

An Empirical Analysis of the Contributions of Secondary School Personnel Towards the Achievement of Teaching Practice Objective

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ABSTRACT This study identified the contributions, and problems affecting the effective involvement of secondary school personnel towards the achievement of teaching practice objectives. It also identified possible ways for the enhancement of the contribution of secondary school personnel towards the achievement of teaching practice objectives. Three research questions and three hypotheses were formulated and tested using percentages, and t-test statistics at 0.05 level of significant. A questionnaire containing forty-two items was administered to 738 respondents used in this study. The study revealed that; the writing and use of lesson notes, use of classroom management techniques, assess to and positive utilization of instructional materials as some of the contributions of secondary school personnel towards the achievement of the objectives of teaching practice. And there is no significant difference between principals and teachers on the identified ways of enhancing the contributions of secondary school personnel towards the achievement of the objective of teaching practice in Delta State.

INTRODUCTION

Teaching is an act of imparting knowledge to a learner in a teacher in a systematic way. It is a scientific process which involves psychological and philosophical knowledge. Teaching is a profession. A profession is an occupation based upon specialized intellectual study and training, the purpose of which is to supply skilled service or advice to others for definite fee or salary.

Teaching is a systematic presentation of facts, ideas, skill and techniques to pupils or students or any learner. It is a systematic, rational and organized process of transmitting knowledge and skills in accordance with professional principals (Ukeje, 1998).

A teacher is a professionally trained person, involved in the systematic, rational and organized process of transmitting knowledge and skills to a learner. A person in training either in a teacher training college, college of education and faculty of education in a university on how to manage children and facilities, what to teach and how to teach is known as a student-teacher. The training of student-teachers involves both theory and practical courses.

The status of a profession depends among other things entering criteria, duration of training, knowledge and practical based skills acquired for practice, and rigorous preparation for service

(Howsam, 1982). As a result, the curriculum content for training teachers in Nigeria consists of cognitive and psychomotor skills. The practical part of the curriculum is usually a six unit course, divided into three units each, in most colleges of education and faculty of educations, titled Teaching Practice and Practical Teaching respectively. It is designed to expose student-teachers to classroom management techniques, school record keeping, application of teaching methods and styles, evaluation techniques and so on. Teaching practice is similar to one year internship training for medical students and one year rigorous law school programme before licensing to practice.

Teaching practice is basically a pre-practice designed to drive in and inculcate in the student-teacher the ethics of the teaching profession. This experience cannot easily be acquired inside the ordinary classroom condition of teacher training or colleges of education and universities. As a result, one aspect off the teacher education programme that has continued to attract public attention and critics is the student teaching practice (Imogie, 1990). Teaching practice is the most meaningful part of a future teachers' education (Church, 1976). The present situation in our teacher training institutes may not satisfy this demand.

According to Dada and Iyeke (1999:2) "but

unfortunately this is not the case as at now. The Teacher training institutions tend to allow certain circumstances to compel them into compromising in such areas as duration of teaching practice, the practice centers, the supervision modalities and other interacting factors. In the long run, the purpose of the teaching is hardly achieved”.

The external supervision of student-teachers entirely by their school lecturers, may not result into the production of competent teachers, because of their inability to acquire certain competences, for which the courses is designed. According to UkaSoanya (1999: 2) and Mgbor (1995: 18) the competences expected to be developed by student teacher include.

“teaching skills, performances, personality, attitude of the master teacher command of theoretical knowledge about learning and human behaviour. Control of technical skills of teaching which facilities learning display of attitudes which foster learning and genuine human relationships. Sureness and adequacy to the subject matter to be taught”.

Acquisition of these competences by student teacher could promote their instructional; effectiveness when employed as graduate teachers. Teacher training institute could achieve this objective (teacher’s competency) if student teachers are placed in the schools under the guidance of mater teachers who are highly competent (Nelson and Woo, 1988). This indicates that the objective of teaching practice in the training of teacher cannot be achieved without the positive contributions of school principals and senior professional and competent service teachers.

