

FACTORS INFLUENCING THE PARTICIPATION OF SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS IN CONTINUING EDUCATION PROGRAMMES IN DELTA STATE OF NIGERIA

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Abstract

The study was aimed at investigating factors influencing teachers' participation in Continuing Education Programmes in Delta State. Three hundred and twenty respondents constituted the sample used for the study. A questionnaire was developed by the researchers and used for the collection of data. The analysis was done using frequency count, simple percentage and mean scores. The results revealed that the most influencing factors of teachers' participation in Continuing Education Programmes include desire for promotion, job advancement, job demand/challenges, and desire for enhanced social interaction. It was also discovered that personality development and social interaction among teachers help to influence their participation. It was recommended among other things that the tempo of interaction among teachers should be sustained since it is capable of encouraging teachers to participate in continuing education programmes in order to enhance their competence and develop further their personality.

Introduction:

The interest and patience for continue education has continued to gather momentum nationally and internationally. This is because it has become a social requirement satisfying or serving institution of wide variety (Kazeem, 1998). It has also functioned formally and non-formally to serve the purpose of individuals who sought it out. Its purpose therefore range from providing opportunity for persons who have completed, withdrawn, dropped out, or have been denied formal education; and those who have assumed principal roles meeting the demand of work or the requirement of the public, private, voluntary or commercial institutions which have a stake in the performance of the individual. Hence, according to Appa cited in Kazeem (1998), it provides new further development of human ability after entrance into employment or voluntary activities. It includes in-service, up-grading and updating education or training with further career or personal development. In the words of Schreiner (2014), continuing education provides the opportunity for working professional to continue their learning and remain abreast of development within their fields.

The importance of continuing education is predicated on the premise that regardless of one's work, extent of schooling, learning has not and cannot stop with the end of schooling because new concept, new skills, new tools and new knowledge of yesterday will be inadequate to cope with the challenges and changes of tomorrow (Akanji & Oyitso, 2011). In line with the above, education based on knowledge of yesterday will be inadequate to cope with the challenges and changes of tomorrow. Hence, Akinpelu (2002) believes that one cannot do today's job with yesterday's tool and hope to be in business tomorrow. This explains too why continuing education has continued to gather momentum. Continuing education is geared towards meeting a number of purposes

- Providing avenue for people to keep up with new knowledge and techniques required for effective and efficient performance in any area through constant training and retraining process.
- Fostering human resource and capacity building process. The further training offered people enable them to attain higher heights, thereby enhancing their economic base and rewards.

- It is also aimed at providing a second chance education thereby complementing the formal education school system. (Omiunu, 2011)

Continuing education is not a novelty in the educational practice of Nigeria. It has been an integral and essential part of the Nigeria education system. As an aspect of adult education programme, its practice has been operated with educational provision in the country. The commission for Mass Literacy, Adult and Non-Formal Education has been the umbrella body charged with the responsibility of providing education programmes on a continuous basis to different categories of people. The various state agencies of Adult and non-formal education has complemented the effort at the state level. There is no state in the country today that does not have such body. Apart from government agencies, other bodies/agencies namely, Universities, churches, Muslim organization, professional bodies, private and community associations are also actively involved in the provision of continuing education.

It is clear from the foregoing, that education is no longer seen as something that goes on in the classroom, within a school or as a series of lesson on set subjects measured from time to time by examinations and ending up in the issuance of a certificate. Initially, administrators who were foreigners were anxious to encourage people to absorb a given type of knowledge sufficient to make them good clerks, storekeepers, or interpreters. Appreciably, education is now seen in a broader sense. The popular French principle of education “permanente” underscores the continuity of education. It is now being emphasized that education or learning is continuous and can take place throughout life and go beyond what could be offered within the formal school system. The vast majority of continuing education programmes are organized for clients who have some previous knowledge or jobs other than studying. Continuing education refers to all forms of vocational educational programmes for the acquisition of knowledge, attitude and value that will enable the individual cope with the challenges of life. (Omoruyi, 2008). Continuing education is aimed at meeting identified or expressed learning needs. It has become an essential means of acquiring knowledge, skills and values to meet certain specific needs and interest. It is an instructional programme that brings participants up to date in a particular area of knowledge (The free online dictionary 2014).

