

TEACHERS' PERCEPTION OF FACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR ATTRITION OF TEACHERS IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN EDO CENTRAL SENATORIAL DISTRICT

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ABSTRACT

This study examined teachers' perception of factors responsible for attrition of teachers in public secondary schools in Edo central senatorial district. Two hypotheses were raised to guide the investigation that adopted the survey research design. A sample size of 105 participants was drawn from a population of 1,035 teachers in all the public secondary in Edo State. A research instrument titled: Factors of Attrition Questionnaire (FATAQUE) was used to collect data for the study. The t-test statistics was used to analyze the hypotheses. The result of analysis showed that job satisfaction, morale and remuneration were perceived as factors responsible for attrition of teachers; the male teachers have higher rating which probably makes them prone to attrition than their experienced folks. It was recommended that government and relevant stakeholders should help improve teacher's level of job satisfaction, morale and remuneration.

Introduction

The immense relevance of education to national development cannot be over-emphasized. This accounts for the huge sum of committed into funding of education by the government, to ensure that all Nigerians benefit from formal education. This is in realization of the federal government's adoption of education as an instrument par excellence for effective national development based on the five main national objectives as enshrined in the National Policy on Education (2004).

To this end, several secondary schools were opened and existing ones were expanded infrastructurally. Several Teacher Training Colleges and colleges of Education were also established; and various universities are offering courses in education so as to turn out teachers in the society. In spite of the large number of teachers so far produced by these teacher training institutions and the enormity of teachers absorbed ever since, it is baffling to observe that the number of teachers in the teaching profession is still grossly

inadequate (Edo State Ministry of Education, 2008).

The shortage of qualified and experienced teachers who should have brought about the realization of the laudable national education objectives in our secondary schools given cause to worry because it is at this school level that career decisions are made by young graduates. At present, not only are the teachers insufficient to meet the needs of the secondary schools system, the few ones already there are allegedly leaving the system. Attrition of teachers in the public secondary schools appears to be a continuous phenomenon and its becoming worrisome to stakeholders in the education industry. This is because when teachers' roles are critically viewed against the backdrop of socio-economic development and capacity building for job performance, the need to curb or minimize attrition cannot be over-emphasized.

Furthermore, attrition is a measure that is used to determine the internal efficiency of an institution. It stands to reason, therefore, that if there is a high attrition rate, the perception is that secondary school education has problem of efficiency that can negatively impact on quality. Any analysis of attrition of teachers must consider work place and labour market considerations. For example,

possible dissatisfaction with the workplace can be an important inducement to teachers to seek alternative opportunities.

The word attrition, therefore, is derived from the Latin word "attrition" meaning "wearing out" and depicting a state of gradual and persistent decrease in the number of persons (Fowler, 1978). It refers to people who are leaving employment. It also used to refer to loss and replacement of employees, and generally indicate job leavers (Hammer, 2004). It thus becomes imperative; therefore, that attrition in education refers to teachers leaving the course of study and teaching respectively. In this context, it includes absconders who never return and "stop outs" who leave and come back later. This later group includes those who go on leave of absence, study leave, etc. simply put, attrition of teachers refers to situation where all the teachers who leave the teaching profession or their places of teaching assignment for whatever reasons(s) other than death and retirement.

It is important to justifiably posit here, that attrition cannot and should not be attributed to one factor and that reasons for withdrawal are complex and interrelated. A review of literature on some of these factors includes among others teachers' job

satisfaction, moral and remuneration.

Teachers' Job Satisfaction and Attrition

Steyn and Van Wyk (1999) defined job satisfaction as the feeling of pleasure that arises from an individual impression of his or her job. They see job satisfaction as a pleasant spur that moves an individual to his place of work and make him perform his duties creditably so as to help achieve organizational goals. Luthans (1989) described job satisfaction as an emotional response that can only be referred to and that is ascertained by how well expectations of an employee are met in the work place. It stands to reason, therefore, that work employment is a vital factor in ascertaining the level of an individual's job satisfaction and his output in the organization.

Martinez (2003) reported that "Studies often cited personnel reasons such as family problems, finances, child care, distractions, and job needs and demands as the cause of withdrawal" it could be asserted here that Martinez's report summarizes the cause of workers attrition as frustration and lack of self-fulfilment. In fact, a lot of factors are associated with satisfaction in a teachers work. In related study carried out by Mwamwenda (1995), secondary

school teacher cited the following factors as contributing to job satisfaction: working with cooperative, motivated and confident publics; benefits such as holidays; and collaboration respect and support from learners, parents and colleagues.

In the same vein, students on job satisfaction and attrition have found that the demands of the education system and society, among other factors, have led to reduced levels of satisfaction among teachers (Behind Tye and O'Brien 2002). From this study, it can be observed that poor working condition which includes heavy workload, dilapidated facilities, inadequate supply of resources and lack of job security, as others, influence on job satisfaction levels. Socio-economic factors according to them, can impact greatly on the attention, ability and discipline of students.

