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TEACHERS' PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT TRAINING NEEDS FOR IMPROVED TEACHING AND LEARNING IN PUBLIC PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN ANAMBRA STATE

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study was to examine teachers' professional development training needs on the use of technology to enhance learning in public primary schools in Anambra State. Two research questions guided the study while two null hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance. The population of the study comprised 5,995 teachers in all the 1,060 public primary schools in Anambra state. The sample size for this study was 384 teachers from the public primary schools in Anambra State. Multi-stage sampling procedure was employed in selecting the sample size. The instrument for data collection was researchers' structured questionnaire titled "Questionnaire on Professional Development Training Needs on The Use of Technology (QPDTNUT) and Questionnaire on Professional Development Training Needs on Language and Communication (QPDTNLC). The instruments have three sections; A, B and C. Section A elicit demographic information of the respondents; Section B elicits information on the use of technology; while section C elicits information on language and communication skills. The instruments were validated by three experts from Faculty of Education, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. The data collected were analyzed using Cronbach Alpha method and a coefficient value of 0.81 and 0.79 respectively. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions. Hypotheses were tested using t-test statistics. Findings of the study revealed that the use of technology and language and communication skills were among areas of professional development training needs of public primary school teachers. Based on the findings, it was recommended among others that School management should develop and implement training programmes that will enable teachers in public primary schools to acquire necessary knowledge and skills in using technology to improve teaching and learning.

Keywords: Professional Development Training, Teachers' Training Needs, Use of Technology, Enhancing Learning, Public Primary Schools

Introduction

Educating the individual for self-reliance and productive citizenship is a major concern of the Nigeria educational system. At every level of the nation's education system, the quest for productive citizenship has become a critical factor without which the nation's developmental objectives would seem to be ineffective. The Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN, 2013), in the National

Policy on Education (NPE) sees a situation where every citizen of the nation is offered life-long education and education that will be related to the community's needs amongst others. The FRN referred to primary education as the education given to children aged 6 – 11 years plus and that the rest of the education system is built upon it. Therefore the primary education level is the key to success or failure of the whole education system. This statement confirms the fact that the primary level of education is most crucial to the success of other levels and as such seen as the bedrock of educational system, hence the need for the teachers and other stakeholders to do everything possible to lay a solid foundation for its sustainability.

For primary education to be the bedrock of educational system, Umoh (2016) maintained that it must bring to the learners, elementary and general knowledge of science, by teaching them to use and operate scientific objects and gadgets so that they may be conversant with such foundational knowledge as they advance to other levels. It is essential for primary education to prioritize science education and provide students with access to scientific tools and resources (Rajagopalan (2019). This will not only lay a strong foundation for their future academic pursuits but also equip them with the necessary skills and knowledge to navigate the increasingly complex world of science and technology. Therefore, it becomes imperative for teachers who impact knowledge and skills to learners to continue to upgrade their knowledge through professional trainings. Achieving success in a career requires ongoing training and education, which is where teachers' professional development training needs come into play.

Teachers' professional training needs refer to the specific areas of knowledge, skills, and competences that teachers require to improve their teaching practices and enhance the quality of education they provide to their students. Oluremi (2016) noted that these needs may vary depending on factors such as the subject matter, the level of education, the teaching context, and the needs of the students. Borko (2014) stated that the essence of professional development of teachers via different training platforms is to sharpen their existing skills or help the teachers to develop specialised skills that could enhance their level of creativity and innovation. According to National Teachers Institute (NTI, 2020), training needs of teachers includes; training on basic teaching methods and techniques, basic classroom management and techniques, language and communication skills, and use of technology to enhance learning. Within the context of this study, the researcher focused on the use of technology and language and communication skills as a dimension of training needs for teachers.

The use of technology has become increasingly popular in recent years, as it offers many benefits that can enhance the learning experience for students. The technology that enhances learning are tools like computer, laptop, android phone, smart phones, white boards and others that can help teachers in creating, manipulating, using and sharing information in the classroom. These technologies are used as a part and parcel of teaching-learning process because, technology has digitized classroom through

digital learning tools, if they are available and well used by the teachers (Edinburgh, 2016). Teachers should be trained effectively on the modern technology to help them in their teaching profession. As a result, teaching as a profession lean towards continuous development of knowledge and ability through training programmes bearing in mind the goal of teacher education in Nigeria and preparedness in dealing with problems facing primary education.

