

Implementation of Teachers' Registration Council of Nigeria Guidelines in Kwara State, Nigeria

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to investigate implementation of Teachers' Registration Council of Nigeria guidelines in secondary schools in Kwara state, Nigeria. Cross-sectional survey design was adopted for the study. 370 teachers and 66 staff of TRCN out of the 9, 803 teachers and 79 TRCN staff respectively were selected as research participants.

A researcher-designed questionnaire labelled: "Implementation of Teachers' Registration Council of Nigeria Guidelines Questionnaire" (ITRCNGQ) was used to obtain data for the study. The questionnaire was administered to the respondents using electronic social media platforms. Both descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyse the data collected.

The findings of the study showed among others: that the level of awareness of the TRCN guidelines is not good enough as majority of the respondents only have good level of awareness about accreditation but low level of awareness about monitoring, internship and annual examination; and that the level of implementation of the TRCN guidelines was rated fair showing that much still needs to be done by the body.

Based on the findings of the study, it was recommended, among others, that the TRCN should improve its level of implementation of other guidelines in the Professional Standards for Nigerian Teachers (PSNT) other than the accreditation aspect only. Also, the Federal Government should improve upon the resources and facilities available to TRCN in order that their monitoring would traverse the nooks and crannies of the state to cover both the urban and rural school locations.

Keywords: Teachers' Registration Council of Nigeria; TRCN Law; Education Law; Monitoring; Continuous Development for Teachers; Nigeria.

Introduction

Teaching profession in Nigeria has not been given appropriate attention and recognition due to poor government policies and ineffective implementation of Teachers' Registration Council of Nigeria (TRCN) guidelines. It has been observed by researchers such as Anadi (2007); Voogt, Fisser, Pareja and Tondeur (2013); and Ogunyinka, Okeke and Adedoyin (2015) that poor implementation of TRCN guidelines in recent years could be responsible for poor teaching as well as other problems which include negative perception about teachers in the society, poor educational outcomes, inadequate learning resources to support teaching, inadequate staff development, poor teachers' motivation, inadequate programme preparation and implementation, negative attitude of people towards the teaching profession, and poor professional attitude and commitment to work. To realise the goals of education, Federal Republic of Nigeria (2004) prescribes that only professionally qualified and registered teachers shall be allowed to practice at all levels of education, with the TRCN registering and regulating teaching profession and practice. Unfortunately, the teaching service is replete with a lot of nonprofessional and poor-quality teachers (Federal Ministry of Education, 2012).

Teaching is widely accepted as a public service that requires specialized skills, acquired and maintained through rigorous and continuing study and demands for a sense of personal and corporate responsibility for the education and welfare of the learners under their custody. Therefore, to ensure all the aforementioned merits of teaching profession is actualized, there is need to ensure that Teachers' Registration Council guidelines are strictly adhered to. The establishment of the Teachers' Registration Council of Nigeria (TRCN) in 1993 boosted the status of teaching in the country for it to fulfil an important criterion required for upgrading teaching from a mere vocation to the status of a profession. The Teachers' Registration Council of Nigeria was by virtue of Act 31 of 1993 (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1993), established to perform duties such as determining what standards of knowledge and skill are to be attained by persons seeking to become registered as teachers under this Act and raising, those standards from time to time as circumstances may permit; regulating and controlling the teaching profession in all its aspects and ramifications among others. Since its inception, the TRCN has been working to uphold the enviable status of teaching profession in the country. With regards to professional development, the council has organized many continuous training and development activities to enhance the instructional skills of teachers. The aim of these trainings is to enhance teachers' professional competencies. Apart from organizing these trainings, the TRCN has made the Mandatory Continuous Professional Education

