

STOCHASTIC AND DIAGNOSTIC ANALYSIS OF VOCATIONAL TEACHERS' ATTRITION AND RETENTION IN ADAMAWA STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

This survey on Stochastic and diagnostic analysis of vocational teachers attrition and retention in Adamawa State was conducted to find out the factors contributing to vocational teachers attrition and retention, and the strategies for curtailing the attrition. All the vocational teachers in Adamawa State technical colleges and other government secondary schools constituted the study's population. A sample of fifty six vocational education teachers was randomly selected from the three education zones in the State. With the help of three research questions, data were collected using well structured questionnaire and analyzed using a statistical mean rating. The results indicated among others that vocational teachers' attrition was as a result of neglect of teaching profession and poor salary structure. The major proposition was that government should address the issue of neglect of teaching profession, improve the salary structure, facilitate and encourage professional development and provide incentives and regular in-service training to all vocational teachers.

Keywords: Attrition, stochastic and diagnostic, analysis, vocational teachers, retention.

INTRODUCTION

Statistical random behaviour in identifying the nature of gradual reduction of the size of a work force by means of natural events such as retirement, death, and resignation have a demoralizing effect on the remaining teachers in the work force (Macdonald, 1999). Attrition of vocational teachers cannot be easily qualified; because there were numerous challenges that has to be properly addressed, which has brought setback to the school teachers and the students' performance (Webb, 1983). Burgess, (1981) stated that teacher attrition can have either positive or negative effects on the school programmes. In a positive sense, attrition may be a way of naturally getting rid of incompetent teachers thus giving way to hiring new teachers who may be competent and who may introduce new programme contents, new policies and procedures to the existing school programme.

The negative consequences might arise when the leavers are the best teachers or when the school programmes are undergoing rapid growth and development. In this sense, teachers' attrition lowers the overall effectiveness of the school and ultimately the quality of learning. Replacing high performing teachers might be very difficult thus decreasing the overall performance of the affected school. He further

said that attrition could result in expenses associated with recruitment and selection of teachers and also loss of productivity until probably a new teacher has mastered the job. Macdonald, (1999) ascertain that a demoralizing effect on the students and the remaining teachers.

The individual teacher who remains in the work force might develop dissatisfaction simply by watching other teachers leave for other job opportunities. Tilburg (1987) stated that when a staff quits, both the students and the remaining teachers suffer. There is disruption of service, the extra time and money spent on recruitment and training for replacement, also the additional stress of more work to the remaining staff members are the possible consequences suffered by the school organization as a result of attrition. Loss of teachers to the teaching profession is rarely distributed evenly across the teaching force. Attrition is highest in geographical locations where living conditions are extremely poor, expensive, or where teachers are not comfortable with the local ethnicity, customs, or language (Macdonald, 1999).

Hedges, (2002) ascertains that retention of teachers are most often due to sacrifice or based on the recognized need to keep in classroom, those teachers who are qualified and utilized effective teaching strategies, demonstrated by increased salary and student achievement year after year. A variety of strategies to increase retention of teachers are required to have a bond signed. If they leave teaching before their initial three year posting is completed, they are bared from further employment in the state sector and guarantor must repay the bounded amount. In practice, however, the value of the bond has been reducing by inflation, and the system is no longer enforced. Lack of enforcement has led to wide spread disapprove about the scheme. Macdonald, (1999) says that increasing salaries may appear to be obvious response to attrition problems.

However, there is little evidence that increased salary alone has a high long term impact on retention. Improving teachers' physical, social and professional experiences of work increases their commitment, reduce attrition, and is often cheaper than trying to tackle salary or the costs of teachers dissatisfaction, loss and retraining. Burgess, (1981) in the study on teachers shortage found out that attrition of agricultural teachers was due to low morale toward teaching, teacher-load which include matters such as record keeping, clerical work; community demand, extra curricular load, and keeping up to date professionally. In a study by (Phenethi, 1995) on the turnover of agricultural teachers in secondary school and higher school found that, lack of involvements of teachers in decision making, lack of support for teachers, poor working relationship between agricultural teachers and head teachers, limited mobility in teaching service, discriminatory practices against the promotion, high demand to attain class activities, failure to recognize outstanding performance of teachers, lack of in-service training for agricultural teachers, inadequate supply of equipment by school management, attractive condition of service in other sectors of the economy etc. were major factors associated with turnover of agricultural teachers.

