

PROBLEMS OF SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS IN DELTA NORTH DISTRICT OF DELTA STATE, NIGERIA.

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Abstract

The study investigates some of the problems facing secondary school teachers in Delta North Senatorial District in Delta State of Nigeria and suggests ways through which such problems could be eliminated.

The study also examines the issues of whether rural and urban located secondary school teachers in the study area have similar problems.

The methodology adopted to carry out the research was the use of questionnaire designed to test the hypotheses. Purposive sampling technique was used to sample 80 secondary schools both in the rural and urban areas. The student 't' test was used to validate the tested hypotheses.

The results obtained show that both the rural based and urban based secondary school teachers in the study area experience similar problems. Some of such problems affect teachers' efficiency and thus students' performance.

It is however, important to note that these problems faced by secondary school teachers in Delta north District of Delta State could be minimized or completely eradicated if adequate incentives are provided for the teachers by both the community and the government.

It has been observed that a lot of things have constituted different problems to teachers in secondary schools with particular reference to some areas of Delta North Senatorial District in Delta State which limit teaching effectiveness and efficiency. Like in every organization, there are various problems inherent in either the administration, the organization of members or the tasks. These are also typical of school organization and secondary schools in particular.

Stone (1979), emphasized that there are tremendous changes in man's abilities brought about by advances in technology. It should not be forgotten, however, that the teacher himself is part of society and that social changes do not leave him unaffected. Already the accelerating tempo of scientific development is rendering much of what the teacher learnt himself at school obsolete long before his teaching life is over. This serves to emphasize more strongly than ever the need to ensure that we do not concentrate in our teaching on specific aspects of phenomena but seek to encourage the ability to develop generalized methods of attack on problems and frameworks of understanding of general application. The role of the teacher has sometimes merely been teaching but in recent times his role has included the participation in decision making. He comes to the class not only to teach but also to observe a child and know him. The information that the teacher gathers about the child helps him to participate in professional conferences or seminars on the child. In curriculum development and general educational planning, the teacher is required to participate in the decision making process. In his role as a teacher, there is the demand to link up with the home of the child. Such relationship may also arise out of the need to help the child in his areas of weaknesses, or to stress the need for the home to be supporting the child as an informal meeting between the teacher and the home. The teacher is also an important and key factor in policy formulating processes because he provides the information to the school inspectors and principals who in turn inform the educational authorities about educational practices in the classroom. For the fact that teachers occupy a very important position in nation building and development and bearing in mind too that there is no organization free from problems, it is therefore necessary to carry out a survey of problems facing secondary school teachers with particular reference to Delta North Senatorial District of Delta State.

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Statement of the Problem

Some of the problems which affect teachers in schools are similar while some differ in nature from teacher to teacher and school to school. These various problems are not all known, thus it is my wish to find out if:

- i) Classroom based problems affect teachers
- ii) Some school based problems exist that could make teachers inefficient
- iii) Whether there are teacher based problems
- iv) Whether community based problems are less pronounced in Delta North Senatorial district than elsewhere in the State.
- v) If teachers in the study area are seriously affected by ministry based problems.

Purpose of the Study

The main aim of this research is to find out the problems facing teachers in the post-primary schools in Delta North District of Delta State. Therefore, it is necessary to identify the various categories of these problems, and how they affect the teaching / learning situation in schools. For example, some of these problems make for teachers inefficiency thereby resulting into low job performance. The effect of teachers low job performance could be very dangerous to the real essence of teaching / learning. Another important objective is to find out the nature of these problems that face the secondary school teachers, identifying those that are endogenous and those that are exogenous.

Significance of the Study

It has become necessary to examine the problems of teachers in secondary schools in Delta North district of Delta State because of the neglect for teachers among other professionals in the state. The recommendation that would be advanced from this study would to a great extent help encourage many teachers who fear change because of the extra sacrifice required of them in the absence of motivation and also bring about effective classroom management in order to promote learning most efficiently. This study is also aimed at making the society which consists of parents and other agencies to be aware of their expected roles in school administration and pointing out to them that their non-challant attitude or neglect could bring about negative effects.

This study will also help the government to have a good plan for educators whenever they are preparing their budgets by providing money for materials needed by teachers to enhance learning.

