

Teachers' Training and Professional Development Practices of Principals for Teachers' Retention in Public and Private Secondary Schools in Anambra State

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Abstract

The seeming teacher turnover in secondary schools in Nigeria necessitated this study on teachers' training and professional development practices of principals for teachers' retention in public and private secondary schools in Anambra State. The study adopted the descriptive survey research design. One research questions guided the study, while one hypothesis was tested at 0.05 level of significance. The population of the study comprised 650 principals in public and private secondary schools in Anambra State. There was no sampling as the entire population was used for the study. Researcher's developed questionnaire was the instrument used for data collection. The instrument was validated by three experts who are lecturers in Educational measurement and evaluation, Department of Educational Foundation and the other in Educational planning and management, Department of Educational Management and Policy all in the Faculty of Education Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. The Cronbach's alpha method was used to determine the internal consistency of the items which yielded reliability coefficient index of 0.75. The researchers with the help of ten research assistants distributed the questionnaire to the respondents. The research question was answered using the arithmetic mean while the hypothesis was tested using t-test. It was found among others that principals in private secondary schools in Anambra state to a low extent apply teachers' training and professional development practices for teachers' retention. Based on the findings of the study, it was recommended among others that principals should provide an avenue and encourage teachers to carry out researches and publish same in reputable journals.

Keywords: Teachers' Training and Development Practices, Teachers' Retention

INTRODUCTION

Education is a tool for strengthening ones' intellectual power, building character, maintaining emotional balance as well as moral and cultural empowerment of individuals to bring about positive development in the society. The skills and potentials of individuals for self-reliance and actualization could be developed through education. Nigeria, just like other countries of the world acknowledges the fact that education is a vital instrument for national development and social change and as such has joined other countries of the world in the march towards worthwhile educational investments and reforms.

Consequently, one of the goals of education according to the Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN), (1) is the development of appropriate skills, mental, physical, and social abilities and competencies to empower the individual to live in and contribute positively to the society. The purpose of any of the three levels of formal education (Basic, Secondary or Tertiary) in Nigeria is to effect changes in children's behaviour by exposing them to relevant experiences through systematic presentation of skills, attitudes, concepts and principles. Secondary school education

is the form of education children receive after nine years of basic education and before the tertiary stage. Secondary education is concerned with the acquisition of fundamental principles and knowledge for the study of different disciplines at tertiary level of education [2]. The importance of secondary education lies in its position both as the bridge between the basic and tertiary education and also as the agent for preparing individuals for useful living in the society [3]. There are two categories of secondary schools in Nigeria; public and private secondary schools.

Public secondary schools are schools that are owned by the government and its agencies. Such schools are controlled and managed directly by public education authority, governing agencies or by a governing body (council, committees among others), most of whose members are appointed by public authority or are elected by public franchise [4]. Private secondary schools, on the other hand, are schools owned, financed and managed by private individuals, missions, corporate organizations and non-governmental organizations (NGO's). Private secondary schools, according to Etuk (5), were set up for the reason of providing better teaching and

learning conditions than that obtained in the public secondary schools.

Irrespective of the ownership, secondary schools in Nigeria have common objectives to achieve as stated by FRN (1) as follows:

- a. Provide holders of the Basic Education Certificate and Junior Arabic and Islamic Studies Certificate with opportunity for education of a higher level, irrespective of gender, social status, religious or ethnic background;
- b. Offer diversified curriculum to cater for the differences in talents, disposition, opportunities and future roles;
- c. Provide trained manpower in the applied sciences, technology and commerce at sub-professional grades;
- d. Provide entrepreneurial, technical and vocational job specific skills for self-reliance and for agricultural, industrial, commercial and economic development;
- e. Develop and promote Nigerian Languages, art and culture in the context of world's cultural heritage;
- f. Inspire students with a desire for self-improvement and achievement of excellence;
- g. Foster patriotism, national unity and security education with emphasis on the common ties in spite of our diversity; and
- h. Raise morally upright and well-adjusted individuals who can think independently and rationally, respect the views and feelings of others and appreciate the dignity of labour.

