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## Impacts of In-service Trainings of Secondary Schools' Teachers on Academic Performance of Students in Lagos State, Nigeria

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### Abstract

This study explored the impacts of in-service professional development trainings of secondary school teachers on the academic performance of students in Lagos state public schools. The objective was to reflect the importance of in-service professional development to teaching and learning in African schools. The result of the findings affirmed in-service professional development as a contributing factor to high level of academic performance of students; IPD empowers the teachers with instructional tasks delivery skills that make them competent, thereby attaining the expected goals of education. These in service trainings include various workshops, seminars, lesson study, conferences that promote necessary skills, knowledge, attitudes and values that help to deliver quality education in the classroom. It is highly recommended that these trainings which promote consistent acquisition of knowledge, skills, values, right attitudes and potentials needed for academic excellence, should be specifically designed to address the needs of teachers to promote teaching and learning effectiveness. There should be motivation for teachers to ensure transmission of the acquired skills from the trainings into teaching and learning in school system. Premised on these findings, government and relevant agencies should intensify effort on the regular provision for quality teachers 'in-service professional development to promote quality education through effective instructional delivery tasks.

**Keywords:** Professional development, Impacts, Lagos, Academic performance.

### Introduction

One of the challenges of education is having the right professional development program to meet the needs of teachers towards effective teaching and learning in African educational systems. Teachers have been exposed to varieties of trainings, some have been beneficial and result oriented, while some have been condemned to be of no impacts to the teachers by the teachers themselves.

Despite this crisis in education in many countries, the school remains the critical space, a complex crossroads of wide ambitions for the learners. It is venue for acquisition of knowledge, empowerment of learners for usefulness, activeness, productiveness, where teachers are seen as nuclear actors in the impartation of knowledge. Teachers are the most significant and critical resource in quality education in any country.

This is why teachers are to be regularly and effectively updated on the concurrent trends that could make them relevant to teaching and learning always [1]. This study uses a framework of relevant literature

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that provides in-depth insight into in-service professional development of teachers, with special focus on:

- Why teachers need in-service professional development trainings.
- Correlation between in-service PD and academic performance of students.
- Challenges militating against in-service PD.
- Summary of the related literature to this study.

This study reflects on the impacts of in-service professional development trainings on the academic performance of students in Lagos, Nigeria, using related literature to form its framework using the above as sub-headings:

### **Why Do Teachers Need In-service Professional Development?**

Professional development is highly important and essential to effective teaching in the school system. An effective teacher is the one that can actually effect learning or impart real and concrete learning. Teaching profession is saddled with great responsibility of producing responsive individuals who can compete skillfully in any field of humanities [1]. The needs for improved quality education have led to drive for professional development of teachers to achieve better performance of learners in academic activities. Teachers have great responsibilities of molding learners who can arsenal various resources in the society to propel developments in various facets of economy. Teachers are to facilitate learning that can produce learners who are responsive and skillful for nation's manpower. These vast expectations from teachers make them to be repositioned for in-service professional development activities that can increase their knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary for optimum performance in their teaching profession.

Louise [2] identifies the needs for professional development of teachers in African secondary schools as these:

1. Provision of sophisticated academic workforce as teaching personnel in the schools.
2. Empowerment of teachers with modern skills to boost human resource development in schools.
3. Conforming to present information and communication technological advancements that befit the expectations of the modern teachers.

Amadi [3] confirms that human component forms the most important aspect of the resources in educational institutions. Incapacitated teachers in schools despite all the best infrastructures, sufficient funds and other non-human materials will result in poor academic performance of the learners. The development of any nation lies in the hands of the teaching force of that country. Teachers' knowledge, skills, attitudes and values are meant to be updated regularly to accommodate new trends that can improve or sustain quality education.

### **Scope of Teachers' In-service Professional Development**

In-service professional development activities of teachers develop/improve teaching responsibilities, equip them with professional capabilities that ensure effective and efficient delivery of teaching and learning, which eventually lead to improve academic performance of students [1,4].

