RESEARCH PAPER

STEMMING DOWN HIGH RATES OF TRUANCY, DROP-OUT AND FAILURE IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN OSUN STATE

By

SOFOWORA O. ALABA *

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to find out whether 1) truancy, drop-out and failure rates was as a result of the teacher teaching strategy in Secondary Schools in Osun State, 2) skill in instructional design has any relationship with failure rate; and 3) teachers who studied Educational Technology would perform significantly better in their teaching profession than those who did not. The study also investigated the rate at which teachers utilized instructional materials and the extent of ensuring active, participatory and effective learning among secondary school students in Osun State.

Three hundred and sixty three samples were selected from all the secondary schools in Osun State. They were divided into three groups, that is, the Art subjects, Science subjects and the social sciences. The statistical programme for social sciences (SPSS) was used to analyze the data. The result showed that;

(i) 65% of the students taken for sample showed dissatisfaction with their teachers' teaching method ($x2=2.41\,p<0.05$),

(ii) the data collected showed that only 20% of their teachers use the library always in Arts, 4% in Sciences and 7% in Social sciences,

(iii) the teachers in Osun state seldom employed instructional materials that would have motivated the students and encouraged active and participatory learning,

(iv) the result also showed that there was a significant relationship between the teacher's teaching strategies, truancy, drop out and failure rate in secondary schools in Osun State ($X2=19.40\,p<0.05$),

(V) Teachers who studied Educational Technology and instructional design were able to use a better approach and performed significantly better in their teaching profession than those who did not study Educational Technology ($X2=2.52\,p<0.05$).

Key words: Educational Technology, Pedagogy, Active learning, Teaching approaches, Mediated instruction, Instructional design and Multimedia.

INTRODUCTION

In Nigeria today, as more than before, there is a greater demand for properly oriented teachers capable of adapting to innovative practices that will lead multitude of school pupils and children onto paths of meaningful learning and progress. The importance of teachers in any educational system can therefore not be questioned. The entire system of education will be shaking if the teaching force is weak and ineffective. The most important factors for an effective teacher is that he / she will contribute to improve education.

The achievement of effective teaching and learning in the schools has been one of the perennial problems of education in Nigeria (Akanbi 1992 and 2007). As a result of this, Nigeria recognizes the importance of Educational Technology in education. In this regard it is believed that to ensure effective teaching and learning in schools, teachers must be versatile in Educational Technology and the art and craft of instructional design. This is a great challenge to teachers to rise to the occasion and fulfill the country's educational expectations in an effective manner. Also ever than before, the roles of the teachers have changed. Apart from the normal teaching, teachers are expected to cope and manage effectively, problems relating to learning, teaching disabilities, over population, motivation and problems of

truancy/indiscipline in schools. Events have however shown that teachers are not well equipped to cope with these demands. Teachers today need an up-to-date knowledge and skills in the application of innovative practices and support to be more effective in solving the numerous problems and in meeting the demands society makes on them. A cursory look at the educational system also reveals the dissatisfaction of pupils and students with the school system. There are high rates of failure and truancy at both primary and secondary schools level. In Osun State, the issue of truancy in the secondary schools has become a matter of concern to parents and the government. Several approaches were taken to stem down the dropout, truancy and failure rates, but without much success. Hence, the background of this study was designed against the investigation of how effective teaching through Educational Technology can help to solve the problem.

Educational Technology and Effective Teaching

The capabilities of Educational Technology to improve the quality and quantity of education cannot be overemphasized. It might be necessary to define it before discussing how it can be used to achieve effective teaching and learning in Nigeria. Educational Technology has been defined differently by different scholars. For example Ingles (1975) defines Educational Technology as an integrated and systematic way of designing, planning, implementing and evaluating the total process of teaching and learning and the process of communication. While the National Council on Educational Technology (NCET 1971), defines it as the application of systems, techniques and aids that are adopted in educational system to improve the process of learning. This description was however expanded to characterize four features: a) definition of objectives to be achieved by learner, b) the application of principles of learning to the analysis and structuring of the subject matters to be learnt, c) the selection and the use of appropriate media for presenting materials, d) and the use of appropriate materials for assessing students performance, to determine the effectiveness of the course and material. Educational Technology can also

be defined as the systematic analysis of educational problems which results in the identification of objectives, designing of resources and methods, the integration and evaluation of these to achieve the objectives (Onyejemezi, 1990).