The achievement of the above objectives has been the priority of secondary school education in Nigeria whether public or private. The secondary education level is managed by the principal who is responsible for utilizing the available school resources to enhance the attainment of stated goals of the school. The success or failure of a particular secondary school will be attributed to the principal, however, principals alone cannot work in isolation towards the achievement of the goals; they therefore should work together with their teachers. No educational level in Nigeria (Secondary education inclusive) could rise above the quality of its teachers [1].

Therefore, to be able to achieve the goals and objectives of secondary education in Nigeria, the hiring and retention of qualified and experienced teachers are of utmost importance because they are the cornerstone upon which the excellence of education rests. Teachers play important roles in the achievement of stated educational objectives and in the task of nation building for sustainable development because they turn educational policies into practice in a normal classroom setting.

From the foregoing, it could be deduced that the goals of secondary education in Nigeria cannot be achieved without the retention of adequately trained and motivated teaching staff. There is therefore the need to keep teachers satisfied with their jobs and careers so that they remain in the teaching profession. Teaching is a highly stressful career, and teachers are leaving the profession at an alarming rate [5 & 6]. This is not a welcome development because as observed by Faremi (7), the retention of highly qualified teachers is of great importance if the objectives of secondary education in Nigeria are to be achieved. Teacher retention according to Masood (8) is the act of keeping teachers on the job without being moved from one school to another and or leaving the teaching profession entirely for other professions.

Retention is about how a particular school manages its workforce or more specifically its relationship with its workforce. Retention is conceptualized in terms of teachers staying and teachers leaving. The main purpose of retention is to prevent competent teachers from leaving the school organization as this could have adverse effects on productivity and service delivery. Retention is also an action of holding something in position or containing it, hence the researcher defined teachers' retention as a state or a condition of attracting and enabling teachers to work and remain with the school organization before retirement

Every school, whether public or private, strives to retain a pool of qualified, committed and talented teaching staff that can deliver quality education to its students and in turn produce students of high quality. When qualified teachers, for any reason, have intentions of leaving the school system or teaching field, it would portend a negative impact on students and the institution's overall performance as well. Thus, it is essential to retain highly qualified teachers in the school system on continuous basis for quality education delivery viz-a-viz the achievement of the objectives of secondary school education. It is important for schools through the employment process, to attract quality teachers, however, it is more important for educational managers to devise strategies with which to retain the talented teachers in the service of the school organizations in order for teachers to benefit from the investment already made in them [9]. Brown and Wynn (10) emphasized that unless schools, specifically administrators (principals), begin to take a more proactive approach in supporting their new and veteran teachers, teachers are going to continue to leave the field and all schools and children will suffer. Therefore, retaining teachers in schools, most especially the new ones is an important and powerful force for the betterment of schools, students, and education as a whole [11 & 12].

Ladd (13) maintained that the perspective of new teachers begin to form immediately they enter a new educational environment and includes how they perceive those in authority and those who nurture and direct them through their initial experiences, as well as how they perceive the school culture. Specifically, principals are not just supervisors within the school, but are also the leaders looked up to by teachers to listen to them, assist them, and value them [14 & 13]. The principal is the central leader who sets the tone and culture of the school, serves as a role model to the teacher, and shapes the professional image of the future for the teachers [13].

Principals' involvement with teachers, therefore, can be a significant factor in retaining teachers and in inspiring the passion that keeps beginning teachers from dropping out [15]. Although the leadership (principals) of the school may not have much influence over the reasons for entering teaching, principals are critical players on whether teachers decide to stay in the profession or not [16 & 17]. In line with this, Akudo and Oni, (18) maintained that salaries are not the most important factor in teacher retention, but that teacher retention is a major function of the principal. This supports, Loeb and Page in Akudo and Oni (18) who revealed that once teachers begin to work transfers to other schools and to other professions often appear to be influenced only modestly by salaries and more by other factors such as working conditions, school leadership, teacher support, resources, facilities and safety. Archie in Akudo and Oni (18) maintained that when competent and qualified teachers leave schools for another profession, transfer to another school, it becomes an issue of quality in education opportunity.

