

MANAGING PERSONNEL AND EFFECTIVE TEACHING IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN MAKURDI LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF BENUE STATE

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Abstract

The purpose of this paper was to examine the relationship between managing personnel and effective teaching in secondary schools in Makurdi Local Government Area. Three research questions and three hypotheses guided the study. The population of the study was 421 teachers from 17 public secondary schools in Makurdi Local Government Area of Benue State. The sample size was 84 respondents (teachers) from 10 secondary schools. Two instruments were used for data collection viz: "Managing Personnel for Effective Teaching Questionnaire (MPETQ)" and "Effective Teaching Questionnaire (ETQ)". The instruments were trial tested on 10 teachers at government secondary school Gboko to determine the internal consistency using Cronbach Alpha coefficient and yielded 0.87. The data collected was analyzed using mean and standard deviation to answer research questions and Pearson Product Moment Correlation to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The study revealed that safety and health, retirement benefits and training and development have significant relationship with teacher's effective teaching in secondary schools. Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made; government and principals of secondary schools should ensure that personnel in schools are safe and healthy through provision of health facilities such as health insurance services and medical facilities. Government should also improve on how retirement benefits are being managed in Benue State.

Keywords: Managing Personnel and Effective Teaching

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Introduction

The success of the school system, like any other organisation is anchored on providing good and enabling working environment geared towards the advancement of productive capacities of staff at work. These capacities are in the pursuit of achieving the educational objectives as well as satisfying the needs of the individual staff. The primary aim of school personnel management is to secure sufficient numbers and categories of suitable teachers and support staff to undertake the task of educating the students to the standard expected by the students, their parents and the society at large. Thus, the quality of education provided in schools depends directly on the capability, commitment and motivation of the teachers together with significant number of non-teaching staff employed in a variety of support roles.

According to Bua and Ada (2018), personnel management is a continuous process that involves team spirit and team work. The scholars further add that it involves functions like planning, organizing, directing and controlling, procurement, development, maintenance of human resources and helps to achieve individual, organizational and social objectives. According to Omebe (2001), teachers who are well managed always look for better ways of performing their job of teaching. Such teachers are more quality oriented and more productive. Management of teachers can be through the adoption of these management strategies; supervision, in-service training and compensation among others. More so, teachers who enjoy the motivation strategies above are more likely to be productive deriving from their satisfaction with the work environment.

Secondary school is the second level of education given to learners after primary education. It is a sector of education that usually comes immediately after primary education. It is at this stage of education that students are prepared for further studies in polytechnics, colleges of education, and universities. Within the framework of the New National Policy on Education (Federal Republic Nigeria, 2013), secondary education shall last for six years, broken into two distinct parts that are perfectly correlated with the ground works of the first three years–Junior Secondary School (J.S.S.) dovetailing into the next three years of Senior Secondary School (SSS). However, the success of this level of education depends on the kind of personnel employed and how effective they are managed.

The primary objective of personnel management in secondary school according to Nwagwu (2008) is to ensure effective teaching–learning process. For this objective to materialize, there is need to plan, organize, direct, coordinate and control the activities of the staff and students in an atmosphere devoid of persistent and unresolved conflicts. Thus, given that quality learning depends on the recruitment, retention and development of professional teachers, effective personnel management procedures are essential pre-conditions for the employment and continual development of adequately qualified and dedicated staff that would promote an optimum level of performance towards the provision of quality education. Therefore, personnel management is an important management function concerned with obtaining, developing and motivating the human resources required by an organisation to achieve its objectives.

Teacher effectiveness refers to the output, the capacity to achieve the stated objective in terms of abilities, behaviour, and habits as well as observed behaviour in the teacher or subordinate being rated (Nwafor, 2012). Teachers in Makurdi Local Government Area for many years have faced various challenges confronting their effectiveness in schools. This development has been hampering the achievement and

the realization of stated school objectives. Personnel management plays an indisputable role in maintaining and promoting quality education in the school system. In discussing the importance of personnel effectiveness in school, Keating and Olivares (2007) observed that school personnel are the principal instruments in awakening the students to cultural values, in preparing the child for his or her later professional training and in helping him/her adjust normally to his environment. Despite the key role of human resources in ensuring quality education, some problems still militate against the provision of human resources, the effective utilization of available ones and active involvement of staff in human resource management for effective teaching in secondary schools.

Managing teachers is that part of school management function which is concerned with teachers at work and their relationship within the educational enterprise. It seeks to bring together and develop into an effective educational organization, men and women who make up the teaching workforce, enabling each to make his/her own best contribution to its success. Management of teaching workforce involves a number of strategies that begin and maintain activities toward the achievement of personal and organizational goals (Aja-Okorie, 2014). There are several strategies of managing personnel in secondary schools such as placement, induction, orientation, training and development, selective hiring, compensation, supervision and motivation, delegation of duties recruitment of competent staff, making sure that the staff of an educational institution is safe and healthy, payment of their retirement benefits after retirement from service among others.

