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Assessing the Effects of In-service Training on the Performance of Ghanaian Basic School Social Studies Teachers

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Abstract
This study investigated the effects of in-service training on Social Studies teachers' performance in Ghana. The study area was Offinso Municipality in the Ashanti Region. To achieve this purpose, the study examined the various training programmes available to teachers, the effect of training on the teachers' performance and explored ways to improve teachers training at Offinso Municipality. The study adopted a quantitative approach and research design was descriptive survey. Questionnaire was used in getting data from respondents. The population of the study consisted of 550 teachers at Offinso Municipality in the Ashanti Region. However, 232 teachers were sampled using simple random technique. Data was collected and analyzed using quantitative analysis. The study found out that external or extramural courses were prepared for teachers as well as industrial experiences. The study found out that training among Social Studies teachers at Offinso Municipality had a moderate positive significant relationship with teachers' performance. It was also found out that teachers' in-service training could be improved at Offinso Municipality when copies of training modules were given to teachers after training to serve as reference materials. The study concluded that in-service training is statistically significant and positively related to Social Studies teachers' performance. Finally, the study recommends that Ghana Education Service should improve upon its in-service training and development policy to be consistent with the needs of teachers in general.

Keywords: Performance, In-Service Training, Social Studies Teachers, Effects, Ghanaian Basic Schools.

1. Introduction

Teachers are specially educated and trained to acquire the needed knowledge and skills that will make them effective in their work as teachers. Obviously, regular engagement with teachers to be current in new trends of teaching helps to endow them with both pedagogical and content knowledge that will impact positively in their performance.

The entire education process is designed by many significant agents, and the teacher plays an integral role in these agents. The teacher is requested to play a central role in education as he assumes the role as the implementer of the school curriculum (Tay & Wonkyi, 2018). Teacher preparation is therefore pivotal in realizing the aims of education in so far as the school system is concerned. Preparing teachers for the teaching profession is conceived as being a higher priority in any country since this profession is considered as being challenging and critical and may lead to nations' rising and progress in the different domains.

As a huge agency, education has great importance in building strong and developed societies, and the teacher is one of the primary agents for achieving that (Edens & Suzanne, 2013). For such reasons, it is always an urgent educational need that teachers should receive adequate educational and professional training to possess adequate knowledge and teaching skills and to be able to dedicate themselves to the teaching profession. Training has become the most significant factor in the organisational world today, because it upsurges the efficiency and the effectiveness of both employees and the organisation (Raja, Furqan & Khan, 2011). Teachers having gone through preparations at their college levels need to continuously upgrade their skills and knowledge to enable them to play their roles well.

Shaheen, Naqvi, and Khan (2013) defined training as a systematic development of the knowledge, skills and behaviour required by employees to do adequately on confirmed task or job. According to Amin, Aziz, Halamek and Beran (2013) in-service training is simply learning that is provided in order to improve performance on the present job. In-service training presents a prime chance to extend the learning base of all employees. Most employees have a few shortcomings in their working environment aptitudes and require regular interaction through training to help them overcome such shortcomings (Tay & Wonkyi, 2018).

The in-service training makes a strong working environment (Tabassi, Ramli, & Bakar, 2012). Workers may access training they would not have generally thought about or searched out themselves. Workers who feel acknowledged and tested through training may feel more fulfillment toward their occupations (Daily, Bishop & Massoud, 2012). In-service training projects builds communication between different levels of an organisation. Any deficiency in processes and jobs is eliminated and those close to production processes become involved in the management (Tabassi, Ramli, & Bakar, 2012). Staff empowerment will only be successful when proper training is provided to those empowered.

In the fast pace changing world of education and technological advancement and environmental uncertainty, it is imperative for educational players to realize the limitations of dealing with new challenges and should therefore invest in training and retraining programmes to make their employees competent enough to face uncertainties and take effective decision in time and remain competitive in the market (Tai, 2016).

