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TEACHERS' TIME PLANNING AS A STRATEGY FOR IMPROVING STUDENTS ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN ANAMBRA STATE

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ABSTRACT

The study investigated teachers' time planning as a strategy for improving students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State. One research question guided the study and one hypothesis was tested at 0.05 level of significance. The population of the study comprised 6990 public secondary school teachers in Anambra State. The sample of the study was 1,398 teachers. The instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire developed by the researchers. The instrument was validated by three experts in the faculty of education, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. The reliability of the instrument was ascertained through a pilot test on 20 teachers in public secondary schools in Asaba Metropolis. Test on the data collected using Cronbach Alpha reliability method yielded coefficient value of 0.88. Mean, standard deviation and t-test were used in analyzing data collected for the study. Findings revealed that teachers time planning is a strategy for improving students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State. Based on this finding, the researchers recommend that teachers should give adequate attention to planning their daily activities. The researchers also recommended that teachers should participate in training programmes that will further educate them on effective ways of planning for time in the discharge of their instructional functions.

Keywords: Teachers, Time Planning, Strategy, Academic Performance, Students' Performance

Introduction

Education is the instrument for national and global development. Education is the instrument through which developmental strides are achieved. This is why the Federal Republic of Nigeria (2013) sees education as an instrument per excellence. Education is a tool for the formation of the minds and acquisition of skills. Formal education in Nigeria is carried out at three levels; primary, secondary and tertiary levels. Secondary education which is the focus of this study is the level of education that prepares its recipients for useful living and for higher education (FRN, 2013). The achievement of these goals depends to a very great extent on the teachers.

Teachers ensure that the academic activities are carried out. Teachers add value to self and school performance through combination of positive behaviours both within and outside the school. The school success is dependent on teachers' ability to manage themselves and school schedules. At the secondary school level, Udalla (2012) noted that the attainment of the teaching-learning goal is majorly in the hands of teachers who are required to utilize their skills in preparing and planning their lesson, managing their class and assessing their students. The ability of teachers to adequately manage their time has been considered an important factor that improves students' academic performance.

Academic performance is the accomplishment or acquired proficiency in the performance of an individual in a given skill or body of knowledge. Academic performance means knowledge attained and skill developed in the school subjects usually designated by test scores or by marks assigned by teachers or by both. Academic performance according to Cyril (2015), is the extent to which students achieve their academic goals. In order for teachers to achieve their stated goals, it is imperative that they are able to properly manage time.

Time is defined as a continuum in which events succeed one another from past through present to future (Cyril, 2015). Ugbor (2010) defined time as a particular point in the day, as expressed in hours and minutes or shown on a clock, or in a particular point in the day, month or year. Time is an important resource available to all, however, what people choose to do within time and how they actually spend their time differ widely across individuals. It is believed that no one actually manages time itself (Cyril, 2015). However, the use of time can be managed through clear identification of personal and professional goals and scheduling time to reflect them. Time management refers to the development of processes and tools that increase efficiency and productivity. Aduke (2015) defined time management as a skill of organizing, planning, arranging and accounting one's time for creating more productivity and efficient work. In the same vein, Muhammad, Aqsa and Aamir (2020) defined time management as a process of determining objectives, prioritizing and planning to achieve these objectives. Hence, time management can be viewed as behaviors that aim at achieving an effective

use of time while performing certain goal directed activities.

De Guzman and Guy (2013) opined that teachers can adequately improve students' academic performance through proper time planning. Time planning is one of the strategies of time management. Shazia and Muhammad (2015) noted that there are short range and long range planning for time. Short-range planning is defined as time management activities surrounded by daily or weekly time structure and cover the activities such as setting objectives at the commencement of the day, planning and prioritizing daily behaviors and creation work contents. Long range planning is defined as having long-range objectives and having disciplined routines for everyday task over a long period (Shazia & Muhammad, 2015). According to Razalli, Rusiman, Gan and Arbin (2018), time planning appears to have obvious and straight forward influence on students' academic achievement. It has been suggested by authors like Chandi, Ndiritu, Kidombo, Mbwesa and Keiyoro (2013) that the gender of teachers could be an influencing factor on their ability to use time planning strategy. Chandi et al noted that female teachers tend to exhibit better time planning than their male counterparts. However, this view has not been empirically ascertained. It is against this background that the study determined teachers' time planning as a strategy for improving students' academic performance in secondary schools in Delta State.

Statement of the Problem

The importance of teachers in the implementation of the overall goals of secondary education as espoused in the national policy of education of Nigeria cannot be overemphasized. This is because the teachers are central to the application and assessment of learning goals. However, it seems like teachers in secondary schools are finding it difficult to cope with the task of teaching and managing their personal life. This seem to be evidence in cases in secondary schools where some teachers fail to prepare their lesson notes, schemes of work and provide record of students assessment. Field observation by the researchers reveal that some of the teachers complain of having too much workload which seem to affect the smooth discharge of their duties, the researchers are worried that the failure of some of these teachers appear to give an indication of poor time management and would negatively impact on students' academic performance. This paper therefore seeks to investigate the time planning as a strategy for improving students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State.

Research Question

1. To what extent is teachers' time planning a strategy for improving students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State?

Hypothesis

The hypothesis was tested at 0.05 level of significance:

1. There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female

teachers on the extent time planning is a strategy for improving students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State.