Today in educational organizations, it is becoming increasingly clear that for many staff, their place of employment can be more than source of income and identity. It has also become not only source of illness but also the source of death (Akpakwu, 2013). Aviva (2011) found that safety and health facilities reduce sickness, absenteeism, injury rates, the costs associated with replacing staff, increase productivity levels and lower insurance costs. A sound and healthy staff increases staff morale, organisation loyalty and contribute to its reputation. They further reported that there is psychological contract between the employer and worker and approximately 61% of workers said they would work harder for an employer who invested in their health. Health refers to state of physical, mental and emotional well-being or a condition of being sound in mind or body. Safety and health measures include: reasonable safety of place of work; safe means of access to work; and safe systems of working in terms of fellow workers, and handling, storage and transport of articles and substances. Adequate provision of these services assists in motivating the staff towards maximum performance and ultimate goal attainment. According to Adedokun (2010) and Ogbebor (2011), good health is perceived as the predicator of happiness of staff. This is because they are capable of directing the affairs of their lives at any time when they are free from illnesses.

Payment of retirement benefits of teachers could motivate teachers who are in the service to be more effective. Retirement according to Akpakwu (2008) is the time following the work period of an employee. That is, the compulsory time an individual must stop working (after attaining 60 years of age or 35 years in service, in Nigerian Public Service, for instance). However, retirement in Nigeria is usually welcomed with a sense of uncertainty (Iyortsuun & Akpusugh, 2013). A survey of some teachers currently serving in Benue State by the researchers showed that when teachers who retired from service paid their entitlement are paid the ones' in the service feel

comfortable with hope that after their retirement their entitlements will be paid also. It is usually associated with risk, especially among the civil servants. This is occasioned through the tension and strain retirees experience before they are able to access their benefits and entitlements from either the government or the pension managers (Inaja & Chima, 2013). One important advantage of this is the possibility of recruitment of competent staff and the promotion of deserving younger personnel. That is, retirement aims at increasing staff competency, stability, morale and human satisfaction. According to Akpakwu (2013), the retirement benefits of employee are pension, insurance, payment supplements and health services. This helps take care of personnel after retirement.

Training and development directly increase the job skills of an individual or a group of individuals by teaching them how to perform their tasks more effectively (Aja-Okorie, 2014). For instance, production workers may learn how to handle certain book-keeping details associated with their work. Teachers may go for refresher courses, seminars and workshops. It is clear that training contributes primarily to the productivity goal. It helps employees to be up-to-date and meet with modern methods of teaching. Training develops a staff while the school also benefits from higher performance (Aja-Okorie, 2014). A study by Akintunde (2017) found that teachers whose in-service training were focused on the curriculum can teach well when what has been learnt were applied in the classroom. The study also showed that students' achievements are usually high if their teachers participated in training that focused on the curriculum.

Many studies have been conducted on variables such as induction, compensation, orientation, appraisal and placement how they related with staff performance in school, however, not much has been done on variables such as payment of retirement benefits, safety and health and training and development of staff. In secondary school, personnel are very vital if the objectives and aims of education as stated in National Policy on Education are to be achieved. However, the situation of personnel in secondary schools in Benue State, particularly Makurdi Local Government Area, seems different as many personnel complain of mere absence of were safety and health facilities, inadequate training and development, irregular or non payment of retirement benefits to those who have retired from service. This situation translates to low morale among teachers thereby hampering their effectiveness in their work place. It is against the background that this study sought to investigate managing personnel for effective teaching and learning in secondary schools in Makurdi Local Government Area of Benue State.

Statement of Problem

Teacher management is an important process in the schools. The ability of school managers to manage the personnel could affect positively or negatively their teaching effectiveness. However, teachers' effective teaching has been questioned in recent times due to the poor performance of students in internal and external examinations, particularly secondary schools in Makurdi Local Government Area of Benue State.

Safety and health of a teacher are very important to his/her effectiveness, since a sick and unsafe teacher cannot function effectively. However, it seems teachers are not properly taken care of especially when they are sick. Often times, teachers complain of not being able to buy drugs not to talk of going to hospital to seek medical attention.

This could be attributed to the non payment of their salaries and lack of health facilities for teachers.

Inability of government to put in place a retirement benefits in form of a functional pension scheme appears to thwart the staff effectiveness in secondary schools. There are incessant protests by retired civil servants in Benue State, including teachers. This development has cast doubt on the effectiveness of teachers currently in service as most of them appear to engage in other activities outside of teaching as a strategy to safe guide their future after service.

