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Staff Development Programme And Job Performance On Early Childhood Education In Delta State

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ABSTRACT
The research investigated the relationship between staff development programmes and job performance on early childhood education in Delta State. Four research questions and four null hypotheses were raised to guide the study. The population of the study consisted of one hundred (100) head-teachers and one thousand nine hundred (1,900) teachers, which will give a total of two thousand (2,000) respondents, out of which three hundred and eighty (380) staffs representing 35.53% of the population were used as respondents. The correlational research design was adopted. Two sets of structured questionnaire titled: 'Staff Development Programme Assessment Scale and Effective Job Performance Assessment Scale' were used to obtain data from the field. The instruments were validated by the supervisor and two other experts. Reliability coefficients for the Staff Development Programmes Scale (SDPS) and Effective Job Performance Assessment Scale' (EJPAS) are 0.81 and 0.84; while the reliability coefficients for the subscales: Staffs In-Service Training 0.86, Staffs Seminar 0.85, Staffs Conference 0.86, and Staffs Classroom Visitation or Observation 0.82 respectively, were determined using Cronbach Alpha Statistics. Pearson Product Moment Correlation and same correlation statistics were used to answer the research questions and test the hypotheses respectively. Findings revealed that there is a relationship between staffs in-service training, staffs classroom visitation or observation and effective job performance on early childhood education in Delta State, and these relationships were found to be significant at 0.05 level of probability; also, staffs seminar, staffs conference, has no significant relationship with effective job performance on early childhood education in Delta State. The instruments were validated by the supervisor and two other experts. Based on the findings of the study, it was concluded that there was significant relationship between staff development programmes and effective job performance on early childhood education in Delta State, it was recommended among others that In-service teacher training programs should be diversity and continuous. Continues programs result more successfully as compared to programs which have a short spin of life. To allow in-service teacher training programs to proceed successfully it should be a continue process. These programs should not focus on a single side of teacher development but it should focus on the overall development of the teacher.
Keywords: Staff Development Programme. Job Performance, Early Childhood Education, Delta State

INTRODUCTION

Early childhood education (ECE), also known as nursery education, is a branch of education theory that relates to the teaching of children (formally and informally) from birth up to the age of eight. Traditionally, this is up to the equivalent of third grade. ECE is described as an important period in child development. At its most basic level, early childhood education (ECE) encompasses all forms of education, both formal and informal. Early childhood education ages cover birth through age eight. This education is fundamental to the development of a child. It can significantly shape the later years of an individual's life.

Early years in life are the most important to the formation of intelligence, personality and social behaviour of a child. The year before a child reaches Kindergarten are among the most critical in his or her life to influence learning. That is why modern societies show serious concern for the education of their young ones by providing needed support to prepare them to succeed later in school (Ejieh, 2009). It is common practice in most societies to make provision for early childhood education programmes of various sorts for children below the official school-going age (usually 6years) mainly to prepare them for education in primary schools (Obidike, 2012). Early childhood education popularity is increasing daily. It emphasises holistic approach in attending to child's physical, emotional, social as well as cognitive development. To achieve these, there is need for proper management of education by the personnel who are going to teach, nurture and manage this level of education. Research shows that children learn, grow, and thrive in Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) settings when those settings are characterised by high quality interactions and relationships. There is growing recognition that the level of quality in ECEC settings influences children's learning, development and well-being. This attention to quality has generated continued interest in how to most effectively achieve and sustain quality. ECEC research has consistently focused on pedagogy and classroom/playgroup/group quality as key determinants of children's experiences in ECEC settings. Less is known about the role of leadership and its relationship to quality. Substantial research indicates that high quality early childhood education and care (ECEC) confers a wide range of benefits for children, yet quality in ECEC remains inconsistent. Given the variability in training and qualifications, one strategy for improving ECEC quality is in-service professional development (PD).

The Federal Government of Nigeria recognizes the importance of early childhood education in Nigeria and as a result it was given prominence in the National Policy of Education (FRN, 2014) as one of the programmes in the Nigerian educational system. Across the globe revealed that an estimated figure of one hundred million children, struggle daily for survival in villages and cities, and are exposed to the risks of hunger, poverty, disease, illiteracy and abuses. In support of this view, Mahuta (2007) stresses that the need to address the problems and salvage these children and the next generation of children from these menace, has necessitated the programme of Early Childhood Care Development and Education (ECCDE). Mahuta (2007) also stated that the aim of ECCDE is to foster the proper development of the children, identify and address their problems, harness their potentials, mould their character, enhance their learning, equip them for life, so that their actions are channeled towards positive personal, communal and global development in all ramifications of life.

