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Improving Teachers Content Knowledge and Students Achievement through Performance appraisal Approach in South-south, Nigeria

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Abstract

The research was aimed Improving Teachers Content Knowledge and Students Achievement through Performance appraisal Approach in South-south, Nigeria. The population of this study was 2073 sourced from selected public secondary schools in the south south zone of Nigeria while the sample size was 335. The study used a survey research design. Data analysis was done with simple regression analysis. It was established that performance appraisal feedback (beta value =5.042) has a significant influence on teachers' content knowledge towards educational goal attainment in public secondary schools in south south zone of Nigeria. Findings also indicated that teachers' post-performance appraisal career development (beta value=2.536) significantly influenced students' academic achievement in public secondary schools in south south zone of Nigeria. Based on findings of the study, it was concluded that performance appraisal can determine teachers' effectiveness in public secondary schools in south south zone, Nigeria. It was recommended among others that policy makers in the education sector should consider formulating relevant policies that effectively address teachers' appraisal feedback towards enhancing their content knowledge towards educational goal attainment. It was also recommended that post performance appraisal career development should be sustained and sponsored as an effective strategy to influence teachers' effectiveness in developing students' academic achievement in public secondary schools in south south Zone of Nigeria.

Keywords: Teachers content knowledge, Performance appraisal, Teachers' effectiveness, achievement,

1.0 Introduction

Worldwide, it is an established fact that the quality of an organization is basically expressed in terms of its output of product or service, which is a function of the input – output process. Hence, in organizational life, the paramount factors to consider are

the human resources because they are the most valuable resource on which other resources depend for relevance and functionality. In schools, the teachers hold the position of authority to direct programmes pertaining to co-curricular activities and teaching. The

quality of a school to a great extent is determined by the quality of the teaching staff of that school. Santiago and Benavides (2019) explained that as the most important resource in schools, teachers are critical to raise education standards. Here lies the importance of performance appraisal of teachers in schools.

Performance appraisal has been variously explained in literature. Lawal (2019) defined performance appraisal as a methodical evaluation of the performance of employees to value its worth to the organization and comparing such performance to the standard set by the organization. Begum, Mark and Cole (2020) explain that performance appraisal deals within the formally arranged interaction that take place among subordinates and their supervisors which involves periodic review in which the subordinate's performance is assessed and subsequently discussed to spot areas of weakness and strength as well as opportunities for achieving improvement in performance and development of skills. Performance appraisal is also seen as a rare and essential aspect of employee career development which comprises assessing the performance of the employee, as well as conveying to the employee details of its performance (Paul, Golman and Bruno, 2019). As a systematic process, performance appraisal has gained popularity in schools for determining the merit, value, and worth of a teacher's current status and estimating his/her potential level of performance with further development (Mwangi, 2021). The author submitted that performance appraisal of teachers is increasingly viewed as a critical process in schools for raising the competency of teachers and thereby the quality of education.

In the school system, it is expected that teachers' performance appraisal should benefit both the teacher and the school in pursuit of quality education. However, despite persistent implementation of performance appraisal in public schools, teaching job delivery by some teachers in Nigeria has been poor in many cases. For instance, Prince-Ifoh (2022) laments that many teachers in Nigeria do not give time to their work and learn progressively to enhance their skills, leading to ineffectiveness. In addition, it has been noted that the emphasis of some secondary school teachers is on making students pass exams and not on equipping them with lifelong skills (Akala, 2021). This study explores the link between appraisal system and teachers' effectiveness with specific reference to the influence of performance appraisal feedback on teachers' content knowledge towards educational goal attainment and teachers' post performance appraisal career development on students' academic achievement in public secondary schools in south south Zone of Nigeria.

Research Objective

This study had the following objectives:

- i. To examine the influence of performance appraisal feedback on teachers' content knowledge towards educational goal attainment in public secondary schools in south south zone of Nigeria.
- ii. To explore the influence of teachers' post performance appraisal career development on students' academic achievement in public secondary schools in south south zone of Nigeria.

