**INFORMATION USE AS FACTORS INFLUENCING PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS' EFFECTIVE TEACHING IN ABEOKUTA SOUTH LOCAL GOVERNMENT, OGUN STATE, NIGERIA**

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**ABSTRACT**

*Teachers need to constantly access and use information relevant to their subject area for effective teaching and active learning. The study investigated the influence of information use on public secondary school teachers’ effective teaching in Abeokuta South Local Government Area ion Ogun State. The study adopted a descriptive survey design with a study population of 1217 secondary school teacher from which a simple of forty percent (i.e., 487) respondents was randomly selected from the population in each school. The questionnaire was the main research instrument used for data collection, while data analyzed using frequency distribution and percentages run on SPSS. The result of the survey revealed that the respondent acquired their information from different sources in order to satisfy their information needs. For effective teaching to really take place in the schools, however, teachers need unrestricted access to information that could help in discharging their duties. They must also be able to use the information to support teaching and facilitate learning activities among the students.*

**Keywords:** Teachers, Information use, Teaching effectiveness, Secondary Schools, Nigeria

**INTRODCUTION**

Generally, the quality of education depends to a large extent on the qualifications and ability of the teachers. The knowledge of subject-matter as well as the ability to access and use information are both essential prerequisites for an effective force knowledge is dynamic and so also is the curriculum changing to accommodate the ever-changing knowledge society. It therefore becomes imperative for teachers to constantly access and use information relevant to their subject area for effective teaching. Education is basically the influence which the teacher exerts on the students entrusted to his care, Effective teachers are required in the classroom because even the best curriculum and most perfect syllabus remain ineffective in the absence of a good teacher. In order to perform his role effectively, a teacher should be professionally aware of professional demands and obligation placed on him by the profession. Further the role of teacher in influencing the future of our advancing national development is becoming increasingly important.

Eagleton (1992) viewed teachers as professional intended to bring change in individual learners. This then requires the individual to have the acumen of implementing a very large number of diagnostic, managerial and therapeutic skills, tailoring behavior in specific contexts for the grooming of learners. The teacher has also been described as one of the most important factors contributing to the national development. He is the pivot around which all the educational programs, such as curriculum, syllabus, textbooks, evaluation, etc., The best system of education may fail to achieve the desire ends in the absence of sincere, competent and professionally aware teachers.

According to Cohen (1981) cited in Shadreck and Mambanda Isaac (2012), define teaching effectiveness as the ability to be useful, helpful, and valuable in facilitating learning. Thus an effective teacher is one who contributes to a student’s acquisition of knowledge and skill by using a number of techniques associated with the promotion of learning and who displays personal characteristics commonly associated with a positive learning environment. Dunkin (1997) considered that teacher effectiveness is a matter of the degree to which a teacher achieves the desired effects upon students. Teacher effectiveness’’ is thus used broadly to mean the collection of characteristics, competencies, and behaviors of teacher’s at all educational levels that enable students to reach desired outcomes, which may include the attainment of specific learning objectives as well as broader goals such as being able to solve problems, think critically, work collaboratively and become effective citizens.

According to Hallak (1990), the quality of education system depends on the quality of its teachers. The National Policy on Education (FME, 2004) in aligning with Hallak (1990) stated that no education system could rise above the quality of its teachers. Obayan (2006) averred that a qualified teacher is not necessarily be an efficient teacher. One simple measure of teachers’ competence and effectiveness is the interaction pattern in the classroom.

According to Akporehe (2011), the main objective of the secondary school education is to train individuals to read, write and be numerically literate Apart from student evaluation which is one of the popular approaches of teaching effectiveness, information access and use can be employed to measure teaching effectiveness of teacher/instructor. Since students are the direct beneficiaries of instruction, and given that they spend a great deal of time with teachers, they can offer useful inputs in identifying flaws during instruction and also found ways of remediation (Owoyemi and Adesoji, 2012). Also, the ability of a teacher to access information from various sources and the competency to meaningfully utilize this information in support of the teaching activities is strong determinant of effective teaching.

Information is inevitable to almost all jobs professions. The need to become informed and knowledgeable individuals leads to the process of identifying information needs (Zawawi and Majid, 2001), and perhaps how such information could be accessed and effectively utilized for optimum performance. Library resources and services is one of the support services provided in secondary school to support the information needs and seeking behavior of teachers in order to aid the delivery of teaching. As Daniel (2002) has revealed, poor quality library resources have depressed the quality of teaching, learning and research. Obsolete and outdated library books and journals beget lecture notes with stale contents. Research is hampered by lack of awareness of the current state of knowledge in the field and the use of out-dated research paradigms and methodologies.

