

# EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION AND JOB PERFORMANCE OF PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHERS IN OGUN STATE, NIGERIA

*By*

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## **Abstract**

*The study compared the performance of the NTI Grade II and NCE Primary Education teachers in the teaching of English among primary school pupils in Ogun State, Nigeria. 1200 primary school teachers whose age ranged between 22 and 47 years were randomly selected from four Local Government Areas. Sixty (60) of the subjects were NTI Grade II certificate holders while the rest sixty (60) hold NCE Primary Education certificate. Simple percentage and chi-square were used to test five null hypotheses. The result showed that there is a significant difference between the job efficiency of Grade II and NCE teachers. Also there is a significant difference in the work patterns of Grade II and NCE teachers. The result also showed that there is a significant difference between the absenteeism patterns of Grade II and NCE teachers. However there is no significant difference between the on-the-job absenteeism patterns of the Grade II and NCE teachers. Also, there is a significant difference between the impaired interpersonal relationships of Grade II and NCE teachers. The implications of the findings were discussed.*

## **Introduction**

For several reasons, primary education being the foundation could be said to be an important stage for all learners. This is more so when one considers the value Nigeria places on the primary education. The National Policy on Education stated that they objectives of primary education include:

- (a) the inculcation of permanent literacy and numeracy, and the ability to communicate
- (b) the laying of a sound basis for scientific and reflective thinking;

- (c) citizenship education as a basis for effective participation in, and contribution to the life of the society;
- (d) character and moral training and the development of sound attitudes;
- (e) developing in the child the ability to adapt to his or her changing environment;
- (1) giving the child opportunities for developing manipulative skills to function effectively in the society within the limits of their capacity;
- (g) providing basic tools for further educational advancement, including preparation for trades and crafts of the locality.

Appropriate curricular activities at this level include the development of literacy and numeracy, the study of science, social norms and values first of the local community and of the country as a whole. The foundation for sound education should be laid through civics and social studies; health and physical education, moral and religious education, the teaching of local crafts, domestic science and agriculture.

Until the last decade of the twentieth century, primary school teachers in Nigeria were produced by Teacher Training Colleges. Nigeria's National Policy of Education in Section 9, sub-section 61, makes reference to standards in teacher education as an ultimate expectation. It is expected that only candidates whose minimum qualification is WASC or its equivalent will be admitted into the teacher training colleges, and that the NCE will ultimately become the basic qualification for entry into the teaching profession.

Lassa (1998) observed that the Nigerian Certificate in Education (NCE) is a sub-degree but highly qualitative professional diploma in teacher education, obtained after a three-year full-time programme in Colleges of Education. It is therefore a higher quality and specialized teacher's certificate than the Teachers' Grade Two certificate that it is expected to replace. The establishment of the National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE) in 1989 as a supervisory body for teacher education in Nigeria saw the beginning of consistent and deliberate thrust towards actualizing the policy on the NCE qualification becoming the minimum certificate for entry into the teaching profession in Nigeria (Uzodinma, 2003). Consequently, as the number of Grade Two Teachers' Colleges fell from 285 in 1976 to 153 in 1989 and less than 120 in 1991, the number of

Colleges of Education increased from 44 in 1983 to 61 in 1993. Similarly, the enrolment in Colleges of Education rose from 24,710 in 1980/81 to 86,830 in 1990/ 91 (UNESCO, 1998).

In addition to the expansion of full-time programmes for the production of primary and junior secondary school teachers who will be holders of the NCE, several part-time programmes have been started whether in Colleges of Education as sandwich courses, or by distance learning organized by the National Teachers Institute (NTI) aimed at transforming serving Grade Two teachers into NCE holders. Indeed, between 1990 and 1996, the National Teachers' Institute was able up-grade 24,817 serving Grade II teachers to the NCE level.

The National Primary Education Commission personnel audit in 1996 showed that only about 39% of all teachers in primary schools in Nigeria possess the NCE and higher qualification. However, it projected that with about 31,563 Grade II teachers enrolled in 1997 in the Distance Learning NCE programme and another 25,596 enrolled in the sandwich programmes of the various Colleges of Education, it is expected that by the year 1998, the proportion of qualified teachers holding the NCE and above, who are serving in our primary school sector would be somewhere around 78% of those in service. Lassa (1998) concluded that in spite of this promising enhancement of teacher quality in Nigeria, there are indications of a faulty implementation of the policy thrust towards the replacement of the Teachers Grade 11 Certificate with the NCE as the basic qualification.