(MCPE) part of the requirements for the renewal of teachers' practicing licenses. The aim of the TRCN in this regard is not to make things difficult for teachers but to avail every teacher the opportunity for continuous development so as to remain relevant as professionals in the present information age. Though the TRCN has recorded some dividends, there are still some challenges facing the Council in its effort to further project the professionalization of teaching in Nigeria. The Teachers Registration Council of Nigeria (2010) advocates that teaching just like other professions now requires that only those who are adequately prepared and regulated should be entrusted with the teaching- learning process. However, it is of great concern that despite the existence of the TRCN as a regulatory agency, teaching in Nigeria has not really assumed professional status like other professions such as legal, medical and other allied vocations indicating that the regulatory guidelines established in the Professional Standards for Nigerian Teachers (PSNT) are not adequately adhered to and effectively implemented. The purpose of this study, therefore, is to investigate implementation of Teachers' Registration Council of Nigeria guidelines in secondary schools in Kwara state, Nigeria.

Research Questions

The following research questions were raised to guide the study

- i. What are the Teachers Registration Council of Nigeria's Guidelines?
- ii. Do the teachers in Kwara State have adequate awareness about the TRCN guidelines?
- iii. What is the level of implementation of TRCN in Kwara State?
- iv. Are the TRCN guidelines adhered to in Kwara State?
- v. Are there challenges impeding effective implementation of TRCN guidelines in Kwara State?

Research Methodology

Cross-sectional survey was adopted for this study. The relevance of cross-sectional survey to this study is that this study is on the implementation of Teachers' Registration Council guidelines in Kwara State secondary schools, which requires probing the understanding and perspectives of different cadres of teachers. Krejcie and Morgan (1970) Table for sample size determination was used to select 370 teachers and 66 staff of TRCN out of the 9, 803 teachers and 79 TRCN staff in Kwara State. This makes 436 respondents available for the study.

The instrument used for data gathering in this study was a researcher-designed questionnaire labelled: "Implementation of Teachers' Registration Council of Nigeria Guidelines Questionnaire" (ITRCTGQ). This questionnaire was used to elicit data on the level of implementation of TRCN guidelines. Cronbach's Alpha method of reliability was used to pilot-test the instrument in selected primary school of Kwara State at interval of three weeks. The results were statistically analysed using

Pearson product moment correlation coefficient and 0.77 was obtained. This was high and shows that the instrument was reliable.

To answer the research questions in this study, the responses on items 1-18 of Sections B and C of the questionnaire were collated and analysed, using frequency counts, percentage and mean as statistical methods as shown in Tables 2-6. The rating scores for taking decisions are: 3.50 - 4.00 = V. Good; 2.50 - 3.49 = Good; 1.50 - 2.49 = Fair; 0.00 – 1.49 = Poor.

Data Analysis and Presentation of Results

Table 1: Demographic Data of the Respondents

Variables	Number	Percentage	Remarks
Ages			
25-30	32	7	4
31-40	238	55	1
41-50	123	28	2
51-60	43	10	3
Total	436	100	
Gender			
Male	144	33	2
Female	292	67	1
Total	436	100	
Qualifications			
NCE	117	27	2
B.Ed/B.A/B.Sc	296	68	1
M.Ed/M.A/M.Sc	23	05	3
Ph.D.	0	0	4
Total	436	100	

Year Service			
1-5	55	13	4
6-10	83	19	3
11-15	143	33	1
16-20	127	29	2
21-above	28	6	5
Total	436	100	

Source: Field Report, 2020

Table 1 shows that 55% of the respondents within the age of 31-50 years were more than other age groups constituting 83% of the respondents. In terms of qualification, majority (68%) had Bachelor's Degree followed by 27% who still teach with their NCE certificate. Furthermore, majority (62%) have been working for between 11 and 20 years.

Research Question One: What are the Teachers' Registration Council of Nigeria's Guidelines?

This question was raised to assess the level of awareness of the teachers about the TRCN guidelines on professionalisation of teaching.