Review of Related Literature

Many educators and researchers have in the past written articles on the various problems faced by teachers in schools. However, it is observed that teachers in their various schools encounter many problems which could be from the state government, community, the school itself or the administrator of schools and teachers based problems as well. Ugoh (1983) argues strongly that the governments have contributed to the low value attached to education: for instance, the present predicament of our educational institutions: many of which lack infrastructure, teaching materials and qualified staff. Lack of trained teachers and teaching materials makes teaching ineffective. Teachers constitute an important and expensive input of every education system. Coombs (1970) emphasizes that the crisis of teacher supply is not just one of numbers, but that it is first and foremost a problem of quality of getting a large enough quantity of the right quality. The issue of large numbers of unqualified and under-qualified teachers in our secondary schools has been a perennial problem. The untrained teachers lack the necessary motivation for teaching and further contribute to the high rate of attrition and instability in the profession. Ugoh, further stressed that teachers in primary and post primary schools are irregularly paid their salaries much less their fringe benefits. This ugly situation has degenerated into making many trained teachers leave teaching for other jobs.

Ouche (1978) noted that one of the problems confronting mathematics teachers lies in the fact that most of these teachers are products of teachers' training colleges that do not usually have enough adequately trained tutors to teach mathematics and methodology. This reflects on most secondary schools in Delta North District of Delta State, where low status of teachers confronts the teaching of

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mathematics. The low status of teachers and the consequent majority entering the profession because they failed to obtain employment or missed the chance of their proposed career, makes most of the teachers lack motivation and thus have a non-challant attitude towards the profession. Nigeria is yet to be recognized in the field of technology. Revolutionizing it technologically demands that the teaching of science should be encouraged both in the primary and post-primary institutions and emphasis should be laid on the practical aspect of science. Teaching of sciences has been a problem in secondary schools in the study area. For example, most teachers and their students always have so much of their focus on passing external examinations. As a result, the practical and other aspects of the subjects in question are neglected. The teachers want their students to pass their tests and examinations and most of these students do so by mere memorization, forgetting that the content of science change so often. Another problem in this area of study is that most of the secondary schools, especially the rural ones, have no laboratories, and where they have, they are empty or with scanty equipment or obsolete ones. In schools such as urban ones where laboratories and facilities exist, the theoretical aspects only are being emphasized since funds are not made available for principals to buy reagents and chemicals. Poor practical knowledge gained from the training time and laxity on the part of most teachers are all contributory factors to the problem.

Low qualification of teachers has hampered the effective teaching of science, mostly mathematics. The low qualification of these teachers undoubtedly has an adverse effect on the performance of the students in the sciences particularly mathematics in the area of study. Teachers teaching without the necessary materials and incentives are like farmers going to the farm to work without cutlasses. A teacher cannot carry out his teaching effectively without consulting a current and up-to-date textbook and his students also will not understand fully without some teaching aids.

Aka (1984) opined that, it is indeed a sad and painful irony of life that teachers who are the builders of the nation, who have helped to train up professionals and rulers are treated shabbily worse than second class citizens. It would have been a world of darkness, ignorance, barbarity and illiteracy if there were no form of formal education and no teachers, but thanks to goodness there have been teachers and there are still teachers. The Doctors, Lawyers, Accountants, Engineers, Scientists, Senators, Legislatures, Politicians, Military men amongst others, were once pupils and students of the classroom teachers. In spite of these invaluable contributions to humanity and civilization, it is a sad and painful irony of life that teachers are still in this 21st century treated shabbily in Nigeria. The governments are the forces starving, killing and humiliating our dear teachers. For example, all the state teachers are always the last set of workers to be paid with the worse victims being the primary school teachers. They are promoted notionally without financial benefits. Some teachers in the primary schools earn two promotions with their salaries being what they were before the promotions. Thus a primary school teacher on level 14 could still be earning the salary on level 12. Teachers have been relegated to the background in many vital issues such as in granting car and housing loans, selection of the government sponsored pilgrims to the Holy land, political appointments while in service, even in Nigeria National Awards. Recently in 2010, some comedians and actors were recognized for the National Award in Abuja not one secondary or primary school teacher was included. Teachers have been so maltreated in our country yet, they are the live-wire of any nation. Without teachers no nation can survive and progress educationally.