Method

The study adopted a descriptive research design. The study was carried out in Anambra State. The population of the study comprised 6990 public secondary school teachers in Anambra State. Sample of the study was determined through simple random sampling of 20% of teachers in the State. This amounted to a sample size of 1,398. The instrument was titled "Questionnaire on Time Planning as a Strategy for Improving Students Academic Performance in Public Secondary Schools (QTPSISAPSS)". The instrument has two sections, A and B. section A contains information on teachers gender while section B contains 10 items on time planning. The instrument was structured on a four-point rating scale of Very High Extent (VHE), High Extent (HE), Low Extent (LE) and VLE (VLE). The instrument was validated by three experts in the faculty of education, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. The reliability of the instrument was ascertained through a pilot test on 20 teachers in public secondary schools in Asaba Metropolis. Test on the data collected using Cronbach Alpha reliability method yielded coefficient value of 0.88. The researchers administered the instrument with the help of two research assistants. The instrument was administered to the respondents in their classrooms or staffrooms. The instrument was administered and retrieved on the spot after completion. However, an appointment was booked in cases where the respondents were unable to fill the questionnaire on the spot. This process lasted for about four weeks out of the 1,398 copies of questionnaire administered, 1024 were retrieved in good condition and used for the computation of data analysis. Mean, standard deviation and t-test were used in analyzing data collected for the study. The mean value was used to answer the research question while standard deviation was used to determine the relatedness of the respondents mean ratings. In analyzing the research questions, any items with mean rating of 2.50 and above was regarded as agree while mean rating below 2.50 was regarded as disagree. t-test was used to analyze the hypotheses. For the hypothesis, where the calculated t-value was less than the critical value of t, it means that the variable did not significantly influence respondents' mean ratings and the hypothesis was not rejected. Conversely, where the calculated t-value was equal to or greater than the critical t-value, it means that the variable had a significant influence on the respondents' mean ratings and the hypothesis was rejected.

Results

Research Question

To what extent is teachers' time planning a strategy for improving students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State?

S/NO	Item	X	SD	DECISION
1	Making daily "to do" lists each day	3.10	0.85	High Extent
2	Breaking classroom tasks into components that can be handled within time available	3.04	0.73	High Extent
3.	Amassing resources prior to beginning a task	2.99	0.72	High Extent
4.	Minimizing opportunities for interruptions during task planning	3.11	0.78	High Extent
5.	Carefully planning classroom lesson	2.86	0.81	High Extent
6.	Having a list of tasks to accomplish	3.06	0.87	High Extent
7.	Specifying periods for the completion of each task	3.16	0.74	High Extent
8.	Ensuring that the task would be completed on said periods	3.09	0.98	High Extent
9.	Regularly reviewing time plans	3.12	0.84	High Extent
10.	Seeking opinion from other teachers	2.65	0.70	High Extent
	Cluster Mean	**3.01**		**High Extent**

Data in Table show that all items (1-10) with mean ratings ranging between 2.65 to 3.16 are to a high extent time planning strategies for improving students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State. The cluster mean of 3.01 indicate that teachers' time planning is a strategy for improving students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State to a high extent.

Hypothesis

There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female teachers on the extent time planning is a strategy for improving students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State.

Table 2: Summary of t-test Analysis of Male and Female Teachers on the extent Time Planning is a Strategy for Improving Students' Academic Performance

Status	N	X	SD	df	cal. t	t-crit.	Decision
Male Teachers	376	2.95	0.84	1022	0.62	1.96	NS
Female Teachers	648	3.18	0.78				
Total	1024						

Result in Table 2 show that male teachers had a mean rating of 2.95 and standard deviation of 0.84, while the female teachers had a mean rating of 3.18 and standard deviation of 0.78. These yielded a calculated t-value of 0.62 at 1022 degrees of freedom. Since the calculated t-value of 0.62 is less than the critical t-value of 1.96, the null hypothesis

is accepted. This means that there is no significant difference in mean ratings of male and female teachers on the extent time planning is a strategy for improving students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State.

Discussion

Findings of the study reveal that teachers' time planning is a strategy for improving students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State to a high extent. Findings further show that specifying periods for the completion of each task, regularly reviewing time plans, and minimizing opportunities for interruptions during task planning and ensuring that the task would be completed on said periods are teachers' time planning strategies for improving students' academic performance in public secondary schools. This finding is in agreement with De Guzman and Guy (2013) who reported that proper time planning would improve students' academic performance. According to Monterosso (2014), planning periods provide time for teachers to attend to many of the tasks necessary to manage an effective classroom. Monterosso further averred that teachers may utilize this time to plan for instruction, prepare and organize materials, review student work, complete routine tasks, and communicate with parents. Perkins and Reese (2014) averred that many prominent school improvement initiatives included the development of a structure where teachers were routinely provided additional allotments of planning time specifically for the purpose of increasing collaborative discussion and activities.

Furthermore, findings of the study revealed no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female teachers on the extent time planning is a strategy for improving students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State. This finding is in agreement with De Guzman and Guy (2013) who noted that teachers time planning is a strategy for improving students' academic performance. It is therefore imperative that teachers engage in both team-based and individual planning time so as to improve students' academic performance in secondary schools.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, the researchers conclude that efficient use of time planning by teachers would improve students' academic performance. This is because through time planning teachers are able to articulate and prepare for lesson and other academic activities. It is therefore imperative that effort is made to bring about improvements in teachers time planning practices in secondary schools in Anambra State in particular and Nigeria in general.

Recommendations

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

1. Teachers should give adequate attention to planning their daily activities. They can do this by purchasing digital time planners and schedulers.

2. Teachers should participate in training programmes that will further educate them on effective ways of planning for time in the discharge of their instructional functions.
3. Teachers should also learn to prioritize their activities so as to make optimum use of their time.

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