In-service training can simply be defined as the relevant courses and activities in which a serving teacher may participate to upgrade his or her professional knowledge, skills, and competence in the teaching profession. Therefore, it encompasses all forms of education and training given to a teacher who is already on the job of teaching and learning (Osamwonyi, 2016). According to Billing (1976 cited in Osamwonyi,2016) in-service education is staff development which is a deliberate and continuous process involving the identification and discussion of present and anticipated needs of individual staff for furthering their job satisfaction and career prospects and of the institution for supporting its academic work and plans, and implementation of programmes of staff activities designed for the harmonious satisfaction of these needs.

Generally, the teachers are regarded as the hub of educational development. Therefore, in-service education is concerned with the activities and courses in which a serving teacher may participate for the purpose of upgrading his or her professional skills, knowledge and interest, subsequent to initial training. In this case, in-service education is designed to fill the gap of professional inadequacies of a serving teacher. As Fisher (2003) has rightly pointed out the skill appropriate for generations ago might no longer prepare students for the world beyond school. Students are being tasked to be more creative and thoughtful in their daily activities.

In-service education is also referred to as continuing education that is designed for the retraining, reskilling and updating the knowledge of manpower. According to UNESCO (1985) continuing education can be regarded as the entire body of educational processes whatever the content level and method, whether formal or otherwise, whether they prolong or replace initial education in schools, colleges and universities as well as in apprenticeship, whereby persons regarded as adults by the society to which they belong develop their abilities, enrich their knowledge, improve their technical or professional qualifications or turn them in a new direction and bring about changes in their attitudes or behaviour in the two-fold perspective of full personal development and participation on balance and independent social, economic and cultural development.

Papay, Taylor, Tyler and Laski (2016) see the teachers' role in education as very vital and identify some basic qualities and indicators of the teacher's performance such as good knowledge of the subject matter, ability to understand the student differences, ability to develop student competence, resourcefulness, good leadership capacity, self-discipline, and these qualities have significant impact on the teachers' job performance. This probably warranted Amaele (2010) to see teachers as prominent actors that interpret and transmit the desirable knowledge, skill, attitudes and values in the society. The implication is that the capacity of the teachers' knowledge and skill affect the teachers' job performance.

Empirically, studies conducted by Hervie and Winful (2018) and Antwi, Anderson and Abagali (2016) in Ghanaian Senior High Schools, revealed that lack of frequent in-service training, lack of teaching and learning materials, lack of incentives and motivation, and improper supervision have direct influence on science teachers' performance.

However, there is no fundamental study that has been conducted to investigate the effects of in-service training of teachers of Social Studies in the Basic School on their performance in the Offinso Municipality of the Ashanti Region of Ghana. Therefore, this study sought to fill the gap in examining the effects of in-service training of Social Studies teachers in the Basic School on the teachers' performance in the Offinso Municipality.

1.1. Objectives of the study

Specifically, the study sought to:
1. examine the effects of in-service training on the Basic School Social Studies teachers' performance.
2. explore ways to improve teachers in-service training at Offinso Municipality

1.2. Research Questions

To achieve the research objectives, the following questions were set to guide the study.
1. What are the effects of in-service training on the performance of basic school Social Studies teachers' performance?
2. In what ways can the in-service training of teachers can be improved to equip them with the requisite skills that will enable them to perform effectively on their work?

2. Methodology

This aspect virtually looked specifically into areas such as research approach, research design, population, sample and sampling techniques, instrumentation and procedure for data collection and data analysis.

2.1. Research Approach

The research approach was quantitative. This approach to research is specific, well structured, has been tested for their validity and reliability, and can be explicitly defined and recognised (Gefen, Rigdon & Straub, 2011, Creswell, 2018).

2.2. Research Design

The study adopted the descriptive research design. This was adopted because it is a scientific method which involves observing and describing the behaviour of a subject without influencing it in any way. It involves gathering data that describes events and then organises, tabulates, depicts, and describes the data collection (Xiaodan & Deepark, 2019). The descriptive research design was chosen mainly because it comprises a cross-sectional design in relation to which data are collected predominantly by questionnaire or by structured interview (Buchanan & Bryman, 2007). It also provides evidence concerning an existing situation or current conditions; hence surveys provide a more accurate picture of events and seek to explain people's perception and behaviour based on data gathered at a point in time. Further, it has the advantage of producing good responses from a wide range of people and it involves accurate and objective collection of data to describe an existing phenomenon (Amaratunga, Baldry, Sarshar & Newton, 2002).

