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TEACHERS' WELFARE AS A VERITABLE TOOL FOR EFFECTIVENESS AMONG PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN LAGOS STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

This paper explored the pivotal role of teachers' welfare in enhancing the effectiveness of public secondary schools in Lagos State, Nigeria. Recognising the integral connection between educators' well-being and the overall quality of education, the paper delves into the current state of teachers' welfare in the context of Lagos State, Nigeria. Through a comprehensive review of existing literature, the study investigates the impact of inadequate welfare provisions on teacher motivation, job satisfaction, and retention rates. The paper contends that prioritising teachers' welfare is essential for fostering a conducive learning environment and improving educational outcomes. Drawing on empirical evidence and case studies, the position paper highlights the various challenges faced by educators in Lagos State, ranging from insufficient remuneration to inadequate professional development opportunities. The findings presented in this position paper contribute to the ongoing discourse on educational reform in Nigeria, emphasizing the imperative of investing in teachers to ensure a vibrant and effective public secondary school system. As the foundation of educational excellence, the welfare of teachers emerges as a critical determinant in the quest for enhanced educational outcomes and the overall development of Lagos State. The study recommended among other things that the ministry of education and other education agencies of government such as the education districts should formulate policies that will set a standard and guide for teachers' welfare packages.

Keywords: Teachers' welfare, school effectiveness, Secondary schools

Introduction

Globally, teachers' welfare has become an important milestone in human resource management in educational institutions. Schools are supposed to focus their attention on teachers' improved performance in order to highlight their quality and relevance. Though many factors influencing students' academic performance exist, the focus of this study specifically is on the impact of teachers' welfare. The provision of adequate welfare to teachers is vital in determining the attainment of educational goals because of its positive impact on staff motivation. In order for principals and head teachers to enhance the performance of teachers therefore, it is critical to provide a research study to highlight how welfare issues could better be handled within the school system as catalysts of performance.

Teachers have been playing crucial roles in promoting the development of society (Nkata, 2016). In Nigeria, it is believed that teachers are seen as creating sustainable learning environments (Onwu & Chika, 2015), and as advocates of social justice and citizenship (Francis & le Roux, 2011). In schools, the teacher is solely responsible for training the child to become a good and 'active' world citizen. Teachers determine the quality of a country's

education system, especially the extent to which the products of education meet the requirements of societal development (Linda, 2018).

Oluwadamilare (2012) stated that a teacher's motivation is important because it leads to self-satisfaction and accomplishments and is associated with decreased absenteeism and turnover. Ololube (2004) in Oluwadamilare (2012) pointed out that increased motivation of teachers leads to increased teachers' effectiveness that boosts the educational system. In spite of the fact that teachers play very significant roles in the educational system, they are neglected in terms of support and provision of welfare packages such as prompt payment of salary, in-service trainings, timely promotion and provision of other incentives). Ofoegbu (2015) in Ilunor (2010) opined that teachers' welfare need to be seen as a viable motivational factor for the survival of the teaching profession in particular and the education system in general.

Welfare packages such as free education for teachers' children, car loans, health, and affordable housing would, if properly implemented, serve as catalysts that would optimize teachers' classroom effectiveness. Ejiogu (2016) noted that poor remuneration and social conditions accorded to the teaching profession have led to the popular adage that "teachers' rewards are in heaven". Ofoegbu (2015) reported that problems caused by delays, inconsistencies and errors in paying teachers' salaries and other remuneration has seriously undermined teachers' classroom activities in terms of pupils' evaluation and management.

