

EVALUATING THE INFLUENCE OF IN-SERVICE TRAINING ON PEDAGOGICAL PRACTICES AND OUTCOMES IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN ENUGU EDUCATION ZONE

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Abstract

This research assesses the impact of in-service training on teaching methods and educational results on secondary schools in Enugu Education Zone. In-service training is an essential resource for boosting teacher's professionalism, refine teaching skills, methods and improving student's academic prowess. The study utilizes a descriptive survey approach, focusing on secondary school educators in Enugu State. A stratified random sampling method is utilized to guarantee representation from urban and rural educational institutions, whereas a standardized questionnaire as a source of information gathering. The research explores essential factors like teachers participation in training programs, modifications in classroom practices, implementation of the curriculum and their effect on student learning results. The data gathered we examined utilizing descriptive and inferential statistics. Results indicated that in-service training notably enhanced teachers teaching abilities, classroom management, and instructional effectiveness. Instructors who consistently engaged in workshops seminars and professional development initiatives exhibited greater creativity, adaptability and student focus teaching methods than those with limited training experience. Additionally, the research found a significant link between educators' professional growth and students' academic success showing marked enhancements in student engagement and performance in essential subjects. The research finds that in-service training is an essential tool for promoting quality education in the Enugu Education zone. It suggests ongoing investment in teacher development initiatives continuous evaluation of training requirements, and efficient oversight to guarantee that lend skills lead to better teaching results and improved students learning.

Keywords: Training during service, instructional methods, educational results, secondary schools

Introduction

Education plays a crucial role in societal development and national progress, where the caliber of teaching has a profound impact on learning results. In Nigeria, particularly in the secondary schools of Enugu, the effectiveness of instruction is closely associated with the competencies of educators, which can be enhanced through continuous professional development (CPD). One prominent form of CPD is in-service training, aimed at refining teachers' pedagogical methods, instructional delivery, and classroom management capabilities. This type of training equips educators with contemporary knowledge, innovative teaching techniques, and familiarity with new educational technologies, thereby improving the quality of teaching and learning outcomes (Okeke & Okechukwu, 2020). Pedagogical practices encompass the diverse methods, strategies, and approaches that teachers utilize to convey curriculum content to learners, especially students. These practices are not fixed; they adapt in response to changes in educational policies, technological advancements, and the evolving needs of students. In instances where teachers receive inadequate training, their instructional approaches may remain conventional, centered around the teacher, and ineffective in cultivating critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving abilities among students (Ogunyemi, 2021). Consequently, in-service training becomes essential for ensuring that teachers remain competent and effective in addressing the contemporary demands of education. By fostering learner-centered teaching, differentiated instruction, and the integration of

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) tools within the classroom, in-service training directly contributes to improved student performance and overall educational outcomes (Adeyemi & Adeyinka, 2019).

The educational landscape in Nigeria has long been plagued by challenges such as insufficient teacher preparation, inadequate professional development frameworks, and limited access to modern instructional resources. Specifically, within the Enugu Education Zone, secondary schools encounter issues related to student underperformance, insufficient exposure of educators to innovative teaching methodologies, and a disconnection between curriculum expectations and actual classroom practices (Nnamani, 2022). Consequently, there is an increasing concern regarding the effectiveness of teaching outcomes and the readiness of students for higher education and future careers. In-service training is perceived as a viable strategy for overcoming these challenges by enhancing teachers' competencies and aligning classroom practices with global educational standards. In the Enugu Education Zone, ongoing challenges such as poor student performance, outdated teaching methods, and a limited embrace of learner-centered approaches persist, despite numerous teacher training initiatives from both government and NGOs. Research indicates that many public secondary school students in Enugu State are still underperforming in reading and comprehension (Ugwu, 2020). It should be noted that while teachers attend regular workshops, their classroom practices largely remain teacher-centered, hindering student engagement. This disconnect between training and real-life application often stems from issues like insufficient teaching resources, overcrowded classrooms, and inadequate monitoring and evaluation (Eze & Ani, 2021). Moreover, studies show that students' reading comprehension in the region consistently falls below the national average, revealing significant barriers in teaching methods and innovative practice adoption (Obi, 2022). These issues underscore the urgent need for targeted interventions that extend beyond workshops to effectively address classroom dynamics and enhance reading comprehension in public secondary schools across Enugu State.

