

# Attitudes and Perceptions of In-Service Teachers to Continuing Education Programmes in Tertiary Institutions: Nigeria and South Africa Experience

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## Abstract

In Nigeria, West African Region of Africa and South Africa operates different system of education but the curriculum and modes of operation are partially similar in one way or the other. Teachers in full-time teaching employment are keenly interested in professional development, and acquiring of additional qualifications through continuing education programmes. Most serving teachers are without teaching qualifications hence opted for continuing education programmes in tertiary institutions of higher learning. The paper looks at the mode of lecture delivery, effectiveness and efficiency of the programme from the two Universities in Africa that are involved in the upgrading of teachers qualifications and professional development. The two Universities selected as case study are the University of Zululand (UZ), KwaDlangezwa, South Africa, and Adekunle Ajasin University (AAU), Akungba-Akoko, Nigeria. The target population and sample for the paper were the current learners of continuing education programmes of these selected Universities. The study compared the mode of operation of the programme in the two institutions, and questionnaire was designed to collect data on the responses of the target population. Both qualitative and quantitative methods were adopted for the study. Five hundred (500) questionnaires each were administered at the University of Zululand (UZ) and Adekunle Ajasin University (AAU). Three hundred and sixty-five (365) and three hundred and twenty-one (321) were valid for analysis. Results of the study revealed that in-service teachers generally hold a positive perception and attitude towards continuing education programme from tertiary institutions of higher learning.

**Keywords:** Perception, attitudes, continuing education, in-service teachers, universities.

## Introduction

According to Fafunwa (1974) education plays vital roles in human endeavour; and brings light to human being in terms of social, economic and political activities in the society. In-service teachers leave their work place for further studies in order to upgrade their academic status. They do so with the hope that they return back to their workplace but these days in-service teachers do prefer to proceed on further studies through part-time or continuing education programmes because of economic reasons. In past days, when there were employment opportunities, workers in Nigeria enjoyed study leave with-pay and after acquiring additional qualification they return to their work place to resume duties. Similarly in South Africa, workers prefer to proceed on academic programme on part time basis because of the fear of losing their jobs. There was a lot of employment in the past readily available for university graduates but because of economic crunch in Nigeria in the early 1980s, many workers prefer to combine world of work with part-time programmes to attain additional qualifications and at the same time maintain their work. Continuing education as a branch of adult education sets out to increase access to a wider section of adult population, to enable participants combine world of work with study without losing their job. These sets of adult learners are of diversified experiences (Ojo, 2010; Egunyomi & Aderinoye, 2001; Hayes, 2006; Christie, 2008; and Mestry, Hendricks & Bisschoff, 2009).

Moreover, continuing education has contributed immensely to the upgrading of teachers in term of additional qualifications and professional development. One of the major challenges facing in-service teachers at their schools is to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the school curriculum, and the school system at large. They must be properly trained after the initial teachers' education. It is also important for every school to determine its in-service teacher education and training needs (Boaduo & Babitseng, 2007).

## Perceptions of continuing education

Omolewa (2000) posits that continuing education is re-education, training and retraining opportunities that are made available to out-of-school youth and adults, employed and unemployed, to enable them cope with new challenges of life. From his idea, one can say that continuing education provides learning opportunities that can be taken up after the cessation of full-time compulsory schooling. It is a kind of programme that is available to

persons of any age and could be provided on part time basis. In this wise, it makes use of distance learning which may include the use of video tapes, CD ROM materials, broadcast programming and on-line/internet delivery. It is understandable that continuing education is necessary in a changing society. Formal education undertaken at a young age cannot equip the individual to function effectively in a changing society for the whole of a lifetime (Simpson, 2000). Egunyomi, (1999) and Jegede (2010) further stressed that the quality of a person's life would be affected by his/her ability to acquire new knowledge throughout life and to use this knowledge to solve problems and make decisions.

