Staff Development and Academic Staff Output in the Universities in South-South Geo-Political Zone of Nigeria

[1]Menwo Ukechi Wilson-Osigwe, [2]Emmanuel C. Obiano & [3]Idoli, Nwachukwu Ben

[1]Department of Geography,
Faculty of Social and Management Sciences,
Taraba State University, P.M.B 1167, Jalingo, Taraba State, Nigeria
[2]Department of Environmental Health Science, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Nigeria
[3]National Teachers Institute, St. John Study Centre, Port Harcourt, Nigeria

Abstract

This study dealt with staff development and academic staff output in the universities in South-South geo-political zone of Nigeria. It was an Ex-post facto design study carried out specifically in three federal universities in the area of study. These were: University of Port Harcourt, Choba; University of Uyo, Uyo and University of Calabar, Calabar. Two hypotheses based on the variables were formulated to guide and direct the study. These were: staff in-service training and staff ICT training, respectively. Two self-constructed questionnaires called staff development questionnaire (SDQ) and academic staff output questionnaire (ASOQ) were used for data collection. The first instrument was administered to 800 academic staff. The second instrument, three copies were administered one each to three students to assess each individual academic staff. Data collected were analyzed using one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) and independent t-test. The results revealed among other things that; there existed an influence of in-service training on academic staff output which is not significant. Statistically and that there existed a difference between output of staff who received ICT training and that of those who had not but the difference is not statistically significant.

Keywords: *Staff Development, Academic Staff output in the Universities, South-South geo-political zone of Nigeria.*

Corresponding Author: Menwo Ukechi Wilson-Osigwe

Background to the Study

Education is the key to the development of a nation in general and of a person in particular. It is through education that individuals and groups realize their worth and potentials. This explains why the government of developing countries of which Nigeria is an example; make spirited efforts to provide education for all their citizens. Hence, they invest a large proportion of their income in it. One of the most important components of any educational system is the teacher. Teachers are more important than any other factor, which contribute to the quality of education at any level of our educational system. This cuts across the overall development of any nation. It is the teachers, more than any single group of people, who determine the attitudes of society and shape the idea and aspirations of the nations. (Odor, 1998, Nyere in Nakpodia, 2000).

The quality of any educational system depends to an extent on the quality of teachers. For this reason, a good policy will ensure the recruitment of good teachers and the development of skills in them. It is when their skills have been developed that they can increase their output (Jardine, 2006). However, the importance and quality of teachers cannot be noticed without their involvement in staff development programmes. This is because staff development focuses on professional growth (Mbipom, 2000). More specifically, staff development brings about change in individual's knowledge, understanding, behavior, attitude, skills, values and beliefs. The purpose of staff development generally is to improve job performance, enhance the quality of the work environment and foster personal growth and development. Through staff development activities, faculties and staff acquire knowledge about educational issues and problems, develop and utilize new or improved skills or work ethics and methods, clarify work-related attitudes and values, derive greater satisfaction from working with students and develop more stimulation and supportive relationships with colleagues (Boyd, 2004).

Staff development programmes like in-service training, ICT training, conferences, seminars, and workshops for teachers are designed to help teachers increase their capacity for knowing more about their work, and to enable them use this know-how so that they can perform their responsibilities without direct supervision (Sergiovanni and Elliot, 2002).

Staff development brings about quality manpower. The importance of quality manpower can hardly be over-emphasized. In other words, of all the factors that are necessary for engendering the necessary forces of economic growth and development, none perhaps, is more important than the availability of qualified manpower, which can emanate from staff development (Okebukola, 2005).

Contemporarily, one of the obligations of university leadership is to groom its staff professionally so as to support learning and improve students' performance (Bank and Mayer, 2001). This improvement in the professional competencies of the academic staff in the university helps to develop knowledge and skills of the staff in support of current role or prepare a staff for future role (Fullan, 2002).

Staff development in its ramifications provides growth and progress and improved school organization. It assists in promoting academic staff from one level to another and encourages hard work among them (Oloruntoba and Ajayi, 2006).

During the process of staff development, academic staff have the privileges and opportunities to be retrained (in-service training) to acquire more educational prowess in their job. They are exposed to workshops, seminars and conferences. In-service training, as the name implies, is the training for employees that enables them develop their skills in a specific discipline or occupation. It is usually an inter-mix of teaching and practice carried out in order to attain a desired standard of behavior, efficiency and effectiveness, with the main aim of effecting a better change (Nwachukwu, 1989).

