



Non-Financial Rewards as Predictor of Teachers’ Retention in Private Secondary Schools in Rivers State

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ABSTRACT

The study investigated non-financial rewards as predictor of teachers’ retention in private secondary schools in Rivers State. Design of the study was descriptive survey research design. Population of the study was the 14,256 private secondary school teachers in Rivers State while the sample was 389 teachers who were sampled for the study using stratified random sampling technique. Taro Yamane sample size determination technique was used to determining the sample size for the study. Two questionnaires were used for data collection for the study namely; “Non-Financial Reward Questionnaire” (NFRQ) as well as the “Teacher’s Retention Questionnaire” (TRQ) for data collection on the independent and dependent variables of the study respectively. The questionnaires were validated by two experts in the Department of Educational Management, University of Port Harcourt. Cronbach alpha was used to determining the reliability of the questionnaire and coefficients derived were 0.75 and 0.79 for the independent variable of the study and 0.81 for the dependent variable. 386 copies of the questionnaire were retrieved out of the 389 copies administered in the study. The research questions raised were answered using Pearson product moment correlation statistic while the hypotheses were tested using z-ratio at 0.05 level of significance. The findings of the study showed a high positive relationship of $r=0.82$ between recognition and teachers retention and a low positive relationship of $r= 0.23$ between reduced working hours and teachers retention. It was recommended that private schools should set a day aside for teachers’ recognition for their outstanding contributions towards the success of the school.

Keywords: Non-Financial Reward, Teachers, Retention, Private, Rivers State

INTRODUCTION

The teaching force in any school system is an important education resource which plays a vital role in the attainment of quality educational goals and objectives. This is why most school administrators make conscious effort to keep the right quality and quantity of teaching staff as their presence contribute immensely to success of the goals and objectives of the school. However, retaining the right teaching staff in any school system is a task that must be given adequate attention by any school administrator. Schaffhauser (2014) pointed out that teacher retention focuses on the ability of a school administrator to keep the teachers who have been employed in the school for a long period of time for educational goal attainment.

School administrators have a lot of tools at their disposal for retaining the right teaching force. One of the ways of achieving this objective is by managing the reward package under the control of the school administrator whether financial or non-financial. However, in the face of financial inadequacies for the administration of the school, school administrators are gradually shifting attention to how non-financial rewards can be used to bring in and retain the right quality of teaching force for the success of the school. Non-financial rewards refer to any form of non-monetary reward which can be given to teachers to encourage them to put in their best effort in the place of work. The reduction in the impact of monetary reward has driven school administrator’s attention to the provision of non-financial rewards to teachers. This is because some teachers in the school system need something more than money to keep them in their place of work and also to improve performance.

The teaching profession is one that is characterized by different activities that teachers are expected to carry out. As a teacher especially in a private school, teachers are expected to write lesson notes, and

prepare other statutory and non-statutory records. In addition to this, the teacher is saddled with other co-curricular activities that sometimes make the teachers work cumbersome. Every teacher therefore looks for opportunity to be appreciated for putting in their best in all of these activities and this can come in the form of recognizing the effort of the teacher.

Teachers can be recognized by applauding their effort and presenting such teacher to others as a staff that is worthy of emulation. In addition, the teacher can be recognized by making his or her job autonomous for a period of time for showing excellence in the place of service. Autonomy plays an important role in employee motivation (Gagne & Deci, 2005). When teachers are free to determine their work schedule, it does not only give them a sense of belonging, it also helps the teacher to plan towards achieving excellence in the school. Christopher (2014) stated that teachers want freedom to do their own duties without any interference. He further pointed out that job autonomy contributes to job satisfaction. When a teacher enjoys freedom in their place of work, it gives them that sense of satisfaction such that they can be able to attend to other pressing unofficial demands.

Teachers who show excellence at work and are recognized for such feat have better opportunity than others to be recognized in the future. This is because such teacher will use the autonomous privileges given to improve on their job. This will put them in a better position to be recognized again in the future.