2.3. Population of the Study

Babbie, Halley and Zaino (2007) posit that study population is the group or community that a researcher intends to carry out research on for the purpose of generalisation. Kotzab (2005) refers to a study population as the entire group of respondents or elements relevant to research. Umair (2018) adds that population refers to the target group that research intends to study or treat. The population for this research constitutes five hundred and fifty (550) Social Studies teachers at the Primary and the Junior High levels in the Offinso Municipality.

2.4. Sample and Sampling Procedure

Hair (2000) defines sampling as selecting a group of people or object from a targeted population for a study. Similarly, Sarantakos (2007) pointed out that sampling is a process of choosing the units of the target population which are to be included in a study. Crews and Creswell (2018) posit also that sampling procedures deal with the various approaches of getting the exact number of the study group out the target population. This refers to the individuals of which the research is conducted. A sample assist a researcher to study a relatively smaller percentage of the larger target population in which the results may be a representation of the larger group. It hence reduces the challenge of having to include the whole population in the study. Using Yamane (1967) sample size formula with a margin of error of 5% and 95% confidence interval, sample size of 232 was used. Respondents were randomly selected to participate in the study.

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N\,(e)^2\}}$$

Where: n = Desired Sample Size   N = Total Population   e = error limit   1= A constant

$$n = \frac{550}{\{1 + 550\,(0.05)^2\}}$$

$$n = \frac{550}{\{1 + 550\,(0.0025)\}}$$

$$= \frac{550}{\{1 + 1.375\}}$$

$$= \frac{500}{\{2.375\}}$$

$$= \quad 232$$

2.5. Study Area

The study area for this research was the Offinso Municipality. Ghana Education Service (GES) often organize training workshops for Teachers at the Municipality to boost their skills in delivery and knowledge base.

2.6. Data and Sources

The study made use of primary and secondary source of data collected from Social Studies teachers at Offinso Municipality using questionnaires. Some of the data collected from the field were the socio-demographic characteristics of respondents, training programmes and performance level of the respondents. The secondary data included journals, books, articles.

2.7. Data Collection Instruments

A self-administered questionnaire was used in the data collection. The questionnaire had three sections (A, B and C). Section "A" dealt with the demographic characteristics of respondents. The Section "B" focused on training programmes available for teachers including Social Studies teachers at Offinso Municipality. Section "C" focused on the performance of respondents. The questionnaire comprised close ended questions. Close-ended questions were relevant because they were easy to ask and quick to answer. Another reason was that analysis of closed-ended questions was easy and straight forward.

2.8. Data Collection Procedure

After formal permission for the data collection was granted by management of the various schools, the questionnaires were self-administered to the respondents to participate in the study. The purpose of the study was to be explained to them to pave way for retrieval of the questionnaires from the respondents without difficulty. This mode of primary data collection provided the opportunity for the researcher to establishing rapport with the respondents, thereby ensuring higher recovery rate (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010).

2.9. Data Analysis

Collected questionnaires must be managed properly if decision-making is to be made of it. Consequently, it is important that raw data is handled properly to transform it into information for the purpose of decision-making. The questionnaires that were retrieved would first be sorted out to find out those that were not answered and to check for consistency, clarity, and accuracy of recording. Each of the questionnaires was given an identification number to avoid double entry or data loss. The questionnaires would be coded using the SPSS Version 25.0 template. The SPSS aided in the analysis of the data collected. For all the objectives, one and two descriptive statistics such as frequencies and percentages were used in making the analysis. Regression analysis would be used to analyse the objectives three.

3. Discussion

3.1. Teachers' Performance

It was imperative to assess the level of teachers' performance before examining how training regresses on performance. Nine (9) indicators (items) were used to measure the level of job satisfaction and the measurement of this was done using mean and standard deviation to measure their level of agreement where SD = strongly disagree, D = disagree, N = neutral, A = Agree and SA = Strongly Agree.

