

AN ASSESSMENT OF TEACHER RETENTION IN SECURITY PRONED COMMUNITIES IN NIGER STATE

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Abstract

This study is aim at finding out the retention of teachers in security prone communities in Niger State. There is no iota of doubt that the major security challenges of Nigeria national security is the containment of various manifestations of violence spearheaded by various unknown groups. The populous group in contemporary Nigeria that has stretched the resources, expertise, patience and even the competence of Nigeria's security apparatuses to the limit, both individually and collectively, is the Boko Haram sect and her sponsors, Banditry, and Cattle Rustling. Teachers are the most basic and crucial resources in any education system at any level, this is because the strength of any educational system largely depends upon the quality and quantity of her teachers. Retention is conceptualized in terms of teachers staying and teachers leaving. The main purpose of retention is to prevent competent employees from leaving the school organization as this could have adverse effects on productivity and service delivery. Teachers fill a complex set of roles, which vary from one society to another and from one educational level to another. The study adopted the descriptive survey design and was guided by three research questions. Data were collected and analyzed. One of the major conclusions revealed that insecurity is a bane to Teacher retention in Munya, Rafi, and Shiroro Local Government Areas. It was therefore recommended that the insecurity prone communities should be provided with adequate security by the Local, State and Federal Governments. In addition, the teaching/learning environment should be made child friendly through the renovation and

construction of additional classrooms. There should be adequate provision of teaching/learning materials. Motivation of teachers can be enhanced through prompt payment of salary and the reward of outstanding teachers

Key words: Assessment, Teacher Retention, Insecurity Communities.

Introduction.

There is no iota of doubt that the major security challenges of Nigeria national security is the containment of various manifestations of violence spearheaded by various unknown groups. The populous group in contemporary Nigeria that has stretched the resources, expertise, patience and even the competence of Nigeria's security apparatuses to the limit, both individually and collectively, is the Boko Haram sect and her sponsors, Banditry, and Cattle Rustling. The sheer number of deaths arising from bomb attacks orchestrated by these notorious groups far outstrips any other cause of death in Nigeria, including epidemics (Bankong-Obi, 2012). Security is an inherently contested concept, encompassing a wide variety of scenarios, and is commonly used in reference to a range of personal and societal activities and situations.

The term security is used in three broad segments. The general and everyday use of the term. In this instance, security refers to the desire for safety or protection and also the usage of the word for political purposes; relating to political processes, structures, and actions utilized to ensure a given political unit or entity is secure. The term "security" is frequently used as a political tool to assign priority to a given issue or perceived threat within the broader political realm. Finally, "security" can be employed as an analytical concept to identify, define, conceptualize, explain, or forecast societal developments such as security policy, institutions, and governance structures.

Nigeria is today plagued with social disorder such as, unemployment, banditry, cattle rustling, poverty, illiteracy, balance of payment deficit, poor health statistics, ethnic and religious conflicts, corruption, crime and criminality and political crises, Boko Haram Kidnapping, All these mean that we are very insecure in terms of human wellbeing. The problems, individually and collectively constitute threats to the peace, security and development of the country. Invariably, they have implications for the continuity and survival of the nation.

Nigeria's national policy on education in recognition of the relevance of education stated that no nation can rise beyond the quality of its educational system. Thus, education is seen as a catalyst for socioeconomic and political development of a nation. The success of many nations in tackling major security and development problems such as poverty, unemployment, insecurity, inequality among others can be traced to their educational system. They had not received an education in that area for many, many, years....Now they [Boko Haram] have chased away the teachers. Their children have no future.

Based on interviews with 215 people – including 99 teachers, 31 students, 36 parents, and 25 school administrators – this report documents Boko Haram's attacks on schools, students, and teachers in Borno, Yobe, and Kano states between 2009 and February 2016. It charts the different kinds of assaults waged by the group – including targeted killings, suicide attacks, widespread abduction, burning and looting. Some of these assaults likely amount to war crimes and crimes against humanity.

The report finds that Boko Haram's attacks on education, and the government security forces' misuse of school for military purposes, has had a devastating effect on the right to education in the northeast. It has dramatically affected hundreds of thousands of school children at all levels of education, and thousands of teachers and education administrators.

The government has failed to adequately protect schools, in the face of Boko Haram's attacks. In April 2014, the group abducted 276 schoolgirls from Government Secondary School in Chibok, Borno State. Some of the girls initially escaped, but none were rescued and 219 remain missing at time of writing. Another attack on Zanna Mobarti Primary School in Damasak, also in Borno State, in November 2014, led to the abduction of an estimated 300 young students. None of the children have so far been returned to their parents.