Early childhood education sees to the total development of the child physically, mentally, socially, emotionally and linguistically. Physically by provision of playground apparatus for large muscle development (Singh Panda & Nayak, 2012) for instance climbing, balancing, sand piles, wheel toys, truck cars, housekeeping materials, harmer, nails, wood for small carpentry, clay, picture books, drums and other small musical instruments. Similarly, the school extends the child's range of contacts, prepares him to fit into a world more complex than the home and transmits the values of the culture of the society through its various learning opportunities and activities and that the various subjects in the curriculum such as language and communication skills, mathematical skills, creative arts help to adequately socialize the child into the society. The school is also to put into consideration the child age and ability as such, it becomes extremely necessary that the curriculum takes cognizance of the learner's innate potentials (Nwamwenda, 2014). In this regard, the child's physical abilities, the kind of manipulative skills he can learn, the level to which his physical energy can carry him, his physical maturity and psycho-social make-up. The child should not be bent to suit the curriculum because it was made for the child. As such, practices and task must be done in such a way that it does not stress or strain the child (Nagaraju, 2014). It is clearly evident that early-year experiences have a significant influence on the all-round development and the later lives of any child. The influence, which may be either positive or negative, has been emphasized across inter-disciplinary research It alerts us to consider the quality of education in the early childhood years seriously.

Staff development in the context of this work refers to teachers' development. The word 'teacher' covers those persons in schools who are responsible for the education of pupils. This implies that the term embraces all who discover order, transmit, disseminate, appraise or administer any learning and teaching processes. An educational policies or a new curriculum may be splendid on paper but may be incomplete or a waste of resources and energy if the learner who is the most important component of

any educational system is ignorant of what is planned. The role of teachers according to the Federal Republic of Nigeria National Policy on Education (NPE, 2014), is to educate the students to work towards financial contribution to the advancement of the society. We are what we are today because the teacher helped us develop the innate tendencies stored and hidden in us. Therefore, it is of utmost importance that teachers should be developed to acquire the necessary skills required to equip them with the knowledge, attitudes and behaviours needed to perform their tasks effectively in the school and classroom. More so, these staff development programmes should be made readily available and frequently accessed by teachers of early childhood education. Staff development programme is a process designed to improve job understanding, promote more effective job performance and establish future goals for career growth. Staff development programmes help staff in understanding their responsibilities.

A workshop are usually a brief intensive educational program for a relatively small group of people that focuses especially on techniques and skills in a particular field. This group of people, with the same interests, normally gather to discuss and research on a specific topic or project. It's one of the company's strategies to improve the skills and abilities of their employees. A seminar is a form of academic instruction, either at an academic institution or offered by a commercial or professional organization. It has the function of bringing together small groups for recurring meetings, focusing each time on some particular subject, in which everyone present is requested to participate. This is often accomplished through an ongoing Socratic dialogue with a seminar leader or instructor, or through a more formal presentation of research. It is essentially a place where assigned readings are discussed, questions can be raised and debates can be conducted (Early childhood education degree, 2018). The term seminar is also used to describe a research talk, often given by a visiting researcher and primarily attended by academics, research staff, and postgraduate students.

Aim and Objectives of the Study

The aim of this study was to examine the relationship between staff development programmes and job performance on early childhood education in Delta State. Specifically, the objectives of the study were to:

1. find out the relationship between staffs in-service training and job performance on early childhood education in Delta State.
2. Identify the relationship between staffs seminar and job performance on early childhood education in Delta State.

Research questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What is the relationship between staffs in-service training and job performance on early childhood education in Delta State?
2. What is the relationship between staffs seminar and job performance on early childhood education in Delta State?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were tested in the study at 0.05 level of significance

1. There is no significant relationship between staffs classroom visitation or observation and job performance on early childhood education in Delta State.
2. There is no significant relationship between staffs conference and job performance on early childhood education in Delta State.

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted correlational design since its emphasis was interested in finding out the relationship between staff development programmes and job performance on early childhood education. The population for this study consisted of the one hundred (100) head-teachers and one thousand nine hundred (1,900) teachers, which will give a total of two thousand (2,000) respondents. The sample size that was used for this study was three hundred and eighty (380) staffs representing 35.53% of the population. The instruments that were used for data collection in this study were two self-structured questionnaires titled "Staff Development Programme Assessment Scale and Effective Job Performance Assessment Scale. The instrument was face and content validated by four experts in University of Port Harcourt. Reliability coefficients for the Staff Development Programmes Scale (SDPS) and Effective Job Performance Assessment Scale' (EJPAS) are 0.81 and 0.84; while the

reliability coefficients for the subscales: Staffs In-Service Training 0.86, Staffs Seminar 0.85. Pearson Product Moment Correlation and same correlation statistics were used to answer the research questions and test the hypotheses respectively.

RESULTS

Answers to Research Questions

Research Question One: *What is the relationship between staffs in-service training and job performance on early childhood education in Delta State?*

Hypothesis (Ho_1): There is no significant relationship between staffs in-service training and effective job performance on early childhood education in Delta State.