Akaraiwe (1975) contended that teachers will be devoted to duty if they have attractive working conditions and these will put an end to outside employment such as trading a side job for raising the standard of living. It is because the working conditions of the secondary school teachers are not attractive to them that most of them are not devoted to their duty and they look for other means of getting money to make them raise their standard of living and make them happy at least. In Delta North district of Delta State, there are not enough teaching materials for teachers in the secondary schools to carry out their jobs and where they have little, teachers are not well paid. This calls for the teachers looking for other means of getting money in order to meet the needs of their families. Here the students suffer the hardship of not being taught and this leads to their poor performances in school examinations mostly in the West Africa Examination Council Senior School

Ukeje (1979:230) remarked that, “the person who has the teaching aptitude and who has undergone a period of professional training is the competent person to teach in our classrooms”. By teaching aptitude, we include a set of interests and other abilities. In addition, the effective teaching without the intellectual skill to see it through. A teacher, therefore, is a man of many parts who combines love of knowledge without the ability to impregnate others with his knowledge. It is very true that, a teacher cannot enlighten his pupils if he himself is ignorant. He can’t lift them higher than himself”. It is therefore important that a good deal of emphasis should be given during training to making the student a well-informed teacher. It was further pointed out by Ukeje that it is essential to bear in mind that the problems of staffing should be closely tied to a predetermined and planned personnel recruitment and selection. Therefore, the effectiveness of administration in performing its function and stimulating responsibilities depends on how successful management has been in defining the duties of all categories of staff, both subordinate and super-ordinate and in their distribution. Equally important is the realization that developing personnel training programmes in advance, enhances administrative effectiveness. The defining of staff functions and the development of training proposals clarify the administrative function and aids teachers to understand better and be in a position to perform the duties for which they are employed. In the area of study, this is a great problem because most of the secondary schools teachers do not know their functions as teachers and so the lack of effective management in the schools.

Data Collection and Analysis

A designed questionnaire of twenty items for secondary school teachers in the study area served as the instrument. The items of the questionnaires were made up of levels of agreement or disagreement. This was done to find out the different problems faced by secondary school teachers. The twenty - item questions were further divided into five sub-sections of four questions of items each to test the five stated problems earlier itemized in the statement of the problem. Percentages and transformation techniques were employed in the analysis. Percentages help to bring about the relative differences between the levels of agreement. The responses for the four items in each sub-section were added up to get the total scores, divided by four to get the mean of the scores and by hundred to get the percentage. Advanced transformation statistics basically the T-score was also used to examine the difference between rural and urban levels of agreement.

HYPOTHESIS 1: Classroom based problems affect teachers efficiency in Secondary Schools in the study area.

Table 1: Responses Percentage for Items Testing Hypothesis 1

ITEM NOS	NO. OF RESPONDENTS	RESPONSES					
		AGREE	%	DISAGREE	%	NOT SURE	%
1	100	45	45	38	38	17	17
2	100	39	39	46	46	15	15
3	100	84	84	14	14	02	02
4	100	55	55	21	21	24	24
Total	400	223	223	119	119	58	58
Mean	100	56	56	30	30	14	14

Source: Field survey, 2008

Table 1 above table shows the mean scores of 56,30 and 14 for ‘Agree’, ‘disagree’ and ‘not sure’ responses respectively. To examine the difference between rural and urban response to hypothesis 1, the t-test was used. The sample of 50 rural respondents and 50 urban respondents were used and the same sample applicable to test the other hypotheses.

TABLE 2: T-Test for Hypothesis 1

Respondents	Number	X	SD	t-test Calculated	t-critical	Conclusion
Rural Teachers	50	28	29.74			
Urban Teachers	50	27.75	28.73	-0.26	1.66	upheld
P> 0.05						

TABLE 3: Responses Percentage for Items Testing Hypothesis II

ITEM NO.	NOS OF RESPONDENTS	RESPONSES					
		AGREE		DISAGREE		NOT SURE	
			%		%		%
5	100	48	48	39	39	13	13
6	100	91	91	4	4	5	5
7	100	78	78	10	10	12	12
8	100	95	95	-	0	5	5
Total	400	312	312	53	53	35	35
Mean	100	78	78	13	13	9	9