Public and private school teacher attrition in (teachers leaving the classroom voluntarily) has become such a critical issue that it has come to the attention of policymakers, educational planners and administrators [19]. The ugly trend seems to be high in private secondary schools than in public secondary schools. The disparity could be in the type of teachers' training and professional development adopted by principals in both categories of schools. When a teacher leaves a school, the school not only loses a teacher, it also loses the investments made in them, including workshops, in-service training, and teacher socialization activities. An effort towards retaining experienced and qualified teachers therefore is imperative if the objectives of secondary education are to be achieved.

Retaining highly qualified teachers should be a top priority for school principals. Principals need to implement programme and have incentives to retain highly qualified teachers [20]. Fullan (21) reported that effective leaders have the ability to change organizational culture which in turn, can create an atmosphere of job satisfaction that produces high retention rates. This tallied with Sparks (22) who

maintained that teachers are far more likely to remain in their positions when they feel supported by their administrators as well as Hanushek and Luque (23) who stated that secondary school principals need to engage some managerial practices towards ensuring the retention of teachers, due to the fact that teachers might be persuaded to take lower salaries in exchange for better working conditions.

Teachers' professional training and development is one of the practices of the principals for teachers' retention in schools. Teachers' connections to the teaching profession and to their schools are strengthened when they feel they possess the content knowledge, instructional skills and technological tools to meet the challenges of quality education in increasingly diverse classrooms and vice versa [22]. To ensure that teachers possess such skills and technological tools, principals must engage in practices that must support staff professional training and development. Training is teaching personnel how to carry out their duties and assisting them in acquiring the knowledge and skills they need to be effective on the job. It comprises of methods used to give old and new teachers added skill and knowledge to perform their job effectively and efficiently. Development on the other hand is building up the skills and knowledge of teachers so that they will be prepared to take on new responsibilities and challenges. Archie in Akudo and Oni (18) maintained that professional development for teachers is an important element in teachers' effectiveness and retention. Teachers' professional training and development gives teachers those skills needed to understand and handle behavioural problems, performance standards and be able to create a conducive environment worthwhile for teaching and learning.

Private and public secondary schools principals in Anambra State seem not to be employing adequate teachers' training and professional development practices towards teachers' retention and this makes almost every teacher to be looking for a better opportunity to leave the teaching profession for other schools or professions. Building a professional teacher corps is a process that only begins with recruiting highly qualified teachers. Once recruited, these teachers need constant training and professional development to develop a strong sense of their own efficacy based on high-quality teaching skills and experience. Regrettably, principals in public and private secondary schools in Anambra seem not to be applying these training and professional development practices adequately towards the retention of teachers as the attrition rate of teachers in Anambra State is on the increase. These and many other factors led to teachers (most especially those in private secondary schools) in Anambra State to either seek transfer to other schools or leave the teaching profession entirely. Teachers attrition rate seem to be higher in

private secondary schools when compared to public secondary schools.

Based on the related literature reviewed and to the researchers' best knowledge, no empirical work seems to have been carried out in the area of a teachers' training and professional development practices adopted by public and private secondary school principals towards the retention of teachers in Anambra State, Nigeria. This thus created a gap in literature. It is therefore based on the identified gap in literature and these identified unsatisfactory state of affairs that the researchers were prompted to carry out an empirical study to find out and compare the teachers' training and professional development practices adopted by public and private secondary school principals towards the retention of teachers in Anambra State, Nigeria with a view to filling the already identified gap in literature thereby contributing to the already existing knowledge.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study was to comparatively analyse the teachers' training and professional development practices of principals for teachers' retention in public and private secondary schools in Anambra State, Nigeria.

Research Question

The following research question guided the study:

1. What are the teachers' training and professional development practices of principals for teachers' retention in public and private secondary schools in Anambra State?

