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PRINCIPALS RATING OF BUSINESS TEACHERS' EFFECTIVENESS IN PROFESSIONAL TEACHING COMPETENCIES IN AKWA IBOM STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

The need to ensure effective teaching of business subjects at the public secondary school level in Akwa Ibom State inspired this study. Three research questions guided the study and a null hypothesis was tested at 0.05 level of significance. Descriptive survey research design was used for the study. A population of 235 principals from all public secondary schools in the area was studied without sampling because the size was manageable. An 18-item questionnaire with five response options was used for data collection. The instrument was validated by three experts. The reliability of the instrument was established using Cronbach Alpha correlation coefficient value of 0.87. Data collected were analyzed with mean for the research questions, and whilst student ttest was for testing the null hypothesis. Findings of the study showed that business teachers are effective in the three professional teaching competencies. It was also found that gender significantly influenced the opinions of the respondents and the null hypothesis was rejected. It was recommended, among others, that: secondary school business subjects' teachers should attend short courses and conferences to update and upgrade their professional teaching competencies; and that government should adequately fund education for effective teaching of business subjects.

Introduction

The introduction of public mass education system geared towards the eradication of illiteracy to some extent in Nigeria at least by the year 2020 has given education a complex dimension. In consonance with above expectation, Ereh (2004) affirmed that the complexity of education industry and the pressing need for quality and functional education entail that the various school activities must be efficiently and effectively supervised to ensure performance. Achievement of educational objectives is a top priority in the scheme of national growth.

A school is a small community consisting of teachers and learners, who operate under a set of rules and regulations within administration and structure. It consists of individuals who are assigned different functions with duties clearly spelt out. A framework of rules, regulations and policies for attaining state and national objectives guides all efforts during teaching, learning, administration of personnel and use of facilities.

School administration requires leadership to coordinate, supervise, monitor, and evaluate performance and report activities of its members towards goal attainment. School principals are leaders who implement educational programmes or policies in the educational

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enterprise such as schools (Adegbesan, 2013). The school principal is the leader whose key responsibility is to oversee the day-to-day running of the school's affairs, working with people, equipment and materials towards achieving set educational goals. Borole (2010) stated that a school principal performs the role of instructional evaluator of subject teachers and assists teachers in determining the right methods of teaching. He determines physical settings and classroom attributes that are most likely to promote effective learning outcomes. His instructional supervision and teacher performance facilitate attainment of effective teaching performance.

Business subject teachers are those required to transmit knowledge and skills to the learners. The teachers direct the affairs of their classes in order to bring the desired changes and goals. Teachers who teach effectively are competent in their areas of specialization. Business subject teachers are expected to possess and utilize relevant knowledge, abilities, skills and attitudes in discharging their functions creditably. Business subjects offered in Nigerian secondary schools include business studies in junior secondary while commerce, financial accounting, typewriting and shorthand subjects are offered in senior secondary.

Teaching according to Adeola (2011) is a process of imparting in the students' knowledge, skills and attitude in order to bring about a desirable change in learners. The author said that teachers are the most important factor in students' learning next to students themselves. The author also stated that the pre-eminence of teachers, the application of pedagogical knowledge into classroom oriented plan of actions constitute most fabric upon which the success of the school, its administration and the entire education system rest upon. The success of secondary schools depend among other elements on the students, teachers, quality of teaching, devotion and effectiveness of the teachers. To be effective implies the ability of individuals to bring about the expected result from a particular job. Effectiveness of business teachers implies that such teachers apply all the necessary skills, materials, time and all it takes to teach learners to acquire the learning outcome. Teacher effectiveness according to Okolocha and Onyeneke (2013) citing Diamond (2004) is the teacher's ability to produce desired results measured in terms of how well the teacher is able to maximize learning in the students.

Teacher professional competency consists of the knowledge, abilities and beliefs as confirmed Malm, Lofgren & Host, (2006). Competency refers to the abilities or power and authority or skills, knowledge, attitudes that are needed to accomplish tasks on the job (Achilike & Okwuanaso, 2001). Efficient and effective teaching can help achieve the objectives of secondary education, if such variables as technical competency, communication and evaluation competencies are employed in the teaching process (Esu, 2005). This study focuses on the need to identify the extent of business subject teachers' effectiveness on the use of professional teaching competencies in teaching students based on the school principals' rating.

