



Original Article

Teachers' Professional Development and Job Performance in Selected Secondary Schools in Ibanda Municipality Uganda

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The study examined the relationship between teachers' professional development and teachers' job performance in secondary schools in Ibanda Municipality. A cross-sectional descriptive survey design using a quantitative approach was used in the collection, analysis, interpretation, and presentation of data. The target population consisted of headteachers, teachers, and the directors of studies. Using Morgan and Krecjie's table of sample size determination, the study used 19 headteachers, 470 teachers, and 20 directors of studies. Simple random sampling and purposive sampling were used to select the sample size. Data was collected using a closed-ended questionnaire. Findings revealed a positive correlation between professional development and the performance of teachers. Teachers' professional development is very critical in job performance since it helps teachers to improve subject mastery, teaching methods, general attitude, and beliefs towards work, and diverse learning activities. The study recommends sequential professional development activities for all teachers. School administration should have a specific budget for teachers' professional development. There should be deliberate efforts by school supervisory bodies like Board Governors and district education officers to ensure teachers' professional development. This would encourage professional development. A promotional criterion that focuses on the extent of professional development should be adopted by schools.

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INTRODUCTION

Globally, scholars have since the start of the 20th century developed an interest in teachers' professional development and its effect on teaching quality in secondary schools (Garcia, 2011). Drawing on previous studies, DeMonte (2013) showed that teachers' professional development had evolved from the teacher institutes where teachers were first trained for teaching. With the ever-changing demands for new knowledge and skills, the knowledge and skills got from the institutes were still lacking (Cohen & Kisker, 2010). Since these could not adequately cater to the changing needs of teachers, in-service training was started to organise courses to upgrade teachers' skills. The 21st century has seen increased interest in teachers' job performance and the quality of education being offered in secondary schools. Whereas secondary school stakeholders inject a lot of money to pay teachers and finance other school programs, job performance was still characterised by high rates of absenteeism, untimely schemes of work and lesson plans, poor instruction practices, limited assessment, and non-participation in out of class activities (UNESCO, 2015).

Theoretically, the study was mainly based on Fredrick Taylors' theory of scientific management. One of the key principles of this theory is that once the most suitable person to do a job has been identified and chosen to do a job; then it is the responsibility of management to train such an individual until they become first-class. Taylor believed that everyone had the capacity to be a first-

class worker provided they received the correct and sufficient training. The concept of professional development fits in well with the idea of continuous training of staff with an objective of achieving maximum productivity and efficiency.

Conceptually, teachers' professional development is defined as the continued training and education of an individual in regards to his/her career (Campos, 2020). He further points out that the goal of professional development is to keep the individual up to date on current trends as well as help them to develop new skills for the purpose of advancement in their field. Avalos (2011) defined teachers' professional development as the process through which teachers improve on their learning, how they learn and how they apply their newly acquired knowledge in practice. This is in agreement with Pedder and Opfer (2011), who states that teachers' professional development and learning is about the growth and development of teachers' expertise that leads to changes in their practice to enhance the learning outcome of students. Kampen (2019) defines teacher professional development as any type of continuing education for teachers with the aim of improving teachers' skills which will in turn boost student outcomes. It is further argued that professional development can take place in formal settings such as conferences, courses, seminars, and workshops, but it can also take place in informal settings such as independent research, peer learning, or even just chatting with a colleague in the staff room.

Professional development can help new and experienced teachers to develop the skills they need to feel confident in the classroom. However, it is observed that many school leaders will admit that professional development is the last thing on their minds in the middle of the school day and faces many challenges, including time and resource constraints. Garcia and Weiss (2019) noted that the demands of teaching are constantly changing and teachers need to continually adapt their knowledge and practice. It was further observed that failure to provide effective professional development is likely to jeopardise teachers' effectiveness, a sense of purpose and career advancement opportunities. In this study, teachers' professional development was conceptualised in terms of orientation sessions, professional network associations, workshops, seminars, short courses or long upgrading courses related to improving the teaching skills of the teacher

Job performance, on the other hand, has been defined differently by different scholars. In a study on employee relations correlation with the job performance of secondary school teachers in the Kawempe Division, Uganda, Kizza (2009) conceptualised teachers' job performance in terms of attendance, time management, acceptance of responsibility, teacher preparations and harmonious relations at school. This conceptualisation agreed with Klassen and Chiu's (2010), who argued that teachers' job performance could be measured in terms of planning and preparation, classroom management and instruction. Evans (2010) defines job performance as changes in teachers' practice, e.g., knowledge, understanding, skills, behaviour, attitudes, values, and convictions. In this study, teacher job performance was conceptualised as the extent to which the teachers achieved school objectives through lesson preparations which involved making schemes of work, lesson plans, actual classroom teaching, assessment and evaluation of the learners, management of learners' discipline, involvement in co-curricular activities.