A critical examination of some of the definitions above indicates that Educational Technology involves some of the following:

(i)   Identification of educational problems;

(ii) Stating the objectives to be achieved in solving the problems;

(iii) Indicate the conditions necessary for the achievement of the identified objectives;

(iv) Map out the appropriate methods and material resources that will be used to achieve the objectives;

(v)   Determine whether the objectives have been achieved;

(vi) Where the objectives are not achieved, go back to step I - V above, locate the problem, make necessary changes.

From the above it is evident that Educational Technology has major role to play in the development of education and in bringing quality teaching and meaningful learning. The process of Educational Technology is therefore a quality control instrument, which any country wanting qualitative and quantitative education should not neglect. It is therefore important that teachers and educational practicioners be well equipped and encouraged to apply Educational Technology process for the attainment of effective teaching and learning in schools.

In Nigeria teaching and learning can be improved through Educational Technology through the following process as mentioned in Figure 1.

Other conditions necessary for the realization of the potentials of Educational Technology in solving problems within the educational Systems include:

equipping teachers, trainee teachers and school administrators with skills and techniques in the use of Educational Technology;
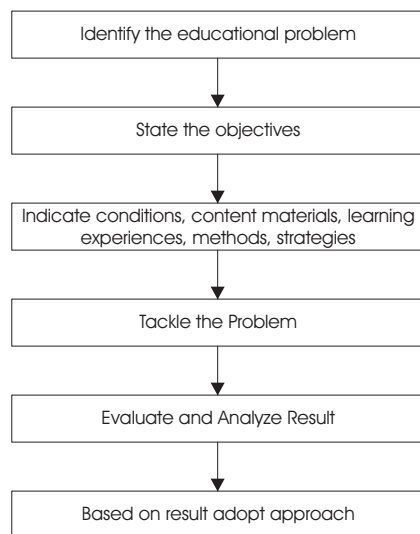
Figure 1. Process of Educational Technology

Providing the necessary resources, support and opportunities for the practice of Educational Technology processes in the school system;

Encouraging school-based innovative approaches and dissemination of such information to others;

Enriching and improving teaching by adopting modern principles and theory of instructional design.

However a critical appraisal of the schools system in the country reveals that many of the teachers today are not well skilled in Educational Technology and basic craft of instructional design. In addition is the fact that they are disenfranchised with the school system and the policies of the present government. Another militating factor is that most of the teachers are not amenable to innovation(Akanbi 2007). Many still adopt the old traditional talk and chalk method of teaching. Teaching at any level requires that the students be exposed to innovative teaching and some forms of stimulation. This can be achieved when Educational Technology processes is employed. Educational Technology if used appropriately can ensure active learning and active participation.

Active learning involves learner's search for personal and academic knowledge which is far more than mere assimilation of information and mere regurgitation of information. Active learning, unlike the traditional learning involves, has a sound grasp of the key concept,

procedure and principles. In active learning, the rate of assimilation and retention is very high and information can be readily recalled. Active learning, gives the learner greater responsibility for self-learning so that they have the full opportunity for involving themselves with challenges to inquire, make critical thinking, to identify and tackle problem. Active learning, unlike traditional approach, calls for creativity and challenge on the part of the teacher. Promoting active learning therefore calls for blending of the teaching strategies. An examination of the schools' system reveals that teachers are not exposed to the art and craft of instructional design. Hence they cannot utilize active learning. Perhaps this may be the cause of high rates of dropout, truancy and failure in the secondary schools in Osun State. Benneth (1976) and Entwistle (1981) are of the opinion that the approach, which a teacher adopts, depends on his view and purpose of education and that the method adopted has a resultant effect on the learner. Entwistle (1991) further opines that, one-way of improving the teaching efficiency of the teacher is to adopt the methods that emphasize control and tight structure on the learning environment. Chickering and Gamson (1987) in support of active learning say: "Learning is not a spectator sport. Students do not learn much just by sitting down in the class listening, memorizing prepared package, assignments and spitting out the answer. They must talk about what they are learning, write about it, and relate it to their daily lives and past experiences". Tobias (1992) also says that active learning encourages the linking of abstract ideas to real life experiences. It encourages active participation. It allows for sharing and articulation of understanding or perspectives in a supportive setting. It encourages student use of imagination and initiative in proposing solution to problems. One would have expected teachers in the state to use these innovative methods in teaching rather than the passive method presently being used.