Information and Communication Technology is another crucial part of staff development. It is used in sending audio, video or digital data from one place to another by radio waves, optical signals or cables and also the collection of world-wide computers and their networks that are connected together to exchange digital data in three different types of use like, access to millions of pages through the world-wide web; sending e-mail messages between users; transferring large amounts of information through file transfer, internet, etc. (Samways and Byrne, 1999). Other variables that constitute part of staff development are: conferences, seminars, and workshops. As already mentioned, they contribute in no mean way to the enhancement of the skills and knowledge of staff for the achievement of high output.

Staff development is pivotal to staff output and has an absolute positive connection with academic staff output. Academic staff output is the amount of something that they produce. Academic staff output measures the extent to which university organizations achieve their goals which is dependent on the acquisition of new skills, knowledge and experiences attributable to staff development programmes. Low output in our organizations has become a great concern to management of these organizations. Improving the output of an average employee has been a bothering problem of many organizations. Hence, conferences, seminars and workshops are organized to achieve this objective (Nwachukwu, 1989).

Research publication is an important issue in a university environment. It is a major or most significant indicator of academic staff output. It may be pointed out that research publication in any field of specialization provide current information for growth, progress, development and an improved society. It increases the social prestige of the academic staff status to the rank of a professor irrespective of his or her gender. Research publication encourages hard work and fills in the gaps of previous researches and creates avenue for future investigations. Research attainment is determined by the number of published articles in referred journals and conference proceedings of repute (Oloruntoba and Ajayi, 2006).Others are teaching output and community service output.

In the light of this background, it is clear that staff development is welded into staff output and the two cannot be separated.

Statement of Hypotheses

This study was guided by the following null hypotheses:

(1) Staff in-service training does not significantly influence their output in university in terms of research, teaching and community service.

(2) Academic staff ICT training does not significantly influence their output in terms of research teaching and community service.

Literature Review

The review of literature is done in the following sub-headings:

(1) In-service training and academic staff output.

(2) ICT training and academic staff output.

In-Service Training and Academic Staff Output

Etudor (2000) carried out a study on in-service training and teacher's output in Cross River State secondary schools and tested the hypothesis that, there is no significant relationship between in-service training and output of workers. Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (r) at 0.05 level of significance was used. The result revealed that the calculated r-value was greater than the critical r-value, indicating that there was relationship between them.

In contrary, Akuegwu (2000) researched on human resources management and teachers' output in secondary schools in Imo State and tested a hypothesis that, there is no significant influence of secondary school teachers' professional growth on their work output with one-way analysis of variances, (ANOVA) at 0.05 level of significance. The result of the analysis revealed a significant influence of secondary school teachers' professional growth on their work output. It was therefore, concluded that the more teachers are exposed to professional growth the more their performance and the improvement of school output. The researches of Etudor and Akuegwu in Cross River State and Imo State in year 2000 respectively were researched on human resources and in-service training as it relates to output. Their results proved that a significant relationship exists between in-service training and staff output. The two researches complement each other. Their difference is in the use of statistical technique. While Etudor used Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (r), Akuegwu used the Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) in testing the hypothesis, respectively.

Huang (2001), researched on training of employees and output in a firm and tested a hypothesis: there is no significant relationship between employees and training and output. Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (r) was used. The result proved that there was a significant relationship between employees' training and output. He then concluded that for employee to carry out their roles and functions in managing a firm or organization successfully to achieve high output, they must be well trained and educated. In addition, he also agreed that in-service training can be a powerful driving force to aid a firm or an organization to profitability.

Inyang and Akpama (2002), corroborating stated that, in-service training can be taken as any learning activity, which is directed towards the acquisition of specific knowledge and skills for the purpose of improving staff performance. Also, Inyang (2000) posited that, in-service training is a process or a set of activities aimed at assisting individuals to acquire knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary, for the effective performance of specific task or job. Impliedly, within the context of work in the modern business world, in-service training is normal and necessary if an organization's staff must achieve the goal of high output.

ICT Training and Academic Staff Output

Abdal-Haqq (2000) researched on the awareness of information and communication technology. The result proved that, in societies where ICT is upheld and a majority of the population has access to computers and other technologies (such as in USA, Canada, European countries and other developed nations), staff preparation institutions are lagging behind. In addition, a growing number of studies are discovering that both new and experienced staff's including teachers feel inadequately prepared to use computers and other forms of technology in their classroom. Gallant (2000) corroborating this stated that, this can be seen in the fact that relatively few teachers regularly use computer-based technology in their classrooms. When they are used, it is usually for drills and word processing or growing lecture notes into the computer.

