

# JOURNAL OF RESEARCH IN EDUCATION

13

VOL. 4, NO. 3, 2007



INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE

## THE PERCEPTION OF TEACHERS AND SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS TO SCHOOL BASED AND CLUSTER INSERVICE TEACHERS PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT PROGRAMME

<sup>1</sup>Isabel Ezinwa Okokoyo, <sup>2</sup>Caroline Nwaham and <sup>3</sup>Violet Asua Ikpeba

<sup>1&3</sup>Department of Educational Fundation and Administration

<sup>2</sup>Dpartment o Primary Education

<sup>1,2,&3</sup>Colegeof Education, Agbor, Delta State, Nigeria

### ABSTRACT

*The paper focused on the perception of teachers and school administrators about school-based and cluster in-service teachers professional support programme because teachers are the best advocatés for and constructive critics of any programme relating to their professional development. The paper reveals that the school-based and cluster in-service teachers support programme which is a major component of the UBE mandate as a strategy for National capacity building and enhancement for teachers to ensure quality of the teaching and learning, fell into coma immediately after the launch of the pilot research programme on school-based and cluster in-service in the studied area. The paper also presented a contextual insight as to why the initiative should not be allowed to die as researches on teacher education development show the growing consensus that professional development of the teacher yields the best results when it is long-term, school-based, collaborative, localized, actively involving all teachers and used as a matter of central importance teachers own knowledge of their practice and the realities of their classrooms and schools. (Hiebert et al 2002).*

**Keywords:** *School-Based, Cluster In-Service, Professional Support Perception.*

### INTRODUCTION

The Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme was launched by the president of the Federal Republic of Nigeria on 30<sup>th</sup> September, 1999 in Sokoto with the following mission statement; to serve as a prime energizers of a national movement for actualization of the Nations Universal Basic Education (UBE) vision, working in concert with all tiers of government, teachers union, Parents Teachers Association (PTA), NGO's, development partners, the private sector and all classes of the civil society, thus mobilizing the Nations creative energies to ensure that education for all becomes the business of all with active Nigerian Populace patriotically assuming ownership of UBE and doggedly assuring its unqualified success (UBE 2003). A major component of the UBE mandate is to ensure quality of the teaching and learning process through National capacity building and enhancement for teachers. The UBE through its department of Teacher Training and Curriculum development and through support from the world Bank Primary Education project (PEP) has been trying out new initiatives in training teachers through its school based and Cluster Teachers Professional Support Programme (UBE 2003). The school based and cluster in-service' teachers professional support programme is a school initiative geared towards helping each teacher facilitate change in the classroom through co-operative and collaborative approach. It is an initiative which brings teachers from the same school or various schools within a locality together in a cluster and facilitate a co-operative process whereby participants become creative in problem solving, production of teaching and learning materials, preparation of lesson plan and suggest ways of improvement. School based and cluster teacher professional support programme is a staff development strategy which provides a bridge stone with other teacher and school administrators to help solve problems and support each other through discussion, modeling, coaching and involvement with other aspects of school and educational change (Okokoyo 2006). It is a capacity building and enhancement professional development approach of a continuous on the job collaborative support and guidance for the purpose of updating and acquiring new knowledge, skills and competence for increased efficiency in the primary functions which will eventually rub on the quality of students output. The school based and cluster teachers professional support programme is an interactive approach in which all participants mutually benefits. Experienced and exceptional teachers are used as resource persons to assist and expose newly certified and old serving teachers who do not have the opportunity of attending any refresher courses to a variety of innovation in the teaching/ learning process which will make it possible for the cluster to work together as a learning community and grow professionally in areas of common concern. The resource persons on the other hand benefit because the questions from the cluster may provide an opportunity for them to re-examine their own classroom practices and the effects of accepted instructional techniques on the teaching/learning process and classroom

# The Perception of Teachers and School Administrators to School Based and Cluster Inservice Teachers Professional Support Programme



Fig: shows how organized these programmes are in the studied area

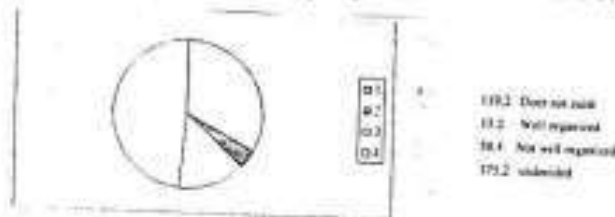


Fig 4: Shows the Change and Improvement That Occur In The Classrooms of Teacher That Participated In the Programmes.