Teacher need various kinds of information for teaching and research for the purposes of impacting knowledge in students and self-development. To achieve this, the right information must be available for the right person at the time in its appropriate format, which are the responsibilities of the library. Oguntuase and Falaiye (2004) agree with this view by observing that the most effective way to mobilize people is through the provision of required information. In the most useable form and that such information should be provided for the benefit of a large number of people. Akinyele (1999) in his own contributions to teaching effectiveness identifies eight principles to teaching and learning namely: perception, readiness, motivation, participation, evaluation, multiple learning, practice and transfer/integration/ association. He sees these principles of teaching and learning as the fundamental reasoning or assumption upon which effective learning and teaching based.

Wilson (2000) suggested that not all information needs make a person seek information. For example, an individual does not engage in seeking activities if he or she is convinced that the possessed knowledge is sufficient to understand the situation and make a decision. If he or she lack such conviction, the stress connected with danger of making a mistake, trespassing social or legal norms, financial responsibility or not answering expectations of others people, occurs. The bigger the stress the bigger is the, motivation to look for information, up to a certain point where the stress paralyses such activities. Another activating factor is a necessary to cope with a situation or to solve a problem.

**Statement of the problem**

Information access and utilization have been perceived as indicators of effectiveness in the school situation. Also, teachers are expected to be professionally and academically qualified to perform the duties effectively. However, no matter how professionally qualified a teacher is, he must have exposed to a wide pool of information, relevant to his subject area.

Teacher are central to contributing to wards any enhanced quality and value of classroom experiences. It has been observed that most teachers in public secondary school only rely on prescribed and available teaching materials. In most cases, there is no school library or information Centre to support the teaching and learning activities in the school. Therefore, students are always fed with the same stale information.

Poor perception of information among teacher can be attributed to their low level of awareness, inadequate source of information and poor information acquisition skills, which in turn contribute to the low level of accessibility and use of information for teaching effectiveness. It seems that the extents to which teachers in public secondary school are able to handle information for their teaching activities. Also determine utilization by teachers is greatly influenced by the level of its perception by the user. Poor perception of information results in poor seeking behavior which has a direct adverse effect on its use for teaching effectiveness.

It is based on this background that the study was carried out to investigate the information use on public secondary school teacher’s effective teaching in Abeokuta South Local Government Area in Ogun State, Nigeria.

**Objectives of the study**

The main objective of the study is to investigate the information use on public secondary school teacher’s effective teaching in Abeokuta South Local Government Area in Ogun State, Nigeria. The specific objectives are to:

1. Find out what constitute the information needs to teachers in public secondary school in Abeokuta South Local Government Area, Ogun State;
2. Investigate the challenges to information use for effective teaching by teachers in public secondary schools in Ogun State.

**METHODOLOGY**

The descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. The population for the study comprised 1217 teachers in public secondary schools. The study covered selected public secondary schools in Abeokuta South Local Government, Ogun State. There are 20 public secondary schools in the LGA from which 10 of them were systematically selected based on proximity. The simple random sampling technique was adopted for the purpose of this study. The sampled respondents for this study were drawn from the total population of 1217 teachers from ten public secondary schools in Abeokuta LGA. Forty percent (40%) of the population from each school was used as the sample size for this study. This gave a sample size of 487 respondents, which spread across the ten secondary schools. Questionnaire was the main research instrument used for the collection of data for the study. Descriptive statistics involving tables and percentages was used in analysing the data collected and also to show the questionnaire response rate. The data collection through the questionnaire was further subjected to statistical analysis using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS).

**DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION**

This chapter deals with the analysis and interpretation of data and is presented in the following order. Questionnaire response rate, Analysis of research questions and Discussion of findings

**Questionnaire response rate**

The response rate of the questionnaire distributed is presented in Table 1 below.

**Table 1 Questionnaire response rate**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **S/No** | **Secondary Schools** | **Sample** | **Return** | **Percentage %** |
| 1. | Asero High School | 49 | 48 | 100.0 |
| 2. | Agunbiade Grammar School | 17 | 17 | 100.0 |
| 3 | Girls Grammar School | 47 | 47 | 100.0 |
| 4. | Abeokuta Grammar School | 73 | 73 | 100.0 |
| 5. | Egba High School | 67 | 67 | 100.0 |
| 6. | Lantoro High School | 44 | 44 | 100.0 |
| 7. | Lisabi Grammar School | 51 | 49 | 100.0 |
| 8. | Saje High School | 50 | 45 | 100.0 |
| 9. | Ijemo Titun High School | 51 | 51 | 100.0 |
| 10. | Igbore High School | 38 | 38 | 100.0 |
|  | **Total** | **487** | **479** | **100.0** |

A total of 487 copies of the questionnaire were administered to respondents in the selected secondary schools in Abeokuta South LGA in Ogun State out of which 479 copies were completed and returned, which were found valid for analysis. This represents a total of 100% response rate as revealed in Table 1.

