

Perception of Teachers of Agriculture about Supervised Agricultural Experience Programmes (Saep) in Secondary Schools in Ekiti and Ondo States Nigeria

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The study investigated the perception of teachers of agriculture about Supervised Agricultural Experience Programmes (SAEP) in secondary schools in Ekiti and Ondo States. The population used for the study consisted of 520 teachers of agricultural science in all the secondary schools in Ekiti and Ondo States. The sample used for this study was 136 teachers of agricultural science drawn through a proportionate stratified sampling technique to pick four(4) teachers from each of the 34 Local Government of the two states. The Instrument used was a structured questionnaire to investigate the extend to which the teachers agreed on disagree with statemenst regarding SAEP. The questionnaire were test and re-tested yielding a reliability co-efficient of 89. (Cronbach alpha). The data for the study were analyzed using mean, standard deviation t-test and two tailed probability statistics. The probability level was set at $P < 0.05$. Thirty eight items were generated for the study. The study found out among others that the teaching of agriculture needs improvement; that though SEAP related contents are in the agricultural science curriculum the teaching and learning of agriculture are not vocationally oriented in Ekiti and Ondo States. It was recommended among others that agricultural programmes in all schools should include supervised agricultural experience programmes, while the State School Boards in collaboration with relevant Ministries should conduct informational workshop and orientation on SAEP for educational planners, administrator and teachers of agriculture in Nigeria.

Introduction

Nigerian government has been embarking on series of extensive programmes since independence in 1960 to increase agricultural production and get the youths involved in agriculture. In 1976, Operation Feed the Nation was launched, followed by the Green Revolution in 1980. The Young Farmers Club, Graduate Farm Scheme and the Back to Land Scheme, were some of the different programmes embarked upon to revitalize agriculture in Nigeria. Others include the National Directorate of Employment (NDE) of 1987, National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS), recently the (7) Seven Point Agenda (7PA) followed by Vision 20: 2020 and the Student Industrial Work Experience Scheme (SIWES) of the Industrial Training Fund (ITF).

Amimu (2008) observed that all the programmes and visions have more or less the same broad thrust for wealth creation, employment generation, poverty reduction and value re-orientation but not specifically engineered for agricultural production through youths in the school. He expressed that poor logistics have been a negative factor leading to programmes disruption and overall low performance of agricultural schemes in Nigeria, It has been observed that most of the Nigerian agricultural programmes are not directed towards secondary school youths who needed to be nurtured at their early malleable years.

Olaitan (2010) viewed that, for an effective implementation of agricultural education programmes in Nigeria, both the theory and practice of agriculture must go together. Agricultural programmes in Nigerian secondary schools must be more than in-class instructions. He stressed that attitude, knowledge, abilities and appreciation of agricultural facet are best taught and learnt through various experience acquired through learning by doing during the receptive and malleable years when the pupils are still in secondary schools.

The learning by doing principle should hold true for Nigerian student – farmers in secondary schools. This is because no matter how well a classroom instructions is presented, it is no enough unless applied. According to Oke (2010) vocational education programmes in agriculture are as effective as the instructors or teachers of agriculture make them. Olaitan emphasized that agricultural education programmes in secondary schools must charge with time because the scope of agriculture is getting wider. He opined that diversified methods, experiential activities and different approaches must be used to acquaint students with the wider scope of agriculture. Teachers of agriculture who wish to make a change must project their needs ahead by attending professional agriculture meetings, conventions and workshops. According to Phipps (1980) supervised agricultural experience programme (SAEP) is the strong tool placed in the hands of teachers to bridge the gap between the school, agricultural occupations, enterprise education, skill developments and employment.

Statement of the Problems

It has been observed that most of the agricultural programme in Nigeria had not been engineered towards skill development and agricultural production through youths in school. Most of the students are found roaming the streets in search of employment after graduation from schools and colleges. Olaitan (2010) opined that for an effective implementation of agricultural programmes in Nigerian schools, both the theory and practice of agriculture must go together so that the students can develop effective saleable skills needed for performance on job after leaving the school. Olaitan emphasized that the teaching and learning of agriculture in secondary schools must be more than in-class instructions, but should include learning by doing to gain the experience needed for establishment on a job or career after graduation. This had not been occurring in schools and colleges in Nigeria (Aderogba, 2011)

Richardson (1983) and Oke (2010) opined that it is the teachers of agriculture who holds a critical role in determining whether a total programme is offered or not. This study was designed to determine the teacher's perception of supervised agricultural experience programmes in secondary schools in Ekiti and Ondo States, Nigeria.