Table 2: Teachers' Registration Council of Nigeria's Guidelines

Statements	Number and Percentage (%) Yes	Number and Percentage (%) No	Mean Score	Decision
Accreditation	345(79%)	91(21%)	3.62	Very Good
Monitoring	289(66%)	147(34%)	2.48	Fair
Internship	188(43%)	248(57%)	1.70	Fair
Annual examination	201(46%)	235(54%)	2.01	Fair
Annual Conference	155(36%)	281(64%)	1.45	Poor

Source: Field Report, 2020

According to Table 2, majority of respondents (79%) agreed that no one is qualified to teach in Nigeria without teaching license by TRCN. With a mean score of 3.62, the majority of respondents show very good awareness that a professional teacher must be duly accredited by the TRCN before (s)he could venture into the teaching profession. 66% of the respondents agreed that mandatory monitoring and supervision of schools are part of the core mandates of TRCN, but having a mean score of 2.48 is an indication that the awareness of teachers about the actual monitoring of schools by TRCN is not high enough. For internship, 57% of the respondents do not agree that induction (through internship) is compulsory for admittance into teaching profession. The mean score is just 1.70. A higher number of respondents (64%) disagreed that ensuring annual attendance of conferences and seminars for professional development by the teachers is part of statutory functions of TRCN. Meanwhile, a slight majority of the respondents (54%) with a mean score of 2.01 disagreed that annual professional examination is mandatory for all teachers to assess level of development on the job.

Research Question Two: What is the level of implementation of TRCN guidelines in Kwara State?

This question assessed the level at which the TRCN implements its professionalisation guidelines in Kwara state.

Table 3: Level of Implementation of TRCN in Kwara State

Statements	Number and Percentage (%) Agreed	Number and Percentage (%) Disagreed	Mean Score	Decision
Employment of teachers in Kwara State is guided by the TRCN stipulated guidelines.	354(81)	82(19)	2.77	Good
Only teachers with relevant qualifications and certified by the TRCN are offered employments in Kwara State schools.	189(43)	247(57)	1.61	Fair
Educational policy makers in Kwara State work hand -in-hand with TRCN to determine implementation of educational activities.	324(74)	112(26)	3.62	Very Good

Source: Field Work, 2020

Table 3 reveals that 81% of the respondents agreed that the employment of teachers in Kwara state is guided by the TRCN guidelines. In addition, 74% of the respondents agreed that educational policy makers in Kwara State work hand-in-hand with TRCN to determine implementation of educational activities. But in contrast, majority of the respondents accounting for 57%, opined that not only teachers with relevant qualifications and certified by the TRCN are offered employments in Kwara State schools.

Research Question Three: Are the TRCN guidelines adhered to for improving teaching and learning in Kwara State?

Table 4: Adherence to Guidelines of TRCN for Improving Teaching and Learning in Kwara State

Statements	Number and Percentage (%) Agreed	Number and Percentage (%) Disagreed	Mean Score	Decision
TRCN conducts regular monitoring of teachers to ensure that only licensed teachers are legally permitted to teach in schools in Kwara State.	103(24%)	333(76%)	1.55	Fair
Accreditation exercise of schools in Kwara State is done in line with the provisions of TRCN guideline policy.	322(74%)	114(26%)	3.33	Good
Induction programmes are made mandatory for the newly employed teachers in Kwara State to ensure professional competencies.	62(14%)	374(86%)	1.12	Poor
Annual examinations are conducted for teachers to determine level of professional competency among teachers in Kwara State.	44(10%)	392(90%)	0.32	Poor
Annual conference is usually organized for teachers in Kwara State to improve the quality-of-service delivery in schools.	23(5%)	413(95%)	0.10	Poor

Source: Field Work, 2020

Table 4 presents the opinions of respondents on the adherence to TRCN Guidelines with the aim to improve teaching and learning in Kwara state. In the Table, an overwhelming majority (76%) of the respondents disagreed that TRCN conducts regular monitoring of teachers to ensure that only licensed teachers are legally permitted to teach in schools in Kwara State. 74% of the respondents agreed to the statement that accreditation exercise of schools in Kwara State is done in line with the provisions of TRCN guideline policy. In addition, 86% of the respondents disagreed that induction programmes are made mandatory for the newly employed teachers in Kwara State to ensure professional competencies. Also, a vast majority of the respondents (90%) disagreed that annual examinations are conducted for teachers to determine level of professional competency among teachers in Kwara State. Finally, on this, 95% of the respondents disagreed that annual conference is usually organised for teachers in Kwara State to improve the quality-of-service delivery in schools.

