

THE ROLE OF TEACHER TRAINING IN IMPROVING STUDENT OUTCOMES IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN OKITIPUPA LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF ONDO STATE

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Abstract

The paper examined the role of teacher training in improving student outcomes in secondary schools in Okitipupa Local Government Area of Ondo State. This study adopted descriptive survey design. The total population of the study consisted of 1734 teachers from 24 public secondary schools in Okitipupa Local Government Area of Ondo State. The total sample of 200 respondents representing 11.5% of the population was randomly selected. The instrument for this study was a questionnaire titled "Role of Teacher Training in Improving Student Outcomes Questionnaire (RTTISOQ). The collected data was presented and analysed using descriptive methods such as frequencies and percentages. The study established that the role of teacher training in improving the academic performance of secondary school students is significant. Based on the findings from the study, it is recommended among others that government should invest in high quality teacher training programmes that focus on developing teachers' pedagogical skills and classroom management strategies and provide teachers with the resources and support needed to implement evidence-based teaching methods.

Keywords: Teacher training, Student Outcomes, Pedagogical skills, Secondary schools

Introduction

Teachers play a pivotal role in shaping the minds and futures of their students. Effective teaching requires not only a deep understanding of the subject matter but also the ability to engage students, foster critical thinking, and create a positive learning environment. Teacher training, therefore, is an essential component of ensuring quality education for all. Teacher training encompasses a range of programs, initiatives, and professional development opportunities designed to equip educators with the knowledge, skills, and competencies necessary to effectively teach and support their students (Darling-Hammond, 2000). Teachers should have a strong grasp of the subjects they teach, staying up-to-date with current research, pedagogical advancements, and emerging trends in their respective fields. Effective teaching goes beyond simply conveying knowledge. Teachers need to be skilled in instructional design, classroom management, assessment techniques, and differentiated instruction to cater to the diverse needs of their learners. Building strong relationships with students, parents, and colleagues is crucial for creating a supportive and inclusive learning environment (Guskey, 2002). Teacher training should emphasize the importance of communication, empathy, and cultural sensitivity. Teaching is a dynamic profession that demands continuous learning and adaptation. Teacher training programs should encourage educators to engage in reflective practice, seek feedback, and pursue ongoing professional development opportunities.

Teacher training manifests through different models, encompassing pre-service education, in-service professional development, mentorship programs, and online courses. Darling-Hammond (2017) advocates for comprehensive pre-service programs that merge theoretical knowledge with practical classroom experience. In-service training models, such as peer coaching and mentoring, aim to provide ongoing support and foster a culture of continuous improvement (Ingersoll & Strong, 2011). Effective teacher training programs address a range of components, including pedagogical techniques, classroom management, assessment strategies, and the integration of technology. Darling-Hammond and McLaughlin (1995) stress the significance of aligning training with real-world classroom challenges.

The relationship between teachers' training and students' academic performance is a critical aspect of educational research and policy. Research consistently demonstrates a strong correlation between teacher quality, often enhanced through training, and student achievement (Darling-Hammond, 2017). Theoretical frameworks such as the Effective Teacher Framework (Kyriacou, 2009) emphasize the multifaceted nature of teacher effectiveness, encompassing instructional strategies, classroom management, and the ability to engage diverse learners. Teacher training often includes components related to effective classroom management. A positive and well-managed learning environment, cultivated through training, has been linked to increased student engagement and better academic outcomes (Marzano & Marzano, 2003).

Teacher training in Nigeria faces a myriad of challenges that impact the quality of education provided to students. Adedjei (2017) and Olulobe (2017) that lack of adequate infrastructure and resources, insufficient classrooms, outdated teaching materials, a dearth of modern educational technologies, shortage of qualified instructors in teacher training institutions contributes to a decline in the quality of education provided. Many institutions struggle to attract and retain highly qualified educators and trainers, leading to a gap in the transfer of up-to-date pedagogical knowledge and practices.

Improving teacher training in Nigeria is pivotal for advancing the quality of education and ensuring that educators are well-equipped to meet the demands of a dynamic educational landscape. This study proffers possible ways to enhance teacher training in Nigeria through: Upgrading training institutions with modern classrooms, libraries, and technological facilities can create an environment conducive to effective learning (Adedjei, 2017). Implementing competitive remuneration packages, professional development opportunities, and creating a conducive work environment can motivate experienced educators to participate in teacher training programs (Ololube, 2017). A thorough review and alignment of teacher training curricula with the practical needs of educators in the classroom are essential. Collaboration between training institutions and educational practitioners can ensure that curricula reflect the current challenges and innovations in the field (Oduolowu et al., 2018). Providing training on digital literacy, educational software, and online teaching methodologies prepares teachers for the modern classroom (Adomi et al., 2010).