Another area of training needs is language and communication skills. These are the process or the medium teachers use to pass information to their learners. There are four language and communication skills; listening, speaking, reading and writing. These four skills of language allow an individual to comprehend and produce spoken language for proper and effective interpersonal communication. Interpersonal communication support good and effective communication between the teacher and learners (Rohana, 2018). Teachers communicating with learners need to pay attention to different ways of learning for each individual, serving learners differently according to their needs and interest. The purpose of communication is to provide knowledge and information to the learners, to influence their thinking, change their attitude, and encourage them to do certain things. The teacher should convey the message to the learners as clearly as possible.

In Nigeria, little attention has been given to the crucial development requirement of professional development training for teachers, despite the emphasis placed on it. Consequently, the quality of education in the teaching profession, particularly in public primary schools in Anambra State, has significantly declined, and teachers face daunting challenges such as insufficient funding, lack of resources and infrastructure, poor working conditions, falling standards in training institutions, and low teacher quality (Udofia & Ikpe, 2012). This scenario may be the reality for many primary school teachers, regardless of their teaching experience or qualifications. It is against this background that the researchers examined teachers' professional development training needs for improved teaching and learning in public primary schools in Anambra State.

Research Questions

The study was guided by the following research question:

1. To what extent do teachers' professional development training needs on the use of technology improve teaching and learning in public primary schools in Anambra State?
2. To what extent do teachers' professional development training needs on language and communication improve teaching and learning in public primary schools in Anambra State?

Hypotheses

The following null hypothesis were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance:

1. The mean ratings of public primary school teachers on their professional development training needs on the use of technology for improved teaching and learning do not differ

significantly based on their educational qualification.

2. The mean ratings of public primary school teachers on their professional development training needs on language and communication for improved teaching and learning do not differ significantly based on their teaching experience.

Research Method

The study adopted a descriptive survey design. Nworgu (2015) defined descriptive survey as a study which aims at collecting data on, and describing in a systematic manner, the characteristics, features or facts about a given population. The study was carried out in Anambra State. The population of the study comprised 5,995 teachers in all the 1,060 public primary schools in Anambra state (Anambra State Universal Basic Education Board, 2021). The sample size for this study was 384 teachers from the public primary schools in Anambra State. Multi-stage sampling procedure was employed in selecting the sample size as follows: First, simple random sampling was employed to select eight schools from each of the six education zones, making them 48 public primary schools altogether. This selection process was done using balloting with replacement. Secondly, disproportionate stratified random sampling technique was employed to select 8 teachers each from each of the 48 public primary schools from the six education zones making it a total of 384 teachers which is 8% of the entire population. The choice of 8% is in line with the recommendations of Nworgu (2015) who stated that 5% of any given population is adequate for research work.

The instruments for data collection were researchers' structured questionnaire titled "Questionnaire on Professional Development Training Needs on The Use of Technology (QPDTNUT) and Questionnaire on Professional Development Training Needs on Language and Communication (QPDTNLC). The instruments have three main sections; A, B and C. Section 'A' elicits demographic information of the respondents; section 'B' elicits information of the use of technology; while section' C' elicits information on language and communication. The questionnaires were on 4-point rating scale of VHE (Very High Extent), HE (High Extent), LE (Low Extent), VLE (Very Low Extent) weighted 4, 3, 2 and 1. The instruments were validated by three experts, two from Educational Management and Policy Department and one from Measurement and Evaluation. All of them were from the Faculty of Education, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. The data collected were analyzed using Cronbach Alpha method and a coefficient value of 0.81 and 0.97 were ascertained. The data generated from the copies of the completed questionnaires were used to answer the research questions and test the hypotheses using descriptive and inferential statistical measures respectively. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions. The cut off point for taking decision was 2.50. Any mean value of 2.50 and above was considered high extent, indicating areas of professional development training need of the teachers while any mean score less than 2.50 was considered low

extent, showing that the items are not areas of professional development training needs of public primary school teachers. Hypotheses were tested using t-test statistics. In taking decision on the hypotheses, when the t-calculated was less than the stipulated 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis was rejected. On the other hand, when the t-calculated was greater than the stipulated 0.05 level of significance, the null hypotheses was accepted.

Presentation of Results

Research Question 1: To what extent do teachers' professional development training needs on the use of technology improve teaching and learning in public primary schools in Anambra State?