Research Questions

In this study, the following research questions were raised:

- i. What are the performance appraisal techniques mostly utilized for teachers' appraisal in public secondary schools in South South zone of Nigeria.?
- ii. To what extent has performance appraisal feedback influenced teachers' content knowledge towards educational goal attainment in public secondary schools in South South zone of Nigeria?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated:

- H₀₁:** There is no significant positive influence of performance appraisal feedback on teachers' content knowledge towards educational goal attainment in public secondary schools in South South Zone of Nigeria
- H₀₂:** There is no significant positive influence of teachers' post performance appraisal career development on students' academic achievement in public secondary schools in South South Zone of Nigeria

2.0 Review of Literature and Theoretical Issues

Performance Appraisal

Performance Appraisal is concerned with giving value to employees' contribution to organizations with a view to improving their contributions to the business of organizations (Blazer, 2019). It is essential for the effective management and evaluation of staff. It aims to improve organizational performance as well as individual development (Mark, 2018).

Asuku and Abraham (2019) are of the view that teacher's appraisal is a legal framework for teachers' performance and improvement hence gives supervisors the opportunities to assess subordinate's duties or functions as well as performance in various classroom and general school programmes. The school principals, schools board or ministry of education supervisors move round to monitor, assess and inspect erring and standard teachers. When this is done without bias, fear or favour there will be promotion for good performance and improvement for weak ones, because praises and promotion for good performance is needed by all teachers. Similarly, Nelson (2024), Igwe (2016) opined that, staff appraisal is important in educational institutions. This is because it determines the extent to which teachers perform their functions effectively and efficiently. Teacher appraisal is a technique for enhancing teaching and all learning outcomes, it is a mechanism for improving teaching and learning (Filgona et al (2020). The author explained that the key responsibilities for teacher performance areas are: teaching responsibilities, such as planning the lesson, teaching method and technique, classroom management, classroom environment and control, curriculum knowledge and students' assessment.

Feedback

The purpose of any establishment when conducting employee evaluation is to obtain feedback. Spector (2018) describes feedback as the information offered to an individual employee about his performance. In the perfect condition, workers get information about how they are doing in their occupation and where they could develop or improve upon. Filgona et al (2020) have identified that the feedback tool acts as a way of discovering employees' weaknesses and strengths. Many scholars assert that to better the performance of an employee, it is necessary to first distinguish his

extent of growth and dimness via feedback (Karamanos, 2020). when feedback is conveyed to the workforce, it enables the employees to understand in clear terms how their contributions are facilitating their organization's performance goals, the expectations on their performance and what needs to be done to improve performance towards improving organizational effectiveness and goals.

Post Appraisal Training

Post appraisal training is extremely significant for employee's performance as it aids in developing competencies in employee and in facilitating the capacity of organizations to maintain its employees through satisfaction and inspiration (Mbore & Cheriuiyot, 2017). Continuous training and development take personnel to a satisfactory stage of performance and retaining them occupied really has an important relationship to morale and optimism thus influencing performance (Mbore & Cheriuiyot, 2017). The authors observed that training boosts knowledge attainment, talent expansion, traits, and competencies as well as worker performance with effect for great output in any organisation. Similarly, Maheshwari & Vohra (2018) were of the conclusion that training inspires the employee to attain the aim set by an organization. they submitted that the training which workforces acquire following appraisal brings about improvement in job performance.

Teachers' Effectiveness

The literature leads educators in three main directions when defining teacher effectiveness. The first is an emphasis on student achievement (Carrero, 2016). Other studies on teacher effectiveness identify the skills and actions of highly effective teachers (Gallagher, 2018). In addition to these findings, some other studies identify the mindset and attitudes needed to increase teaching effectiveness (Gurol & Kerimgil, 2017).

Researchers on teacher effectiveness have striven to identify specific teacher skills and behaviors that lead to increased teacher effectiveness. Dilworth and Aguerreberere (2017) emphasized that assessment of teaching must move beyond compliance measures toward capturing improved teacher behavior and performance as well as evidence of deeper student knowledge, improved skills, and greater understanding. Several studies found that teacher characteristics include: knowledgeable, purposeful, critical, creative, committed, open-minded, flexible, patient, tolerant, adaptive, responsive, and eager and willing to learn (Carrero, 2016; Hobbs, 2016).

Empirically, Otaka, Mugizi, and Rwothumio (2023) revealed that while goal setting and career development had a positive and

significant influence on teacher effectiveness, performance management appraisal had a positive but insignificant influence on teacher effectiveness. Dhana -Raju & Vijaya -Vardhini (2022) established a significant difference between teaching experience of secondary school teachers with respect to teacher effectiveness. Amie-Ogan & Onyebuchi (2020) found that to a high extent teachers' subject content knowledge and teachers' commitment to managing students learning process influence instructional delivery in public secondary schools. Asuku & Abraham(2019) found that performance interview practices can enhance teachers' productivity to high extent in secondary schools.