Naqvi, Kanwal, Ishtiaq and Ali (2013) stated that autonomy is “a kind of freedom and the quality or state of being independent, free, and self-directing” (p. 69). One of the most important things that every worker wants in the work environment is the ability to determine when to work, how to work and who they are working for. This on its own comes with some level of satisfaction. Job autonomy is a necessity for workers who are experts in their area of work. The autonomy they enjoy helps them introduce diversity in the place of work. Morgeson, Delaney-Klinger and Hemingway (2005) pointed out that autonomy in the place of works shows the level of liberty, self-determination, and carefulness to routine work, take decisions, and choose the techniques used to do their tasks.

Job autonomy refers to the degree or level of freedom and discretion which an employee enjoys on the job. It is the ability and privilege an employee enjoys determining his or her work pattern. Educational scholars have pointed out that job autonomy does not imply that a teacher is isolated at work; it only refers to the freedom given to the teacher for professional action.

Autonomy is important to teachers as it serves as a tool for teachers to act in the school in line with their abilities (Tadic, 2015). This makes the teacher to be more productive and result-oriented. Similarly, the teachers interact with different educational stakeholders and the teacher needs to be autonomous so as to deal with situations as they arise and deserve. Al-Siyabi (2016) supported this idea when he pointed out that there is no school that can achieve innovations and without giving the teachers job autonomy.

The dire need for autonomy by teachers has made some of them to leave the teaching profession to other jobs where they enjoy some level of freedom. Every employee wants to display their innate ability which can be exercised within their environment. Scholars in education have revealed that a teacher can exhibit autonomy in various ways. For example, a teacher may act autonomously based on moral justification and in other cases, a teacher may act independently based on the provisions of his or her occupation. Teachers can be rewarded in this way when they are given the power to act independently and this promotes teacher retention.

Employees who have done well for the success of the school can also be rewarded by relaxing their working hours. Reduced work hours do not only provide ample time for the teacher to engage in other activities but also provides an opportunity for the teacher to keep fit for other activities. Teachers who have shown excellence in the place of work can be given few hours or days off work just as it is practiced in other formal organizations. This will help to keep the teacher fit and maintain their health for further service.

The school environment is one that is characterized with different learning resources. While physical resources in the school are subjected to depreciation as a result of wear and tear, the human resources are also subjected to some level of depreciation. When teachers teach, they suffer different levels of physical and emotional threats and this sometimes result to health challenges. Teachers who have put in their best in the school should therefore be provided with some hours or days off work. Similarly, it is important that such school should provide free health care scheme for teachers as a form of reward for service delivery. This can be consulted when the teacher is off work. Teachers who suffer from

depression and other diseases expect to be provided with an opportunity to go for medical check-ups as reward for putting in their best at work. Health care is very important for the survival of any single individual in the school (Ogbe, 2012; Oseji & Okolo, 2010; Baba, Shehu & Oniyangi, 2010; Ogwu & Ayabiogbe, 2010; Ademijiu & Ayanlaja, 2006). When the health of any teacher deteriorates, he or she will not be able to perform at their optimum. This is why the provision of good health care freely for teachers is an indispensable necessity.

The actualization of the goals and objectives of the education sector can become elusive when teachers do not enjoy good health. This is why reduced work hours as a reward is very effective. Good health care is important for meeting the education goals of any nation (Abodunrin, Adeoye, Adeomi, Osundina & Ilor, 2014). This is because the teachers are central for the achievement of the goals and objectives of education in any nation. It is therefore important that school administrators should reward teachers by providing them with opportunities to acquire quality health care. The school administrator should take up the responsibility of attending to the health need of their teachers. This is very important if the teacher must remain in the school. There is no teacher who will be willing to remain in their place of work when their health needs are not given adequate attention.

