

Contributions of Critical Thinking Skills and Self-Regulation to the Professional Competence of Business Studies Teachers in Ogun State, Nigeria

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Abstract

The advancement in the world has made typical business schools to focus in shifting courses designed to impact a large dose of quantitative management skills and techniques to specific softer skills (behavioural and societal) involving the ability to work with others, to communicate effectively, to display multicultural awareness and to exhibit some entrepreneurial and leadership skills. In fact, there is growing emphasis in education, business, government, employer organizations, and alumni and even student for graduate to possess competencies for employability. Hence, the study examined critical thinking skills and self-regulation as determinants of professional competence of business teachers. A descriptive survey research design was adopted for this the study. Thirty-two (32) respondents that constituted the population of the Business Studies Teachers in Secondary Schools within Ijebu-North Local government Area of Ogun State were sampled to participate in study. Adopted and validated scales were used for data collection and statistically analysed using multiple regression at 0.05 alpha levels. The result revealed that there was a significant relationship between critical thinking, self-regulation and professional competency among business studies teachers. Based on the result of this study, the researchers recommend strategies for sustaining professional competence among the business studies teachers, using critical thinking and self-regulation.

Keywords: Critical Thinking Skills, Professional Competence & Business Studies Teachers, Self-Regulation

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Introduction

Business studies in the context of this study is subject at the junior secondary school to enable pupils acquire basic skills in office practice, shorthand, commerce, bookkeeping keyboard and computer education (Ehimetalor, Osunwufo, Makeri-Yahaya & Oladunjoye, 2009). Business studies teachers are expected to be sound and competent in order to meet up with the current trend of new technologies in vogue. McQuade et al. (2005) note that the new environment requires that individuals need to be increasingly flexible, innovative, good communicators and team player, contributing to strategy goals of the organizations and increasingly technically and professional competent. The competency development process in the theory is comprised of mental reflections as well as physical action process. This dual process transforms the learners by using skills as the interplay elements and this transformation relies on individual construction of meaning so that experience and knowledge are equilibrium (Steven, 2000).

The concept of critical development stage theory was developed by Richard Paul and Linda Elder in 1997. The theory holds that critical thinking is that mode of thinking about any subject, content, or problem in which the thinker improves the quality of his or her by skillfully charge of the structures inherent in thinking and imposing intellectual standards upon them (Paul and elder 2001). According to Levy and Keber (2003) critical thinking arises from the practice of reflection thinking. Individuals are able to think and analyse critically about their own leaving and strive to develop expertise in their areas of professionalism. In the area of teaching and learning for example, the practice with the skills to improve and develop their pedagogical teaching skills.

A Delphi report published by American philosophical association describe as one who is habitually inquisitive, trustful of reasoning flexible, prudent in making judgments orderly in complex matters, seeking relevant information which are as precise as the subject and the circumstances of inquiry permit (Faciene, 1990). Critical thinking and self-regulatory strategies interrelated critical thinking is a cognitive skill that enables learners to use deep process strategies in their learning (Ignatavicious, 2011). One strategy that may be used to promote the growth of critical thinking is by means of self-regulation. Critical thinking is embedded within self-regulation strategies use (Kuiper, 2002). Found in her study that promoting self-regulation could serve as pedagogical method to promote critical thinking in diverse clinical areas. Self-regulation Pintrich (2000) originated self-regulation theoretical frame work is based on the socio-cognitive perspective of learning (Badure, 2001; Schunk, 2001).

It is simultaneously and dynamically, producing multiple interactions between the different processes and component. Self-regulatory provides the vary basis of purposeful action. The concept of self-regulated learning is helpful to distinguish between broad and narrow conceptions. In a broad sense, learning is self-regulated if the learning is free to decide what, when, where and how to learn (Weinert, 1982). Little, (2003) proposed that current teacher professional development consider teachers as learner who derive their available information of their teaching experiences to inform their work and professional improvement (Randi, 2004). Hence, this study investigates whether critical thinking, self-regulation would determine professional competence of business studies teachers.