However, in another study of teachers, Ramrathan (2002) identified professional stress, the restructuring of education and an increase in workload as reasons that appear to have spurred some teachers to leave the profession.

Teachers' Morale and Attrition

A connection to a school is best summarized as organizational fit. School culture including climate and management style is the reason

teachers most often indicate is behind their decisions to remain in or leave a school. This connection between school culture and fit is illustrated through research on the morale of teachers and level of attrition.

Since a relationship exists between morale and attrition, Lawless (1979) indicated that the internal cohesiveness that is present in a group of workers with high morale increases job satisfaction and reduces absenteeism and turnover while low morale impacts on employees' performance, thus contributing to attrition. Suffice it to mention that attrition itself may be responsible for lowering the morale of employees who remain in an organization. Low morale may be a result of the effects of attrition- and may lead to more attrition. Lawless (1970) states that the high-morale group is held together by internal cohesiveness: Goodwill, cohesiveness and adaptability to its charges are mark of morale.

Being part of such group provides the individual with wide range of support as well as some of consolation or protection against frustration or harsh conditions in the workplace. In a study of teacher morale, good collegial relationship (64% of the sample) and good relationship (64% of the sample) were seen as sources of high morale by a representative sample of members of the National

profession teachers organization of South Africa (Naptosa) Hayward (2002).

In a related study on principals, Morford (2002) identified the differently of fitting into organization property as a major factor that dampens morale of workers. He observed that the principals must discover how to fit into the existing workplace or group in their school, while remaining distinct enough to contribute creatively to the growth and development of the school. According to Hara and Kling (2001), low morale which culminates in attrition is anchored on "reported condition, anxiety, and frustration due to perceived lack of prompt or clear feedback" from the instructors during orientation or induction course, and from ambiguous instructions given by super-ordinates. This also dampens their morale and makes them start looking for alternative jobs in their career.

However, existing research reveals that a decline in employee morale because of the effects of attrition on the attitudes and behaviour of remaining staff may result in additional turnover (Mobley, 1982). Turnover itself may stimulate more turnovers because of the enduring effects of social networks and negative effects on the worker who remain (Moore and Burke, 2002).

Teachers' Remuneration and Attrition

The most common reasons given by teacher for leaving the profession are low salaries, student's behaviour, unsupportive parents and unsupportive administration (Easley, 2000). Remuneration is one of the most important areas in personnel management in the education sector. This includes wages and salaries. Wages consist of all payments that compensate individuals for time and effort spent in the production of economic goods and services; which salaries are usually expressed in annual terms although it is mostly paid on monthly basic. It is progressive and increase annually until the employee gets to the bar (Ogunu and Omoike, 2006) in Aghentar and Omoregie (2006).

Remuneration is supported to attract and retain workers in the organization, satisfy employees and reduce labour turnover and grievances control pay costs i.e if the salary employees is well structured, the employer tends to be able to control wages and salaries paid to its workers; and motivate employees to superior performance, i.e it takes a kind of reward for better performance (Agbator, 1990). The question that needs to be answered by stakeholders in the education industry inducting is: has

remuneration for teachers achieved its purpose? Discussions with teachers will reveal an abysmal dissatisfaction with their pay. This is why there is always agitation for salary increase (Okosun 2001).

Problem of the Study

In spite of the huge investment on education sector by successive and recent governments, a lot of trained graduate teachers often feel reluctant to take up teaching appointments, while those who accept the job of teaching may use it as a stepping stone to other jobs. What makes the situation more disturbing is the fear expressed by the school Heads that even the few available teachers were at the verge of resigning their jobs from the school for different reasons. Two unanswered questions that therefore, agitate the minds of stakeholders in the schools are: What is the rate of attrition of teachers in the study area? What are the causes of attrition of teachers in Edo Central? The need to provide answers to those questions motivated the study.

Hypotheses

Ho₁: there is no significant difference between male and female teachers' rating of predisposable factors of attrition of teaching in public secondary schools in

Edo central senatorial district. stage and simple random sampling techniques

Ho₂: there is no significant difference between experienced and inexperienced teachers' rating of predisposable factors of teachers in public secondary schools in Edo central senatorial district.

The instrument used was a self developed questionnaire by the researchers called Factors Responsible for Attrition of Teacher's Questionnaire (FATAQUE). The first part contained the personal characteristics of the research subjects while the second part contained 20 items on predisposable factors of attrition on a 4-point Likert scale. The test re-test method was then used to determine its reliability which was analysed with the Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient. The reliability index of the instrument was 0.83. the research instruments were personally distributed by the researchers and lasted for two weeks.