Since the 1980's, many people who for one reason or the other cannot enroll as full-time learners have continued to patronize continuing education outfit scattered all over the country to satisfy their personal need and interest. According to Omiunu (2011), many institutions have been established and are offering continual professional training to raise participants' competence through the provision of new knowledge and skills for the purpose of upgrading and updating the knowledge, attitude and values acquired previously. Teachers especially at the post-primary level have not been left out. The level of patronage has obviously increased. Many of them have taken due advantage of the opportunity offered by continuing education programme to improve themselves by up-grading and up-dating their initial education acquired. The increase in demand for education through continuing education strategy demands explanation to obtain empirical data on factors influencing the demand for continuing education.

Statement of the Problem

The problem of this study arose from the increase in the number of continuing education outlet apparently as a result of the increase in demand for such education. The trend has been that more people are daily acquiring education through continuing education means. The secondary school teachers have not been left out. It is obvious that there are certain forces propelling the increased demand for or participation in continuing education by these teachers. It has been alluded that the desire to enhance one's status or develop one's personality has influenced the participation in continuing education (Appa in Kazeem, 1998 and Akinpelu, 2002). Furthermore, it has also been posited that the desire to meet changes occurring in our ever changing world has been responsible for the demand for continuing education. Yet, some have argued that the need for and participation in continuing education has been accentuated to meet variety of desires and interest (Egunyomi, 2001; Olomukoro, 2005 and Ifeyinwa, 2005). It is not clear or certain as to the factors that influence secondary school teachers' participation in continuing education programme. It is against this backdrop that the study tends to determine the factors that influence secondary school teachers' participation in continuing education programme.

Purpose of the Study

Specifically, the study sought to achieve the following purpose.

1. To find out the main factors that influence secondary school teachers' participation in continuing education programme in Delta State.
2. Ascertain if the desire to develop their personality influences their participation in continuing education programmes in the area.
3. Determine if the social interaction among the teachers influences their participation in continuing education programmes in the area.

Research Questions

The study sought to find answers to the following questions.

1. What are the main factors that influence secondary school teachers' participation in continuing education programmes in Delta State?
2. Does the teachers' desire for the development of their personality influence their participation in continuing education programme in the area?
3. Does the social interaction among the teachers influence their participation in continuing education programmes in the area?

Methodology

Research Design

The study employed the descriptive survey research utilizing ex-post-facto method.

Population of the Study

The population of the study comprised of the entire secondary school teachers in public secondary schools in Delta South Senatorial District. This includes seven (7) local government areas that make up Delta South Senatorial District. The total numbers of teachers were five thousand, three hundred and twenty-two (5,322) in three hundred and twenty-one (321) secondary schools in the area.

Sample and Sampling Technique

The sample comprised of three hundred and twenty (320) secondary school teachers drawn from thirty-two (32) secondary schools in the area. Out of the three hundred and twenty-one (321) secondary schools, thirty-two (32) schools were randomly selected. This represents approximately ten percent of the population of schools in the area. From the thirty-two (32) secondary schools, three hundred and twenty (320) secondary school teachers were randomly selected and ten (10) teachers were selected from each school sampled.

Instrumentation

The major instrument used for the study was a set of questionnaire designed by the researchers. The questionnaire was divided into two parts. The first part covers the demographic information about the respondents while the second part covers all the assumed factors influencing secondary school teachers' participation in continuing education programmes in Delta State.

Validity and Reliability of the Instrument

Content validity of the instrument was determined by remarks of three experts in Adult Education Department to determine the relevance of items in the instrument to the study. The reliability was determined using the split-half method. The instrument was therefore administered once on a group of thirty (30) secondary school teachers from the population. The scores obtained were correlated using the pearson product moment correlation and a correlation index of 0.85 was obtained.

Method of Data Collection

The copies of the questionnaires were administered on the sampled respondents by the researchers with the assistance of some of the teachers. The questionnaires were also collected immediately they were filled.

Data Analysis

The data collected was analyzed using descriptive statistics comprising of mean, frequency count and simple percentage. The criterion mean was 2.50. The mean score above 2.50 was accepted while the mean below 2.50 was rejected.

Results**Research Question 1:**

What are the main factors that influence secondary school teachers' participation in continuing education programmes in Delta State?

Table1: Percentage Distribution of responses on factors influencing secondary school teachers' participation in Continuing Education programmes.

