

Reward Packages and Teachers Retention in Private Secondary Schools in Rivers State

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Abstract

The study investigated reward packages and teachers retention in private secondary schools in Rivers State. Two research questions and two hypotheses were formulated to guide the study. Design adopted for this study was correlation. Population of the study was all the 14,256 private secondary school teachers in Rivers State out of which 389 teachers were sampled for the study using stratified random sampling technique. Taro Yamane formula was used to determine the sample size of the study. Two sets of questionnaire were used for collection of data for the study namely; “Non-Financial Reward Questionnaire” (NFRQ) as well as the “Teacher’s retention Questionnaire” (TRQ) for the independent and dependent variables of the study. The sets of questionnaire were validated by two experts in Measurement and Evaluation, Department of Psychology, Guidance and Counselling, University of Port Harcourt. Cronbach alpha was used for estimate the reliability of the questionnaire with values of 0.79 and 0.76 for the independent variable of the study and 0.80 for the dependent variable. 386 copies of the questionnaire were retrieved out of the 389 copies administered in the study. Research questions were answered using Pearson Product Moment Correlation co-efficient while the hypotheses were tested using z-ratio at 0.05 level of significance. The findings of the study showed that managerial privileges and study leave have high and moderate positive relationship with teachers retention at $r = 0.68$ and $r = 0.46$ respectively. It was therefore recommended that school administrators should review the managerial privileges given to teachers from time to time for a higher rate of teacher retention.

Keywords: Reward, Packages, Teachers, Retention, Private

Introduction

It is the desire of every formal organization to assemble the best workforce as this goes a long way to determine how well the organization can survive in the face of stiff competition. Private secondary schools are not left out as they seek to retain the best teaching staff amidst growing proliferation of private schools. The issue of teacher retention has therefore become a growing concern both among private and public organizations alike including private secondary schools. According to Schaffhauser (2014), teacher retention focuses on the ability of a school to keep teachers who have been employed into the school for a

long period of time. It is the ability to retain the teaching force for a long period of time with little or no attrition.

However, there are deliberate efforts that must be made by school administrators to ensure the retention of the best teaching force at any point in time. This effort includes the management of the reward package at the disposal of the school administrator. Reward can be any inducement given to an employee which motivates him or her to work. However, in the face of resource scarcity among public and private organizations, emphasis has been laid on the use of non-financial reward packages to motivate teachers and improve on their retention rate. Non-financial reward can be intrinsic or extrinsic but comprises of all strategies of motivation which is not monetary. There are different non-financial rewards that have been developed in different sectors of the economy to keep the best work force. The private sector as well as the public and civil service are gradually shifting to the use of non-financial reward to motivate their workforce.

One of the aspirations of every teacher is that they should be able to rise to a level where they enjoy the rights and privileges enjoyed by the management staff. This includes privileges to be a decision maker in the school, manage school resources and also enjoy security on the job. Every teacher looks forward to a day when they will be rewarded by bringing them into the management cadre especially in private secondary schools either as head of department or any other administrative position. This is an important reward system that has also been effective in keeping the best teachers. This is in addition to the fact that such teacher knows that his or her job is secured.

The high level of unemployment in the country has made it difficult for job seekers to make choice on the type of employment they are willing to pick up. However, it is the desire of every job seeker that whatever employment they are picking up is one that can be of benefit for a long period of time and where they can rise to the top after putting in their best in the organization. The ability of an individual to keep his or her job for a long period of time is known defines how secure the job is. Job security is therefore a function of how permanent ones job will remain all things being equal. Arabi, as cited in Jandaghi, MokhlesandBahrami (2011) stated that “job security is the feeling of having a proper job and the assurance of its continuance in future as well as the absence of threatening factors” (p. 6854). When an individual is employed, he or she should be able to determine how long he or she will be on the job right from the first day of being engaged. This explains how secure the job is to the employed. On his part, Kraja (2015) defined job security as “protection against job loss” (p. 20). This is the assurance that an employee will not lose his or her job or the benefits attached to the job within the shortest possible period of time.