The following null hypotheses were specifically tested:

HO₁: There is no significant relationship among critical thinking self-regulation and professional competence among business studies teachers.

HO₂: There is no significant relationship between critical thinking skills and professional competence among business teachers

HO₃: There is no significant difference between self-regulation and professional competence among business studies teachers.

HO₄: There is no significant composite contribution of critical thinking and self-regulation on professional competence.

HO₅: there is no significant difference between male and female teachers and professional competence in teaching business studies.

METHOD

Design

This study adopts the descriptive research design. The population comprises the entire thirty-two (32) teachers who teach business studies shorthand, keyboarding, office practice and ICT in all the twenty (20) secondary schools in Ijebu-North Local Government Area of Ogun State, Nigeria. This study uses selected sample technique. The thirty-two (32) teachers were selected from this study since the size of the population was not large. The respondents were selected from secondary schools in Ago-Iwoye, Oro, Awa and Ijebu-Igbo. The instrument was developed based on the modification of previous instruments developed

by several authors such as (Choy and San, 2012) - (Choy and San, 2012) critical thinking scale (CTS), Cob, (2003) – Self regulation scale (SRS) and Umamieye and Ogunbanmerun (2012) – professional competencies scale (PCS). Choy and San critical thinking scale and self-regulation scale were administered on segment of the sample had an internal consistency ranging from 0.81 and 0.79 were derived respectively while the professional competence scale had an internal consistency with Cronbach alpha 0.76 using Pearson Product Moment Formular (PPMC). The measurement of the Choy and San Critical thinking scale was based on the 4point likert scales with 1 demonstrating “Strongly Disagree” to 4 demonstrating “Strongly agree” and self-regulation and professional competence were based on the 4 point likert scales with 1 demonstrating “strongly disagree” and to 4 demonstrating “Strongly agree”.

Procedure

The questionnaires were administered personally by the researchers. The researcher visited the teachers that were selected for the study while permission had already been from the principal of the school. The respondents were asked to fill the instrument independently before returning them to the researcher. The statistical methods that were used for answering the study was multiple regression analysis and independent t-test at 0.05 level of significance.

Results

The results are as presented in table 1-5.

Table 1: Combination of critical thinking, self regulation and professional competence among business teachers.

		Professional Competencies	Critical Thinking	Self Regulation
Professional Competencies	Pearson Correlation	1	-.351*	.354*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.049	.047
	N	32	32	32
Critical Thinking	Pearson Correlation	-.351*	1	.128
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.049		.484
	N	32	32	32
Self Regulation	Pearson Correlation	.354*	.128	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.047	.484	
	N	32	32	32

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The results in Table 1 above revealed that there is a positive relationship between critical thinking and professional competence among Business studies teachers ($r_{(32)} = -.351$; $p < 0.05$); there is a positive relationship between self

regulation and professional competence among Business studies teachers ($r_{(32)} = .354$; $p < 0.05$); this implies that there is a significant relationship among critical thinking, self regulation and professional competence among Business studies teachers.

Table 2: Relationship between critical thinking and professional competence

		Critical Thinking	Professional Competence
Critical Thinking	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	1	-.351*
	N		.049
			32
Professional Competence	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	-.351*	1
	N	.049	
		32	

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The results in Table 2 above revealed that there is a positive relationship between critical thinking and professional competence among Business studies teachers ($r_{(32)} = -.351$; $p < 0.05$);

this implies that there is a significant relationship between critical thinking and professional competence among Business studies teachers.

Table 3: Relationship between self regulation and professional competence

		Self-Regulation	Professional Competence
Self-Regulation	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	1 32	.354* .047 32
Professional Competence	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	.354* .047 32	1 32

**Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The results in Table 3 above revealed that there is a positive relationship between self regulation and professional competence among Business studies teachers ($r_{(32)} = .354$; $p < 0.05$);

this implies that there is a significant relationship between self-regulation and professional competence among Business studies teachers.

