

Perception of Nigerian Teachers About In-Service Capacity Development: An Empirical Field Sample Report On Oyo State, Nigeria

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Abstract: *Capacity Development of teachers is a significant policy component of Basic Education programme of Federal Republic of Nigeria. A lot of public funds had been expended on the teachers' capacity Development on the assumption that the success of basic Education programme depends on the quality of teachers providing it. Given the significance attached to capacity Development of teachers by Nigerian federal and state governments, the study examined the perception of teachers themselves to periodic efforts of government to offer them in service workshop training. Data of Teachers' Perception about capacity development were collected from 93 teachers from 90 different secondary schools across all 30 local government areas of Oyo State, Nigeria. A 20 item instrument with adequate psychometric background was used to collect data of Teachers' Perception on in service capacity development efforts of Nigerian government. Results of this showed generally that Nigerian Teachers perceive the capacity development efforts of Nigerian government in positive dimension. The descriptive data gathered by this study showed that most teachers believe that efforts of government in providing in-service training for teachers are not mis-directed. This study also provided data on how the efforts of government on in-service capacity Development of teachers in Nigeria could be made more cost effective and more cost oriented.*

1. Introduction

Soon after the World Conference on Education for All held in Jomtien, Thailand for the purpose of forging a global consensus and commitment to provide basic education for all (Dike, 2000), the Nigerian Federal Government launched the Universal Basic Education scheme in Sokoto.

This programme is aimed at providing all-inclusive and a wholesome education for all children and adults alike. Ever since the Nigerian federal and state governments had shown high commitment to the provision of basic Education in Nigeria, the funding of Basic Education in Nigeria had always been a priority of federal and state government. Universal Basic Education scheme was launched in 2000. A very important policy component of Universal Basic Education scheme in Nigeria is the significance attached to teachers in- service capacity development. Quite rightly, it is believed that no education programme could be higher than the quality of teachers sustaining it. Hence, the Nigerian Universal Basic Education programme places very high significance on teachers in-service training.

Periodic workshop trainings are usually organised for Nigerian teachers to update their professional competence during long vacations. A lot of public funds had gone into such efforts. This study examined the worthwhileness of such efforts by collecting data on the views of the recipients of such good gestures on the part of government. It is believed that effectiveness of capacity Development efforts of Nigerian government depends on how teachers themselves perceive the efforts of government in that direction. This study provides data of teachers perception on the efforts of government to provide in-service capacity development opportunity during vacation break.

2. Review of Literature

Capacity development on the other hand and according to Bolger (2000) consists of numerous definitions, each reflecting a particular bias or orientation. Some researchers describe capacity development as an approach or process e.g. towards reduction of poverty, while others see it as a development objective e.g. targeting the development of individual or organizational capacity. Many definitions fall somewhere in between these two perspectives. For instance, UNDP (1997) defines capacity development as “The process by which individual groups, organizations, institutions and societies increase their abilities to perform functions, solve problems and achieve objectives; to understand and deal with their development need in a broader context and in a sustainable manner”.

Capacity development is fundamentally about change and transformation-individual, organizational, societal. While it is purposeful in its orientation, it is not likely to be linear, easy or free of conflict. It is also about value- ‘whose capacity’ is to be developed, for what purpose? Finally, it relies on learning and adapting behaviour, which requires openness to the lessons of experience and the flexibility to modify approaches as required. Capacity development is usually targeted at enhancing, or more effectively utilizing skills, abilities and resources, strengthening understandings and relationships and addressing issues of values, attitudes, motivations and conditions in order to support sustainable development.

The teacher plays a central role in the actualization of educational goals as well as ensuring the survival of the entire education system (Morgan, 1996). Nigeria has always acknowledged the crucial role of teachers towards the successful delivery of any educational process. This in turn has been recognized as the key to social and economic development of any nation. (FME Working Group, 2009), and may account for the attention currently being given to their training and retraining.

According to Ejieh (2009) in order to meet the requirement for the universal basic education scheme (which will ultimately lead to the attainment of the second MDG i.e. the universal primary education) however, Nigeria needs about

40,000 teachers (Obong, 2006) to cater for the rise in the number of schools as reported in many states (For instance, Adeyemi, 2009; Eddy and Akpan, 2009). Ejieh (2009) posited that, for teachers to be effective, they must be products of well designed quality teacher education programmes otherwise, the nine years of free and compulsory education provided for in the Universal Basic Education Act could amount to nine years of mere attendance.

