

Influence of Retraining Programme on Self-esteem of Primary School Teachers in Ebonyi State of Nigeria

Igbo Janet N., Eze Justina U., Eskay M., Onu V. C., Omeje J.
University of Nigeria, Nsukka, Nigeria

This study investigated the influence of retraining programme on self-esteem of primary school teachers in Ebonyi State of Nigeria. The study was guided by one research question and a null hypothesis. A purposively selected sample of 775 primary school teachers who attended capacity building retraining programme provided the data collected using an 18-item questionnaire developed by the researchers and face-validated by three test specialists in the University of Nigeria, Nsukka. Mean, *SD* (standard deviation), and *t*-test analysis tested at 0.05 probability level were used for data analysis. Findings indicate that retraining programme influences teachers' self-esteem positively with urban teachers having higher self-esteem ($x = 3.16$) than the rural ($x = 2.96$). The null hypothesis testing indicates that there is no significant difference between the mean scores of the urban and urban primary school teachers with regard to the influence of the retraining programme on teachers' self-esteem ($t\text{-cal} = 0.15$; $df = 773$; $P = 0.05$; critical- $t = 1.96$). Based on these findings, it was recommended among others that Nigeria teachers are regularly retrained to help enhance their self-esteem towards teaching profession.

Keywords: self-esteem, retraining programme, special education, psychology, counseling

Introduction

It is a general statement that no nation's educational system can rise above the quality of its teachers. This implies that teachers, who are a major stakeholder in educational system and the oil that lubricates the wheels of educational system (Afe, 2001), and in fact, the pivot on which educational development of a nation hinges (James, 2003) need to be motivated and equipped to meet up with the educational challenges of contemporary times. Probably, this could be one of the rationales for the observed wind of retraining programmes for teachers in various states of Nigeria. According to Khan (2009), retraining programme serves as an incentive to self-esteem of workers and its ripple effect spreads across family life activities, health, and productivity in workplaces.

Self-esteem is an aspect of the construct "self". The term refers to one's perception of himself or herself. According to Khan (2009), self-esteem is a continuous process that spans through childhood to adulthood. With it, an individual expresses the extent of happiness with one's own character and abilities. Allen (2000) indicated that it conveys the feelings of self-regards, self-respect, self-assurance, and self-importance which individuals

Igbo Janet N., Ph.D., Department of Educational Foundations, University of Nigeria.
Eze Justina U., Ph.D., Department of Educational Foundations, University of Nigeria.
Eskay M., Ph.D., professor, Department of Educational Foundations, University of Nigeria.
Onu V. C., Ph.D., Department of Educational Foundations, University of Nigeria.
Omeje J., Ph.D., Department of Educational Foundations, University of Nigeria.

have about themselves. It, in essence, reveals the level of confidence and satisfaction that one holds for oneself. Hence, people are found to describe themselves positively when they have high self-esteem or negatively when their self-esteem is low. Probably, it may be teachers' positive self-esteem aspect that influences their drive towards commitment in teaching and learning activities in schools.

One's self-esteem induces the feeling of goodness at home and in workplace as well as the assurance that one has ability to succeed in life (Allen, 2000). According to Zunker (2006), self-esteem in contemporary counseling is one of the very important concepts just like self-concept, self-awareness, and self-knowledge which need to be evaluated in counseling process so as to help individuals to make optimal decisions in general issues and career choices in particular. Self-esteem in this context therefore refers to teachers' self-evaluation and expressions of feelings with regard to their self-importance, self-respect from others, self-assurance, and confidence in possession of the capability to teach and be successful in teaching profession.

Self-esteem can be evaluated and categorized into high self-esteem and low self-esteem. Individuals vary in their perceptions of self-esteem. While high self-esteem individuals perceive themselves as very important, capable, competent, attractive, likeable, morally good, and able to make great impressions on others, the low self-esteem individuals view themselves as less important, incapable, not being loved, and not confidence to impact other people (Khan, 2009; Baumeister & Bushman, 2008; Adams, Ketschick, & Keating, 2000). High self-esteem individuals are more focused, willing, and optimistic in succeeding in the tasks they are involved in unlike the low self-esteem individuals who are pessimistic and lack confidence in succeeding in tasks being carried out (Baumeister & Bushman, 2008; Baumeister, Campbell, Krueger, & Vons, 2003; McFarlin & Blascovich, 1981). Studies also reveal that high self-esteem individuals tend to pursue self-enhancement and are goal-oriented unlike the low self-esteem individuals who tend to avoid self-derogation and non-action oriented (Martin, Carlson, & Bushkist, 2009; Haggins, 1998).