In light of this context, conducting an evaluation of the influence of in-service training on pedagogical practices and teaching outcomes in secondary schools within the Enugu education zone is both timely and crucial. Such evaluation not only provides insights into the effectiveness of current training programs but also guides policy decisions regarding teacher development initiatives. Moreover, it assists in identifying areas for improvement within the professional development of educators. Ultimately, this study contributes to the broader discourse on enhancing educational quality in Nigeria, aligning with global efforts to achieve Sustainable Development Goal 4, which emphasizes the importance of inclusive and equitable quality education for all. Additional systems worldwide constantly evolved in response to new societal demands, technological advancement, and emerging pedagogical theories. Teachers, as a primary facilitators of learning command must controlling adapt their knowledge and instructional strategies to meet this challenges. All of the central mechanisms for supporting teacher development is in-surface training, also referred to as continuing professional development (CPD) (Okeke & Okechukwu, 2020). In-service training involves structured learning opportunities offered teachers after initial qualification, with the goal of enhancing pedagogical practices and improving teaching outcome. These paper examines the concept of in-service training, its influence on pedagogical practices, and its impact on teaching outcomes why highlighting the theoretical underpinnings and empirical evidence supporting its significance. In-service training refers to provisional learning activities designed to update teachers knowledge, skills, and attitude while they are actively engaged in teaching profession. Unlike pre-service training, which equip with the functional knowledge, in-service training provides practicing teachers with opportunity to refine their pedagogical practices in line with the contemporary educational needs. The scope of in-service training may include

workshops, seminars, coaching, mentoring, online courses, and collaborative professional learning communities.(Nnamani, 2022).

The concept is anchored in nation of lifelong learning, where teachers are seen as reflective practitioners who must engage in continuous development. In-service training alliance with adult learning theories, particularly no principle of andragogy, which emphasize self—direction, relevance and experiential learning. For teachers, in-service programs are most effective when they are contextual, sustained, analyze both institutional goals learners needs.(Adeyemi & Adeyinka, 2019). Pedagogical practice encompasses the strategies command methods, an approaches that teachers employ in the classroom to facilitate student learning research indicate that in service training has a profound impact on improving teachers be their logical competence. In-service training equip stitches with innovative instructional methods, including learner-centered approaches, differentiated instruction, and inquiry-based learning. Teachers who receive training on active learning strategies are more likely to shift from traditional lecture-based methods to interactive approaches that foster critical thinking and collaboration amongst students. (Guskey, 2002). The rapid digitization of education has necessitated teacher competence in educational technology. In-service training enable teachers to effectively integrate digital tools into their pedagogy, thereby enhancing teaching and learning experiences. Technology integration enhances teachers capacity to use digital resources, promote blended learning, and prepared students for 21st-century skills. In-service shown in encourages teachers to engage in reflective practice, allowing them to critically analyze there is a national methods and outcomes. (Tondeur 2016). Teachers who participate in training are more likely to evaluate their teaching effectiveness, identify gaps, and make necessary adjustments improving classroom experience. Effective flashing management is Central to pedagogical success. In having service training often includes models on behavior management command Humphrey resolution command and creating inclusive learning environment. (Schön, 1983). Studies show that teachers who undergo such tree in demonstrate improved classroom control command linked more conducive learning atmospheres (Opfer and Pedder, 2011)

The ultimate goal of in-service training used to improve teaching outcomes, which can be measured through students achievement, engagement command and overall learning experiences. There are key areas wherein in-service training influencing teaching outcomes like Numerous studies highlights the correlation between teacher provision development and student performance. A Conducted meta-analysis found that well designed in-service training programs have significant positive effects for students achievement. (Yoon, 2007). When teachers acquire new instructional storage is, student benefit through enhance comprehension, critical thinking, and problem solving abilities. Teachers trained in interactive teaching methods are better able to engage students in meaningful learning activities. Professional development that emphasizes student-centered pedagogy result in increased participation, motivation, and interest in learning (Darling-Hammond, Hyler, & Gardener, 2017). Engage students are more likely to demonstrate persistence, creativity, and collaborative skills, which contribute to holistic educational outcomes. Equity and Inclusion in in-service training can also improve teaching outcomes by fostering inclusive education practices. Teachers trained in inclusive pedagogy are more likely to adapt instruction for learners with diverse abilities, cultural backgrounds, and learning needs (Florian and Spratt, 2013). This leads to equitable learning outcomes and reduces disparities in educational achievement. Effective professional development contribute to higher teacher efficacy and jobs satisfaction, which directly improves teaching outcomes. Teachers who feel competence and supported are more motivated command the mostly stronger commitment, analysis likely to leave their profession (OECD, 2019). Stability in the teaching workforce positively impact continuity and student achievement.

