ASSESSMENT OF AGRICULTURAL SCIENCE TEACHERS' ATTITUDE TOWARDS SCHOOL FARM IN SENIOR SCHOOLS IN ILORIN EAST LGA, KWARA STATE

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Abstract

The study assessed agricultural science teachers' attitude towards school farm in senior secondary schools in Ilorin East LGA of Kwara State. The study adopted a descriptive research of the survey type. The sample of the study consisted of one hundred and twenty (120) randomly selected agricultural science teachers. Four research questions were raised and answered in the study. The instrument used for data collection was a researcher- designed questionnaire. Data obtained were analyzed using percentages, mean and Spearman rank correlation statistics .The study revealed that agricultural science teachers had positive attitudes towards school farm work irrespective of school type, academic qualifications and availability of farm tools. Based on the findings of the study it was recommended that adequate incentives should be given to the Agricultural science teachers to sustain their positive attitude towards school farm; also private and public schools should give proper attention to planning and management of school farm while teachers' academic qualifications should not be used as a yardstick for implementing programmes on school farm.

Keywords: Agricultural Science Teachers, Attitude, School Farm, Teachers' Qualification

Introduction

Education is widely recognized as the most effective tool for development in all its ramifications that any country can invest to better the lots of its citizenry. World Bank (2007) affirmed that it is one of the critical pathways to promote social and economic development. It is also central to the development of a better life and better world. Hence, in the absence of education, development could not be effective and sustainable. Battle and Lewis (2002) remarked that education is a fundamental step that is expected of everyone in this era of globalization. It serves the vital function of human capital development and is a prerequisite to an individual's wellbeing and better standard of living.

Education is the acquisition of knowledge and skills through which an individual's productivity could be enhanced thereby ensuring quality of life. The aggregation of these individual increase in productivity which consequently leads to increase in earning engender national economic growth (Saxton, 2000). A crucial aspect of education through which increased productivity and improved quality of life could be enhanced is through functional agricultural education. Agricultural education is a teaching and learning activity that deals with all aspects of cultivating crops and rearing animals for the economic benefits and human uses. Agricultural education provides learners with necessary skills required for the effective

practice of agriculture with the aim of providing food, jobs and raw materials for industries and ensure food security and sustainability (Akinsorotan, 2007)

The objectives of senior secondary school agricultural science curriculum as outlined in the Nigeria Educational Research and Development Council (2013) are to stimulate and sustain student interest in agriculture, to enable student acquire basic knowledge and practical skills in agriculture and enable students to be self reliant. These objectives would be realised if the teachers to implement them have favourable attitude towards both theory and practical aspect of agriculture.

An Agricultural Science teacher is someone who has acquired training in the pedagogical and content aspects of agriculture and is responsible for the inculcation of agricultural knowledge, skills and attitudes into learners (Olaitan, Asogwa, & Assouzu, 2010). This also includes technical aspect of agriculture which involves carrying out all activities that are done on the school farm. It deals with the whole content of agricultural science as highligted in different sections in the curriculum (Olaitan, Asogwa, & Assouzu , 2010).

School farm is an aspect of school programme of activities that is responsible for productive agriculture in the society. School farm is a designated parcel of land within or close to the school premises where learners engage in practical agriculture in the area of crop and animal farming. Etuk (2014) describes school farm as a channel for learning and acquisition of practical skills in agriculture to complement whatever background knowledge the students must have acquired through classroom instructions in order to develop the entry level skills in agriculture and agricultural related- jobs.

In Nigeria, many secondary school graduates still feel reluctant to engage in the practice of agricultural related occupations even without any prospect of getting employed and most of these graduates are not employed because they lack the practical knowledge and skills required in the agricultural enterprises. This problem could be as a result of unfavourable disposition or level of exposure of learners to agricultural science or farm practical work especially in secondary schools due to the attitudes of their teachers towards school farm.