In a similar finding, Breuleux, Baker and Pagliard (2000) in their study on the use of computers in the classrooms found that some schools are introducing computers into their classrooms but are offering no training to their teachers on how to use them effectively. Revenaugh (2000) supporting this, encourages leaders to support this change of attitude in four simple steps. They are put someone in-charge, diversify the approach taken, demand technological proficiency and a model for teachers. These two researchers, Abdal-Haqq (2000) and Breuleux (2000) were researching on the issue of computer in the same year, though in different areas. Their findings proved the same. Abdal-Haqq found out that, when majority have access to the computer, staff preparation schools will not be doing better, while Breuleux discovered the introduction of computers into the classroom without giving training to the staff on the use of it. Impliedly, both of them are stressing possible result of low output.

Methods and Materials

The study adopted Ex-post-facto research design. Kelinger (1986) defines it as a systematic empirical inquiry in which the scientist does not have direct control of independent variables because their manifestations have already occurred or because they are inherently not manipulable. Inferences about relations among variables are made, without direct intervention from concomitant variation of independent and dependent variables. The researcher has nothing to add or manipulate but starts with the observation of the dependent variables. The independent variable or variables are studied in retrospect for their possible relationship to, and effects on the dependent variable or variables. Therefore, they examined retrospectively the effects of a naturally occurring event on a subsequent outcome with a view to establishing a causal link between them.

This design is appropriate for the study because the cause and effect of staff development on academic staff output of the universities in South-South geo-political zone of Nigeria already existed and so, the study is only to establish the relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable. Two thousand, eight hundred and ninety four (2894) academic staff from the three Federal universities in South-South geo-political zone of Nigeria selected for the study, University of Port Harcourt, Choba, Rivers State; University of Uyo, Uyo, Akwa Ibom State; and University of Calabar, Calabar, Cross River State were randomly selected and used for the study. A structured questionnaire was used for data collection. Data collected was analyzed using one way analysis of variance (ANOVA) and independent t-test.

Results
Test of Hypotheses

HO$_1$: Staff in-service training does not significantly influence their output in terms of research, teaching and community service.

The independent variable in this hypothesis is in-service training while the dependent variable is academic staff output in terms of research, teaching and community service. The respondents were categorized into four groups on the basis of their in-service training at various levels of educational qualification. These were those who were sponsored by their universities for Masters' degree only, PhD. only, Masters and PhD. and those that were not sponsored by the universities at these levels of educational qualification. Their outputs were compared using one way analysis of variance to test the hypothesis. The result is as presented in Table 1.

Table 1: One way Analysis of Variance of the Influence of In-service Training on Academic Staff Output in terms of Research, Teaching and Community Service

Variables	Pterms	N	Means	SD
Research	Ph.D. only	301	6.48	1.42
	Masters and Ph.D	168	6.59	1.34
	Masters only	66	6.38	1.55
	None of the above	265	6.45	1.35
	TOTAL	**800**	**6.49**	**1.39**
Teaching	Ph.D. only	301	11.09	2.41
	Masters and Ph.D	168	11.50	2.19
	Masters only	66	10.92	2.55
	None of the above	265	6.45	1.36
	TOTAL	**800**	**11.28**	**2.32**
Community Service	Ph.D. only	301	12.56	1.65
	Masters and Ph.D	168	12.33	1.82
	Masters only	66	12.60	1.59
	None of the above	265	12.66	1.64
	TOTAL	**800**	**12.54**	**1.68**

Variables	Source Variance	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F	Significant
Research	Between Groups	11.80	3	3.93	1.39	.24
	Within Groups	2250.30	796	2.83		
	TOTAL	**2262.10**	**799**			
Teaching	Between Groups	2.93	3	.971	.50	.68
	Within groups	1546.94	796	1.943		
	TOTAL	**1549.85**	**799**			
Community Service	Between Groups	31.36	3	10.454	1.956	.119
	Within groups	4254.13	796	5.344		
	TOTAL	**4285.50**	**799**			

$P > .05$; df = 3 and 796; Critical -F = 3.14

The results in Table 1 shows that the calculated F-value for research (f = 1.39, teaching f = 0.50), Community service (f -1.956) were all found to be less than the critical F-value of 3.14 needed for significance at 0.05 alpha level with 3 and 796 degrees of freedom. With this result, the null hypothesis is retained. It, therefore, means that in-service training of those academic staff that was sponsored at various levels of educational qualification did not differ significantly. This is because their level of output was not more than the level of output of those who were not sponsored at the same levels of educational qualification.

HO$_2$: Academic staff ICT training does not significantly influence their output in terms of research, teaching and community service in universities in South-South geopolitical zone of Nigeria.