Teachers' job performance has been linked to teachers' professional development by many scholars. Odinga (2010), in a study involving lecturers of Moi University in Kenya, reported that staff development was significantly related to the number of training programs attended by a lecturer. It was recommended that there was a need for universities to recognise and acknowledge the usefulness and need to support both short- and long-term training opportunities for lecturers. Similarly, in a study carried out in Nigerian public schools, it was established that job performance was significantly and positively related to professional development (Ekpoh, et al, 2013). It was concluded that teachers' job performance could be enhanced through improved professional development. A study by Owen (2015) found that an innovative approach involving thinking in new ways about teaching and learning and testing ideas about teaching had a positive effect on the learning of both teachers and students.

Statement of the Problem

Ideally, secondary school teachers should regularly attend, adequately prepare for instruction, deliver up-to-date content to learners, assess their progress, and participate in out-of-class school programs. Though teachers in secondary schools are trained, their job performance is still unsatisfactory and low characterised by high rates of absenteeism and limited scheming (Dan, 2010). Teachers' professional development plays a major role in teachers' job performance. However, its effects on teachers' attendance, planning, lesson delivery, and participation in out-of-class school activities had not been examined in secondary schools in Ibanda Municipality. The study, therefore, aimed at filling this gap. The purpose of the study was to examine the relationship between teachers' professional development and teachers' job performance in secondary schools in Ibanda Municipality. It was hypothesised that:

H₀: There is no significant relationship between teachers' professional development and teachers' job performance in secondary schools of Ibanda Municipality.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research Design

This study adopted a cross-sectional descriptive survey design using mixed methods. This design was utilised because it allows collecting data from a large population at a particular point in time. The mixed methods approach was used in the collection, analysis, interpretation, and presentation of data. This approach is popular in the post-positivist tradition in which researchers design tools to collect data, measure variables and interpret statistical results.

Target Population

The target population for the study consisted of headteachers, teachers and the directors of studies of secondary schools in Ibanda Municipality because they are key informants as far as teacher professional development and job performance are concerned.

Study Area

The study was conducted in Ibanda Municipality. Ibanda municipality is in the western region of Uganda located approximately 70 kilometres northwest of Mbarara Town. It is bordered by Kamwenge District to the west and north, Kiruhura District to the East, Mbarara District and Buhweju District to the south, and Rubirizi District to the southwest. There are 20 secondary schools of which 6 were government-aided and 14 private and 470 teachers, according to the Municipal education office report (2018).

Sample Size and Sampling Technique

Using Morgan and Krecjie's table of sample size determination, the study used 19 headteachers, 212 teachers and 19 directors of studies.

Simple random sampling and purposive sampling were used to select the sample. The researchers used simple random sampling to select schools to participate in the study so as to avoid bias. The researchers then randomly selected 19 secondary schools to participate in the study. An alphabetic list of the schools was prepared and the schools assigned numbers on the list. The numbers were put in a box and shaken, after which an assistant blindfolded to pick out any 19 schools to participate in the study. Simple random sampling was used to select teachers at each of the selected schools to participate in the study because teachers are many and would help the researcher to avoid bias, giving a chance for equal selection in the study. This was done after dividing the teachers according to sex in order to make the study findings gender-sensitive.

Purposive sampling was used to select the head teacher and director of studies from each of the schools that had been selected to participate in the study. The headteachers were selected because they are the immediate supervisors of the teachers and hence can give reliable information on their job performance. The director of studies is the custodian of academic information and the documents connected with teaching at the school. Therefore, the director of studies acted as a key informant on teachers' job performance levels.

Data Collection methods

Data from both secondary and primary sources using a mixed methodology for triangulation purposes during the various phases of the study. Primary data was collected directly from the field. The methods for collecting primary data involved the administration of a survey questionnaire to teachers and conducting face to face interviews with the headteachers and directors of studies. The

questionnaire helped to elicit teachers' views on professional development and their task performance. The interviews with the headteachers and the director of studies helped the researcher to triangulate findings and if possible, probe for more information that could not be got from the questionnaires.

Research Instruments

The closed-ended questionnaire was administered to teachers. This was advantageous because it allowed respondents to fill in the questionnaires at their time of convenience and keep confidentiality. It was preferred because it allows the collection of data from a large population in a short time.