Research Question Four: Does the implementation of the TRCN guidelines influence the effectiveness of teaching in Kwara State?

This research question is raised in order to evaluate the understanding of the respondents on whether TRCN guidelines enhance teaching effectiveness in Kwara State. Table 5 presents the opinions of the respondents on how TRCN guidelines influence teaching effectiveness in Kwara State. 71% of the respondents agreed that the implementation of TRCN guidelines in Kwara State is a factor to improve teaching competencies among teachers in Kwara State. Also, 94% of the respondents agreed that attending annual conferences and seminars would make teachers in Kwara State to acquire new skills and other values that are capable of making them to discharge their duties professionally. In the same vein, 100% of the respondents held that issuance of teaching license to qualified teachers in Kwara State would influence teachers service delivery positively; while 72% agreed that annual examinations for teachers' professional development in Kwara State enables teachers to understand their areas of weaknesses on the job.

Table 5: TRCN Guideline and Teaching Effectiveness in Kwara State

Statements	Number and Percentage (%) Agreed	Number and Percentage (%) Disagreed	Mean Score	Decision
The implementation of TRCN guidelines in Kwara State is a factor to improve teaching competencies among teachers in Kwara State.	309(71%)	127(29%)	3.40	Good
Attendance of teachers in annual conferences and seminars in Kwara State would make teachers to acquire new skills and other values that are capable of making them to discharge their duties professionally.	412(94%)	24(6%)	3.87	Very Good
Issuance of teaching license to qualified teachers in Kwara State influences teachers service delivery positively.	436(100%)	0(0%)	4.00	Very Good
Annual examinations for teachers' professional development in Kwara State enables teachers to understand their areas of weaknesses on the job.	316(72%)	120(28%)	2.76	Good

Source: Field Work, 2020

Research Question Five

Are there challenges impeding effective implementation of TRCN guidelines in Kwara State?

Table 6 presents the opinions of the respondents on the challenges for effective implementations of TRCN guidelines and teaching effectiveness in Kwara State. 61% of the respondents agreed that teachers in Kwara State do not understand the objectives of TRCN guideline policy. A slight majority of 57% of the respondents held that the authorities in charge of education programmes in Kwara State support TRCN officials in monitoring the implementation of TRCN guideline, while a significant majority of 94% opined that only schools in the urban areas in Kwara State

are monitored for the implementation of TRCN guideline guide policy. The fairly low mean score of range 1.53 to 3.22 is an indication that the TRCN is faced with a number of challenges that hinder its adequate implementation of and adherence to the PSNT with a view to uplifting the professional status of teaching from its vocational status.

Table 6: Challenges for Effective Implementations of TRCN Guidelines in Kwara State

Statements	Number and Percentage (%) Agreed	Number and Percentage (%) Disagreed	Mean Score	Decision
Teachers in Kwara State do not understand the objectives of TRCN guideline policy.	267(61%)	169(39%)	2.35	Fair
The authorities in charge of education programmes in Kwara State give little or no support to TRCN officials in monitoring the implementation of TRCN guideline.	189(43%)	247(57%)	1.53	Fair
Only schools in the urban areas in Kwara State are monitored for the implementation of TRCN guideline guide policy.	411(94%)	25(6%)	3.22	Good

Source: Field Work, 2020

Discussion of Findings

This study finds in respect of research question one that the TRCN, while striving to fulfil its mandate of professionalising teaching, has provided certain guidelines to bring the profession in line with best practices in professional vocations. The guidelines include Accreditation, monitoring, internship, annual examination, and annual conference.