Employees who are sure that they will remain on the job for a long period of time are the only ones who start building a career from the very first day of being employed. Those who are not sure of staying in the organization for so long will contribute little or nothing to the advancement of the organization. This also leads to a feeling of dissatisfaction on the job. Thomas, Tram and O'Hara (2006) pointed out that when an employee enjoys job security, it will increase the level of his or her job satisfaction and commitment. There is no commitment at work without the assurance that the job will be available to meet their immediate needs. “Job security is one’s

expectation about continuity in a job situation. It has to do with employee feelings over loss of job or loss of desirable job features such as lack of promotion opportunities, current working conditions, as well as long-term career opportunities” (Akpan, 2013, p. 83). The security of one’s job is not only about securing the job for a long duration, but being sure that all the entitlements attached to the job will be provided as at when due.

Abdullah and Ramay (2012) pointed out that the major wish and desire of any employee in any organization is to have an employment that is secured. Furthermore, Mondy and Noe (2005) went further to reveal that in the process of building a career; the first thing any employee thinks about is job security. It is not possible for any employee to build a lifelong career by switching jobs from place to place and from time to time. Teachers will therefore find it difficult to remain on the job when they are not satisfied with the conditions attached to the job.

The security of jobs in most states of the country is no longer guaranteed and the school system is not exempted. There are private schools where teachers are sacked at intervals and compelled to re-apply just because the school proprietors do not want to pay higher salaries. This makes it difficult for some teachers to remain in their jobs once it’s a private school. The situation has worsened such that some teachers who are even qualified for different subject areas are employed on part-time basis and this makes private schools unattractive to intending teachers.

The opportunity to embark on study leave is another reward that every teacher will appreciate. Leave is a period of absence from normal work given to a worker to attend to some pressing needs or demand. It is common to hear of workers being given a period of absence from work such as sick leave, maternity leave and study leave. This period provides sufficient time for the worker to attend to the need for which the leave was given. Teachers who enter into the teaching profession in private schools with a low qualification and have put in their best into the school can be rewarded by giving them a period of leave to study for higher degrees. This form of rewarded gives the teacher a sense of belonging and also a willingness to remain on the job.

One of the types of leave that a teacher can enjoy is study leave. Study leave can be given with or without pay. Study leave without pay is a period of absence from work to pursue an educational programme within which any monthly financial entitlement will not be paid. However, study leave with pay means that the teacher who is absent from work to pursue an educational programme will continue to receive their financial entitlement for the period; this is a form of financial reward that can be given to teachers. The money paid to the teacher during this study period will go a long way to assist the teacher to pay for tuition and also pay for other educational resources.

The increasing demand for certification in the teaching workforce has made the need for study leave almost inevitable. The certificates with which some teachers are employed later become inadequate in the future. For example, there are teachers who are employed with the Nigeria Certificate in Education (NCE) and as a result of growing personal or family demands, they need to increase their certification for better financial benefits; they will need to get a study leave for this purpose. When school administrators give study leave with pay, it is one of the greatest non-financial rewards that can promote teacher’s retention. This is why Okenjom, Ogar,

Bake and Eze-Anyim (2016) stated that “teachers need motivation through study leave with or without pay to pursue short or long term courses for professional growth and development” (p. 97). Study leave also assists the teacher to pursue other professional programmes that will make them useful to the school for a long period of time.

The provision of study leave with pay as a form of reward to teachers is most times based on some conditions of agreement that must be met and kept and met by both the school administrator and the teacher. In a related manner, Billy (2014) identified some of the conditions for providing study leave which included the following:

1. The minimum number of years to serve before qualifying for the grant of study with pay is five (5) years satisfactory service. A beneficiary of study leave with pay shall be boned for the number of years served at the institution plus one (1) year
2. An applicant who has served in a designated deprived area for two (2) years may be eligible for consideration for the grant of study leave with pay.
3. An applicant who apply for the study leave with pay in the critical subject areas would be required to teach initially for two (2) years before embarking on study leave with pay
4. Non-professional graduate teachers should serve for at least one (1) year before being eligible for Post Graduate Diploma in Education (PGDE) course
5. Members of the service returning on secondment must serve a minimum of two (2) years before they become eligible for the study leave with pay
6. Members of the service who vacate the service and are re-engaged must serve a minimum of five (5) years before being eligible for the study leave with pay
7. An applicant who is eligible for the study leave with pay must have a minim of two (2) years to serve after the course. For example, staff who are fifty five (55) years and above cannot apply for the study leave with pay to pursue course that last for four (4) years or more. They can however, apply to pursue courses that have duration between one (1) and three (3) years
8. An applicant shall be eligible for study leave with pay subject to the following:
 - a. Good conduct
 - b. Good performance
 - c. Recommendation by immediate supervisor (pp. 12-13).

