

**IMPACTS OF TEACHERS TURNOVER ON SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS'
ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN NIGERIA**

BY

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Abstract

This paper examined the concept of teachers' turnover, the concept of students' academic performance, the impact of teachers' turnover on secondary school students' academic performance, causes on of teachers' turnover, implication of teachers' turnover on students' academic performance. The paper concluded that teachers' turnover has significant impact on students' academic performance. The paper also made some suggestions that can enhance retention of teachers towards improving secondary school students' academic performance in Nigeria, among are government should pay adequate attention to teachers' condition of service, motivation, job stress, staff development, administrative support and school location that are capable of making the teachers to stabilize on their job than looking for other lucrative job.

Keywords: Teachers' Turnover, Secondary School, Academic Performance

Introduction

Education in Nigeria is an instrument "par excellence" for effecting national development. It has witnessed active participation by non-governmental agencies, communities and individuals as well as governmental intervention. Education is the greatest device man has created for his own continued improvement. It trains individual for the position of leadership on earth. Education gives man understanding and enlightenment, improves his intellect, knowledge and skills as well as his attitude to his environment (Ogunde, 2004). The importance of Nigeria's philosophy of education specified that education fosters the worth and development of individual, for each individuals sake and for the general development of the society. Nigerian education is classified into primary, secondary and tertiary levels. However, secondary education is the education children received after primary education and before the tertiary stage.

The importance of secondary education made the federal government to state the broad aims of secondary education is preparation for useful living within the society and for higher education (Alabi, 2005). However, it appears that secondary schools are not living up to expectation in discharging its obligations. In spite of the importance and popularity of secondary education, the academic performance at the secondary level has been poor (Ahmed 2013). Secondary education is unique in the educational development of a child, being the link between primary and tertiary institution. The knowledge, skills, values and traits which a child acquires at the secondary level will complement those acquired at the primary level and these are combined will prepare such child for higher education. In spite of the roles of secondary education, it is quite unfortunate that secondary schools appear not to measure up to the standard expected of them. There have been public out cries over the persistent poor academic performance of students in public examination.

Educators and general public, over time, have expressed concerned over the causes of poor academic performance of students in West African School Certificate Examination. In spite the fact that government in recent time has renovated schools, computers were given to students yet the academic performance seems to be poor. According to Nwokocha and Amadike (2005) academic performance of student is the yardstick for testing educational quality of a nation. Hence, it is important to maintain high performance in internal and external examinations. Students' performance plays an important role in producing the best quality graduates who will become great leaders and manpower for the nation, thus responsible for the country's social and economic

development. Poor academic performance has been defined as failing to meet the average academic performance in test or an examination scores as determined by a set cut-off point.

The performance of students in any academic task has always been of special interest to educators, parents and the society at large. The primary concern of an educator who is entrusted with the responsibility of selecting students for any advance training program in a given field is the ability to estimate as accurately and as early as possible the probability that such examinees will pass or fail. According to Ijaiya (2000) Academic performance has been described as the scholastic standing of a student at a given period of time. This scholastic standing could be explained in terms of the grades obtained in a subject or subjects. Oderinde (2003) commented on this scholastic standing and argued that performance is a measure of output and that the main outputs in education are expressed in terms of learning, that is, changes in knowledge, skills and attitudes of individuals as a result of their experiences within the school system. Performance is the level of attainment of a person in an examination, that is, how an individual is able to demonstrate his or her abilities in an examination as stated by (Adeniran 2004).