Basically, some of the general tacks which will help in meeting the responsibilities to student teachers by the competent co-operating (permanent teacher of service teacher) include:

- (i) Assist the student-teacher with school building, departments, administrative procedure and policies.
- (ii) Give guidance and suggestion in the construction of units and lesson plans, lesson notes, evaluation procedures and student counseling.
- (iii) Adequate training of student – teachers by co-operation teachers demands a reasonable time period, not just six or twelve weeks duration, particularly at the beginning of new academic year and so on.

The present system in which inadequate time is allocated to the teaching practice exercise may be responsible for the following student-teachers competency deficiencies by the university of Port-Harcourt, education students; these includes: writing of evaluation question in the affective and psychomotor domain, arousing the interest of students at the beginning of the lesson and presentation of lessons. Sequentially and involvement of students in the lession and so on (Ukasoanya, 1999: 2).

The objectives of teaching practice are laudable. If these objectives are to be achieved, the need for effective instructional supervision becomes very crucial. However, continuous instructional supervision cannot be carried out by lecturers from teacher training institutions. Educationalist like: Fagbahi (1984) have questioned the value and quality of teaching practice supervision and Balogun (1984) agree that supervision can affect the quality of teaching. Hence there is need for adequate and positive involvement of principal and co-operating teacher of secondary schools in the daily profe-ssional assistance and guidance of student-teachers. In what ways can secondary school personnel contribute towards the achievement of teaching practice objectives? What are the problems affecting their contributions and possible solutions towards such problems.

This study was designed to identify the contributions of secondary school personnel towards the training of student-teachers. It also examined problems affecting their contributions and identified the possible solutions to these problems in Delta State. Specifically the study provided answers to the following questions.

Research Questions

1. What are the professional contributions of secondary school personnel towards the achievement of teaching practice objectives?
2. What are the problems affecting the contributions of secondary school personnel towards the achievement of teaching practice objective?
3. In what ways could the contributions of secondary school principals and teacher towards the achievement of the objective of teaching practice be enhanced?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated and tested in this study.

1. There is no significant difference between the professional contributions and problems affecting the contributions towards the achievement of objective of teaching practice by secondary school personnel.
2. There is no significant difference between principals and teacher on the identified ways of enhancing the contributions of secondary school personnel towards the achievement of teaching practice objective.
3. There is no significant difference between teacher and principals' view on the identified problems affecting the contribution of secondary school personnel towards the achievement of teaching practice objective.

METHOD AND PROCEDURE

The study is a descriptive research, made up of 325 principals and 6,879 secondary school teachers in Delta State. The proportional stratified random sampling techniques was used in the selection of the sample which consisted of 50 principals and 688 teachers that is 738 respondents which is 10.2% of the population.

An instrument titled Achievement of Teaching Practice Objective, contributions of secondary school personnel was developed and used by the researcher. It was validated by experts in the area of educational administration and has a test-re-test reliability of 0.81, when it has administered to a group of twenty respondents within an interval of two weeks.

Collection of Data: The questionnaire was administered by the researcher and a groups of post graduate students in the department of educational administration of the Delta State University, Abraka. A total of 738 usable questionnaires were collected from the respondent. Each respondent's instrument was scored on the basis of his/her responses to the item, following the four-lakert scale.

Data Analysis: In analyzing the data collected, the researcher made use of the weighed scores from responses by principals and teachers. The research questions were analyzed using weighted scores grand total 2952 and percentage, and the hypotheses were tested with t-test statistics at 0.05 level of significance.

RESULTS

The results of the data analysis were presented according to research questions and hypotheses.

Research Question One

What are the professional contributions of secondary school personnel towards the achievement of teaching practice objectives?

Table 1revealed that secondary school personnel assist student-teachers in the writing of lesson notes, use of classroom management techniques, dressing mode through moral instruction provision and utilization of teaching aids and community relations.