3.0 Materials and Method

This study was based on a survey research design. The design enabled the researchers to obtain sought information from respondents who were teachers in the South-south Nigeria. The population of the study was 2073 teachers while the sample size was determined through Taro Yamane sample size determination formular was 335. On account of accessibility and proximity to one another, three states in the South-south zone of Nigeria, namely, Akwa Ibom State, Cross River State and Rivers State were investigated. In the same vein, three public secondary schools within state capitals of the selected states were studied. The instrument for data collection was a questionnaire developed by the researchers titled "Appraisal Techniques and Teachers' Job Performance Questionnaire (ATTJPQ)". Instrument validation was done with two experts in the field of Curriculum and Educational Management, their suggestions assisted the researchers to modify the research instrument. Furthermore, the Cronbach Alpha reliability test was carried out on research variables. The result indicated alpha coefficient of 0.78% which was an indication that the instrument was reliable. The instrument as designed reflected 5 – point Likert scale. It was scored as follows; strongly Agree (SA = 5); Agreed (A = 4); Disagree (DA = 3), Strongly Disagree (SD =2) and Undecided (UN =1). The instrument achieved 77.02% response rate. The respondents were made up of 115(55.83%) male and 91(44.17%) female. Descriptive analysis was used to answer the research questions while regression analysis was used in testing for hypotheses at .05 significance level.

4.0 Data and Analysis

Research Questions

Research question 1

To what extent has performance appraisal feedback influenced teachers' content knowledge towards educational goal attainment in public secondary schools in south south zone of Nigeria?

Table 1: Responses on the influence of appraisal feedback on teachers' content knowledge towards educational goal attainment in public secondary schools

Statements	SA	A	D	SD	UN
Appraisal feedback enhances my knowledge as a teacher	49 (23.79%)	97 (47.09%)	34 (16.50%)	21 (10.19%)	5 (2.43%)
Feedback on appraisal helps me to cover syllabus within stipulated time	51 (24.76%)	107 (51.94%)	21 (10.19%)	18 (8.74%)	9 (4.37%)
Through feedback on appraisal, I am able to improve on my assessment of students' work	41 (19.90%)	122 (59.22%)	26 (12.62%)	11 (5.34%)	6 (2.91%)
Feedback on appraisal assist me in identifying my students' strengths and weaknesses in order to	35	92	37	31	11

respond as applicable	(16.99%)	(44.66%)	(17.96%)	(15.05%)	(5.34%)
Mean	44	105	29	20	8

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Table 1 shows the responses on the influence of appraisal feedback on teachers' content knowledge towards educational goal attainment in public secondary schools in South South Zone, Nigeria. In the table, 49(23.79%) respondents strongly agreed that appraisal feedback enhances my knowledge as a teacher; 97 (47.09%) respondents agreed; 34(16.50%) respondents disagreed; 21(10.19%) respondents strongly disagreed while 5(2.43%) were undecided. Also, in the table, 51(24.76%) strongly agreed that feedback on appraisal helps me to cover syllabus within stipulated time; 107(51.94%) respondents agreed; 21(10.19%) respondents disagreed; 18(8.74%) strongly disagreed while 9(4.37%) respondents were undecided. Furthermore, 41(19.90%) respondents strongly agreed that through feedback on appraisal, they were able to improve on their assessment of students' work ;122(59.22%) respondents agreed; 26(12.62%) respondents disagreed; 11(5.34%) respondents strongly disagreed while

6(2.91%) respondents were undecided. Also, in the table, 35(16.99%) respondents strongly agreed that feedback on appraisal assist me in identifying my students' strengths and weaknesses in order to respond as applicable; 92(44.66%) respondents agreed;37(17.96%) respondents disagreed; 31(15.05%) respondents strongly disagreed while 11(5.34%) respondents were undecided. The analysis shows that majority of the respondents 149(72.33%) were in agreement that appraisal feedback influenced teachers' content knowledge towards educational goal attainment in public secondary schools in south south zone, Nigeria.

Research Question 2

To what extent has post performance appraisal career development influenced students' academic achievement in public secondary schools in south south zone, Nigeria?