Table 1: Respondents' Mean Ratings on the Teachers' Professional Development Training Needs on the use of Technology in Public Primary Schools in Anambra State (N=384)

S/No	I Need Professional Development Training in the Underlisted Areas	Mean	SD	Remarks
1.	Delivering of online virtual lesson to pupils	3.62	0.85	VHE
2.	Approaches to recording lessons	3.70	1.01	VHE
3.	Methods of sourcing of materials on the internet to enhance lesson preparation	3.56	0.82	VHE
4.	Utilization of digital platform for sharing learning materials	3.20	0.70	VHE
5.	Use of recommended browser for sourcing of relevant materials online	2.01	0.83	LE
6.	Usage of available software to personalized learning to suite the demands of pupils	3.81	1.12	VHE
7.	Organizing zoom class instructions	2.34	0.71	LE
8.	Posting of lessons on digital platform for pupils to access	2.40	0.75	LE
	Cluster Mean	**3.08**		**Agree**

Data in Table 1 indicated that the respondents agreed to the teachers' professional development training needs on the use of technology to improve teaching and learning on items 1, 2, 3, 4, and 6 mean ratings of 3.62, 3.70, 3.56, 3.20 and 3.81 and standard deviations of 0.85, 1.01, 0.82, 0.70, and 1.01 respectively. The cluster mean of 3.08 indicates that use of technology to improve teaching and learning is among areas of teachers' professional development training needs in public primary school in Anambra State. The standard deviations show that public primary school teachers in Anambra State rating for each item are closely related.

Research Question 2: To what extent do teachers' professional development training needs on language and communication improve teaching and learning in public primary schools in Anambra State?

Table 2: **Respondents' Mean Ratings on the Professional Development Training Needs of Public Primary School Teachers on Language and Communication Skills in Public Primary Schools in Anambra State (N=384)**

S/No	I Need Professional Development Training in the Underlisted Areas	Mean	SD	Remarks
9.	Sensitization of pupils on measures to communicate effectively	3.59	0.87	Agree
10.	Approaches to listen attentively without interrupting pupils during classroom teaching and learning	3.42	0.74	Agree
11.	Designing pamphlet containing information on concepts	3.64	0.72	Agree
12.	Modalities to stimulate pupils to ask questions classroom sections	3.20	0.70	Agree
13.	Interval of time to display relevant information at the school notice boards	3.62	0.85	Agree
14.	Designing of suggestion box to promote exchange of ideas in the school	3.70	1.01	Agree
	Cluster Mean	**3.52**		**Agree**

Data in Table 2 indicated that the respondents agreed to the professional development training needs of public primary school teachers based on language and communication skills on items 15, 16, 17, 18, 19 and 20 with mean ratings of 3.59, 3.42, 3.64, 3.20, 3.62 and 3.70 and standard deviations of 0.87, 0.74, 0.72, 0.70, 0.85, and 1.01 respectively. The cluster mean of 3.52 indicates that language and communication skills were among areas of professional development training needs of public primary school teachers in Anambra State. The standard deviations show that public primary school teachers in Anambra State rating for each item are closely related.

Hypothesis 1: The mean ratings of public primary school teachers on their professional development training needs on the use of technology to improve teaching and learning do not differ significantly based on their educational qualification.

Table 3 Independent t test of the Mean Ratings of Respondents on Teachers' Professional Development Training Needs on the Use of Technology to Improve Teaching and Learning in Public Primary Schools in Anambra State Based on their Years of Educational Qualification

Educational Qualification	N	Mean	Df	T	P-value	Decision
Qualified	216	3.83	382	2.76	3.01	No Sig
Less qualified	168	3.21				

The focus of hypothesis 1 was to determine if there was significant difference in the mean ratings of respondents on the teachers' professional development training needs in the use of technology to improve teaching and learning in Anambra State based on their teaching qualification. Data in Table 3 revealed that p-value of 3.01 calculated at 0.05 level of significance and at 2 and 382 degree of freedom is less than .05. Since the p-value of 3.01 is greater than the alpha level value of .05, the null hypothesis was not rejected. Hence, teachers' professional development training needs on the use of technology to improve teaching and learning in public primary school in Anambra State differ significantly based on their years of educational qualification.

Hypothesis 2: The mean ratings of public primary school teachers on their professional development training needs on language and communication skills to improve teaching and learning do not differ significantly based on their teaching experience.