The attitude of agricultural science teachers towards the school farm as a means for teaching practical agriculture has been recognized as an important factor. Onwumere, Modebelu and Chukwuka (2016) studied the impact of school farm on teaching agricultural science in secondary school in Ikwuano local government in Abia State, Nigeria. The findings revealed that Agricultural Science teachers have a high positive attitude towards school farm. This findings could be as a result of the socio-economic status of the people in the study area or due to the agrarian nature of the people covered. However, in an urban and elite society like the current study area, the reverse may be the case.

Teacher with positive attitude may engage the use of school farm in teaching agriculture while those with negative attitude may just be teaching agriculture theoretically. Also the teacher's attitude to school farm could also determine his ability to motivate student to develop interest in agriculture thereby influencing the extent to which students to choose occupational interest in agriculture.

It is against this background that this study intended to investigate the influence of teachers' attitudes to school farm in senior schools in Ilorin East LGA of Kwara State.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of the study was to assess Agricultural Science teachers' attitudes towards school farm in Senior Schools in Ilorin East LGA of Kwara State. Specifically, the study examined the:

1. attitude of Agricultural Science teachers' towards school farm work.
2. influence of availability of farming tools on the Agricultural Science teachers' attitude to school farm.
3. influence of the school type on Agricultural Science teachers' attitude towards school farm.
4. influence of Agricultural Science teachers' academic qualification on their attitude towards school farm.

Research Questions

To guide this study, the following four research questions were raised:

1. What is the attitude of Agricultural Science teachers' towards school farm work?
2. How does avalability of farming tools determine the Agricultural Science teachers' attitude to school farm?
3. In what way does school type affect Agricultural Science teachers' attitude towards school farm?
4. How does Agricultural Science teachers' academic qualification determine their attitudes towards school farm?

Hypotheses

Ho_1 There is no significant relationship between availability of school farm and teachers' attitude towards school farm.

Ho_2 There is no significant relationship between the type of school in which teacher teach and their attitude towards school farm.

Ho_3 There is no significant relationship between the teachers' qualification and their attitude to school farm.

Methodology

This research was a descriptive research of the survey type. The population for this study consisted of all senior secondary school Agricultural Science teachers in Ilorin East LGA of Kwara State. The sample for the study comprised 120 randomly selected Agricultural science teachers in public and private secondary schools in Ilorin East LGA of Kwara State. Cronbach Alpha analysis was used and a reliability coefficient of 0.72 was gotten for the instrument. The data collected were analyzed using percentages, mean, standard deviation and Spearman Rank Correlation .The hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance.

Results

The findings of this study were presented according to the research questions.

Research Question 1

What is the attitude of Agricultural Science teachers towards school farm?

Table 1: *Mean Responses of Agricultural Science Teachers Attitude towards School Farm*

S/N	Attitude of Agricultural Science teachers towards school farm	Mean	SD	Remark
1.	I enjoy going to school farm with my students	57.12	6.21	Sig
2.	I like going to the school farm both in the raining and dry seasons.	54.23	6.01	Sig

3.	I go to school farm even during weekends	63.56	7.29	Sig
4.	I use my personal money most times to supplement farm input on the school farm	38.33	4.24	Sig
5.	I trekked long distances from my house to the school farm	48.26	5.92	Sig

Results in Table 1 revealed that the respondents enjoyed going to the school farm with the students with a mean of (57.12). Also, Agricultural Science teachers like going to the school farm during rain and dry seasons (54.23). Most of the respondents also like going to the school farm even during weekends (63.56). While few of the respondents use their money to sponsor school farm work (38.33) and Some also agreed that they could also trek long distance to school farm (48.26). The level of involvement and commitment of agricultural science teachers on Table 1 is an indication that agricultural science teachers have positive attitude toward school farm work.

Research Question 2: How does availability of farming tools determine Agricultural Science teachers' attitude towards school farm?