Purpose of the study

The main purpose of this study was to determine:

- (a) The perception of teachers of agricultural science/education about supervised agricultural experience programmes in Ekiti and Ondo States.
- (b) The difference that existed between the perception of teachers of agriculture that had practical agriculture or SAEP related programmes and teachers that had no practical agriculture or SAEP related programmes.

Hypothesis

There will be no significant difference in the mean rating of the perception of teachers who had SAEP related programmes or practical agriculture and those who had no SAEP-oriented programmes about supervised agricultural experience programme in Ekiti and Ondo States.

Methodology

The study was a survey research. The population for the study consisted of 520 teachers of agricultural science in secondary schools in Ekiti and Ondo States. The sample, used in this study was 136 drawn through a proportionate stratified sampling techniques consisted of four teachers of agricultural science selected from each of the 34 Local Government area of the two states. The instrument used was a structured questionnaire. One hundred and thirty six (136) questionnaire were distributed to the respondents out of which only 130 (95.5%) were completed and used for this study. The items in the questionnaire were face and content validated by five experts. The Likert scale was employed for obtaining teachers perception on Supervised Agricultural Experience Programme (SAEP) in secondary schools in Ekiti and Ondo State, Nigeria. The questionnaire were used to identify the degree to which the teachers agreed or disagreed with statements regarding SAEP; Sixteen (16) items were developed for the rating with five point scale of strongly Agree (5), Agree (4) Neutral (3), Disagree (2), Strongly Disagree (1). The final questionnaire for this study yielded reliability co-efficient of .89, using Cronbach's alpha procedures.

Data Analysis

The data for this study were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Mean standard deviation, t – test and two tailed probability analysis for the t-test statistics were used to analyze the data. The probability level was set at $P < 0.05$. The response scale was divided into two equal segments to facilitate interpretations. Mean of equal or greater (\geq) than 2.5 (2.5 to 5.0) were adjudged to indicate relative agreement with the underlying statements. Means of equal or less that (\leq) 2.4, (2.4 to 1.0) were categorized as relative disagreement with the associated statement. Standard deviation was also used to determine the variability of the response of each of the statements.

Results

From the analysis of data collected, results are presented in the tables below based on the research questions.

Research Questions 1

What are the teachers of agriculture perceptions of Supervised Agricultural Experience Programmes? Result presented in Table 1 shows that the two statements that received the most desirable rating; the teaching of agriculture needs improvement in Ekiti and Ondo States [means= 4.69, standard deviation = .21], evaluation is needed to appraise vocational agriculture effectiveness in Ekiti and Ondo State [mean = 4.54, standard deviation = .54].

The teachers disagreed most with the statement that SAEP or SAEP related contents are not in the vocational agriculture curriculum of Nigeria education [mean = 1.89, standard deviation = .93]. The teachers disagreed that agriculture is vocational oriented enough in Ekiti and Ondo State schools [mean = 2.01, standard deviation = 1.57].

Table 1. Rating Assigned To Statements About Teachers Perception Of Supervised Agricultural Experience Programme by Teachers of Agriculture in Ekiti and Ondo States

Statement*	Groups +++				GRAND		Results
	A Mn+	SD++	B MN	SD	Mn	SD	
Teachers perception of agricultural programmes were that:							
1. Practical agriculture and SEAP are the same	2.19	1.65	2.28	1.36	2.24	1.52	Disagreed
2. Vocational agriculture is complete without SAEP	1.69	1.31	2.74	1.49	2.22	1.40	Disagreed
3. all vocational agriculture students should be required to conduct SAEP	4.11	0.97	2.88	1.62	3.50	1.29	Agreed
4. It should provide students with exploratory and placement activities improvement projects and supplementary skills	3.86	1.32	3.18	1.91	3.52	1.62	Agreed
5. SAEP or SAEP related contents are not in Agriculture curriculum in the state.	1.56	0.85	2.22	1.01	1.89	0.99	Disagreed
6. Agricultural science is vocational oriented enough in Ekiti and Ondo State schools	2.14	1.72	1.86	1.31	2.01	1.52	Disagreed
7. The teaching of agriculture needs improvement in Ekiti and Ondo States	4.84	0.37	4.54	0.51	4.69	0.21	Agreed
8. Evaluation is needed to appraise vocational agriculture effectiveness, in helping students to develop the competencies needed to achieve their occupation objectives	4.63	0.15	4.44	0.56	4.54	0.54	Agreed

+++ Groups A = Teachers who had SAEP or related programmes;
B = Teachers who did not have SAEP or related programmes

Research Questions 2

What differences exist between the perception of teachers of agriculture that had practicals or SAEP related programmes; and teachers that had no practicals or SAEP related programmes, about SAEP?

