

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MOTIVATION AND TEACHER RETENTION IN NIGERIAN PRIMARY SCHOOL: A CASE STUDY OF GWALE LOCAL GOVERNMENT OF KANO STATE

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Abstract

The paper discusses the concepts of primary education, its objectives, motivation and problems militating against the retention of teachers at the primary school level in Nigeria. A closed ended questionnaire with ten items on (lie relationship between motivation and retention of teachers in a three point Likert scale of Agree, Undecided and Disagree was administered to 200 primary school senior teachers and 100 head teachers. Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient statistical instrument at 0.05 level of significance was employed to test the null hypothesis to determine the level of relationship. Based on the findings of the study, suggestions are advanced on how to motivate and retain primary school teachers for professional continuity and improved academic standards at the primary school level.

Introduction

The wastage of qualified teachers at the primary school level in Nigeria should be a matter of paramount concern to educational administrators, parents and other stakeholders in the primary education sector. The exodus of high caliber personnel from primary school now results in a constant change of staff which is capable of destroying the continuity of the pupils' education and undermines academic standards.

A study of Blake (2002), on the above subject revealed that those who enter teaching at the primary school level are socially ambitious and that they remain in teaching only as long as they can use it as a step to something better. This ambition according to him is more for a higher social and economic status. Furthermore, a greater degree of dissatisfaction among teachers in this country may arise from comparing themselves with men in other occupations who enjoy higher incomes and greater prestige. The desire for upward social mobility may account for a number of individuals leaving teaching fields for greener pastures.

At this juncture, some fundamental questions that should be raised and answered are: What are the causes of poor retention of teachers at the primary school levels? What steps should be taken to check attrition of teachers in the primary school?

It is on the basis of the above exposition that the paper examines relationship between motivation and teacher retention at the primary school level.

Conceptual Classification of Primary Education and its Objectives

National Policy on Education (2004), defines primary education as the education given in institutions for children aged 6 to 11 plus. Hence primary education is regarded as the foundation stone upon which other levels of education are built on. Therefore it is often referred to as the key to the success or failure of the whole educational system. The duration is six years. This being the case, the national objectives of primary education are to:

- i. Inculcate permanent literacy and numeracy; and ability to communicate effectively,
- ii. Lay a sound basis for scientific and reflective thinking,
- iii. Give citizenship education as a basis for effective participation in and contribution to the life of the society.
- iv. Mould the character and develop sound attitude and morals in the child,
- v. Develop in the child the ability to adapt to the child's changing environment.

Give the child opportunities for developing manipulative skills that will enable the child function effectively in the society within the limits of the child's capacity and vii. Provide the child with basic tools for further educational advancement, including preparation for trades and crafts of the locality.

The national objectives of primary education are very laudable and relevant to the needs and aspirations of the primary school children. However, it must be emphasized at this juncture that the effective implementation of these objectives at the classroom level depends on a well motivated and conscientious primary school teacher.

Motivation

There is little agreement among different proposals about what defining criteria of motivation should be. This is so, because motivation appears to be neither an overt experience nor a fact of behaviour. For example, Huse et al (1977) defined motivation "as the condition responsible for variation, for the intensity, quality and direction of ongoing behaviour. The conditions are both intrinsic to the individual. From the above definition, it could be deduced that to motivate a worker demands a high level of fact and ingenuity from the school administrator. Furthermore, Kalucer (1969), viewed motivation as a conscious attempt by the administrator or manager to identify the various motives drives in men and trying as much as possible to make provision in form of needs to satisfy the motives or drives moving in stages from the lowest to the highest hierarchy of needs. From this definition, it is obvious that the tendency for the desire for the next level of needs arises as soon as the first level is fulfilled.

A number of motivational theories which are relevant to the discussions on motivations include Kontz et al (1980) carrot and stick theory, Maslow (1943), hierarchy of needs theory, Douglas (1946), X and Y theories, Vroom (1964), expectancy theory, and Hertzbergs (1976), hygiene theory. All these motivation theories can be utilized by educational administrator to effectively- arid appropriately motivate primary school teachers to ensure their retention and professional continuity in the primary school system.

Problems of Motivation and Teacher Retention at the Primary Education Level

A number of studies have been carried out by eminent scholars on the above subject matter. For example, a study by Henry (2000), on problem of motivation and teacher retention in the primary schools revealed poor conditions of service. According to him, a greater degree of dissatisfaction among the primary school teachers in this country may arise from comparing themselves with men in other occupations who enjoy higher incomes and greater prestige. It must be emphasized at this juncture., that the necessity of good pay for good teaching is clear if the profession is to attract and hold the best minds.

Another study by Taiwo (1998), on the problem of motivation and teacher retention revealed the poor status of the teacher. According to the outcome of his study, many teachers leave teaching because they have seen their pupils become more highly regarded in the society than they themselves. Apart from low salaries, the social position of the primary school teacher remains inferior to that of other professionals. Descent living good social positions are not accrued to primary school teachers in Nigeria.

Furthermore, a study by UNESCO (2000), in the problem of motivation and teacher retention in the third world countries revealed lack of job satisfaction on the part of the teachers. According to the research finding, insufficient teaching aids and overcrowded classrooms constitute a serious problem to effective teaching and teachers' morale in the classroom.