S/N	Options	Weighted Mean Score	Mean Score	Decision
1	Social Demands	768	2.40	Rejected
2	Desire for Promotion	896	2.81	Accepted
3	Job Advancement	890	2.78	Accepted
4	Job Demands/Challenges	890	2.78	Accepted
5	Change in Government Policy	879	2.74	Accepted
6	Influence of Colleague	740	2.31	Rejected
7	Desire for enhanced Social Interaction	880	2.75	Accepted
8	Improve/Raise Competence	878	2.74	Accepted
9	Acquisition of more knowledge	860	2.61	Accepted
10	The desire to be more efficient	875	2.73	Accepted

N = 320

Criterion Mean = 2.50

The results in table I above reveals that all perceived factors with the exception of social demand, influence of colleague were accepted as factors influencing teachers' participation in continuing education. This indicates that the desire for promotion, job advancements, job demand/challenges, change in government policy, the desire for enhanced social interaction, improved competence, acquisition of more knowledge and the desire to become more efficient are factors or variables accepted by the respondents as responsible for the participation of teachers in continuing education programmes in the area.

Research Question 2:

Does the teachers' desire for the development of their personality influence their participation in continuing education programmes in the area?

Table 2: Distribution of Responses on the Influence of Teachers' Desire for Personality Development on their Participation in Continuing Education Programmes.

Level of Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	128	40%
Agree	100	31.25%
Disagree	92	28.75%
Strongly Disagree	—	—
Total	320	100%

The result in Table 2 above shows that 128 or 40% of the total respondents strongly agree that the desire for personality development influence teachers' participation in continuing education programmes. 100 or 31.25 percent agree on the issue while the remaining 92 representing 28.75 percent of the respondents disagreed on the issue. This indicates that teachers' desire for personality development influence their participation in continuing education programmes in the area.

Research Question 3:

Does the social interaction among the teachers influence their participation in continuing education programmes in the area?

Table 3: Distribution of Responses on Social Interaction on Teachers' Participation in Continuing Education Programmes

Level of Response	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agreed	20	6.25
Agree	293	91.56
Disagree	7	2.19
Strongly Disagreed	—	—
Total	320	100%

The results presented in table III above revealed that 20 or 6.25 percent of respondents indicated strongly agree on the issue while 293 of the respondents representing 91.56% stated that they agreed that social interaction influence teachers' participation in continuing education programmes. Only 7 or 2.19 percent of the respondents of the total sample disagreed on the issue. This proved that social interaction among teachers influence their participation in continuing education programmes in the area.

Discussion of Findings

From the data analysis, it was discovered that the desire for promotion, job advancement, job challenges, change in government policy, desire for enhanced social interaction, improved competence, acquisition of more knowledge and the desire to be more efficient are major factors influencing secondary school teachers' participation in continuing education programmes in the area. The above view is corroborated by Afonja, (2003) who said a person's drive and goal seeking behavior is what motivates participation in continuing education programmes. According to him, this means that all behavior is motivated and for a worker (teacher) to participate in a programme, he must have been motivated by a need or needs. In line with the findings, Smits (2013) posited that continuing education helps workers keep their skills up – to – date, reduces the likelihood of market exclusion. According to Sharp (2014) the need for workers to upgrade their skills in order to retain their positions and compete effectively for new ones made them to participate in continuing education programmes. This helps workers receive promotions, gain more power in the job markets and become more valuable employees.

Furthermore, it was discovered that the desire for personality development strongly or significantly influence their participation in continuing education programmes in the area. This view supports an earlier view by Egbule (2000) who stated that personality is a configuration of human behavior and is one of the important factors affecting the learning process. Oyitso (1998) averred that the need to raise one's self-concept and confidence appeared to be the most important factors propelling women to participate in vocational training. On their own part, Omoruyi and Ojogwu (2005) found that the need to raise self concept and self confidence in one's ability to become self-reliant, raise one's economic status, acquire productive skill for improving one's life and family pressure were forces inducing women's appreciable level of participation in programmes.

The findings of the study were indicative of the fact that social interactions among the teachers significantly influence their participation in continuing education. This is understandable since those who have benefited from the programme would exert influences that would make their colleague desire to also take advantage of the opportunity available to participate in continuing education programme. This view is corroborated by Aluede (1999) who posited that peers provide opportunities to compare their own behavior, skills and other similar age and social standing. He concluded by saying peer group influence takes priority and may even supplant the influence of the home and school.

Conclusion/Recommendations

Secondary school teachers in Delta State participate in continuing education programmes for various reasons, ranging from the desire for promotion, job advancement, job demands/challenges, changes in government policy, desire for enhanced social interactions, improve and raise their

competence, acquire more knowledge and the desire to become more competent in the performance of their job.

Based on the findings, it is recommended that

- The tempo of interaction among teachers should be sustained since it is capable of encouraging more teachers to participate in continuing education programmes This is to enhance their competence and to further develop their personality.
- Teachers in the area should be encouraged to participate in continuing education programmes irrespective of sex, creed, status and affiliation.

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