



Teachers' Continuous Professional Development Practices Adopted By Principals for Enhancing Effective Teaching in Public Secondary Schools in Anambra State, Nigeria.

Okeke, Uju V.

Department of Commerce and Co-operative Education
School of Business Education
Federal College of Education (Tech),
Umunze, Anambra State

Prof. Nwogbo, Vivian N.

Department of Educational Management and Policy
Faculty of Education,
Nnamdi Azikiwe University,
Awka, Anambra State

Abstract

This study determined Teachers' Continuous Professional Development practices adopted by principals for enhancing effective teaching in secondary schools in Anambra state. The study was guided by three research questions and three null hypotheses tested at 0.05 level of significance. A descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. The population consisted of 6,639 respondents comprising 257 principals and 6,382 teachers in the 257 state owned government public secondary schools in Anambra state. A sample of 801 was drawn using multi-stage sampling procedure. Data were collected using a researcher developed instrument titled Principals Continuous Professional Development Practices for Teachers' Effective Teaching Questionnaire. The instrument was face validated by three experts and subjected to internal consistency test using Cronbach alpha method which yielded 0.90. Data analysis was done using mean and standard deviation for the research questions and t-test for the hypotheses. The findings revealed among others that the extent to which principals encourage staff attendance to conferences and workshops for teachers for effective teaching in Anambra state secondary schools is high. The study recommended among others that principals should uphold their conference and workshop practices for teachers for enhancing effective teaching.

Keywords: *continuous professional development, effective teaching, principals, teachers*

Introduction

The potential of secondary education for significant contribution to national development is unquestionable since it prepares one for a useful living. These potentials can only be harnessed where the necessary input, resources and environment are provided. The teacher remains one of the major influential factors in the implementation of any school curriculum and no education system can rise above the quality of its teachers. To improve the quality of teachers in secondary schools, principals play a key role in providing needed support and conducive environment for teachers to develop. He provides learning opportunities for teachers to acquire veritable knowledge, skills and practices that are required to achieve agreed goals and expectations (Smart, 2005). This he does through the provision of Continuous Professional Development (CPD) programmes.

Continuous Professional Development (CPD) according to Youngs, (2013) is when teachers are given an opportunity to be knowledge generators and are provided with the tools to meet professional challenges, ensuring that they are up-to-date with information that will match the test of time. In discussing teacher CPD, Goodal, Day and Lindsay (2005) posited three settings in which learning may occur: direct teaching (conferences, courses, workshops, consultations), learning in schools (peer coaching, action research, working on tasks together, mentoring, job shadowing) and learning out of the classroom (reform networks, school-university partnerships, visiting model schools). Professional Standards for Nigerian Teachers (PSNT) identified the Principal as one of those to promote teacher CPD in schools.

Principals are expected to promote teachers' CPD in secondary schools. They are expected to initiate, promote, support and organize teachers' CPD in the school according to the professional needs of the teachers. Principals are to achieve this by imbibing CPD programmes in the school as well as ensuring that teachers utilize the knowledge acquired in CPD programmes in classrooms for effective teaching. He must encourage staff attendance to conferences and workshops; promote staff collaboration and provide staff mentorship for teachers, among other teacher CPD. The present study will focus on the extent principals encourage staff attendance to conferences or workshops and promote staff collaboration for teachers. The choice of these two is at the researchers' discretion considering the fact that they might be the most critical areas that have direct influence on effective teaching.

Workshop which is one of the teacher CPD programmes, according to Riltig (2007), is one in which the individual's working group brings their life style, their culture and their values together. It provides opportunities for exchange of ideas on teaching methods and other areas of teaching interest that enhance teachers' performance. This can also foster staff collaboration.

Staff collaboration is a process by which staff works together in an organization as a team. In staff collaboration, principals and teachers develop a culture of collective responsibility in schools. According to Barth (2011) collaborative cultures yield improved teacher performance and promote effective teaching in schools.

Effective teaching is that teaching which leads to improved students achievement using outcomes that matter to their future success (Coe, Aloisi, Higgs & Elliot, 2015). According to Radha and Halder (2018) effective teaching is when a teacher uses right pedagogies in delivering classroom instructions to ensure the actualization of educational objectives.

However, situational analysis seem to suggest that some secondary school principals in Anambra state do not often encourage teachers' participation in CPD programmes for enhancing effective teaching. Some principals seem not to regularly encourage teachers' attendance to conferences and workshops. Teachers appear not to work collaboratively in school matters. It becomes worrisome as to the extent the principals of secondary schools in Anambra state are playing their expected roles regarding the teachers' continuous professional development. This situation therefore made it imperative to determine the extent of teachers' continuous professional development practices adopted by principals for enhancing effective teaching in secondary schools in Anambra State.