Hypotheses

The following hypothesis was tested at 0.05 level of significance:

1. There is no significant difference in the mean responses of public and private secondary school principals on their teachers training and professional development practices towards teachers' retention in Anambra State.

Method

The study adopted the descriptive survey research design. According to Akuezuilo and Agu (24), descriptive research design describes and interprets what is; seeks to find out the conditions or relationships that exist, opinions that are held, processes that are going on, effects that are evident or trends that are developing. Also according to Nworgu (25), descriptive survey is the design which aims at collecting data on, and describing in a systematic manner the characteristic features or facts about a given population

The study was carried out in Anambra State. Anambra state is one of the five states in the south-east geo-political zone of Nigeria. There are six education zones in Anambra state namely; Aguata,

Awka, Nnewi, Ogidi, Onitsha and Otuocha educational zones. Anambra state shares borders with; Delta State on the south west; Imo and Abia States on the south-south; Enugu state on the North-east; and Kogi State on the North central.

The population of the study comprised 650 principals in the 650 secondary schools (256 public and 394 private) in the six education zones in Anambra State. There was no sampling in this study due to the relatively manageable size of the population of the study. Thus, all the 650 principals in public and private secondary schools in Anambra State were used for the study.

The instrument used for data collection is a structured questionnaire developed by the researchers from views of experts and literature reviewed. The items in sections B of the questionnaire adopted the response pattern of "Strongly agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and strongly disagree (SD) weighted 4, 3, 2, and 1 respectively.

The questionnaire was subjected to face validation using three experts who are lecturers; one in the Department of Educational Management and Policy and two from Measurement and Evaluation in the Department of Educational Foundations all in the Faculty of Education, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. The reliability of the instrument was established using 20 principals (10 private and 10 public) in secondary schools in Enugu State. Enugu State was used for the reliability test because they are not part of the study. Twenty copies of the questionnaire were administered once on them. Cronbach alpha method was used to determine the internal consistency (reliability) of the items. The reliability coefficients of the instrument yielded an index of 0.75 and thus was considered reliable.

The instrument was administered to the respondents by the researcher with the help of 10 research assistants who are post graduate students in the Faculty of Education, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. Out of the 650 copies of the instrument administered, a total of 490 representing 75% return rate were properly filled and successfully retrieved. These copies were used for data analysis. The research question was answered using the arithmetic mean, while the hypothesis was tested using t-test at 0.05 level of significance.

In answering the research question, any response with a mean score of 2.50 and above was taken to indicate high extent, while any mean score below 2.50 was taken to indicate low extent. The hypothesis was rejected if the p-value is less than the significant value of 0.05, while the hypothesis was not rejected if the p-value is equal or greater than the significant value of 0.05

RESULT

Research Question 1: What are the teachers’ training and professional development practices of

principals for teachers’ retention in public and private secondary schools in Anambra State?

Table 1: Mean ratings and standard deviation scores of principals’ Teachers’ Training and Professional Development practices for teacher retention in public and private secondary schools in Anambra state

teaching profession where teachers can obtain information and resources for classroom instruction, actual classroom observation of teaching and learning and in-service training for teachers on teaching pedagogy. With mean rating below 2.50, they