The provision of free health care service or scheme to teachers is an important tool for keeping the best teaching force in any school. Ruy, Park and Yoon (2003) pointed out that teachers who get medical care freely would always demand for lesser days of sick leave than the others. Teachers only absent themselves from work or leave the school when their health needs are not given proper attention. Scheuch, Haufe and Seibt (2015) stated that “the teaching profession includes the following stress factors: Physical, including noise and indoor climate factors; Chemical, e.g. hazardous substances in specialized teaching and building materials and Ergonomic, such as computer workstations (p. 348). There is no teacher that is ready to undergo all of this work stress and remain in the school without being rewarded with a good health plan.

The Federal Ministries of Health and Education as cited in Kuponiyi, Amoran and Kuponiyi (2016) revealed that “only 14 % of head teachers indicated that pre-enrolment medical examination was mandatory in their schools” (p. 2). This explains the poor health condition in most schools. Stansfield, Head, Singleton and Lee (2003) pointed out that teachers are exposed to different health challenges as a result of their profession among which are exhaustion and fatigue, headaches, tension, listlessness, sleep and concentration disorders, inner restlessness, and increased irritability. School administrators are therefore expected to provide appropriate health care to attend to this health challenges. However, it is surprising to note that most private schools do not make provision for this.

There is need for private schools to collaborate with health care service providers to attend to the health needs of the teachers. The provision of free medical treatment is an essential reward to teachers who have put in their best into the school activities. Toma, Oyebode, Toma and Agaba (2014) pointed out that health programme of any school should “include health appraisals, treatment of common ailments, including the provision of emergency care, supervision of the health of children (normal and handicapped) and personnel, control of communicable diseases, record keeping, and the school nutrition programme. School health Service is therefore an essential component of the School health Programme” (p. 83). Providing health care as a reward is therefore an essential part of the school system. The Federal Ministry of Education as cited in Kuponiyi, Amoran and Kuponiyi (2016) stated that “school health services are both preventive and curative services” (p. 2). Teachers should be given quality health service as a reward to both prevent them from falling ill in their place of work and also to restore their health when they are sick.

School administrators need to develop the health programme they develop for their teachers. “It should include pre-entry medical screening, routine health screening/examination, school health records, sick bay, first aid and referral services” (Kuponiyi, Amoran & Kuponiyi, 2016, p.2). Free health care is therefore an indispensable tool that can encourage teachers to remain in the school.

Aim and Objectives of the Study

The aim of the study was to investigate non-financial rewards as predictor of teachers’ retention in private secondary schools in Rivers State. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. examine the relationship between staff recognition and teacher retention in private secondary schools in Rivers State
2. find out the relationship between reduced working hours and teacher retention in private secondary schools in Rivers State

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What is the relationship between staff recognition and teacher retention in private secondary schools in Rivers State?
2. What is the relationship between reduced working hours and teacher retention in private secondary schools in Rivers State?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance:

1. There is no significant relationship between staff recognition and teacher retention in private secondary schools in Rivers State
2. There is no significant relationship between reduced working hours and teacher retention in private secondary schools in Rivers State

METHODOLOGY

Design of the study was descriptive survey research design. Population of the study was the 14,256 private secondary school teachers in Rivers State while the sample was 389 teachers who were sampled for the study using stratified random sampling technique. Taro Yamane sample size determination technique was used to determining the sample size for the study. Two questionnaires were used for data collection for the study namely; “Non-Financial Reward Questionnaire” (NFRQ) as well as the “Teacher’s Retention Questionnaire” (TRQ) for data collection on the independent and dependent variables of the study respectively. The questionnaires were validated by two experts in the Department of Educational Management, University of Port Harcourt. Cronbach alpha was used to determine the reliability of the questionnaire and coefficients derived were 0.75 and 0.79 for the independent variable of the study and 0.81 for the dependent variable. 386 copies of the questionnaire were retrieved out of the 389 copies administered in the study. The research questions raised were answered using Pearson product moment correlation statistic while the hypotheses were tested using z-ratio at 0.05 level of significance.