The mean showed the average responses to each item whereas the standard deviation showed the variation in the responses to each item. Also, on a scale of 1 to 5, the accepted midpoint is 2.9 such that any mean score below 2.9 is regarded as disagreement and mean score above 2.9 is regarded as agreement. According to Wan, Wang, Liu & Tong (2014), anytime measures of central tendencies are computed, there is the need to also compute the measure of variation. However, there is no threshold for acceptable variation, but each variation can be compared with the variations of other items under the same construct. Table 4 therefore present the results of the level of teachers' performance as at Offinso municipality.

Table 4: Level of Teachers' Performance

Statement	Mean	Std. Deviation
I have improved on my leadership qualities	3.11	.88
I understand the values of my job	3.03	.66
I now have positive attitude towards work	3.06	.709
I have improved on my classroom management	3.15	.60
I am able to motivate students to study	3.16	.61
I have also been very effective in my job	3.12	.73
I have improved in skills in teaching	3.03	.48
I counsel my students	3.08	.60

3.2. Effect of In-Service Training on Social Studies Teachers' Performance

The objective one looked at the effect of in-service training on social studies teachers' performance at Offinso Municipality. Regression analysis was done where the linearity and the relationship between the two variables were analyzed with in-service training as the independent variable and teacher performance as the dependent variable. **Table 4** gave the model summary of the output, and it displays the R, R squared, adjusted R squared, and the standard error. R is the Pearson product moment correlation coefficient which indicates the strength and direction of the linear relationship between the dependent variable (teachers' performance) and the independent variable (in-service training). Hence from **Table 4**, training and employees' performance are positively correlated, and the strength of the relationship is strong at 0.641.

The R Square explains the amount of variation that exists in the dependent variable (teacher performance) caused by the independent variable (in-service training). Therefore, the result further indicates that 41.0% variation in the teachers' performance (as dependent variable) is explained by the independent variable (in-service training) and the remaining 59.1% is explained by the residual (other factors not captured by the model). The implication is that an increase in in-service training programs would result in a moderate increase in social studies teachers' performance and as such, in-service training alone cannot influence the teachers to perform well.

Table 4: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.641[a]	.410	.408	3.47335

a. Predictors: (Constant), TRP

Table 5 is the ANOVA table which provides the test significance for R and R^2 using the F-statistic. The F statistic is the regression mean square (MSR) divided by the residual mean square (MSE). If the significance value of the F statistic is small (smaller than say 0.05) then the independent variables do a good job explaining the variation in the dependent variable. In this analysis, the ρ-value is well below .05 (ρ = .000). Therefore, it can be concluded that, the R and R^2 between in-service training and employees' performance is statistically significant.

Table 5: ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	1930.267	1	1930.267	160.001	.000[b]
	Residual	2774.750	230	12.064		
	Total	4705.017	231			

a. Dependent Variable: Employee Performance
b. Predictors: (Constant), TRP

The Table 6 also provides information that is useful for understanding the regression equation. Under the column marked unstandardized coefficient and sub-column B, the numerical value for the first row, labelled (constant), is the value for the intercept (a) in the regression equation. The numerical value on the second row, labelled as training in this case (representing the independent variables), is the value for the slope (b) for the regression equation. Based on these results, the researcher can report the following regression equation, predicting employees' performance based on the available training program.

Y (Employees' performance) = 19.234 + 0.446X (Training)

Hence, taking the values for the slope and the intercept in the resulting regression equation, the following assertions could be made. According to the intercept, when there is no training program for employees, thus, when training is zero, employees' performance will be at 19.234, and according to the slope, for any training given to employees (teachers), there will be an increase in employees' performance by (26.6%). Therefore, training at Offinso Municipality has a moderate significant influence on employees' performance.

Table 6: Coefficients

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta	T	Sig.
1	(Constant)	19.234	1.217		15.807	.000
	INT	.446	.035	.641	12.649	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Employee Performance

This finding is in line with a study by Macleani (2018) whose study revealed that there were positive and significant relationships between teacher learning, teacher growth, teacher needs, teachers' collaboration and job performance in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State in NIgeria. Hervie and Winful (2018) for instance, revealed that, poor performance of teachers was due to lack of frequent in-service training, lack of teaching and learning materials, lack of incentives and motivation, and improper supervision. As such training teachers enhanced their performance.

