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MANAGING TEACHERS FOR TRANSFORMATIVE LEARNING IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN RIVERS STATE, NIGERIA: AN IMPERATIVE FOR SUSTAINABLE NATIONAL TRANSFORMATION

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ABSTRACT

This study examined how teachers can be managed for transformative learning in secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria: An imperative for sustainable national transformation. Two research questions and one hypothesis guided the study. A descriptive research design was adopted. The population comprised all the 286 principals in the 286 public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. Out of these principals, 170 are males while 116 are females. A sample of 129 teachers (77 males and 52 females), representing 45% of the population was drawn using both the simple random sampling and proportionate stratified random sampling techniques. This was determined by the Taro Yamane Formula which gave a minimum sample 105 principals. The instrument that was used for data collection was a researcher-based 17-item questionnaire entitled: “Managing Teachers for Transformative Learning Questionnaire (MTTLQ).” It was structured after the four-point modified Likert rating scale and duly validated by experts. The internal consistency of the instrument was determined using Cronbach’s Alpha. Reliability coefficients of 0.88 and 0.79 were obtained respectively for the various sections of the instrument, which showed that the instrument was reliable. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions while z-test was used in testing the null hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance. The findings of the study revealed, among others, that transformative learning, which brings about change in learners’ behaviour that will drive sustainable national transformation depends on the ways principals manage teachers in the education system. Based on the findings, it was recommended, among others, that Rivers State Government should either pay or subsidize professional development fees for teachers in order to encourage them to constantly upgrade themselves to the evolving approaches to transformational learning in this digital era.

KEYWORDS: managing, teachers, transformative, learning, imperative and sustainable

INTRODUCTION

Education has been widely acknowledged as a vital transformational tool and formidable instrument for sustainable national development. National development can only be achieved through improving the quality of teaching and effectively managing the teachers, who play key roles in transforming learners to functional citizens. This is why the teacher factor is very fundamental in quality education delivery as teachers are determinants of the kind of education learners receive. As the approaches to classroom instruction is evolving in this 21st century, several learning principles and methods of instructional delivery that are geared towards meeting every learner's needs are introduced in the education system. In order for teachers to make their classes more interesting, more engaging and perform optimally in the teaching tasks, managing them becomes very critical. Lending credence to this assertion, the Federal Republic of Nigeria (2014) stipulated that teachers shall be regularly exposed to changes and innovations in their profession. Similarly, Uzokife and Mbonu (2023) noted that the growth and development of any education sector depend to a large extent on the management of its teaching staff. Kumar and Parveen (2013) emphasised that teachers need to be constantly developed professionally and managed effectively to be able to adapt to the global best teaching practices. Thus, it is the responsibility of school administrators to harness teachers' potentials and talents towards transformational learning processes that will inspire students to use their three Hs – head, heart and hands in the classroom.

Transformative learning is simply a kind of learning that changes or transforms an individual to a holistic person through the inculcation of critical reflections that make him use his knowledge (head), attitudes (heart) and skills (hands) efficiently in carrying out a task. Mezirow (1991, as cited in Humprey 2020) defined transformative learning as the process of changing one's perspective or basic ways of looking at things through understanding of the self, one's belief systems, attitudes, emotions and behaviour. To Mezirow, transformation can occur when teachers develop students holistically, and thereafter; they are accepted by the society. Mei, et al. (2022) asserted that one of the ways to help students is through proactive teachers who practice, apply and integrate transformational learning principles. Slavich and Zimbardo (2013) viewed transformative learning as a process that involves creating dynamic relationships between teachers and students in a way that promotes student learning and personal growth. Transformative Learning Centre (2016) described transformative learning as a mental shift in basic premises of thought (cognitive), feeling (affective) and action (psychomotor). Thus, transformative learning aims at helping individuals to challenge the current assumptions on which they act.