The Federal Government of Nigeria upholds the existence of continuing education. The National Policy on Education (NPE) (2004) lists continuing education among the components of adult and non-formal education. Section 7 of the document states that adult and non-formal education consists of functional literacy, remedial, continuing, vocational, aesthetic, cultural and civic education for youths and adults outside the formal school system.

In the same policy document, the objectives of adult and continuing education should be:

- To provide functional literacy education for adults who have never had the advantage of any formal education.
- To provide functional and remedial education for those young people who prematurely dropped out of the formal school system.
- To provide education for different categories of completers of the formal education system in order to improve their basic knowledge and skills.
- To provide in-service on-the-job, vocational and professional training for different categories of workers and professionals, in order to improve their skills.
- To give the adult citizens of the country necessary aesthetic, cultural and civic education for public enlightenment.

It is observed from this policy that continuing education should be an agent of national development and establishment of continuing education centres which must call for effective planning and execution. The more compelling reasons for proper planning is stressed by the complex nature of continuing education format, in an ever growing and complex economy like Nigeria. Bello (1999:17) remarks:

Short course offerings and formats are evolving. Presently, it is possible to find series of courses which defines specific curricula. These curricula set the stage for new developments in the future, including increased certification and licensing ... along with such certifications will come the need for accreditation.

He further explained that the more the growth of the continuing education centres and their programmes, the greater the need for more effective management and styles adopted to execute the programmes to achieve desired results.

Similarly, Skills Development Initiative through Adult Basic Education Training programmes was also introduced in South Africa. In terms of the Skills Development Act, 25 SETAs (Sector Education and Training Authorities) were established in March 2000 and revised to 23 in March 2005. ABET programmes are integrated within these 23 SETAs. For instance, AGRISETA (Agricultural Sector Education and Training Authority) offers ABET programmes to help its employees in the agricultural environment such that they may later enter some further learning programmes such as learnerships. FASSET (Sets for Finance, Accounting, Management, Consulting and other financial services) usually has 3% of its employees under ABET programmes. In MERSETA (Manufacturing, Engineering and related services) usually discovers that most of its employees lack workplace basic education hence the need for ABET projects for the companies. In the banking industry BANKSETA (Banking Sector Education and Training Authority) employees are given on-site accredited training by preferred providers under the auspices of ABET apprenticeship. Also, SASSETA (SETA for Safety and Security) offers ABET programmes to their employees. These programmes brought rapid development in the education of adults and social change in South Africa (Batjes & Mathe, 2003). Though one may be looking at ABET as not part of continuing education programme but in the other sense it is a continuing education programme in one way or the other that provides training opportunities to other sector of the economy in South Africa.

### **In-Service Education**

In-service education is regarded as a kind of programme of instruction or training provided by an agency or institution for its employees. The programme is held in the institution or agency and it is intended to increase the skills and competence of the employees in a specific area. In-service education may be a part of any programme of staff development and usually organised on a part-time basis (week end) or on a specific period, long vacations that is convenient for the learners. In the same vein, staff development is paramount for every organisation or establishment to improve work morale and efficiency of a worker.

If people working in a particular profession are given in-service training, they attend special courses to

improve their skills or to learn about new developments in their field. Rogers (1982) describes development as a result of the knowledge and understanding that a society may have of itself and its environment in one hand and of its ability to organise it for a better control of the latter through the implementation of solution formulated by its members on the other hand. However, it is obvious that every staff member must be adequately developed by the employer or personally by the worker him/herself.

### Objectives of the study

The objective of this study is to investigate the mode of lecture delivery, effectiveness, efficiency and the correlation of the students responses from the two selected Universities in Africa that are involved in the upgrading of teachers qualifications and professional development.

### Research design and methods

The purpose of this empirical study was to gather information in the Universities of Zululand, South Africa, and Adekunle Ajasin University, Nigeria. This study focused on gathering qualitative and quantitative data from both the continuing education/sandwich in-service teachers of the two selected African Universities. The descriptive survey research design of ex-post facto was adopted for the study (Hesse-Biber, 2010). The design was adopted because it helps to describe clearly the existing true picture of the population under study without subjecting the variables to any control or manipulation by the researcher.

