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TEACHER EFFECTIVENESS AMONG FEMALE TEACHERS IN PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN SOUTHWESTERN NIGERIA

by Irete Folasade Alao, PhD

Abstract

This study determined the level of female teachers' effectiveness in primary and secondary schools and specific factors related to the effectiveness of female teachers in southwestern Nigeria. The teacher effectiveness rating scale was used in gathering data on a sample of 2,400 female teachers in selected Nigerian primary and secondary schools. The analysis of data shows that a high percentage (78.3%) of the teachers were effective. More specifically, 81.4% of the primary school female teachers were effective, while 75.1% of the secondary school female teachers were effective. The difference in effectiveness was found to be statistically significant ($t = 4.93$, $p < 0.05$). Workload and multiple role performance were found to have a significant relationship with female teachers' effectiveness ($\chi^2 = 30.49$, $p < 0.05$ and $\chi^2 = 31.52$, $p < 0.05$ respectively), while schedule of duty and status at work had no significant relationship with female teachers' effectiveness ($\chi^2 = 21.37$, $p > 0.05$ and $\chi^2 = 15.49$, $p > 0.05$ respectively). Recommendations were made on improving the effectiveness of female teachers by assigning light teaching periods that would allow attention for other non-teaching duties, as well as development of skills and access to counseling interventions to ameliorate challenges that may affect their performance at work.

1. Introduction

Listen to Irete Alao, Chief Lecturer, Department of Educational Foundations & Counseling, Adeyemi College of Education, Nigeria discuss teacher effectiveness among female teachers in Africa.

Researchers have shown that teacher effectiveness is one of the keys to improve students' educational outcomes. Rivkin, Hanushek & Kain (2002) and Clotfelter, Ladd & Vigdor, (2007) found that effective teachers have significant impact on students' ability to learn. Sanders & Rivers (1996) and Gordon, Kane & Staiger (2006) also found that students who consistently have an effective teacher benefits exponentially from schooling. Alliance for Excellent Education (2008) emphasized the fact that effectiveness, more than any other indicator of teacher quality, is the area in which

policy makers and educators must focus their attention in order to improve students' educational achievement.

Moreover, to achieve the Education For All (EFA) goals and the Millennium Development Goals, researchers have emphasized that attention should be focused on the provision of quality teachers for primary and secondary school education who will be able to teach and equip the students with the opportunities they need to optimize their potentials and contribute to the growth and development of the society and humanity. Presently in Nigeria, the delivery of basic education is more or less in the hands of the female teachers, as statistics from the Federal Ministry of Education (2003) have shown that the percentage of female teachers, especially at the elementary level, is higher than that of the male teachers (female teachers- 53.8%, male teachers- 27.7%). Females have been found to be warm, patient, and meticulous. They have also been found to be affected more emotionally and psychologically than males by situations, events, gender roles and role conflicts, and socio-cultural demands, while also experiencing more professional burnout. Therefore, investigating some of the factors affecting female teachers' effectiveness will go a long way in improving the quality of the majority of teachers who will deliver the nation's educational goals. Such investigation could provide valuable information that could help in a better understanding of the female teachers and enable necessary interventions that could help them perform their professional duties at their best. This will invariably contribute to improving the condition of the educational system in Nigeria.

Since the 1920s, teacher effectiveness has been a focus of research because of its importance and relevance in the measurement of students' achievement at school. Research on teacher effectiveness have focused on various aspects of the subject matter, ranging from indicators of teacher effectiveness to a paradigm of operations and measurement. Ryans (1953) viewed teacher effectiveness as the extent to which the teacher does things, or behaves in ways that are favorable to the development of skills, understandings, work habits, desirable attitudes, and adequate personal adjustment on the part of the pupils and students. He defined the essence of a teacher's role as guiding the learning or development of others, and all other roles and responsibilities of the teacher were considered important only in enhancing this essential function. Campbell, Kyriakides, Muijs & Robinson (2003) defined teacher effectiveness as the power to realize socially valued objectives agreed for teachers' work, especially, but not exclusively, the work concerned with enabling pupils to learn. Studies (Bajunid, 2000; Klette, 2000 and PricewaterhouseCoopers, 2001) have also shown that the significance of teachers' work outside the classroom is also increasing, and that teachers typically spend less than half their working time on classroom instruction, while spending more time on lesson preparation, marking, report writing, curriculum development, and social and welfare tasks of pupils and parents. Empirical studies of teachers' work by Campbell & Neill (1994) and PricewaterhouseCoopers (2001) also showed that teachers typically spend less than half their working time on classroom instruction while the remaining time is occupied by other extra-classroom activities like administrative and clerical tasks, marking, lesson preparation, meetings, report writing, curriculum development, social and welfare tasks with students and parents, school management,

leadership roles, and professional development. It has also being postulated that given the education reforms and the development of modern education systems in various countries, the roles of the teacher should not be limited to cognitive activities; rather, they should include the management of people, relationships, and handling of pastoral and welfare matters in the school system.