The dependent variable in this hypothesis is academic output in terms of research, teaching and community service while the independent variable is ICT training. This was assigned into two independent levels respondents who have never been sponsored and those who have been sponsored once for ICT training in the last five years. The outputs of these two classes of staff were compared. Independent t-test statistical procedure was adopted for data analysis. The result is as presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Independent t-test analysis of the difference in academic staff output in terms of research, teaching and community service between academic staff sponsored for ICT training once and those that were never sponsored

Variables	ICT Training	N	Mean	SD	T-cal
Research	Never	278	6.45	1.25	-0.51
	Once	522	6.51	1.46	
Teaching	Never	278	11.24	2.21	-0.27
	Once	522	11.29	2.37	
Community Service	Never	278	12.64	1.62	1.21
	Once	522	12.49	1.72	

$P > 0.05$; df = 798; Critical t-value = 1.96

Table 2 revealed that the calculated t-value for research (t = 0.507), teaching (t = -0.271), and community service (t = 1-212) were all found to be less than the critical t-value of 1.96 needed for significance at 0.05 alpha level with 798 degrees of freedom. With this result, the null hypothesis is retained. It therefore, means that there exist no significant differences in academic staff output in terms of research, teaching and community service between academic staff who have received ICT training once and those that have never received ICT training.

Discussion of Findings
In-Service Training and Academic Staff Output
The finding of this study revealed that there exist no significant influences statistically of in-service training on academic staff output in universities because of inadequate attendance. This means that the output of those that were sponsored for in-service training did not differ significantly and as such, it is not more than that of those that were not. The position could be understood from lack of awareness of the proper role of in-service training of teachers. It could also be the mismanagement, maladministration, threat, and influences that divert and misdirect the attention of teachers from focus. "Knowledge is power" but not until applied. It could as well be understood from lack of application of knowledge skill, etc. that those who were sponsored acquired and it could be understood from the quest to explore and discover new knowledge and the competitive nature of man to excel in life. The more organizations sponsor their staff for in-service training, the more individual staff go for staff sponsorship. This implies that no vacuum is created and there is hardly the existence of staff on the cue-cue waiting for the sponsorship of organization, hence, this result. Academic staff will achieve

improved out if the knowledge and skills acquired from in-service training are applied to work and not diverted things of no interest. The result is in agreement with the earlier studies by Obot (2002) and Ekpoh (2003) whose studies on the influence of in-service training on teachers' output, discovered no significant influence existed upon their output by their satisfaction with staff development.

On the contrary, the result is not in agreement with the earlier studies by Etudor (2001), Huang (2001) and Collins (2003) whose research results on the influence of in-service training on output of workers proved significant. However, all the three researchers had differences in their methodologies, statistical tools, instruments, population of the study and limitations but the results proved the same, that in-service training has a significant influence on staff output. Inyang and Akpama (2002) corroborating and also in line with the finding of these studies submitted that, in-service training is necessary if an organization's staff must achieve the goal of high output.

However, the difference in these findings is expected because knowledge is not static but dynamic, depending on the ingenuity of man. Over time in the school system, things change, teaching method, aids and materials, etc. Academic staffs are expected to get abreast with these changes; hence, in-service training is necessary for them. However, this is a means of providing new information as well as recharging the academic staff for hard work. When they are sponsored for in-service training, they will learn more for more skills acquisition, fulfillment of specific manpower need, improvement of their morale, etc. and if applied to work, then, high output will be realistic.

ICT training and Academic Staff Output
The test of the hypothesis containing these variables revealed that there exist no significant difference statistically in the output of academic staff who have received ICT training and that of those who have not received from their universities due to poor attendance. It means that ICT training by academic staff that were sponsored did not differ significantly and it is not more than that of those that were not sponsored. This position could be understood from lack of ICT in teaching/learning. Following this non-integration of ICT in learning, would have no impact on staff output. It goes to explain that ICT is presently neglected and disregarded in the teaching/learning processes in schools. Many schools do not have an ICT centre. In most cases there is no standby generator to assist. Based on this, the desired result is not yielded. Hence, it is said to have no significant influence on academic staff output.

This result is in agreement with the earlier research findings by Abdal-Haqq (2000), Breuleux, Baker and Paliaroli (2000), and Ragsdale (2005) whose studies on the influence of ICT training on output proved no significant influence. Gallant (2000) corroborating stated that, this can be seen in the fact that relatively few teachers regularly use computer-based technology in their classrooms. Even the schools that are introducing computers into their classrooms no training is offered to their teachers on how to use them effectively. However, the present finding disagrees with the research work of Collins (2005) who discovered that, there exists a significant relationship between staff ICT training and output in Imo State, Nigeria.