Poor students' academic performance in secondary schools could be attributed to ineffective training and development of teachers in secondary schools by Benue State government. Many teachers in secondary schools hardly attend workshops or seminars on new inventions that are taking place in the educational sector. This has made teachers' to exhibit poor work behaviour like tardiness, absenteeism, delays in the marking of examination scripts and submission of grades. These are indicative of ineffective teachers and lack of commitment. Therefore, the problem of this study is put in question form: what is the relationship between managing personnel and effective teaching in secondary schools in Makurdi Local Government Area of Benue State?

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What is the relationship between safety and health and teachers' effective teaching in secondary schools in Makurdi Local Government Area of Benue State?
2. What is the relationship between retirement benefits and teachers' effective teaching in secondary schools?
3. What is the relationship between training and development and teachers' effective teaching in secondary schools?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance

1. There is no significant relationship between teachers' safety and health and teachers' effective teaching in secondary schools in Makurdi Local Government Area of Benue State.
2. There is no significant relationship between retirement benefits and teachers' effective teaching in secondary schools.
3. There is no significant relationship between training and development and teachers' effective teaching in secondary schools.

Methodology

This study adopted correlation survey design. Correlation survey design is one which investigates one or more characteristics of a group to discover the extent to which the characteristics are related to each other. Correlation is to determine relationships between variables and if a relationship exists. It usually seeks to establish that the relationship exists between two or more variables (Marilyn & Jim, 2011). The justification for adopting correlation survey design for this study was because the researcher intended to establish the relationship that exists between managing personnel and effective teaching in secondary schools.

The population of this study comprised 421 teaching staff from 17 secondary schools. The sample size was 84 respondents made up of teaching staff representing 20% of the entire population of the study. To arrive at this sample size, purposive sampling technique was used to select 84 teaching staff from ten schools. The

instruments used for data collection were questionnaire titled: “Managing Personnel Questionnaire (MPQ)” and “Effective Teaching Questionnaire (ETQ)”. The questionnaire was structured based on four likert scale of Strongly Agree (SA) =4, Agree (A) =3 Disagree (D) =2 and Strongly Disagree (SD) =1 respectively. The cut off for acceptance mean score was 2.50. Any item less than 2.50 was not accepted.

Face and content validation of instrument were done by three experts in Department of Educational Foundations in Benue State University, Makurdi. The questionnaires were administered on the respondents from the ten secondary schools using three research assistants who were chosen from three secondary schools in Makurdi Local government Area of Benue State. The data generated were analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient to answer the research questions, while Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient was used to test the hypothesis at the 0.05 level of significance.

Results

Research Question 1: What is the relationship between safety and health and teachers’ effective teaching in secondary schools in Makurdi Local Government Area of Benue State?

Table 1: Pearson Product Moment Coefficient of Respondents on relationship between Safety and Health and Effective Teaching in Secondary Schools

Variables	N	\bar{X}	SD	R
Safety and Health	84	3.14	.75	.174**
Teachers’ Effective Teaching	84	2.93	.79	

Table 1 indicates correlation coefficient between safety and health and teachers’ effective teaching in secondary schools, $R=.174^{**}$. This means that there is positive relationship between safety and health and teachers’ effective teaching in secondary schools in Makurdi Local Government Area of Benue State.

Research Question 2: What is the relationship between retirement benefits and teachers’ effective teaching in secondary schools?

Table 2: Pearson Product Moment Coefficient on Relationship between Retirement Benefits and Teachers’ Effective Teaching in Secondary Schools

Variables	N	\bar{X}	SD	R
Retirement Benefits	84	3.42	0.98	.185**
Teachers’ Effective Teaching	84	2.93	0.79	

Table 2 indicates correlation coefficient between retirement benefits and teachers’ effective teaching in secondary schools $R=.185^{**}$. This means that there is positive relationship between retirement benefits and teachers’ effective teaching in secondary schools.

Research Question 3: What is the relationship between training and development and teachers' effective teaching in secondary schools?

Table 3: Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient between Training and Development and Teachers' Effective Teaching in Secondary Schools

Variables	N	\bar{X}	SD	R
Training and Development	84	2.75	.90	.176**
Teachers' Effective Teaching	84	2.93	.79	

Table 3 indicates correlation coefficient between training and development and teachers' effective teaching in secondary schools $R=.176^{**}$. This means that there is positive relationship between training and development and teachers' effective teaching in secondary schools.

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant relationship between safety and health and teachers' effective teaching in secondary schools.

