

RETENTION FACTORS AS CORRELATES OF TEACHERS' ATTRITION AMONG PRIVATE SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS' IN AWKA EDUCATION ZONE, ANAMBRA STATE.

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Abstract

The study investigated retention factors as correlates of teachers' attrition among private secondary school teachers in Awka Education Zone of Anambra State. In an attempt to focus on the study, three research questions were formulated and three null hypotheses tested at 0.05 level of significance guided the study. The study adopted a correlational research design. The population of 403 teachers in the registered private secondary schools were sampled using proportionate stratified sampling techniques. Two sets of instruments were used for the study; 60 items retention factor scale (RTF) developed by Dockel (2003) was adapted; 12 items teachers Attrition Scale (TAS) developed by the researcher was used for the study. Face and construct validation of the instruments were determined by three experts. One expert in Measurement and Evaluation and two experts in Educational Foundations all in the Department of Educational Foundations, Faculty of Education Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University, Igbariam Campus. The reliability of the instrument was determined using Cronbach Alpha which yielded coefficient of 0.82 and was considered reliable for the study. The instruments for data analysis were administered with the help of five briefed research assistants. Data collected were analyzed using Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient for research questions while t-test for significance was used to test hypotheses 1-3 at 0.05 level of significance. The findings revealed that there is a significant relationship between retention factors and teachers' attrition among private secondary school teachers in Awka Education Zone of Anambra State. The findings of the study showed that compensation, staff development, staff participation in decision making, remuneration, work environment and principal support are retention factors that can reduce the rate of attrition among private secondary school teachers in Awka Education Zone of Anambra State. Based on the findings the study recommended among others, that the proprietors of private secondary school should include retention strategies policy as an integral part of the schools' policy statement as well as improving on the salary scale of teachers in private secondary schools.

Keyword: Retention Factor, Attrition, Teachers

INTRODUCTION

Teachers are the most fundamental and needed resources in every education system at all levels. The strength of an organization and an education system largely depends upon the quality and quantity of its employees. Educational goals for any nation can never be achieved without a trained, motivated and experienced teaching staff. Consequently, for schools and in particular private secondary schools to thrive in the competitive environment, the satisfaction of its teachers is of the utmost importance this will in turn lead to an optimum productivity and aid in the retention of its best brains. In many secondary schools in Nigeria, the working and living conditions of many teachers are very poor, especially those in private schools. The remunerations for teachers in private schools are relatively very low when compared with their contemporaries who worked in public schools. This has in a way translated to low morale and in turn has culminated into teachers' attrition.

Teacher's attrition is the decrease in the number of teachers when they leave the profession due to various reasons such as illness, retirement, death or for other personal reasons. (Moe 2017). Teacher attrition is regarded as one of the most phenomenon that is characterized by teachers leaving work in the classroom to take up and pursue other professional responsibilities inside or outside the educational system (Okeke, et al 2019). The authors added that, it is regarded as one of the most important determinants in the overall ineffectiveness, low performance, and lack of quality in the modern school system.

Teachers attrition in private secondary school refers to teachers shortage, the wastage of resources and expertise as well as that concerning teachers lowly status and poor working conditions (Steinke, 2013). Global online Bookstore in Bilingual special education for 21st century (2022) viewed teacher attrition in three different perspectives - The rate at which new teachers leave the profession, teachers leaving the profession or moving between schools, but in this study teachers attrition refers to the gradual reduction in the number of teachers in the institution.

Notably, teacher attrition imposes setback in school achievement and a lot of cost on school systems. High attrition has damaging impact on the quality of schooling. Private schools with high attrition rate is more likely to get inexperienced teachers or unqualified teachers who are likely to be less effective. Thus, impacting students' academic performance scores. More so, teacher attrition is costly because the proprietor is forced to spend huge amount of funds to recruit, induct on replace new teachers (Okeke, et al 2019). The emphasis on acquiring secondary education which is a bridge to tertiary institution brought about increase in enrolment of students without a corresponding increase in teaching strength of new teachers. Losing experienced teachers has a direct impact on students. A caring teacher can serve as a role model or mentor, for some students the disappearance of such a figure can be discouraging and result in a loss of scholastic engagement. The students may become less inclined to participate in class, leading to a drop in performance The loss of experienced and productive employee causes among others, a big loss to the investment; loss of intellectual capital and the loss of potential information to competitors (Lucas 2022). The proliferation of private secondary schools as a result of deregulation has mix results.