Research Methodology

The sample for this study is made up of 198 students and 165 teachers selected through simple randomization from secondary schools in Osun State. In all, total samples

of three hundred and sixty three were used for the study.

Statement of the Problem

A Cursory look at the secondary schools in Osun State reveals that there is increase in the dropout and failure rates. A further look at the classroom situation, shows that the method adopted by the teachers lack challenges to the learner. In addition to this, is the fact that teachers are handicapped by lack of sufficient skills in instructional design, Educational Technology and modern teaching approaches. Lately, the performance of the students at the senior secondary school reveals that there is much wastage due to failure rate. (Institute of Education) 1976, Ezezobor 1983, Ogunseye 1987, Akanbi 1992 Ekpo 1995, Ayodele 2001 and W.A.E.C (2002). It is therefore not unlikely that the truancy, drop-out and failure rate are caused by some of the problems identified within the school system, hence the study.

The high rate of student's failure in the country Table 1 has raised lot of concerns. It has become a subject matter of public debate and headline in news papers. Ayodele (2001) notes that mass failure in schools have become a national problem to which right solution is yet to be proffered. Ayodele therefore calls on the government,

teachers, parents and individuals to solve the problem of poor performance. Commenting on students' poor performance, the West African Examination Council Chief Examiners Report (2000, p.10) states: "Candidates' performance was inexplicably disappointing. The cause of this poor performance was due to students' inability to read and write simple English (p.10)". Events and happenings show that situation is yet to improve. In 1995 the Science Examiners report says, "Nevertheless, the performance of the candidates in most of the subjects continued to show a down ward trend. It was observed that we might be heading for a crisis unless the school, and education authorities take steps to arrest the deteriorating situation before the standard comes crashing on our head (p. 5)".

This study therefore is a yield to the clarion call at arresting the downward trend of academics and the deteriorating situation in secondary schools in the state. In order to achieve this, the following research objectives were stated.

Objectives of the Study

The main thrust of the study was to find out;

(a) Whether there is any relationship between the teachers' teaching strategies, truancy/drop out, and failure rate in secondary schools in Osun State,

(b) Whether teachers' qualifications, or skill in instructional design has anything to do with truancy, drop-out and failure rate among the students; and

(c) Whether teachers who studied educational technology will perform significantly better in their profession than those who did not study Educational Technology.

Research Hypothesis

The following research hypotheses were made:

H1 - there is no significant relationship between the teaching strategies and drop out/failure rate in secondary schools in Osun State.

H2 - there is no significant relationship between teacher's qualifications, skill in instructional design and drop-out out/failure rate.

YEAR	TOTAL NUMBER OF CANDIDATES EXAMINED	NUMBER WHO PASSED WITH CREDIT 1-6	NUMBER WHO HAD PASS 7-8	NO. WHO FAILED F9
1992	299,881	46,182 (15.40)%	95,362(31.80)%	158,337(52.80)%
1993	412,588	60,650(14.72)%	128,728(31.20)%	291,538(55.50)%
1994	525,294	73,541(14.00)%	160,215(30.50)%	291,538(55.50)%
1995	286,896	60,3363(21.04)%	119,406(41.62)%	107,127(37.34)%
1996	345,183	34,829(10.09)%	132,481(38.38)%	177,873(51.53)%
1997	514342	77,334(15.04)%	157,989(30.72)%	279,019(54.20)%
1998	616923	96,180(15.59)%	201,363(32.64)%	319,380(51.74)%
1999	635686	102,242(16.09)%	249,112(39.20)%	284,132(44.71)%
2000	510369	121,444(23.80)%	202,316(39.64)%	186,609(36.56)%
2001	685721	130,231 (18.99)	223,452(32.59)%	332,038(48.42)%
2002	475,649	102, 272(21.50)%	164,209(34.52)%	209,168(43.97)%
2003	484,508	53,256(11.0)%	78,190(16.1)%	140,199(47.7)%
2004	345,61	135,447(39.20)%	83,530(24.17)%	126,610(36.63)%
2005	434,315	65,433(15.0)%	144,010(33.1)%	224,872(51.9)%

Source: Courtesy of WAEC, Office of the Senior Deputy Registrar/head of Research, WAEC Lagos, 2002.