The questionnaire was arranged on a Five-Point Likert scale, ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree in order to allow the teachers' express their level of agreement or disagreement with the aspects given in the questionnaires. Strongly agree was assigned a numerical value of 5, agree was assigned a value of 4, undecided had a value of 3, disagree had 2 while strongly disagree had a value of 1. Average values in a response ranging from 4-5 indicated agreement; 1-2 indicated disagreement, while three indicated not being decided.

Data Analysis

Pearson-product moment correlation was used to analyse the relationship between teachers' professional development and teachers' job performance. This method of data analysis was used because it determines the strength of that relationship, it is easier to interpret, and it produced data with better statistical properties (Johnson, 2013).

Ethical Considerations

Permission was first sought from the Education officer of Ibanda Municipality, which was presented to the different study participants. The purpose of the study was clearly explained to participate in the

study. Respondents were free to choose whether they wanted to participate in the study or not without any reprimand. Tools of data collection did not bear any names. Confidentiality was ensured using Pseudo names. Before participating in the study, respondents were asked to sign consent forms.

RESULTS

Basing on a Five-Likert scale with a mean score of 2.5 as the cut-off point for agreement, the state of teachers' professional development in secondary schools in Ibanda Municipality was generally average (overall mean score = 3.12). The majority (88.6%, mean score = 4.02) agreed that schools support their upgrading, have a mentorship program for teachers (79.2%, mean score = 3.81), teachers attended professional development seminars (84.9%, mean score = 4.15) and 77.4% (mean score = 3.86) of the teachers said they attended professional development workshops. However, a minority of the teachers agreed that they attended subject retooling (7.5%, mean score=1.96), ICT retooling workshops (30.2%, mean score = 2.43), SESEMAT workshops (33.0%, mean score = 2.49) and UNATU workshops (22.6%, mean score = 2.26).

This was corroborated by the head teachers who said that teacher professional development in their schools was average. For instance, one head teacher said,

"...the school has programme for teachers to go for further studies as a scheme. Seminars and conferences for teachers in respective subjects and general information on educational issues are usually held termly. Science and mathematics teachers are facilitated for SESEMAT insets every year",

Another headteacher said,

"... teachers' attendance to seminars and conventions is not regular but we have

arrangements for such workshops to update teachers on subject content in case funds allow”.

On challenges to supporting professional development of teachers, one headteacher said,

“... school does not support teachers’ professional development in terms of upgrading since funds to support such programmes are not available...funds to facilitate in service training of teachers are inadequate and seminars and workshops are rarely held for teachers”.

The responses of the head teachers indicated that teachers’ professional development in Ibanda Municipality was dependent either on individual teachers or the secondary schools. The prevailing situation was that there was no formal organized teacher professional development in Ibanda Municipality.

Basing on a teacher performance scale with 0.00-2.49 as low, 2.50 - 3.49 as moderate and 3.50 - 5.00 as high (Amin et al, 2013), teacher performance was analysed. The overall self-reported performance of the teachers was average and its level moderate as indicated by the overall mean score of 3.44. The findings showed that teacher performance was high in terms of arrival in time (83%, mean score=4.08), scheme preparation (96.2%, mean score = 4.34), lesson attendance (66%, mean score = 4.26), joint scheming (77.3%, mean score = 3.87), using a variety of teaching methods (96.2%, mean score = 4.32), giving assignments (91%, mean score = 4.04), availability for learners (86.8%, mean score = 4.04), giving remedial (83%, mean score = 3.96) and discipline management (90.6%, mean score = 4.2).

However, performance was low in terms of lesson planning (6.6%, mean score = 1.85), lesson delivery

with lesson plans (4.2%, mean score = 1.64) involving learners in instructional materials design (9.4%, mean score = 1.90) and participation in co-curricular activities (17%, mean score = 2.27). This indicated average performance of the teachers.

The findings were corroborated by qualitative data from the head teachers and directors of studies. According to one headteacher,

“...teachers’ performance is good. Teachers’ attendance to duty is regular and preparation for teaching was very good except that lesson planning was still a challenge. Teaching practices like use of different methods of teaching, preparation of instructional materials and assessment of learners was good. However remedial teaching is not specific to weak learner”.

Similarly, another head teacher said:

“...there is average job performance. Teachers’ discharge of duties is regular and good. Teachers’ preparation for teaching and teaching practices is generally good. This level could be attributed to proper supervision, good staff motivation and school environment in addition to teacher’s attendance of professional development programmes”.