The Summit on Population in Developing Countries held at New Delhi, India in December 1993 re-iterated the relevance of qualitative teacher production to the quest for improved basic education for all. According to the Federal Ministry of Education report (FEM & YD, 1994), it was discovered that nearly all issues, whether related to goals, learning achievement, organization of programmes or performance of the education system are related to the role of teachers. These include their behaviour, performance, remuneration, incentives, skills and how they are used by the system. Therefore, teacher production should be based on a sound philosophy, and on such rationale that should guarantee

the acquisition of necessary knowledge components and professional skills which will enable pre-service teachers educate the pupils (Harris, 1992). This expectation is very critical, not only to the quality of teacher education, but equally to the very survival of the various disciplines in the curriculum of education.

According to Lassa (1998), the philosophy for teacher production in Nigeria is anchored on five objectives of teacher education as enshrined in the National Policy on Education. These are to:

(i) produce highly motivated, conscientious and efficient classroom teachers for all levels of our educational system:

(ii) encourage further the spirit of enquiry and creativity in teachers;

(iii) help teachers to fit into the social life of the community and society at large and to enhance their commitment to national objectives:

(iv) provide teachers with intellectual and professional background adequate for

their assignment and to make them adaptable to any changing situation not only in the life of their country but in the wider world:

(v) enhance teachers' commitment to the teaching profession  
Lassa (1998) stressed that these national objective could be reduced into three major attributes to be achieved in the making of an effective teacher. These are the:

- possession of a body of knowledge and understanding;
- possession of professional skills and techniques;
- possession of positive personal qualities.

These three attributes are interrelated and possessing one is mere often than not enhanced by the possession of the others.

Teachers are the pivot for the implementation of any education policy. For language teachers to be effective, they should be adequate in numbers, well motivated, qualified and competent, both professionally and academically in the skills of language learning and teaching and have opportunities for various forms of relevant in-service training (Emenanjo, 1996). In Nigeria, there is the perennial

problem of teachers without the right mix, as pointed out above, for all school subjects. The task of developing Nigeria into a modern independent nation with national and international obligations has made the language problem crucial issue.

Adekunle (1976) and Olagoke (1979) observed that the diversity and multiplicity of mutually unintelligible languages in a single country have made it impossible or rather difficult to establish an effective and efficient network of communication throughout the country. Three of the indigenous languages of Nigeria-Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba, are usually referred to as the country's main languages. In spite of the wide spread use of indigenous Nigerian languages, none has yet emerged as the country's dominant language. This is because there is no single language that is spoken and understood by an overwhelming majority of Nigerians. English language therefore fills a huge communication gap. English language helps to facilitate contact between Nigerians of diverse language backgrounds. It is also the official language of the country that the educated elites use in official matters and in exchanging views during formal public and private occasions. Speaking of English fluently is seen in the present day Nigeria as a yardstick for enlightenment. Individuals who are unable to express themselves correctly are seen as illiterates even though they might be educated fellows in other areas of life. This has made so many people to desire to improve their educational level (Oladunjoye, 2003).

Nigerians believe that English language is better taught in the private primary schools than the public schools. This could therefore explain the desire of many parents, including the illiterates, to send their children to private schools, just to ensure that they can speak English fluently. Research reveals that the influence of teachers is the single most important factor in determining students' achievement, even more than socio-economic status, which for years was deemed as having the highest correlation with academic success (Coleman, 1966).

Poor students' performance in English language in such public examinations as SSCE, GCE, and UME raises questions about teacher quality and the effectiveness of teachers. For years, states relied on certification to

ensure teacher preparation and quality, despite the lack of compelling evidence justifying the selection of the certification requirements. Research indicated also that teachers who major in the subject-area taught have a more positive impact on students' achievement than teachers majoring in an out-of-field discipline, including those in education (Goidhaber & Brewer, 1999).

According to Izumi and Evers (2002), school reform is a topic on many people's minds today as a thing of necessity in our system. Unlike many policy areas, the vast majority of people have strongly held opinions, mostly arising from their own personal experiences in school. As a result, much of policy making involves walking a line between research findings and popular views. These popular views frequently are not the best guides for decision-making. This discussion begins with some evidence about the importance of teacher quality and moves to ideas about how the quality of teachers can be improved. Central to all of the discussion is the relationship between incentive and accountability. The current study is therefore, interested in evaluation of NTI Grade II and NCE Primary Education Graduates' performance in teaching English Language to primary school pupils.