In this study, teacher effectiveness refers to the extent to which the teacher performs the professional activities that enable the student to gain the maximum from the school system. This was measured through the teacher's rating on the performance of her professional duties of teaching, classroom management, teacher task responsiveness, feedback to students, respect for students, behavior management skills, and student development.

Studies (Chen & Yang, 2004; Fan, Wang, & Ma, 2004; Hou & Zhang., 1998; Li, 2001; LIU Yu, 2005; Wang & Li, 2002; Zhang, Cao & Miao, 2006 and Zhao, 2006) conducted on female teachers reported that female teachers are a special group of people, who although in the majority, are often not given adequate attention and consideration. In addition, most of them were inclined to lose their enthusiasm for work, had little interest in personal accomplishment, took no pride in their profession, and had a lower efficiency in the work (LIU Yu, 2005).

Few studies have been conducted particularly on female teachers in Nigeria, but deductions have been made on Nigerian female teachers from studies conducted on Nigerian teachers generally with bias in gender. Mallam (2005) in his study of the impact of gender of teacher on students' attitudes toward mathematics found that female students learned mathematics better when they were taught by female teachers. Akiri & Ugborugbo (2009); Ladebo (2005); Ma & Macmillan (1999) and Michaelowa (2002) in their various studies of job satisfaction among Nigerian teachers, revealed that female teachers found their jobs more satisfying than male teachers did. Sargent & Hannum (2003) found that gender does not have a statistically significant relationship with teachers' job satisfaction, though female teachers appeared to be more satisfied with their teaching career. In a study conducted by Ijaiya (2008) on the belief system of 60 principals and vice principals on the productivity of teachers in their schools, it was reported that the majority of them considered experience, graduate, qualified, unmarried, and permanent teachers more productive. Male principals, however, held the view that male teachers were more productive than the females, whom they considered disadvantaged by domestic responsibilities. Researchers agreed that variations in life situations, events, and roles affect females in the society; the extent to which these may affect the effectiveness of female teachers in Nigeria was the focus of this study.

This study therefore set out to;

i) determine the level of effectiveness of female teachers in primary and secondary schools in Southwestern Nigeria

ii) identify the factors that may be related to female teachers' effectiveness

iii) examine differences in the effectiveness of female teachers in primary schools and those in secondary schools.

To meet these goals, the following hypotheses were postulated and tested;

1) There is no significant relationship between female teachers' effectiveness and each of their schedules of duty, work load, multiple role performance, and status at work.

2) There is no significant difference in the effectiveness of female teachers in primary and secondary schools in Southwestern Nigeria.

2. Methodology

The population for the study consisted of married, never married (singles), and unmarried (divorced, separated, widowed) Nigerian female professional teachers in primary and secondary schools in Southwestern Nigeria. All six southwestern states—Lagos, Ogun, Oyo, Osun, Ondo, and Ekiti—participated in the study. The multistage sampling technique was used in the sample selection for this study. Each of the states were divided into three senatorial districts from which one was randomly selected for the study. The senatorial districts selected for the study were Ekiti South, Lagos Central, Ogun Central, Ondo Central, Osun East, and Oyo South. Thereafter, 10 primary and 10 secondary schools were randomly selected in each of the selected senatorial districts. In each of the primary schools selected, 20 female teachers were randomly selected to participate in the study. In each senatorial district, 200 secondary school female teachers were selected using the stratified sampling technique. The strata used were sciences, arts, social sciences, languages, and vocational & technical education. For each stratum, 40 female teachers were randomly selected. This was to avoid lopsidedness in the selection of the female secondary school teachers for the study. Finally, 1,200 female primary school teachers were selected from 60 primary schools, and 1,200 female secondary school teachers were selected from 60 secondary schools, 2,400 female teachers participated in the study.

