

Enhancing Job Satisfaction for Teachers: A Strategy for Achieving Transformation of Secondary Education in Nigeria

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Abstract

The neglect of teachers' needs have impacted negatively on our educational system in Nigeria. Indeed, the teaching profession has suffered untold hardship for quite sometimes now. This paper uses a theoretical approach to x-ray the factors responsible for poor job satisfaction among secondary school teachers. The paper also examines teachers' job satisfaction as a strategy for transformation of secondary school education in Nigeria. Nigerian secondary school teachers need job satisfaction in the form of better condition of service, proper administrative and organizational structure, teaching aids should be provided and instructional materials among others. The last part of the paper contains conclusion and recommendations on the ways of achieving transformation in Nigerian secondary school education and job satisfaction for teachers.

Introduction

Among the pressing problems of our time is the falling standard of education in Nigeria. Our school system has been producing half-baked and unemployable products. This has worsen to an extent where some secondary school graduates do not in any way differ significantly from those who have not seen the four corners of the classrooms. Beside the learner, the content, objectives, materials and the medium of presentation, the teacher is yet another important factor in the teaching learning process and transformational process. One should note that teachers' efficiency and productivity is influenced among other variables by how their needs are satisfied. In view of this the teacher is supposed to be named as a nation builder.

In Nigeria, teachers and indeed the teaching profession have been relegated to the background. Teachers are no longer accorded the usual respect in the society even from their own students. If the teacher should win back his respect, it is necessary to improve his condition. Ajayi (1988) posited that motivational tools such as teachers' salaries, allowances, promotion and other benefits need to be paid promptly as that would enhance his productivity which may in turn leads to the transformation of secondary education in Nigeria. In most Nigerian private schools, teachers are over – loaded with subjects and at times forced to teach subjects which they are not qualified. This makes them to under perform hence the falling standard. In Nigeria, teachers are being looked down upon even in communities where they serve. Gone are the days when the teacher was looked upon as the light bearer of the society and was well respected by the people as a whole. In the 1970's and 80's the Nigerian teacher was trained in various fields of human endeavours.

This includes medical training, for instance he was thought how to administer injection for malaria and other related diseases and provided with drugs. This helped him to give both his primary service (teaching) and auxillary service. Today, the teacher has been relegated to the background no one seems to appreciate his work. When students failed the society blame him but when they pass the society praises them and not the teacher. For a speedy transformation of secondary education in Nigeria, teachers need to be motivated in cash and kind and also the academic calendar be strictly followed. Contributing, Ejiogu (1990) stated that until peoples' needs are satisfied, they can not perform efficiently on their jobs. This implies that every avenue be employed to make Nigerian teachers more efficient in order to take the secondary education to greater height. Similarly, Griffin (2002) pointed out that motivation (the desire to do the job) ability (the capacity to do the job) and the environment (resources needed) are the key factors for teacher's efficiency. Motivation appears to be the most difficult to define, since it can not be exactly measured. Therefore to achieve quality and transformation in the secondary education in Nigeria, job satisfaction for the teachers must take the centre stage of the educational policies.

Conceptual Issues

Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction entails the ability of employers to be able to provide workers with the conditions that will make them more efficient and active in their place of work with the view to improving their productivity level. According to Nwankwo (1982) the more the needs of workers are satisfied within an organization, the more they are motivated to work. He added that a satisfied worker operates at two levels of satisfaction, namely his own

needs satisfaction and the satisfaction of the needs of the organization. It therefore means that a teacher who is satisfied with his job will in turn satisfy the needs of his students' in a secondary school. Similarly Okonkwo (1997) posited that job satisfaction has to do with a high level of emotional stability of an individual in his job such that his morale is also high and consequently he aspires to do more towards the achievement of organizational goals. Buttressing this fact Locke as cited in Okonkwo (1997) stated that job satisfaction refers to a pleasurable and positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job experiences. Job satisfaction is the totality of an individuals' psychological, social and physical well – being with regard to his work and job performance (Eneasator, 1990).