A similar study by Ojo (1998), on the problem of motivation and teacher retention revealed poor financial incentives inform of loans to own a personal car and house. According to the research finding car and housing loans which are available to other categories of workers arc either not available or difficult to secure by primary school teachers in Nigeria. Financial incentives, in form of car and housing loans are good morale booster and factors of teacher retention in the primary school.

Another study by Muassazi (1989), on the problems of motivation and teacher retention in schools revealed that most of the attrition in the teaching profession can be attributed to factors in our community, especially in the rural areas. We face the problems of getting enough qualified teachers to staff the, schools in our rural areas where they are urgently needed. According to him, one of the reasons often cited for the reluctance to teach in rural schools is that, the work there does not carry with it the same prestige as work in other communities. It is generally believed that appointment to rural schools often means that the teacher has low ability.

To sum up, it seems reasonable to suppose that a high proportion of teachers will continue with the teaching profession in preference for other vocations as long as their preparation lacks distinctiveness. Teachers generally need to be well trained for the job of teaching in any community where they found themselves.

Study Procedure

Research Hypothesis: There is no significant relationship between motivation and retention of teachers at the primary school level.

Population: The population for the study consists of 2300 primary school teachers and head teachers from 50 primary schools in Gwale Local Government of Kano Slate.

Sampling Procedure: Four senior teachers were randomly selected from 50 primary schools and 2 head teachers were also randomly selected from 50 primary schools. In all 200 teachers and 100 head teachers totaling 300 subjects participated in the study.

Instrumentation: A close ended questionnaire with 10 items on the relationship between motivation and teacher retention in primary school level was developed by the researcher. The questionnaire was vetted by three specialists in the area of educational research in order to ensure content validity and reliability.

Data analysis: Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient Statistical instrument at 0.05 level "of significance was employed to test the null hypothesis.

Presentation and Analysis of Data

Table 1: Showing the responses of the subjects on the question items on relationship between motivation and teacher retention at the primary school level

S/N	Items	Senior primary school teachers S =200	Head teachers S = 100	R	C.V
				0.447	0.05
1	Your monthly salary and other allowances are paid promptly and regularly	1.300(1285)	650 (635)		
2	You are promoted as at when due	1.300(1285)	650 (635)		
3	You have enough equipment and teaching aids to carry out your teaching assignments	1.300(1285)	. 650 (635)		
4	The attitude of the head teacher is always friendly to you	1.300(1285)	650 (635)		
5	You have the hope of owning your personal car and house	1.300(1285)	650 (635)		
6.	You are always over loaded with teaching and other assignments	1.300(1285)	650 (635)		
7	You have a high prestige in the society	1.300(1285)	650 (635)		
8	You do not experience overcrowded classroom	1.300(1285)	650(635)		
9	You like to teach in rural areas	1.300(1285)	650 (635)		
10	You will like to remain a primary education teacher for the rest of	1.300(1285)	650 (635)		

$$X=1285$$

$$X=650$$

The 'r' value was obtained by dividing the mean of all the positive responses by the mean of the negative responses.

Research Hypothesis

There is no significant relationship between motivation and teacher retention at the primary school level.

Test of Hypothesis

From the analysis of the data collected and using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient, it can observe from table 1 that the r value is 0.447 while 0.05 is the level of significance. The critical value is 0.362 by implication of these analyses; the research hypothesis is therefore rejected on empirical ground. The rejection of the hypothesis is based on the principle of Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient which states that, when the r values are greater than the. critical value then the alternation hypothesis is accepted. The data analysis shows that the r values are greater than the c value. Therefore, by the implication of the data analysis there is a significant relation between motivation and teacher retention at (lie primary school level.

Discussion of the Findings

Data analysis, on relationship between motivation and retention of teachers at the primary school showed that there is a significant relationship. Using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient Statistical Instrument, the results show that the r-value is 0.447 at 0.05 level of significance. The critical values of 0.362 by implication of these analyses the alternating hypothesis should be upheld.

All things being equal, regular payment of teachers' salaries and other allowances are necessary to motivate and retain primary school teachers. Other incentives of teacher retention in the primary school include regular promotion, availability of equipment and teaching aids in quality, friendly attitude of head teachers, opportunities to own personal cars and houses, and appropriate accurate teacher-student ratio.

In addition to the above, the conditions of service of the primary school teacher should be improved periodically to match those of their counterparts who work in other educational institutions. All these findings are

compatible with the studies of Eric (2000), Taivvo (1998), UNESCO (2000), Ojo (1998), and Mussazi (1989). The outcome of the studies by these eminent scholars uphold the fact that better conditions of service, economically and socially are necessary factors for the enhancement of teacher retention in primary schools in Nigeria.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study on relationship between motivation and teacher retention at the primary school level, the following recommendations have been advanced:

1. Adequate funding of the primary education is necessary in order to have sufficient funds to pay teacher salaries and other allowances regularly and promptly.
2. Adequate funding necessary to procure school equipment, teaching materials and to provide car and housing loans for staff.
3. There should be special monetary allowance for teachers teaching in the rural areas.
4. Primary school teachers should have opportunities for advancement in their work.
5. The primary school teachers should be adequately trained for the job they are expected to do.

Conclusion

In conclusion, primary education is the foundation of all other levels of education and should therefore, be given the desired attention. The teachers who are vested with the responsibility of implementing educational goals at the primary school level should be well motivated to ensure their retention and continuity. This will in turn bring about the enhancement of academic standard at the primary school level in all ramifications.

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