Statement of the Problem

In recent times, government has shown a strong desire for quality education through innovations and policies aimed at improving the learning of secondary school subjects (business subjects inclusive) in secondary schools in the country. The problem of students' failure in both internal and external examinations in business subjects and lack of practical skills by business students in secondary school in Akwa State is a clear evidence. In support of this, Okolocha and Onyeneke (2013) carried out field study of West African Examination Council(WAEC) results of 2010 showed that out of 9,565 candidates that registered for selected subjects, 8,106 (84.75%) sat for the examinations; 4,218 (52.04%) got credit while above and the rest either got ordinary pass, failed or were absent. In like manner, Nwogu (2011) conducted another study of selected secondary schools on National Examination Council Organization(NECO), West African Examination Council(WAEC) and Junior Secondary School Three (JSS 3) 2009 results. Nwogu found that students' performance was poor in the three categories of examinations.

This poor performance led to high rate of unemployment and students' lack of interest in business education in higher institution (Nwogu, 2011). How effective are the Akwa Ibom State business subjects teachers in the use of professional teaching competencies in teaching business subjects based on the secondary school principals' ratings?

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study was to determine public secondary school principals' rating of business teachers' effectiveness in professional teaching competencies in Akwa Ibom State. Specifically, the study determined the ratings of public secondary school principals on business teachers' effectiveness in use of:

1. technical competencies in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom State;
2. communication competencies in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom State; and,
3. evaluation competencies in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom State.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What is the rating of principals on business subject teachers' effectiveness in the use of technical competencies in secondary schools in Akwa Ibom State?
2. What is the rating of principals on business subject teachers' effectiveness in the use of communication competencies in secondary school Akwa Ibom State?
3. What is the rating of principals on business subject teachers' effectiveness in the use of evaluation competencies in secondary school in Akwa Ibom State?

Hypotheses

The following null hypothesis was tested at 0 .05 level of significance:

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Male principals do not differ significantly from their female counterparts in their mean ratings on business subjects teachers' use of professional teaching competencies in secondary school in Akwa Ibom State.

Teaching of Business Subjects

Teaching is a series of interactions between someone in the role of teacher and someone in the role of a learner, with the explicit goal of changing one or more of the learners' cognitive state (what he knows or believes or his skills in performing cognitive tasks) or affective state (his attitudes, values or motives) (Emeh & Enukoha, 2001). Teaching is an aspect of instruction. It is an attempt to assist someone acquire or develop skills, attitudes, knowledge, ideas of appreciation after he/she has been perfectly exposed to the teaching opportunities. Learners are influenced by the instructional activities that cause them to attain desirable changes in behavior, attitudes and knowledge. Teaching and learning depend on teachers; this is the reason why an effective teacher has been conceptualized as one who produces desired results in the course of his duty as a teacher (Akiri & Ugborugbo, 2009). The domains found in the definition of teaching as given by Emeh & Enukoha (2001:12) embody:

i. cognitive domain that is the knowledge, concepts or ideas
ii. psychomotor domain entails skills in all forms, and
iii. affective domain the attitudes, beliefs and values to be acquired or developed.

Business subjects are educational subjects relevant to the nation. They help individuals or youths to acquire knowledge, skills and attitudes for employment. Business subjects in secondary school are business studies, book keeping and accounts or financial accounting, commerce, typewriting and shorthand (Osuala, 2004:112). Business education graduates from Colleges of Education and Universities teach these subjects. These categories of teachers are expected to give effective teaching because of their professional training. The fundamental prerequisite for the desired technological development of self-sustenance and productivity is the availability of capable work force that has passed through a viable and sound educational programme, for example business education.

Secondary school teachers work under the supervision and directive of the school principals. The principal as the head of the school is in the right position to carry out teacher performance evaluation among other administrative functions. This crucial role of the principal is to ensure effective instructional processes as well as attainment of secondary education objectives. Teacher effectiveness according to Okolocha and Onyeneke (2013) is the teacher's ability to produce desired results measured in terms of how well the teacher is able to maximized learning in the students. Effective teaching according to Ferdinand (2007) means the use of clearly formulated objectives by the teacher, illustrated instruction that will enable students to acquire desired knowledge content, application of the knowledge to classroom and other related problems, thinking and taking independent decision and the use of effective evaluation techniques by the teacher.

Business subject teachers are expected to demonstrate effective technical, communication and evaluation skills in teaching. Teaching business subjects requires the teacher to possess the necessary technical skills that would enable him/her to render effective instruction to the learners. Skill is the expertness in learning something, practical ability, dexterity and tact. Communication is the transfer, transmission or exchange of ideas knowledge, beliefs and attitude from one person to another within a given social organization. It brings people together, and keeps people together and ensure that individuals and groups understand one another. It is fundamental to all working relationships. Communication skills involve the ability of the business education teacher to communicate effectively with his students. The teacher's ability to communicate fluently and interact meaningfully in the classroom makes him or her to be effective. Evaluation competency involves the application of techniques for the process or task of appraising the progress and achievement of students. The teacher in his normal classroom functions uses evaluation skills to appraise or judge the performance, progress and achievement of each student. Evaluation is a method of finding out what the learners have gained from learning activities in terms of knowledge, moral reasoning and character development (Ukpong, 2003).