Therefore, since teachers' job satisfaction is a major determinant factor for teachers' motivation, it is obvious therefore that motivation and job satisfaction are unseperatable. They influence the achievement and transformation of educational objectives and goals. The fact that teaching refers to a ritualization between the teacher and the learner, the teacher remains an instrument of change used by the learner.

The Teacher/Teaching

The teacher is someone who imparts knowledge, skills to the students and also instructs them on what to do. Rybum as cited in Bulus & Mai (1996) defined teaching as helping those whom we teach to live fully, to learn the art of living with others. This therefore means parents are teachers as they teach their children to walk, talk care for clothes, cross streets safely etc. Similarly, Encyclopaedia Britannica (2010) defined teaching as a profession of those who give instruction, especially in an elementary or a secondary or in a university. Also the teachers help students to learn by imparting knowledge to them and also by setting up a situation in which student's can learn effectively. The teacher serves as a mediator, disciplinarian or controller of student behaviuor, judge of achievement and a scholar and research specialist among others.

Secondary Education

Secondary education is the education children receive after primary education and before tertiary stage (NPE, 2004). This implies that secondary education is the type of education received at both the junior secondary schools and the senior secondary schools in Nigeria. According to NPE (2004) this type of educations' broad goals are to prepare the individual for useful living within the society and for higher education or admission into either the Polytechnic, Colleges of Education, Monotechnics, Universities and other similar institutions within and outside the country.

The Goals of Secondary Education in Nigeria

According to the National Policy on Education (2004) the specific goals of secondary education are:

- To promote all primary school leavers with the opportunity for education of a higher level regardless of sex, social status, religion or ethnicity.
- To offer diversified curriculum to cater for the difference in talents, opportunities and future roles.
- To provide trained manpower in the applied science, technology and commerce at sub professional grades.
- To develop and promote Nigerian languages, art and culture in the context of world's cultural heritage.
- To inspire student's with a desire for self improvement and achievement of excellence.
- To foster national unity with an emphasis on the common ties that unite us in our diversity;
- To raise a generation of people who can think for themselves, respect the views and feelings of others and dignity of labour, appreciate our national values and live as good citizens.
- To provide technical knowledge and vocational skills which are necessary for agricultural, industrial and commercial development;

Factors hindering job satisfaction and transformation of secondary education in Nigeria

If job satisfaction is indeed a measure of the ability of the organization to satisfy individuals' expectations and the degree to which it is able to reward productivity, then the falling standard of education in Nigeria has proved the fact that teachers in the country are not satisfied with their job. So many teacher's who are teaching in secondary schools today, are doing so because they are yet to find better jobs. Teaching is therefore viewed as a "stepping stone" to finding better jobs. Haggai & Piwuna (2000) reported that due to low level of motivation, there is high exodus from the teaching profession in Nigeria at all levels. However, poor job satisfaction and transformation of secondary education in Nigeria is attributed to among other reasons.

1. Poor condition of service – Today, teachers in secondary school's in Nigeria are seen as second class citizens even in their respective communities because of their financial status. They are grossly under rewarded financially. Their salaries and condition of service are poor. In Nigeria, secondary school teachers' are not motivated. There salaries are hardly paid and there is delay in their promotions and other benefits. Hence Haggai & Piwuna (2000) stated that the problem with the Nigerian teacher is that he suffers from lack of job satisfaction and is unmotivated and frustrated. This clearly indicates that as he is frustrated, nothing tangible comes out of him. Instead of transforming the sector, the teacher contributes in bringing down the sector. That has resulted in the fallen standard of education in Nigeria.