**Research question 2: What are the sources of information of teachers in public secondary school in Ogun State?**

The sources of information of the teachers in the selected secondary schools afre represented in Table 2.

**Table 2 Sources of information of teachers**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **S/N** | **Sources** | **Freq** | **Percent** | **Mean** |
| a. | Discussion with colleagues (i.e., another teacher) | 455 | 93.8 | 1.00 |
| b. | The principal, Vice-principal or supervisor | 433 | 89.3 | 1.00 |
| c. | Television programmes, video, DVD or CD | 334 | 68.9 | 1.00 |
| d. | Through the social media (Facebook, etc.) | 77 | 77.7 | 1.00 |
| e. | Face to face discussion | 410 | 84.5 | 1.00 |
| f. | Through E-mail message | 364 | 75.1 | 1.00 |
| g. | Reading latest books | 430 | 88.7 | 1.00 |
| h. | Reading newsletter (print and online) | 409 | 84.3 | 1.00 |
| i. | Attending professional conferences, seminars and workshops | 385 | 79.4 | 1.00 |
| j**.** | Media: TV and radio | 381 | 78.6 | 1.00 |
| k. | Scanning current issue of print and electronics | 386 | 79.6 | 1.00 |
| l. | Reading newsletters | 341 | 70.3 | 1.00 |
| m. | By using the school library or media centre in my area | 358 | 73.8 | 1.00 |
| n. | Consulting the public library | 350 | 72.2 | 1.00 |
| o. | Counsellors | 340 | 70.1 | 1.00 |
| p. | From the TESCOM Office | 307 | 63.3 | 1.00 |

The result of the survey revealed that the respondents acquired their information from different sources in order to satisfy their information needs. Table 2 revealed that majority of the teachers 455(93.8%) sourced their information through discussion with colleagues (that is, their fellow teachers), while many of them 89.3% also go through the principal, vice-principal or the supervisor for information. Attending professional conferences, seminars and workshops was also a means of sourcing for useful information by the teachers, as indicated by 79.4% of the respondents. Interestingly, many of the teachers also go as far as the TESCOM office in the local government secretariat to get needed information.

Other sources of information of the secondary school teachers included through the television programmes, video, DVD or CD, the social media (face book, etc.), face to face discussion, E-mail messages, reading latest books, reading newspapers (print and online), media: TV and radio, scanning current issues of print and electronic journals, reading newsletters, using the school library or media centre in the area, as well as consulting the public library. As this finding revealed, the secondary school teachers are taking full advantage of every sources in their domain to sure that they are well informed and get access to relevant information at all times. Considering the nature of their job, they need to be constantly up-to-date and keep abreast of developments in education.

This study confirms previous studies on workers' information sources in organizations. For instance, de-Alwis and Higgins (2001) found that information was usually acquired by managers in organizations through various available channels such as their colleagues, telephone, Internet, reference books, memoranda, circulars, online databases and customers. This was further affirmed by Pezeshki-Rad and Zamani (2005) who found that the top three mostly used information sources by extension managers and specialists in Iran were Persian books, Persian scientific magazines, and scientific technical reports.

**Research question 3: What are the challenges to information use for effective teaching by teachers in public secondary schools in Ogun State?**

