

Teacher's Competence: A Variable for Recruitment and Retention of Teachers for Successful Implementation of the Universal Basic Education Scheme

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Abstract

This paper x-ray the extent to which competence is used as a criterion for recruitment and selection of primary school teachers and also the extent to which recruited Teachers are empowered to attain competence on job and remain in service. Three Hundred and twenty five (325) teachers in primary schools, 95 male, and 230 females were randomly selected from 18 primary schools from 6 of the 16 local government areas of Kwara state formed the sample of the study. The competence in Appointment and Retention Questionnaire (CARQ) was used for Data Collection. The result shows that the value attached to the use of competence as a criterion in the selection of Teachers is poor. The study also revealed the inadequacy of the existing forms of incentives of the teaching service condition for retention of primary school teachers on the job. It was recommended that the government should demonstrate enough political will in its desire to achieve successful implementation of the UBE scheme by employing enough qualified teachers. Teachers morale and self esteem should be empowered by regular payment of salary and allowances.

Introduction

No nation can develop above the quality of its teachers (Sotande, 2000). Therefore the attainment of quality education in any educational programme is solely dependent on quality teaching by the teachers. That is, quality teaching is highly crucial to successful implementation of any education programme of which the Universal Basic education (UBE) is a part. In the light of the above, Teachers who serves as the conveyors of knowledge in the educational sector has a significant roles to play as the key element for success of school organization, management and school change.

Competence of staff in any organization is sacrosanct and often highly required in order to ensure productivity. The unattractive nature of teaching profession resulting mainly from contemporary societal perception of the profession appears as a casual attribute of poor quality of personnel. The teaching profession attracts only people who see it as the last resort (Anikweze, 2004). The problem of unmet needs of teachers that ultimately negates their favourable disposition to gain competence on the job is an issue of poor motivation. A motivated teacher according to Anikweze (2004) is effective and productive in the performance of his responsibilities.

Need satisfaction in this study is psychologically interpreted as environmental influence on motivated behavior with focus on the behavioral concept of incentives. Need satisfaction function as incentive, an external force that energizes and sustains teachers desire to gain competence on the job. Consequent upon the poor incentive of teachers with regards to low remuneration allowances, promotion and their fringe benefits, a lot of teachers in service demonstrate lack of concern for dedication and competence. Thus, hardly is any teacher ever dismissed from duty as a result of incompetence.

Several recruited teachers who are professionally incompetent and lack adequate knowledge of the subject matter are selected from those who see the profession as the last resort. Although teachers' employers place high premium on competence of teachers at public primary schools,

competence does not seem to be the overriding factor in recruitment and retention of teacher in service.

Teacher competence in this study pertains to ability to perform the duties of the teacher accordingly consequent upon the completion of course of professional training and acquisition of relevance skills and qualifications. The teacher who is competent to handle the teaching programme is cognitively equipped and acquires professional training in teaching institution with which he or she is empowered to handle the subject matter authoritatively and methodologically. In a nutshell, teacher competence refers to teachers' ability to perform the task of teaching, learning and providing guidance for students' activities as expected by virtue of the endowed capacity through training, qualification and certification.

According to BBC dictionary (1992), competence is the ability to do something effectively following professional standards. In order to attain the intended result of quality teaching and learning in the UBE scheme, the need for teacher competence can never be over emphasized. It is thus very vital that the recruitment of teachers who are educational facilitators be based on competence in order to attain expected result of quality education. Recruitment of workers is carefully handled by organizations to ensure proper selection of staff into whichever aspect of production for which they are most capable in order to achieve maximum productivity (Ibukun 1997). Teacher quality as identified by Sotande (2000) include, possession of content knowledge, language/communication competence, classroom management competence, exposure to in service training, keeping up to date in curriculum development, instructional technology, work place trend and educational policy. Undoubtedly, to get the type of teachers of the aforelisted qualities selected in to the teaching profession involves careful selection of appointees.

The importance attached to competence as a crucial criterion for recruitment of workers into several organizations in Nigeria school system inclusive, appear very unimpressive. A fundamental dysfunctional element revealed by a survey conducted by Adeyemi (2004) shows that more than 80 percent

of employed university graduates secure gainful employment outside their areas of specialization. It is commonplace to see graduates of English, History, Social Studies and other humanity disciplines in the banking industry, while those who graduated in accounting and other related disciplines are taking to teaching; legal practitioners seem to have usurped the job of estate managers and most graduates of engineering are classroom teachers (Adeyeni 2004). Similarly, graduates of agricultural science, surveying, and fisheries are often employed as civil servants at local or state government levels.

