

Strategies For Teacher Retention: Evidence From Occupational Incentives In Private Secondary Schools In Ibadan, Oyo State

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ABSTRACT: *The study investigated strategies for teacher retention: evidence from occupational incentives in private secondary schools in Ibadan, Oyo State. High teacher turnover presents a significant challenge to educational quality and stability in Oyo State and specifically, Ibadan, with many private school teachers seeking better opportunities in government-owned schools. The research adopted a descriptive survey design, data were collected from 188 teachers across the 11 local government areas in Ibadan. The instruments used was structure questionnaire which yielded reliability coefficient value of 0.91. Frequency count distribution and Multiple regression at 0.05 level of significance were used to analyze the data. Result revealed that teacher retention is low (mean 2.21); the predominant factors determining the teacher retention are remuneration ($\beta = 0.714, P < 0.05$); career progression ($\beta = 0.610, P < 0.05$) and staff welfare ($\beta = 0.590, P < 0.05$). Among others, it was recommended that private school proprietors in Ibadan enhance teachers' conditions of service, provide regular training, and establish clear pathways for career progression to improve long-term retention, thereby benefiting the schools, students, and the broader educational sector.*

Keywords: Teacher Retention, Occupational Incentives, Remuneration, Career Progression, Staff Welfare

Introduction

Teacher retention is a key area of educational research that investigates the factors influencing a teacher's decision to remain in their school, transfer to another institution, or exit the profession before retirement. The high rate of teacher attrition is a prevalent challenge for many private secondary school proprietors who struggle to retain their staff against the lure of more attractive employment opportunities.

Role of teaching in school discipline and progress cannot be underrated. Atanda (2020) stated that "The role of teachers in ensuring educational quality is a concern to educational stakeholders. They are regarded as nation builders. They guide, train, counsel, mold, instruct, discipline and encourage the learners in their custody". This assertion is supported by Agboola and Offong (2018) who stated that "Teachers are the most fundamental and crucial resources in education system, this is because the strength of an educational system largely depends upon the quality and quantity of its teachers". Whether public or private, schools strive to recruit a pool of qualified and committed teaching staff that can deliver quality education to the students and in turn produce students of high quality. Therefore, it is crucial for schools to ensure that their best hands are retained.

When committed and qualified teachers have intentions of leaving a particular school or teaching profession for any reason, it constitutes negative impact on students and the school overall performance as well (Olasunkanmi and Olaiya, 2019). Thus, it is essential to retain highly qualified and committed teachers in the school system on continuous basis for quality education delivery. Retaining teachers in a schools especially private schools have become an arduous task. During the past decades, teachers' turnover has become a major concern in educational research and policy analysis because of the demand it creates for replacement (Johnson & Birkeland, 2003).

Weem & Ajbar (2014) on defined teacher retention as the capacity of a school to keep its instructors. Agboola et al (2018) argued that teacher retention is conceptualized in terms of teachers staying and teachers living the profession. Hirsch and Emerick (2006) defined teacher retention as a process in which teachers are encouraged to remain with the organization for a maximum period of time or for the completion of a particular session. Going by this assertion, it is safe to say that teacher retention is a process in which teachers are encouraged to remain with the organization for a maximum period of time.

Globally low retention of teachers in schools is a big challenge. For instance, in the United States, primary teaching experiences high and increasing rates of annual departures of teachers from schools and teaching altogether. Annual teacher turnover is estimated to be close to 16% at the national level and reaches 24% for hard-to-staff schools (Sutcher, Darling-Hammond, & Carver-Thomas, 2016). In the UK, 9.2% teachers in 2010-11 left and the number increased to 9.9% in 2016-17. For the new entrants, 22% of those who joined in 2015 had left by November 2016.

There are different factors responsible for school's failure to retain teachers, this study seeks to see how occupational incentives such as remuneration, career progression, staff welfare, job security and staff promotion have effect on teacher retention. Candle (2010) identified reasons why teachers leave their jobs as lack of incentive for the job, poor mode of payment, poor salary structure, late or non-payment of teacher's salaries and allowances, non-inclusion of teachers in decision making in matters concerning them among

others. Agboola et al (2018) stated that “The remunerations for teachers are also relatively very low when compared with their contemporaries who worked in other private or federal sectors. This has in a way translated into teachers’ low morale in the country, which in turn has culminated into students’ poor academic performance in external examinations.” This assertion is supported by Xaba (2003) who affirmed that a massive exit of teachers from the profession is due to lack of adequate salaries, allowances, housing and promotion among other reasons.

Kariuki (2020) stated that while motivational factors are undoubtedly numerous, financial incentives are core factors in retention of teachers. As important as financial incentives are, Kariuki (2020) argued further that “financial incentives alone are not enough, non-monetized factors such as working conditions, psychological contract and supervision improves the retention of teachers in secondary schools”.