The age range of the female teachers who participated in the study were between 20 and 56 years. Four hundred and forty-three of the teachers were between 20 and 30 years of age, 834 were between 31 and 40 years of age, and 884 were between the ages of 41 and 50 years, while 239 were between the ages of 51 and 56 years. The years of experience of the teachers ranged between 1 and 34 years. Teachers with years of experience between 1 and 10 years were 1,007, while 711 of the teachers had years of experience between 11 and 20 years, and 682 had years of experience between 21 and 34 years. Among the female teachers, 296 were single, 50 were separated/divorced, 50 were widowed, and 2,004 were married. In terms of

qualification, 46 of the female teachers possessed the Teacher's Grade II Certificate, 1,229 had the Nigeria Certificate of Education, 1,002 held the Bachelor's Degree in Education, while 52 held the Master's Degree in Education and 71 possessed the Postgraduate Diploma in Education.

The research instrument used for data collection was the Teacher Effectiveness Rating Scale (TERS). The Teacher Effectiveness Rating Scale (TERS) was developed by Omoteso (1998). The scale consisted of sections A and B. Section A included 7 items eliciting demographic information. Section B included 20 items each, with 4 levels of rating scale. Scores varied from 4 for "very effective" to 1 for "not effective." Total scores ranged from 20–80. Scores below 50 (which is the median score for the scale) indicated unfavorable effectiveness rating (i.e., not effective), while scores above 50 indicated favorable effectiveness rating (i.e., effective). The Teacher Effectiveness Rating Scale had a correlation coefficient (r) of 0.68 and coefficient alpha of 0.76.

TERS was administered on the selected teachers in their schools. The selected teachers responded to section "A" of the "Teacher Effectiveness Rating Scale," while the head teachers and the heads of departments rated the effectiveness of the selected teachers by responding to the section "B" of the Scale. The responses to the instrument were scored and analyzed.

3. Data analysis

Data collected for the study were subjected to descriptive and inferential statistics, using the SPSS statistical package. Results of the analyses and discussion of the findings are presented below. To determine the effectiveness of the female teachers, the median score (i.e., 50) on the TERS was used in the classification. Teachers whose scores on the TERS were above 50 were considered to be effective, while those whose scores were below 50 were considered not effective. Using this classification, the female teachers' scores on the TERS were processed, and the results are presented in Table 1.

Table 1 shows that 81.4% of female teachers in primary schools were effective, and 11% were not effective. Among female teachers in the secondary schools, 75.1% were effective, and 8.7% were not effective. On the whole, 78.3% of the respondents were effective, and 9.8% were not effective.

Research Hypothesis 1

Hypothesis 1 states that there is no significant relationship between female teachers' effectiveness and each of their schedules of duty, workload, multiple role performance, and status at work. In order to test this hypothesis, each of these variables were cross tabulated with levels of teacher effectiveness and the relationship of each of the variables were tested using the chi-square. In the analysis, duty post/ position of

authority was input as schedule of duty with two levels of classification, namely teachers with extra schedule of duty and teachers without extra schedule of duty. Number of periods taught per week also represented workload, with two levels of classification namely light workload and heavy workload. Marital status represented multiple role performance while qualification was input as status at work. The results are presented in Tables 2, 3, 4, and 5.

Relationship between Schedule of duty and Teacher Effectiveness of Female Teachers in Southwestern Nigeria.

Based on their responses on duty post/position of responsibility, the female teachers were grouped into two groups, namely, teachers with positions of responsibility (i.e., class teachers having other schedules of duty other than that of a class teacher, e.g., games mistress, PTA secretary, chairman/secretary of committee) and teachers without positions of responsibility (i.e., class teachers having schedules of duties of a class teacher only). Using these classifications, schedule of duty was cross tabulated with levels of teacher effectiveness for chi-square analysis. The results are presented in Table 2.

Results in Table 2 show that 77.9% of teachers without extra schedules of duty were effective, while 9.7% were not effective. Among teachers with extra schedules of duty, 84.6% were effective and 10.5% were not effective. The results in Table 2 show that there was no significant relationship between schedule of duty and teacher effectiveness of female teachers in Southwestern Nigeria ($\chi^2 = 21.372$, $df = 14$, $N = 2400$, $p > 0.05$). For this variable (schedule of duty), therefore, hypothesis 1 was accepted, indicating that there was no significant relationship between schedule of duty and female teachers' effectiveness.

Results in Table 3 show that 83.6% of teachers with light workloads were effective, while 8.9% was not effective. Among teachers with heavy workloads, 78.5% was effective and 10.3% was not effective. The results in Table 3 show that there was a significant relationship between workload and teacher effectiveness of female teachers in Southwestern Nigeria ($\chi^2 = 30.492$, $df = 4$, $N = 2400$, $p < 0.05$). For this variable (workload), therefore, hypothesis 1 was rejected, indicating that there was a significant relationship between workload and female teachers' effectiveness.