Table 1. Failure rate 1992-2005

H3 - Teachers who studied Educational Technology would not necessarily perform significantly better than those who did not.

Data Fathering Procedure

A questionnaire and a checklist-rating schedule were the instrument used for this study. The questionnaire was divided into five sections. The first section addressed personal data and teacher's evaluation of the possible causes of truancy, drop-out and failure rate in Secondary Schools in Osun State. The second part asked for the competencies that may possibly influence active learning. The third section was directed at utilization of materials. While the fourth section addressed instructional strategies. The last section was designed for the class teachers only. The questionnaire used was validated using content validity and the coefficient of reliability was 0.65.

Results

The data collected in respect of hypothesis 1 is presented in Table 2.

From Table 2 it was evident that there was a significant relationship between the teacher teaching strategies, drop-out and failure rate in the secondary schools in Osun State. Hence, hypothesis 1 was rejected. It implied that the drop-out, truancy and the failure rates being experienced in the state was partly as a result of the teaching strategies employed by the teachers.

With regard to hypothesis 2 which states that there is no significant relationship between teachers' qualifications, skill in instructional design and failure rate in secondary school in Osun State, the result showed that 41.9% of the respondents were of the opinion that there was no relationship, while 58.1% were of the view that there was

a relationship. When this was further subjected to chi-square statistical method, the result obtained was significant. It therefore implied that there was a significant relationship between drop out and failure rate with teachers qualifications and skill in instructional design. (See Table 3).

Hypothesis 3; that teachers who studied educational technology might not necessarily perform significantly better in teaching profession than those who did not study educational technology. The result of the data analyzed revealed that 3.6% of the respondents disagreed, while 96.4% agreed with it. When chi-square statistics was used to determine, the relationship if any, the chi-square value obtained was 2.52 which was greater at 0.05 probability level. Hence Hypothesis 3 was rejected. (See Table 4).

When students were asked to rate their satisfactions with the teacher teaching strategies, the data obtained revealed that 65.2% were dissatisfied, while 34.8 % were satisfied. When this was subjected to chi- square statistics a value of (2.41 $p < 0.05$)was obtained.

Based on the data obtained, it could be adduced that students dis-satisfaction with the teacher teaching strategies were one of the factors responsible for truancy, drop out and high failure rate in the secondary schools in Osun State. Other findings as revealed in the teachers' questionnaire were of the fact that the availability of

Response	Subject Area		Social Sciences	Row Total
	Arts	Sciences		
Disagreed	25	28	29	115 (58.1)
Agreed	31	34	50	83 (41.9)
Column Total	57 (28.8)	62 (31.3)	79 (39.9)	

*Significant
$X^2 = 1.47 \ P < 0.05$

Table 3. Teachers' qualifications and failure rate

Response	Subject Area		Social Sciences	Row Total
	Arts	Sciences		
Disagreed	2	21	26	49 (24.7)
Agreed	55	41	53	149 (75.3)
Column Total	57 (28.8)	62 (31.3)	79 (39.9)	

*Significant
$X^2 = (19.40 \ P < 0.05)$

Table 2. Relationship between failure rate and teaching strategies

Response	Subject Area		Social Sciences	Row Total
	Arts	Sciences		
Disagreed	1	2	3	6 (3.6)
Agreed	71	49	39	159 (96.4)
Column Total	72	51	42	

*Significant
$X^2 = (2.52, \ P < 0.05)$

Table 4. Relationship between job performance and training in educational technology

appropriate and relevant instructional materials would go a long way at enhancing active learning and might help in the diversification of teachers' teaching method. It was also found out that there were dearth of books in science and social science subjects and well equipped library facilities; further more, it was revealed that only 20% of the teachers made use of the library. The data collected showed that 16% used once a week, 13% once a term and, 23% never visited the library (see Table 5). This result poses serious challenges that must be quickly addressed. When teachers themselves do not patronize the library or cultivate the habit of reading, it is a serious threat. The ultimate effects of all the above on schooling was that students found the school dull, uninteresting and patronized the cyber café, video clubs and played snookers instead of attending classes.