RESULTS

Research Question One: *What is the relationship between staff recognition and teacher retention in private secondary schools in Rivers State?*

Table 1: Pearson product moment correlation of the relationship between staff recognition and teacher retention in private secondary schools in Rivers State

Variable	n	r	r ²	Remark
Staff Recognition	368	0.82	67.2	Very high positive relationship
Teacher’s Retention				

Table 1 revealed that the value of the Pearson product moment correlation, r which was estimated was 0.82. This implies that there was a very high positive relationship between staff recognition and teacher retention in private secondary schools in Rivers State. It was further revealed from the table that recognition predicted teacher retention at the rate of 67.2% in private secondary schools in Rivers State.

Research Question Two: *What is the relationship between reduced working hours and teacher retention in private secondary schools in Rivers State?*

Table 2: Pearson product moment correlation of the relationship between reduced working hours and teacher retention in private secondary schools in Rivers State

Variable	n	r	r ²	Remark
Reduced Working Hours	368	0.23	5.3	Very low positive relationship
Teacher’s retention				

Table 2 showed that the value of the Pearson product moment correlation, r which was estimated was 0.23. This indicated that there was a very low positive relationship between reduced working hours and teacher retention in private secondary schools in Rivers State. It was further revealed from the table that reduced working hours predicted teacher retention at the rate of 5.3% in private secondary schools in Rivers State.

Hypothesis One: There is no significant relationship between staff recognition and teacher retention in private secondary schools in Rivers State

Table 3: z-ratio of the relationship between staff recognition and teacher retention in private secondary schools in Rivers State

Variable	n	df	z-ratio	z-crit.	Level of significance	Decision
Staff Recognition Teacher's Retention	368	366	16.40	0.10	0.05	H ₀ was rejected

The result of table 3 showed that the estimated value of the z-ratio was 16.40 while the value of z-critical was 0.10. The value of z-ratio was more than the value of z-critical and as such the null hypothesis was rejected. This result implied that there was a significant relationship between staff recognition and teacher retention in private secondary schools in Rivers State

Hypothesis Two: There is no significant relationship between reduced working hours and teacher retention in private secondary schools in Rivers State

Table 4: z-ratio of the relationship between reduced working hours and teacher retention in private secondary schools in Rivers State

Variable	n	df	z-ratio	z-crit.	Level of significance	Decision
Reduced Working Hours Teacher's Retention	368	366	4.60	0.10	0.05	H ₀ was rejected

Table 4 showed that the value of z-ratio was 4.60 while the value of z-critical was 0.10. Since the value of z-ratio was more than the value of z-critical of 0.10, the null hypotheses was rejected and the alternative hypothesis upheld indicating that there was a significant relationship between reduced working hours and teacher retention in private secondary schools in Rivers State

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Relationship between Staff Recognition and teacher retention in Private Secondary Schools in Rivers State

Recognition has been used in many formal organizations as a way of rewarding staff for contributing to the goals and objectives of the organization. According to the findings of the study carried out by Masaiti and Naluyele (2011), recognition was the highest form of non-financial reward that can ever be given to a teacher and this improves their level of commitment at work. This is sometimes done at the end of the year or academic session. In some cases, the best performing staff is given an award of excellence as a way of rewarding the staff for his or her diligence. In some other cases, the staff may be praised as a way of showing appreciation for the contribution made to the school. There are teachers who are rewarded in the same way as a way of appreciating their service to the school. Recognition puts the teacher at the fore front of the activities of the school as it showcases the teacher as a symbol of excellence among other teaching staff. When teachers are adequately recognized, Bari, Arif and Shoaib (2013) pointed out from the findings of their study that it will help to enhance their work place behavior which also includes increasing their level of commitment to the school.