### Population and Sample

The population for the study were the current students of the continuing education programmes of the selected universities. Samples of 1000 questionnaires were administered at both AAU and UZ. There were only few students offering B Ed Hons and PGCE programmes at UZ but there were more than enough students for the National Professional Diploma in Education programme. The selection of students at AAU spanned all the levels of B Ed Hons.

Tables 1 and 2 below show the distribution and administration of questionnaires at both universities.

*Table 1: Administration of Questionnaires at University of Zululand, SouthAfrica*

Type of programme	Number of questionnaires administered	Number of valid questionnaires
B. Ed. (Hons.)	20	16
PGCE	20	14
NPDE	460	322
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>365</b>

#### Source: Researchers' Field Survey

*Table 2: Administration of Questionnaires at Adekunle Ajasin University, Nigeria*

Year/level of study	Number of questionnaires administered	Number of valid questionnaires
100 level/1 <sup>st</sup> Year	100	67
200 level/2 <sup>nd</sup> Year	100	61
300 level/3 <sup>rd</sup> Year	100	59
400 level/4 <sup>th</sup> Ye2r	100	65
500 level/5 <sup>th</sup> Year	100	69
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>321</b>

#### Source: Researchers' Field Survey

Samples of 1000 questionnaires were administered at both AAU and UZ. There were only few students offering B Ed Hons and PGCE programmes at UZ but there were more than enough students for the National Professional Diploma in Education programme. The selection of students at AAU spanned all the levels of B Ed Hons.

### Research hypotheses

Three research hypotheses were raised for the study, namely:

**Hypothesis 1:** Institution has no significant effect on mode of lecture delivery to the students.

**Hypothesis 2:** Institution does not have significant effect on the effectiveness of continuing education/sandwich programme.

**Hypothesis 3:** Institution does not have significant effect on the efficiency of continuing education/sandwich programme.

### Data analysis

Data were collected through administration of questionnaire from UZ and AAU. The research hypotheses were

tested using chi-square and frequency counts.

**Hypothesis One**

Statement of Hypothesis

H<sub>0</sub>: Institution has no significant effect on mode of lecture delivery

H<sub>1</sub>: Institution has a significant effect on mode of lecture delivery

**Level of significant** ( $\alpha$ ) = 5%

**Decision Rule:** Reject H<sub>0</sub> if the P-value is less than  $\alpha$ , otherwise accept it.

Table 3: Computation of test statistic:

Enjoy delivery mode used * Institution Cross tabulation				
Enjoy delivery mode used		Institution		Total
		UZ	AAU	
Yes	Count	316	240	556
	Expected Count	299.1	256.9	556.0
	% within Institution	89.0%	78.7%	84.2%
No	Count	39	65	104
	Expected Count	55.9	48.1	104.0
	% within Institution	11.0%	21.3%	15.8%
Total	Count	355	305	660
	Expected Count	355.0	305.0	660.0
	% within Institution	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	131.176	1	.000

**Pearson Chi-Square** ( $\chi^2$ ) = 131.176

**Degrees of freedom (df)** = 1

**P-value** = 0.000

**Decision:** Reject the null hypothesis since P-value (0.000) is less than level of significant  $\alpha$  (0.05) and conclude that Institution has a significant effect on mode of lecture delivery at 5% level of significant. It means that we are 95% sure that Institution has a significant effect on mode of lecture delivery.

**Interpretation:** This means that a learner who decides to attend a continuing education/sandwich programme has effect on how such a learner enjoys the mode of lecture delivery. In other word, the two universities UZ and AAU mode of delivery are not the same.

**Hypothesis two**

**Statement of hypothesis**

H<sub>0</sub>: Institution does not have significant effect on the effectiveness of continuing education/sandwich programme.