Variables	N	Df	R	P (Sig.)	Decision
Staffs In-Service Training	372	370	0.061	0.021	Reject Ho_1
Effective Job Performance	372				(Significant) P <0.05

Decision Rule: 0.00 – 0.19 = Very Low, 0.20 – 0.39 = Low, 0.40 – 0.59 = Moderate, 0.60 – 0.79 = High, 0.80 – 1.00 Very High

To answer the research question, results from Table 4.1 produced a correlation coefficient, 'r' of 0.061; which apparently means there is a moderate relationship between staffs in-service training and effective job performance on early childhood education in Delta State.

For hypothesis tested, Table 4.1 also revealed that r of 0.061 is significant with P < 0.05 because the calculated probability value of 0.21 is less than the critical probability value of 0.05. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. By implication, there is a significant relationship between relationship between staffs in-service training and effective job performance on early childhood education in Delta State.

Research Question 2: *What is the relationship between staffs seminar and effective job performance on early childhood education in Delta State?*

Hypothesis (Ho_2): There is no significant relationship between staffs seminar and effective job performance on early childhood education in Delta State.

Table 4.2: Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient Formular (r) Showing the Relationship between staffs **seminar and effective job performance on early childhood education in Delta State.**

Variables	N	Df	R	P (Sig.)	Decision
Staffs Seminar	372	370	0.022	0.552	Accepted Ho_2
Effective Job Performance	372				(Not Significant) P > 0.05

To answer the research question, results from Table 4.2 showed a correlation coefficient, 'r' of 0.022; which suggest that there is a low relationship between staffs seminar and effective job performance on early childhood education in Delta State.

For hypothesis tested, Table 4.2 also revealed that r of 0.022 is not significant with P > 0.05 because the calculated probability value of 0.552 is greater than the critical probability value of 0.05. Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted. By implication, there is no significant relationship between staffs seminar and effective job performance on early childhood education in Delta State.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The first finding of the study revealed that there is a moderate relationship between staffs in-service training and effective job performance on early childhood education in Delta State. Also, there is a significant relationship between relationship between staffs in-service training and effective job performance on early childhood education in Delta State. The result of this study showed that there were significant changes in the teachers' behavior in their classroom as well as in their administrative work context. Teacher's role is very crucial in education quality as they become awareness about their

responsibilities and duties. There are different techniques to measure the quality of teacher training programs the numbers of indicators that define good teacher can serve as a direct measure for evaluating the effect of training programs. To meet the institutional needs in term of skills and knowledge, the roles and capacities of teacher can be further improved through inservice training. Only the trained teacher can set educational goals for teaching and can organize plans for reaching those goals.

The second finding of the study showed that there is a low relationship between staffs seminar and effective job performance on early childhood education in Delta State. Similarly, there is no significant relationship between staffs seminar and effective job performance on early childhood education in Delta State. There are number of aspects that highlight this factor, i.e. individuals are able to hone communication skills and interactive abilities; augment presentation and public speaking skills; augment competencies, abilities and aptitude; generate information regarding modern, scientific and innovative methods; generate awareness in terms of educational goals; develop contacts with members, internal and external to the educational institutions; clear doubts; develop motivation towards the implementation of tasks and activities; form positive viewpoints in terms of various aspects of educational institutions; recognize the meaning and significance of time management skills and form cordial and amiable terms and relationships with others. When these aspects are acknowledged, individuals are able to contribute significantly in leading to up-gradation of the overall system of education. In order to carry out this task, the individuals need to be knowledgeable. They need to possess efficient knowledge in terms of methods, approaches, strategies and procedures. Furthermore, it is of utmost significance for the individuals to inculcate the traits of morality, ethics, diligence and conscientiousness. These traits are the key to make seminars successful, achieve educational goals and promote well-being and goodwill of the members and the overall educational institutions. Therefore, useful in leading to enhancement of overall system of education is a factor highlighting the eminence of seminars, which needs to be acknowledged by all the members, irrespective of their job positions in the hierarchy of the educational institutions.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of the study, it was concluded that there was significant relationship between staff development programmes and effective job performance on early childhood education in Delta State. Thus, regularly development programmes for teachers and provision of the necessary professional guidance has positive influence on teachers job performance in terms of making deliberate effort to enhance effective job performance.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations were made based on the findings of the study:

1. The government should encourage In-service teacher training programs and there should be diversity and continuous. Continues programs result more successfully as compared to programs which have a short spin of life. To allow in-service teacher training programs to proceed successfully it should be a continue process. These programs should not focus on a single side of teacher development but it should focus on the overall development of the teacher. Programs for continues development must therefore take into consideration this diversity in order to make teacher training program more effective.
2. Head teachers should ensure seminar for teacher training programmes should carefully be designed in order to meet the educational and personal needs of the teachers, once these needs have been identified proper planning should be made to asses and support teachers. If these programmes are presented with the idea of increasing educational and professional growth, it will broaden teachers' skills knowledge and result in positive attitude.

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