Table 2: Responses on the influence of post-performance appraisal career development on students' academic achievement in public secondary schools

Statements	SA	A	D	SD	UN
Appraisal information help in identifying areas I need to improve on students' learning	39 (18.93%)	95 (46.12%)	38 (18.45%)	31 (15.05%)	3 (1.46%)
Through appraisal information, my professionalism is enhanced in supporting students' learning	46 (22.33%)	91 (44.17%)	42 (20.39%)	22 (10.68%)	5 (2.43%)
The outcome of appraisal improves my relevance in guiding students	40 (19.42%)	105 (50.97%)	33 (16.01%)	21 (10.19%)	7 (33.98%)
Through appraisal information I become aware of the likely future learning needs of my students	36 (17.48%)	83 (40.29%)	38 (18.45%)	40 (19.42%)	9 (4.37%)
Mean	40	94	38	28	6

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Table 2 shows the responses on responses on the influence of post-performance appraisal career development on students' academic achievement in public secondary schools in south south zone, Nigeria. In the table, 39(18.93%) respondents strongly agreed that appraisal information helps in identifying areas they need to improve on students' learning. Again, 95 (46.12%) respondents agreed; 38 (18.45%) respondents disagreed; 31(15.05%) respondents strongly disagreed while 3 (1.46%) respondents were undecided. Also, in the table, 46(22.33%) respondents strongly agreed that through appraisal information, their professionalism is enhanced in supporting students' learning. Also, 91(44.17%) respondents agreed; 42(20.39%) respondents disagreed; 22(10.68%) respondents strongly disagreed while 5(2.43%) respondents were undecided. Furthermore, 40(19.42%) respondents strongly agreed that the outcome of appraisal improves their relevance in guiding students. On this statement, 105(50.97%) respondents agreed; 33(16.01%) respondents disagreed; 21(10.19%) respondents strongly disagreed while 7(33.98%) were

undecided. Also in the table, 36 (17.48%) respondents strongly agreed that the through appraisal information they become aware of the likely future learning needs of their students. On this statement, 83(40.29%) respondents agreed; 38(18.45%) respondents disagreed; 40(19.42%) respondents strongly disagreed while 9(4.37%) were undecided. In Table 4.9, majority of the respondents 134(65.05%) indicated that post performance appraisal career development had an influence on students' academic achievement in public secondary schools in south south zone of Nigeria.

Hypotheses testing

Hypothesis 1

There is no significant positive influence of performance appraisal feedback on teachers' content knowledge towards educational goal attainment in public secondary schools in south south zone of Nigeria

Table 3: Regression Analysis Result on influence of performance appraisal feedback on teachers' content knowledge towards educational goal attainment in public secondary schools.

Model Summary							
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate			
1	.844 ^a	.712	.641	0.17323			
Goodness of Fit ^a							
Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	
1	Regression	146.581	1	20366.331	645.218	.000 ^b	
	Residual	203.139	204	231.188			
	Total	349.720	205				
Coefficients ^a							
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			
1	(Constant)		2.326	.311		3.033	1.018
	Performance appraisal feedback		.738	.206	.639	3.5825	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Performance appraisal feedback

b. Predictors: (Constant), Teachers' content knowledge

Table 3 shows the result of regression analysis on the influence of performance appraisal feedback on teachers' content knowledge towards educational goal attainment in public secondary schools in south south Zone, Nigeria. The generalized model summary showed an R² of 0.712 which implies that 71.2% of the changes in performance appraisal feedback influences 71.2% of teachers' content knowledge.

The model also showed a goodness of fit at 95 percent (p-value <0.05). Performance appraisal feedback influence on teachers' content knowledge towards educational goal attainment in public

secondary schools in south south Zone, Nigeria showed a statistically significant relationship at 95% (also p-value <0.05). In view of this result, the null hypothesis is rejected. This shows that there is a significant positive influence of performance appraisal feedback on teachers' content knowledge towards educational goal attainment in public secondary schools in south south zone, Nigeria.