- If this should be remedied, teacher's pension and gratuity be paid promptly on retirement.
2. Poor school Administrative organizational structure – Teachers in Nigeria are poorly treated in schools by school administrators/heads such as proprietors and principals. The head sometimes appoints newly employed teacher's to head their senior counterparts. This often creates disunity in schools and may lead to disrespect for the senior among teachers' by the junior ones. Most times, teachers' are not given the opportunity to take part in decision making in schools, but are expected to implement policies for which they were not part of. Some teachers are denied the opportunity to further their studies through the in – service training. Imam (2003) suggested that in other to enhance productivity on the job, principals should recommend teachers for in – service training so as to better equip them professionally. Sometimes when they are released, school heads force them to come back to teach during short breaks. All these and many others make teachers dissatisfied with their job.
 3. Lack of professional regulatory body – In Nigeria, the teaching profession has not been accorded the status of a profession. Some secondary schools engage the services of Diploma and Higher National Diploma holders who do not have the pre-requisite qualification for teaching. It is a pity that Nigeria still engage non – professionals to teach. Most of them employed as teachers learn to prepare lesson plan and lesson notes in the field. To worsen the situation, National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) members are often engaged to teach in secondary schools irrespective of whether they study the subject they are teaching or not. This practice will not help to transform secondary education in Nigeria. It should be noted that when square pegs are put in round holes they would not fit in.
 4. Negative attitudes to duty by teachers – Some secondary school teachers are not dedicated to duty. Such teachers come to school late and leave early on the pretext that it is government work and so no one can challenge them. On the other hand, some teachers come late and leave early in order to attend to some other activities. This is done mostly to make ends meet, since the remuneration given to them is not enough. This condition is one of the reasons why some Nigerian teachers pick up part-time teaching jobs in two or more other schools around. It retards the growth of the sector.
 5. Limited instructional materials and school facilities – Most secondary schools in Nigeria today are characterized by the inadequacy of instructional materials such as textbooks, charts, teaching aids etc and school facilities such as classrooms, desks, sits etc. Where these materials are available, they are at a near stage of collapse. Buttressing this fact Adewole (1999) reported that in Nigeria it is only the secondary school level that quite a number of them were established by conversion of primary premises into secondary schools overnight without consideration of differentials in requirements in respect of facilities. The infrastructures are dilapidated while the facilities are grossly inadequate. Most of the classes are overcrowded with high population and very poor ventilation. School libraries and laboratories are often empty buildings with nothing for students to learn. In most schools, the principals are incapacitated financially it becomes difficult for subject teachers to buy the needed materials for practicals. Also sporting facilities and materials are lacking as sometimes monies meant for this are often diverted into personal pockets by school heads. Ejiogu (1990) summarizes the effects of poor job satisfaction for teachers and transformation of secondary education as follows: teachers who feel dissatisfied embark on the following behaviours: truancy, displacement, negativism, absenteeism and apathy in discharging their jobs. Some end up leaving the job. Teachers who are suppressed dissatisfied are prone to leaving teaching profession for other jobs which they felt might satisfy their needs. Thus the sector suffers in terms of transformation.

Teachers' Job Satisfaction a Strategy for Transformation of Secondary School Education in Nigeria.

It is obvious that job satisfaction promotes teachers efficiency and productivity and transformation. Therefore, teachers' job satisfaction will bring transformation and quality secondary education in Nigeria. Vroom & Deci as cited in Okonkwo (1997) posited that workers will be motivated to perform their jobs effectively to an extent to which they are satisfied with those jobs. The more workers' rewards are, the harder they would work. Similarly, the greater the extent in which an employee's needs are satisfied in his job, the greater the extent to which he would respond, presumably with gratitude or loyalty. So when teachers are satisfied with their jobs, they will give their students the best and they will be willing to transform education at the secondary level. In addition, they will be willing to transform and prepare the student for higher studies or to perform societal roles.