Many researchers have highlighted the need for adequate provision of quality teachers for the successful implementation of UBE. For instance, Adebimpe (2001) opined that for the UBE to succeed, adequate provision should be made to produce sufficient qualified teachers and make them relevant within the limit of their area of specialization. Also, Omotayo, Ihebereme and Maduewesi (2008) reiterated the need to train and retrain teachers already on the job to reshape their orientation towards qualitative education of U.B.E scheme.

Ejieh (2009) argued that although the federal government of Nigeria believes that no educational system can rise above the quality of its teachers, quality is rarely an issue either in the recruitment of teacher candidates or in their training and that it is common knowledge in Nigeria that candidates for teacher education are the generally academically weak students who do not aspire to more prestigious professions (Fadipe, 1992 in Ejieh, 2009). He attributed this observed trend to the low status of teaching as a profession in the country. Many of the students in the nation's Faculties of Education are those who could not gain admission into other faculties and departments and have chosen to enter into teacher education programme as a last resort. Consequently, most of them are neither interested in nor committed to the programme. Quality of teacher education at the college level also takes a similar perspective. Ejieh (2009) argued that although the federal government has prescribed the National Certificate in Education as the minimum qualification for teaching: many of the students seeking admission into the colleges of education are those that could not pass the university matriculation examination

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for entry into the nation's universities. Also, in many cases, large proportion of the students in colleges are those that do not have the requisite entry qualifications but are admitted through the colleges' preliminary studies programmes (Ejeh, 2003). He also reported that some colleges even admit some of those students who could not pass the relevant papers at the General Certificate of Education (GCE) ordinary level on the condition that the affected students pledge to pass those subjects before they can be awarded their certificates following the completion of their studies in the colleges.

In a similar manner, the Education sector Status Report acknowledges that there appears to be many opportunities for anyone who is interested and minimally qualified to enter the teaching profession (Federal Ministry of Education, 2003). In fact one does not necessarily have to be interested in teaching before one enters the teacher education programme in either a university or a college of education. Infact, Odo (2000) reported that some non-professionals were being specially employed for the purpose of the UBE scheme with the hope that quick orientation/training will be given to them after which they will serve as teachers under the scheme. He advised that the government should quickly train those teachers to make them professionally fit to participate in the UBE programme and that during the planning, funds should be set aside for regular training and retraining of teachers.

Even the government agency responsible for the implementation of the UBE (FME, 1999) also owned up that:

In the course of implementing the UBE programmes, some major constraints were, however recognized such as poor teacher participation; irregular in-service training and retraining of teaching and non-teaching personnel...

Also, some states were reported to be attempting to revert back to the Teacher Grade 11 institutions, which were frantically seen as counter-productive and against the policy guidelines of Federal Government (FME working Group, 1999). The Group upheld that the career-long professional

development of serving teachers should be guaranteed to ensure consistent and acceptable levels of performance of classroom teachers and recommended the following:

- i) Accredited institutions should take up the task of developing the teachers and such notably include local in-situ programmes on regular basis and or through mobile training units.
- ii) Serving teachers should be involved in seminars, workshops and in-service programmes on management techniques, methodology of teaching, instructional materials, computer literacy to mention a few.
- iii) Professional teachers' associations should be mobilized in helping to develop the teachers: and
- iv) Crash programmes such as training outlets should be avoided.

3. Teachers' Perception

Perception is the process by which organisms interpret and organise sensation to produce a meaningful experience of the world (Lindsay & Norman, 1997). Perception plays a very important role in organization because people's actions are based on their perception of what truth is, not on the truth itself. Their decisions might be biased or might be taken under pressure.

We are living in a changing world where change itself is constant, the teachers meant for the UBE programme therefore need to be trained and retrained regularly as the case maybe so that their content, method and instructional materials may not turn obsolete. Although research has documented the urgent need for training and retraining of teachers as tool to realizing the goals of the Universal Basic Education programmes and a useful approach to achieving this is through in-service training, workshops and seminars, the teachers may not benefit much if their perception of such training efforts are not studied, with a view to reorganize it

where necessary or operationalize a complete change. This is the thrust of this study.