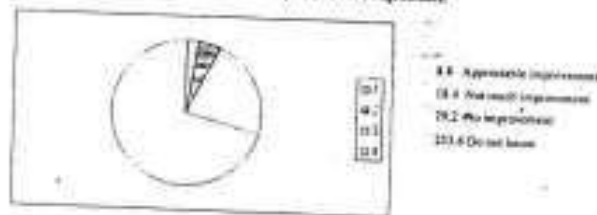


Fig 5: Shows The Effect of These Programmes on Students' Desired Characteristics Such As Academic Learning, Skills And Attitudes.



## DISCUSSION

Fig 1 shows the level of awareness of teachers and school-heads in the studied area to school-based and cluster in-service teachers' professional support programmes (TPS). The study reveals that only the teachers and school heads of the schools used for the pilot research programme are measurably aware of this new initiative to their professional support. The Local Government Education Authorities (LGEA) who are the managers of the programme at the schools and local levels and more or less the beneficiaries of the TPS of the UBE were supposed to ensure that the knowledge acquired by teachers in the pilot programme were used by them to form learning communities of teachers in various localities within their LGA and ensure their sustainability and effectiveness.

But this was not the case. There is therefore the need to do a lot of advocacy and sensitization in order to mobilize all the stakeholders of the programme. This should be done with a view to selling the idea and making the stakeholders feel that the programme is theirs and that they are part and parcel of it. The results shown in fig 2 and fig 3 as to how frequent and organized the programme is in the studied LGA are therefore obvious as the programme had a still birth and did not take off after the launching. The issues of the changes and improvement that are supposed to occur in the classrooms of teachers that participated in the programme and the effect of the programme on students' desired characteristics, such as, academic learning, skills and attitudes cannot be addressed or determined as the programme was not allowed to thrive due to the usual and unfortunate Nigeria factor of lack of vision, mission and commitment in the execution of any government project. We hope this will not be the beginning of the failure of the UBE, because a major component of the UBE mandate is National capacity building and enhancement of teachers to ensure quality of the teaching and learning process, through the school - based and cluster in-service teacher support initiative.

## CONCLUSION

The school-based and cluster teachers in-service support programme which is a radical departure from the centralized method of in-service training whereby the initiative for change is imposed from above should not be allowed to die. This is more so that, there is a growing consensus that professional development of teachers yield the best results when it is long-term, school-based, collaborative, localized and used as a matter of central importance teaches own knowledge of their practice. This is because teachers have the best ideas for content and for organizing and administering school based in-service programme (Elizabeth Len 2004). They know what is most relevant to their practice and as professionalism grows they will have the greatest concern for quality. Teachers are the main determinant of any educational reform. The critical

ingredience for the success of the school-based and cluster programme are teachers' willingness, ability and self confidence to examine what happen in their classrooms and schools. This makes a difference in their ability to teach and the pupils to learn. It also affords the teachers the opportunity to share teaching and learning experiences with network of teachers in their own locality especially in isolated rural settings. In this way teachers will be better equipped to develop teaching strategies that are appropriate for their school context and pupils in their classes. They will become more creative in adapting the curriculum to suit the pace and style of their pupils and will have more opportunity to develop their own instructional support materials. The success of the UBE programme lies on the school – based and cluster teacher support initiative to provide focused instruction for new uncertificated, newly certified and old serving teachers who do not have the opportunity of attending any refresher courses, an induction programme which is essential to guide and support – teachers and help develop sound teaching practice and reduce teachers' attrition.

#### REFERENCE

1. Boyle, B., While, D., & Boyle, T. (2003) A Longitudinal study of teacher change: what makes professional development effective? University of Manchester institute for Political and Economic Governance, Working Paper No 1 Manchester, University of Manchester.
2. Brewer, E. W. & J. McMahan – Landers (2003). Job Satisfaction among industrial and technical teachers educators. *J. Ind. Teacher Education*, 40:28-36.
3. Elizabeth, L. (2004) The Patterns and purposes of school-based and cluster Teachers Professional Development programmes. Academy for Educational development. Working paper No. 1 under EQUUIP 1's study of school-based Teacher inservice programmes and clustering of schools.
4. Goad, C., (1984 ) preparing Teachers for life long Education. Hamburg. UNESCO institute for Education
5. Greenland, J., (1983). The In-service Training of Primary School Teachers in English-Speaking Africa. London. Macmillan.
6. Hiebert, J.G. & J.W. Stigler (2002). A knowledge base for the Teaching Profession; what would it look like and how can we get one? Educational researcher
7. Okokoyo, I.E. (2006). Cluster In-service Teachers Professional Support Programme; A strategy for staff development. *Journal of Research in Education*. Vol 3 No 1.
8. Universal Basic Education (UBE) (2003). Cluster Teacher Professional support. A training manual for teachers, Head teachers and Teacher Educators. Ibadan. UBE.
9. United States Agency for International Development (USAID) (2002). Progress in Education, USAID 2000-2001. Washington DC, USAID.