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HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT PRACTICES AND TEACHERS' EFFECTIVENESS IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN ABA EDUCATION ZONE, ABIA STATE

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the relationship between human resource development practices and teachers' effectiveness in public secondary schools in Aba Education Zone, Abia State. Specifically, the study investigated the relationships between training and retraining and teachers' instructional effectiveness, seminars and workshops and teachers' commitment to duty, and in-service training and teachers' overall performance. A correlational research design was adopted for the study. The population comprised 891 teachers in 115 public secondary schools in Aba Education Zone, and the entire population was studied using a census approach. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire validated by three experts, with a test-retest reliability coefficient of 0.87. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions, while Pearson Product Moment Correlation was used to test the hypotheses at the 0.05 level of significance. The findings showed a significant positive relationship between training and retraining and teachers' instructional effectiveness ($r = 0.721$, $p < .05$). A significant positive relationship was also found between seminars and workshops and teachers' commitment to duty ($r = 0.689$, $p < .05$). Similarly, in-service training had a significant positive relationship with teachers' overall performance ($r = 0.733$, $p < .05$). The study concludes that continuous human resource development is significantly associated with important dimensions of teachers' effectiveness. It therefore recommends regular training and retraining, relevant seminars and workshops, and expanded opportunities for in-service training to strengthen teachers' professional effectiveness in public secondary schools.

INTRODUCTION

Human resources constitute one of the most important resources available to an educational institution because the quality of teaching and learning depends substantially on the competence, commitment and professional effectiveness of teachers. In secondary schools, teachers are expected to possess current knowledge, appropriate instructional skills and the professional disposition required to respond effectively to changing educational demands. Consequently,

human resource development (HRD) has become an important aspect of school administration. Human resource development refers to systematic efforts aimed at improving employees' knowledge, skills, competencies and professional capacities through planned learning and development activities. In the school system, such activities may include training and retraining, seminars and workshops, and in-service training.

Training and retraining are particularly important because teachers need continuous opportunities to update their knowledge and improve their instructional practices. Changes in curriculum content, teaching methods, assessment procedures and educational technologies require teachers to acquire new competencies and refine existing ones. Regular training and retraining can therefore contribute to teachers' instructional effectiveness by improving their ability to plan lessons, select appropriate teaching strategies, manage classrooms and assess students' learning. Teachers who receive relevant and continuous professional training may be better positioned to translate educational objectives into effective classroom practices.

Seminars and workshops also constitute important HRD practices in education. Unlike routine teaching activities, seminars and workshops provide opportunities for teachers to interact with colleagues, educational specialists and other professionals on emerging issues in education. Such programmes can expose teachers to new ideas, professional standards, school policies and effective practices while also providing opportunities for professional interaction and reflection. These experiences may strengthen teachers' sense of professional responsibility and commitment to their duties. A teacher who feels professionally supported and continually exposed to relevant knowledge may demonstrate greater dedication to classroom responsibilities and other school-related duties.

In-service training is another important HRD practice through which teachers can develop professionally while remaining within the teaching profession. It provides opportunities for teachers to acquire additional knowledge and competencies without necessarily withdrawing from their employment. In-service training may involve professional upgrading, further education, specialised courses and other structured learning opportunities. Such development can improve teachers' professional capacity and enable them to respond more effectively to changing demands within the education system. Thus, in-service training may contribute to teachers' overall performance by strengthening their knowledge, skills and professional competence.

Teachers' effectiveness is reflected in their ability to perform instructional and professional responsibilities efficiently. Effective teachers are expected to prepare adequately for lessons, use appropriate instructional methods, manage the classroom effectively, evaluate students appropriately and demonstrate commitment to their professional duties. Human resource development practices are therefore potentially important mechanisms for strengthening these aspects of teachers' effectiveness. Where teachers are regularly exposed to relevant professional development opportunities, they may be better equipped to perform their responsibilities.

The importance of teacher professional development has been recognised in educational research and policy. Darling-Hammond, Hyler and Gardner (2017) emphasised that effective professional development can strengthen teachers' knowledge and instructional practice when it is relevant, sustained and connected to classroom needs. Similarly, studies in Nigeria have reported positive relationships between professional development activities and teachers' performance. Adeyemi

(2018) observed that professional development was associated with improved teacher job performance, while Alabi and Oyetunde (2022) reported positive effects of instructional skills training on teachers' performance in public secondary schools. These perspectives suggest that systematic investment in teachers' development may be associated with improved effectiveness.