As a result of displacements caused by Boko Haram attacks on schools and other targets, many children have limited schooling in displacement camps or in private homes and communities where they are hosted by friends, families, and others across northern Nigeria. In such camps, schools consist of children grouped according to their age in large rooms or underneath trees for three to four hours of lessons per day, in most cases three times a week. School materials such as paper and pencils are provided in United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) supplied bags, but there are no textbooks for the children or other teaching aids for teachers.

Teacher Retention in the face of insecurity

Teachers are the most basic and crucial resources in any education system at any level, this is because the strength of any educational system largely depends upon the

quality and quantity of her teachers. No educational goal of any nation can ever be achieved without adequately trained and motivated teachers. Consequently, for teachers to give optimum productivity, their need and security is of utmost importance.

Every school, whether public or private, strives to recruit a pool of qualified and committed teaching staff that can deliver quality education to its students and in turn produce students of high quality. Therefore, it is crucial for schools to retain the talented teaching staff. When the qualified teachers for any reason have intentions of leaving the school system or teaching field, it would portend a negative impact on students and the institution's overall performance as well. Thus, it is essential to retain highly qualified teachers in the school system on continuous basis for quality education delivery. In many secondary schools in Nigeria, the working and living conditions of many teachers are very poor, especially those in the rural areas, irrespective of the fact that they are arguably the most important group of professionals in the development of the nation. Teachers at times have to work under the most unsafe and unhealthy conditions, which has negative consequences on the academic success of students and the level of motivation of the teachers themselves. Being intrinsically and extrinsically motivated increases job satisfaction (Nadim, Chaudhry, Kalyar, & Riaz, 2012). The teachers can be retained successfully only if they are satisfied with their jobs. Job satisfaction could lead to their improved performance and retention as well.

Employee retention is one of the most critical issues facing Niger state government today as a result of the wanton killings, Kidnapping, and banditry in Munya, Rafi and Shiroro Local Government Areas of the State. However, it is more important for the State Government to devise strategies with which to retain the talented employees in the service of their State even in the crises prone communities of the State in order for employees to benefit from the investment already made in them. Retention is about how government manages its workforce or more specifically its relationship with its workforce. It is also an action of holding something in position or containing it hence employee retention may be explained as a state or a condition of attracting and enabling people to work and stay with their organizations/state.

Retention is conceptualized in terms of teachers staying and teachers leaving. The main purpose of retention is to prevent competent employees from leaving the school organization as this could have adverse effects on productivity and service delivery. There are many factors that may influence teacher retention; for the purpose of this studies retention of teachers will be examined in the light of insecurity and a good working environment in afore mention communities. Thus, teachers' retention helps to avoid disruption of schooling especially when teachers leave the profession

during the academic year or whilst engaged in critical projects in school. It is evident that retention helps to ensure continuity and to avoid teachers' shortage in a given country (Borsuk, 2001; Chiboiwa, , Agbool Samuel, & Chipunza 2010).

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

- What are the dimensions of teachers' challenges in Munya, Rafi and Shiroro LGA?
- What are the chief causes of teachers' seeking transfer in Munya, Rafi and Shiroro LGA?
- What are the strategies for improving teacher' retention in Security prone communities of Munya, Rafi and Shiroro LGA?

Relevance of Teachers to the Community

Teachers fill a complex set of roles, which vary from one society to another and from one educational level to another. Some of these roles are performed in the school and some in the **community**. Teachers are the future builders of our country; they are the providers of knowledge and wisdom. They are the basic source of education for most of the people of the country and they are the ones who build the nation. The teachers can very easily decide what they want the nation to look like and educate the masses accordingly. They have the ability and the strength to fight the odds and make Nigeria a powerful and a well-educated country. Citizens are molded by teachers. Chanakya (2009) stated, "Teacher is the maker of nation" So for the development of the country, the teacher can be rightly called a nation builder. Teachers through their perseverance love and sacrifices have shown us the right path in which great men have built our nation. It is our dear teachers who mould our character, our personality and show us the right direction which leads us to our Final destination.

Teachers are the real agents that help in the development of various skills and competencies. It should be noted that the more good teachers the nation has, the more the solid more development of the country. No other personality can have an influence more profound than that of a teacher. Students are deeply affected by the teacher's love and affection, his character, his competence, and his moral commitment. A popular teacher becomes a model for his students. The students try to follow their teacher in his manners, customs, etiquette, style of conversation and his get up. He is their ideal. He can lead them anywhere. During their early education, the students tend to determine their aims in life and their future plans, in consultation with their teachers.