Low self-esteem poses some behavioural problems, such as depression, anxiety, and under achievement in academics and workplaces (Khan, 2009; Collins, 2007). These authors respectively noted that these behavioural problems often induce in individuals the feelings of incapacities and failures in life. Individuals, especially teachers, with low self-esteem therefore need to be helped through cognitive restructuring of mindsets (Ellis, 1994) and retraining programmes, so that they can feel happy in teaching service and achieved better performance.

Self-esteem is seen to be influenced by societal factors such as acceptance and rejection. According to Leary and Baumeister (2000), increase in societal acceptance increases self-esteem while increase in societal rejection threatens and lowers self-esteem. High self-esteem helps in elevating one's initiatives and the feeling of goodness and stress relief unlike is with low self-esteem. With these, it may not be an over-statement to say that primary school children all over Nigeria not excluded might be at risk if teachers who are knowledgeable inculcators, mentors, and major implementers of school curriculum are allowed to function with low self-esteem. No wonder, Ndu, Ocho, and Okeke (1997) asserted that if Nigerian teachers are not motivated and educationally empowered they might constitute a cog in the wheel of educational growth and development of the nation.

Teachers in contemporary times are expected to be properly trained and continually subjected to retraining in order to be adequately equipped to meet up with the educational challenges of the time. According to Ramalingam (2006), teachers require incentive which will act as drive or psychological motive in driving

individuals, and in this case, teacher can have positivity in teaching profession. It is however regrettable that Nigerian teachers operate under unfavourable working conditions and lack societal recognition (Njoku, 2011). These no doubt have helped in inducing low self-esteem in a good number of them. It may not be in understatement to say that this low self-esteem of some teachers might be responsible for the existing poor academic performance of children in internal and external examinations. And this calls for retraining of teachers to boost their morale for enhanced productivity.

Retraining entails teaching or preparing a person or an animal's skills for a particular job or activity. Retraining is an on-the-job-training used by organizations to bring about development and improved competency in the workers (Zunker, 2006). According to Mangal (2010), retraining helps in making an individual in becoming competent due to the many formal and informal experiences, opportunities, and practices which the individual would acquire. It is therefore hoped that the retraining of teachers in Nigeria would not only serve as a motivating factor to teachers' self-esteem but would impart in them the feeling of social acceptance and recognition by the government and the zeal for improved performance in teaching.

The Statement of the Problem

It is a common observation that every nation is concerned about the standard of educational development of their citizenry. Nigeria as one of the countries with high illiteracy level is concerned not only with how to structure perfect educational objectives, but also concerned about the implementation of the curricular contents at various educational levels, hence, the capacity building retraining programmes for teachers in various states of the country. Some issues of concern however are: How do teachers perceive the retraining programmes being organized for them? Would these have any influence on their self-esteem as teachers? It is in view of these that this study was carried out.

The Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study is to ascertain the influence of retraining programme on Ebonyi State primary school teachers' self-esteem in teaching. Specifically, the study:

- (1) ascertaining primary school teachers' perception of influence of retraining programme on their self-esteem;
- (2) ascertaining if urban and rural primary school teachers differ in their perceptions of influence of retraining programme on their self-esteem in teaching.

Research Questions and Hypothesis

Research Questions

These research questions guiding the study are:

- (1) What is Ebonyi State primary school teachers' perception of influence of retraining programme on their self-esteem in teaching?
- (2) Is there any difference between the perceptions of primary school teachers' in urban and rural schools on influence of retraining on their self-esteem in teaching?

Hypothesis

The following null hypothesis tested at 0.05 probability level guided the study.

H₀: There is no significant difference between the mean scores of urban and rural primary school teachers on influence of retraining programme on their self-esteem in teaching.