Career progression is another factor that makes teachers to leave their job. Career progression involves programs that enable employees to realize achievement of new skills” (Mutio 2020). Nyambura and Kamara (2017) argued that if an organization has an efficient career development program that meets individual expectation of its employees, those people will automatically want to stay”. Many teachers do not see themselves achieving much career-wise, thus they easily change profession, opting for other professions they consider more rewarding than teaching. In addition to the above factor is job security. Security is one of the second fundamental needs of man as postulated by Maslow’s hierarchy of needs.

Promotion and welfare come handy in the list of the occupational incentives. In fact, the two factors when put in place in an organization generally motivate the members of staff. Chukwu & Ezepue (2018) stated that “Staff promotion has become one of the vital personnel policies across organizations. The capacity of promotion to motivate and enhance performance of the staff members may not be over-emphasized”. Nwankwo (2005) stated that “teachers’ promotion is growth and advancement in a cadre of rank and with it is financial benefits and recognition. It is a major role of personnel policies to ensure that secondary school teachers are promoted as and when due.

Staff welfare is another factor responsible for schools’ inability to retain teachers. Arikewuyo (2006) identified some of the welfare services that can be provided by the organization to enhance staff retention to include adequate retirement benefit, pension scheme, medical services for teachers and their dependents, provision of counseling services, creche or nursery schools for children of staff, official cars for staff, end of year bonus etc. Agboola et.al (2018) are of the opinion that “the working and living conditions of many teachers are very poor, especially those in the rural areas, irrespective of the fact that they are arguably the most important group of professionals in the development of the nation”.

Statement of the Problem

Teacher retention has been a serious challenge to many of the private secondary school owners in Nigeria and especially, in Oyo State. The attrition rate has become a threat to students, learning, administrators and society at large. Thereby, making educational objectives very difficult to achieve. Efforts should be directed towards lowering turnover rate and keep high-quality teachers by the school administrators, because it high level of teacher retention helps students in achieving the academic goals. There are many challenges associated with inability to keep teachers for a long time on schools and students. This include but not limited to reducing instructional improvement across schools, reducing collaborations among teacher, disruption of continuity of instructions, leading to lower achievement for students. Also, another effect of low teacher retention includes loss of valuable experience and knowledge when teachers leave and drainage of valuable resources from the educational system. It is against this, that the study investigated how occupational incentives such as remuneration, career progression, job security, staff promotion and staff welfare determine teacher retention in private secondary schools in Egbada local government area of Oyo State.

Purpose of the Study

The study investigated the relationship between occupational incentives and teacher retention in private secondary schools in Ibadan, Oyo state. Specifically, the study investigated the:

- i. level of teacher retention in private secondary schools in Ibadan, Oyo State;
- ii. predominant factor that determine teacher retention in private secondary schools in Ibadan, Oyo State;
- iii. relative contribution of occupational incentives (remuneration, career progression, job security, staff promotion and staff welfare) on teacher retention in Ibadan, Oyo State;
- iv. joint contribution of occupational incentives (remuneration, career progression, job security, staff promotion and staff welfare) on teacher retention in Ibadan, Oyo State;

Research Questions

1. What is the level of teacher retention in private secondary schools in Ibadan, Oyo State?
2. What is the predominant factor that determine teacher retention in private secondary schools in Ibadan, Oyo State?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated to guide the study

- H₀₁ Occupational incentives (remuneration, career progression, job security, staff promotion and staff welfare) will not significantly have relative relationship with retention of teachers in private secondary schools in Ibadan, Oyo State.
- H₀₂ There is no significant joint relationship between occupational incentives (remuneration, career progression, job security, staff promotion and staff welfare) and teacher retention in private secondary schools in Ibadan, Oyo State.

Methodology

Research Design

Descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. The variables of the study have already been secured and the researchers have no control over them and cannot manipulate them in any way.

Population of the Study

The population of the study consisted all teachers in approved private secondary schools in Ibadan, Oyo State.

Sample and Sampling Techniques

The sample size for the study was 188 private secondary school teachers. Multi-stage sampling procedure was adopted to draw 20% of teachers in the sampled private secondary schools in Ibadan.

Research Instruments

A structured self-designed questionnaire titled “Occupational Incentives and Teacher Retention Questionnaire (OITRQ)” was used for data collection. The questionnaire was divided into three sections (A, B and C). Section A dealt with the demographic characteristics of the respondents such as gender, age, marital status, educational qualification and length of service. Section B contained 25 items, 5 items on each indicator of occupational incentives (remuneration, career progression, job security, staff promotion and staff welfare). Section C focused on measures of dependent variable, 8 items were raised to measure teacher retention in private secondary schools.