Method

Descriptive research design was used for the study. The coverage area was Akwa Ibom State. The population for the study consisted of all 235 secondary school principals which was studied in entirety without sample. Instrument for data collection was 18-item questionnaire tagged Business Subject Teachers Professional Teaching Competencies Questionnaire (BSTPTCQ) developed by the researcher. The instrument was divided into two sections - A and B. Section A sought information on the demographic data of the respondents, while Section B centred three professional teaching competencies. The instrument was validated by three experts and measure of internal consistency was used to determine its reliability whereby it was administered to 20 school principals in Cross River State and use of Cronbach Alpha yielded reliability co-efficient value of 0.87. The researcher used personal contact and research assistants in the administration of the instrument and data obtained were analyzed using the arithmetic mean scores to answer the research questions while t-test statistics was used to test the hypothesis at 0 .05 level of significance.

Results

Research Question 1

What is the rating of principals on business subject teachers' effectiveness in the use of technical competencies in secondary schools in Akwa Ibom State?

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Table 1:
Principals mean rating of public secondary school on business subject teachers' effectiveness in the use technical competencies
(N = 235)

S/N	Technical Competencies	Mean	Remark
1.	Ability to utilize accounting machine for effective teaching and learning	4.84	Highly Effective
2.	Ability to operate typewriter	4.87	Highly Effective
3.	Ability to use computer input and output units to aid teaching and students' learning	1.56	Ineffective
4.	Speed and accuracy in key boarding	4.65	Highly Effective
5.	Ability to utilize stop watch to aid skills development	2.15	Ineffective
6.	Time management skill for effective teaching/learning	4.55	Highly Effective
	Grand Mean	**3.77**	**Effective**

Table 1 presents the result on the level of effectiveness of secondary school business subjects' teachers in the use of technical competency in teaching business students in Akwa Ibom State. The grand mean for this category of 3.77 was regarded as effective. This therefore means that secondary school business subject teachers were effective in the use of technical competencies.

Research Question 2
What is the rating of principals on business subject teachers' effectiveness in the use of communication competencies in secondary school Akwa Ibom State?

Table 2:
Principals mean rating of public secondary school on business subject teachers' effectiveness in the use of communication competencies
(N = 235)

S/N	Communication Competency	Mean	Remark
7.	Ability to speak clearly	4.78	Highly Effective
8.	Ability to communicate using all modes of Communication.	4.90	Highly Effective
9.	Ability to listen effectively for understanding students' learning needs.	3.79	Effective
10.	Ability to use language/words effectively to enhance students' proficiency in the use of English language	2.39	Ineffective
11.	Reading ability	4.78	Highly Effective
12.	Ability to write logically on the chalkboard.	4.92	Highly Effective
	Grand Mean	**4.26**	**Effective**

Table 2 presents the results on the level of effectiveness of secondary school business subjects' teachers on the use of communication competency in the training of business students in Akwa Ibom State. The grand mean was 4.26. This revealed that secondary school business subject teachers were effective in the use of communication competencies.

Research Question 3
What is the rating of principals on business subject teachers' effectiveness in the use of evaluation competencies in secondary school in Akwa Ibom State?

Table 3:
Mean rating of public secondary school principals on business subject teachers' effectiveness in the use of evaluation competencies
(N = 235)

S/N	Evaluation Competencies	Mean	Remark
13.	Ability to recognize students' level of performance and competence.	4.89	Highly Effective
14.	Ability to assess student learning.	4.99	Highly Effective
15.	Ability to encourage self evaluation.	3.48	Somewhat Moderately Effective
16.	Ability to select appropriate assessment tools for specific learning achievement. .	2.45	Ineffective
17.	Ability to maintain documentation of student progress	3.64	Effective
18.	Ability to use continuous assessment strategies to ascertain students' strength and weaknesses.	4.98	Highly Effective
	Grand Mean	**4.07**	**Effective**

The data in Table 3 presents the results on the level of effectiveness of secondary school business subjects' teachers on the use of evaluation competency in the teaching of business students in Akwa Ibom State. The grand mean of this category was 4.07. This fell with the effective range. It was concluded that secondary school business subject teachers were effective in the use of evaluation competency.

Testing of Null Hypothesis
Male principals do not differ significantly from their female counterparts in their mean ratings on business subjects teachers' use of professional teaching competencies in secondary school in Akwa Ibom State.
In order to test the null hypothesis, the analysis is presented follows:

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Table 4:
t-test analysis of male and female principals mean rating of business teachers' effectiveness in the use professional teaching competencies.