Table 4: Summary of the Multiple Regression Analysis of critical thinking, self-regulation and professional competence

REGRESSION		ANOVA				
Model	Source	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig
R = .534 ^a	Regression	1263.434	2	631.717	5.789	.008 ^a
R ² = .285	Residual	3164.784	29	109.130.		
Adj. R ² = .236	Total	4428.219	31			

Table 4 above reveals that the combination of critical thinking, self-regulation and professional competence yielded a coefficient of multiple regressions (R) of 0.534 and a multiple regression square of 0.285. This shows that 53% of the total variance in professional competency is accounted for by the combination of critical

thinking and self-regulation. The table also indicates that the analysis of variance of the multiple regression data produced an F-ratio value of 5.789 significant at 0.05 level. This means that critical thinking and self-regulation has a significant relationship with professional competence.

Table 5: T-test showing significant difference between male and female on professional competence in teaching business studies

Sex	N	Mean	Std	df	t	Sig	Remarks
Male	17	144.58	11.58	30	.174	0.679	Not Significant
Female	15	145.80	12.72				

The result in Table 5 revealed non – significant outcome ($t = .174$, $P > 0.05$). This outcome implied that there was no significant difference between male and female on professional competence in teaching business studies. The mean score of (144.58) recorded by male teachers is not significantly different from

that of (145.80) recorded by female teachers at 0.05 level of significance. The difference is not statistically significant. Hence, there was no significant difference between male and female on professional competence in teaching business studies.

Discussion of the Findings

The purpose of this study was to investigate critical thinking and self regulation as determinant of professional competence of Business studies teachers in Ijebu North Local Government in Ogun State. The result presented in Table 1 revealed that there was a significant relationship among critical thinking, self regulation and professional competence among Business studies teachers. This result corroborates the study of Epstein & Hundert, (2002) which posited that professional competencies connotes the capability of critical thinking and analysis, the successful exercise of professional judgment in assessing a situation and making decisions about what to do or not do based on that assessment, and the ability to evaluate and modify one's decisions, as appropriate, through reflective practice.

Table 2 revealed that there was a significant relationship between critical thinking and professional competence among Business

studies teachers. Facione, (1995) corroborates the study when he posited that critical thinking is important for education because critical thinking is an essential factor in making professional judgment

Table 3 This is supported by Belar (2001) which opined that order to achieve this, professionals need to know what is required for effective self assessment. Self-assessment, like many other abilities, is an ability that requires learning, practice, feedback, and public criteria so one knows the standard against which one is being assessed. These dual processes transform the learners by using skills as the interplay elements and this transformation relies on individual construction of meaning so that experience and knowledge are in equilibrium (Stevenson, 2000).

Table 4 revealed that critical thinking and self-regulation had a significant relationship with

professional competence. This result is in line with the study of Evensen and Hmelo, (2000) which posited the various cognitive strategies involved in self-regulation accentuate the role of critical thinking as a sub-process that may enable learners to transform their mental abilities into performance outcome. In a similar vein, the proactive process of self-regulation may enable learners to acquire the academic skill of critical thinking, in this case, as manifested by the ability to interpret, analyse, and evaluate (Ignatavicius, 2001).

Table 5 revealed that there was no significant difference between male and female on professional competence in teaching business. This will be having a higher level of professional competence. The study also revealed that male teacher does not have higher professional competence than the female.

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Conclusion and Recommendation

The study shows that there is a relationship among critical thinking, self regulation and professional competencies of teachers in business studies. Critical thinking and self-regulation and professional competency level of the teachers are not dependent on each other. They are positively correlated with each other. This indicates that the teacher with high level of critical thinking and self-regulation will have a higher level of professional competency. It is recommended that training programs in the business studies teachers' education curriculum, workgroups be formed to further define and advanced competencies within professional business teachers. It confirmed that professional competency differs in relation to gender and strata but contradicted portion is that women teachers have significant higher teaching competency than men.

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