Statement of the Problem

Despite the importance of teacher training in improving student outcomes, there is a lack of high-quality teacher training programmes available for educators. This lack of quality training can have a negative impact on teachers' ability to effectively teach and on students' ability to learn and achieve academic success. This paper therefore investigated the role of teacher training in improving student outcomes in public secondary schools in Okitipupa Local Government Area of Ondo State.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study is to investigate the role of teacher training in improving student outcomes in secondary schools in Okitipupa Local Government Area of Ondo State. It specifically focuses on finding out:

1. Forms of teachers training in public secondary schools,
2. The impacts of teachers training on students' academic performance in public secondary schools
3. The challenges of teachers training in public secondary schools.
4. How to improve teachers training in public secondary schools.

Research Questions

The following research questions were raised to guide the study

1. What are the major forms of teachers training in public secondary schools in Okitipupa Local Government Area?
2. What are the impacts of teachers training on students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Okitipupa Local Government Area?
3. What are the challenges of teachers training in public secondary schools in Okitipupa Local Government Area?
4. What can be done to improve teachers training in public secondary schools in Okitipupa Local Government Area?

Methodology

This study adopted descriptive survey design. Descriptive survey design is adopted to enable the researcher to collect original data from the respondents and describe the present conditions as they exist in their natural settings.

The total population of the study consists of 1734 teachers from 24 public secondary schools in Okitipupa Local Government Area of Ondo State. The total sample of 200 respondents representing 11.5% of the population was randomly selected. The instrument for this study was a questionnaire titled "Role of Teacher Training in Improving Student Outcomes Questionnaire (RTTISOQ)". The collected data was presented and analysed using descriptive methods such as frequencies and percentages.

Results

Research Question One

1. What are the major forms of teachers training in public secondary schools in Okitipupa Local Government Area of Ondo State?

Table 1: Percentages on forms of teachers' training in public secondary school

S/N	ITEM	SA	A	D	SD
1	Pre-service teacher education	75(37.5%)	88(44%)	14(7%)	23(11.5%)
2	In-service professional development	87(43.5%)	68(34%)	13(6.5%)	32(16%)
3	Mentorship and induction programs	34(17%)	41(20.5%)	66(33%)	59(29.5%)
4	Online teacher training	11(5.5%)	13(6.5%)	89(44.5%)	87(43.5%)
5	Collaborative learning communities	20(10%)	38(19%)	76(38%)	66(33%)

Table 1 above revealed that a higher percentage 81.5% of the respondents agreed that pre-service teacher education is one of the major forms of teachers training in public secondary schools. Also, 77.5% of the respondents agreed that in-service professional development is a form of teachers' training. Whereas, a very few number of the respondents agreed that mentorship and induction programs as well as online teacher training are forms of teachers' training.

Research Question Two: What are the impacts of teachers training on students' academic performance?

Table 1: Percentages on impacts of teachers training on students' academic performance

S/N	ITEM	SA	A	D	SD
1	You believe that teacher training has positively influenced your ability to manage classroom dynamics and create a conducive learning environment	85 (42.5%)	90 (45%)	13 (6.5%)	12 (6%)
2	You think your training has equipped you to address the diverse learning needs of your students	77 (38.5%)	78 (39%)	13 (6.5%)	22 (11%)
3	You noticed an improvement in your students' academic performance since undergoing teacher training	74 (37%)	71 (35.5%)	25 (12.5%)	30 (15%)
4	You feel adequately prepared to integrate technology into your teaching practices as a result of your training	11 (5.5%)	13 (6.5%)	89 (44.5%)	87 (43.5%)
5	Teacher training influenced your students' attitude towards learning	80 (40%)	58 (29%)	20 (10%)	42 (21%)

Table 2 revealed the impacts of teachers training on students' academic performance. Out of the 200 respondents, 87.5% agreed that they believe that teacher training has positively influenced their abilities to manage classroom dynamics and create a conducive learning environment. 77.55 agreed that they think their training has equipped them to address the diverse learning needs of their students. It was also found in the table that 72.55 of the respondents agreed that they noticed an improvement in their students' academic performance since undergoing teacher training. 69% of the respondents also agreed that teacher training influenced their students' attitude towards learning. However, very few percentage of the respondents, 12% agreed that they feel adequately prepared to integrate technology into their teaching practices as a result of their trainings. This shows that they lack adequate knowledge in technology. It could be concluded that the impacts of teachers training on students' academic performance is very high.

Research Question Three: What are the challenges of teachers training in Ondo State?

Table 3: Percentages on the challenges of teachers training in Ondo State

S/N	ITEM	SA	A	D	SD
1	Inadequate infrastructure and resources	85(42.5%)	88(44%)	14(7%)	13(6.5%)
2	Shortage of qualified instructors	67(33.5%)	78(39%)	23(11.5%)	32(16%)
3	Curriculum misalignment with educational needs	54(27%)	41(20.5%)	46(23%)	59(29.5%)
4	Insufficient integration of technology	81(40.5%)	83(41.5%)	19(9.5%)	17(8.5%)
5	Limited access to continuous professional development	80(40%)	48(24%)	24(12%)	48(24%)

Table 3 revealed the challenges of teachers training in Ondo State. A higher percentage of the respondents, 86.5% agreed that inadequate infrastructure and resources is a major challenge of teachers training. Also, 72% of the respondents agreed that shortage of qualified instructors is a challenge. 82% agreed that insufficient integration of technology is a challenge while 64% agreed that limited access to continuous professional development is also a challenge.