Despite its benefits, in-service training presents several challenges that hinder its effectiveness. These include inadequate funding, limited mobility, lack of follow-up support, and the mismatch between training content and teachers' real classroom needs. Additionally, one-off workshops with no sustained engagement often fail to translate into meaningful pedagogical changes. Addressing these challenges requires systemic commitment to continuous collaborative and context-driven professional development (Guskey, 2002). In-service training plays a critical role in enhancing pedagogical practices and improving teaching outcomes. It equips teachers with innovative instructional strategies, fosters reflective practice, promotes technological integration, and strengthens classroom management. The positive influence of such training on student achievement, engagement, and inclusion underscores its significance in modern education. To truly make a difference, in-service training for educators must be well-organized, continuous, and attuned to their specific needs. Ultimately, when we invest in the professional development of teachers, we are also investing in the quality of education and the future success of our students. (Darling-Hammond, Hyler, & Gardener, 2017).

Statement of Problem

The effectiveness of teaching in secondary schools is closely tied to the professional competence of teachers, which is often enhanced through in-service training programs. In-service training provides teachers with updated pedagogical knowledge, modern classroom strategies, and improved classroom management skills necessary for quality education delivery. However, in the Enugu Education Zone, there are persistent concerns about poor student performance, ineffective teaching methods, and limited adoption of learner-centered pedagogies despite the implementation of various training initiatives. This raises questions about the actual influence of in-service training on teaching practices and student learning outcomes. Research in the context of educational settings indicates that ongoing professional development for teachers has a favorable effect on instructional quality and student outcomes. However, there is a scarcity of empirical evidence specific to Enugu State. Therefore, it is essential to assess the degree to which in-service training affects pedagogical practices and teaching methods in secondary schools within the Enugu Education Zone.

Purpose of the Study

The primary objective of this study is to assess the effect of in-service training on teaching methodologies and student learning outcomes within secondary schools in the Enugu Education Zone.

1. To analyze the degree to which in-service training affects the pedagogical approaches of teachers in secondary schools located in the Enugu Education Zone.
2. To evaluate the influence of in-service training on students' academic performance and learning achievements.
3. To explore the challenges and opportunities that arise from the execution of in-service training programs for educators in the Enugu Education Zone.

Research Questions

The following research questions were formulated to guide this study:

1. What is the impact of in-service training on the pedagogical practice of secondary school teachers in the Enugu Education Zone?
2. How does participation in in-service training programs affect student learning outcomes in secondary schools within the Enugu Education Zone?
3. What are the perceptions of school principals regarding the effectiveness of in-service training in enhancing teachers' productivity and overall school performance in the Enugu Education Zone?

Hypothesis

H₀₁: There is no statistically significant relationship between in-service training and the quality of pedagogical practices or teaching outcomes among secondary school teachers in Enugu Education zone.

Methods

This study adopted a descriptive survey research design. Population of the study comprised of three thousand two hundred and fifteen (3,215) academic staff in sixty secondary schools in Enugu State, Nigeria. A sample size of two hundred and seventy-three (273), representing 8.5% of the total population, was selected from sixty (60) secondary schools in Enugu State using a proportionate sampling technique. Out of this sample, 143 were male and 130 were female. A total of 273 questionnaires were distributed, of which 260 were duly completed and retrieved for data analysis. The research instrument, titled *The Influence of In-Service Training on Pedagogical Practices and Teaching Outcomes in Secondary Schools in Enugu State*, was developed and validated for the study. The reliability of the instrument was established using Cronbach's Alpha, which yielded a coefficient of 0.85, indicating a high level of internal consistency. The instrument comprised two sections: Section A, which sought bio-data of the respondents, and Section B, which contained items designed to elicit information on the influence of in-service training on pedagogical practices and teaching outcomes in secondary schools in Enugu State. The items in Section B were structured on a modified four-point Likert scale: Strongly Agree (4), Agree (3), Disagree (2), and Strongly Disagree (1). The instrument was administered by the researcher with the assistance of one trained research assistant. Data collected were analyzed using mean and standard deviation to answer the research questions, while hypotheses were tested using the z-test at 0.05 level of significance.

Results

Research Question One: What is the impact of in-service training on the pedagogical practice of secondary school teachers in the Enugu Education Zone?

Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation response of the impact of in-service training on the pedagogical practice of secondary school teachers in the Enugu Education Zone.