Statement of the Problem

Teachers require exceptional expertise, knowledge, and specialized skills that is sustained only through vigorous and continuous training. Teacher continuous professional development (CPD) aims to keep teachers abreast with the latest innovation in the teaching profession and prevents the setting in of the "law of diminishing returns" that could set in without continuous training. They need to be supported and encouraged to participate in CPD if they must remain relevant in their profession and bring about quality teaching and learning in the school.

Interactions with teachers in Anambra state secondary schools suggest that some of the teachers seem not to take teacher CPD seriously. They seem not to participate in CPD programmes. Consequently, some teachers probably may not be equipped with relevant and up-to-date knowledge, skills, abilities, and competencies to meet their professional challenges and provide meaningful education to students. One therefore begins to wonder the extent to which principals adopt teachers' CPD practices in the school to enhance effective teaching.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of the study is to determine teachers' continuous professional development practices adopted by principals for enhancing effective teaching in secondary schools in Anambra State. Specifically, the study determined the extent to which:

1. Principals encourage staff attendance to conferences and workshops for enhancing effective teaching in secondary schools in Anambra state.
2. Principals promote staff collaboration for enhancing effective teaching in secondary schools in Anambra state.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. To what extent do principals encourage staff attendance to conferences and workshops for enhancing effective teaching in Anambra state secondary schools?
2. To what extent do principals promote staff collaboration for enhancing effective teaching in Anambra state secondary schools?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance:

1. Principals and teachers do not differ significantly in their mean scores on the extent to which principals encourage staff attendance to conferences/ workshops for enhancing effective teaching in Anambra state secondary schools.

- Principals and teachers do not differ significantly in their mean scores on extent to which principals promote staff collaboration for enhancing effective teaching in Anambra state secondary schools.

Method

A descriptive survey design was adopted for the study. The population of the study is 6,639 consisting of 257 principals and 6,382 teachers in the state government owned secondary schools in the six education zones of the State. The sample size for the study is 801 consisting 129 principals and 672 teachers in the 257 state government owned secondary school in Anambra State drawn using multi-stage sampling technique. A researcher developed questionnaire titled “Principals Continuous Professional Development Practices for Teachers’ Effective Teaching Questionnaire” (PCPDPTETQ) which was face validated by three experts was used for data collection. Internal consistency reliability coefficient of 0.90 was obtained using Cronbach alpha method. The research questions were answered using mean and standard deviation while t-test was used to test the null hypotheses at alpha level of 0.05.

Results and Findings

Research Question 1: To what extent do principals encourage staff attendance to conferences/workshops for teachers for enhancing effective teaching in Anambra state secondary schools?

Table 1: Mean ratings of principal and teachers on the extent to which principals encourage staff attendance to conferences and workshops for teachers for enhancing effective teaching

Items	Principals (N=129)			Teachers (N=654)			Total (N=783)		
	Mean	SD	Remark	Mean	SD	Remark	Mean	SD	Remark
1. Encourages staff attendance to workshop/conferences for effective teaching	3.59	.51	HE	3.31	.80	HE	3.36	.76	HE
2. Organizes workshops on matters of school and classroom instruction for effective teaching	3.40	.59	HE	3.36	.68	HE	3.36	.67	HE

3. Created an on-line group where teachers learn effective instructional processes for effective teaching	2.01	.95	LE	1.97	.92	LE	1.97	.92	LE
4. Sometimes offers to help pay for teachers to attend workshop for effective teaching	3.24	.70	HE	3.09	.59	HE	3.12	.61	HE
5. Ensures that teachers practice what they learnt from workshop/conference for effective teaching	2.95	.23	HE	2.81	.39	HE	2.83	.38	HE
6. Commends teachers that bring relevant feedbacks for effective teaching	2.95	.71	HE	2.87	.79	HE	2.89	.78	HE
7. Puts in place explicit school-based process for using those learning in classrooms for effective teaching.	3.13	.62	HE	3.04	.79	HE	3.06	.76	HE
8. Recognizes the need to support teachers and help to develop teachers professionally through conferences for effective teaching	3.12	.53	HE	2.94	.65	HE	2.97	.64	HE
9. Encourages teachers inputs in scheduling workshops for effective teaching	3.02	.77	HE	2.78	.82	HE	2.82	.82	HE
10. Seeks out information in order to help teachers grow and improve as professionals for effective teaching	3.02	.57	HE	2.93	.76	HE	2.94	.73	HE
Mean of means	3.04	.62	HE	2.91	.72	HE	2.93	.71	HE