Knowingly or unknowingly, teachers prepare the kids for unknown environment which they might have to face in their lives. Literacy and wisdom – The teachers not only make the child literate so that he/she can earn enough to have a normal lifestyle; they also provide words of wisdom every day which shape the personality of the child. Many children are influenced by their teachers more than the parents. A teacher is mostly selfless and believes in dissipating whatever information he/she can to make the kid wiser than yesterday. A friend, philosopher and guide – Today we can see that teachers have moved on from the basic image of a strict teacher, they have become much more for their students. They provide a friendly shoulder to cry on when the kid is in a problem, they tell about the philosophies of life so that the child could take lessons and apply to his/her own life and they guide the child to follow the right path. The teachers have the courage to push the kid to do what they want to, even if it has never been done before. Well-wishers – No other job makes a person worried if a child's parent is divorced, a drunk or a wife abuser. Teachers are the ones who have full knowledge of the child's life, the environment back home, his mindset and his capabilities. They always try and strike a balance between all of these things and make sure that the kid's future doesn't get affected in a bad way.

Teacher education and teachers are the major instrument for achieving educational goals and national development hence no nation can rise above the standard of its educational system. This write up observed that teachers are not provided with adequate security, they are molested, sometimes harassed, intimidated and humiliated by the insecurity challenges facing the country and Local Governments Areas under study and most a times left at the mercy of seeking transfer to other more secure communities. Notwithstanding, teachers contribute to the development of the nation in areas of, supply of manpower to the various sectors of national economy, they ensure good discipline and high moral plane of pupils who are future leaders of tomorrow. The teacher is the real agent that helps in the development of various skills and competencies thereby enhancing self-employment and self-efficiency.

The Impact of insecurity on education

In 2015, UNICEF estimated that 37% of the Internally Displaced People (IDP) in Borno, Adamawa and Yobe States were between 6 and 17 years of age (UNICEF 2015). The Education in Emergencies Working Group Nigeria (EIEWGN) estimates that more than 800,000 school-aged children were displaced in late 2015 with more than 650,000 of these in two neighbouring Local Government Areas (LGAs) in Borno – Maiduguri and Jere (EIEWGN 2015). It is likely that the conflict has significantly increased the number of out-of-school children (OOSC) this has also dispersed the Teachers as well.

Boko Haram has targeted government facilities, especially public schools for attack. Human Rights Watch reported that over 910 schools had been destroyed with 1,500 schools forced to close in North East Nigeria since the Boko Haram incursion of 2009-2015 (HRW 2016). Over a period of just two weeks in February 2012, Boko Haram burned down at least twelve schools around Maiduguri, the Borno State capital (HRW 2012). By 2013, well-planned and coordinated attacks became more brazen during daylight with increased brutality and a greater focus on the education system.

In May 2013, anonymous government officials reported that Boko Haram had burned or destroyed 50 schools and an additional 15,000 school children in Borno State had stopped attending school due to continuous waves of Boko Haram attacks on teachers and school children (IRIN 2013). This violence led the Borno State Government to close all public schools in 22 out of 27 LGAs for at least two years, and Public Secondary Schools across the State for even longer (HRW 2016). The blanket closure has since been lifted. In March 2016, Borno State authorities reported that 512 Primary Schools, 38 Secondary Schools and 2 Tertiary Institutions had been totally or partially destroyed in the State since 2010 (Daily Trust 2016).⁷ Past government statements indicate that an estimated 49,000 children have been orphaned in Borno alone due to the armed conflict (Leadership 2016).

An infamous attack in 2014 was the abduction of 275 girls from a boarding school in Chibok, Borno (CNN 2014). By March 2015, a regional military force from Nigeria, Cameroon, Chad and Niger pushed Boko Haram into the Sambisa forest yielding most of the towns under its control and freeing hundreds of captives. By April 2016, approximately 11,000 abductees were released from Boko Haram captivity. Released abductees, especially girls, have often experienced sexual, physical and psychological violence, which present challenges to their reintegration into the education system.

In 2015, the President of the National Union of Teachers (NUT) issued a statement that 611 teachers have been killed over half of which were in Borno State, (Borno NUT records suggests 526 killed) and that 19,000 teachers had been displaced across the north since 2009 (Daily Trust 2015).

Methodology

The study employed descriptive survey to collect data from respondents in the three (3) LGAs with a population of 827,166. Using Salant and Dilman (1994) at 5% sampling error and 50/50 option, a sample size of 120 was drawn from the three insurgency prone Local Government Areas namely Munya, Rafi and Shiroro in Niger State. The instrument was a likert structured format which makes responses quicker and retrieval instant. So the whole of 120 questionnaires were returned and used in the data analysis.