Research Question Two

What are the problems affecting the

Table 1: Identified contributions of secondary school personnel

S. No.	Item	Total score	%	Remarks
1.	Assist in the writing and use of lesson notes, school records and the curriculum.	2302	78	To promote professional growth and development
2.	Assist in classroom management techniques and the practical application of theoretical knowledge of human behaviour	2214	75	- do -
3.	Educate them on professional code, through moral instruction especially dressing mode.	2184	74	- do -
4.	Guide and direct them in locating sources and adequacy of instructional materials.	2214	75	- do -
5.	Assist them in providing opportunities to develop good human relationship with students, parents, teacher and community members.	2273	77	- do -
6.	Assist and supervises them in extra-curriculum activities i.e. labour, conduct of assemble, agricultural project etc.	2037	69	- do -
7.	Organize micro-teaching, to demonstrate use of various teaching methods.	1157	39	Not applicable

contributions of secondary school personnel towards the achievement of teaching practice objectives?

Table 2 revealed that there is no significant difference in the views of principals and teachers in the following problems affecting the contribution of secondary school personnel towards the achievement of teaching practice objectives short duration of the exercise, poor administration system in secondary, uneven distribution of student-teachers. None provision of basic facilities by secondary school teacher and lack of professional link between training institutes and secondary school personnel in the area of supervision.

There were differences between principals and teachers in terms of poor academic standard of student-teachers and inadequate professional training given to student teachers by training institutes.

Research Question Three

In what ways could the contributions of secondary school personnel towards the achievement of the objectives to teaching practice be enhanced.

Table 3 revealed that adequate involvement of secondary school personnel in the supervision of student-teachers with a corresponding increase in the duration of practice could enhance the contribution of secondary school personnel towards the achievement of the objective of teaching practice.

Hypotheses One

There is no significant between the professional contributions and problems affecting the contributions towards the achievement of the objectives of teaching practice by secondary school personnel.

Table 2: Identified problems affecting the contributions of secondary school personnel towards the achievement of teaching practice objective.

S. No.	Item	Principals	Teachers	Total	%
1.	Short duration of the exercise.	156 (78%)	2147 (78%)	2303	78
2.	Poor academic standard of student-teachers.	156 (78%)	1792 (64%)	1948	66
3.	Inadequate professional training given to student-teachers in colleges and universities.	150(75%)	1887 (68%)	2037	69
4.	Poor administrative systems in secondary schools.	158 (79%)	2115 (76%)	2273	778
5.	Lack of professional link in area of supervision and assessment between college/universities and secondary school principals.	170 (73%)	2014 (73%)	2184	74
6.	None provision of basic facilities by secondary school principals to student-teachers make their control difficult.	164 (82%)	1961 (71%)	2125	72
7.	Lack of specialist co-operation teacher in some areas of specialization of student-teachers in schools.	148(84%)	1977(72%)	2125	72
8.	Uneven distribution of student teachers resulting into over-population of them in some schools.	142(71%)	1977(72%)	22145	75
9.	Indiscipline behaviour by some college/university lecturer make internal supervision by supervision by co-operating teachers difficult.	160(80%)	2054(75%)	2214	75
10.	Wrong period of posting student-teachers to schools i.e beginning of a new term or session.	124 (62%)	1913(70%)	2037	69
11.	Negative attitude of some student-teachers towards the teaching profession.	130(65%)	2202(80%)	2332	79

Table 3: Identified ways of promoting achievement of teaching practice objectives through the contributions of secondary school personnel.

S. No.	Item	Total score	%
1.	Increase the duration of teaching practice and practical teaching to at least three months.	2524	86
2.	Secondary school personnel should be involved in the supervision, discipline, assessment and organization of orientation programme for student-teachers.	2356	80
3.	Government should provide allowances, accommodation and other orientation needs through principal of secondary schools to student-teachers.	2322	79
4.	Training institutes should send student-teachers to only schools with qualified teachers.	2184	74

The result revealed a calculated t-value of 1.85 which was found to be higher than the critical t-value of 1.658 at 0.05 level of significance with 736 degree of freedom (Table 4). This finding led to the rejection of hypothesis one. It therefore implied that the identified problems affects the contributions of secondary school personnel towards the achievement of teaching practice objectives in Delta State.

Table 4: Summary of t-table showing contributions and problems affecting the contributions of secondary school personnel towards the achievement of teaching practice objectives.

1	N	Mean	SD	Df	tcal	t-table value
Problems	738	33.83	9.62	736	1.85	1.658
Contributions	738	11.44	7.42			

Hypothesis Two

There is no significant difference between principals and teachers on the identified ways of enhancing the contributions of secondary school personnel towards the achievement of teaching practice objectives.