Whereas some private schools have risen to the challenge of taking education to its peak in line with global best practices, others have become a laughing stock of what secondary schooling should be. Regrettably, this constant replacement of and demand for teachers has an impact on the private

schools, staff, and students. Hiring and replacing teachers can also be a costly undertaking that depletes school funds (Barnes et al., 2017). Teacher labour markets and teacher shortages have strong implications for learning outcomes and equity for students (Nguyen, 2018). The globalization rise in the retention of valuable teachers has become a severe challenge; this may not be unconnected with the increasing luxury of choice as better schools with more attractive pay emerge every day

In Awka education zone, which comprised Awka north, Awka south, Anaocha, Dunukofia and Njikoka L.G.A., some private secondary schools administrators hire secondary school leavers as staff and also employ the services of National Youth Service Corps members. The retention of teachers in private secondary schools has been a continuing concern for teachers and school administrators in recent years. It seems that significant numbers of teachers leave the teaching force each year. The issue of teacher retention becomes even more critical when added to the condition of teacher shortages

In fact, this trend obstructs the implementation of coordinated instruction programme throughout the school, and it often causes schools to hire substitute teachers with low preparation and experience, a move which has negative implicit interest for schools, and scholars, in order for them to implement procedures that aid teachers retention. Teachers retention is critical to school success (Martson, 2022). The teaching profession cannot go unfilled unlike other professions which makes it more compelling to retain teachers because they are single most important factor in student achievement. Goodlad in Martson (2022) stated that the ability to develop successful private schools is directly related to the ability to attract and retain quality teachers

Zachary (2017) enumerated four key factors impacting teacher retention: compensation, teacher, preparation, administrative support and working conditions. Zach (2022) opined that improving teacher retention can directly benefit school systems and students. But in the context of this study retention factors are the techniques school management create and use to reduce teachers attrition and increase the tendency of retaining teachers. Retention factor will be delimited to compensation, staff development, staff participation in decision making.

Compensation refers to monetary payment given to an individual in exchange for their services. in the work place compensation is what is earned by employees. It includes salary or wages in addition to commission and any incentives that come with the given employees position. Compensation can be in the form of a salary, wage, benefits, bonuses, paid leave, pension funds, and stock options and more (Shani Jay, 2018). Understanding the different types of compensation is critical to creating an attractive compensation package for your current employees. Not only will this help you retain your top talent, but will also help you attract new talent to your organization as long as you set yourself apart from your competitor.

Staff Development is defined as the processes and activities designed to increase the professional knowledge, skills, and attitudes of staff members so that they can improve the learning of students. Some defining characteristics of staff development are: it is an intentional process. It is an ongoing process. Providing the opportunity for staff development allows you to find and address any weaknesses, helping your employees to be more all-rounded and better skilled at every factor of their job. Since the technology and management practices are changing at a fast rate, training and updating teachers is crucial (McMurray et al. 2016). Staff development enables the employer to ensure that the employees maintain and enhance the knowledge and skills needed to deliver professional services and enable staff to advance in their career. Training and development ensure that your knowledge is relevant and up to date with the latest regulations. Staff training and development programme allows employee to find and address any weakness, helping them to be all-rounded and better skilled at every factor of their job. It increases employee's confidence within their role. Investment in training and development helps to show appreciation to employees which can help them to feel a greater level of job satisfaction and enhance retention of staff (Jenniffer, 2023).

Staff participation in decision making gives teachers the opportunity to voice their opinions, and to share their knowledge with both school administrators and fellow teachers. This improves the relationship between school leaders and teachers; it encourages a strong sense of teamwork among teachers. Staff participation in decision making process shows those across the organization that their opinion is valued and trusted. It helps workers feel less like cogs in a machine and more like experts and consultants in their respective areas of expertise. By involving staff in the decision making process, you create an opportunity for colleagues to share ideas, learn from each other and work towards a common goal. In turn, it fosters collaboration and creates a sense of belonging among the staff. Staff participation in decision making process can serve as morale that can lead to high innovation, commitment, job satisfaction and employee retention strategy.