Due to limitation in job opportunities and the usual scramble for any available job opportunity, competence in recruitment of teachers has been seriously jeopardized. The principles of merit and relevance which are important strategies in dealing with recruitment of teachers of primary schools are no more taken into consideration. What does matter much nowadays in recruitment than qualification is "god fatherism" or "who you know".

In line with this, Nwadiani (2000) espoused that the growing surplus of educated unemployed and the incongruent relationship between schooling and existing job opportunities in Nigeria make people perceive contemporary education as investment in frustration, and waste of time, energy and resources.

Recruitment of incompetent teachers into the teaching field is responsible to a great deal for incompetence of teachers (Adeyemi, 2004). Incompetence of the teacher is very much connected with the quality of students who enrolled in teacher education today. The "rejects" who enrolled in teacher education has very little to contribute to the success of educational programmes since they themselves are limited in their scope of performance (Anikweze, 2004). Lots of certificated people are highly incompetent of expressing themselves in simple sentences talk less of communicating effectively in English language. In line with the policy thrust that no nation can rise above the quality of its teachers, it is obvious that incompetence of teachers has negative impact on

quality education, manpower production and national development in all its ramification.

Directly connected with the recruitment of teachers is the issue of their retention on job. Teachers, who are absorbed into the teaching programme need to remain in the field to gain experience, become more competence and more skillful in the art of teaching. However, it is common experience that the teaching profession has been made a stepping stone to more lucrative job opportunities in Nigeria. Quality teaching has thus continued to suffer lots of setback in Nigeria and mostly in the villages where new hands are employed on yearly basis. Thus, Youth Corpers from the National Service Corps usually from the majority of teaching staff in villages where only two or three regular teachers are available to complement their effort in carrying out teaching responsibilities.

Statement of the Problem

Incompetence of teachers has further contributed to the contemporary poor perception of the teaching profession. Teaching job has become unattractive to lots of gifted and highly intelligent men and women in Nigeria. The profession attracts only people who see it as a last resort. Teaching has thus become the job of the jobless (Anikweze, 2004). Quality education especially at the primary school level is seriously at stake. The process of recruitment of staff has not made things better. Incompetent teachers who are in the profession are unable to 'handle the expanding and up to date curriculum. The process has also brought in teachers who are not knowledgeable in subject matter. They are unable to meet the; standard of education and also fall short of the expectation of the society Several competent teachers often seek more lucrative jobs and quit the teaching service. Teachers whose lack of competence on job arises from lack of qualification and skill also quit the teaching profession for more lucrative jobs rather than working towards attainment of competence in" the teachers profession. The inability of employers of teachers to retain a lot of competent ones and influence the desire of incompetence others to remain and attain competence on job

is a serious problem. Quality education that is highly essential to the success of UBE can only be based on the effort of competent teachers. According to Anikweze, (2004), quality education is predicated upon what is paid, for good soup is cooked with quality money. Factors that hinder the retention of teachers as identified by Anikweze (2004) include:

- Poor perception of the public about the teachers' status and the teaching profession;
- The low morale and poor self-esteem of teachers arising from:
 - The non-recognition of higher certificates
 - Poor facilities obtainable at the village level and
 - Poor teacher remuneration and welfare services.

Many years back and even at present, the quality of Nigeria education has greatly reduced due to the low level standard of some teachers, low and irrelevant teaching materials used by them, constant strike by teachers, uncared attitudes of the government to the teachers' welfare, among others. Recruitment of teachers are based on sentiment and favouritism. Many of those that were recruited are lazy who do not have the interest of the job in mind. According to survey made by Nwadiani 2014, 45% of teacher employed to teach especially in primary and secondary level of education do not have the prerequisite qualification hence, high rate of failure in external examinations. This and many others called for this study.

Purpose of the Study

The purposes of this study are:

1. To investigate the value attached to competence in the recruitment and retention of teachers
2. To find out whether teachers' personal characteristics of qualification and sex have any influence on their perception of competence in appointment and retention in the teaching job.

3. To examine the process, criteria and extent of transparency in appointment of teachers.

Research Questions

The following research questions were raised to guide the study:

1. What is the process of appointment of teachers?
2. What are the criteria for the appointment of teachers?
3. What is the perceived extent of transparency in appointment of teachers?

Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were proposed and tested in this study:

1. There is no significant difference in teachers' perception of the value attached to competence in recruitment of teachers based on qualification.
2. There is no significant difference in teachers' perception of the value attached to competence in retention of teachers based on gender.

Method

The research design for this study is descriptive survey. The study focused on the prevailing situations concerning the process, the criteria and extent of transparency in appointment of teachers at the primary school level. It also investigated the effectiveness of the existing incentive of the teaching service on retention of staff.