The result in Table 1 shows the aggregated mean of means of 2.93 and the standard deviation of .71 indicating that principals to a high extent encourage staff attendance to conferences/workshops for teachers for enhancing effective teaching in Anambra state secondary schools. The disaggregated grand mean and standard deviation for principals (3.04 and .62) and teachers (2.91 and .72) indicates that principals and teachers perceived the extent to which principals encourage staff attendance to conferences/workshops for teachers for enhancing effective teaching in Anambra state secondary schools as high. The item by item analysis shows that principals and teachers rated the extent to which principals encourage teachers on nine items (item 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10) out of the ten listed items to be high. The mean for principals ranged from 2.95 to 3.59 while that of the teachers ranged from 2.78 to 3.36. However, the extent to which principals encourage teachers on the remaining item (item 3) was rated to be low by principals and teachers.

Research Question 2: To what extent do principals promote staff collaboration for teachers for enhancing effective teaching in Anambra state secondary schools?

Table 2: Mean ratings of principals and teachers on the extent to which principals promote staff collaboration for teachers for effective teaching

Items	Principals (N=129)			Teachers (N=654)			Total (N=783)		
	Mean	SD	Remark	Mean	SD	Remark	Mean	SD	Remark
1. Assigns tasks to two or more teachers to promote team learning for effective teaching	2.88	.62	HE	2.88	.70	HE	2.88	.69	HE
2. Fosters an environment that values sharing and trust for effective teaching	2.84	.56	HE	2.79	.70	HE	2.80	.67	HE
3. Provides time for teachers to collaborate on specified issues for effective teaching	3.26	.71	HE	3.19	.73	HE	3.20	.72	HE
4. Develops school structures that fosters group team work for effective teaching	3.40	.64	HE	3.13	.70	HE	3.18	.70	HE
5. Establishes protocols to guide group critiques of teacher practice for effective teaching	3.22	.60	HE	3.16	.64	HE	3.17	.64	HE
6. Provides protocols to ensure that teachers feel safe to admit mistakes for effective teaching	3.16	.62	HE	2.99	.64	HE	3.02	.64	HE
7. Follows up by monitoring the progress of teachers as they implement feedbacks in the classroom for effective teaching	3.12	.63	HE	2.97	.68	HE	3.00	.67	HE
8. Works with teachers on instructional improvement for effective teaching.	3.14	.57	HE	3.02	.63	HE	3.04	.63	HE
9. Encourages teachers to observe each other's practice for effective teaching	2.87	.59	HE	2.81	.62	HE	2.82	.62	HE
Mean of means	3.10	.62	HE	2.99	.67	HE	3.01	.66	HE

The results on table 2 shows the aggregated mean of means and standard deviation of 3.01 and .66 which indicates that the extent to which principals promote staff collaboration for teachers for enhancing effective teaching in Anambra state secondary schools is high. The mean of means and standard deviation for principals (3.10 and .62) and teachers (3.29 and .67) indicates that principals and teachers perceived the extent to which principals promote staff collaboration for teachers for effective teaching in Anambra state secondary schools as high. The analysis of the items indicates that principals and teachers rated principals' promotion of staff collaboration

regarding the nine listed items as high. The mean for principals ranged from 2.84 to 3.40 while that of the teachers ranged from 2.79 to 3.19.

Hypothesis 1: Principals and teachers do not differ significantly in their mean ratings on the extent principals encourage staff attendance to conferences/ workshops for teachers for enhancing effective teaching.

Table 4: t-test comparison of principals' and teachers mean ratings on the extent principals encourage staff attendance to conferences/ workshops for teachers for enhancing effective teaching

Source of variation	N	Mean	SD	df	t-cal	P-value	Decision
Principals	129	3.04	.62	781	3.08	.002	Sig
Teachers	654	2.91	.72				

The results in table 5 shows that the mean for principals ($M=3.04$, $SD=.62$) was significantly greater than that of the teachers ($M=2.91$, $SD=.72$); $t(781) 3.08$, $p=.002$. The null hypothesis of no significant difference between the two groups on the extent to which principals encourage staff attendance to conferences/ workshops for teachers for enhancing effective teaching was therefore rejected.

