An Evaluation of the National Teachers Institute’s Manpower Training Program for Teaching Personnel in Mid-western Nigeria

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This study evaluated the manpower-training program for teaching personnel in Mid-western Nigeria by the National Teachers Institute. Overall 240 participants involved in the training program who were randomly selected from the area constituted the sample for the study. A questionnaire designed by the authors was the major instrument used for data gathering. The analyses of the results obtained showed that the programs are fairly effective in upgrading the skills and knowledge of the participants. It was also discovered that the programs have impacted on the level of performance of the participants in the area. It was recommended inter alia that the institute should be adequately funded to enable it achieve its mandate to the fullest. Since the programs are considered relevant to the training needs of the participants, it would be proper to do everything humanly possible to consolidate the gains of the programs.

National Teacher Institute Manpower Training Program, Mid-western Nigeria, questionnaire

INTRODUCTION

Every educational system in any known human society requires highly skilled teaching personnel to sustain it. This explains why the teachers are regarded as the most important element in the school system. It is generally believed that no educational system can rise above the quality of its teachers. Hence training is often organised for teachers to upgrade and update their knowledge and skills. In Nigeria the need for well qualified teachers has gained pre-eminence because it is considered as a means of not only providing them with the necessary skills and knowledge needed to help educate those who could not gain admission into the regular programs but also those who are unwilling to leave their jobs for full-time education and training programs (Imhabekhai, 1998).

Training is conceived as an organised procedure by which people learn and acquire knowledge and skills for a definite purpose (Oyitso, 1997). Nwanchukwu (1990) also sees training as the process of increasing human efficiency through which people are offered the opportunity to acquire new skills and current knowledge required in carrying out various specialised tasks in their place of work. Training and retraining are necessary if efficiency and profits are to be attained. When people are offered training, they acquire new and improved skills and knowledge that will enable them to perform better thereby enhancing their level of productivity. Training and retraining for teachers therefore, is capable of enhancing their level of performance and also enabling them to cope with the ever-increasing challenges of educating the mass of the people in the country (Woghiren, 1997).
Since the early 1980s the Nigerian education system has witnessed an unprecedented increase in population. The major challenge that has continued to agitate the minds of educational planners, administrators and the government has been how best to cope with the increasing population of students as well as provide well-qualified teaching personnel that would help empower the individual students through the acquisition of knowledge and skills and would enable them to participate fully and actively in nation building (Imhabekhai, 1999/2000). It was in response to this challenge that the Federal Government in 1976 through Act No.7 established the National Teachers Institute (2001, 2002). The enabling Act mandated the institute to *inter alia*:

- provide refresher and upgrading courses for teaching personnel;
- organise workshops, seminars and conferences;
- conduct examinations;
- carry out research; and
- formulate policies and initiate programs that would lead to the improvement in the quality and content of education in the country.

The overall goal of the institute therefore, was to uplift the quality and quantity of teaching personnel in Nigeria through training and retraining programs (Omoruyi, 2001). The institution was thus expected to provide courses of instruction leading to the development, upgrading and certification of teachers as specified in the relevant syllabus using a distance education approach or technique. The Institute’s distance learning programs cover the entire country and are managed through field centres located in each of the 36 states including the Federal Capital Territory. The headquarters is located in Kaduna. The policies and guidelines of operation are issued from the headquarters.

In pursuance of its mandate, the Institute has initiated training and training programs for helping unqualified primary school teachers and also refresher courses in the teacher training colleges. Recently, the Institute also embarked on the Nigeria Certificate in Education (NCE) program through a Distance Learning System (DLS). The Institute also provides training for the Pivotal Teachers Training Program (PTTP) by means of a distance learning system. The PTTP was introduced in 2002 as a means of producing teachers to fill the gap in teacher supply for the newly introduced Universal Basic Education (UNBE) program of the Federal Government.

In Mid-western Nigeria, the Institute has its study centres located in some secondary schools in the area. The schemes have been in operation in the area since 1987 apart from the Pivotal Teachers Training Program, which commenced in 2002. Many teachers have been encouraged to take advantage of the opportunity offered by the Institute to upgrade and update their skills. In spite of this, it has been observed that many teachers in Mid-western Nigeria are yet to benefit from those programs provided by the National Teachers Institute.

This study was therefore inspired by the desire to determine how effective the training program had been in helping to uplift the quality and quantity of teaching personnel in Mid-western Nigeria. In view of the above, this study was designed with the following objectives:

a) to determine if the activities of the institution or training programs offered were relevant to the teaching manpower needs of the area;

b) to find out if the Institute encounters any constraints in seeking to realise its objectives;

c) to ascertain if the programs provided are effective; and

d) to ascertain if the programs have impacted on the performance of teachers in the area.

Based on the focus of the study the following research questions were raised to guide the study.
1. Are the NTI training programs relevant to the teaching manpower needs of mid-western Nigeria?

2. What are the major constraints to the Institute's efforts in seeking to realise its mandate?

3. How effective are the Institute's program?

4. Is there any relationship between the training programs provided by the Institute and teachers level of performance?

**METHODOLOGY**

The population for this study comprised participants in the National Teachers Institute manpower training programs in Mid-western Nigeria.

The sample for the study comprised 240 participants selected from the Institute's Nigeria Certificate in Education (NCE), the teacher Training Grade Two Certificate (TCII) and the Pivotal Teacher Training Program (PTTP). The breakdown shows that 80 participants each are in the final year of their training across the three programs. The sample size was selected using a simple random sampling procedure. The choice of this group of participants was based on the fact that they have spent some time in the program and so are in a position to assess the program as well as ascertain its impact on them as teachers.