Retention factors are strategies employed by an institution in keeping productive and talented workers and reducing turnover which include fostering a positive work atmosphere to promote engagement, showing appreciation to employees, providing competitive pay and benefits (Shaun, 2022). The load of retaining employees in the private secondary school in Awka education zone, lies upon the proprietors and managers of private schools Thus, to gain teachers' commitment to school and increase retention the school administrators need to identify which retention factors will be more applicable to reduce attrition. Though, outstanding teachers may leave a school because they become dissatisfied, underpaid, and unmotivated. For the school not to provide training and not to give opportunity to get promotion, and while trying to retain teachers within the school they may present other challenges as well (Dhanpat et al., 2018). For retention of teachers has appeared to be not worthy to the advancement and achievement of school objectives and goals particularly in building upper hand in the period of expanded globalization. However, changes in school environment, financial aspects, staff participation in decision making, staff development and administrator characteristics may be the factors prompting high teachers' attrition. It is based on this background that the study investigated retention factors as correlate to teachers attrition

among private secondary school teachers in Awka education zone of Anambra State.

Statement of the Problem

Teachers, parents, school principals and the general public are worried about the seeming negative impact teacher attrition has on the progressive academic performance of secondary school students in private secondary schools in Anambra State. To explain factors responsible for such ugly development a lot of research have been carried out by scholars to address the trend. Previous studies have been carried out at public secondary schools to find out causes of attrition and their impact on secondary school student academic achievement. The outcome of such studies seem not to have yielded maximum result. The owners of some private schools do not cherish the effort of teachers and therefore pay them poorly and this resulted to attrition . There are desire by researchers to ascertain the retention factors that are responsible for teacher attrition and turnover intention. Unfortunetely, there seem to be few studies on private seconday school on like public secondary school. This has created a gap that needs to be filled. It is against this background that the problem of this study retention factors and teachers attrition and turnover intentions among secondary school teachers in private schools in the state, is deemed worthy of empirical study.

Purpose of the Study

The general aim of this study is to investigate retention factors as correlates of teachers attrition among private secondary school teachers in Awka education zone of Anambra State. Specifically, the study sought:

1. Ascertain the relationship between compensation and teachers attrition among private secondary school teachers in Awka education zone in Anambra State.
2. Examine the relationship between staff development programme and attrition among private secondary school teachers in Awka education zone in Anambra State.
3. Determine the relationship between staff participation in decision making in the school and

Teacher attrition among private secondary school teachers in awka education zone in anambra state.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What is the relationship between compensation and teachers attrition among private secondary school teachers in Awka education zone of Anambra State.
2. What is the relationship between staff development programme and teachers attrition among private secondary school in Awka education zone of Anambra State.
3. What is the relationship between staff participation in decision making and teacher attrition in private secondary school in Awka education zone of Anambra State.

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses, tested at 0.5 level of significance guided the study.

1. There is no significant relationship between compensation and teachers attrition among private secondary school teachers in Awka education zone of Anambra State.

2. There is no significant relationship between staff development programme and teachers attrition among private secondary school in Awka education zone of Anambra State.
3. There is no significant relationship between staff participation in decision making and teacher attrition among private secondary school in Awka education zone of Anambra State.

METHOD

The study adopted the correlational research design. Apuke (2017) defined correlational research design as a quantitative design used to determine the degree of relationship that exists between two or more variables within a population or a sample.

The population of the study comprised 1008 teachers in the 84 registered private secondary schools in Awka Education Zone of Anambra State. The data were obtained from the Post Primary Schools Service Commission (PPSSC), Department of Planning, Research and Statistics (PRS) 2022. (See appendix B for list of schools).The sample for this study comprised 403 teachers drawn using proportionate stratified sampling technique and 40% of teachers from each strata. Two sets of instruments were used for the study. “Retention Factors Scale (RFS)” developed by Dockel (2003); has 60 items and “Teacher Attrition Questionnaire (TAS)” developed by the researcher has 12 items.