Variables	N	X̄	SD	t
Technical Competencies				
Male	179	23.06	3.27	4.18*
Female	56	21.22	0.76	
Communication Competencies				
Male	179	25.98	3.04	4.31*
Female	56	24.21	0.76	
Evaluation Competencies				
Male	179	24.74	3.50	2.83*
Female	56	23.41	0.80	
Teaching Competencies				
Male	179	149.59	1944	3.87*
Female	56	139.45	3.28	

*Significant at 0.05 level; df= 233; N= 235; critical t-value = 1.960

Table 4 presents the obtained t- value as 4.18, 4.31, 2.83 and 3.87 for technical competence, communication competency, evaluation competency and professional teaching competencies respectively. These values were tested for significance by comparing them with the critical t-value (1.960) at 0.05 level with 233 degree of freedom. The obtained t-values were greater than the critical t-value (1.960). Hence, the results were significant and the null hypothesis was rejected. The result therefore means that there is significant difference in the mean rating of the effectiveness of business subject teachers in the use of professional teaching competencies in the training of business students by male school principals and that of female school principals in Akwa Ibom State.

Summary of Findings
Findings of the study are summarized as follows:

1. Secondary school business subjects' teachers in Akwa Ibom State were effective in the use of technical, communication and evaluation competencies in teaching business subjects.
2. Gender significantly affected the respondents' mean ratings on business subjects teachers' effectiveness in the use of technical, communication and evaluation

competencies in secondary schools in Akwa Ibom State.

Discussion
The data on the use of technical competency in Akwa Ibom State secondary schools as believed by the school principals is that business subjects' teachers were effective. These findings are in agreement with the opinion of Osuala (2004) and Ojo (2005) who asserted that business subjects' teachers need to keep up with new processes and equipment if they must be effective. The result also supports the opinion of Onyekonwe (2008) who supported that when a teacher of business education uses teaching equipment/machines, students would operate such machines. Such machines are computer sets, printers, photocopiers, fax machines. His conclusion was that some of these machines do facilitate teaching and learning processes as well as the quality and efficiency of the school and any business subject teacher who lacks skills in any aspect of the technical gadgets cannot offer effective instruction.

The result of the data on the use of communication competency showed that in the course of instructional delivery, business subjects teachers were effective in some aspects of communication such as ability to speak clearly, ability to listen effectively for understanding students' learning needs; reading ability and ability to write logically on the chalk board. Whereas, the respondents observed and indicated ineffective those items where business subjects teachers were either able to use and not able to use language/words effectively to enhance students' proficiency in the use of English language. As business subjects teachers lack ability to use language/words effectively to enhance students' proficiency, Ekwue (1993) lamented that it is unfortunate that most business subjects teachers lack language power to explain certain concepts before writing them down, of which the effect is teaching ineffectiveness as well as ineffective learning. As the result showed that, the secondary school principals rated business subjects' teachers effective on the application of communication competency. This is in agreement with the opinion of Esu (2005), who said that an effective teacher (business subjects teachers inclusive) is one who recognizes and employs as many as possible, the components of communication skills in his or her pedagogical task and that effective communication skills lead to effective teaching and learning.

The result of the data on the use of evaluation competency showed that business teacher who uses evaluation strategies effectively will be able to find out the extent of manifestation of traits expected to be brought out in learners following the learning situation (Esu, 2005). Esu disclosed that effective evaluation involves asking right questions and that the absence of these skills tend to have negative effects on students' learning progress. The success or failure of any evaluation depends on the evaluation competency of the business teacher.

The results of the data analysis in Table 4 revealed that there is significant difference

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in the mean rating of the effectiveness of business subjects teachers in the use of for technical, communication, evaluation competencies in the training of business students by male school principals and that of female school principals in Akwa Ibom State. Based on the significant difference of the null hypotheses is thereafter rejected.

Conclusions

Based on the findings of this study, it was concluded that secondary school in Akwa Ibom State business subjects' teachers are making appropriate use of technical, communication and evaluation professional teaching competencies in training of business students in business subjects.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusion of the study the following recommendations were made:

1. Principals should be fair in appraising teachers to ensure that credit or blame is given to deserving ones.
2. Ministry of education should liaise with related educational commissions/ institutions, the National Teachers Institute and school principals to review their present curriculum to be in line with identified tasks of typewriting and Information Communication Technology (ICT) in which teachers of business subjects need improvement.
3. Government should organize seminars and workshops for teachers of business Studies in the state to enhance or sustain their use of professional teaching competencies for greater effectiveness.
4. Government and secondary school management should improve funds allocation to education for the purpose of acquiring needed instructional facilities and enhancing effective school administration.

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