According to the directors of studies, attendance, lesson planning, and use of instructional materials were poor. On the other hand, teaching practices and scheme preparation was very good. For instance, one director of studies said,

‘I do not have problems with my teachers when it comes to schemes of work and lesson delivery. However, teaching with lesson plans and involving learners in design of instructional materials remains a problem’

Table 1: Relationship between the performance of teachers and professional development in Secondary Schools in Ibanda Municipality

		Professional Development	Job performance
Professional Development	Pearson Correlation	1	0.593**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.000
	N	212	212
Job performance	Pearson Correlation	0.593**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	
	N	212	212

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Findings indicated a moderate positive correlation between professional development and performance of teachers, $r = 0.593$, $n=212$, $p = 0.000$. Since $p = 0.000$ was less than 0.05, this indicated that the correlation was statistically significant. The null hypothesis that there is no significant relationship between teachers' professional development and job performance was thus rejected, and the alternative hypothesis that there is a significant relationship between teachers' professional development and job performance was adopted.

All head teachers believed that teachers' professional development programmes improve teachers' job performance. One head teacher was quoted saying;

"... Teachers who go for in-service training courses perform better especially in content delivery. Staff [teacher] motivation is also key factor that determines teachers' job performance, well-motivated teaching staff is result oriented and works hard".

Another head teacher reported:

...teachers' professional development results in better job performance. However, performance is also related to available learning material and staff supervision. Some teachers with high qualifications may not perform if not properly supervised even when they have the content.

That most of these are the ones who even miss the lessons, delay marks as compared to those with low level of qualifications",

The implication of these findings is that teachers' professional development influences performance of teachers, and the correlation significant 2-tailed $r = .593$ indicated a moderate relationship meaning that there are other factors which also influence teachers' job performance in secondary schools in Ibanda Municipality. The positive nature of the relationship implied that the change in teachers' professional development and performance of teachers was in the same direction whereby better teacher professional development, contributed to better performance of teachers.

DISCUSSION

The study findings showed that professional development had a significant relationship with the job performance of teachers. This implied that teachers' professional development was vital in improving teachers' job performance. The study findings agree with a study conducted by Pitsoe and Maila (2012), which suggested that teachers' professional development was important because it helped teachers to improve subject mastery, teaching methods and moving beyond the comprehension of the surface features of a new idea or innovation, to a deeper understanding of a topic. Similarly, Yarema (2015) conducted a study of the impact of teachers' professional development

programs on teachers practice in the United States. The findings revealed that there was a moderate relationship.

The current study confirmed previous findings and contributed additional evidence that continuous teachers' professional development was necessary for improved teachers' job performance. Yoon (2016) conducted research in secondary schools in South Korea to explore teachers' professional learning in a community of practice and its impact on teachers' and pupils' learning. The findings revealed that the professional training program helped teachers to develop both 'pedagogies' and 'teachers' characteristics. Similarly, Ekpoh et al. (2013) conducted a survey on 450 teachers and 1800 students to investigate the influence of staff development programmes on secondary school teachers' job performance in Uyo Metropolis, Nigeria. The purpose of the study was to find out if there was any relationship between the provision of staff development programmes and secondary school teachers' job performance. The study revealed that there was a significant relationship between staff development and Job performance.

The study findings also agree with Annoy (2013), who conducted a study on the support given to licensed teacher's professional development in adopting learner centered pedagogy in Tanzanian secondary schools. The purpose of this study was to obtain a better understanding of the professional learning needs of Tanzanian science teachers who were recruited using an alternative route approach to teacher recruitment and to seek ways to address these needs. The results showed that the professional development programs improved the classroom practices of these teachers since they started using learners-methods in the class. Similarly, Tanang and Baharin's (2014) study examined the impact of teachers' professional development on teachers' behaviour-attitude, pedagogic skills, and diverse learning activities. The findings show that the professional development activities which the teacher passed

through improved teachers' behaviour and attitudes, teaching skills, knowledge, and beliefs. At the same time, teachers' professional development led to the formation of teacher learning communities where teachers worked collaboratively in lesson planning.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Teachers' professional development is very critical in job performance since it helps teachers to improve subject mastery, teaching methods, general attitude, and beliefs towards work, and diverse learning activities. The study recommends sequential professional development activities for all teachers. School administration should have a specific budget for teachers' professional development. There should be deliberate efforts by school supervisory bodies like school Board Governors and district education officers to ensure teachers professional development. To encourage professional, development of promotional criteria that focuses on the extent of professional development should be adopted by schools

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