Research Method

This study adopted an ex-post facto design which according to Zunker (2006) is a design that seeks to establish the cause-effect relationship of an event that has already occurred and for which the independent variable cannot be manipulated. This design is deemed appropriate for this study because the retraining has been done and its influence on teachers' self-esteem is being assessed.

The area of this study is Ebonyi state of Nigeria. This is one of the five states in South-Eastern Nigeria. This state has 13 local government areas, and 988 primary schools out of which 317 are located in the urban while 671 are in rural areas (ESUBEB (Ebonyi State Universal Basic Education Board), 2011). This state is one of the listed educational disadvantaged states in Nigeria due to the poor academic performances of students of this state public examination. Hence, the rationale for this study in this state is to see if retraining of teachers can have positive impact on teachers' self-esteem towards improving productivity in teaching.

The Population of the Study

This consists of all the primary school teachers in urban and rural schools purposively selected by the Ebonyi State government and exposed to capacity building retraining programme for two weeks by ESUBEB in 2011. The total population of teachers in this state is 9,987 (ESUBEB, 2011).

Sample and Sampling Technique

A total of 775 teachers were used for this study. There was no sampling as the entire teachers exposed to the retraining programme organized by the ESUBEB were used.

Instrument for Data Collection

The instrument for this study was on an 18-item questionnaire designed by the researchers and titled "RPTEQ (Retraining Programme and Teachers' Self-Esteem Questionnaire)". This instrument has two sections. Section A has one demographic variable on location of the teachers. Section B has 18 items that elicited information on teachers' perception of the influence of the retraining programme on their self-esteem in teaching. The items were placed on a 4-point rating scale of "SA (Strongly agree), A (Agree), D (Disagree), and SD (Strongly disagree)" weighted 4, 3, 2, and 1 for positively stated items and the reverse for the negatively stated items 5, 9, 11, 16, and 17. A criteria mean of 2.5 was used as a decision rule. Any item of mean $x = 2.50$ and above was taken for retraining producing high self-esteem in teachers while mean less than 2.50 was taken for retraining influencing low self-esteem in teachers.

Validation and Reliability of Instrument

The RPTEQ was face validated by three test experts in measurement and evaluation, psychology and guidance and counseling units of which are University of Nigeria, Nsukka. To ascertain the reliability of RPTEQ, 25 copies were given to primary school teachers in Enugu State of Nigeria who also attended a similar retraining programme. Data collected were then subjected to Cronbach Alpha statistical analysis to determine the internal consistency. Result of the analysis gave an Alpha coefficient value of 0.79 which indicates that the instrument is reliable for use in the study.

Method of Data Collection and Data Analysis

The researchers personally distributed and collected the instrument at the end of the retraining exercise. Mean and *SD* (standard deviation) were used to answer the research questions while the null hypothesis was

analyzed using independent *t*-test tested at 0.05 probability level.

Results

The following is the analysis of data to research questions and null hypothesis.

Table 1

Mean and SD of Retraining Programme Influence on Teachers' Self-esteem

S/N	Item: Retraining programme influence on teachers' self-esteem	Urban & rural teachers		
		\bar{X}	SD	Dec.
1	Perceives myself as a worthy person	3.18	0.99	A
2	Perceives teaching now as a pleasurable profession	3.08	0.86	A
3	Feels now satisfied being in teaching profession	2.99	1.05	A
4	Feels no more resentful to teaching profession	3.33	0.69	A
5	Still sees teaching as a tasking job	2.94	0.78	A
6	Thinks I can now tackle the challenges in teaching with the new skills acquired	3.03	0.80	A
7	Gives me the assurance of being successful in teaching	3.01	0.86	A
8	Feels happy being in teaching profession	2.96	0.95	A
9	Still feels inferior as a teacher when in the midst of friends who are not teachers	2.89	1.13	A
10	Feels now confident being a teacher	3.64	0.58	A
11	Still does not feel competent in being a teacher	2.81	1.08	A
12	Feels now comfortable in continuing being a teacher	3.14	0.89	A
13	Now perceives myself as an achiever in teacher	3.01	0.94	A
14	Now perceives myself as being more focused with my teaching roles	3.35	0.59	A
15	Still feels that I cannot cope with the challenges in teaching profession	2.81	0.93	A
16	Feels continuing in teaching will make me loose friends that are not teachers	2.46	0.96	D
17	Feels that continuing in teacher means signing to poverty	3.06	0.84	A
18	No longer has regrets being a teacher	3.28	0.84	A
Overall		3.06	0.85	

Notes. $n = 775$; Criterion $\bar{X} = 2.50$; A = Agree; D = Disagree.