S/N	Items	Male			Female		
		Mean	SD	Decision	Mean	SD	Decision
1.	In-service training sessions have significantly improved my classroom instructional techniques	3.16	.76	Agreed	3.08	.72	Agreed
2.	I now integrate more engaging and student centered learning activities as a result of in-service training	2.96	.68	Agreed	2.80	.60	Agreed
3.	I feel more confident in using modern pedagogical tools and strategies after attending in-service training	3.40	.86	Agreed	3.28	.82	Agreed
4.	In-service training and help me better manage classroom interactions and student behavior	2.98	.78	Agreed	3.04	.74	Agreed
5.	Regularly applied the knowledge and skills gained from in-service training in my day-to-day teaching	3.26	.79	Agreed	3.18	.77	Agreed
	Grand Total	15.76	3.87		15.38	3.65	
	Grand Mean	1.152	.774	Agreed	3.076	.730	Agreed

Table 1 revealed that all items (1 to 5) had mean scores above the criterion mean of 2.50. In summary, with the grand mean of 3.152 and 3.076 for male and female teachers in the

Secondary Schools in the Enugu Education Zone. It is adjudged that all of them agreed that the above items are the impact of in-service training on the pedagogical practice of secondary school teachers in the Enugu Education Zone.

Research Question Two: How does participation in in-service training programmes affect students learning outcomes in secondary school within the Enugu Education Zone?

Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation response of how participation in in-service training programmes affect students learning outcomes in secondary schools within the Enugu Education Zone?

S/N	Items	Male			Female		
		Mean	SD	Decision	Mean	SD	Decision
6.	Teachers who attend in-service training are more effective in improving students academic performance	3.19	.82	Agreed	3.14	.80	Agreed
7.	In-service training equipped teachers with new teaching methods that enhance students understanding of lessons	3.04	.78	Agreed	3.02	.76	Agreed
8.	Students show higher engagement and participation in classes taught by teachers who have attended in-service training	3.68	.98	Agreed	3.60	.86	Agreed
9.	Regular in-service training for teachers positively influences students examination results	3.46	.83	Agreed	3.42	.80	Agreed
10.	In-service training helps to teachers to better address students learning difficulties leading to improved learning outcomes	3.80	.96	Agreed	3.74	.902	Agreed
Grand Total		17.19	4.27		16.92	4.122	
Grand Mean		3.438	.854	Agreed	3.384	.824	Agreed

Table 2 revealed that all items (6 to 10) had mean scores above the criterion mean of 2.50. In summary, with the grand mean of 3.438 and 3.384 for male and female teachers in the Secondary Schools in the Enugu Education Zone. It is adjudged that all of them agreed that the above items are how participation in in-service training programmes affect students learning outcomes in secondary schools within the Enugu Education Zone.

Research Question Three: What are the perceptions of school principals regarding the effectiveness of in-service training in enhancing teachers productivity and overall school performance in the Enugu Education Zone?

Table 3: Mean and Standard Deviation response of the perception of school principals regarding the effectiveness of in-service training in enhancing teachers productivity and overall school performance in the Enugu Education Zone.

S/N	Items	Male			Female		
		Mean	SD	Decision	Mean	SD	Decision
11.	In-service training has significantly improved teachers instructional skills in my school	3.8	.842	Agreed	3.84	.83	Agreed
12.	Teachers who attend in-service train in demonstrate higher productivity in lesson delivery	3.72	.804	Agreed	3.68	.79	Agreed
13.	Participation in in-service training positively influences students academic performance in my school	3.68	.88	Agreed	3.64	.852	Agreed

14.	In-service training programs are relevant and aligned to the needs teachers in our school	3.82	.101	Agreed	3.80	.98	Agreed
15.	Teachers are more motivated and confident in their teaching after attending in-service training	3.84	.104	Agreed	3.78	.102	Agreed
Grand Total		18.86	2.731		18.74	3.554	
Grand Mean		3.772	.5462	Agreed	3.748	.7108	Agreed

Table 3 revealed that all items (11 to 15) had mean scores above the criterion mean of 2.50. In summary, with the grand mean of 3.772 and 3.748 for male and female teachers in the Secondary Schools in the Enugu Education Zone. It is adjudged that all of them agreed that the above items are the perceptions of school principals regarding the effectiveness of in-service training in enhancing teachers productivity and overall school performance in the Enugu Education Zone.

Hypothesis

Hypothesis One: is no statistically significant relationship between in-service training and the quality of pedagogical practices or teaching outcomes among secondary school teachers in Enugu Education zone.