The three sets of instruments were structured on likert four point rating. The instrument which measured Retention factors were structured on the following options:

- Strongly Agreed (4)
- Agreed (3)
- Disagreed (2)
- Strongly Disagreed (1)

The questionnaire was validated by three experts who are lecturers in the Department of Educational Foundations, two experts in Educational Management and an expert in Measurement and Evaluation all in the Faculty of Education, Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University, Igbariam Campus. The reliability of the instruments were established using Cronbach Alpha with an overall reliability index of 0.78 which were considered reliable. five research assistants who are secondary school teachers in Awka Education zone were used in the administration and collation of the instrument. out of 400 copies of instrument distributed 399 was retrieved, Data collected were analyzed using Pearson’s Product Moment Correlation Coefficient to answer the research questions, t- test for significance of correlation was used to test hypotheses. In taking decision on the null hypotheses, if p-value is equal or less (\leq) than significant value of 0.05, the null hypothesis was rejected, but if p-value is greater than ($>$), the significant value of 0.05 the null hypotheses was not rejected.

ANALYSIS

Research Question I

What is the relationship between compensation and teachers' attrition among private secondary school teachers in Awka Education Zone of Anambra State?

Table I

Pearson (r) correlation between compensation and teachers' attrition among private secondary school teachers.

Variation		Compensation in retention Factor	Teachers' Attribution
Compensation in Retention Factor	Pearson (r)	1.00	0.852 ^{xx}
	N	399	399
Teachers' Attrition	Pearson (r)	0.852 ^{xx}	1.00
	N	399	399

^{xx} r (.852) = very high relationship

Pearson (r) presented in Table I showed that relationship between compensation and teachers' attrition among private secondary school teachers yielded a correlation coefficient of 0.852. This indicate that there was a high positive relationship between compensation in Retention Factor and teachers' attrition among private secondary school teachers in Awka Education Zone.

Table 2

Pearson (r) correlation between staff development programme and teachers' attrition among private secondary school teachers.

Variation		Staff Development in retention Factor	Teachers' Attribution
Staff development in Retention Factor	Pearson (r)	1.00	0.852 ^{xx}
	N	399	0.464
Teachers' Attrition	Pearson (r)	0.464 ^{xx}	1.00
	N	399	399

^{xx} r (0.464) = moderate positive relationship

Table 2 revealed that the relationship between staff development programme and teachers' attrition among private secondary school teachers had a correlation coefficient of 0.464. This implied that there was a moderate positive relationship between staff development programme and teachers' attrition among private secondary school teachers in Awka Education Zone.

Research Question 3

What is the relationship between staff participation in decision making and teachers' attrition among private secondary school in Awka Education Zone of Anambra State?

Table 3

Pearson (r) between staff participation in decision making and teachers’ attrition among private secondary school teachers.

Variation		Staff participation	Teachers’
		in decision making	Attribution
Staff participation in decision making	Pearson (r)	1.00	0.505 ^{xx}
	N	399	399
Teachers’ Attrition	Pearson (r)	0.505 ^{xx}	1.00
	N	399	399

^{xx} r (.505) = moderate positive relationship

As seen in Table 3, the Pearson (r) between staff participation in decision making in Retention Factor and teachers’ attrition yielded a coefficient correlation of 0.505. This implied that there was a moderate positive relationship between staff participation in decision making and teachers’ attrition among private secondary school teachers in Awka Education Zone of Anambra State.

played in Table 5, the correlation coefficient between work environment and teacher turnover yielded an index of 0.779. This finding showed that there was a high positive relationship between work environment and teacher turnover intention among private secondary school teachers in Awka Education Zone.

Testing of Hypotheses

Hypothesis I

There is no significant relationship between compensation and teachers’ attrition among private secondary school teachers in Awka Education Zone of Anambra State.

Table 4

Test of significance of correlation between compensation and teachers’ attrition among private secondary school teachers.