Sample and Sampling Techniques

Stratified random sampling and simple random sampling techniques were used to draw a sample of 325 out of 50,000 teachers of public primary schools in Kwara state. Six local government areas out of existing sixteen (16) were selected by simple random sampling techniques with three schools from each local government area making a total of eighteen schools selected. Schools were stratified according to their local governments. From the 16 local government areas six (6) local

government areas were selected using simple random sampling method. Selection of 3 schools from each of the six local government areas was by simple random sampling method. With exception of a school with respondents of 19, eighteen 'respondents were selected from each of the 17 other schools due to their large population, making a total of 325 teachers.

Research Instrument

A self-constructed questionnaire on Competence in Appointment and Retention of Teachers Questionnaire (CARSQ) of 20 items was used to collect data for the study. The content and construct validity of the instrument were ensured as the instrument was subjected to the scrutiny of two experts of the Department of Educational psychology and educational measurement and evaluation of Kwara State College of Education, Ilorin. The experts judged the appropriateness, comprehensiveness and clarity in the items of the questionnaire. The reliability of the instrument was established by test - retest method which gave a coefficient of .78 using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient statistic. Data were collated by the researcher in each school with the help of a research assistance and teachers themselves. The data were analyzed using percentages, One Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) and t-test statistics.

Results

Research Question One: What is the process of appointment of teachers?

Table 1: Mode of interview for teachers' recruitment

S/ N	Items	Agree		Disagree	
		N	%	N	%
	My appointment was through written interview	48	14.7	27	8.3
	My appointment was through oral interview	237	72.9	88	27.1
	My appointment was without any interview	67	20.6	258	79.4

The results from table one show that 14.7% were employed through the process of written interview while 72.9% of the respondents agreed that they were appointed through oral interview. Result also shows that 20.6% of the respondents were appointed without any interviews. The result shows that majority of the respondents were appointed through selection based on interview although for respondents who were not properly selected, nothing was used to determine the competency or quality to impart knowledge.

Research Question Two: What are the criteria for appointment of teachers?

Table 2: Criteria for appointment of teachers

S/N	Items	Agree		Disagree	
		N	%	N	%
	Appointment of teachers is usually based on:				
1.	Relevance of discipline	172	52.9	153	47.1
2.	Professionalism	235	72.3	90	27.7
3.	Candidates without teaching qualification	68	20.9	257	79.0
4.	Class of degree	186	57.2	139	42.8
5.	Competence of teacher	126	38.3	199	61.2

The results as shown in table two show that relevance of discipline, professionalism of teachers and class of degrees are considered as criteria for appointment of teachers. As shown on the table, 52.9% of the respondents agreed that relevance of discipline is used in appointing teachers, 72.3% agreed that professionalism was considered a criterion for appointment and 57.2% agreed that appointment is based on class of degree. However, 20.9% respondents agreed that they were appointed without teaching qualification while 38.8% also agreed that competence is not used as criterion for recruiting teachers.

Research Question Three: What is the extent of transparency in appointment of teacher?

S/N	Items	Agree		Disagree	
		N	%	N	%
	Recruitment of teachers favours:				
	Women who have advantage over men in getting appointment.	246	75.6	79	24.4
	People who are close to the corridor of power	273	84	52	16

Table 3 shows the extent of transparency in appointment of teachers. The table shows that people who are close to those in the corridor of power are much more favoured in recruitment of teachers than others who are not. Eighty four, 84% of the respondents subscribed to this view. Also, 75.6% Agreed that women have advantage over men in getting teaching appointment. Transparency in appointment of teachers thus seem questionable as it seems to underrate the role of competence in appointment.

Hypothesis One: There is no significant difference in teachers' perception of the value attached to competence in recruitment of teachers based on qualification.

Table 4: One way Analysis of variance (ANOVA) on teachers' qualification and competence in appointment.

Source	Sum of squares	Mena of squares	Df	F-Ratio	Tab F
Between Groups	33.27	9.18	4	.415	2.37
Within Groups	6831.72	22.36	321		
Total	6864.99		325		

Results on table 4 show that F ratio of .415 is less than the table value of 2.37, $df = 4$ at 0.05 level of significance. The hypothesis was thus accepted and the result affirmed that teachers' qualification is not a factor in their perception of competence in appointment.

Hypothesis Two: There is no significant difference in teachers' perception of the value attached to competence in retention of teachers based on gender.

Table 5: Test of difference in perception of the value attached to competence in retention of teachers based on gender.