Table 4:
 Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient on Relationship between Safety and Health and Teachers' Effective Teaching in Secondary Schools

Variables	N	\bar{X}	SD	R	Sig.
Safety and Health	84	3.14	.75	.174**	0.00
Teachers' Effective Teaching	84	2.93	.79		

**Correlation significant at .01 level (2- tailed)

Table 7 indicates correlation coefficient between safety and health and teachers' effective teaching in secondary schools $R=.174^{**}$ and $P=0.00$. Since $p<.05$, the null hypothesis is rejected. This means that there is positive significant relationship between safety and health and teachers' effective in secondary schools in Makurdi Local Government Area of Benue State.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant relationship between retirement benefits and teachers' effective teaching in secondary schools.

Table 5: Product Moment Correlation Coefficient on Relationship between Retirement Benefits and Teachers' Effective Teaching in Secondary Schools

Variables	N	\bar{X}	SD	R	Sig.
Retirement Benefits	84	3.42	0.98	.185**	0.00
Teachers' Effective Teaching	84	2.93	0.79		

**Correlation significant at .01 level (2- tailed)

Table 5 indicates correlation coefficient between retirement benefits and teachers' effective teaching in secondary schools, $R=.185^{**}$ and $P=0.00$. Since $p<.05$, the null

hypothesis is rejected. This means that there is positive significant relationship between retirement benefits and teachers' effective teaching in secondary schools.

Hypothesis 3: There is no significant relationship between training and development and teachers' effective teaching in secondary schools.

Table 6: Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient between Training and Development and Teachers' Effective Teaching in Secondary Schools

Variables	N	\bar{X}	SD	R	Sig.
Training and Development	84	2.75	.90	.176**	0.00
Teachers' Effective Teaching	84	2.93	.79		

**Correlation significant at .01 level (2- tailed)

Table 6 indicates correlation coefficient between training and development and teachers' effective teaching in secondary schools, $R=.176^{**}$ and $P=0.00$. Since $p<.05$, the null hypothesis is rejected. This means that there is positive significant relationship between training and development and teachers' effective teaching in secondary schools.

Discussion

Based on the analysis obtained from the study, the discussion of findings is organized around three research questions and three hypotheses.

The first finding revealed that there is positive significant relationship between safety and health and teachers' effective teaching in secondary schools. This finding agrees with Aviva (2011) who found that safety and health facilities reduce sickness absence, injury rates, the costs associated with replacing staff, increase productivity levels and lower insurance costs. A sound and healthy staff increases staff morale, organisation loyalty and contribute to its reputation. Aviva (2011) further reports that there is psychological contract between the employer and worker and approximately 61% of workers said they would work harder for an employer who invested in their health. This finding also agrees with Adedokun (2010) and Ogbebor (2011) who found that good health is perceived as the predicator of happiness of staff. This is because they are capable of directing the affairs of their lives at any time when they are free from illnesses.

The second finding shows that there is positive significant relationship between retirement benefits and teachers' effective teaching in secondary schools. This finding agrees with Ukeje (1991) who reported that retirement benefits increasing staff competency, stability, morale and human satisfaction. This finding lends credence to the opinion of Akpakwu (2013) that when a staff knows that after retirement he will get his retirement benefits such as pension, insurance, payment supplements and health services they put in their best.

The third finding reveals that there is positive relationship between training and development and teachers' effective teaching in secondary schools. The result of this study lends credence to Aja-Okorie (2014) who reported that training and development

influence staff performance, since it directly increases the job skills of an individual or a group of individuals by teaching them how to perform their tasks more effectively. This finding agrees with Akintunde (2017) who found that teachers were more prepared to implement changes in teaching practice, as well as improve their knowledge and teaching skills when the training was much related to daily experiences and parallel to assessment.

Conclusion

The importance of managing personnel cannot be over emphasized. If personnel are not properly handled and managed, it will not augur well with the secondary school system as poor quality and half baked school leavers will be sent out to the labour market without acquiring the desired skills to contribute to the economy. Proper management of personnel in the life of the school contributes greatly to the smooth and orderly running of the school. Hence, this will also help to solve personal and social problems which may bring about the mal-functioning of the management of school system.

Recommendations

- Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made;
1. Government and principals of secondary schools should ensure that personnel in schools are safe from hazardous activities. They should provide health insurance services, medical facilities and also take care of sick personnel. This will motivate them and lead to effective teaching.
 2. Government should change how retirement benefits are being managed in Benue State. They should ensure timely payment of gratuities, health insurance, pension and death benefits to the families of the deceased in order to enable staff to put in their best.
 3. Government should develop a plan where personnel of secondary schools will be given training yearly in order to acquire knowledge and skills to make them more effective on their jobs.

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