Transformative learning is the process in which teachers think critically on how best to achieve a positive outcome in the classroom while they reflect on their previous learning experiences. Mezirow (1991, as cited in Humprey 2020) posited that transformative learning takes place when one applies new ways of thinking and different strategies in using new tools to maintain or achieve results. Rosebrough and Leverett (2011) suggested that school administrators should encourage teachers to

consider the importance of equipping students with both skills *and* attitudes that are necessary for overcoming challenges. Mei, et al. (2022) pointed out that transformative learning emphasises on encouraging individuals to question assumptions and fostering open-mindedness to learning new things. According to Transformative Learning Theory, teachers can serve as facilitators and provocateurs, who help students become aware and more critical of their assumptions by engaging them in learner-centred, participatory and interactive experiences that require group problem-solving, autonomous thinking, critical reflectivity and discourse (Mezirow, 2000, as cited in Slavich and Zimbardo, 2013). The findings of Burns (2015) revealed that the application of Transformative Learning Theory has been proven to be effective in increasing teacher effectiveness. Thus, transformative learning offers innovative teaching-learning approaches that engage students actively in the classroom.

A teacher is an instructor and a change agent who guides learners through the transformational process by stimulating them towards making self-discoveries that shape their fundamental beliefs and assumptions of the world around them. Teachers' roles in the classroom are multifaceted. Obasi and Adieme (2021) observed that professionally competent teachers search for new ideas, implement best teaching practices, modify instruction to meet the learning needs of their students, have high expectations for their students, frequently monitor students' progress, provide students with feedback and discuss work-related improvements with their colleagues at work. In other words, teachers play indispensable roles – they inspire students to improve on their self-efficacy and believe in their own abilities. Slavich and Zimbardo (2013) noted that transformational teaching involves engaging students in the process of interdependent discovery by giving them ample time to discuss the strategies they use and the knowledge they generate. Taylor and Cranton (2013) noted that teachers are trained to employ various strategies that make students brainstorm and think critically. Humphrey (2020) pointed out that teachers are powerful resource in the education system as they engage students in instructional transformation. Hence, managing teachers effectively will go a long way to equipping them with requisite pedagogical skills, knowledge and attitudes to perform the teaching tasks more efficiently and effectively.

Management is the systematic planning, organizing, coordinating and controlling of available human and material resources to efficiently and effectively achieve organisational goals. In school organisation, the management lies solely on the school administrators who manage the school and harness the human resource (teaching and non-teaching staff) in order to attain the educational objectives and goals. These school administrators are referred to as principals in Nigerian secondary schools. The principals are expected to possess the managerial skills – conceptual, human and technical, and keep abreast of the novel concepts, changes and innovations in the education system. Nwideduh and Adieme (2021) asserted that school administrators, as change agents are charged with the inundate tasks of adapting and adopting innovations that are geared towards meeting the demands of globalisation and societal expectations of schools. Management of teachers, who implement the curriculum, is central to achieving the educational goals. Nwogu and Adieme (2018) posited that

principals must take cognisance of changes in methodologies and implement appropriate strategies for bringing out the best from teachers. Armstrong (2012); Obanya (2014); Adieme et al. (2015); Nzokurum and Adieme (2017) outlined motivational strategies, supervision of instruction, in-service training, staff professional development programmes, mentoring, on-the-job training, coaching, team teaching and talent management as management strategies principals can adopt in managing teachers effectively.

Teacher professional development training is a process of continuously exposing teachers to trendy concepts, changes, innovations and novel teaching methodologies in education that will enable them to deliver instruction efficiently. Yemmy (2010) defined teacher professional development training as a process of improving the skills, attitudes, and knowledge of teachers. Uzokife and Mbonu (2023) viewed teacher professional development training as continuous learning that helps teachers to improve on their skills. Adieme et al. (2015) described teacher professional development training programme as a lifelong learning process that helps teachers to upgrade themselves by adapting to change and innovations in education. Similarly, Obanya (2014) opined that teacher professional development training programme can be referred to as conscious and systematic steps that enhance teacher competency and continuous self-improvement. In corroboration, Olaleye (2013) noted that teachers' professional development should be considered an important prerequisite for coping with a continuous stream of changes in the education sector. Thus, teachers' ability to deliver instruction effectively depends to a large extent on their professional development and advancement.