### **Hypothesis**

The following null hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 significant level.

1. There is no significant difference between the job efficiency of Grade II and NCE teachers
2. There is no significant difference between the inconsistent work patterns of Grade II and NCE teachers.
3. There is no significant difference between the absenteeism patterns of Grade II and NCE teachers.
4. There is no significant difference between the on-the-job absenteeism patterns of the Grade II and NCE teachers.

5. There is no significant difference between the interpersonal relationships of Grade II and NCE teachers.

## Methodology

This study adopted the field survey approach. The reason being that the nature of the variables studied precluded any form of manipulation by the researcher. The study was therefore interested in the influence of teacher qualification on their performance in teaching English to primary school pupils. Participants were 120 primary school teachers whose ages range between 22 and 47 years. The teachers were sampled from four Local Government Areas of Ogun State. Sixty (60) of them were NTI Grade II Certificate holders while the rest sixty (60) hold NCE Primary Education.

The Teacher's Job Performance Scale (TJPS) by Oluwole (2004) was used for the study. It was a self-rating instrument containing six (6) subsections. Section A asked for basic demographic information from respondents e.g. sex, age, and educational qualification. Section B of the instrument contains ten (10) statements relating to decline in job efficiency; Section C contains four (4) statements on work patterns; Section D contains eight (8) statements on patterns of absenteeism of the teacher; and Section E is on the perceived impaired interpersonal relationships. The instrument has a co-efficient alpha value of 0.83. Analysis of the data was accomplished using of simple percentage and Student's t test.

## Results

**Table 1: Decline in Job Efficiency**

| Variables         | N  | X    | S    | t.obs | dt  | t.crit | Remark |
|-------------------|----|------|------|-------|-----|--------|--------|
| Grade II Teachers | 60 | 4.73 | 2.37 | 4.05  | 118 | 1.96   | 5      |
| NCE Teachers      | 60 | 3.13 | 1.36 |       |     |        |        |

Table 1 shows that there is a significant difference between the decline in job efficiency of Grade Hand NCE teachers at (X05 level significance. The null hypothesis is therefore rejected in favour of the alternative hypothesis since 4.05

is greater than 1.96 (i.e.  $4.05 > 1.96$ ). The NCE teachers appeared better off in terms of efficiency.

**Table 2: Inconsistent Work Patterns**

| Variables         | N  | X    | S    | t.obs | dt  | t.crit | Remark |
|-------------------|----|------|------|-------|-----|--------|--------|
| Grade II Teachers | 60 | 3.72 | 2.07 | 4.46  | 118 | 1.96   | S      |
| NCE Teachers      | 60 | 1.21 | 1.62 |       |     |        |        |

Hypothesis 2 states that there is no significant difference between the inconsistent work patterns of Grade II and the NCE teachers. Table 2 shows that the null hypothesis is rejected since the observed t value is greater than the critical t value (i.e.  $4.46 > 1.96$ ) at 0.05 level of significance. Hence, there is a significant difference in the inconsistent work patterns of the two groups. The NCE teachers were better off than their Grade II counterparts.

**Table 3: Differences in the Teachers 'Absenteeism Patterns**

| Variables         | N  | X    | S    | t.obs | dt  | t.crit | Remark |
|-------------------|----|------|------|-------|-----|--------|--------|
| Grade II Teachers | 60 | 4.73 | 2.37 | 4.05  | 118 | 1.96   | S      |
| NCE Teachers      | 60 | 3.13 | 1.36 |       |     |        |        |

Hypothesis 3 states that there is no significant difference between the absenteeism patterns of the Grade II and of NCE teachers. From table 3 above, the null hypothesis was rejected since the t observed is greater than the critical t value (i.e.  $2.13 > 1.96$ ) at 0.05 level of significance. Hence, there, is a significant difference between the absenteeism patterns of the Grade II and NCE teachers showing that NCE teachers are better than their Grade II colleagues.