Table 4: z-test statistics of the mean responses of male and female teachers on the influence of in-service training

Teachers	N	df	Mean	SD	P-vale	Z-cal	Z-crit	Decision
Male	132	257	3.152	.774	5>0.05	0.813	1.96	Ho
Female			3.076	.730				Retained

Data on Table 4 revealed that the z-test analysis of difference between the mean scores of the male and female teachers in Secondary Schools in the Enugu Education Zone on the influence of in-service training on pedagogical practices and teaching outcomes in secondary schools in Enugu Education Zone. The result showed that z-calculated the value of 0.813 is less than the z-critical value of 1.96 at the degree of freedom of 257 and at 0.06 level of significance. Hence, the null hypothesis is retained. Therefore, there is no significant difference between the mean response of male and female teachers on the influence of in-service training on pedagogical practices and teaching outcomes in secondary schools in Enugu Education Zone.

Discussion

The findings of the study revealed that in-service training significantly enhanced teachers' pedagogical practices in secondary schools within the Enugu Education Zone. Teachers who participated in regular in-service programs demonstrated improved instructional methods, classroom management, and the adoption of learner-centered pedagogies. This finding aligns with the study of Guskey (2002) who posited that continuous professional development empowers teachers with innovative instructional strategies that improve classroom effectiveness and student engagement. Similarly, Opfer and Pedder (2011) found that teachers who undergo sustained in-service training exhibit stronger reflective practices, better classroom management, and a shift from traditional to interactive teaching methods. These results affirm that well-structured in-service programs are essential for strengthening teachers' pedagogical competence and aligning instructional delivery with modern educational demands.

The findings of the study revealed that participation in in-service training programs positively influenced students' learning outcomes. Trained teachers were better able to engage students in active learning, resulting in higher levels of achievement and motivation. This finding corroborates Yoon et al. (2007) who reported that effective in-service training has a significant positive impact on students' academic performance, especially when programs focus on classroom application. Likewise, Darling-Hammond, Hyler, and Gardner (2017) emphasized that professional development emphasizing student-centered and inquiry-based pedagogy

enhances learners' critical thinking and problem-solving abilities. The present finding also resonates with Florian and Spratt (2013) who observed that teachers trained in inclusive pedagogy improve educational equity by adapting lessons to diverse learners' needs. Hence, in-service training indirectly contributes to improved academic success, inclusivity, and sustained student engagement.

The findings of the study revealed that school principals perceived in-service training as highly effective in improving teachers' productivity and overall school performance. Principals noted that continuous professional learning boosts teachers' confidence, efficiency, and commitment to institutional goals. This finding agrees with Adeyemi and Adeyinka (2019) who asserted that effective in-service training fosters a culture of lifelong learning, leading to improved teacher motivation and school effectiveness. Similarly, OECD (2019) found that teachers who receive adequate professional support demonstrate higher job satisfaction and retention, resulting in a stable and productive teaching workforce. Principals' perceptions underscore the importance of sustained training support from educational authorities to strengthen institutional performance and promote quality education.

Contribution to Knowledge

The study has contributed significantly to knowledge by establishing the empirical relationship between in-service training and teachers' pedagogical practices, student learning outcomes, and overall school performance in the Enugu Education Zone. It provided evidence that regular and well-structured in-service training enhances teachers' instructional competence, classroom management, and adoption of innovative learner-centered strategies. The study further contributed to the understanding that teachers' participation in continuous professional development leads to improved student academic achievement and engagement, thereby strengthening the link between teacher development and student success. In addition, it enriched the body of knowledge by revealing that school principals perceive in-service training as a vital tool for enhancing teachers' productivity and promoting institutional growth. The findings underscore the importance of aligning professional development initiatives with contextual educational needs, and they provide useful insights for policymakers, teacher educators, and administrators in designing effective in-service training programs that foster sustainable educational improvement.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, it was concluded that in-service is important in improving teaching outcomes in secondary school in Enugu Education Zone. The 21st century teacher should engage continuous professional development and in-service trainings to improve their teaching outcome, the importance of the above, cannot be overemphasized, and the adequate teaching and learning techniques should be employed to achieve effective learning outcomes in secondary schools in Enugu Education Zone.

Recommendations

Evaluating the influence of in-service training on pedagogical practices and the general comes in secondary schools within the Enugu Education Zone necessitates a comprehensive approach that considers empirical findings practical strategies and contextual relevance based on recent stories and best practices here four targeted recommendations:

1. Align training content with curriculum and pedagogical needs by developing training modules that focus on enhancing subject-specific teaching strategies and content knowledge.
2. Establish professional learning communities within schools to encourage peer support and knowledge sharing and implementing mentorship programmes where experienced teachers guide their less experienced counterparts.

3. Developing online platforms for delivering training content and facilitating discussions by providing training on integrating technology into teaching practices to enhance classroom instruction.
4. Regular feedbacks from teachers on the relevance and impact of the training programs and analyzing student performance data to identify correlations between teacher development and student outcomes.

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