Teachers' professional development programmes involve well-planned activities that enhance their job performance and productivity. Olaleye (2013); Adieme et al. (2015) conducted different studies and discovered that teachers' professional development programme includes but not limited to: in-service trainings, seminars, workshops, teacher continuous education/sandwich, conferences, inductions, team teaching, mentoring and collegial training. In corroboration to the findings, Dawo (2011) revealed that staff development programmes are vital steps in the professional growth and development of a teacher because they act as a bridge between pre-service training and the actual teaching job. Ngala and Odebero (2013) observed that professional development programmes help teachers to learn how best to adjust their teaching skill to the learning needs of their students. Ukala and Adieme (2024) posited that regular in-service training is needed to guide teachers in teaching inclusive education in mainstream schools. Armstrong (2012) maintained that coaching is a one-to-one approach to helping teachers develop their skills and improve on their performance. Mei et al. (2022) maintained that school administrators should constantly expose teachers to professional programmes that will equip them with skills needed to navigate the transformational processes in the classroom. Thus, a teacher, who is not constantly upgrading himself and learning new methods of teaching in this era of globalisation, definitely will not be able to use modern learning equipment.

Supervision, in the education system is an integral managerial tool that facilitates teachers' professional growth and quality education delivery. Adieme (2016) defined instructional supervision

as daily activities school administrators carry out to ensure that teachers implement the curriculum accordingly. Kitavi (2015) described instructional supervision as those activities school administrators undertake to improve, stimulate, coordinate and make teachers competent in the teaching profession. Thus, supervision helps teachers to develop themselves by becoming more competent in the teaching-learning process. Ogbonnaya (1997, as cited in Adieme and Asuku 2020) opined that a supervisor of instruction should be very knowledgeable and keep abreast of current trends and developments in education; teaching and methodologies; classroom techniques; change and innovations. As classroom approaches are evolving, principals should stimulate, inspire, stir and guide the teaching staff into becoming responsive to the expectations of the knowledge-based society and adapt to the best teaching strategies.

The evolution of Information Communication Technology (ICT) demands a paradigm shift from the traditional method of teaching in our secondary schools. As Obanya (2014, p. 34) puts it, “You cannot use yesterday’s methods to do business today and expect to remain in business tomorrow.” Adeyemi (2010) observed that supervision is a way of training and retraining of teachers on the job for efficiency and effectiveness. Briggs (2012) outlined some supervisory techniques principals can adopt to enhance teaching-learning process to include: classroom observation, demonstration, workshop, micro-teaching, team teaching, research, conferencing and evaluation techniques. Adieme and Asuku (2020) noted that this smart age requires school administrators to supervise what teachers do in the classroom and guide them through the labyrinths of innovations that are characterised by technological advancements. Saeed and Zyngier (2012) observed that by using the appropriate pedagogies, teachers can make their classrooms more engaging for students to learn. Hence, it is imperative that teachers are constantly supervised among other management practices to improve on their competencies.

Sustainable generally connotes being able to keep something in existence for a very long period of time. Education is the only driving force that can develop, transform and sustain a nation. In recognition of the enormous roles education plays in driving sustainable development, the United Nations declared this 21st century, as the era of Education for Sustainable Development. No nation can be transformed and sustained without qualitative education. In supporting this assertion, Federal Republic of Nigeria (2014) emphasised that education is a veritable tool for achieving national transformation and sustainable development. Ahenkan and Osei-Kojo (2014) noted that education for sustainable national transformation engenders radical and holistic change of mind and character for present-day success without jeopardising changes of survival for future generations. In order for our nation, Nigeria, to be sustainable and transformed, the kind of education that is offered to students, especially those in secondary schools must be holistic and transformative. Thus, principals should device management strategies that will improve teachers’ pedagogies for transformative learning that will facilitate sustainable national transformation.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

In recent times, Nigerian public secondary education system has been on the front burners of the national discourse due to poor performance of students in both internal and external examinations. More worrisome is the recently released 2024 Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board (JAMB) examination results where it was observed that students in private schools scored above 300 marks while those in public schools were playing around and below 200 marks! The answer to this puzzle is not far-fetched! It is simply because the students in private schools are exposed to transformative learning processes that enabled them to think critically, analyse ideas and synthesise information. Another heated argument is centred on the traditional pedagogical approach teachers are still using to deliver instruction to students (digital natives) in this digitalised world. As a matter of fact, the knowledge-based society has realised that the best gift a nation can offer to every child is a qualitative education and that teachers are the key actors in actualising the goal.