The instrument used for data collection was a questionnaire designed by the researchers. Some colleagues in the Faculty of Education who were experienced in the construction of research instruments helped to validate the questionnaire. As a result of the input of the experts, some items were added while a few others were restructured. The respondents were required in some cases to indicate the extent to which they agree or disagree with the items, while some other items required a dichotomous response, that is, stating either 'yes' or 'no'. The reliability of the questionnaire was established using test-retest procedure with a three-week interval. A coefficient of 0.65 was obtained using Pearson product moment formula to analyse the responses obtained. Data collected were analysed using simple percentage, mean score and chi-square statistics.

**RESULTS**

The analysis in Table 1 above indicates that 40 or 17 per cent of the respondents stated that the programs are highly relevant to the training needs of their states, while 200 or 83 per cent of the respondents agreed that the programs were relevant to the training needs of their states. This shows that the training programs offered by the Institute are considered relevant to the needs of the area under study.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Options</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Highly relevant</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>16.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relevant</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>83.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Relevant</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>240</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The analysis presented in Table 2 above reveals that all the variables analysed except one met the mean score standard of 2.50. They were therefore considered as major constraints to the Institute’s training programs. The ranking of the responses shows that inadequate finance is considered a crucial constraint as it is ranked first. This is closely followed by Unconducive learning environment, which ranked second. Next is lack of library facilities, which ranked third. This is followed by inadequate teaching and learning materials (ranking fourth), lack of laboratory equipment (ranking fifth), and the problem of accommodation, which is ranked sixth. Only the
issue relating to the problem of accommodation was not considered a problem of the Institute’s training program.

**Table 2. Mean score Distribution on the constraints of the programs**
**(Criterion mean score 2.50, N = 240)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Mean Score</th>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Remark</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Inadequate finance</td>
<td>3.85</td>
<td>1st</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problem of Accommodation</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>6th</td>
<td>Not accepted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inadequate teaching/learning materials</td>
<td>3.50</td>
<td>4th</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of laboratory equipment</td>
<td>3.05</td>
<td>5th</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of library facilities</td>
<td>3.60</td>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unconducive learning environment</td>
<td>3.80</td>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results in Table 3 show that 20 of the respondents representing 8 per cent of the respondents indicated that the programs are highly effective. Thirty or 13 per cent of the respondents are of the view that the programs are moderately effective. One hundred and fifty or 63 per cent of the respondents were of the opinion that the programs are fairly effective. Only 40 or 17 per cent of the respondents agreed that the programs are not effective. It is obvious that the programs are considered fairly effective in meeting its mandate to the people within the area under focus.

**Table 3. Data on the level of Effectiveness of the Programs**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Options</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Highly effective</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>8.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderately effective</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>12.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fairly effective</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>62.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not effective</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>16.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>240</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From Table 4 it can be seen that the computed chi-square value of 52.5 is greater than the tabled value of 5.99 at 0.05 alpha level with 2 degrees of freedom. This implies that there is relationship between the training provided and the level of performance of the beneficiaries. In other words, those sampled from the various programs agreed that the program has impacted on their level of performances as teachers.

**Table 4. Chi-square Distribution of the relationship between Training and Teacher Performance**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Options</th>
<th>TC.II</th>
<th>N.C.E</th>
<th>PTTP</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>X²</th>
<th>Crit.X²</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>40(53.33)</td>
<td>70(53.33)</td>
<td>50(53.33)</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>52.2</td>
<td>5.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>40(26.70)</td>
<td>10(26.67)</td>
<td>30(26.67)</td>
<td>80</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>240</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Significant at P<0.05

**DISCUSSION OF RESULTS**

The analysis of the results obtained show that the training programs provided by the NTI are relevant to needs of the area under investigation. This is not surprising since the training programs are based on the existing curriculum designed for the training of the teaching personnel in mid-western states in particular and the country at large. Besides, the Institute provides a program within the confines of the mandate given to it. However, it was also found that the Institute is faced with a number of constraints, which has limited its operations and made it difficult for it to achieve fully its objectives. Little wonder therefore, that the respondents indicated that it is yet to effectively achieve its goals. The Institute over the years has had to depend entirely on existing secondary school structures and facilities for its various programs. The state of these structures and facilities are better imagined than described. Many are in a state of disrepair. This clearly explains why the people consider the environment quite unconducive for learning. The greatest problem faced by the Institute is inadequate funding or finance coupled with lack of library
facilities and inadequate teaching/learning materials. This probably accounts for the limitations to the effectiveness of the Institute’s training program.

The results of the analysis of the responses obtained on the relationship between training programs and the level of performance of the teachers or beneficiaries show that the programs have impacted on the level of performance of the teachers. This probably might be responsible for the high interest of teachers in the programs. The level of participation has continued to increase over the years. Another reason may be based on the fact that the Institute adopts distance-learning approach, which enables the Institute to reach out to very many of the teachers irrespective of where they reside.

**CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION**

In the light of the above discussion, it is clear that the National Teachers' Institute has done fairly well in pursuing the mandate given to it. The level of performance has undoubtedly been hampered by a number of problems among which are inadequate funding and unconducive learning environment.

On the basis of the findings of the study reported here, it is recommended that the Institute should be adequately funded. In other words, more funds should be made available to the Institute to enable it purchase the needed learning and teaching materials and other facilities that would make for effective teaching and learning.

Efforts should be made to consolidate the success achieved so far. More teachers should be encouraged to enlist in the program as a means of raising the revenue base of the Institute for its programs.

**REFERENCES**