Against this background it is imperative to study the vocational teachers'

attrition in secondary school in Adamawa state. Vocational teachers leave their profession at higher rates than their general teachers educators, some leave the workforce to look for more lucrative jobs, because teachers use teaching as a stepping stone, and when they leave they are not replaced immediately, which lead sto serious setbacks or lowers the overall effectiveness of the school quality and affect students performance (Billingsley, 1993). Vocational teachers also leave workforce for reasons that include poor salary, poor administrative support and training in curriculum (Kauffman and Farrel, 2002). This vocational teacher attrition affects the quality of teachers, restricts planning and programme continuity, increase allocations, for recruitment and hiring of teachers as well as hinders students learning (Shen and Herberg, 1997). Hence, there is need to study vocational teachers' attrition and retention in Adamawa State. To this end, this study seeks to: identify factors that influence vocational education teachers' attrition; determine factors which contribute to teacher retention and identify strategies for curtailing vocational teachers attrition. In an attempt to meet the above objective, the following questions were asked.

- (1) What are the factors that influence vocational education teachers' attrition?
- (2) What are the factors contributing to vocational education teachers' retention?
- (3) What are the strategies for curtailing vocational education teacher attrition?

METHODOLOGY

Survey research design was used in this study. The target population for this study comprises all vocational teachers in Adamawa State technical colleges and other Government Secondary Schools. A sample of fifty six vocational education teachers was randomly selected from the three education zones in the State. The instrument used for data collection is questionnaire. The questionnaire was administered by the researchers with the help of four trained research assistance. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

With reference to table 1, the results shows that items 1-7 of the research question one has been agreed by the respondent, while item 8 was disagreed by the respondent. Therefore, items 1-7 have been agreed by the respondents because it falls within the range of upper limit mean value of 3.50 - 5.00 while item 8 is said to be disagreed because it falls within the range of lower limit mean value of 1.00 - 3.49. It is deduced from table 2 that items 1,2,4,5 and 6 of research question two is said to be disagreed by the respondent while item 3 was agreed by the respondents. From the result, the items 1,2,4,5 and 6 were disagreed by the respondents because they fall within the range of lower limit mean value, while item 3 is agreed because it falls within the upper limit mean value.

Result from table 3 shows that items 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12 and 13 of research question three have been agreed by the respondents while item 2 is said to be disagreed by the respondents. This is because the mean value falls within the

upper limit while item 2 is disagreed because the mean value obtained falls within the lower limit mean value. The result as in table 1 revealed that the factors that influence vocational education teachers' attrition include: poor salary structure, Luke-warm attitude by the government, inadequate welfare packages, and inadequate incentives, lack of respect, inadequate re-training programmes and dissatisfaction with work place condition. This finding is in agreement with (Kauffman and Farrel, 2002) who said that vocational teachers leave workforce for reasons that include poor salary, poor administrative support and training in curriculum. Macdonald (1999) also reported that the loss of teachers to the teaching profession is rarely distributed evenly across the teaching force and attrition is highest in geographical locations where living conditions is extremely poor, harsh, where teachers do not feel comfortable. Hedges, (2002) also reported that vocational teachers' attrition is as a result of economic factors, as teachers make rational economic decision about their careers and seek better paid job where they can. Bundy (1999) also reported that teachers or instructors who work under a load that cannot possibly gain satisfaction under the condition can only result in dissatisfaction and instability.

The implication of the study is that the above mentioned factors cause attrition of vocational education teachers. The result as on table 2 revealed that the factors that contribute to vocational education teachers' retention include: personal commitment and gratification, taking teaching as their future ambition, satisfied level of job security and teachers enjoy the relationship with students and take pride in contributions they make to student learning. This findings was in agreement with Hedges (2002) who reported that retention of teachers are most often due to sacrifices, teachers taking teaching as their future ambition, teachers enjoy their relationship with students and take pride in contributions they make to student learning, improvement of salary for teachers, and adequate welfare reduce attrition. Bundy (1999) also reported that vocational education teachers' retention that work under a load that cannot possibly gain satisfaction under these condition can only result in dissatisfaction and instability. The implication of the findings is that the above mentioned factors contribute to vocational teachers' retention.