Granting of study leave with pay is however limited to avoid under-staffing the school. Similarly, when a teacher is given study leave, he or she must remain in that school for a period of time. This helps to retain the best teachers in the school.

Aim and Objectives of the Study

The aim of the study was to investigate reward packages and teachers retention in private secondary schools in Rivers State. The specific objectives of the study were to:

1. determine the relationship between managerial privileges and teacher retention in private secondary schools in Rivers State

2. examine the relationship between study leave and teacher retention in private secondary schools in Rivers State

Research Questions

The following research questions were posed in the study:

1. What is the relationship between managerial privileges and teacher retention in private secondary schools in Rivers State?
2. What is the relationship between study leave 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 managerial privileges and teacher retention in private secondary schools in Rivers State
2. There is no significant relationship between study leave and teacher retention in private secondary schools in Rivers State

Methodology

The design used for this study was correlation. The population of the study consisted of all the 14,256 private secondary school teachers in Rivers State out of which 389 teachers were sampled for the study through stratified random sampling technique. Taro Yamane formula was used to determine the sample size of the study. Two sets of questionnaire were used for collection of data for the study namely; “Non-Financial Reward Questionnaire” (NFRQ) as well as the “Teacher’s retention Questionnaire” (TRQ) for the independent and dependent variables of the study. The sets of questionnaire were validated by two experts in Measurement and Evaluation, Department of Psychology, Guidance and Counselling, Univeristy of Port Harcourt. Cronbach alpha was used for estimate the reliability of the questionnaire with values of 0.79 and 0.76 for the independent variable of the study and 0.80 for the dependent variable. 386 copies of the questionnaire were retrieved out of the 389 copies administered in the study. Research questions were answered using Pearson Product Moment Correlation co-efficient while the hypotheses were tested using z-ratio at 0.05 level of significance.

Results

Research Question One: What is the relationship between managerial privileges and teacher retention in private secondary schools in Rivers State?

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

Variable	n	r	r ²	Remark
Managerial Privileges	368	0.68	46.2	High positive relationship

Teacher's retention

Table 1 indicated that the value of the Pearson product moment correlation, r which was estimated was 0.68. This result implied that there was a high positive relationship between managerial privileges and teacher retention in private secondary schools in Rivers State. It was further revealed from the table that managerial privileges predicted teacher retention at the rate of 46.2% in private secondary schools in Rivers State.

Research Question Two: What is the relationship between study leave and teacher retention in private secondary schools in Rivers State?

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

Variable	n	r	r ²	Remark
Study Leave Teacher's retention	368	0.46	21.2	Moderate positive relationship

Table 2 showed that the value of the Pearson product moment correlation, r which was estimated was 0.46. This result indicated that there was a moderate positive relationship between study leave and teacher retention in private secondary schools in Rivers State. It was further revealed from the table that study leave predicted teacher retention at the rate of 21.2% in private secondary schools in Rivers State.

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

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

Variable	n	df	z-ratio	z-crit.	Level of significance	Decision
Managerial Privileges Teacher's Retention	368	366	13.60	0.10	0.05	H ₀ was rejected

Table 3 showed that the value of z-ratio was 13.60 while the value of z-critical was 0.10. Since the value of the z-ratio was more than the value of z-critical, the null hypothesis was rejected and the alternative hypothesis upheld indicating that there is a significant relationship between managerial privileges and teacher retention in private secondary schools in Rivers State

Hypothesis Two: There is no significant relationship between study leave and teacher retention in private secondary schools in Rivers State

Table 4: z-ratio of the relationship between study leave and teacher retention in private secondary schools in Rivers State

Variable	n	df	z-ratio	z-crit.	Level of significance	Decision
Study Leave Teacher's Retention	368	366	9.20	0.10	0.05	H ₀ was rejected

Table 4 indicated that the value of z-ratio was 9.20 while the value of z-critical was 0.10. Since the value of the z-ratio was more than the value of z-critical, the null hypothesis was rejected and the alternative hypothesis upheld indicating that there is a significant relationship between study leave and teacher retention in private secondary schools in Rivers State

Discussion of Findings

Managerial Privileges and Teacher Retention in Private Secondary Schools in Rivers State