The Data**Table 1: Dimensions of Teachers Challenges in Munya, Rafi & Shiroro LGAs in Niger State.**

Dimensions of Teachers Challenges	SA	SD	CummulativeTotal
Parents cooperate with Teachers posted to their Communities	111(92%)	9(8%)	120 (100%).
Insecurity Challenges	113(94.2%)	7(5.8%)	120(100%)
Unfriendly Learning Environment	91(75.8%)	29(24.2%)	120 (100%)
Lack of Motivation	87(72.5%)	33(27.5%)	120(100%)
Cummulative Total	402(83.6%)	78(16.4%)	480(100%)

Source: questionnaire data, 2020.

Item 1 above revealed the dimensions of teacher's challenges. The data show that parents cooperate effectively with the teachers posted to their various communities. The table also shows that the respondents agreed to the entire item to the tune of 92%. While the respondents that disagreed with the item are only 8%.

Item 2 on the insecurity Challenges in study area revealed that insecurity relating to banditry, kidnapping, cattle rustling and flooding are highly prevalent in the communities. The table shows that the respondents agreed to the item with 94.2%. While those respondents that strongly disagreed to the presence of insecurity in those communities has recorded 5.8%.

Item 3 examines the nature of the learning environment; the data shows that the respondents agreed that learning is unfriendly which could be attributed to those factors relating to insecurity as well dilapidated class rooms, lack of adequate furniture in the schools, inadequate learning materials, inadequate teachers in schools, etc. This recorded 75.8%. While the respondents that disagreed were 24.5%.

Item 4 establish whether teachers are motivated or not. The table shows Lack of motivation on part of the teachers as represented by 72.5%. While the respondents

that disagreed were represented by 27.5%.

Table 2: Causes of Teachers Seeking for Transfer in Munya, Rafi & Shiroro LGAs in Niger State.

Teachers seeking Transfer	SA	SD	CummulativeTotal
Insecurity related factors	115(95.8%)	5(4.2%)	120(100%)
Poor enrolment	87(72.5%)	33(27.5%)	120(100%)
Political Influences	102(85%)	18(15%)	120(100%)
Lack of accommodation	85(70.8%)	35(29.2%)	120(100%)
Cummulative Total	389(80.5%)	91(19.4%)	480(100%)

Source: questionnaire data, 2020.

Item1 above revealed the causes of teachers seeking for transfer. The data shows that teachers residing in these communities seek for transfer to other places; due to the challenges of banditry, kidnapping, cattle rustling and flooding etc. The table shows that the respondents agreed to the item 1 to the tune of 95.8%. This also shows that the challenges of insecurity are highly prevalent in these communities which affect the life and properties of the entire communities. While those respondents that strongly disagreed with the item were only 4.2%.

Item 2 examines the poor enrolment of students which makes teachers to seek for transfer. The data shows that the respondents agreed that 72.5% of teachers would seek for transfer because the schools in most of these rural communities experience highly low enrolment of students which discourages the teachers to stay believing that their services could be needed elsewhere. While those respondents that strongly disagreed with the item were 27.5%.

Item 3 reveals how Political influence or interference affects the issue of transferring teachers to where they like without due consideration to areas that need these teachers. In most cases teachers that have connection due to political influence are usually posted out of the rural areas to urban Centre living the remote rural areas with one or two teachers who cannot effectively discharge their duties effectively. In some cases you end up having only the principal with number of classes to chatter

for. The data show that respondents that agreed to the item were 85% .This shows that political influence seriously affects the issue of transfer. While those respondents that strongly disagreed with the item were only 15%.

Item 4 in table 2 above revealed that lack of accommodation in the communities always posed a serious problem to the teachers posted to these communities. The issue of lack of accommodation, couple with the insecurity challenges put teachers posted to these communities at risk and a very difficult situation. The data show that respondents that agreed to the item were 70.8%. While the respondents that disagreed were only 29.2%.

Table 3: Strategies for Improving Teachers Retention in Munya, Rafi & Shiroro LGAs in Niger State.

Strategies for Improving Teachers Retention	SA	SD	CummulativeTotal
Teachers Salary Scheme(TSS)be implemented	118(98.3%)	2(1.7%)	120(100%)
Equal distribution of workload	113(94.1%)	7(5.9%)	120(100%)
Professional Development Opportunities	118(98.3%)	2(1.7%)	120(100%)
Timely payment of Salary/Allowances	110(91.7%)	10(8.3%)	120(100%)
Teachers to participate in key decisions that affect them	72(60%)	48(40%)	120(100%)
Cummulative Total	531(88.48%)	69(11.52%)	600(100%)

Source: questionnaire data, 2020.