It can be summarized that teachers, for them to be effective and fully actualize the goals of education in Nigeria, they deserve access to regular, well packaged and designed, effective and quality in-service professional development activities in every level of education. These professional development activities are accessed through workshops, seminars, refresher courses/retreats, conferences and other professionally inclined activities for the teachers. The activities expose teachers to: use and application of modern visual aids in teaching subject areas and empowerment of learners in the usage of same; efficient and varied learner-centered approaches to teaching of their subjects in classrooms; deep, highly intellectual and increased knowledge or skills in their specialized subjects in schools; collaboration and professional networking among teachers in different locations of the world; development of problem solving skills that grooms them as researchers in their teaching fields and comparative of better academic performance of their learners.

### **Challenges of In-service Professional Development**

Effectiveness of teachers remains the priority of any in-service professional activity. However, so many issues militate against the purpose of professional development of teachers in Nigeria.

Louise [2] concludes that teacher professional development activities have failed the purpose in real practice of teaching. These challenges were identified:

Inability of the in-service professional development to meet the expectations of the participating teachers, teachers who have participated in various in-service professional development activities lamented that most of these activities did not benefit their teaching skills in classrooms. Teachers rated these trainings as mere wasting of their precious time as their key expectations and needs were never met or attended to.

Inappropriate professional activities to suit instructional tasks delivery in classroom was also identified as shortfall of professional development by teachers. Various subjects demand varied teaching skills and approaches that promote effective teaching and learning of various subject-contents: these varieties, teachers decried were not considered as teachers of different specialization were hurled together for same professional development activities that did not consider or embed their individual subjects.

Another prominent challenge of professional development of teachers was the limited number of teachers that could access in-service professional development trainings in Nigeria. Many teachers were not opportuned to

participate, and those who participated were not frequently trained.

Ajani [1] and Okwunaso and Igwebuike [5], submit the inability of the participating teachers in professional development activities to apply or adapt the knowledge experienced or acquired in the training to classroom as a big challenge to usefulness of in-service professional development. Innovation of new approaches or ideas in teaching do not manifest in classroom teaching after teachers' participation in these elaborated trainings.

## Recommendations and Conclusion

Education is a powerful tool of development in Nigeria; the teachers in the schools are the major players that determine or facilitate quality education in schools. As it is known that it is only the quality education that can promote developments, teachers who will facilitate learning need to be efficient in instructional tasks delivery of knowledge, skills, values and attitudes. Professional development activities are the designed means of ensuring and improving effectiveness and efficiency of teachers in schools. This paper therefore clamors for varied in-service professional development programmes/activities that must be purposely structured and designed to implement National policy of Education in Nigeria. Professional development activities can as well be designed to introduce teachers to new curricula, new ideas, and new approaches to effective classroom teaching. Teachers' knowledge and skills can be updated on their subject matters through collaborations of ideas, mentorship opportunities among teachers in the in-service professional development; thereby promoting skills acquisition and changed attitudes to arsenal all facilities in Nigerian education system.

The researchers also recommend to organizers of various in-service professional developments of teachers to design contents of professional development activities according to subject areas of the participating teachers for

the programmes to ensure relevance and appropriateness of the activities. This boils down to consultations with teachers to know their teaching challenges and their urgent expectations.

This study recommends that individual teacher should access various in-service professional development activities regularly every year to update them. Participating teachers in professional development should be increased at every professional development program to accommodate many teachers at every session of the professional development. Qualitative Pre-assessment and post-assessment of professional development programmes should be carried out for every activity of professional development. This will ensure application of knowledge and efficacy of the program in classroom situations. Attendance and participation of teachers in in-service professional development programmes' should be motivated based on improvement in quality of academic performance of learners in subjects.

Professional development of teachers should cut across all teaching subjects in schools as against the practice of focusing on few selected core subjects and favoured teachers [1]. Quality professional development training should be designed regularly for teachers in all schools.

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