TEACHERS' ASSESSMENT OF THE AVAILABILITY AND USE OF INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS FOR THE TEACHING OF VOCATIONAL SUBJECTS

ADETAYO JANET OYEBOLA

Department of Curriculum Studies and Instructional Technology,
Olabisi Onabanjo University, Ago-Iwoye

ABSTRACT

This study was conducted to assess the availability and utilization of instructional materials for the teaching of vocational subjects in secondary schools. The study adopted a survey design. A total of four hundred vocational subjects teachers drawn from two Local Government Areas of Ogun State were used for the study. The results of the study revealed that most of the listed instructional materials are not available in schools and where they are available they are not in good conditions. However, the study also revealed that there is a significant difference in the usage of the available instructional materials according to teachers' qualifications. The paper however emphasized the need to ensure immediate supply of necessary teaching facilities into the schools if the aim of making the students self-reliant is to be achieved in the country.

INTRODUCTION

The importance of teacher in the success of any educational programme has been well articulated in the National Policy on Education (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2004). The successful implementation of any programme depends mostly on the teachers as well. Tsui (1998) says, "What teachers know and can do is the most important influence on what students learn", and "recruiting, preparing and retaining good teachers is the central strategy for improving our schools. In general, a teacher imparts knowledge to a student and thereby effects changes in the students. The teacher is therefore one of the most crucial variables in the teaching-learning process, the teacher is meant to help a child acquire new knowledge, attitudes, values and materials (Labo-Popoola, 2003).

Vocational education according to Alebiosu and Akintayo (2006) provides one a specific skill and knowledge to perform a particular activity. The learner is exposed to skills, knowledge and value system that are specifically for occupational requirements for a particular type of job. However, Adeyeye (2000), Fadele (1999) and Ojo-Ajibare (2000), submitted that vocational education should not only be seen in terms of acquisition of specific skills, but should also inculcate in the learners the acquisition of general skills and knowledge necessary to function within and outside the organization. Ayantunji (1999) contends that since vocational education often fostered self-reliance among the participants, it should be reflected in the implementation of the National Policy of Education in Nigeria. Omolewa (2001) advocates for functional vocational education, which he described as work-oriented education. Considering the burden of unemployment on industrial growth of a nation, especially Nigeria, the issue of vocational education, which emphasizes skill development and work-oriented training, needs be emphasized in the National Policy of Education. This will definitely promote employment generation without reliance on white-collar job among the educated population in Nigeria.

The effective teaching of vocational subjects in secondary school will definitely improve the learner's immediate acquisition and varied instructional materials in the teaching-learning process becomes a necessary tool for effective learning. It calls for the application of the sense of sight, smell, taste, hearing and feeling. It has become very pertinent that practicing teachers should place much emphasis on proper preparation and application of appropriate instructional materials. Instructional aids are materials and equipments, which are used effectively for communication with the aim of facilitating teaching and learning (Alebiosu, 2003). According to her, when utilized, they assist the teacher to disseminate knowledge and at the same time, they enrich teaching and learning activities.

Experience has shown, however, that little equipment and tools seen in school is nothing to write home about and those teachers often use the cardboard as the only teaching aid in the classroom. Despite the relevance of instructional materials, the schools and government find it difficult to purchase the sophisticated materials even produced in some of the industries in Nigeria (Ibe, 1992).

Fabayo (1998) and Ogunniyi (1996) revealed that the low level of students' academic performance is related to the decline in the availability of teaching resources in our schools. Oloyede (2003) citing Ogunniyi (1996) submitted that school-related factors have being associated with performance of students in Nigeria. According to him, factors that influence academic performance include poor physical environment, shortage of

personnel and learning facilities and poor quality of teaching. Other factors identified by Farombi (1998) are overcrowded classrooms, laboratories, inadequate instructional materials and poor library facilities.

The ultimate goal of any instructional activity is to facilitate effective teaching and meaningful learning. The teacher is responsible for the translation and implementation of educational policies, curriculum, instructional material package and assessment of school outcomes. It is therefore certain that no curriculum can achieve the desired result unless the teachers who implement it are appropriately trained and properly initiated into it development. The teacher's major responsibility is to produce changes in the students in his learning. The degree to which the changes have been effected can be determined by making regular assessment of what behaviour the learners have acquired (Hassan, 1998). Classroom assessment then, provides information that informs the making of certain conclusions or judgments about the learning process. Information from classroom assessment help the students to attain optimal learning, as well as the teacher to assess teaching effectiveness and to adapt teaching to students' needs (Erinosho and Badru, 2000).

The impact of Instructional materials and the possible revolution explains why Eko (2002) states that instructional strategy is a step-wise process by which a teacher communicates the content of instruction to learner in order to ensure a goal-directed teaching process which will lead to the attainment of set-out objectives. It therefore become imperatives that teachers who are faced with the challenge to be creative would go all out to plan and think of what to treat and the materials to use in order to enhance effective teaching in the classroom. In lieu of the submission above this study set out to ascertained teachers' assessment of the availability and usage of instructional materials in the teaching of vocational subjects (e.g. Book-keeping/Accounting, Shorthand, Typewriting, Business Law, Elementary Business, Office Practice and Economics etc).

Research Questions

1. Are the listed instructional materials available in the selected schools for the teaching of vocational subjects?
2. What ratings do teachers give to the conditions of the available instructional materials?
3. Is there any significant difference between the scores on the uses of instructional materials scales according to teachers' qualifications?

Methodology

This study employed the descriptive survey research design. The population for this study comprised of all the five hundred vocational subjects teachers in Abeokuta South Local Government Area and Ijebu-North Local Government Area of Ogun state. The sample consisted of four hundred teachers selected through simple random sampling technique, out of all the teachers teaching vocational subjects in all the secondary schools in the two local government areas.