Validity of Research Instruments

Face, content and construct validity was adopted for the instruments. The instrument was validated by subjecting the drafts to the experts in the field of Educational Management, Institute of Education, and Quality Assurance Unit of University of Ibadan. Various useful suggestions, comments and ideas were incorporated in the final draft before administration.

Reliability of Research Instrument

A field test was conducted to establish the reliability of the instruments. This was done by administering 10 copies of the questionnaire on teachers of private secondary school in another school which is not part of the selected school for the study. The copies of the questionnaire were subjected to reliability analysis using Cronbach alpha statistics which yielded reliability coefficient of $r = 0.91$, this implies the instrument is reliable.

Method of Data Analysis

Data obtained from the field were analyzed using descriptive statistics of frequency, percentage and mean scores to answer the research questions. Hypotheses 1 and 2 were tested with Multiple Regression Analysis, the analyses were carried out at 0.05 level of significance.

Results

Research Questions 1: What is the level of teacher retention in private secondary schools in Ibadan, Oyo state?

Table 1: Level of Teacher Retention in Private Secondary Schools

TEACHER RETENTION						
	Very High	High	Low	Very Low	Mean	Std. Deviation
I have been teaching for more than 5 years in this school	15 (8.3%)	23 (12.8%)	70 (42.8%)	59 (36.1%)	1.93	0.51
Many staff left this school because of the attitude of our boss	14 (7.8%)	57 (31.7%)	74 (41.1%)	35 (19.4%)	2.28	0.84
The attitude of my boss is great and I will love to work with him again	16 (8.9%)	68 (37.8%)	71 (39.4%)	25 (13.9%)	2.42	0.73
Salary issues chased away many hardworking college	14 (7.8%)	51 (28.3%)	82 (45.5%)	33 (18.3%)	2.26	0.85
The leadership style of my boss, chased away many hardworking staff.	15 (8.3%)	32 (17.8%)	49 (27.2%)	84 (46.7%)	1.88	0.86

Teacher retention in my school is affected by leadership style	17 (9.4 %)	77 (42.8%)	66 (36.7%)	20 (11.1%)	2.51	0.78
Teacher’s retention in my school is affected by occupational incentives	24 (13.3%)	37 (20.6%)	63 (35.0%)	56 (31.1%)	2.16	0.83
In my school both leadership style and occupational incentive affects teacher’s retention	25 (13.9%)	33 (18.3%)	76 (42.2%)	46 (25.6%)	2.21	0.93
Weighted Mean = 2.21						

Mean Ranges from: 0.0 – 1.49 = Very Low; 1.50 – 2.49 = Low; 2.50 – 3.49 = High; 3.50 – 4.00 = Very High

The result of research question one on level of teacher retention in private secondary schools in Ibadan Oyo State is presented on Table 1. The following emerged as the responses of the respondents: I have been teaching for more than 5 years in this school (mean = 2.60); Many staff left this school because of the attitude of our boss (mean = 2.28); The attitude of my boss is great and I will love to work with him again (mean = 2.42); Salary issues chased away many hardworking college (mean = 2.26); The leadership style of my boss, chased away many hardworking staff (mean = 1.88); Teacher retention in my school is affected by leadership style (mean = 2.51); Teacher’s retention in my school is affected by occupational incentives (mean = 2.16); In my school both leadership style and occupational incentive affects teacher’s retention (mean = 2.21).

The weighted mean for all the respondents was found to be 2.21, this indicates that on average, the respondents reported a low level of teacher retention in private secondary schools in Ibadan, Oyo state is high. Based on this, it can be inferred that there is low level of teacher retention in private secondary schools in Ibadan, Oyo State.

Research Question 2: What is the predominant factor that determine teacher retention in private secondary schools in Ibadan, Oyo State?

Table 2: Factors Determining the Teacher Retention in Private Secondary Schools

Variables	Mean	Rank
Remuneration	3.02	1 st
Career Progression	2.97	2 nd
Job Security	2.42	5 th
Staff Promotion	2.68	4 th
Staff Welfare	2.90	3 rd

Table 2 presents answer to research question 2 on the predominant factor that determine teacher retention in private secondary schools in Ibadan, Oyo State. The table revealed that remuneration takes the first position, among the factors considered in the study (mean 3.02). Then, the respondents stated that career progression is also important to factor determining teacher (mean = 2.97). Staff welfare takes the third position in factors determining teacher retention (mean = 2.90); Staff promotion (mean = 2.68) and job security (mean = 2.42).

The implication of this is that teacher retention in private secondary schools in Ibadan, Oyo State is basically determined by all the variables under consideration, but remuneration, career progression and staff welfare take the lead.