This posed great implications to teaching and learning in schools, as a matter of urgency.

Summary and Conclusion

This paper investigated the causes of dropout, truancy and failure rates in the secondary schools in Osun State. This is with the ultimate aim of stemming down the high rates of truancy, drop-out and failure in secondary schools in the State. The result obtained showed that there was a significant relationship between teacher teaching strategies and truancy/failure rates in the secondary schools in Osun State. 65% of the students showed their dissatisfaction with their teacher's teaching strategies. Teachers in the state seldom used mediated instruction which has culminated in dull and uninteresting lessons. It was also evident that there was a significant relationship between teacher's performance on the job and training in Educational Technology. It can therefore be concluded that failure, truancy and drop out rates in Osun schools was as a result of the non participatory, uninteresting and non - interactive method used by their teachers. This explains the need for integrating Educational Technology, modern methods and mediated instruction in schools. Hence it is imperative for teachers to diversify their teaching method by using multi media. If any meaningful improvement is to be made, both the teachers and the Ministry of education need to work out how to redirect students' attention back into the classrooms by introducing and integrating the use of video and modern technologies into the school system. This could be achieved by following the suggestions made by Entwistle (1981). Gamson and Chickering (1987) on active, participatory, experiential and interactive learning in schools. Teachers must be trained to acquire skills in Educational Technology and the application of modern methods to instruction. It is hoped that when the modern methods and mediated / active learning are employed as instructional strategies in secondary schools, students will find their lesson more interesting and would stay in the school rather than playing truancy. It is also hoped that when modern technologies like video and ICTs are introduced and constantly used for instruction, the high rates of drop-out, truancy and failure in the Secondary School system would highly reduce.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are made based on the study:

I. Workshop in the art and craft of instructional design should be organized for the teachers periodically.

ITEMS	ARTS				SCIENCE				SOCIAL SCIENCE			
	NEVER	ONCE A TERM	ONCE A WEEK	ALWAYS	NEVER	ONCE A TERM	ONCE A WEEK	ALWAYS	NEVER	ONCE A TERM	ONCE A WEEK	ALWAYS
Relevant Text Books	3	6	2	61	3	7	1	40	3	8	10	11
Pictures	13	10	16	33	9	7	24	21	7	12	7	6
Charts	23	11	12	26	9	13	13	16	10	9	9	5
Maps and Globe	30	13	14	15	23	9	12	7	10	7	5	4
Tape Recorders	22	20	11	6	29	9	12	2	20	10	4	7
Film and Over head projector	45	12	9	6	29	9	11	2	29	10	5	-
Television and Video	40	19	9	4	29	11	8	3	19	17	2	3
Computer	45	12	8	7	32	11	4	4	26	14	1	1
Models	34	19	9	10	19	10	11	4	26	6	10	7
Library	23	13	16	20	12	8	10	21	19	7	6	20
Science Laboratory	-	-	-	-	3	5	13	30	-	-	-	-
Technical Workshop	-	-	-	-	12	5	16	18	-	-	-	-

Table 5. Teachers' rate of utilization of instructional materials

ii. Relevant instructional materials should be made available in schools in the state by the Ministry of Education and be mandatory for the teachers to use.

iii. Seminars and Workshops should be organized to improve teachers' teaching strategies, while the traditional approach be completely discouraged.

iv. Educational Technology should be made compulsory for all the teachers.

v. Students should be discouraged from truancy by bringing modern technologies into the school for students' use, games and educational clubs be encouraged as part of extra curricular activities.

vi. Library facilities should be provided in schools and they should be effectively managed. Teachers and students should be encouraged frequently to make use of the facilities provided.

vii. Learning resource centers should be established at the Local Government Level.

viii. In-service training should be provided for teachers to upgrade their teaching skill and for the acquisition of innovative skills in the application of pedagogy.

ix. Government should give more support to Education. The morale of the teachers should be boosted. More recognition should be accorded to teaching as a profession.

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

* Department of Educational Technology, Faculty of Education, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-ife

Dr. O. A Sofowora has a Ph.D Degree in Educational Technology in 2002 from Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Osun State, Nigeria. He is presently a lecturer and researcher in the faculty of Education, Department of Educational Technology. He currently teaches both undergraduate and postgraduate students of the university. His area of specialisation is Television production and media design.