Academic performance most especially of senior secondary school students has been associated with various factors. Most students in secondary schools are daily confronted with challenges of coping with academics under emotional strain occasioned by long walk to school, poor school environment and being taught by unmotivated teachers. Despite the governments' investment in education, its output in terms of quality of students has been observed to be unequal with government expenditure. The poor academic performance of students could be attested in the Senior School Certificate Examination (SSCE) conducted by West African Examination Council (WAEC) between 2010 and 2014. The average percentage of students who obtained credit level passes in five subjects and above including English Language and Mathematics between 2010 and 2014 was about 23% in Nigeria (Quality Education Assurance Agency, 2014). In 2011, only 30.9% of the 1,540,250 candidates obtained credit level passes in five subjects including English Language and Mathematics while in the 2011 SSCE only 22.34% of the 1,160,561 candidates obtained credit level passes and above in English Language and 25.14% in Mathematics in the 36 States of the Federation and the Federal Capital Territory (Owadié 2011). In 2014 May/ June West African Senior School Certificate Examination, 649,156 candidates (38.81%) of the 1,677,224 candidates that wrote the examination obtained 5 passes and above in subjects including English Language and Mathematics in the 36 States of the Federation and Federal Capital Territory (Arafat, 2015). The question bothering the heart of people as to the poor academic performance still hinge on. However, the researchers are of the opinion that teachers' turnover could be a bane behind the poor academic performance.

Concept of Teachers' Turnover

Teachers' turnover refers to the departure of teachers from schools and includes movers who change school and leavers who leave teaching altogether (Ingersol, 2001). Thus, according to Ingersol there are two forms of teachers' turnover; one is when teachers' leaves the teaching entirely for another profession which is called attrition and the other is the case of teachers transfer from one location to another still within the school system, this is called "migration". Teachers' turnover occurs when teachers leave teaching profession for another profession. It is described as the movement of employees out of the organization or any permanent departure beyond organization boundaries (Xaba, 2003). Employee turnover is a choice made by either employers or employees or both to terminate the employment relationship. Accordingly, there are two types of turnover, voluntary turnover or involuntary turnover. Voluntary turnover is a type of turnover where the decision to leave the organization is initiated by the employees for reasons such as financial, personal, social and other reasons. The involuntary turnover is initiated by the employer. This could be as a result of different factors like poor performance of the employee or adaptation of new strategy by the organization which result in reduction of numbers of employees and other similar factors the organization can decide to dismiss or lay off its employees. Cole (2002) affirms this by noting that some people leave because they have been offered better jobs somewhere else or for a variety of other personal motives. Nevertheless, teachers' turnover in excess of 10% has more negative than positive consequence (Dereje 2007).

In line with this, Chaika (2000) expressed that the sense that movement of teachers at the inappropriate time which likely affects students' academic performance. For example, in a school where there is a single Mathematics, English Language and Physics teachers and if any of them should leave the school at an unexpected time may affect the students' performance and even the frequent transfer of teachers when students are preparing towards examination and bringing in another new teacher may also influence the students' academic performance negatively.

Concept of Academic Performance

A scholastic standing of a student at a given moment is described as the academic performance. This scholastic standing could be explained in terms of grades obtained in a course or groups of courses taken (Omolayo, 2009). Bello, Bukar and Ibi (2016) while commenting on the scholastic standing of students argued that performance is a measure of output and that the main outputs in education are expressed in terms of learning, that is, changes in knowledge, skills and attitudes of individuals as a result of their experiences within the school system. Thus, in determining academic performance, Sakin (2000) emphasized the use of grades in examinations and reported that grades could serve as prediction measures and as criterion measures.

However, academic performance is largely identified by a range of statistical indicators. Bello, Bukar and Ibi, (2016) supported this argument and reported that performance is the level of attainment of a person in an examination, that is, how an individual is able to demonstrate his or her abilities in an examination. Hence, Performance has been regarded as a measure of educational output. Students' performance in the Nigeria context mainly entails; teaching consistently with diligence, honesty and regularity orchestrated by increased good results from students; setting adequate written and practical exercises, ensuring effective marking, evaluating all exercises promptly and carefully and observing academic regulations and instructions (Bello, Bukar and Ibi 2016). The feeling by many people, including the researchers, is that this is a shallow understanding of students' performance. The researcher is of the view that performance of any student should not only be considered from the academic outcomes only, but should also focus on other education outcomes such as the affective domains and the psychomotor domains. In school environments therefore, students' performance should not only be defined in terms of test scores, examination results, students' ability to socially apply what is learnt, and the rate at which students move on to higher institutions of learning, but should consider the achievements of the school in other areas like equipping the learners with the requisite skills for survival.