Method of Study

This study, a descriptive research based on the survey design analysed the factors that predispose public secondary school teachers to attrition in Edo Central Senatorial District of Edo State. A sample size of 105 teachers was drawn from a population of 1,035 teachers in the study area. A sample size of 105 teachers (i.e. 10%) was chosen using the multi-

Data Analysis and Results

Ho₁: there is no significant difference between male and female teacher's rating of predisposable factors of attrition in public secondary schools in Edo south senatorial district.

This hypothesis was tested using the t-test statistics for independent samples. The result of analysis is presented in table 1.

Table 1: t-test Analysis of Male and Female Teachers' Rating Predisposable factors of attrition of Teachers.

Variables		N	X	SD	DF	Level	t-cal	t-tab	Remarks
Job Satisfaction	Male	61	3.75	2.82	103	0.05	4.42	1.96	significant
	Female	44	3.87	2.86					
Moral	Male	61	3.31	2.23	103	0.05	4.42	1.96	significant
	Female	44	3.89	2.86					
Remuneration	Male	61	4.72	3.62	103	0.05	4.42	1.96	significant
	Female	44	4.48	3.57					

Source: Researchers' Fieldwork, 2010

According to the data in table 1, the calculated t-value was 4.42 at 103 degree of freedom while the table value was 1.96 at 0.05 level of significance. Since the calculated t(4.42) value was greater than the table value (1.96), it

implied that there was a significant difference between male and female teachers' rating of predispositional factor of attrition. The null hypothesis was therefore rejected.

Ho₂: there is no significant difference between experienced and inexperienced teachers rating of predispositional factors of attrition in public secondary school in Edo central senatorial district.

Table 2: t-test Analysis of Experienced and inexperienced Teachers' Rating of Predisposable Factors of Attrition of Teachers

Variables		N	X	SD	DF	Alpha Level	t-cal	t-tab	Remarks
Job Satisfaction	Experienced	56	3.73	3.26	103	0.05	6.9	1.96	significant
	Inexperienced	49	3.93	2.98					
Moral	Experienced	50	3.58	2.96	103	0.05	6.9	1.96	significant
	Inexperienced	49	3.56	2.62					
Remuneration	Experienced	56	4.87	2.87	103	0.05	6.9	1.96	significant
	Inexperienced	49	4.30	3.43					

Source: Researchers' Fieldwork, 2010.

As shown in table 2, the calculated t-value is 6.9 while the table value 1.96 at 0.05 level of significance. Since the calculated value (6.9) is higher than the critical value (1.96), the null hypothesis which states that experienced and inexperienced teachers will not significantly differ in rating of

predispositional factors of attrition is rejected. The inexperienced teachers rated the predispositional factors higher than experienced teachers.

Discussion of Findings

Results of this study have shown relevant information on the factors that predispose public secondary teachers to attrition. The hypothesis on the difference between the perception of male and female teachers regarding the factors of attrition of teachers yielded a calculated 't' value of 4.42, while the table value is 1.96. This result indicated that there is a significant difference between the perceptions of two groups of teachers regarding the factors of attrition of teachers. The findings are supported by the earlier findings of Obilade (1992) and Foxley (1976) that female teachers tend to enjoy more job stability in the teaching service than their male counterparts. It could also be observed that both male and female teachers' factors rated remuneration highest as a predisposal of attrition. This finding is in line with Schulze and Stern (2003) and Foxley (1976) who found that male and female teachers were motivated and discouraged by the same factors and considering all indices for both sexes, women held about the same number of jobs in a given period like their male counterparts.

As observed from the result of analysis in table 2, the finding shows that experienced and inexperienced teachers did not perceive the factors of attrition of teachers the same way. It was

observed that the inexperienced teachers have a higher perception and likely good attrition than the experienced teachers. This is probably because they feel they are still very far from being heads, while the situation may differ with the experienced teachers. The inexperienced ones may not yet be seriously committed to family responsibilities. Obilade (1992) in an earlier study found out that demographic variables such as sex, age, experience, etc. have possible influence on the stability of teachers. According to the study, it was discovered that older teachers tend to have more job stability than the younger ones, as he found out that age and experience had possible influence on job satisfaction. In the study, it was further discovered that years of teaching experience did not make a significant difference in the job satisfaction of teachers.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Based on the findings, there is a relationship between attrition and condition of service. Apart from job satisfaction; the other factors that were significant are morale and remuneration. Additionally, the male teachers have a higher percentage in perception of attrition than the female teachers, while inexperienced teachers perceived the factors responsible

for attrition of teachers differently from the experienced teachers.

It is therefore recommended that government should formulate policies to reduce the rate of attrition of teachers and improve the teaching profession to be more attractive. Government and other employers of teachers should help improve teachers' remuneration, morale and social image. Also relevant policies should be put in place to help improve the teachers work environment, condition of service and, their level of job satisfaction.

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