Teachers' gender	N	\bar{X}	SD	Df	T. cal.	t. value
Male	95	29.46	5.16	323	.778	1.96
Female	230	34.52	6.52			

Results on table 5 show that the calculated t of .778 is less than the table value of 1.96, $df = 323$ at .05 level of significance. The hypothesis was thus accepted. Result shows that both male and female teachers do not differ in their perception of the value attached to competence in the retention of teachers based on gender.

Discussion

The result of this study shows that competence as a criterion in the process of appointment of teachers is low in as much as the high percentage of teachers were employed without either oral or written interview. It was also revealed in this study, that relevance of discipline, professionalism of teachers and class of degrees are considered as criteria for appointment of teachers. It is however a common thing to see teachers being employed without teaching qualification because a significant number of teachers are still being employed without teaching qualification. This finding is corroborated "by Akomolafe (2005) in which he found out that 80 percent of employed university graduates secured gainful employment outside their area of specialization. In the light of this development.

The extent of transparency in appointment of teachers today show that people who are very close to those in the corridor of power are much favoured. This makes it possible for people without teaching qualification to gain access into teaching profession. The incompetence teachers have opportunity to go into teaching because they were able to buy their ways through influential people. This is a very crucial issue that needs to be addressed in order to ensure successful implementation of the UBE scheme. The advantage of women over men in gaining employment is a reflection of the extent of transparency in appointment.

The study revealed that significant difference did not exist the value attached to competence in the recruitment of teachers on the basis of qualification. This finding further confirms the low value accorded competence in the process and criteria of appointment to teaching job. This perception of teachers is not varied with qualifications. Teachers with low or high

qualification (ranging from part time teachers, Grade II, NCE and B.A (Ed)

Have similar perception of the competence in teachers' appointment. It is obvious that incompetent teachers are limited in their ability to contribute meaningfully and successfully to the success of the UBE scheme.

The study also revealed that male and female teachers are similar in their perception of their perception of the value attached to competence in the retention of teachers based on gender. Sex is not a factor influencing the perception of competence in retention of teachers' appointment. Retention of teachers on job as shown in this study is basically a factor of incentive and not gender. Both female respondent who are higher population and their male counterparts indicated the non attractiveness of the teaching service condition and it in effectiveness in boosting the poor morale and poor self esteem of teacher. Incentive of workers is an issue of motivation. Teachers' motivation according to Ofuegbu (2004) could be referred to as those factors that operate within the school system which if not made available to the teacher could hamper performance, cause stress, discontentment and frustration all of which would subsequently reduce classroom effectiveness and student quality output. Teachers' motivation is also anything done to make teachers happy, satisfied, dedicated and committed in such a way that they bring out their best in their places of work so that both students, parents and the society will greatly benefit from their services. This study also revealed that termination of teachers appointment as a result of incompetence is not a common phenomenon. Teachers on their own quit service for more profitable jobs. This is an indication that poor incentive of teachers exists in the teaching profession and that this situation negatively effects the retention of teachers. Nwadiani (2014) complained about poor motivation of teachers and acknowledged that schools are fast decaying. The "rot" in the system ranges from shortage of all teaching and learning resources to proper motivation of teachers. Nwadiani (2014) pointed out that teachers in Nigeria were unhappy, frustrated uninspired and unmotivated. Teachers at times have to work

under the most unsafe and unhealthy conditions. The poor perception of the teachers' status and the teaching profession, the unfavourable conditions attached to remuneration and teachers welfare programmes etc. obviously make teaching unattractive. This has no doubt, translated into teacher low morale and poor self esteem which in turn translates into students poor performance in the Common Entrance Examination. There is the need to address the issue of low self esteem and low morale of teachers for successful implementation of the UBE scheme in Nigeria.

Conclusion

The study revealed that the value attached to the use of competence as a criterion in the recruitment of teachers is poor in as much as high percentage of teachers are employed without oral or written interview and that the degree of candidates' closeness to people in the corridor of power favours recruitment. The study revealed that significant difference does not exist in the value attached to competence in the recruitment of teachers on the basis of qualification. The study also revealed the inadequacy of the existing forms of incentives for retention of teachers in the teaching profession.

Recommendation

The following recommendations are offered in this study:

1. Students undergoing training should intrinsically develop interest and consciously struggle to gain mastery of the school subject matter in order to provide foundation for competence for recruitment.
2. Recruitment of more teachers into the teaching profession must undergo due process of interview.
3. Standard classrooms should be established and should be furnished with relevant furniture and teaching materials. Teachers pupils ratio should not exceed 1:40 in a class.
4. Teachers should be empowered through regular payment of salary and other allowances. This will go a long way to improve teachers' image in the society and encourage them to remain on their jobs.

5. Teachers employers should motivate them to serve in the rural areas through provision of attractive incentives and befitting accommodation.

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