Several studies reviewed indicated that student's characteristics and administration style of principals influences student's academic performance. Students characteristics in this case includes their social economic background, one study by Kadenyi and Kamuyu (2006) on the influence of family social – economic status on students' academic performance found that, students' performance is significantly influenced by the family background. The study found that performance of the learners depends on the students' ability and determination to achieve his/her academic targets.

Causes of Teachers' Turnover in Schools

The observed sub- variables of teachers' turnover that are capable of influencing students' academic performance are teachers' condition of service, teachers' motivation, job stress, staff development, administrative support and school location ;Teachers' condition of service: This refers to all requirements that are connected with service rendered by teachers. It could include welfare, probationary period, working hours, medical services, job tenure, job security, salaries and fringe benefits. The welfare of teachers' include: transfer, examination leave, sick leave, study leave, casual leave and maternity leave. The researcher observed that teachers' condition of service in Ekiti State is below expectation which in turn leads to teachers' turnover. Akomolafe (2004) opined that some of the provisions adopted by school organization as a matter of policy to ensure the maintenance of uninterrupted services are teachers' condition of service and their welfare.

Motivation: This refers to the drive or energy that propels a person to a specific action. In management context, motivation is the force that enables people to achieve organization's objectives. An organization can recruit, select and train people; but without proper motivation they will be ineffective. Motivation can be inform of intrinsic and extrinsic. Intrinsic motivation is probably the most effective. This is achieved by

designing the job or task in such ways the workers derive personal inward (intrinsic) enjoyment in their work and are keen to do the task. Extrinsic motivation is the drive to achieve objectives based on pay, reward, recognition, belongingness, advancement and achievement.

Stress: This is a feeling of tension that is both emotional and physical. It has also been diagnosed as a state of psychological tension produced by the forces of pressure as well as a state of mental and emotional strain. Stress is a common phenomenon in organization, be it formal or informal and the school is not an exception. In the school, it is common to see teachers complaining of stress in relation to the nature of their job which involves physical and mental exertion. The teaching profession requires regular use of various parts of the body (legs, hands, eyes, head, brain etc), each having roles to play simultaneously in the teaching and learning process.

Common observation in Secondary schools in Ekiti state revealed that many teachers teach more than 25 periods per week as against the recommendation of the national policy on education which stipulates that a maximum work load of 25 periods per subject per teacher per week (FGN 2004). In the same manner, observation shows that some teachers teach more than one subject. There are instances where a teacher combines subjects such as Biology and Chemistry, Economics and Government, Mathematics and Further Mathematics thereby compelling them to have work excess load. It has been observed that the rate at which the experience and dedicated teachers are moving out of the teaching profession is becoming alarming as a result of stress encountered in the process of carrying out their functions thereby deteriorate students' academic performance.

Staff development: This is considered to be a factor that enhances teachers' quality. Edem (2006) highlighted some of the reasons why teachers should be developed on the job. He explained that as a result of increasing knowledge about how learning occurs, new teaching method techniques are consistently emerging of which the classroom teachers must be made aware. His teaching could become stale if he is not exposed to new ideas through in-service-training. In-service-training comprises all the activities engaged in by teachers' during their service and is designed to contribute to professional improvement.

Observation shows that much has not been achieved in the areas of staff development in Nigeria as many teachers prefer looking for job where staff development is giving adequate priority. In most cases, the movement of teachers from one job to another may be as a result of lack of staff development which also has effects on students' academic performance. Akomolafe (2002) perceived staff development as not only in-service-training undertaking by teachers but also interaction among colleagues arising from school activities and programme. Akomolafe went further that development starts from inception and during service years so teachers' they could be well oriented on their job. However, if teachers' are not developed, it will affect the students' progress academically. The students will not be able to compete with their colleagues academically because of the low knowledge of the teacher which may likely jeopardise the future of the students. This is because the students may not be able to learn new things from the teacher thereby leaving the students in the state of dilemma.