Data presented in Table 1 indicate that all the 18 items with the exception of item number 16 have mean score above 2.50. This indicates that the teachers' in rural and urban primary schools perceive the influence of retraining programme as increasing their self-esteem in teaching.

Data analysis of research question 2 and the null hypotheses is presented in Table 2.

Table 2 presents data analysis of influence of retraining programme on self-esteem of teachers in urban and rural primary schools. Result shows an overall mean difference between urban and rural primary school teachers (Total urban $\bar{X} = 2.96$; rural $\bar{X} = 3.16$). However, the null hypothesis testing indicates that items 1, 2, 3, and 15 have *t*-calculated values above the critical *t*-value of 1.96 which indicates that they are significant at 0.05 probability level. On the other hand, items 4–14, 16–18 show *t*-calculated values lower than critical *t*-value of 1.96. This indicates that they are not significant at 0.05 probability level. The overall result of the analysis indicates that there is no significant difference between the mean ratings of the teachers in urban and rural primary schools ($t\text{-cal} = 0.15$, $df = 773$; $p = 0.05$; critical- $t = 1.96$). Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted, meaning that retraining programme influences the self-esteem of teachers irrespective of their locations.

Table 2

Analysis of Urban and Rural Teachers' Perceptions of Influence of Retraining Programme on Self-esteem

S/N	Item: Retraining programme influence on teachers' self-esteem	Urban teachers <i>N</i> = 495		Rural teachers <i>N</i> = 280		<i>t</i> -cal	Dec.
		\bar{X}	<i>SD</i>	\bar{X}	<i>SD</i>		
1	Sees myself as a worthy person	3.03	1.04	3.45	0.83	2.55	S
2	Perceives teaching now as a pleasurable profession	2.96	0.90	3.30	0.74	2.43	S
3	Feels now satisfied being in teaching profession	2.85	1.06	3.23	0.99	2.21	S
4	Feels no more resentful to teaching profession	3.23	0.71	3.07	0.78	1.48	NS
5	Still sees teaching as a tasking job	2.88	0.77	3.07	0.78	1.48	NS
6	Thinks I can now tackle the challenges in teaching with the new skills acquired	2.96	0.82	3.16	0.76	1.51	NS
7	Gives me the assurance of being successful in teaching	3.06	0.81	2.93	0.95	0.92	NS
8	Feels happy being in teaching profession	2.94	0.96	3.00	0.95	0.38	NS
9	Still feels inferior as a teacher when in the midst of friends who are not teachers	2.78	0.22	3.09	0.96	1.65	NS
10	Feels now comfortable in continuing being a teacher	3.60	0.62	3.71	0.50	1.76	NS
11	Still does not feel competent in being a teacher	2.86	0.06	2.73	1.04	1.12	NS
12	Feels now confident being a teacher	3.05	0.92	3.30	0.81	0.70	NS
13	Can now perceive myself as an achiever in teacher	2.91	0.94	3.20	0.92	1.72	NS
14	Can perceive myself being more focused with my teaching roles	3.28	0.59	3.48	0.57	1.84	NS
15	Still feels that I cannot cope with the challenges in teaching profession	2.80	0.90	2.82	0.97	2.04	NS
16	Feels continuing in teaching will make me loose friends that are not teacher	2.48	0.93	2.43	1.10	0.15	NS
17	Makes me feel that continuing in teacher means signing to poverty	3.10	0.79	2.98	0.92	0.35	NS
18	No longer has regrets being a teacher	3.18	0.87	3.46	0.74	0.85	NS
Total		2.96	0.82	3.16	0.76	0.15	NS

Notes. $p = 0.05$; $n = 775$; $df = 773$; Critical- $t = 1.96$; S = Significant; NS = Not significant.