Table 4: Independent t test of the Mean Ratings of Respondents on Teachers' Professional Development Training Needs on Language and Communication Skills to Improve Teaching and Learning in Public Primary Schools in Anambra State based on their years of teaching experience

Years of Experience	N	Mean	Df	T	P-value	Decision
Experienced	221	3.39	382	2.39	.000	Sig
Less experienced	163	3.07				

The focus of hypothesis 2 was to determine if there was significant difference in the mean ratings of respondents on the teachers' professional development training needs on language and communication skills to improve teaching and learning in Anambra State based on their teaching experience. Data in Table 4 revealed that p-value of 0.000

calculated at 0.05 level of significance and at 2 and 382 degree of freedom is less than .005. Since the p-value of 0.000 is less than the alpha level value of .05, the null hypothesis was rejected. Hence, teachers' professional development training needs on language and communication skills to improve teaching and learning in public primary schools in Anambra State do not differ significantly based on their years of teaching experience.

Discussion of Findings

Findings on the extent teachers' professional development training needs on the use of technology to improve teaching and learning in public primary schools in Anambra State revealed that the use of technology to improve teaching and learning was among areas of professional development training needs of public primary school teachers. The findings also revealed that public primary school teachers needed professional training needs to a high extent on how to deliver online virtual lessons to pupils, approaches to record lessons, methods of sourcing materials from the internet to enhance lesson preparation, utilize digital platform for sharing learning materials, use available software to personalize learning to suite the demands of the learners, among others. This finding may have resulted because of lack of awareness and training on the part of school management and government on the need to educate and train teachers on the use of the above mentioned to enhance instruction in public primary schools. This is in agreement with the findings of Maimun and Mohammad (2021) who stated that teachers' professional development needs includes support for teachers or staff as they apply technology to their evolving educational delivery practices, from lesson planning and curriculum integration to record-keeping and administration functions, among others. Furthermore, this finding is in line with Maimun and Mohammad (2021) who stated that teachers need professional development that is integrated with digital technology. The authors also revealed that various teaching and learning activities that are integrated with technology impact student learning outcomes and assumptions about lifelong learning.

More so, the study found out that the mean ratings of teachers' professional development training needs on the use of technology to improve teaching and learning in public primary schools in Anambra State differ significantly based on their educational qualification. This implies that the qualification of public primary school teachers did not influence their professional development training needs on the use of technology. This could be as a result of lack of awareness and training on the part of the school management and government on the need to utilize technology by teachers in teaching and learning.

Findings on the extent teachers' professional development training needs on language and communication to improve teaching and learning in public primary schools in Anambra State revealed language and communication skills were among areas of professional development training needs of public primary school teachers in Anambra State. The findings also revealed that public primary school teachers needed professional training needs to a high extent on how to

sensitize learners on measures to communicate effectively, approaches to listen attentively without interrupting pupils during classroom teaching and learning, modalities to stimulate pupils to ask questions classroom sections, interval of time to display relevant information at the school notice boards and designing of suggestion box to promote exchange of ideas in the school. The finding of the study is in agreement with the findings of Kornwipa (2021) who found that teachers mostly needed to develop speaking, listening, pronunciation, and cross-cultural communication. Grammar and vocabulary were areas that needed to be improved the least. The teachers also needed to develop many pedagogical skills, e.g., creative material development, teaching speaking, game-based learning approach, 21st-century teaching management, teaching listening, and CEFR-based teaching. The findings also showed that school management and government in Anambra State have done little or nothing in the provision of the necessary improving communication in schools.

Furthermore, the study found out that the mean ratings of professional development training needs of public primary school teachers on language and communication skills in Anambra State do not significantly differ based on their teaching experience. This implies that the years of experience of public primary school teachers did not influence their professional development training needs in the area of language and communication skills. This could be as a result of lack of awareness on the part of the school management and government on the need for language and communication skills to enhance learning in public schools.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, the study concluded that the use of technology and language and communication skills are among areas of teachers' professional development training needs in public primary school in Anambra State. It is therefore pertinent that teachers in public primary school are made aware of the need to utilize these professional development training needs in the areas of the use of technology and language and communication skills in teaching and learning. This will not only improve the quality of education but also make learning more engaging and interactive for pupils.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the researchers recommended that:

1. School management should develop and implement training programmes that will enable teachers in public primary schools to acquire necessary knowledge and skills in using technology to improve teaching and learning.
2. The National Teachers Institute (NTI) and Teachers Registration Council of Nigeria (TRCN) should organize conferences and workshops for her members so as to educate them on the appropriate language and communication skills needed to improve quality teaching and learning.

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