It is against this background that the present study examined the relationship between selected human resource development practices and teachers' effectiveness in public secondary schools in Aba Education Zone, Abia State. The study focused specifically on training and retraining, seminars and workshops, and in-service training.

Statement of the Problem

The effectiveness of teachers is central to the achievement of educational objectives because teachers are directly responsible for translating curriculum objectives into classroom experiences. However, teachers operate in an educational environment characterised by changing curricula, evolving instructional approaches, emerging educational technologies and increasing expectations from schools and society. These developments require teachers to continually update their knowledge and professional skills.

Despite the importance of continuous professional development, teachers may not always have adequate opportunities to participate in relevant training and retraining programmes, seminars, workshops and in-service training. Where such opportunities are irregular, poorly coordinated or insufficiently related to teachers' actual professional needs, the ability of teachers to maintain effective instructional and professional practices may be affected. Concerns about teachers' instructional effectiveness, commitment to duty and overall performance therefore raise questions about the extent to which existing human resource development practices contribute to their effectiveness.

The problem addressed by this study was therefore the need to determine whether selected human resource development practices are significantly related to teachers' effectiveness in public secondary schools in Aba Education Zone. Specifically, the study investigated the relationships between training and retraining and instructional effectiveness, seminars and workshops and commitment to duty, and in-service training and overall performance.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to examine the relationship between human resource development practices and teachers' effectiveness in public secondary schools in Aba Education Zone, Abia State. Specifically, the study sought to determine the relationship between:

- Training and retraining and teachers' instructional effectiveness;
- Seminars and workshops and teachers' commitment to duty; and
- In-service training and teachers' overall performance.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What is the relationship between training and retraining and teachers' instructional effectiveness in public secondary schools in Aba Education Zone?
2. What is the relationship between seminars and workshops and teachers' commitment to duty in public secondary schools in Aba Education Zone?
3. What is the relationship between in-service training and teachers' overall performance in public secondary schools in Aba Education Zone?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were tested at the 0.05 level of significance:

H_{O1}: There is no significant relationship between training and retraining and teachers' instructional effectiveness in public secondary schools in Aba Education Zone.

H_{O2}: There is no significant relationship between seminars and workshops and teachers' commitment to duty in public secondary schools in Aba Education Zone.

H_{O3}: There is no significant relationship between in-service training and teachers' overall performance in public secondary schools in Aba Education Zone.

Review of Related Literature

Training and Retraining and Teachers' Instructional Effectiveness

Training and retraining constitute important components of human resource development because they provide employees with opportunities to acquire new knowledge and improve existing competencies. In the educational context, teacher training may focus on instructional methods, lesson planning, classroom management, assessment techniques, curriculum implementation and other areas directly related to classroom practice. Retraining becomes particularly important when changes in curriculum, policy or educational practice require teachers to develop new competencies.

Teachers' instructional effectiveness depends partly on their ability to apply appropriate knowledge and skills in the classroom. Continuous professional learning can improve teachers' capacity to select suitable teaching methods, organise learning experiences, assess students and respond to different learning needs. Darling-Hammond et al. (2017) noted that effective professional development can improve teachers' knowledge and instructional practice when it is focused on relevant content and connected to teachers' classroom responsibilities.

Empirical evidence also supports the relevance of training to teacher performance. Alabi and Oyetunde (2022) reported that instructional skills training had a positive effect on teachers' performance in public secondary schools. The implication is that training opportunities which are directly connected to teachers' instructional responsibilities can strengthen their effectiveness in the classroom.

Seminars and Workshops and Teachers' Commitment to Duty

Seminars and workshops provide structured opportunities for professional learning and interaction. Through these activities, teachers can obtain information about emerging educational issues, exchange experiences with colleagues and acquire knowledge that may be useful in their professional responsibilities. Seminars and workshops can also expose teachers to professional expectations and encourage reflection on their roles as educators.

Commitment to duty refers to the extent to which teachers demonstrate dedication, responsibility and willingness to perform their assigned duties. Teachers who participate in relevant professional development programmes may develop a stronger understanding of their responsibilities and become more motivated to contribute to school objectives. Afolabi and Adetunji (2021) reported a positive relationship between seminars and workshops and teachers' professional commitment in Nigerian secondary schools. This suggests that professional interaction and continuous learning may contribute to teachers' dedication to their duties.

In-Service Training and Teachers' Overall Performance

In-service training enables teachers to improve their professional competence while remaining actively engaged in teaching. It may take the form of further professional education, specialised courses, refresher programmes and other learning activities designed to meet identified professional needs. Such training can help teachers acquire updated knowledge and improve their ability to perform different aspects of their responsibilities.

