From Cascade to Cluster School Model of Teachers' Professional Development Training Programme: Nigerian Experience, Ondo State: A Case Study

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Abstract : This research explores the differing effectiveness of cascade and cluster models in professional development programs for educators in Ondo State, Nigeria. The cascade model emphasizes a top-down approach, where training is cascaded from expert trainers to lower levels of teachers. In contrast, the cluster model, a bottom-up approach, fosters collaborative learning among teachers within specific clusters. Through a review of the literature and empirical studies of the implementations of the former in two academic sessions followed by the cluster model in another two, the study examined their effectiveness on teacher development, productivity and students' achievements. The study also drew a comparative analysis of the strengths and weaknesses associated with each model, considering factors such as scalability, cost-effectiveness, adaptability in various contexts, and sustainability. 2500 teachers from Ondo State Primary Schools participated in the cascade with intensive training in five zones for a week each in two academic sessions. On the other hand, 1,980 and 1,663 teachers in 52 and 34 clusters, respectively, were in the first and the following session. The programs were designed for one week of rigorous training of teachers by facilitators in the former while the latter was made up of four components: sit-in-observation, need-based assessment workshop, pre-cluster and the actual cluster meetings in addition to sensitization, and took place one day a week for ten weeks. Validated Cluster Impact Survey Instruments, CISI and Teacher's Assessment Questionnaire (TAQ) were administered to ascertain the effectiveness of the models during and after implementation. The findings from the literature detailed specific effectiveness, strengths and limitations of each approach, especially the potential for inconsistencies and resistance to change. Findings from the data collected revealed the superiority of the cluster model. Response to TAQ equally showed content knowledge and skill update in both but were more sustained in the cluster model. Overall, the study contributes to the ongoing discourse on effective strategies for improving teacher training and enhancing student outcomes, offering practical recommendations for the development and implementation of future professional development projects.
Keywords : cascade model, cluster model, teachers' development, productivity, students' achievement
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