H<sub>1</sub>: Institution has a significant effect on the effectiveness of continuing education/sandwich programme.

**Level of significant** ( $\alpha$ ) = 5%

**Decision Rule:** Reject H<sub>0</sub> if the P-value is less than  $\alpha$ , otherwise accept it.

**Test Statistic:** Chi-square test for contingency

Table 4: Computation of test statistic:

UZ and AAU continuing education is effective * Institution Cross tabulation					
UZ and AAU continuing education is effective			Institution		Total
			UZ	AAU	
UZ and AAU continuing education is effective	Strongly Agree	Count	133	152	285
		Expected Count	148.3	136.7	285.0
		% within Institution	40.2%	49.8%	44.8%
	Agree	Count	149	129	278
		Expected Count	144.7	133.3	278.0
		% within Institution	45.0%	42.3%	43.7%
	Strongly Disagree	Count	15	16	31
		Expected Count	16.1	14.9	31.0
		% within Institution	4.5%	5.2%	4.9%
	Disagree	Count	7	8	15
		Expected Count	7.8	7.2	15.0
		% within Institution	2.1%	2.6%	2.4%
Undecided	Count	27	0	27	
	Expected Count	14.1	12.9	27.0	
	% within Institution	8.2%	.0%	4.2%	
Total	Count	331	305	636	
	Expected Count	331.0	305.0	636.0	
	% within Institution	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	28.790	4	.000

**Pearson Chi-Square** ( $\chi^2$ ) = 28.79

**Degrees of freedom (df)** = 4

**P-value** = 0.000

**Decision:** Reject the null hypothesis since P-value (0.000) is less than level of significant  $\alpha$  (0.05) and conclude that institution has a significant effect on continuing education/sandwich programme effectiveness at 5% level of significant. It means that we are 95% sure that institution has a significant effect on the effectiveness of continuing education programme.

**Interpretation:** This means that the effectiveness of continuing education/sandwich programme could be affected by the university or institution attended.

### Hypothesis three

#### Statement of Hypothesis

$H_0$ : Institution does not have significant effect on the efficiency of continuing education/sandwich programme.

$H_1$ : Institution has a significant effect on the efficiency of continuing education/sandwich programme.

**Level of significant** ( $\alpha$ ) = 5%

**Decision Rule:** Reject  $H_0$  if the P-value is less than  $\alpha$ , otherwise accept it.

**Test Statistic:** Chi-square test for contingency

Table 5: Computation of test statistic:

UZ and AAU continuing education is efficient * Institution crosstabulation					
		Institution			
			UZ	AAU	Total
UZ and AAU continuing education is efficient	Strongly Agree	Count	96	122	218
		Expected Count	115.1	102.9	218.0
		% within Institution	28.3%	40.3%	34.0%
	Agree	Count	172	149	321
		Expected Count	169.5	151.5	321.0
		% within Institution	50.7%	49.2%	50.0%
	Strongly Disagree	Count	24	14	38
		Expected Count	20.1	17.9	38.0
		% within Institution	7.1%	4.6%	5.9%
	Disagree	Count	25	18	43
		Expected Count	22.7	20.3	43.0
		% within Institution	7.4%	5.9%	6.7%
	Undecided	Count	22	0	22
		Expected Count	11.6	10.4	22.0
		% within Institution	6.5%	.0%	3.4%
Total	Count	339	303	642	
	Expected Count	339.0	303.0	642.0	
	% within Institution	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	28.591 <sup>a</sup>	4	.000

**Pearson Chi-Square** ( $\chi^2$ ) = 28.591

**Degrees of freedom (df)** = 4

**P-value** = 0.000

**Decision:** Reject the null hypothesis since P-value (0.000) is less than level of significant  $\alpha$  (0.05) and conclude that Institution has a significant effect on continuing education/sandwich programme efficiency at 5% level of significant. It means that we are 95% sure that institution has a significant effect on the efficiency of continuing education programme.