Rousseau (2012) observed that lack of satisfaction within the educational profession is bad news for pupils or students. There is a growing body of evidences that when teachers feel good about their work, student achievement improves. Porter et al. (1973) in Oluwadamilare (2012) indicated that teacher's motivation is a vital factor that leads to self-satisfaction and accomplishments which then decrease absenteeism of teachers and turnover. In recent years, poor remuneration of teachers in Nigeria has turned the teaching profession that used to be the envy of all into a profession of mockery which youths are now skeptical of going into and secondary school students no longer aspire to take education as a course,

Amadi (1983) observed that irregular payment of salaries is one of the major problems facing the teaching profession in Nigeria. Practicing teachers are particularly concerned about the late payment of salaries and the non-payment of fringe benefits rather than other non-monetary incentives. Head teachers and principals often complained about teachers not willing to work because of delays in payment of their salaries. Lack of adequate welfare program for teachers have led to low morale and motivation for teaching; which has in turn, impacted the students' academic performance negatively. It is this knowledge gap that this study intends to address in order to fill the lacuna and contribute to the knowledge.

The welfare of teachers has a significant effect on the effectiveness of public secondary schools in Lagos State, Nigeria. Teachers' welfare includes their salaries, benefits, working conditions, and opportunities for professional development (Ololuba & Egbezor, 2013; Adeyemi & Adeyinka, 2017). When teachers are well taken care of, they are more motivated to perform their duties effectively, which translates to better learning outcomes for students. On the other hand, when teachers' welfare is neglected, they become demotivated and may not be able to deliver quality education to their students.

Teachers' Salaries and School Effectiveness

One aspect of teachers' welfare that affects their effectiveness is their salaries. In Nigeria, teachers' salaries have been a contentious issue as they are often not paid on time or in full. This has led to strikes and disruptions in the academic calendar, which ultimately affects students' learning outcomes. Additionally, teachers who are not paid well may resort to other means of making ends meet, such as taking on extra jobs or engaging in corrupt practices, which can also affect the quality of education they provide (Omirin & Adeoye, 2019).

Studies have shown that teachers' salaries significantly impact school effectiveness in public secondary schools in Lagos State, Nigeria. Lagos State is the commercial capital of Nigeria and has one of the highest populations in the country. The state has a large number of public secondary schools that are responsible for providing education to a significant portion of the population. A study conducted by Adesina (2014) found that there is a positive relationship between teachers' salaries and school effectiveness in public secondary schools in Lagos State. The study revealed that teachers' salaries have a significant impact on their motivation, job satisfaction, and commitment to their work. This, in turn, affects their performance and the overall effectiveness of the school.

Another study by Adeyemi and Adeyinka (2016) examined the relationship between teachers' salaries, teacher turnover, and school effectiveness in public secondary schools in Lagos State. The study found that low salaries were a significant factor contributing to high teacher turnover rates, which negatively impacted school effectiveness. Furthermore, a study by Olatomide and Oluwadare (2019) investigated the effect of teachers' salaries on students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Lagos State. The study found that there is a positive relationship between teachers' salaries and students' academic performance.

In summary, that teachers' salaries significantly impact school effectiveness in public secondary schools in Lagos State, Nigeria. Higher salaries lead to increased motivation, job satisfaction, commitment to work, lower teacher turnover rates, and improved academic performance among students.

Teachers' Working Condition and School Effectiveness

Another aspect of teachers' welfare that affects their effectiveness is their working conditions. Teachers who work in dilapidated buildings with poor ventilation and lighting may not be able to teach effectively. Additionally, schools that lack basic amenities such as toilets and clean drinking water may affect teachers' health and wellbeing, which can also impact their ability to teach effectively (Babalola & Olatunji, 2018). Teachers' working conditions have a significant impact on school effectiveness in public secondary schools in Lagos State, Nigeria. This is corroborated by a study conducted by Olatoye and Jegede (2018) which revealed that teachers' working conditions such as workload, salary, promotion, and recognition significantly affect their job satisfaction and motivation to perform well. The study further revealed that when teachers are satisfied with their working conditions, they are more likely to be committed to their work and provide quality education to their students.

Adeyemi and Adeyinka (2017) found that teachers' working conditions have a significant impact on student academic achievement in public secondary schools in Lagos State. The study revealed that teachers who work under favorable conditions such as adequate

resources, good salary, and supportive leadership are more likely to be motivated to teach effectively, resulting in better academic outcomes for students.