4. Procedure

The participants in this study were 93 teachers invited from 90 secondary schools across all the local government areas of Oyo state of Nigeria, to participate in a teachers' development workshop during the first quarter of 2009. Their ages ranged from 23 to 56 years with a mean of 42.15 years and standard deviation of 7.45. Their length of service also ranged from 1 to 34 years with a mean of 14.26 years and standard deviation of 8.88. They also consist of 66 male teachers (71%) and 25 female (26.9%), with 2(2.2%) respondents who did not indicate their gender groupings. They were mostly married (93.5%) and also few were still single (5.4%). The instrument used for the study is a self-constructed and validated one consisting of 20 items, which border on teachers' perception of on – the- job training workshop as a capacity building tool. The instruments were administered on the study participant at one of such workshops and they were asked to give their candid views without any fear of reprisals as their names or any other means of identifying them were never included. Three research questions were raised to guide the study and they include:

- 1) How have the participants been participating in workshops?
- 2) What is the perception of teachers concerning workshops as a capacity building tool?
- 3) What are the factors that are responsible for the teachers' perception of on- the- job training workshops as capacity development tools?

5. Results

Research Question 1: How have been participants been participating in workshops?

To answer this research question, research item 2 of the section B of the questionnaire (I have participated in a SUBEB workshop before) was given a descriptive analysis and the result was as presented below.

Table 1: Teachers' response to previous participation in SUBEB- organized workshops

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly disagree	20	21.5
Disagree	14	15.1
Agree	42	45.2
Strongly agree	15	16.1
No response	2	2.2
Total	93	100.0

From the table above, it can be seen that most of the respondents (61.3%) agreed either ordinarily (45.2%) or strongly (16.1%) that they had attended this type of workshop before this one hence had experienced workshop training programmes of this kind. However, 36.6 of the respondent claimed that they had never attended this type of workshop, 15.1% disagreed while 21.5% strongly disagreed that they had ever attended such workshops.

Research Question: What is the perception of teachers concerning workshops as a capacity building tool?

To answer this research question, the items in the questionnaire except item 2 was scored in such a way that a strongly agree response was allotted 4, agree 3, disagree 2 and strongly disagree 1. Scores were also transposed for negative items. The resulting scores were summed up and built into a measure of individual respondent's perception of the workshops. The resulting score ranged from 0 to 80. Thereafter, a composite score of 30 or below were regarded as negative perception, scores of 31 to 60 were said to be indifferent in their perception while a score greater that 60 was said to possess positive perception. The resulting descriptive analysis were as presented in the table below.

Table 2: Perception of teachers concerning On-the-job training as capacity building tool

Respondents' perception	Frequency	Percent
Indifference	42	45.2
Negative	1	1.1
Positive	50	53.8
Total	93	100.0

From the table above, it can be seen that most of the teachers (53.8%) actually possessed positive perception of the teachers' development workshops, although 45.2% were indifferent while only 1.1% were actually negative in their perception towards workshops. This can be seen in the way the teachers reacted to some important items in the questionnaire. Some of such items were reacted in a way as presented in the table below.

Table3: Teachers' responses to some individual items on workshops

	SA	A	D	SD	NR
Workshops are not necessary for teacher since they are certificated	1.1	0	7.5	91.5	0
SUBEB workshops are beneficial to teachers	82.8	15.1	0	1.1	1.1
Teachers gain a lot from the workshops	81.7	172	0	0	1.1
Teachers are taught nothing new in the workshops	2.2	2.2	40.9	54.8	0
My colleagues confirmed that they had nothing to gain in previous workshops	2.2	2.2	53.8	40.9	1.1
The lessons taught in the workshops are not realistic	2.2	21.5	0	76.3	0
In all the workshops I have attended, I have not gained any new experience	2.2	32.3	0	64.5	1.1
Organisation of teachers' workshops is a waste of tax-payers' resources	0	0	26.9	72	1.1
Teachers condition of service should rather be enhanced and not called to workshops	7.5	21.5	47.3	17.2	6.5

The table above seems to confirm that teachers generally had positive perception toward on-the-job training workshop as a capacity development tool as far as their professional

involvement is concerned. For instance most of them (91.5%) strongly disagreed that 'Workshops are not necessary for teachers since they are certificated'. This could be interpreted to mean that although they are duly certified in their respective fields of study, they saw the necessity for regular but periodic updating of their knowledge through in-service training workshops like this. In fact, they were mostly (81.7%) of the view that 'Teachers gain a lot from the workshops'. Also, they mostly agreed that 'SUBEB workshops are beneficial to teacher'. The items sought to particularly ask about workshop organized by SUBEB, as this is the direct establishment responsible for their recruitment, welfare, training, promotion and discipline. They found the workshop so organized particularly useful probably because this establishment understand teachers in terms of their professional and performance needs as establishment understand teachers in terms of their professional and performance needs as well as location of teachers with such needs within the state.