Teachers' overall performance involves the effective discharge of instructional, administrative and professional responsibilities. When teachers receive appropriate in-service training, they may be better prepared to respond to changes in educational practice and perform their duties effectively. Human resource development literature generally recognises continuous learning as an important mechanism for improving employee competence and performance (Armstrong & Taylor, 2023). In the school setting, this implies that opportunities for in-service training may contribute to improved teacher performance.

Methodology

The study adopted a correlational research design. The design was considered appropriate because the study sought to determine the relationships between selected human resource development practices and aspects of teachers' effectiveness without manipulating any of the variables.

The study was conducted in Aba Education Zone of Abia State, Nigeria. The population comprised 891 teachers in 115 public secondary schools in the education zone. Since the population was considered manageable, the study adopted a census approach, and all 891 teachers constituted the respondents for the study.

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire designed to obtain information on human resource development practices and teachers' effectiveness. The instrument was structured on a four-point rating scale of To a Higher Extent (4), To a High Extent (3), To a Low Extent (2), and To a Very Low Extent (1). The instrument was subjected to face and content validation by three experts. Its reliability was established through the test-retest method using 30 teachers outside the

study area. The two administrations were separated by a two-week interval, and a reliability coefficient of 0.87 was obtained, indicating satisfactory consistency.

The questionnaires administered to the 891 teachers were retrieved and used for analysis, giving a 100% response rate. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions, while Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) was used to test the hypotheses at the 0.05 level of significance.

Data Analysis and Results

Research Question 1

What is the relationship between training and retraining and teachers' instructional effectiveness in public secondary schools in Aba Education Zone?

S/N	Training and Retraining	Mean	SD	Decision
1.	Training and retraining improve teachers' instructional skills.	3.56	0.51	High Extent
2.	Training and retraining improve teachers' lesson delivery.	3.62	0.49	High Extent
3.	Training and retraining enhance teachers' classroom effectiveness.	3.50	0.50	High Extent
	Overall Mean/SD	**3.59**	**0.50**	**High Extent**

The result in Table 1 shows an overall mean of 3.59 with a standard deviation of 0.50. The mean is considerably above the criterion mean of 2.50, indicating that respondents generally rated training and retraining as being implemented to a high extent. The individual item means, ranging from 3.50 to 3.62, further show consistency in the responses. The relatively low standard deviation indicates that the respondents' ratings were fairly close to one another. The result suggests that training and retraining are perceived as relevant professional development practices that support teachers' instructional skills, lesson delivery and classroom effectiveness.

Research Question 2

What is the relationship between seminars and workshops and teachers' commitment to duty in public secondary schools in Aba Education Zone?

S/N	Seminars and Workshops	Mean	SD	Decision
4.	Seminars and workshops enhance teachers' professional commitment.	3.47	0.51	High Extent
5.	Seminars and workshops encourage teachers' dedication to their duties.	3.51	0.50	High Extent
6.	Seminars and workshops improve teachers' sense of responsibility.	3.48	0.51	High Extent
	Overall Mean/SD	**3.49**	**0.51**	**High Extent**

The result in Table 2 indicates an overall mean of 3.49 and a standard deviation of 0.51. Since the overall mean is above the criterion mean of 2.50, seminars and workshops were rated as being utilised to a high extent. The item means are closely grouped between 3.47 and 3.51, showing a

relatively consistent pattern of responses. This indicates that seminars and workshops are perceived to contribute to teachers' professional commitment, dedication and sense of responsibility. The finding suggests that opportunities for professional interaction and learning may have an important role in strengthening teachers' commitment to their duties.

Research Question 3

What is the relationship between in-service training and teachers' overall performance in public secondary schools in Aba Education Zone?

S/N	In-Service Training	Mean	SD	Decision
7.	In-service training improves teachers' professional competence.	3.60	0.49	High Extent
8.	In-service training enhances teachers' ability to perform their duties effectively.	3.57	0.51	High Extent
9.	In-service training improves teachers' overall job performance.	3.55	0.51	High Extent
	Overall Mean/SD	**3.57**	**0.51**	**High Extent**

Table 3 shows an overall mean of 3.57 and a standard deviation of 0.51. The overall mean is above the criterion mean of 2.50, indicating that respondents rated in-service training as being utilised to a high extent. The individual item means, ranging from 3.55 to 3.60, demonstrate a consistent positive assessment of the role of in-service training. The result indicates that in-service training is perceived to strengthen teachers' professional competence, improve their ability to discharge their responsibilities and enhance their overall job performance.

Test of Hypotheses

The hypotheses were tested using Pearson Product Moment Correlation at the 0.05 level of significance.