Item 1 in table 3 above shows the strategies for improving teachers' retention in the communities they have been posted. The implementation of Teachers Salary Scheme (TSS) should be fully implemented. The data show that respondents that agreed to the item were 98.3. This shows that TSS when fully implemented to teachers it will go a long way in encouraging and motivating the teachers to stay in the communities they have been posted and as well discharge their duties diligently. While the respondents that disagreed were only 1.7%.

Item2 in table 3 examines the issue of equal distribution of work; the data

shows that respondents agreed to the item with 94.1% .This result revealed that there should be equal distribution of work load among the teachers in the schools. While the respondents that disagreed were only 5.9%.

Item 3 in table 3 reveals the impact of professional development opportunities, the data shows that respondents agreed to the item with 98.3%. This shows that teachers need to be given professional development opportunities to enable them update themselves regularly, so as to enable them become conversant with the developments in the new modern technology and strategies. When given the opportunity they will be able to produce students who will be ready to face the challenges of life academically. While the respondents that strongly disagreed were only 1.7%.

Item 4 in table 3 revealed the issue of timely payment of salary/allowances. The data shows that respondents agreed to the item with 91.7%. The timely payment of salary/allowance will enable the teachers to discharge his/her duties effectively; this is because teachers rely solely on their hard earned salary to take care of their home, they don't have kick back or contracts or anything to fall on. While the respondents that strongly disagreed were 8.3%.

Item 5 in table 3 is on teachers participating in key decision making that affect them. The data show that respondents agreed to the item with 60%. This shows that their participation in the decision that affect them will enable them to air some of the views as it affects them in their various communities, there by finding proper solution that will enable them move forward. While the respondents that disagreed are with 40%.

Conclusion

The following conclusions have been drawn from analyses above as issues and factors bedeviling teacher retention in insecurity prone communities in Niger State, Nigeria.

- The findings shows that teachers in the three LGAs studied have series of challenges namely; insecurity, unfriendly teaching/learning environment and lack of motivation among others; confronting the teachers protection in general.
- The findings reveals that teachers in the three LGAs studied are seeking for transfer out of the communities because of insecurity related factors; poor enrolment of students; political influences and lack of accommodation among others.
- The findings established that teachers in the three LGAs studied can be retained through the following strategies in security prone communities. Firstly, Teachers' Salary Scheme (TSS) be implemented fully and Teachers

salary/allowances should be paid timely. Secondly, there should be equal distribution of workload among teachers. Thirdly, professional development opportunities for teachers. Lastly, teachers should be allowed to participate in all the key decisions that affect them.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were advanced toward addressing teacher retention in

insecurity prone communities in Niger State.

- Teachers in the security prone communities should be provided with adequate security by the Local, State and Federal Governments. In addition, the teaching/learning environment should be made child friendly through the renovation and construction of additional classrooms. There should be adequate provision of teaching/learning materials. Motivation of teachers can be enhanced through prompt payment of salary and the reward of outstanding teachers. This can be achieved through Niger State Universal Basis Education Board NSUBEB, Local Government Education Authorities [LEAs], School Based Management Committees (SBMC) and Parents Teachers Association (PTA) of each school.
- Teachers seeking for transfer in the LGAs should be provided with adequate security by LGAs Chairmen through the vigilante in the communities, traditional title holders in the communities and the SBMC. The issue of poor enrolment can be tackled through massive enrolment drive to be spearheaded by the traditional/religious leader, SBMC, PTA, Mothers association and the teachers. They can embark on house to house enrolment drive. While the issue of political interference can be tackled by the stakeholders in the communities to decongest the rural –urban schools that are highly populated by their wives and relatives and send them to rural areas where their services will be much needed if actually we want to achieve the desire objectives. The LGA Chairmen and traditional leader should endeavor to provide affordable accommodation to teachers posted to their communities if they really want their services.
- Teachers in these communities can be retained through the implementation of Teacher salary scheme (TSS) and allowances as it was mentioned by President of Nigeria Mohammed Buhari during Nigeria's 60 Independent speech to the Nation, this will greatly motivate teachers. In addition, teacher's salary/allowances should be paid timely. There should be provision for professional development opportunities for all teachers to update themselves with the current trends in the profession. Lastly, teachers should

be allowed to participate in the key decisions that affect them.

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