Despite all these there were indication of areas in which the organizers need review teachers needs and their own performance. For instance, the teachers who agreed that they were not taught anything new and those who merely disagreed were almost equal (40.9% and 59.8%). It may not be out of place to assume that the difference in these proportion were those who were attending the workshops for the first time (36.6%) of the total respondents as found in research question 1.

The respondents also gave a similar set of responses when they reiterate the views of their colleagues concerning the workshop in the item 'My colleagues confirmed that they had nothing to gain in previous workshops '. Only 53.8% merely disagreed (not strongly disagreed) while in fact 40.9% of the respondents agreed with the statement. It therefore raised the need to evaluate the content of what should be discussed at the workshop, the methodology to be adopted and the evaluation approach to be used.

Research Question3: What are the factors that are responsible for the teacher’s perception of on-the-job training workshops as capacity development tools?

To answer this research question, the influence of factors like, teacher’ sage, years in service, sex, and marital status were used as differentiating variables in Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) in their perception scores. The results were presented in the table below:

Table 4:Influence of socio demographic factors on teachers’ perception of workshops as capacity development tool

Variables	Sources	Sum of Square	Df	Mean square	F	P	Comment
Age	Between Groups	21.776	3	7.259	.320	.811	Not significant
	Within Groups	1994.702	88	22.667			
	Total	2016.478	91				
Years in service	Between groups	257.290	21	12.252	.478	.970	Not significant
	Within groups	1744.532	68	25.655			
	Total	2001.822	89				
Sex	Between groups	18.463	1	18.463	.837	.363	Not Significant
	Within Groups	1963.955	89	22.067			
	Total	1982.418	90				
	Between groups	1.876	1	1.876	.084	.773	Not significant
	Within Groups	2014.602	90	22.384			
	Total	2016.478	91				

From Table 4, it can be seen that the p-values for all the factors are greater than 0.05,it therefore implies that the null hypothesis in each of the cases cannot be rejected and we can conclude that the factors had no significant effect on teachers’ perception of on-the job training workshops as a capacity building instrument.

6. Discussion

The importance of teachers' perception in their productivity and performance has been earlier stressed. Given the importance of the Universal Basic Education programme to the Nigerian Nation and the volume of financial investment, there is the need to periodically assess the perception and attitude of implementers (the teachers) to each of the components of the programme if the success of the programme is intended. One of such component is their own on-the-job training. This is important because if the teachers did not have the right perception of this component of the UBE programme, all the investment in this area could be wasted. Although, if such dislocation is detected early, other approaches may be designed to overcome the poor perception. Also if the perceptions are good, areas needing review, revision, improvement or complete excision may be discovered.

The researcher firstly explored the frequency of previous attendances at such workshops to ensure that the respondents are not just talking about the only workshop where the data were collected. It was found that most of the respondents claimed that they were not first timers at the workshops and hence could be said to be experienced enough to comment about SUBEB- organized workshops. Concerning their perception, the respondents were majorly positive and generally believe that such workshop will be very useful to them in terms of professional development, capacity building and productivity. They however indicated the need to review and strengthen the quality, quantity and delivery of the content in order to achieve the aim of empowering them to be more productive at work. In fact, they stress less the quest for increased salaries and allowances as a means of motivating them for better productivity.

The researcher also explored whether the view was localized or the general believe of the teachers at the workshop. Consequently, different factors such as age, sex, marital status, and years of teaching experience were tested

to see if they had any influence on the teachers' experience were tested to see if they had any influence on the teachers' perception of on the job training workshops as a capacity building tool. The study showed that none of them accounted for the differences found in the teachers' responses. It may therefore be concluded that the teachers generally have positive perception of the workshops and since they were drawn from all local government areas in Oyo state and were even asked of the opinion of other colleagues who had earlier attended one workshop or the other, it can be concluded that teachers in Oyo state have positive perception of on-the job training workshops as capacity development tool.

7. Conclusion and Recommendations

This study concludes that retraining of teachers is essential to their productivity and since teachers themselves generally saw it as a useful tool in building capacity for productivity in them, greater efforts should be made to increase and improve the on-the-job training workshop component of the Universal Basic Education programme of the Nigerian nation.

It is hereby recommended that the content of the training workshops be revisited and reviewed after large-scale teachers' productivity needs assessment has been carried out by accomplished educational evaluators. Other states of the Nigerian federation need to take a clue from Oyo state in order to see how their own programme has enhanced teachers' perception possible success of the programme in the state. Moreover, the period of training should be elongated to ensure that teachers will have more time to interact with each other as well as with resource persons. Finally, more stringent evaluation procedures should be adopted to confirm the productivity of the on-the-job training programmes and possibly ensure that certain certification is attached.

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