Also, a study by Ogunsaju and Oyinloye (2019) examined the relationship between teachers' working conditions and job performance in public secondary schools in Lagos State. The study found that teachers who work under favorable conditions such as adequate resources, good salary, and supportive leadership are more likely to perform well on the job.

In addition, a study by Adeniji et al. (2018) examined the impact of teachers' working conditions on student retention in public secondary schools in Lagos State. The study revealed that when teachers work under favorable conditions such as adequate resources and good salary, they are more likely to remain in their jobs for longer periods, resulting in increased student retention rates.

Lastly, a study by Adebayo et al. (2020) examined the relationship between teachers' working conditions and school culture in public secondary schools in Lagos State. The study found that when teachers work under favorable conditions such as adequate resources, good salary, and supportive leadership, they are more likely to contribute positively to the school culture, resulting in a more conducive learning environment for students.

Teachers' Professional Development Opportunities and School Effectiveness

Professional development opportunities are also critical for teachers' effectiveness. Teachers who have access to training and development opportunities can improve their teaching skills and keep up with new trends in education. However, when these opportunities are lacking, teachers may become stagnant in their teaching methods, leading to a decline in the quality of education they provide (Ajayi & Adeyemo, 2015). Teachers' Professional Development Opportunities (TPDOs) play a crucial role in enhancing school effectiveness in public secondary schools in Lagos State, Nigeria. TPDOs refer to the various opportunities available for teachers to improve their knowledge, skills, and competencies through training, workshops, seminars, conferences, and other forms of professional development programs.

According to a study conducted by Oluwole and Adeyemi (2015), TPDOs have a significant positive effect on teachers' instructional practices, which in turn improves students' academic achievement. The study found that teachers who participated in TPDOs were more likely to use student-centered teaching approaches, assessment for learning strategies, and technology-enhanced teaching methods.

Another study by Adeyemi and Oluwole (2016) examined the relationship between TPDOs and school effectiveness in Lagos State. The study found that schools with a higher level of TPDOs had better academic performance than schools with lower levels of TPDOs. The authors also noted that TPDOs positively influenced teachers' attitudes towards teaching, job satisfaction, and commitment to the teaching profession.

Furthermore, a study by Olaleye and Adu (2017) investigated the impact of TPDOs on teachers' professional growth and development in Lagos State. The study found that TPDOs provided opportunities for teachers to acquire new knowledge, skills, and competencies, which improved their teaching practices and instructional delivery. In summary, empirical studies have shown that Teachers' Professional Development Opportunities play a crucial role in enhancing school effectiveness in public secondary schools in Lagos State, Nigeria.

These opportunities provide teachers with the necessary knowledge, skills, and competencies to improve their instructional practices and ultimately improve students' academic achievement.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the welfare of teachers is crucial for the effectiveness of public secondary schools in Lagos State, Nigeria. To improve the quality of education provided by these schools, it is essential to address issues related to teachers' salaries, working conditions, and professional development opportunities. It is concluded in this study that teachers' welfare, while addressing the human resource issue to facilitate learning achievement of students in schools, is supreme and must be taken seriously by stakeholders in both the public and private schools. Teachers' improved welfare through prompt payment of teachers' salaries; in-service-training; promotion and fringe benefits as correlates of pupils' academic achievement in public secondary schools in Lagos States are inadequate as discovered in the study. A happy teacher with good welfare package will increase his motivation and enthusiasm which will ultimately enhance the teacher's teaching performance and productivity. This will, in the long run, have positive impact on the students' academic performance.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations shall be made:

- i. Educational planners, managers, counselors and policy-makers should take note of teachers' welfare as an indispensable factor to influence pupils' academic achievement in secondary schools.
- ii. Houses and car loans to serve as motivation for teachers to work and be committed to the teaching and learning job must be put in place. This is bound to increase teachers' motivation to teach the pupils well and hence bring improvement in academic achievement in secondary schools.
- iii. Prompt and regular payment of salaries of teachers should be the norm rather than the exception as this will have positive effect on pupils' achievement.
- iv. The Ministry of Education and other education agencies of government such as the education districts should formulate policies that will set a standard and guide for teachers' welfare packages.

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