The Rivers State Government has been making concerted efforts in equipping the public secondary schools with infrastructural facilities that can enhance quality education delivery. However, it appears the teachers that utilise the learning facilities lack adequate Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK) that is needed to prepare students for computer-based learning that fosters students' active engagement. Furthermore, most teachers seem to still rely heavily on traditional methods of instructional delivery while some appear not to avail themselves the opportunities for professional development programmes that can expose them to evolving approaches to classroom instruction in this 21st century that is learner-centred. These scenarios underscored this study.

Aim and Objectives of the Study

The aim of this study was to examine how teachers can be managed for transformative learning in secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria: An imperative for sustainable national transformation. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. determine ways teachers' professional development can be managed for transformative learning in secondary schools in Rivers State; and
2. ascertain ways instructional supervision can be carried out for transformative learning in secondary schools in Rivers State.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. In what ways can teachers' professional development be managed for transformative learning in secondary schools in Rivers State?
2. What are the ways instructional supervision can be carried out for transformative learning in secondary schools in Rivers State?

Hypothesis

The following null hypothesis was formulated at 0.05 alpha level:

Ho₁ There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of male and female principals on the ways instructional supervision can be carried out for transformative learning in secondary schools in Rivers State.

METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a descriptive research design. The population of the study comprised all the 286 principals in the 286 public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. Out of these principals, 170 are males while 116 are females (Planning, Research and Statistics Department, Rivers State Ministry of Education, 2023). A sample of 129 teachers (77 males and 52 females), representing 45% of the population was drawn using both the simple random sampling and proportionate stratified random sampling techniques. This was determined by the Taro Yamane Formula which gave a minimum sample 105 principals. The instrument that was used for data collection was a researcher-based 17-item questionnaire entitled: “Managing Teachers for Transformative Learning Questionnaire (MTTLQ).” The questionnaire was structured after the four-point Likert rating scale of Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree and Strongly Disagree with weights of: 4, 3, 2 and 1. The instrument was duly validated by three experts in Test and Measurement Department, Curriculum Department and Educational Management Department of Faculty of Education, University of Port Harcourt.

The internal consistency reliability coefficient of 0.84 for (MTTLQ) was computed using Cronbach’s Alpha. The subscales’ reliability for managing teachers’ professional development and instructional supervision are 0.88 and 0.79 respectively; hence, they were adjudged to be reliable for the field study. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions. Any mean score from 2.50 and above was agreed upon, and the mean below 2.50 was disagreed upon. z-test was used in testing the null hypothesis of no significant difference. The acceptance or rejection of the hypothesis was based on the critical value of z-test, which is ± 1.96 at 0.05 level of significance.

RESULTS

Research Question 1: In what ways can teachers’ professional development be managed for transformative learning in secondary schools in Rivers State?

Table 1: Mean Scores and Standard Deviations on the Opinions of Male and Female principals on Ways Teachers’ Professional Development can be Managed for Transformative Learning in Secondary Schools in Rivers State