He recommended that ICT training is necessary for staff to improve their competence for enhanced output. The difference in the finding of the researcher could arise from different country, geographical area, methodology of research and instrument used.

Recommendations
The following recommendations were made:
(1) University management should not de-emphasize in-service training, rather, it should emphasize on the awareness of the proper role of in-service training of academic staff, to ensure that the influence of in-service on their output will not be despised.
(2) University management should ensure that facilities and equipment are provided for academic staff trained for ICT. These will assist in making a difference in their output.

Conclusion
Based on the findings obtained from this study, the following conclusions were made:
In-service training given to academic staff has not influenced their output statistically more than that of those who were not sponsored by their universities in the last five years. Those sponsored were not better than, those that were not sponsored by their universities in terms of output. This is because the output of those that were sponsored was not more than that of those that were not sponsored. The output of academic staff sponsored for ICT training by their universities has not helped in improving their level of output statistically more than that of those who were not sponsored, for interaction with other academic staff in other part of Nigeria, Africa and the world in the last five years.

References
Abdal-Haqq, I. (2000). *Infusing technology into pre-service teacher education,* Eric Digest. Washington, D. C.: Eric Clearing House.

Akuegwu, B. A. (2000). *Human resources management and teacher's productivity in secondary schools in Imo State*, Unpublished M.Ed. thesis, Department of Educational Administration and Planning, University of Calabar.

Bank, P. & Mayer, S. (2001). Why is teacher professional development important? *International Institute for Educational Planning*, www.unesco.org/iiep, January, 4-2001.

Boyd, V. (2004). *School context: Bridge or barrier for change*, Austin TX: Southwest Educational Development Laboratory.

Breuleux, A. Baker, P. & Pagliaroli, G. (2000). *Extending the professional development of teachers in technology*, Retrieved April 10, 2009 from www.education.mcgill.ca/olit./partner

Collins, U. (2005). *ICT Training and Teachers*, Port Harcourt: Immaculate Publishers.

Ekpoh, U. I. (2003). *Reward system physical working environment and secondary school teachers work performance in Uyo education Zone Akwa-Ibom State,* Unpublished M.Ed. Thesis. University of Calabar.

Etudor, E. E. & Edu, M. I. (2001). *Human resources management skill and teacher's job effectiveness in Akwa-Ibom State,* Unpublished M.Ed. Thesis, Graduate School. University of Calabar.

Fullan, M. (2002). *The meaning of educational change*, Ontario: OISE Press.

Gallant, G. M. (2000). Professional development for web-based teaching: Overcoming innocence and resistance, *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education*, 88, 69-78.

Huang, T. C. (2001). The relation of training practices and organizational performance in small and medium size enterprise, *Education and Teaching*, 43 (819), 437-444.

Inyang, B. J. & Akpama, A. M. (2002). *Personnel management practice in Nigeria*, Calabar: Merb Business Publisher

Jardine, C. B. (2006). *Staff development: In M. Michael (ed), school management skills*, Benin: Heinemann Educational Books.

Mbipom, G. (2000). *Educational administration and planning*, Calabar: Glad Tidings Press Limited

Nakpodia, E. D. (2000). The role of educational administration in the promotion of in-service teachers education for primary school teachers in Nigeria, *Current Issues in Educational Management in Nigeria*, Benin City: Ambik Press.

Nwachukwu, C. C. (1989). Supervision and productivity: Nigeria organization, *Journal of Management Studies*, 2 (1), 48-60.

Odor, P. I. (1998). Teacher in-service education in Nigeria: A study of teacher perception of current in-service programme, *Journal of Education in Developing Area*, 6, 204-211.

Okebukola, P. (2005). Quality assurance in the Nigerian University system, A Key Note Address presented at the 2005 Fellowship Seminar Award of the Curriculum Organization of Nigeria held at Bauchi Road Campus from June 3rd to 6th, University of Jos, Jos – Nigeria.

Oloruntoba, A. & Ajayi, M. T. (2006). Gender and research attainment in Nigerian Agricultural Universities, *Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa*, 4 (2), 83-98.

Ragsdale, R. (2005). Effective computing in education: Teachers' tools and training. *Education and Computing*, 7, 157-166.

Revenaugh, M. (2000). No more excuses, *Curriculum administration*, 36 (4) 25-48.

Samways, B. & Byrne-Jones, T. (1999). *Computers basic facts*, Scotland: Harper Collins Publishers.