and learning process but also teachers themselves. It helps teachers in understanding their strengths and their weaknesses and also provides a base to their knowledge. Professionalism identifies the appropriate support and help teachers in attaining their educational goals. It is very helpful in meeting the educational demands, vocational needs of the teachers (Kelchetermans cited in Zafar & Shazia, 2016). Tang and Cho cited in Zafar and Shaziai (2016) posited that the professional development of a teacher may be considered as a learning process that results from the meaningful interaction between the teacher professional contexts. They further noted that, it has great significance and values in the professional growth of a teacher. The links between professionalism and professional development of a teacher indicates the fact that concept of professionalism is inherent in professional development policies and practices.

Geography Teachers' Job Performance

The success and failure of any educational system largely depends on the performance of the teachers', this translate to the fact that the performance of teachers' in a school system is emphatic for the improvement of the overall educational system. Performance is simply defined as the accomplishment of an assigned task. However, Vipinosam (2015) opined that performance refers to the actual work done as against the expected achievement. He noted further that performance is the result of the effort exerted and the resources utilized. While expressing their views, Garret and Poole in Maclean (2018) pointed out that performance is measured in terms of both efficiency and effectiveness of the teachers. Adeyemi (2010) asserted that teacher performances are duties performed by teachers at a particular period in the school system. It also refers to the ability of teachers to combine relevant input for the enhancement of teaching and learning process (Riaz, 2000). From the foregoing discussion, it is obvious that for quality education to be achieved in a school system, what happens in the classroom and all other environmental factors within the school need to be well taken care of. As a major stakeholder who is responsible for enforcing quality education, the teachers' performance is recognized as critical element influencing education quality thus the development of teacher performance (UNESCO, 2006).

A teacher's job performance can be influenced by the following factors: attitude, subject mastery, teaching methodology, personal characteristics, the classroom environment, school environment, mental ability, personality, relation with the students, preparation and planning, effectiveness in presenting subject matter, relation with other staff, self-improvement, relation with parents and community, noise, intellect, teaching techniques, motivational skills (Akram, 2014). Performance has certain criteria that teachers should identify and practice as soon as they find themselves in the teaching profession. These are: good classroom management, a caring personality, participation and involvement in school activities, attractive appearance, and admission of one's own mistakes. Others include self-control, punctuality to work, cooperation with constituted authority and fellow staff, and commitment to duty. Amin et al (2013) stated that job performance is determined by the workers' level of participation in the day to day running of the school system. They identified some factors

which contribute to performance as follows: (i) satisfy the learners' through his teaching style and quality (ii) Apart from teaching performance of other assignments as assigned by the principal and the department. (iii) Management of class discipline, student motivation and improvement of their achievement. (iv). Performance of his duties in a regular way and (v) Interaction with students, parents, colleagues and high officials.

In-Service Education and Geography Teachers' Job Performance

Training works as a catalyst which provokes a significant change in a teacher, redefines role, broadens vision and enhances the attributes of a teacher. In-Service teacher training enables teachers' to be more systematic and logical in their teaching style (Kazmi, Pervez & Mumtaz, 2011). According to Harris and Sass (2011), In-Service training programmes for teachers tend to increase the qualities possessed by a good teacher which positively affect the performance of a teacher. A study of the effects of teachers training on teacher value added conducted by Harris and Sass (2011), indicated that training of a teacher was positively associated with productivity in the middle and high school mathematics. The result of the study revealed also that more experienced teachers appeared more effective in teaching elementary and middle school reading. Another study conducted by Angrist and Lavy cited in Dolores and Ernest (2018) about In-Service teachers' training in Jerusalem revealed positive relationship between teachers' training and students test scores. In line with many studies on performance of employees which indicated a strong association between teachers' motivation and improvement in performance. Oluremi (2013) found a significant relationship between teachers' motivation and teachers' job performance competency. Nyamwange, Kyalo and Opakas (2017) in a study on In-Service training on performance of mathematics in Kenya, observed that in-service education training project had significantly improve programme of mathematics. Furthermore, in Nigeria Oyewole cited in Abdullah and Afshin (2017) investigated the impact of teaching experience on job performance. The result revealed that there was a significant relationship between teachers' years of experience and their job performance.

Need for In-Service Education and Professional Development of Geography Teachers' in Nigeria

The need for In-Service education and professional development in Nigeria cannot be over emphasized; hence it is a veritable platform for teachers to equip themselves with new knowledge and skills which will enable them to face new challenges and reformation in education. Ajani, Samantha and Maluleke (2018) opined that professional development is highly important and essential to effective teaching in the school system. They noted that an effective teacher is the one that can actually affect learning or impact real and concrete learning. They further noted that teaching profession is saddled with great responsibility of producing responsive individuals who can compete skillfully in any field of humanities. The need for improved quality education has led to drive for professional development of teachers to achieve better performance of learners in academic activities. Teachers' have great responsibility of molding learners who can arsenal various resources in the society to propel developments in various facets of economy. Teachers' are to facilitate learning that can produce learners who are responsive and skillful for nation's manpower. These vast expectations from teachers' make them to be repositioned for In-Service professional development activities that increase their knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary for optimum performance in their teaching profession.

Louise cited in Ajani, Samantha and Maluleke (2018) identified the need for In-Service education and professional development of teachers' in Nigeria and African secondary schools as follows:

1. Provision of sophisticated academic workforce as teaching personnel in the schools.
2. Empowerment of teachers with modern skills to boost human resource development in schools.
3. Conforming to present information and communication technological advancements that befit the expectation of the modern teachers.
4. In-Service education offers one of the most promising roads to the improvement of instruction. It includes goal and content, the training process and the context. In-service education is the totality of educational and personal experiences that contribute toward an individual being more competent and satisfied in an assigned professional role.

Conclusion

Teachers' are the most significant and critical resource in quality education in any country in the world. Therefore, for Nigeria to achieve the national objective of education as enshrined in NPE, In-Service education of teachers should be viewed as a necessary tool in achieving this very important national goal. In-Service education and professional development of teachers constitute an integral part of human resource management for every institution of learning. Hence for teachers' to be effective and fully actualize the goals of education in Nigeria, they deserve access to regular, well packaged and designed, effective and quality In-Service professional development activities in every level of education. Government through the Ministry of Education (MOE) must invest in In-Service education and development of teachers' through the organization of workshops, seminars, conferences refresher courses and other relevant In-Service education and professionally inclined programmes.

Recommendations

The researcher recommended that:

1. Government should provide In-Service education opportunities for geography teachers in Nigeria through a systematic and planned process to enable them update and upgrade their skills and knowledge.
2. Government as a matter of urgency should develop a deliberate training policy that will encourage regular organization of In-Service training programmes which will aim at enhancing geography teachers' job performance in Nigeria.
3. Schools should carry out teachers' training needs assessment; this will ensure that adequate and appropriate training programmes are designed for geography teachers.
4. To ensure uniformity and standard of In-Service education in Nigeria, standing committees should be constituted to regulate the exercise in each state.
5. In-Service training for geography teachers should be made mandatory and the training should be focused on job related tasks that are real, practical oriented and relevant to the participants.

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