The outcome of the study revealed that a strong positive relationship exists between staff recognition and teacher retention in private secondary schools in Rivers State. Tehseen and Hadi (2015) pointed out from their study that staff recognition is a type of intrinsic motivation for teachers and has a high influence on their willingness to stay in a job. There are teachers who invest their time and talent in the school in preparation for the day they will be recognized by the school. These teachers put in their best to ensure that they are appreciated by the school. This keeps the teacher in the school for a long period of time. Furthermore, when this teacher earns this desired reward, it gives him or her more reason to remain in the school. This is because at such point the teacher feels they are part of the school and must maintain the quality of service developed in the school. This is why some school administrators use staff recognition as a way of keeping their best staff. When these teachers are recognized, they sometimes stay in the school to relish the accolade that has been given to them.

The respondents of the study revealed that there are different ways teachers can be recognized that will compel them to remain on their job. While some teachers are given a simple thank you, others revealed that they should be given the opportunity to model others as such recognition gives them reason to remain on their job. There are other teachers that are awarded and this helps to instill a sense of belonging in the teacher and this form of recognition helps to promote reasons in the mind of the teacher to remain on their job.

Relationship between Reduced Working Hours and teacher retention in Private Secondary Schools in Rivers State

The school like every other formal organization has its work hours. Teachers are expected to resume in the morning and close at an agreed time. Shaharruddina and Ahmad (2015) pointed out in their study that providing flexible working hours for employee increases job autonomy and this in turn promotes workplace commitment and performance. However, there are situations where teachers who have contributed excellently to the goals and objectives of the school are given some hours or days off work as a way of rewarding them for their diligence. In some of the private schools, a teacher can be given some hours of days off work whenever they are engaged with activities outside what they are employed to do for the school. They are therefore rewarded with hours or days off work. In some other cases, teachers in private school who contribute effectively to the administration of the school can be rewarded by giving them a relaxed working condition such that they can resume and close work at more convenient hours of the day. This form of reward provides opportunity for the teacher to perform other personal functions and sometimes this encourages the teacher to remain on the job especially when they know they cannot get such privileges elsewhere.

The findings of the study showed that there exists a very low positive relationship between relaxed working hours and teacher retention in private secondary schools in Rivers State. Marston (2014) pointed out from the findings of his study that reduced working hours does not exist in poor schools and this makes it difficult for teachers to work in such schools and this may explain why a low relationship exist between this type of non-financial reward system and Teacher Retention. This implies that teachers do not attach so much importance to relaxed working hours as a way of rewarding their commitment to the school. There are situations where teachers benefit monetarily from the school based on the number of hours spent in the school. In order cases, some teachers benefit directly or indirectly from the school by being at their place of work. However, when such teachers are given reward in the form of relaxed working hours, it may affect other benefits they get from the school. This may explain why a very low positive relationship exists between reduced working hours and teachers' retention in private secondary schools in Rivers State.

Reduced working hours as a form of non-financial reward has little relationship with teacher's retention in private secondary schools. However, the study carried out by Nyaga (2015) showed that providing reduced working hours for teachers increases their level of authority in the workplace and this increases the prospects of remaining on the job. Similarly, if these working hours are converted into economic use within or outside the school premises, it may be more meaningful to the teacher than just given out these free work hours for frivolities. It is therefore important that school administrators who wish to reward teachers by given them reduced working hours must ensure that this reward system will be of benefit for the teacher when it is administered.

CONCLUSION

The following conclusion was made based on the outcome of the study:

The study concluded that non-financial rewards significantly predict teachers' retention in private secondary schools in Rivers State.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations were made based on the findings of the study:

1. Private secondary school administrators should set aside a day within each term or academic session where they can recognize teachers who have made outstanding contributions towards the success of the goals and objectives of the school.
2. Teachers in private schools should rather be given some days off work as a reward package rather than reduced working hours. This will help the teacher to attend to other pressing

family or career needs and also increase their prospect of remaining in the school for quality service delivery.

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