The findings regarding research question two revealed that the teachers possess a reasonably high level of awareness of the existence of TRCN and some of its guidelines. According to Hattie (2008), effectiveness of teaching is not measurable only from the teacher's knowledge but also involves their inherent values or beliefs as well as skilful implementation of those values. Therefore, the awareness of the PSNT has high tendency to make the teacher's to be more conscious of their professional responsibilities thereby improving their teaching effectiveness. The reasonable level of awareness could be said to emanate from the high level of staff retention in the teaching service. Table 1 shows that the highest numbers of the respondents are those who have been in the teaching service for between 11 and 20 years. At this service age, most of the respondents have garnered sufficient experience to be reasonably aware of the existence of the TRCN and its guidelines. It must be noted that the high level of awareness exhibited by the respondents to this study negate the position of Aluede (2009) that the PSNT is not widely known by teachers. But a holistic consideration of the data in Table 2 indicates that the awareness is still not pervasive enough. Most of the respondents are not adequately informed about the necessity of internship, annual examination and annual conference for teachers. What this means is that TRCN focuses more on the regulatory part of its mandate while ignoring the continuous professional development angle. This approach has the potential to only demotivate the teachers thereby affecting their effectiveness as earlier established by Osman and Warner (2020) and Lasica, Meletiou-Mavrotheris&Katzis(2020).

Further findings from this study revealed a fair level of implementation of the TRCN guidelines. 57% of the respondents believed that the state government employ unqualified teachers. A question that comes to a discerning mind here is that how are non-qualified and non-accredited persons being employed as teachers when majority agreed that employment of teachers in Kwara State is guided by the TRCN stipulated guidelines? The possible insight into this poser could be found in the fact that a large chunk of the respondents are graduates of Bachelor of Arts (BA) or Bachelor of Science (BSc.) as indicated in Table 1 above. Thus, the respondents knowing that their appointments or that of their close associates are not fully in line with the PSNT are unwilling to fault their employments. Perhaps, it was in a bid to ensure adequate compliance with the TRCN guidelines that Kwara state recently threatened to sack professionally unqualified teachers (News Agency of Nigeria, 2019); and pursuant to which the affected teachers have been given moratorium to acquire the requisite qualification (NUT on Radio, 2019).

It was equally found that the TRCN guidelines are weakly adhered

to. According to Olagunju (2015), what distinguishes a profession is its strong adherence to its guidelines. That is the appeal that professions like legal practice, engineering, medical practice and accounting enjoy (Ozano, 2013). In Table 4, the mean scores of the ability of TRCN to conduct regular monitoring of teachers to ensure that only licensed teachers are legally permitted to teach in schools in Kwara State is found to be 1.55 and it is rated to be fair. This finding contrasts with the above finding that proper accreditation is done by the TRCN. An explanation for this could however be that while the school accreditation is done administratively through paper works, the monitoring (in other words, inspection) is meant to be done physically on-site. Without adequate monitoring, impunities would be exhibited in appointment of unqualified teachers who almost certainly would be ineffective in their teaching. In Akram & Khan (2020), monitoring was identified as one of the significant issues in education without which the quality and effectiveness of teaching and learning cannot be guaranteed.