Administrative support: This refers to approval, encouragement and perhaps help teachers' receives from the authority or leader of the school system. The supports include financial support, moral support and facilities support. Financial support is the allowances given at the end of the term to the teachers which could be incentives and improved salaries. Moral support involves awards, honour, letter of recommendation and letter of commendation given to teachers at the end of the term while facilities support include provision of facilities such as training facilities, accommodation and infrastructural facilities such as electricity, pipe-borne water, tables and chairs, computer soft and hard wares. It appears that much have not been achieved in the area of administrative support in Ekiti State. For instance, Motuma (2006) in his study of teachers' turnover in government secondary schools of Oromia regional state revealed that lack of administrative support are the major problems contributing to teachers' turnover.

School location: This refers to the community in which the school is located such as rural and urban areas. Observation shows that teachers move from rural areas to urban areas where there are adequate facilities and amenities such as electricity, pipe born-water, good road network, recreation centers, hospital, market and banks in Nigeria. Bosede (2010) reported that school location influence students' academic performance in some subject areas. Further observation reveals that teacher's prefer seeking transfer to the urban areas than the rural areas which consequently may affects student's academic performance. Considine and Zappala (2002)

studied students in Australia and found out that geographical location does not significantly predict outcomes in school performance.

It appears that when schools are located in the urban areas where there are adequate facilities and amenities, teachers seem to remain in the teaching profession and the rate of teachers' turnover seems to reduce and thereby enhances students' academic performance. It has been observed that schools that are located in rural areas where there are inadequate facilities and amenities suffers increase of teachers' turnover and the effect is that if experience teachers are moving out when their services are needed at a particular time, such movement may likely have effect on the students' academic performance.

Implication of Teachers Turnover on Students' Academic Performance

Observation reveals that the rate of teachers' turnover is common in secondary schools in Nigeria is alarming. Many teachers are in the habit of using teaching as a stepping stone to get a juicier job. This has made education sector to suffer series of setback ranging from shortage of experience teachers, students' poor academic performance and poor perception of teaching profession by the society.

It is crystal that secondary education is an incontrovertible pivot to the educational system of any developing nation like Nigeria. With the general awareness that the standard of academic performance of secondary school students in West Africa Senior Examination is falling, one wonders whether the responsibility ascribed to education as regards nation building is not a force after all. The society is much apprehensive of this observed falling in students' performance in the school Certification Examination (SSCE) and National Examination Council (NECO).

Teachers' turnover results in lower student's scores in internal and external examinations. Also, teachers' turnover brings about low academic performance of students thereby denying a large percent of students an opportunity to gain admission into higher institutions of learning.

Conclusion

The study concluded that Teachers' turnover has significant impact on students' academic performance. In other words, students' academic performance in Nigeria Secondary Schools depends on academic environment devoid of teachers' turnover. This is to say, teachers' stability in the teaching profession are greatly depend on condition of service, motivation, less job stress, staff development, administration support and school location. When teachers are favorably exposed to all the variables of teachers' turnover, students' academic performance will be improved and pre – determined educational objectives will be effectively accomplished.

Suggestions

1. The Teacher Registration Council of Nigeria should professionalize teaching profession to prevent and reduce teachers' turnover rate in schools.
2. The government should also make regulations that will recognize teaching profession as a distinct profession, creating separate salary scale, setting out pre-requisite for who would be teachers thereby reducing the entry of no- professional teachers into the profession.
3. The number of teachers in our schools should be periodically assessed by the designated school commissions, in order to ensure adequate supply and posting of teachers to schools to enhance and improve students' academic performance.

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