The result shows that, the strategies for curtailing vocational teachers attrition include facilitating and encouraging professional development, appoint highly qualified technical teachers as principals of vocational technical schools, offer opportunity for self improvement through in-service training, provide enough working materials in all schools, improve salary for vocational teachers, improve welfare packages for teachers, avoid indiscriminate transfer, provide special allowances for vocational teachers, provide adequate instruction materials, regular in-service training for all vocational teachers and encourage on-the-job and off-the-job training. The finding is in agreement with Hedges (2002) who reported that increasing teachers salaries, provision of special allowance to teachers, adequate provision of incentive for all teachers, encourage professional development activities of teachers and adequate welfare packages for teachers curtail vocational teachers' attrition. Macdonald (1999) also reported that increasing salaries may appear to be obvious

response to attrition problems and improving teachers physical, social and professional experience of work increases their commitment and reduces attrition. Kauffman and Farrel (2002) also reported that vocational teachers also leave workforce for reasons that include poor salary, poor administrative support and training in curriculum.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Attrition of vocational teachers is as a result of negligence of the teaching profession that makes some vocational teachers to leave teaching profession in Adawama State. Vocational education teachers' attrition restricts planning and programme continuity; as a result, it affects the quality of teachers and hinders students learning. Attrition makes qualified teachers leave the teaching for well paid job as a result of poor salary structure and other factors. Vocational education teachers use teaching as a stepping stone, and when they leave, they are not replaced immediately. This leads to the set back on the overall effectiveness of the school quality and affect students performance. This attrition has a demoralizing effect on the students and the remaining teachers in the work-force who might develop dissatisfaction simply by watching other teachers leave for better paid job.

Based on the factors identified to be affecting the vocational teachers attrition and the strategies proffered for curtailing the attrition the following are recommended:

- The Adamawa state Government should, address the issue of negligence of teaching profession and look into these problems that affect the retention of vocational teachers in teaching profession.
- The welfare of vocational teachers should be paramount in the mind of all stakeholders to reduce the attrition of vocational teachers.
- Adamawa state Government should improve the salary structure and allowances of vocational teachers appropriately.
- The government should also improve the standard of teaching profession to motivate vocational teachers that use teaching profession as a stepping stone so as to retain them in the profession.
- Facilitating and encouraging professional development, provision of incentive and regular in-service training for all vocational teachers to curtail dissatisfaction of vocational teachers must not be neglected too.
- Lastly, the Government should make it a point of duty to fund and provide the necessary facilities and equipment for vocational education at all levels of secondary schools in Adamawa state.

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Table 1: Factors that Influence Vocational Education Teachers Attrition in Adamawa State.

S/N	Items	X	Decision
1.	Poor salary structure influence vocational teachers to look for well paid job	4.85	Agreed
2.	Luke-warm attitude by the government to teachers demand	4.41	Agreed
3.	Inadequate welfare package for vocational teachers	4.42	Agreed
4.	Inadequate incentive for vocational teachers	4.43	Agreed
5.	Vocational teachers leave workforce for lack of respect.	3.58	Agreed
6.	Inadequate re-training program for vocational teachers	3.89	Agreed
7.	Workplace conditions	4.07	Agreed
8.	Dissatisfaction with workplace responsibilities	3.25	Disagreed

Source: Field survey, 2009.

Table 2: Factors that Contribute to Vocational Teachers Retention in Adamawa State

S/N	Items	X	Decision
1.	Vocational teachers stay in teaching for personal commitment and gratification	2.91	Disagreed
2.	Vocational teachers take teaching as their future ambition	3.23	Disagreed
3.	Teachers enjoy the relationship with students and take pride in contributions they make to student learning	3.67	Agreed
4.	Satisfied with the level of job security at the school	2.48	Disagreed
5.	Satisfied with my salary	1.57	Disagreed
6.	Computers and other technological instrument for my classroom are sufficiently available in my school	1.60	Disagreed

Source: Field survey, 2009

Table 3: Strategies for Curtailing Vocational Teachers Attrition in Adamawa State.

S/N	Items	X	Decision
1.	Facilitating and encouraging professional development activities for teachers	3.76	Agreed
2.	Encourage professional collaboration among teachers.	3.48	Disagreed
3.	Appoint highly qualified technical teachers as principals of vocational and technical schools	4.01	Agreed
4.	Offer opportunity for self improvement through in-service training	4.21	Agreed
5.	Provide enough working materials in all the schools workshop	3.89	Agreed
6.	Improvement of salary for all vocational teachers	4.00	Agreed
7.	Provision of incentive for all vocational teachers	4.03	Agreed
8.	Adequate welfare package for vocational teachers	3.69	Agreed
9.	Avoid incredible transfer of highly qualified vocational teachers.	3.51	Agreed
10.	Provide vocational teachers special allowance (Hazard allowance).	4.14	Agreed
11.	Provide adequate and relevant vocational textbooks in schools	3.76	Agreed
12.	Regular in-service training for all vocational teachers	4.00	Agreed
13.	Encourage on-the-job and off-the-job training	3.90	Agreed

Source: Field survey, 2009