Further, the findings were in line with Antwi, Anderson and Abagali (2016) whose study revealed that science teachers had initial low self-efficacy beliefs but developed high self-efficacy beliefs after the in-service training. Okoye and Onuoha in Okolie (2015) also found that teachers' quality through regular training enhanced the teachers' teaching quality and the development programmes. Lastly, the findings corroborate with Essel, Badu, Owusu-Boateng and Saah (2009) whose study result also showed that more than 60% of the teachers were in favor of getting more training, acquiring new attitudes and skills in order to help them excel in their teaching profession and sharing their gained information with other colleagues and pupils/students they teach.

3.3. Ways Training of Teachers can be Improved at Offinso Municipality

The last research objective sought to determine from respondents the ways training of teachers can be improved at Offinso Municipality. The question was open-ended, and respondents were made to suggest ways of improving the training of teachers. Their responses were grouped into themes. The majority of the respondents mentioned that training modules are collected back immediately after the program, and they hardly remember everything learnt. As such their suggested that the copies of the modules be given to them after training to serve as a reference material. Also, others suggested that there should be frequent check-ups by trainers to various schools to verify

the progress of teachers after training. This, most asserted that would urge teachers to be mindful of the teaching behaviour.

The respondents, especially the female counterparts, averred that there should be equal opportunities for both sexes with respect to teachers training at the municipality. They stated that most of times, there is gender discrimination where the males are in the realm of affairs of training in the Metropolitan and Municipalities. In other to improve training of teachers, the respondents suggested that apart from training program organized for the municipality, each school should have a trainer so that periodically, that person could train the teachers based on the conditions presented at each school. Others suggested that they were either late or unable attend to training because of transportation constraints. Some indicated that they were from far places and others complained about fare charges.

Similarly, the respondents suggested that starting time for training program should be on time to enable prospective trainees in the hinterland go back home on time since transportation to some areas were difficulty. The respondents claimed that adoption of modern technology should be inculcated in the training of the teachers in the municipality. To them, the use of these modern gadgets would help a long way in promoting easy understanding of the outlines of the training program.

These suggestions by respondents were somewhat in line with recommendations of many studies (Salimans, Goodfellow, Zaremba, Cheung, Radford & Chen, 2016; Gulrajani, Ahmed, Arjovsky, Dumoulin & Courville, 2017; Hervie & Winful; 2018; Antwi, Anderson and Abagali (2016; Essel, Badu, Owusu-Boateng and Saah (2009). For instance, Hervie and Winful (2018) recommended that Ghana Education Service should improve upon its in-service training and development policy to be consistent with the needs of teachers. More so, periodic learning needs assessments should be conducted before training programmes are designed for teachers. Again, Antwi, Anderson and Abagali (2016) and Essel, Badu, Owusu-Boateng and Saah (2009) also training should time bound, and conscious effort be made to allow trainees to reflect on the training.

4. Conclusions

This study has provided an overview and relevant discussion on the relationship between training and teachers' performance at Offinso municipality. The study concluded that among others, extramural courses industry experience, coaching, job instructions, job rotation, conference and simulation are training programmes that could be offered to Social Studies teachers to enhance their skills, knowledge, and competencies in the teaching profession.

The study further concludes with confirmation to other studies and assertions that training is statistically significant and positively related to teachers' performance at Offinso Municipality. However, the effect on employee's performance at the Sub-metro is moderate.

Lastly, the study concludes that copies of training modules should be given to teachers after training to serve as a reference material. Correspondingly, there should be recurrent check-ups by trainers to various schools to substantiate the progress of teachers after training as well as equal opportunities to both sexes with respect to teachers training at the municipality.

5. Recommendations

Based on the study's conclusions, the following recommendations were hereby made.

1. The study recommended that Ghana Education Service should improve upon its in-service training and development policy to be consistent with the needs of teachers. More so, periodic learning needs assessments should be conducted before training programmes are designed for teachers.

2. Also, since the effect was moderate, the study recommended that Ghana Education Service should adhere to suggestions made by the respondents (teachers) in the form of copies of training modules, regular check-ups, and equal opportunities to both sexes to boost morale, hence performance.

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