New teachers are neither properly briefed nor allowed to understudy experienced teachers which could have helped to improve their competencies. No doubt, inductions, nay mentorship play significant role in ensuring effectiveness in teaching and learning. It has been established by several scholars (Karlberg & Bezzina, 2020; Kessels, 2010; Bezzina et al., 2004) that “the quality of a teacher's experience in the initial years of teaching is critical to developing and applying the knowledge and skills acquired during initial teacher training and to forming positive attitudes to teaching as a career”. According to Ronfeldt, Bardelli, Brockman & Mullman (2020), “growing evidence suggests that preservice candidates who receive better coaching are more instructionally effective when they are mentored”. This tallies with the findings in Hairon, S., Loh, S.H., Lim, S.P. et al., (2020) where the survey results showed that beginning teachers perceived mentoring to have positive impact on their classroom effectiveness. Thus, the TRCN needs to increase their efforts at establishing mandatory induction programmes as part of career training in order to ensure improved effectiveness in teaching and learning. Similarly, the ratings for the organisation of annual examinations and conferences for the purpose of determining level of professional competency among teachers in Kwara State; and improving the quality-of-service delivery in schools were poor. These poor ratings are signs that the motivation and professional upgrade of teachers' skills, knowledge and competence is not top of the list for TRCN. As postulated by Hasha & Wadesango (2020), the idea about continuous professional development is to enhance the improvement of individual teacher's professional skills and knowledge with the purpose of upgrading the teacher's quality, efficiency and effectiveness. Thus, CPD motivates positive change in the teachers and drives them to introduce new ideas into their classroom practice with the result of inducing positive changes in student outcomes (Osman & Warner, 2020; Zhang, S., Shi, Q. & Emily Lin, 2020; Liu, Y. & Liao, W., 2019; Kennedy, 2016).

The factors that challenge the effective implementation of TRCN guidelines in Kwara State are identified in this study. Firstly, the teachers in Kwara State do not understand the objectives of TRCN guideline policy. This condition could not be

unconnected with the general low level of awareness about the existence and the provisions of the PSNT as observed by Aluede (2009). With such condition, the teachers would not be able to ascertain what exactly they are expected to know and do and how they would be assessed on those variables and this is contrary to the objective of the PSNT 2010. Secondly, the respondents believed that the state authorities are not supporting the TRCN enough to enable the agency perform optimally. Thirdly, the TRCN monitors only schools in the urban areas of the State. This finding is corroborated by Busingye (2020) that mostly in developing countries like Nigeria, the inspection is often limited to urban schools. While inadequate inspection/monitoring is a challenge to effective implementation of TRCN guidelines, inspection itself is faced with myriads of problems. Ogunsaju (2002) identified lack of transportation, inadequate funding, inspectors' low adaptability to rural life, lack of suitable accommodation, lack of mobility among the impediments to effective inspection in Nigeria (Orunbon & Isaac-Philips, 2020; Bagaya, Akullu Ezati, Wafula & Rasmussen, 2020).

Conclusion

The study examined the implementation of TRCN guidelines in Kwara State. The study assumed that implementing the guidelines stipulated by the TRCN is a key factor in achieving teaching effectiveness in the state. From the foregoing, therefore, the study concluded that any inadequacy in the implementation of the TRCN guidelines would largely negatively affect the quality of teachers saddled with the responsibility of transferring knowledge thereby affecting teaching and learning in the state. It is further concluded that consistent implementation of the guidelines in the Professional Standards for Nigerian Teachers would ensure that more qualified and licensed teachers are employed into the state's teaching service so as to enhance improvement in the quality of the existing teachers.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, it was recommended among others that:

1. The TRCN should improve its level of implementation of other guidelines in the PSNT other than the accreditation aspect only.
2. The TRCN should improve on the level of awareness about the professional guidelines by widely disseminating the PSNT 2010 as well as by beefing up its publicity department to liaise with the news media to make the populace know about what TRCN stands for and its regulatory activities.
3. The TRCN should also mandate employers to focus on the continuous professional development of teachers by allowing and sponsoring them for teacher conferences, workshops and other skills acquisition programmes.
4. The TRCN should beef-up its inspection and monitoring activities both during the pre and post school establishment exercises to ensure that employers comply with its guidelines at all times.
5. The Federal Government should provide resources and facilities for TRCN so that their monitoring would cover both the urban and rural school locations
6. TRCN should strictly enforce the mandatory induction programmes for

- newly employed teachers in Kwara State by ensuring that they are adequately mentored by senior colleagues before being pushed before the students.
7. The guideline should be updated to include deterrent and punitive provisions for infractions and lack of compliance.

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