S/N	ITEMS	Public Principals (N = 245)			Private Principals (N = 245)		
		Mean	SD	Remark	Mean	SD	Remark
1.	Workshop on subject related matters for teachers	3.22	.628	Agree	2.97	0.626	Agree
2.	Seminars where teachers have a platform to learn and discuss challenges	3.30	0.799	Agree	3.03	0.977	Agree
3.	Allowing teachers to obtain additional formal professional or subject qualification	3.32	0.687	Agree	3.07	0.929	Agree
4.	Training courses e.g computer training courses for teachers	3.07	0.762	Agree	2.86	0.815	Agree
5.	Individual research on a topic of interest for teachers	2.16	0.873	Disagree	1.96	0.858	Disagree
6.	Research with a group of professionals for teachers	2.04	0.895	Disagree	1.89	0.871	Disagree
7.	In-service training of teachers	2.74	0.823	Agree	2.33	0.938	Disagree
8.	Publications in journals etc by teachers	1.73	0.568	Disagree	1.72	0.486	Disagree
9.	An avenue for students’ evaluation of teachers’ teaching effectiveness	1.97	0.511	Disagree	1.71	0.551	Disagree
10.	Analyzing and communicating to teachers the outcome of students’ evaluation of teachers’ teaching effectiveness	1.91	0.561	Disagree	1.77	0.525	Disagree
11.	Opportunities to form a network with others in the teaching profession where teachers can obtain information and resources for classroom instruction	2.82	0.796	Agree	2.63	0.749	Agree
12.	Actual classroom observation of teaching and learning	3.06	0.713	Agree	2.80	0.711	Agree
13.	Avenue for peer coaching	2.03	0.732	Disagree	1.66	0.631	Disagree
14.	In-service training for teachers on teaching pedagogy	2.85	0.645	Agree	2.43	0.743	Disagree
15.	Study group among teachers	1.85	0.556	Disagree	1.59	0.548	Disagree
16.	Opportunities for team teaching	2.10	0.7.22	Disagree	1.95	0.739	Disagree
Mean of means		2.50	0.444	Agree	2.27	0.525	Disagree

Results presented on Table 1 revealed that principals of public secondary schools with mean ratings above 2.50 agreed that they apply items 1-4, 7, 11, 12 and 14 as teacher training and professional development practices for teachers’ retention in secondary schools. This implies that their teacher training and professional development practices for teachers’ retention include workshop on subject related matters, seminars where teachers have a platform to learn and discuss challenges, allowing teachers to obtain additional formal professional or subject qualification, training courses for teachers, opportunities to form a network with others in the

indicated that they do not apply other eight items listed as teachers’ training and professional development practices for teachers’ retention.

On the other hand, principals of private secondary schools with mean ratings above 2.50 agreed on items 1-4, 11 and 12 as teachers training and professional development practices for teachers’ retention. This implies that teachers’ training and professional development practices applied for teachers’ retention by private secondary school principals in Anambra State include workshop on subject related matters, seminars where teachers have

a platform to learn and discuss challenges, allowing teachers to obtain additional formal professional or subject qualification, training courses for teachers, opportunities to form a network with others in the teaching profession where teachers can obtain information and resources for classroom instruction and actual classroom observation of teaching and learning. With mean ratings below 2.50, they indicated that they do not apply the other 10 items listed as teacher training and professional development practices for teachers’ retention.

A cursory look at the analysis shows that while principals of public secondary schools apply eight out of the 16 items listed, principals of private secondary schools apply only six out of the 16 items listed. Furthermore, the mean of means for public secondary

school principals is 2.50 while that of the private secondary school principals is 2.27. From the analysis, it can therefore be concluded that the teacher training and professional development practices for teachers’ retention are better applied by principals of public secondary schools in Anambra State than the principals of private secondary schools in the State.

Test of Hypothesis

Ho₁:There is no significant difference in the mean responses of public and private secondary school principals on their teachers’ training and professional development practices towards teachers’ retention in Anambra State.

Table 2: t-test of the Mean Ratings of Public and Private Principals on their teachers’ training and professional development practices for teachers’ retention in Secondary schools in Anambra State

variables	N	X	SD	t-cal	p-value	Df	∞	Remarks
Public	245	2.50	.444	5.371	0.00	488	0.05	Significant
private	245	2.27	.525					

Result from table 2 showed that the p-value of 0.00 is less than the significant value of 0.05, therefore the null hypothesis was rejected. Therefore there is a significant difference in the mean responses of public and private secondary school principals on their teachers’ training and professional development practices towards teachers’ retention in Anambra State.