Hypotheses Testing

H₀₁ Occupational incentives (remuneration, career progression, job security, staff promotion and staff welfare) will not significantly have relative relationship with retention of teachers in private secondary schools in Ibadan, Oyo State.

Table 3: Regression Table Showing Relative Relationship between Occupational Incentives and Teacher Retention

Dependent Variable	Independent Variables	Unstandardized Coefficient		Stand. Coefficient Beta Contribution	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error			
Teacher Retention	(Constant)	12.142	2.097		5.79	0.000
	Remuneration	0.416	0.201	0.714	3.496	0.001
	Career Progression	0.364	0.107	0.610	2.583	0.000
	Job Security	0.402	0.266	0.411	1.438	0.213
	Staff Promotion	0.311	0.251	0.489	1.982	0.105

	Staff Welfare	0.322	0.114	0.590	2.218	0.007
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Table 3 reveals relative relationship between occupational incentives (remuneration, career progression, job security, staff promotion and staff welfare) and teacher retention in private secondary schools in Ibadan, Oyo State. It is, expressed as beta weights: remuneration ($\beta = 0.714$, $P < 0.05$), career progression ($\beta = 0.610$, $P < 0.05$), job security ($\beta = 0.411$, $P > 0.05$), staff promotion ($\beta = 0.489$, $P > 0.05$) and staff welfare ($\beta = 0.590$, $P < 0.05$). Result from the table shows that three of the indicators of the independent variables in the model (remuneration, career progression and staff welfare) have significant relationship to teacher retention of private secondary school teachers in Ibadan, Oyo State, while job security and staff promotion were found to have no significant relationship to teacher retention.

H₀₂ There is no significant joint relationship between occupational incentives (remuneration, career progression, job security, staff promotion and staff welfare) and teacher retention in private secondary schools in in Ibadan, Oyo State.

Table 4: Regression Table of Joint Relationship between Occupational Incentives and Teacher Retention

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig	Rmks
Regression	332.642	5	66.528			
Residual	2196.462	173	14.45	4.604	0.001	Sig.
Total	2529.104	178				
R = 0.363 R Square = 0.132 Adjusted R Square = 0.103 Std. Error of the Estimate = 3.80137						

Result of hypothesis 2 on joint relationship between occupational incentives (remuneration, career progression, job security, staff promotion and staff welfare) and teacher retention in private secondary schools in in Ibadan, Oyo State is presented in Table 4. The result shows a joint significant relationship between occupational incentives and teacher retention ($R = 0.363$; $R^2 = 0.132$; $F = 4.604$). This shows that all the variables of occupational incentives (remuneration, career progression, job security, staff promotion and staff welfare) accounted for 13.2% of the variance in teacher retention in in Ibadan, Oyo State. The remaining 86.8% might be captured by other exogenous variables that were not included in the study. Based on this, the joint contribution is shown to be significant ($F_{(5, 173)} = 4.604$; $P < 0.05$), therefore the hypothesis is rejected at 0.05 level of significant. This implies that occupational incentives indicators (remuneration, career progression, job security, staff promotion and staff welfare) have joint relationship with teacher retention in in Ibadan, Oyo State.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, it was concluded that teacher retention is low among private secondary schools in Ibadan, Oyo State.

It was also concluded that among the variables of occupational incentives considered in the study, the predominant ones that determine teacher retention in private secondary schools in Ibadan, Oyo State are remuneration, career progression and staff welfare. Another conclusion drawn from the study is that remuneration contributed highest to teacher retention, followed by career progression, staff welfare, staff promotion and then job security contributed least to teacher retention.

Lastly, it was concluded that there is joint relationship between occupational incentives (remuneration, career progression, job security, staff promotion and staff welfare) and teacher retention in private secondary schools in Ibadan, Oyo State.

Recommendations

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

It is recommended that private secondary school owners in Oyo should endeavor to improve the condition of service of their teachers so as to retain their teachers for a long time.

It is also recommended that remuneration of teachers in private secondary schools should be improved, considering the present economic situation, regular review of salary structure should be considered to motivate teachers to enhance teacher retention.

Private secondary school owners should always encourage and give opportunities for professional growth and career advancement to their teachers, through in-service programme, workshops and training attendance. When such opportunity is provided, it motivates and makes teachers to stay for a longer period in a school and will thereby serve as advantage to management of private schools and the students as well.

Lastly, it is recommended that staff welfare programmes should be Strengthened. Private secondary school owners can invest in comprehensive welfare programmes that can help physical, mental, and emotional well-being of teachers. This may include access

to healthcare services, counseling support and work-life balance initiatives. By prioritizing staff welfare, schools can foster a positive and supportive environment that promotes teacher satisfaction and retention.

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