S/ N	Ways Teachers’ Professional Development can be Managed Include:	Male Principals = 77		Female Principals = 52			Decision
		\bar{X}_1	SD ₁	\bar{X}_2	SD ₂	$\bar{X}_1 \bar{X}_2$	
1.	Conducting workshops to train teachers on new teaching methodologies.	2.72	0.84	2.81	1.01	2.77	Agreed
2.	Organising in-service trainings to help teachers keep abreast of evolving approaches to instructions.	2.69	0.84	2.64	1.03	2.67	Agreed
3.	Organising seminars to guide teachers on how to actively engage students in the classroom.	3.09	0.79	2.97	0.98	3.03	Agreed
4.	Encouraging teachers to keep up-grading themselves through continuing education programmes, online trainings, etc.	3.04	0.80	3.06	0.97	3.05	Agreed
5.	Motivating teachers to attend conferences on transformative learning by subsidizing the fees for them.	1.97	0.92	1.58	1.18	1.78	Disagreed
6.	Inviting resource persons (subject specialists) to train teachers on how to teach with technologies that keep students on-task.	2.39	0.87	2.16	1.09	2.28	Disagreed
7.	Encouraging teachers to practise self-directed learning via online to improve on their competencies.	2.83	0.82	2.77	1.01	2.80	Agreed
8.	Assigning less experienced teachers to experienced teachers, who mentor them on pedagogies.	3-10	0.79	3.03	0.98	3.07	Agreed
9.	Conducting on-the-job-induction training for newly recruited teachers.	3.15	0.79	3.18	0.95	3.17	Agreed

Aggregate Mean/SD 2.76 0.83 2.69 1.02 2.73

Table 1 shows the mean responses of male and female principals on ways teachers’ professional development can be managed for transformative learning in secondary schools in Rivers State. Both male and female principals agreed on items: 1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 8 and 9 respectively with mean scores greater than the mean criterion of 2.50. However, they disagreed on items: 5 and 6, which are less than the mean criterion of 2.50. Their aggregate mean scores of 2.76 and 2.69 respectively; indicate that they agreed that ways teachers’ professional development can be managed for transformative learning include: workshops, in-service trainings, seminars, continuing education/training programmes, self-directed learning, mentoring and on-the-job-induction training. Conversely, the principals are financially constrained to hire resource persons to train teachers and sponsor them for conferences.

Research Question 2: What are the ways instructional supervision can be carried out for transformative learning in secondary schools in Rivers State?

Table 2: Mean Scores and Standard Deviations on the Opinions of Male and Female principals on Ways Instructional Supervision can be Carried Out for Transformative Learning in Secondary Schools in Rivers State.

S/ N	Ways Instructional Supervision can be Carried Out Include:	Male Principals = 77		Female Principals = 52			Decision
		\bar{X}_1	SD ₁	\bar{X}_2	SD ₂	$\bar{X}_1 \bar{X}_2$	
10.	Classroom visitation where teachers are guided on how to effectively manage their classes for transformational learning.	2.89	0.82	2.94	0.99	2.92	Agreed
11.	Mandating Heads of Departments (HoDs) to always go through teachers’ lesson notes so as to ensure that the specific objectives meet the three education domain – cognitive, affective and psychomotor.	3.12	0.79	3.08	0.97	3.10	Agreed
12.	Coaching teachers individually to solve common classroom problems in order to engage students actively.	2.25	0.89	2.14	1.10	2.20	Disagreed
13.	Using competent teachers to conduct team teaching to	2.86	0.82	2.89	0.99	2.88	Agreed

	demonstrate transformational teaching to the incompetent ones.							
14.	Instructing HoDs to regularly check students' notebooks to ensure teachers' assessment are done properly.	2.95	0.81	2.93	1.02	2.84	Agreed	
15.	Encouraging teachers to always surf the Internet to research trendy concepts in education before writing lesson plans.	3.05	0.80	3.16	0.97	3.06	Agreed	
16.	Conducting classroom observation regularly to identify areas where teachers need to improve on.	2.91	0.86	2.98	0.98	2.95	Agreed	
17.	Giving feedback to teachers after classroom observation on teaching skills they need to improve on.	2.97	0.81	3.13	0.96	3.05	Agreed	
	Aggregate Mean/SD	2.88	0.82	2.91	0.99	2.90		

Table 2 displays the mean responses of male and female principals on ways instructional supervision can be carried out for transformative learning in secondary schools in Rivers State. Both male and female principals agreed on items: 10, 11, 13, 14, 15, 16 and 17 respectively with mean scores greater than the mean criterion of 2.50. However, they disagreed on item 12 which is less than the mean criterion of 2.50. Their aggregate mean scores of 2.88 and 2.91 respectively, indicate that they agreed that ways instructional supervision can be carried out for transformative learning in secondary schools in Rivers State include: classroom visitation, going through teachers' lesson notes to ensure that the specific objectives meet the three education domain – cognitive, affective and psychomotor; collegial training; checking students' notebooks to ensure teachers' assessment are done properly; encouraging teachers to always surf the Internet to research trendy concepts in education before writing lesson plans; classroom observation and giving feedback to teachers after classroom observation on teaching skills they need to improve on.