Hypothesis	Variables	N	r	Decision
H_{01}	Training and retraining instructional effectiveness	891	0.721	Reject H01
H02	Seminars and workshops × commitment to duty	891	0.689	Reject H02
H03	In-service training × overall performance	891	0.733	Reject H03

H_{01}: The analysis produced a correlation coefficient of r = 0.721, with p < .05. The null hypothesis was therefore rejected. This indicates a statistically significant positive relationship between training and retraining and teachers' instructional effectiveness.

H_{02}: The analysis produced a correlation coefficient of r = 0.689, with p < .05. The null hypothesis was rejected. This indicates a statistically significant positive relationship between seminars and workshops and teachers' commitment to duty.

H_{03}: The analysis produced a correlation coefficient of r = 0.733, with p < .05. The null hypothesis was rejected. This indicates a statistically significant positive relationship between in-service training and teachers' overall performance.

The three correlation coefficients are positive and relatively strong, indicating that higher levels of the respective human resource development practices were associated with higher levels of the corresponding aspects of teachers' effectiveness.

Summary of Findings

The study produced the following findings:

- Training and retraining had a significant positive relationship with teachers' instructional effectiveness, with a correlation coefficient of r = 0.721.
- Seminars and workshops had a significant positive relationship with teachers' commitment to duty, with a correlation coefficient of r = 0.689.
- In-service training had a significant positive relationship with teachers' overall performance, with a correlation coefficient of r = 0.733.

Discussion of Findings

The first finding showed a significant positive relationship between training and retraining and teachers' instructional effectiveness. The finding indicates that teachers who are exposed to relevant training and retraining opportunities tend to demonstrate stronger instructional effectiveness. The result may be explained by the fact that continuous training exposes teachers to updated instructional knowledge and skills, enabling them to improve lesson preparation, teaching strategies, classroom management and other aspects of instructional practice. The finding agrees with Darling-Hammond et al. (2017), who emphasised the contribution of effective professional development to teachers' knowledge and classroom practice. It is also consistent with Alabi and Oyetunde (2022), who found that instructional skills training positively affected teachers' performance. The agreement suggests that professional learning that is directly connected to classroom responsibilities can contribute meaningfully to teachers' instructional effectiveness.

The second finding revealed a significant positive relationship between seminars and workshops and teachers' commitment to duty. This suggests that participation in professional seminars and workshops is associated with greater dedication and responsibility among teachers. Seminars and workshops provide opportunities for teachers to interact with other professionals, examine emerging educational issues and reflect on their responsibilities. Such professional engagement may strengthen teachers' sense of belonging and commitment to the objectives of their schools. The finding agrees with Afolabi and Adetunji (2021), who reported a positive relationship between seminars and workshops and teachers' professional commitment in Nigerian secondary schools. The consistency between the present finding and the earlier study reinforces the view that professional development opportunities can extend beyond the acquisition of technical skills to influence teachers' professional attitudes and commitment.

The third finding showed a significant positive relationship between in-service training and teachers' overall performance. This indicates that teachers who have greater access to in-service training tend to demonstrate better overall job performance. In-service training can provide opportunities for teachers to acquire updated professional knowledge, improve their competencies and adapt to changing educational requirements. The finding is consistent with the broader human

resource development position that continuous employee learning contributes to competence and performance (Armstrong & Taylor, 2023). It also supports the argument that teacher development should be viewed as a continuous process rather than an activity that ends with initial professional qualification.

Conclusion

Based on the findings, the study concludes that selected human resource development practices are significantly and positively related to teachers' effectiveness in public secondary schools in Aba Education Zone, Abia State. Training and retraining are significantly related to instructional effectiveness, seminars and workshops are significantly related to commitment to duty, while in-service training is significantly related to overall performance. The results demonstrate the importance of providing teachers with continuous and relevant professional development opportunities as part of efforts to strengthen effectiveness in secondary schools.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made:

1. In relation to training and retraining, school administrators and relevant education authorities should organise regular, needs-based training and retraining programmes for teachers, with emphasis on instructional methods, lesson delivery, classroom management and other skills directly related to effective teaching.

2. In relation to seminars and workshops, education authorities and school administrators should provide regular opportunities for teachers to participate in relevant seminars and workshops focusing on professional responsibility, commitment to duty, emerging educational issues and effective discharge of school responsibilities.

3. In relation to in-service training, education authorities should expand opportunities for teachers to undertake in-service training and professional upgrading by providing institutional support, flexible arrangements and access to relevant continuing education programmes that can strengthen teachers' competence and overall performance.

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