DISCUSSION

The findings of the study revealed that teachers’ training and professional development practices such as teachers’ attendance to workshop on subject related matters, teachers’ attendance to seminars, allowing teachers to obtain additional qualification, opportunity for teachers to embark on computer training among others were applied by principals of public secondary schools for teachers’ retention in Anambra State. It was also revealed that teachers’ training and professional development practices were applied by principals of private secondary schools for teachers’ retention in Anambra State.

Though teachers in both public and private secondary schools as part of principals’ teachers’ training and professional development practices for teachers’ retention t were not encouraged to publish in journals, students were allowed to evaluate teachers’ teaching effectiveness, and also avenue for peer coaching, formation of study group among teachers, However, generally, the study revealed that teachers’ training and professional development practices for teachers’ retention were better applied by principals of public secondary schools than their counterparts in private secondary schools. To buttress

this, the result of the hypothesis revealed a statistically significant difference in the mean responses of public and private principals on their teachers’ training and development practices for teachers’ retention. This implies that a significant difference does exist on the teachers’ training and professional development practices applied by principals of public and private secondary school principals in Anambra State.

The finding of this study is in tandem with Smith (26) whose study found out that professional development for teachers were not applied for teachers’ retention. The findings also is in consonance with the findings of Samili (27) who revealed that there is lack of application of professional development practices for public and private secondary school teachers in Manayara region and maintained that, that is one of the reason teachers leave the teaching profession.

The findings of this study viz-a-viz the non-application of some of the teachers’ training and professional development practices by principals of public and private secondary schools towards the retention of teachers could be attributed to so many reasons. One of the reasons could be that the principals may be ignorant of the fact that encouraging teachers to carry out researches both individually and collectively and publishing same in a reputable journals, students evaluation of teaching effectiveness and communicating the outcome of the evaluation to teachers, provision of an avenue for peer coaching, formation of study group by teachers and making provision for team-teaching could help strengthened the teachers’ connections to the teaching

profession and to their respective schools (public or private). This will equally make them to possess the content knowledge, instructional skills and technological tools needed to meet the challenges of standard-based education in increasingly diverse classrooms thereby increasing teachers' retention. Another reason could be inadequate funding of public and private secondary schools as the fund made available are so inadequate to sponsor teachers to carry out researches and publish the outcome in journals owing to the fact that researches and publications cost much and teachers on their own may not be able to afford the necessary financial resources needed to carry out such researches, thus there is dearth of research grant for teachers.

The government's allocation to education for over fifteen years now is not encouraging as they are far below UNESCO's prescription. The low application of teachers' training and professional development could result in teachers' dissatisfaction and is one of the highest reasons for teachers to leave the teaching profession in search of a better opportunity that will help to grow and develop their potentials. Furthermore, the significant difference in the teachers' training and professional development practices applied by principals of public and private secondary schools could be as a result of the fact that public schools are more financed and are more concerned about the growth and development of their teachers than their private counterparts who may not have the adequate financial resources for such purposes. This could be the reason why the attrition rate of teachers in private secondary is high when compared to that of public secondary schools. Most teachers in private secondary schools are looking for an opportunity to leave the private schools in search for a place even in the public schools and other sectors in search for an avenue for their personal professional growth and development as teachers.

CONCLUSION

An inference that is drawn from the findings of this study is that public secondary school principals in Anambra State apply teachers' training and professional development practices for teachers' retention while private secondary school principals in Anambra State do not apply teachers' training and professional development practices for teachers' retention. Finally, it is concluded that a significant difference does exist in the teachers' training and professional development practices of public and private secondary school principals in Anambra State towards teachers' retention.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Principals should provide an avenue and encourage teachers to embark on individual

and group research and publish same in journals.

2. Principals should provide an avenue for students' evaluation of teaching effectiveness of teachers and the outcome analyzed and communicated to teachers.
3. Principals should provide an avenue for team teaching, peer coaching and formation of study group among teachers.
4. Private secondary school principals should always provide an opportunity for in-service training of teachers and grant teachers a level of autonomy to select instructional materials and text.

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