Hypothesis 2

There is no significant positive influence of teachers' post performance appraisal career development on students' academic achievement in public secondary schools in south south zone of Nigeria

Table 4: Regression Analysis Result on influence of teachers' post performance appraisal career development on students' academic achievement in public secondary schools

Model Summary						
Model		R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	
1		.926 ^a	.857	.771	0.30432	
Goodness of Fit ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
	Regression	221.427	1	2562.421	713.327	.000 ^b
	Residual	239.228	204	106.393		
	Total	460.655	205			
Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.027	.288		2.264	2.005

	Post performance appraisal career development	.494	.193	.446	2.560	.000
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- Predictors: (Constant), Teachers' post performance appraisal career development
- Dependent Variable: Students' academic achievement

Table 4 shows the result of regression analysis on the influence of teachers' post performance appraisal career development on students' academic achievement in public secondary schools in south south zone of Nigeria. The generalized model summary showed a R^2 of 0.857 implies that 85.7% of the changes in teachers' post performance appraisal career development influenced about 85.7% changes in students' academic achievement in public secondary schools in south south zone of Nigeria. The model also showed a goodness of fit at 95 percent (p-value <0.05). The influence of teachers' post performance appraisal career development on students' academic achievement in public secondary schools in south south zone of Nigeria indicated a statistically significant relationship at 95% (also p-value <0.05). In line with this result, the null hypothesis is thus rejected. This implies that there is a significant positive influence of teachers' post performance appraisal career development on students' academic achievement in public secondary schools in south south zone of Nigeria.

Discussion of Findings

The first objective of this study was to examine the influence of performance appraisal feedback on teachers' content knowledge towards educational goal attainment in public secondary schools in south south zone of Nigeria. In line with this objective, it was hypothesized that there is no significant positive influence of performance appraisal feedback on teachers' content knowledge towards educational goal attainment in public secondary schools in south south zone of Nigeria. In the test of the hypothesis, it was found that there was a significant positive influence of performance appraisal feedback on teachers' content knowledge towards educational goal attainment in public secondary schools in south south zone of Nigeria. This therefore led to rejection of the hypothesis. The result supports Amie-Ogan and Onyebuchi (2020) whose earlier study indicated that to a high extent teachers' subject content knowledge and teachers' commitment to managing students learning process influenced instructional delivery in public secondary schools. Similarly, the result is in agreement with Aina, Olanipekun and Garuba (2015) who stressed that if a teacher is not sound in the content of what he or she teaches, there will be problem in both quality of learning and students' academic performance.

The second objective of this study was to explore the influence of teachers' post performance appraisal career development on students' academic achievement in public secondary schools in south south zone of Nigeria. In view of this objective, hypothesis two was formulated as there is no significant positive influence of teachers' post performance appraisal career development on students' academic achievement in public secondary schools in south south zone, Nigeria. In the test of the hypothesis, outcome showed the existence of a significant positive influence of teachers' post performance appraisal career development on students' academic achievement in public secondary schools in south south zone of Nigeria. Hence, the hypothesis was rejected. The result contradicts Kiprop, Limo and Keter (2024) who found a

weak relationship between the teachers' adherence to deadlines and student academic achievement.

Conclusion

Teachers' effectiveness is vital in the school system in order to assist translate and implement educational goals in the society. Where effectiveness is lacking, in teachers, these goals become unrealized and the students who should directly benefit suffer. In this study, the influence of performance appraisal on teachers' effectiveness in public secondary schools in south south zone of Nigeria was investigated. The study has shown that performance appraisal feedback significantly influenced teachers' content knowledge towards educational goal attainment in public secondary schools in south south zone of Nigeria. Findings also indicated that teachers' post-performance appraisal career development significantly influenced students' academic achievement in public secondary schools in south south zone of Nigeria. Based on these findings, it is concluded that performance appraisal can determine teachers' effectiveness in public secondary schools in south south zone of Nigeria. This study contributes to teachers' effectiveness and educational goal attainment in public secondary schools in south south zone of Nigeria leveraging teachers' appraisal. However, the researchers acknowledge a possible limitation in generalizing findings of this study given that only three states of the south south zone of Nigeria were surveyed. To offer opportunity for comparing findings and to improve generalization of findings, It is suggested that in future, other researchers should expand the scope to cover all states in the south-south zone of Nigeria.

Recommendations

In view of the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made:

- That policy makers in the education sector should consider formulating relevant policies that effectively address teachers' appraisal feedback towards enhancing their content knowledge towards educational goal attainment.
- That post performance appraisal career development should be sustained and sponsored as an effective strategy to influence teachers' effectiveness in developing students' academic achievement in public secondary schools in south south zone of Nigeria.

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