Relationship between Multiple Role Performance and Teacher Effectiveness of Female Teachers in Southwestern Nigeria.

Based on their responses on marital status, the female teachers were grouped into four groups, namely, teachers who were single (i.e. never married), teachers who were divorced or separated from their husbands, teachers who were widowed, and teachers who were married. Using these classifications, multiple role performance was cross-tabulated with levels of teacher effectiveness for chi-square analysis. The results are presented in Table 4.

Results in Table 4 show that 72.6% of teachers who are single were effective, while 7.4% were not effective. Among teachers who were divorced or separated from their husbands, 72.0% were effective and 4.0% were not effective. Among teachers who were widowed, 78.0% were effective, while 12.0% were not effective. Seventy-nine point two percent of teachers who were married were effective, and 10.3% of them were not effective. The frequency counts were subjected to the chi-square test to determine the relationship between workload of the female teachers and their level of effectiveness. The results in Table 5 show that there was a significant relationship between multiple role performance and teacher effectiveness of female teachers in Southwestern Nigeria ($\chi^2 = 31.520$, $df = 6$, $N = 2400$, $p < 0.05$). For this variable (multiple role performance), therefore, hypothesis 1 was rejected, indicating that there was a significant relationship between multiple role performance and female teachers' effectiveness.

Relationship Between Status at Work and Teacher Effectiveness of Female Teachers in Southwestern Nigeria.

Based on their responses on highest qualification obtained, the female teachers were grouped into 7 categories using certification nomenclature. It was assumed that level of certificate determines hierarchy at places of work, and therefore status at work could be determined using level of certificate. Using these classifications, status at work was cross-tabulated with levels of teacher effectiveness for chi-square analysis. The results are presented in Table 5.

Results in Table 5 show that 69.6% of teachers who have Teachers' Grade II certificates were effective while 8.7% were not effective. Among teachers who were NCE certificate holders, 79.8% were effective and 10.3% were not effective. Among teachers having bachelor's certificate in education, 77.3% of those with B.Sc and B.A. degrees were effective, and 9.5% were not effective, while 76.6% of those with B.Ed. certificate were effective and 9.1% of them were not effective. Eighty four percent of teachers with M.A. (Ed.) certificates were effective, and 4.0% of them were not effective, while 77.8% of teachers with M.ED certificates were effective, and 7.4% were not effective. Among teachers with PGDE certificates, 73.2% were effective, while 12.7% were not effective.

The results in Table 5 show that there was no significant relationship between status at work and teacher effectiveness of female teachers in Southwestern Nigeria ($\chi^2 = 15.492$, $df = 12$, $N = 2400$, $p > 0.05$). For this variable (status at work), therefore, hypothesis 1 was accepted, indicating that there was no significant relationship between status at work and female teachers' effectiveness. Results of the analyses show that workload and multiple role performance had a significant relationship with female teachers' effectiveness, while schedule of duty and status at work did not have a significant relationship with female teachers' effectiveness.

Research Hypothesis 2

Hypothesis 2 states that there is no significant difference in the effectiveness of female teachers in primary and secondary schools in Southwestern Nigeria. In testing this hypothesis, the mean scores of female primary school teachers and female secondary school teachers on the teacher effectiveness rating scale were compared using the independent t-test. The results of the analysis are presented in Table 6.

The results in Table 6 show that the primary school female teachers had a mean score of 57.82 and a standard deviation of 20.41, while the secondary school female teachers had a mean score of 53.03 and a standard deviation of 26.70, with a mean difference of 4.79. The independent t-test showed that the difference between the means was significant ($t = 4.927$, $df = 2398$, $p < .05$). Hypothesis 2 was therefore rejected, indicating that there was a significant difference between the effectiveness of female teachers in Southwestern Nigeria. This implies that primary school female teachers, with the higher mean score, were more effective than secondary school female teachers in Southwestern Nigeria.