Table 2: Correllation coefficient of Availability of Farm Tools and Agricultural Science Teachers' Attitude Towards School Farm

Variable	N	Df	Corr-coefficient (rho)	Significant Sig. 2tailed
Corr - coeficient of Availability of Farm tools and Attitude	120	118	0.012	0.853

Table 2 shows relationship between availability of farm tools and teachers attitudes towards school farm. From Table 2, the correlation coefficient is 0.012 while the p value is 0.853 at 0.05 level of significance. Since the p value of 0.853 is greater than 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis is hereby rejected which implies that there is no significant relationship between availability of farm tools and teachers attitude towards school farm. This implies that availability of farm tools does not really influence teachers' attitude towards school farm.

Research Question 3: In what way does school type affect Agricultural Science teachers' attitude towards school farm?

Table 3: Correllation coefficient of school type and the Agricultural Science teachers' attitude towards the school farm?

Variable	N	Df	Corr-coefficient (rho)	Significant (Sig.2 tailed)
Corr - coeficient on School type and Attitude	120	118	0.199	0.408

Table 3 shows the test of hypothesis on the relationship between school type and Agricultural science teachers attitude towards school farm. From Table 3, the correlation coefficient (cr) is 0.199 while the P value is 0.408 at 0.05 level of significance. Since the P value of 0.408 is greater than 0.05 level of significance. This shows that there is no significant relationship between teachers attitude to school farm and the type of school in which they teach (that is private or public). Thus, teachers' school type does not influence their attitude towards school farm.

Research Question 4: How does Agricultural Science teachers' academic qualification determine their attitudes towards school farm?

Table 4 Correllation coefficient of Academic Qualification on Teachers' and their Attitude towards School Farm.

Variable	N	Df	Corr-coefficient (rho)	Significant Sig. 2tailed
Corr coeficient of Academic Qualification and Attitude	120	118	-0.012	0.123

Table 4 reveals the hypothesis testing on the relationship between the teachers' qualification and their attitude towards school farm. The Table shows that the coefficient correlation (r) value is 0.012 while the P value is 0.123 at 0.05 level of significance. Since the probability (P) is 0.123 is greater than 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis is hereby rejected. This shows there is no significant relationship between the teachers' qualification and their attitude to school farm. This implies that both the qualified and unqualified Agricultural Science teachers have almost the same attitudes towards school farm. This might be as a result of the exposure of the Agricultural Science teachers to practical agriculture during their secondary school period.

Discussion

The findings of this study revealed that agricultural science teachers have positive towards school farm .This finding is similar to that of Onwumere, Modebelu and Chukwuka (2016); Olaitan and Mama (2002) and Kidane (2014) whose studies revealed that teachers had positive attitude towards school farm work and Agriculture.

The findings of this study revealed that availability of farm tools does not determine teachers' attitudes towards school farm. The finding contradicted that of Emeya and Ojimba (2012) whose study revealed that availability of farm implements encouraged teachers full participation in school farm. The schools are expected to equip the school farm and ensure that activities are carried out in order to produce results beneficial

and worthwhile to the students and the school.

This study shows that academic qualifications do not affect agricultural science teachers' attitude towards school farm. The finding of this study contradicted the finding of Izumi and Evess (2002) whose study found that teachers' qualification is a factor in improving Agricultural Science teachers' attitude towards school farm.

The study also indicated that school type does not determine Agricultural Science teachers' attitudes towards school farm. This finding was in agreement with Bedi and Grag (2002) who found that private and public schools improve students' attitudes to school farm work.

Conclusion

This study concluded that Agricultural Science teachers' have positive attitudes towards school farm work irrespective of academic qualifications, availability of farm tools and school type. This could have positive effects on teaching and learning of agricultural science and students choice of career in agriculture.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study the following recommendations were made:

1. Teachers with positive attitude to school farm work should be encouraged by the management by providing all necessary farm tools and resources to sustain their interest.
2. Administrator of public and private secondary schools should ensure they have school farm to assist teachers in inculcating practical work into learners.
3. Teachers academic qualifications should not be used as a yardstick for implementing agricultural policies and programmes on school farm work in secondary schools.

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