**Interpretation:** This means that the efficiency of continuing education programme could be attributed to the university or institution attended.

## Discussion of findings

### Response on face-to-face lectures and revision period for learners

There were indications from the learners of the two institutions that face-to-face lectures were preferred during lectures and revision periods. Responses indicated at UZ showed that strongly agree had 47.2% (158), agree 37.6% (126) and at AAU strongly agree, 47.2% (141), and agree, 47.8% (143). Students also disclosed that they would know their lecturers, able to ask questions on what they have read at home and also interact with their colleagues. They would also enjoy what the regular or full time students were enjoying on campus. Many learners believe that their relationship with their lecturer comes out most clearly when the lecturer has to comment on their work on assignments, project writing or practical competence; this is possible if face-to-face interaction is in place. This assertion is supported by Rowntree (1993); Edison, Nora, Pascarella, Terenzini and Whitt (1999).

### Response on effectiveness and efficiency of continuing education programmes

One of the objectives of this study is to examine the effectiveness and efficiency of continuing education

programmes of UZ and AAU. Tables 4 and 5 show the responses on effectiveness and efficiency of continuing education programmes of these universities as perceived by the students. On effectiveness, it was strongly agreed and agreed at UZ by 40.2% or 133 and 45.0% or 149 out of total respondents of 331 whereas AAU had 49.8% or 152, 42.3% or 129, it was evident from the responses that there were effectiveness of the programme from the two institutions. Other responses such as strongly disagree, disagree and undecided had small or no effects on the programmes. We could see the responses at a glance on graph 20. On the part of efficiency of the programme, UZ had 28.3 (96), 50.7% (172) for both strongly agreed and agreed whilst 40.3% (122) and 49.2% (149) were shared by AAU.

An important issue that has continued to attract attention of continuing education educators, scholars, lecturers and researchers is how the universities that are organising this programme for the in-service teachers will make it efficient and effective, whatever their structure, context or circumstances, can assess their own quality (Myrdal, 1994); (Kangai, Bukaliya, Musika and Mapuranga, 2010), note that some critical questions that continue to fuel the “continuing education” quality debate are: what makes continuing education an experience that would be described as one of the qualities of learning process and upgrading for the in-service teachers? How can continuing education improve the quality and effectiveness of the in-service teachers? Saba (1998) shared the opinion that there must be success and efficiency for such programmes because the impact of both the teachers and students must be felt in the society. It is obvious that all universities providing continuing education programme will have some existing systems and procedures for assessing the quality of what they do, but not all have addressed the assessment of quality within their organisations in a systematic way as much as they need to (Mertens, 2005). However, it could be observed that the effectiveness of the programmes were reasonable at this level of responses.

### Conclusion

The study examined the purpose why in-service teachers engaged themselves in part time programmes. The study also gave an overview of its importance and the channels through which they received lectures, effectiveness and efficiency of the continuing education programme.

Results of the study further showed that learners generally hold a positive perception and attitudes to continuing education programme, compared to full time programme because of their being in full time employment. Studies have also determined that students taking continuing education programme, sandwich programme, distance learning courses perform as well as students taking courses via traditional methods (Gagne & Shepherd, 2001). In the present society, all over the world, teachers are primarily concerned with things that will give them either immediate result or practical value (Siaciwena, 2011). Examples of such things that are real in their lives are: promotion in work place, to level up with peer group, development and self actualisation, able to contribute their quota to social, economic and political matters in their community at large (Anyanwu, Omole & Akintayo, 1988). There is need for power, a tendency to seek impact, control, or influence over others and to be seen as a powerful individual, is an additional type of motivation which adult learners require (Lee-Chai & Bargh, 2001; Winter, 2007). Similarly, one might expect people with strong needs for power are more apt to belong to organisations and seek office than are those low in the need for power. They also tend to work in professions in which their power needs may be fulfilled, such as business management and, you may or may not be surprised in teaching profession (Jenkins, 1994).

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