Table 3: Summary of z-test on the Difference between the Mean Ratings of Male and Female Principals on Ways Instructional Supervision can be Carried Out for Transformative Learning in Secondary Schools in Rivers State

Status	N	\bar{X}	SD	Df	z-cal	Critical Value	Remarks	Decision
Male Lecturers	77	2.88	0.82	127	-0.18	±1.96		

				Not Significant	Failed to Reject
Female lecturers	52	2.91	0.99		

P < 0.05

Table 3 reveals the summary of z-test analysis on the difference between the mean responses of male and female principals on ways instructional supervision can be carried out for transformative learning in secondary schools in Rivers State. The result shows that z-calculated value of -0.18 is less than the z-critical value of ± 1.96 . Since the z-calculated value is less than the z-critical value, the null hypothesis failed to reject at 0.05 alpha level. Thus, there is no significant difference between the mean ratings of male and female principals on ways instructional supervision can be carried out for transformative learning in secondary schools in Rivers State.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The finding of this study revealed that ways teachers' professional development can be managed for transformative learning in secondary schools in Rivers State include: workshops, in-service trainings, seminars, continuing education/training programmes, self-directed learning, mentoring and on-the-job-induction training. It was also discovered that the principals are financially constrained to hire resource persons to train teachers and sponsor them for conferences. The finding has implication to educational management in that teachers' ability to deliver instruction effectively depends to a large extent on their professional development and advancement. This is in agreement with Olaleye (2013); Adieme, et al. (2015), who observed that teachers' professional development should be considered an important prerequisite for coping with a continuous stream of changes in the education sector. It is also in line with Ngala and Odebero (2013), who discovered that professional development programmes help teachers to learn how best to re-adjust their teaching skills to the learning needs of their students. The finding also corroborated with the finding of Mei et al. (2022) which revealed the reason teachers in Australia perform well is because school administrators constantly expose teachers to professional programmes that equip them with skills needed to navigate the transformational processes in the classroom.

Another finding of this study revealed that ways instructional supervision can be carried out for transformative learning in secondary schools in Rivers State include: classroom visitation, going through teachers' lesson notes to ensure that the specific objectives meet the three education domain – cognitive, affective and psychomotor; collegial training; checking students' notebooks to ensure teachers' assessment are done properly; encouraging teachers to always surf the Internet to research trendy concepts in education before writing lesson plans; classroom observation and giving feedback to teachers after classroom observation on teaching skills they need to improve on. This implies that supervision of instruction is central to achieving the educational goals and objectives. This finding agrees with Adeyemi (2010); Kitavi (2015), who observed that supervision is a way of training and retraining of teachers on the job for efficiency and effectiveness. It is in consonance with Adieme and

Asuku (2020), who conducted a study on principals' supervisory techniques in secondary schools in Rivers State, and found out they adopt classroom observation, demonstration, workshop, micro-teaching, team teaching, research, conferencing and evaluation techniques to guide teachers through the labyrinths of the teaching-learning process. The finding also supported Saeed and Zyngier's (2012) study, which revealed that by stimulating teachers to use the appropriate pedagogies, students will be actively engaged in the classroom.

CONCLUSION

From the findings of this study, it can be concluded that transformative learning, which brings about change in learners' behaviour that will drive sustainable national transformation depends on the ways principals manage teachers in the education system. Thus, effective teachers are reflections of efficient principals that keep abreast of current trends and developments in education. As the saying goes, "Quality education is a reflection of quality school administrators."

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Rivers State Government should either pay or subsidize professional development fees for teachers in order to encourage them to constantly upgrade themselves to the evolving approaches to transformational learning in this digital era.
2. Principals should learn how to effectively manage their administrative tasks so as to create enough time for instructional supervision, which is central to qualitative education.

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