4. Discussion

Results of the analysis show that schedule of duty and status at work, had no significant relationship with teacher effectiveness, while workload and multiple role performance had a significant relationship with teacher effectiveness. This may be due to the fact that some schedules of duty may not have a direct relationship with students' teaching and learning, or overall behavior (e.g., games mistress, chairman/secretary of committee, secretary to P.T.A). Also, status at work may have taken some teachers away from some student-based activities like teaching; instead, they have become senior tutors who supervise other teachers on a lower status. This is in agreement with Leigh's (2007) report that qualification does not seem to affect female teachers' effectiveness significantly, whereas workload and multiple role performance are tasking and demanding on the individual and as such would affect the female teachers' effectiveness. Teachers with teaching periods between 1 and 20 were found to be more effective, due to an average of 4 teaching periods or less per day and therefore time to attend to other non-teaching duties. Teachers with teaching periods between 21-40 were not as effective, due to an average of more than four to up to eight periods per day, leaving them with little or no time to attend to other non-teaching duties. Moreover, other personal activities and roles of the female teachers contend with the remaining hours of the day outside the classroom. This, coupled with a heavy workload, may affect some female teachers emotionally and psychologically, making them irritable, touchy, edgy, and—at the extreme—aggressive.

Newa (2007) studied teacher effectiveness in relation to work satisfaction among 300 secondary school teachers in Nepal and found that teacher effectiveness positively related to work/job satisfaction, especially among teachers in government secondary schools. Day, Stobart, Sammons, Kington, Gu, Smees & Mujtaba (2006), in a study of teacher effectiveness among 300 primary and secondary school teachers in local

authority schools in the United Kingdom, found that teachers' capacities to be effective are influenced by variations in their work, personal life, and professional identities, as well as their capacity to manage these variables. They concluded that teachers' sense of positive professional identity was associated with well-being and job satisfaction and a key factor in their effectiveness. Perhaps this result indicates that female teachers in primary and secondary schools in Southwestern Nigeria enjoy variations in their work, lives, and professional identities, and that they are capable of managing all the events for effective well-being in the performance of their professional duties. Guarino, Santibanez & Daley (2006) and Ingersoll (2005) reported that low pay and poor working conditions undermine teachers' long-term commitment to their jobs and teacher working conditions (indicated by overall job satisfaction, perceptions of work environments, and willingness to continue to teach) and salary levels are critical in the issue of teacher effectiveness (Boyd et al, 2005; Hanushek, Kain & Rivkin, 2004).

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

Results of the study showed that the majority of female teachers were effective teachers. However, the percentage of female teachers that were effective in the primary school was higher than the percentage of female teachers that were effective in secondary schools in Southwestern Nigeria.

Workload and multiple role performance were found to have a significant relationship with, and affect, female teachers' effectiveness. Teachers with workloads less than 20 periods per week were found to be more effective than teachers with more than 20 periods per week. Perhaps teachers with such light teaching periods had time for other professional duties than teachers with heavy teaching periods. This suggests that teaching periods should be allocated to female teachers to allow some space to attend to professional duties other than teaching. Limiting maximum teaching periods of female teachers to four periods per day may help keep the female teachers effective while affording them time to attend to other nonteaching duties that contribute to their professional effectiveness. However, investigations on optimum workload that will enhance effective performance of the female teachers would be necessary.

Moreover, the significant relationship found between multiple role performance and female teachers' effectiveness is in line with the findings of research earlier discussed that females are affected by situations, events, gender roles, socio-cultural demands, and role-conflicts. This suggests that female teachers would benefit from some skills to balance their job and life demands in order to be effective in the discharge of their professional duties. It will therefore be necessary to lay at the disposal of female teachers some counseling interventions for skill development from time to time to help them adjust to the changing realities in life and on the job, and at the same time be effective in the discharge of their professional duties. One week before resumption for the term could be set aside as a period for skill development programs for female teachers in preparation for the term. Life skills such as self-acceptance, self-confidence,

positive self-concept, self-efficacy, self-management, life-crisis management, and skills for effective relationship management could be topics for discussion in order to support the female teachers for effective performance against all odds. Their professional skills could also be enhanced with some skills such as communication, ethical observance, academics, leadership, discipline strategies, classroom management, and teacher-student relationship. Workshops, seminars, and refresher courses should also be developed for teachers as necessary to keep them abreast of knowledge and methodologies in their subject areas and education. A well-developed and adequately equipped guidance and counseling unit should be operational in every school, where services could be made available and accessible to female teachers in the school system in order to ameliorate the challenges faced by female teachers.

However, there was a significant difference in the effectiveness of female teachers in primary schools and those in secondary schools. Female teachers in primary schools were more effective than female teachers in the secondary schools. Further investigation is needed to identify the factors responsible for the difference.

Finally, effective monitoring of teachers' activities in the school system for effectiveness and quality control by appropriate monitoring or regulatory agencies may help in detecting early signs of inadequacy or professional burnout on the part of any teacher, and necessary and appropriate intervention should be put in place. In addition, necessary referrals should be made to the counseling unit when and if necessary.