**Table 4: On-The-Job Absenteeism**

| Variables                   | N  | X    | S     | t.obs | dt  | t.crit | Remark |
|-----------------------------|----|------|-------|-------|-----|--------|--------|
| Grade II Certified Teachers | 60 | 9.80 | 42.19 | 0.37  | 118 | 1.96   | N.S    |
| NCE certified teachers      | 60 | 9.52 | 45.94 |       |     |        |        |

Hypothesis four states that there is no significant difference between the on-the-job absenteeism patterns of Grade II and NCE teachers. From table 4 above, the null hypothesis was accepted since the t observed is less than the critical t value (i.e. 0.37 < 1.96) at 0.05 level of significance. Hence, 'there is no significant difference between the on-the-job absenteeism patterns of the Grade II and NCE teachers'

**Table 5: Impaired Interpersonal Relationship**

| <b>Variables</b>            | <b>N</b> | <b>X</b> | <b>S</b> | <b>t.obs</b> | <b>dt</b> | <b>t.crit</b> | <b>Remark</b> |
|-----------------------------|----------|----------|----------|--------------|-----------|---------------|---------------|
| Grade II certified teachers | 60       | 5.30     | 12.31    | 2.71         | 118       | 1.96          | N.S           |
| NCE certified teachers      | 60       | 3.83     | 2.09     |              |           |               |               |

Hypothesis five states that there is no significant difference between the impaired interpersonal relationship of Grade Hand NCE teachers table 5 above, the null hypothesis was rejected since the t observed is greater than the critical t' value (i.e. 2.71 > 1.96) at 0.05 level of significance. Hence, there is a significance difference between the impaired interpersonal relationship of the NCE teachers compared to the Grade II teachers.

## **Discussion**

The results from table 1 above shows that there is a significant difference between the decline in job efficiency of Grade II and NCE teachers. Also, there is a significant difference between the inconsistent work patterns of Grade II and NCE teachers. The results further showed that there is a significant difference between the absenteeism patterns of Grade II and NCE teachers. However, there is no significant difference between the on-the-job absenteeism patterns of Grade H and NCE teachers. Finally, there is a significant difference between the impaired interpersonal relationships of Grade II teachers and NCE teachers. These findings are in line with the findings of Goldhaber and Brewer (1999) who revealed that teachers mode of training and specialization go a long way in enhancing their manner of discharging their teaching responsibility which in turn has a more positive impact on student achievement In addition, current findings proves right Lassa's (1998) assertion that there is a fault in implementation of the

policy thrust towards the replacement of the Teachers Grade II Certificate with the NCE as the basic qualification for entry into the teaching profession. The reason for the recent findings may not be unconnected with the entry requirement into distance learning programme for Grade Hand the quality of teachers that teach at NTI's NCE programme.

Moreover, as Nwana (1998) observed that the typical Nigerian teacher has become associated with a disdained social status and often demonstrates a number of non-professional actions while carrying out teaching functions. Some of the disheartening example are:

(a) Lateness to school and classes, social functions as well as unauthorized absence from school for long periods of time;

(b) Divided loyalty i.e. holding other paid jobs concurrently with teaching, contrary to regulations;

(c)- Continuing to teach for several years without seeking self improvement through private reading or further training;

(d) Fals1ring continuous assessment records of students to favour or penalize and in some cases, for money;

(e) Sale of poorly-prepared lesson-notes (referred to as "Handouts") to students in the absence of textbooks, at exhorbitant prices and compelling students to buy

(1) Sexual harassment

(g) Operating illegal schools and preparatory classes and lessons under unsatisfactory conditions for making money;

(1) Operating commercial activities during school hours i.e. trading within or outside the school. As observed in above, most of the incidence and intensity of such non-professional practices are common among the NTI certified Grade II teachers.

## **Implication of the Study**

Findings of this study have several implications. First, it is highly essential that NCE teachers be allowed to teach in primary schools in Nigeria. This is fully in line with the National Policy of Education. This will contribute to improvement of the quality of education at that level.

Also, stakeholders in education should always endeavour to organize refresher courses and sponsor Grade II teachers for further training so as to equip them with improved teaching skills. The inspectorate of education in various states should make effort to thoroughly screen those who seek to be teachers for behaviour abnormalities (such as poor attitude to teaching functions), putting in place more appropriate and forward-looking rules and regulations for teaching, encourage more attendance of regular colleges of education to improve the academic and professional competence of teachers, upward review of teachers' salaries and improvement of their conditions of service.

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