The responses provided by the respondents of the study revealed that there is a moderate relationship between providing managerial privileges for a teacher and their willingness to remain on their job. Providing managerial privileges imply that the teacher can enjoy some of the rights and privileges reserved for those in the management team of the school. For example, the study carried out by Niwamanya (2016) revealed in the findings that when teachers enjoy financial incentives like their superior, it will increase their performance at work. In the long run, this will also encourage them to remain in the work place. Managerial privileges can also be in the form of freedom to determine their work schedule and technique. However, a moderate relationship between these variables implies that managerial privileges have only little benefit to the teacher. The reason for this may not be far from the fact that the teacher may not feel comfortable enjoying managerial privileges that is not fully assigned to them by the school. This is because such managerial privileges may be withdrawn at any time until they are officially assigned to the teacher. According to the findings of the study carried out by Ijaz and Khan (2013) the provision of managerial privileges for non-managerial staff is still very low and this discourages teachers from staying long on a particular job. This may explain why the responses of the teachers revealed a moderate relationship between this type of reward and teacher retention in private secondary schools in Rivers State.

Teachers who enjoy managerial privileges can be incorporated into certain decision making committees. However, there are some other decisions that will be made by the school in which they will be excluded especially those decision that will affect them personally. Similarly, the study revealed that some of the teachers who enjoy managerial privileges enjoy some level of protection from harassment in the work place. Surprisingly, the study carried out by Yeboah and Adom (2016) pointed out in its findings that providing such non-financial reward as managerial privileges has an insignificant relationship with teacher's retention. However, in order for this type of reward to be better appreciated, there is need for the school administrator to make it the right of the teacher to enjoy such privileges. This will make such non-financial reward to be better appreciated. In the long run, such privileges may encourage the teacher to remain on the job and contribute to the goals and objectives of the school.

Study Leave and Teacher Retention in Private Secondary Schools in Rivers State

Private secondary school is one of the places where teachers with different level of education can be found. There are teachers who are employed with as low as a secondary school certificate while others may have post graduate qualifications. This is the reason why some of these teachers are always anticipating furthering their education at one point or the other in the school. According to the study carried out by Makhuzeni and Barkhuizen (2015), private secondary schools perform poorly when it comes to compensating teachers with an opportunity for career development and this contributes to the poor management of these schools. However, as a result of the huge workload in private secondary schools, it may be difficult for any teacher to have the opportunity to further their education. The privilege to further education in this case is then used by the school administrator as a reward system to keep their best teachers. The expenses for this study may be borne by the teacher or the school. This makes the teacher to be more committed to the school in the long run. In fact, Sam, Epah and Osei-Owusu (2014) revealed in the findings of their study that there are teachers who are willing to leave the teaching profession if they are not given the opportunity for further study. This is why this type of reward is significant for teacher's retention in private secondary schools in Rivers State.

However, the responses of the respondents revealed that there is a low positive relationship between study leave and teacher retention in private secondary schools in Rivers State. This implies that providing teachers with study leave as a way of reward has a lesser impact on their willingness to remain with the school. This reason may not be far from the fact that most teachers in private secondary schools are always aspiring for greener pasture and opportunity to pursue other personal ambition. Therefore, the ability to study and get higher qualifications may be seen as an opportunity for them to move to better places where their new qualification can be better utilized. Similarly, Akpan (2013) revealed that some teachers feel their job is no longer secured when they gain study leave and this explains why study leave has little influence on the retention of teachers in these schools. However, this may not do the school much good as the findings of the study conducted by Punia and Kumboj (2013) revealed that failure to allow the teachers embark on study leave reduces work quality among teachers. This no doubt does not do the school any good. The provision of study leave to teachers in private school therefore has a lesser impact to retain these teachers and as such this type of non-financial reward needs to be provided with caution. The school administrator therefore need to ensure that those who will get study leave are those who are willing to use their new skill and knowledge to improve the school system for a reasonable period of time as agreed between the teacher and the school management.

Conclusion

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

The study has been able to show that reward packages significantly predict teacher's retention in private secondary schools in Rivers State.

Recommendations

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

1. School administrators should review the managerial privileges given to teachers from time to time. This will help to ensure that the reward needs of majority of the teachers are satisfied thereby leading to a higher retention rate in these private schools.
2. The government needs to also make laws that will mandate private schools to provide a window for teachers to embark on study leave with pay. This will make those with lower qualification to acquire higher degree and improve their prospect of remaining on the job.

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