Variation	N	(r)	R ²	df	p-value	Remark
Compensation	399	0.852 ^{xx}	0.725	401	0.000	Significant
Teachers’ attribution	399					

^{xx} Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

Table 4 revealed that at 0.05 level of significance and 401 degrees of freedom, the calculated r was .852 with a p-value of 0.000 which was less than 0.05 alpha level. Since the p-value was less than the criterion value, the null hypothesis was rejected. This implied that there is a significant relationship between compensation and teachers’ attrition among private secondary school teachers in Awka Education Zone of Anambra Stat

Hypothesis 2

There is no significant relationship between staff development programme and teachers' attrition among private secondary school in Awka Education Zone of Anambra State.

Table 5

Test of significance of correlation between staff development programme and teachers' attrition among private secondary school teachers.

Variation	N	(r)	R ²	df	p-value	Remark
Staff development programme	399					
Teachers' attribution	399	0.464 ^{xx}	0.215	401	0.000	Significant

^{xx} Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

Table 5 indicated that at 0.05 level of significance and 401 degrees of freedom, the calculated r was .464 with a p-value of 0.000 which was less than 0.05 alpha level. Since the p-value of 0.000 was less than 0.05, the null hypothesis was rejected. This meant that the relationship between staff development programme and teachers' attrition among private secondary school teachers' is significant.

Hypothesis 3

There is no significant relationship between staff participation in decision making and teachers' attrition among private secondary school in Awka Education Zone of Anambra State.

Table 6

Test of significance of correlation between staff participation in decision making and teachers' attrition among private secondary school teachers.

Variation	N	(r)	R ²	df	p-value	Remark
Staff participation in decision making	399					
Teachers' attribution	399					

^{xx} Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

The analysis in Table 6 showed that the correlation between staff participation in decision making and teachers' attrition among private secondary school teachers was 0.505 with degrees of freedom of 401 and p-value of 0.000 which was less than 0.05 level of significance. Since the p-value of .000 was less than 0.05 alpha level, the null hypothesis was rejected. This depicted that the relationship between staff participation in decision making and teachers' attrition is significant.

It was concluded that there was no significant relationship between work environment and teachers' turnover intention among private secondary school teachers in Awka Education Zone of Anambra State.

Discussion of the findings

Findings from the study revealed that there was a high positive relationship between compensation in retention factor and teachers attrition among private secondary school teachers in Awka Education Zone. This agreed with Matt Tenney (2020), that compensation has always been one of the main reasons teachers change jobs, while other factors are certainly contributing to an increase in attrition.. Provision of a good compensation package significantly impacts the performance, profitability and long-term success of the school and enable long lasting retention of teachers.

Findings from the study revealed that there was a moderate positive relationship between staff development programme and teachers attrition among private secondary school teachers in Awka Education Zone. This agreed with Kumar et al, (2016) who opined that staff development allow teachers to take advantage of many distinctive methods of learning that benefit themselves and school. Teachers gain by experiencing better satisfaction in their ability to perform better in their job. School can strengthen their bond with teachers by investing in staff development. Aguenza et al (2017) stated that most teachers are looking for school that provide staff development programmes to facilitate their career planning. These opportunities provided, will increase commitment teachers.

Findings from the study revealed a moderate positive relationship between staff participation in decision making and teachers attrition among private secondary in Awka Educational Zone. The majority of teachers are deeply invested in their students, which makes them important contributors to the overall wellbeing of the school. This agreed with (Knapp, 2017) that when teachers are given the opportunity to be involved in school decisions and collaborate with leaders, school climate is improved. Giving teachers a platform to use their voices contributes to students achievement, better work environment and reduces teachers attrition.

Conclusion

The study concluded that if private secondary school proprietors improve on these retention factors: (compensation, staff development, staff participation in decision making.), a significant reduction can be made in the rate of teachers attrition in the school. However, if the above listed are not adhered to it will lead to massive withdrawal of students from the school; set back to the profit margin of the business; the school will loose value in the community, teachers will seek for greener pastures.

Recommendations

In view of the findings of the study the following recommendations were made:

1. Private school proprietor should make retention factors scheme an integral part of the school policy.
2. The state government should as a matter of urgency enact laws that will develop a bench mark of salary structure for different academic qualification to private school proprietor.
3. Private school proprietors should ensure that the welfare and wellbeing of teachers are

given utmost importance; since teachers are the power engine to every educational institution.

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