Hypothesis 2: Principals and teachers do not differ significantly in their mean ratings on extent principals promote staff collaboration for teachers for enhancing effective teaching.

Table 5: t-test comparison of principals' and teachers mean ratings on the extent principals promote staff collaboration for teachers for enhancing effective teaching

Source of variation	N	Mean	SD	df	t-cal	P-value	Decision
Principals	129	3.10	.62	781	2.65	.008	Sig
Teachers	654	2.99	.67				

The t-test analysis in table 7 shows that the mean for principals ($M=3.10$, $SD=.62$) was significantly greater than that of the teachers ($M=2.99$, $SD=.67$); $t(781) 2.65$, $p=.008$. The null

hypothesis of no significant difference between the two groups on the extent to which principals promote staff collaboration for teachers for enhancing effective teaching was therefore rejected.

Discussion of Findings

The study found that Principals' workshop/conference practices for effective teaching was to a high extent in Anambra state public secondary schools. This is epitomized in the agreement of both principals and teachers on nine items out of the ten items with their respective mean of mean scores above the cut-off point of 2.50. Both principals and teachers were of the view that principals' encourages staff to attend workshop/conferences; organizes workshops on matters of school and classroom instruction, ensures that teachers practice what they learnt from workshop/conferences.

This conforms with Ayeni (2011) as well as Ezeugbor, et al (2018) who evidenced that principals organize workshops to enlighten teachers about innovations on teaching methodologies and encourage teachers to attend conferences in order to up-date their knowledge. However, this finding contradicted Hassan (2013) who submitted among others that the professional development programmes for teachers that are not in practice include: arranging different training programmes, workshops and seminars. This contradiction may be due to difference in the area of the study and research design. Although, principals' CPD practices are seen to be of a high extent, it could be seen that they do not create an on-line group where teachers learn for effective teaching as shown by their low extent response. This result was a surprise giving the fact that the current technological advancement in all facets of the education system would have made the principal to see the need to create on-line groups where teachers can learn for effective teaching. This deficiency in principals' CPD practices may not promote effective teaching. The current technological advancement in all the facets of the education system would have made the principals to see the creation of on-line group where teachers learn as vital.

The findings of the hypothesis indicated that there was a significant difference between the mean ratings of principals and teachers on the extent to which principals encouraged staff attendance to conferences/workshops for enhancing effective teaching in Anambra state public secondary

schools. The difference in the opinions of teachers and principals may be due to the fact that principals rated themselves as it can be seen that their means were higher than that of teachers.

Also, it was found out that Principals to a high extent promote staff collaboration for effective teaching in Anambra state secondary schools. This could be seen from the fact that the mean scores of all the nine items were above the cut-off point. This is to say that principals are promoting staff collaboration for effective teaching in public secondary schools in Anambra state to a high extent. They allow teachers work together in a collaborative effort which allows teachers to share best practices and success stories. The finding is consistent with the study carried out by Ezeugbor, et al (2018) in Anambra state who noted that principals involve teachers in collaborative teaching methods for the purpose of sharing knowledge. Walter (2010) held similar views by asserting that there exists collaboration between Principals and teachers and that a sense of trust was established between the principal and teachers. It also concurred with Omogbehin (2013) who found out that principal created opportunities for teachers to collaborate frequently; opportunities for teachers to meet regularly either in pairs or as departments. The finding however, was not in line with Egboka (2018) who posited that principals do not involve teachers in collaborative teaching methods for the purpose of sharing knowledge. The fact that Egboka's study was conducted in Enugu state (which is a different state from the present study) with different education zones and different respondents could be responsible for this variation.

In null hypothesis two, the difference in the mean ratings of principals and teachers on the extent of principals' staff collaboration practices for enhancing effective teaching in Anambra state public secondary schools was significant thus the null hypothesis was rejected based on the divergent views of the two groups. Principals had more positive perception on the extent they provided staff collaboration for teachers than the teachers. The difference in opinions may be attributed to self-rating situation since principals rated themselves.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, the researcher concludes that going by the fact that all the three areas of the CPD practices explored in this work (conferences and workshops and staff collaboration) are being practiced to a high extent. Consequently, principals to a high extent adopt teachers' continuous professional development practices for effective teaching in Anambra state secondary schools.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Principals should uphold their conference and workshop practices for teachers but strive to create on-line groups to help teachers learn better and current instructional strategies and techniques to enhance effective teaching.
2. Principals should not relent in promoting staff collaboration for teachers to enable them connect and collaborate with other teachers on instructional improvement to enhance effective teaching.

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