Source: Field survey, 2008

TABLE 4: T-Test Score for Hypothesis II

Respondents	Number	X	SD	t-test calculated	t-critical	Conclusion
Rural Teachers	50	39.25	40.72			
Urban Teachers	50	38.75	39.5	-0.12	1.66	upheld
P> 0.05						

TABLE 5: Responses Percentage for Testing Hypothesis III

ITEM NO.	NOS OF RESPONDENTS	RESPONSES					
		AGREE		DISAGREE		NOT SURE	
			%		%		%
9	100	56	56	24	24	20	20
10	100	69	69	15	15	16	16
11	100	86	86	8	8	6	6
12	100	68	68	19	19	13	13
Total	400	279	279	66	66	55	55
Mean	100	70	70	16	16	14	14

Source: Field survey, 2008

TABLE 6: T-TEST SCORE FOR HYPOTHESIS III

Respondents	Number	x	SD	t-test Calculated	t-critical	Conclusion
Rural Teachers	50	37	37			
Urban Teachers	50	32.75	34	-0.10	1.66	upheld
P> 0.05						

TABLE 7: Responses Percentage for Items Testing Hypothesis IV

ITEM NO.	NOS OF RESPONDENTS	RESPONSES					
		AGREE	%	DISAGREE	%	NOT SURE	%
13	100	33	33	24	24	20	20
14	100	60	60	15	15	16	16
15	100	43	43	8	8	6	6
16	100	32	32	19	19	13	13
Total	400	168	168	66	66	55	55
Mean	100	42	42	45	45	13	13

Source: Field survey, 2008

In table 7 above, “Disagree” has the greatest percentage of the responses (45%). It shows that the respondents do not agree with the opinion that community based problem constitute a lot to secondary school teachers in efficiency in the area of study.

TABLE 8: T-Test Score for Hypothesis IV

Respondents	Number	x	SD	t-test Calculated	t-critical	Conclusion
Rural Teachers	50	19	19.2			
Urban Teachers	50	25.75	27.6	3.0	1.66	Not upheld
P> 0.05						

TABLE 9: Responses Percentages for Items Testing Hypothesis V

ITEM NO.	NOS. OF RESPONDENTS	RESPONSES					
		AGREE	%	DISAGREE	%	NOT SURE	%
17	100	80	80	8	8	12	12
18	100	90	90	2	2	8	8
19	100	93	93	1	1	6	6
20	100	49	49	39	39	12	12
Total	400	312	312	50	50	38	38
Mean	100	78	78	13	13	9	9

Source: Field survey, 2008

TABLE 10: T-Test Score for Hypothesis V

Respondents	Number	x	SD	t-test Calculated	t-critical	Conclusion
Rural Teachers	50	38.5	39.6			
Urban Teachers	50	39.5	40.3	0.25	1.66	Not upheld
P> 0.05						

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Conclusion

From the study, the following conclusions are derived;

- 1) Classroom based problems if not checked can affect teachers' efficiency,
- 2) There are some school based problems which are out of the teacher's control and are inherent.
- 3) That teacher based problems are less pronounced than other problems in Delta North district.
- 4) Community based problems do not constitute much problems to secondary school teachers in Delta North district.
- 5) Most Ministry based problems hinder teacher's progress thus resulting in inefficiency among teachers.

Therefore, the teachers should be able to identify, examine and improve upon the conditions under which he carries out his duties, to derive job satisfaction. This is so because it is absolutely true that non-job satisfaction brings about negative attitude of workers. To the educational authorities such as the Ministry, Post-primary Education Board, Committee on Education in the House of Assembly, the schools, etc. they should provide the teachers with the necessary materials so that they (teachers) improve on the students performance since the child is the king pin in the process of learning.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are made, based on the findings of the study.

1. The teachers should be given the necessary incentives, that they will use in effective organization of schools and in developing the right type of education in their pupils, such that they can make use of the education acquired in living a well meaningful life of not only as independent citizens but also to contribute to the development of their immediate societies and the world at large.
2. The population of the schools should be streamlined so that no school should be over populated or under populated.
3. The government should encourage most of the secondary school teachers to go and improve on their standards by approving all such applications from them asking for study leave. The most essential thing in such approvals should be the guarantee of retaining their jobs. The approval should be for courses related to the teaching profession as stipulated by the National Policy on Education

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