Since calculated t-(0.026) is less than t-table value (1.658), the result is not significant at 0.05 level of significance with 736 degree of freedom and the null hypothesis accepted table 5

It therefore implies that both principals and teachers identified several ways of enhancing the contributions of secondary school personnel towards the achievement of teaching practice objective (Table 3).

Table 5: Summary of the t-table showing principal and teacher opinion on the identified ways of enhancing the contributions of secondary school personnel towards the achievement of teaching practice objectives.

1	N	Mean	SD	Df	tcal	t-table value
Principals	50	32.81	5.7	736	0.026	1.658
Teachers	688	31.72	7.01			

Not significant at 0.05

Hypothesis Three

There is no significant difference teachers and principals view on the identified problems affecting the contributions of secondary school personnel towards the achievement of teaching practice objectives.

Since calculated t-(0.03640) is less than t-table

value (1.658), the result is not significant at 0.05 level of significance with 736 degree of freedom and the null hypotheses accepted (Table 6). It implies that both teachers and principals identified similar problems affecting the contributions of secondary school personnel towards the achievement of teaching practice objectives.

Table 6: Summary of t-table showing teachers and principals view on the identified problems affecting the contributions of secondary school personnel towards the achievement of teaching practice objectives.

1	N	Mean	SD	Df	Tcal	t-table value
Principals	688	33.91	5.57	736	0.0364	1.658
Teachers	50	33.16	8.96			

Not significant at 0.05

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study revealed; assistance in the writing and use of lesson notes, classroom management provisions and utilization of instructional materials, educate them on professional code as some of the area on which secondary school personnel contribute towards the achievement of teaching practice objectives. These findings are consistent with those of Howsam (1982), Ukasoanya (1999), Dada and Iyeke (1999).

Identified problems affecting the contributions of secondary school personnel towards the achievement of practical teaching objectives as revealed in this study includes short duration of the exercise, poor administrative system in secondary schools, lack of professional link in area of supervision and assessment between colleges/universities and secondary school principals, uneven distribution of students-teachers and negative attitude of student-teachers towards the exercise.

The problems of short duration of the exercise and negative attitude of student- teachers towards the exercise could be responsible for their rejection by most secondary school principals. The uneven distribution of students teachers resulting to over population in some schools could be responsible for inadequate instructional supervision resulting in their incompetence in areas of arousing the interest of the students at the beginning of the lesson, presentation of lessons sequentially, involvement of student in the lesson, identified by Ukasoanya (1999).

Identified solutions to some of the problems as perceived by principals and teachers include increase the teaching practice and practical teaching exercise to at least one term, colleges/universities should organize workshop on teaching practice before sending students to schools, assessment of student-teachers should be by principals and visiting college/university lecturers and number of visits should be at least four times.

This study also revealed that the identified problems affect the contributions of secondary school personnel towards the achievement of teaching practice objectives. This could lead to the production of half baked (unequipped) professional teachers by colleges/universities in Delta State since theoretical concepts alone cannot produce a competent professional. There is no significant difference between principals and teachers views on ways of promoting the problems affecting the contributions of secondary school personnel towards the achievement of teaching practice objectives in Delta State, as revealed in this study. This is an indication that 'position' of secondary school personnel does not affect their views on ways of promoting teaching practice exercise for the effective training of teachers in Delta State.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Secondary personnel contribute towards the achievement of teaching practice objectives by providing assistance in writing and use of lesson notes, curriculum interpretation and implementation, classroom management and the application of teaching methods.

Problems affecting their contributions include, short duration of the exercise, poor administrative system in secondary school, lack of professional link between training institutions and principals, indiscipline behaviour of some college/university lecturers and negative attitude of student-teachers towards adequate professional training of teachers in the State.

In order to enhance the contribution of principals and teacher in secondary towards the production of competent professional teachers, government should provide fund for the exercise, to enable secondary school principals provide accommodation for students teachers. It will also enable college/universities organise effective supervision of the exercise and pay teaching

practice allowance to students. These could lead to the development of positive attitudes towards the exercise by all concerned, especially the student-teachers. Other recommendations are as revealed in this study.

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