In Nigerian secondary schools, teacher's job satisfaction will help in ensuring quality education as teachers would exhibit the spirit of hard work and dedication. This implies that where teacher's needs are adequately and timely made, they tend to be more dedicated to their duty and work hard. Such teachers go to class fully prepared and academically loaded, willing to impart knowledge so as to bring transformation in the sector. Such teachers embark on quality research and prepare quality notes to students. They are always willing and ready to administer assignments and tests and also award marks as feedback. More so, they make use of different teaching methods to meet the individual needs in the class. Above all, they create room for meaningful learning through dedication and hard work, since the quality of secondary education is measured in terms of

what the products of the school can do (positive transformation) and what they can introduce in the society. Satisfied teachers made students to develop entrepreneurial spirit as such teachers do not just emphasize on the cognitive domain and teacher's effectiveness but also the psychomotor domain which encourages self reliance. Teachers who are satisfied are ready to impart innovative ideas to the students.

Job satisfaction makes teacher's supervision more effective and easier. Satisfied teachers carry out their responsibilities with less supervision as they do not need to be told when and why they should be punctual and also perform certain tasks in school. They abide by the school rules and regulations and take active part in all school activities.

More so promoting job satisfaction for secondary school teachers will enhance quality and transformation of our educational system. Teachers that are satisfied are always willing to improvise instructional materials to aid them in teaching their students. In most cases, some teachers hardly use their salary to purchase current textbooks that will guide them in the subject taught and also aid them in updating their lesson notes.

Enhancing job satisfaction and encouraging teachers to go for in-service training will lead to the transformation of the educational sector. So this would equip the teachers as they will acquire more knowledge. The new things they have acquired would be imparted into the students. Therefore teachers need to be sponsored to attend seminars' and conferences. Ndu (1984) opined that satisfying teacher's needs would encourage them to see the need to advance one's education. A well educated teacher produces educated students. He added that ensuring adequate satisfaction for teachers through motivating them in the school system is by the use of job enrichment which has been described as an attempt by management to increase the intrinsic rewards and to build into jobs a higher sense of challenge, importance and achievement. Similarly, Nwankwo (1982) asserted that teacher's job satisfaction can be achieved through; enhancing the feelings of teachers achievement by recognition and rewarding excellence; involving teachers in decision-making and leadership; proving healthy social climate in the school and improving teachers personal outlook; making the work challenging interesting to teachers by way of assigning special duties and protect them; assigning responsibilities for special function to teachers and ensure adequate authority for carrying them and promoting teachers' personal and professional advancement through recognition of the role played by the teacher.

Conclusion

Whether Nigeria will escape from the vicious circle of poverty and achieve its dream of vision 20 – 2020 or not is a function of the quality of its education. The neglect of teachers needs implies the neglect of our educational system as a whole. If Nigeria is to progress in all spheres of life, then the educational sector should be given adequate attention through ensuring job satisfaction for teachers. To enhance transformation in secondary education through satisfying teacher's needs is indeed a child of necessity considering its impact on our social, cultural, economic and political life as a nation.

12

Recommendations

From our discussion, job satisfaction and achieving transformation in our educational system could be enhanced through the following:

1. The condition of service for secondary school teachers should be made attractive. Teachers should be well paid and their promotions should be given as of when due. They should be provided with car loans, housing loans etc. This would serve as a moral boost for the teacher.
2. The Administrative and organizational structure should be well organized. Junior teachers should not be appointed to head the senior ones. Teachers should be involved in decision making in school. Teachers should be encouraged and sponsored to go for in-service training, as that would equip them better.
3. The teaching profession be regulated - It should be made mandatory through legislation that anyone intending to take teaching as a profession in the secondary school must possess a minimum qualification of Bachelor of Education from any recognized university or its affiliates. Those with degrees other than Bachelor of Education should be made to obtain a post graduate Diploma in Education. Only in this way can productivity be enhanced in the sector.
4. For Nigerian secondary schools to be transformed, teachers should be dedicated to their duties. Teachers should not use school time to engage in other extra activities. They should avoid taking up part time jobs but strictly focus on their duty. In addition to that, teachers should be careful in planning their lessons and notes. Finally they should administer assignments and test to their students.
5. Teachers should improvise teaching aids, as that would assist them in their teaching. Proprietors and government should ensure adequate provision of instructional materials and facilities in their schools. The laboratories should be equipped and the libraries stocked with enough materials.

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