Discussion

Results presented in Table 1 show that retraining programme has positive influence on the self-esteem of primary school teachers in Ebonyi State, Nigeria. The teachers' responses reflect both high and low self-esteems towards teaching although the overall result of the retraining programme influence on teachers' self-esteem (total $\bar{X} = 3.04$, $SD = 0.09$; criterion- $\bar{X} = 2.50$) indicates high self-esteem towards teaching by teachers. This fact can be deduced from the teachers' indications of feelings of self-confidence, self-worth, and non-resentment to teaching. Others include their perceptions of teaching as a pleasurable and challenging profession where they can achieve success in life. In addition, the teachers also agree that the retraining programme not only enriched their knowledge but also equipped them with new skills, thus, imputing them the feelings of competence and happiness in teaching field. These observations are in consonance with Martin, Carlson, and Buskist (2009) and Haggins's (1998) characteristics of people with high self-esteem. According to these researchers, high self-esteem individuals are often optimistic in their perceptions about self, are goal-oriented, and have confidence in achieving success in their life's goals.

The fact that retraining programmes positively influenced primary school teachers' self-esteem might imply that it served an incentive that boosts their morale towards teaching as well as instilled in them the feeling of their recognition and acceptance by their state government as one of the major stakeholders in the achievement of national growth and development. Since earlier studies of Zunker (2006), Khan (2009), and

Mangal (2010) revealed that self-esteem influences one's productivity, it is hoped that incentives, such as retraining of teachers would go a long way in improving their self-esteem societal image and acceptance which are necessary for spurring teachers to improve performance in educational system.

It is worth nothing that although the retraining programme enhanced the primary school teachers' self-esteem, some instances of low self-esteem in teaching still exist. This can be inferred from their indications of feelings of inferiority when in the midst of friends who are not teachers, that teaching is a very tasking job and remaining in teaching profession means continual loosing of friends and declining to poverty in live. Despite of characteristics of individuals of low self-esteem (Baumeister & Bushman, 2008; Adams, Ryan, Ketsetzis, & Keating, 2000), these observations have both psychological and counseling implications. It confirms the fact that the teachers' societal image and acceptance are still poor (Afe, 2001; Njoku, 2011). The implication of this is that if this teachers' poor self-esteem is not improved, the expected quality service delivery and improved academic performance of children will be hindered (Ramalingam, 2006; Zunker, 2006).

The result of the null hypothesis testing reflected in Table 2 indicates that there is no significant difference between the influence of retraining programme on self-esteem of primary school teachers in urban and rural schools in Ebonyi State of Nigeria. This finding is not surprising. It simply implies that location is not a barrier to manifestation of either low or high self-esteem in teaching, because self-esteem is personal feelings and evaluation of self. According to Zunker (2006) and Collins (2007), human beings are unique individuals who have propensities for self-expressions of feelings and evaluations of self-irrespective of the location of one's workplace. However, the observed overall mean difference between the two groups of teachers indicates that the teachers in rural were more influenced than those in the urban primary schools.

Conclusion

This study reveals that retraining of primary school teachers is an essential tool for instilling high self-esteem in teachers towards teaching profession. It not only serves as an incentive for boosting teachers' societal image and recognition by government, but also helps in enhancing their knowledge and skills in the profession, thus, imputing in teachers the feelings of competence and self-worth in effectively handling the children placed under their care. It is therefore hoped that with regular retraining of teachers at all levels of learning, the expected quality assurance in service delivery of teachers in teaching profession and improved academic performance of learners would be achieved.

Recommendation

Based on the findings of this study, the researchers make these following recommendations:

(1) Both federal and state governments of Nigeria should improve teachers' self-esteem towards teaching by exposing teachers to retraining programmes which would help in enriching their knowledge and skills to effectively cope with the technological demands of this era;

(2) Retraining programme of teachers should be carried out on regular basis and for all teachers and not for a selected few from selected schools. This would help in eliminating the feelings of inferiority, preferential treatment, and disregard by government for some schools;

(3) Retraining programmes should also incorporate sessions for psycho-sociological counseling activities. This would enable professional counselors to help the teachers in seeing the need for having high self-esteem towards teaching profession and how self-esteem can be improved since it is a life-long process.

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