Research Question four: What can be done to improve teachers training in Ondo State?

S/N	ITEM	SA	A	D	SD
1	You believe increased investment in infrastructure and resources would improve the quality of teacher training	85 (42.5%)	88 (44%)	14 (7%)	13 (6.5%)
2	You think recruiting and retaining highly qualified instructors is for enhancing teacher training	87(43.5%)	68(34%)	13(6.5%)	32(16%)
3	Aligning the teacher training curriculum with the practical needs of educators positively impact the quality of teacher training	74(37%)	61(30.5%)	26(13%)	39(19.5%)
4	Integration of technology into teacher training programs for improving the skills of educators	61(30.5%)	53(26.5%)	49(24.5%)	37(18.5%)
5	Increasing access to continuous professional development opportunities positively contribute to the improvement of teacher training	80(40%)	58(29%)	26(13%)	46(23%)

Table 4 revealed what can be done to improve teachers training. A higher percentage of the respondents, 86%, 77.5%, 67.5%, 56.5% and 69% respectively agreed that believe increased investment in infrastructure and resources; recruiting and retaining highly qualified instructors, aligning the teacher training curriculum with the practical needs of educators, integration of technology into teacher training programs for improving the skills of educators and increasing access to continuous professional development opportunities positively contribute to the improvement of teacher training.

Discussion

Findings in table 1 revealed the forms of teachers training in public secondary schools in Okitipupa Local Government Area of Ondo State. It was revealed that pre-service teacher education, in-service professional development are the major forms of teachers training. However, it was found in the study

that mentorship and induction programs, online teacher training and collaborative learning communities are not regular forms of teachers training. Darling-Hammond, (2017) emphasized that pre-service teacher education is a foundational form of training that occurs before educators enter the classroom. He is of the opinion that the effectiveness of pre-service training is crucial in shaping the initial competencies of teachers. Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, (1995) also affirmed that in-Service Professional Development such as workshops, conferences, and seminars reflect the need for teachers to adapt to changing educational landscapes.

It was found that the impact of teachers training on students' academic performance is very high. Research consistently demonstrates a strong correlation between teacher quality, often enhanced through training, and student achievement (Darling-Hammond, 2017). Theoretical frameworks such as the Effective Teacher Framework (Kyriacou, 2009) emphasize the multifaceted nature of teacher effectiveness, encompassing instructional strategies, classroom management, and the ability to engage diverse learners. Teacher training often includes components related to effective classroom management. A positive and well-managed learning environment, cultivated through training, has been linked to increased student engagement and better academic outcomes (Marzano & Marzano, 2003).

The study also found several challenges of teachers training in Ondo State. Among these are inadequate infrastructure and resources, shortage of qualified instructors, curriculum misalignment with educational needs, insufficient integration of technology and limited access to continuous professional development. The findings corroborates that of Adedeji (2017) and Olulobe (2017) that lack of adequate infrastructure and resources, insufficient classrooms, outdated teaching materials, a dearth of modern educational technologies, shortage of qualified instructors in teacher training institutions contributes to a decline in the quality of education provided. Many institutions struggle to attract and retain highly qualified educators and trainers, leading to a gap in the transfer of up-to-date pedagogical knowledge and practices.

The findings revealed various ways on how to improve teachers training in Ondo State. It was showed that increased investment in infrastructure and resources; recruiting and retaining highly qualified instructors, aligning the teacher training curriculum with the practical needs of educators, integration of technology into teacher training programs for improving the skills of educators and increasing access to continuous professional development opportunities positively contribute to the improvement of teacher training. This was supported by Adedeji, (2017), Ololube, 2017, Oduolowu et al., 2018 and Adomi et al., 2010 that adequate investment in infrastructure and resources, upgrading training institutions with modern classrooms, libraries, and technological facilities can create an environment conducive to effective learning, increased funding for updated teaching materials, educational technologies, and practical resources, initiatives to attract and retain highly qualified instructors are crucial, implementing competitive remuneration packages, professional development opportunities, and creating a conducive work environment can motivate experienced educators to participate in teacher training programs.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the role of teacher training in improving the academic performance of secondary school students is significant. Well-trained teachers are better equipped to create a conducive learning environment, and their ability to effectively plan and deliver lessons, assess students' progress, and provide feedback can have a direct impact on student achievement.

Recommendations

Based on the findings from the study, the following recommended were made:

1. Government should invest in high quality teacher training programmes that focus on developing teachers' pedagogical skills and classroom management strategies.
2. Government should provide teachers with the resources and support needed to implement evidence-based teaching methods.
3. Government should establish systems for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of teacher training programs and making adjustments as needed.
4. Teachers should be provided with ongoing professional development opportunities that are tailored to their specific needs.
5. School management should encourage collaboration and peer-to-peer learning among teachers to promote best practices

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