The challenges to information use for effective teaching is revealed in Table 3

**Table 3 Challenges to information use**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **S/N** | **Challenges** | **SA** | **A** | **D** | **SA** | **Mean** | **SD** |
| a. | Required material is not always available | 284  58.6% | 105  21.6% | 53  10.9% | 28  5.8% | 1.63 | 0.90 |
| b. | Information is scattered in too many sources | 186  38.4% | 181  37.3% | 76  15.7% | 30  6.2% | 1.89 | 0.89 |
| c. | Information sources are very expensive to acquire | 209  43.1% | 105  21.6% | 117  24.5% | 31  6.4% | 1.94 | 0.99 |
| d. | Information source are located far away | 149  30.7% | 137  28.2% | 119  24.5% | 63  13.0% | 2.21 | 1.04 |
| e. | Lack of current explosion and are up-to-date information | 175  36.1% | 158  32.6% | 83  17.1% | 47  9.7% | 2.00 | 0.98 |
| f. | Information explosion or too much information | 136  28.0% | 158  32.6% | 115  23.7% | 49  10.1% | 2.17 | 0.97 |
| g. | Lack of time to search for access information online | 179  36.9% | 137  28.2% | 95  19.6% | 52  10.7% | 2.04 | 1.02 |
| h. | Inadequate ICT facilities to access information online | 155  32.0% | 170  35.1% | 89  18.4% | 45  9.3% | 2.05 | 0.96 |
| i | Too many classes or administrative work | 151  31.1% | 170  35.1% | 105  21.6% | 35  7.2% | 2.05 | 0.99 |
| j | Poor awareness of information source | 156  32.2% | 152  31.3% | 100  20.6% | 56  11.9% | 2.12 | 1.01 |
| k | Inadequate information to support teaching and learning | 190  39.2% | 150  30.9% | 92  19.0% | 31  6.4% | 1.92 | 0.93 |
| l | Inadequate skills to search for information on the internet | 177  36.5% | 145  29.9% | 104  21.4% | 44  9.1% | 2.03 | 0.99 |
| m | Inadequate time to visit the library for information | 168  34.5% | 145  29.9% | 105  21.6% | 52  10.7% | 2.09 | 1.01 |
| n | Library staff is incompetent or well-trained | 141  29.1% | 135  27.8% | 124  25.6% | 69  14.2% | 2.26 | 1.04 |
| o | Lack of computer hardware or software | 154  31.8% | 146  30.1% | 107  22.1% | 60  12.4% | 2.16 | 1.03 |
| p | Lack of support from library staff | 133  27.4% | 133  27.4% | 120  24.7% | 81  16.7% | 2.32 | 1.07 |
| q | Lack of knowledge in using the library | 154  31.8% | 130  26.8% | 120  24.7% | 63  13.0% | 2.20 | 1.04 |
| r | Poor information literacy skills | 165  34.0% | 140  28.9% | 114  23.5% | 46  9.5% | 2.09 | 0.99 |
| s | Poor electricity supply to listen to radio and TV | 226  46.6% | 129  26.6% | 65  13.4% | 48  9.9% | 1.86 | 1.01 |
| t | Lack of library to support teachers and students information need | 135  27.8% | 151  31.1% | 95  19.6% | 87  17.9% | 2.29 | 1.07 |

Table 3, described the various challenges to information access and use among the secondary school teachers. It was revealed that most of the respondents, 389(80.2%) affirmed that required materials were not always available. Also, lack of time to search for information was experienced by 316(65.1%) respondents. Other challenges facing the teachers' access and use of information included - lack of library to support teachers and students information need, lack of current and up-to-date information, poor information literacy skills, inadequate time to visit the library for information, too many classes or administrative work, and many others.

From the findings, it could be observed that the teachers, just like other managers in other organizations, were being confronted with various challenges in their quest for information access and use to aid their teaching effectiveness. As it has been widely reported, lack of time, poor literacy skills and non-availability of relevant information have always been the major problems of managers in organizations. This is further corroborated by Quigley, Peck, Rutter, and Williams (2002), whose study revealed that major obstacles in scholars' information seeking and use were lack of time, unavailability of needed material, and information retrieval difficulties. In this study, interdisciplinary scholars in particular expressed frustration with the distribution of materials across various library units on campus (e.g., the engineering, medical, and museums libraries), the lack of electronic access to older literature, "grey," and foreign literature, poor control of government and state publications and inadequate coverage by indexes of journals in certain areas. The implication of this is that the challenges will prevent the teachers from accessing and using quality information that could be used in supporting effective teaching and learning activities in the school. And obviously, quality educational services cannot be guaranteed in the absence of relevant, timely, and up-to-date information needed by teachers to support the classroom teaching.

**Conclusion**

It is obvious from the findings that information really empowers if accessed and well utilized. The teachers in the selected secondary schools have been able to resolve many of their information needs as a result of access to and use of information from time to time. The study established that the teachers were able to identify their areas of information need which ranged from personal to official and day-to-day business activities and most of these information were readily accessible to them through various sources such as colleagues, face-to-face interaction, workshops, conferences and seminars, mass media, print media, libraries and some others.

The teachers are one of the pillars of education because they help in imparting knowledge into people through teaching methodologies that is based on a well structured curriculum. For effective teaching to really take place in the schools, however, teachers need unrestricted access to information that could help in discharging their duties. They must also be able to use the information to support teaching and facilitate learning activities among the students. Meanwhile, in order to make this a reality, all the challenges encountered by the teachers in accessing and using information must be taken care of on personal, institutional and state-wide levels.

**Recommendations**

The following recommendations were made based on the findings of this study:

1. Government at various levels should always make information available to all teachers without subjecting them to unnecessary stress looking for information to support their teaching activities or enhance their teaching career.

2. The teachers also need to find time to visit the library for recent and up-to-date information on their teaching subjects in particular, and the advancement of their teaching career in general.

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