Table 2. Mean, t-test and Probability level; Perception Values of Teachers of Agriculture in Ekiti and Ondo States

Statement*	GROUPS ++		t TEST	2-tailed t-value Prob > t ⁴ At .05	Results
	A MEAN	B MEAN			
1. Practical agriculture and SAEP are the same	1.69	2.74	-3.89	0.0002*	Significant
2. vocational agriculture is complete without SAEP	2.19	2.28	-0.33	0.741	Not Significant
3. all vocational agricultural students should be required to conduct SAE programmes	4.11	2.88	4.74	0.0001*	Significant
4. It should provide students with exploratory and placement activities, improvement projects and supplementary / marketable skills	3.86	3.18	2.17	0.0329*	Significant
5. SAEP or SAEP related contents are not in agriculture curriculum in Ekiti and Ondo states.	1.56	2.22	-3.89	0.0002*	Significant
6. agricultural science is vocational oriented enough in Ekiti and Ondo State Schools	2.14	1.86	0.91	0.366	Not Significant
7. The teaching of agriculture needs improvement in Ekiti and Ondo State	4.84	4.54	3.62	0.0005*	Significant
8. evaluation is needed to appraise vocational agriculture effectiveness in helping students to develop the competencies needed to achieve their occupational objectives	4.64	4.44	2.16	0.032*	Significant

P ≤ 0.05 alpha

++Groups: A were teachers that had SAEP related programs;
B were teachers that had no SAEP related programs.

Results presented in Table 2 showed the t-test statistics used to differentiate between the perception of teachers of agriculture that had practicals or SAEP related programmes (Group A) and teachers that has no practicals or SAEP related programmes while in secondary school. Out of the eight statements there were no significant difference at P<0.05 in two statements; while there were significant difference in the opinion of the two categories of teachers in six (6) statements.

Findings and Discussion

The outcome of this study revealed that teachers agreed that all vocational agriculture students, should be required to conduct SAEP. They also agreed that the teaching of agriculture needs improvement in Ekiti and Ondo States. These findings are in consonant with that of Olaitan (2010) who was of the opinion that for an effective implementation of vocational agricultural programmes in Nigerian schools both the theory and practice of agriculture must go together so that the students can develop effective marketable and saleable skills that are needed to perform on the job after leaving the school.

The findings of the study also revealed that evaluation is needed to appraise the vocational agriculture effectiveness in helping students to develop the competencies needed to achieve their occupational objectives. This opinion is in agreement with, Olaitan (1996) and Reyahi et al 2007) that school agricultural programmes should henceforth be evaluated on a continuous basis to allow for appraisal, replanning and improvement purpose and to determine whether they contribute to the behavioural changes desired in the students.

This study also found out that there were no significant difference in the opinion of teachers that had SAEP related programmes and those that had no SAEP related programmes on such statement that the teaching of agriculture needs improvement in Ekiti and Ondo State, and Vocational agriculture is complete without SAEP According to Phipps(1980) and Olaitan(2010). Supervised Agricultural Experience Programmes should be recognized by all agricultural education teachers and educators as an inseparable component of vocational agricultural programmes. However, it appears apparent that most of the teachers are not fully aware of the ingredients and criterions of SAEP.

Summary, Conclusion and Recommendations

Teachers perception play important roles in students learning process and programme implementation in schools. The outcomes of this study have identified the salient perception of teachers about Supervised Agricultural Experience Programmes in Ekiti and Ondo States schools. This study noted that the teaching of agriculture needs improvement, which evaluation is needed to appraise vocational agriculture effectiveness. The teachers also confirmed that though SAEP related contents are in the agricultural curriculum, the teaching and learning of agriculture has not been vocationally oriented in Ekiti and Ondo States. The teachers opined that vocational agriculture education is not completed without supervised agricultural experience programme. Therefore, there is the urgent need to quickly address these short comings in order to encourage learning by doing and skill development through the experiential activities of SAEP.

Based on the findings, and conclusion of this study, it was recommended among others that agriculture programmes in schools should include supervised agricultural experience programmes. Similarly the State School Boards in collaboration with relevant Ministries should conduct informational SAEP workshops and orientation for educational planners, administrators and teachers of agriculture in Ekiti and Ondo State in particular and Nigeria in general .

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