The only instrument for data collection in this study was the researchers' self-developed and validated checklist titled "Instructional Materials Assessment Checklist" (IMAC). The IMAC has two sections. Section A consists of respondent's personal data while section B consists of list of instructional materials to which the teachers were asked to indicate the numbers available, condition and the extent of usage in the teaching learning process in schools. Two experts in the area of questionnaire design and construction in the department of curriculum studies and instructional technology of Olabisi Onabanjo University were given the drafts of the checklist for the purpose of scrutinizing it to ensure its face and content validity. Later the final draft was trial-tested on a sample of twenty teachers from four schools that were not part of the selected teachers and schools. A reliability co efficient of 0.72 using the split half reliability method was obtained. The researcher personally administered the checklist on the respondents.

Data collected were analyzed using frequency counts and simple percentage for research questions one and two while Analysis of variance (ANOVA) test at 0.05 significant level was used to answer research question three and a post hoc test was carried out to detect the direction of observed significance.

Results and Discussion

Question 1: Are the listed instructional materials available in the selected schools for the teaching of vocational subjects?

Table 1: Percentage Distribution of Instructional Materials available in Schools

Materials	Available		Not Available	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
1. Charts	350	87.5	50	12.5
2. Photographs	300	75	100	25
3. Posters	320	80	80	20
4. Real Objects	300	75	100	25

5. Pictures	320	80	80	20
6. Typewriter	120	30	280	70
7. Portable Chalkboard	160	40	240	60
8. Computer	120	30	280	70

The result in table 1 revealed the percentage distribution of the respondents' frequency to the question on availability of instructional materials in schools. According to the table, out of the listed seventeen (17) instructional materials, only eight (8) were indicated to be available. Only five (charts, photographs, posters, real objects, and pictures) seems to be adequately available in schools while typewriter, portable chalkboard and computer are not adequately available. Thus, only five instructional materials are adequately available in schools for teaching vocational subjects. While these instructional materials (Photocopy machine, stop watches, dictating machine, film projector, television, video compact disc, etc.) were said not to be available at all in the selected schools

Question 2: What ratings do teachers give to the conditions of the available instructional materials?

Table 2: Teachers' Ratings of the conditions of Instructional Materials

Materials	CONDITIONS					
	Good		Fair		Bad	
	Number	Percent.	Number	Percent.	Number	Percent
1. Charts	50	12.5	110	27.5	190	60
2. Photographs	40	10	50	12.5	210	77.5
3. Posters	94	23.5	66	16.5	160	40
4. Real Objects	100	25	60	15	140	35
5. Pictures	50	12.5	70	17.5	200	50
6. Typewriter	30	7.5	30	7.5	60	15
7. Portable Chalkboard	30	7.5	20	5	110	27.5
8. Computer	20	5	40	10	60	15

The result in table 2 revealed the percentage distribution of the teachers' ratings of the conditions of the available instructional materials in their schools. It is pitiable to note that none of the available instructional material recorded good rating by the teachers. This indicates that the materials in schools are all in bad conditions and are not readily available for use by the teachers. The result of this study corroborates that of Oloyede (2003) and Oludipe (2006) that most of the secondary schools are ill-equipped in terms of instructional materials and that the conditions of the available materials are appauling.

The instructional materials that are supposed to provide students with vocational skills according to him however are not functioning and most of the equipment had rotten as a result of lack of use.

Question 3: Is there any significant difference between the scores on the uses of instructional materials scale according to teachers' qualifications?

Table 3: Difference in Teachers' Usage of Instructional Materials according to Qualifications.

Qualifications	N	Mean	S.D.	df	F	Sig.
OND/HND	62	7.68	5.08	6	21.136	0.000*
NCE	104	9.96	6.08	326		
BED	146	12.28	6.56			
MED	22	18.9	6.48			
Total	334	11.14	6.66	332	*Significant. at .05 level	

The result in table 3 revealed a significant outcome ($F=21.14$, $p<0.05$). This means that the observed difference between pairs of teachers' qualifications on the usage of instructional materials scale is statistically significant. Hence the teachers' use of the available instructional materials depended significantly on their qualifications.

To detect the direction of the significance observed above, a post hoc analysis was carried out. The summary is given in the table below.

Table 4: Scheffe Post Hoc Test of Teachers' Usage of Instructional Materials Scores

Qualification	Mean	OND/HND	NCE	BED	MED
OND/HND	7.68			*	*
NCE	9.96				*
BED	12.28	*			
MED	18.9	*	*		

The result in table 4 revealed that the pairs of OND/HND and B.ED holders as well as OND/HND and M.ED holders and NCE and M.ED holders account for the observed significant difference in table 3 only. The other pairs of qualifications do not differ significantly.

The observed significant difference on the usage of instructional materials by teachers' qualification is unexpected because the categories of teachers have adequate knowledge of the importance of the materials and possessed the skills required to put such resources into productive use (Oludipe, 2006; Nwosu, 2000). From the findings, it can be concluded that there is dearth of instructional materials in schools and that where they are available the condition is deplorable and also that the teachers most often than not do not put the available one into effective use in the teaching learning process. It is therefore recommended that most secondary schools urgently need quality instructional facilities for effective teaching and learning in order to improve productivity of teachers. Parents need to improve on their financial support for the school system so as to enable the administrator purchase available instructional materials needed by them without having to wait endlessly for the government. And also, teachers should be encourage in the use of the available instructional materials while workshop can also be organized for them to remind and make them to be alive to their responsibility in facilitating impartation of knowledge. Therefore, the Government needs to give urgent attention to the provision of instructional materials into the school system if the purpose of education for self-reliance is to be achieved in the country.

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