

INFLUENCE OF WELFARE SERVICES ON TEACHER'S JOB SATISFACTION AND PERFORMANCE

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Abstract

Staff welfare is paramount in any social organization. The welfare of educational staff especially teachers is essential for any meaningful educational attainment. Since teachers constitute the core element of educational personnel, they require proper care both in the hands of government and school administrators. This paper discussed job satisfaction of teachers which include recognition of their efforts, achievement from the job, assigned responsibilities and their professional growth. The influence of welfare services on teachers' performance as well as the role of school administration in the provision of welfare services were also discussed. It is the contention of the paper that welfare services were identified in the paper and others be provide for teachers to enable them perform effectively.

Keywords: Staff welfare, Job satisfaction, and Performance

Introduction

Teachers constitute the core elements of any educational set up. Without teachers, no matter how curriculum is planned and the school plant well designed it will be increasingly difficult to achieve the set goals and objectives of the school. Teachers who are the most valuable resources of school organization must be given the desired attention required of people who are models of values in the society. Attention needs to be given to the nature and content of their working life.

The government and the school administrators as well as school proprietors need to know how best to

make work more satisfying for teachers and how best to overcome obstacles to performance. This is where staff welfare which is considered to be the engine room for performance comes to the fore. It is evident that staff welfare today has assumed an important place in the educational system of Nigeria as a country. This is because without proper care of teachers who are the hob on which the educational pyramid is hinged, the objectives of education can hardly be achieved and this will invariably affect the development of the society since education no doubt, is the pivot of any meaningful development. It is in consideration of the importance of welfare services to teachers' performance that this paper

discusses the influence of staff welfare on job satisfaction and performance of primary school teachers.

Job satisfaction and performance

Job satisfaction is a complex concept that means a variety of things to different people. Locke as cited Ukeje Akabogu and Ndu (1992) argue that job satisfaction refers to a pleasurable and positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job experiences.

Research carried out by Noram (2010) has however shown that there are basically two schools of thought being shared by different scholars on job satisfaction. The first school of thought considers job satisfaction as the general feeling of an individual towards work. This implies a personal inherent feeling of contentment an individual has on job. While the second school of thought concerns itself with physiological psychological and environmental conditions that combine to give a worker satisfaction on job. The psychological aspect calls to mind the peace an employee internalizes while performing the job because the job is appealing to the employee. The physiological conditions on the other hand touch on the materials or physical effects that satisfy the workers taste and needs and could take in form of material rewards. The environmental conditions concern mainly the surrounding atmosphere or climate in which the work is done.

The psychological and physiological conditions mentioned above on job satisfaction have clearly shown that job satisfaction involves or is referred to as the positive attitudes a worker enjoys including a combination of psychological physiological and environmental conditions that give an employee a feeling of contentment that prompts the employee to perform maximally and which may make such employee to feel proud and identify with the job. Therefore, for any educational program to succeed, the teacher must have the satisfaction in order to implement the program successfully.

Performance

Performance is viewed differently by individuals and organization. In the business circle, performance is measured by the level of how profit is made. Others measure performances based on the number of turn outs that take place daily in such organization. Tarnongu (2003), stipulates the teachers' performance is measured on the number of credit passes that are recorded in external examinations as well as the number of pupils or students that progress from lower level of education to a higher level in internal examinations. Teacher's performance could therefore be induced by training and retraining, proper supervision strategies of supervisor or administrators. It can also be induced by reassigning, posting, provision of welfare services among others.

Since performance could be induced by the aforementioned factors, it is pertinent to stress that teachers job has

to provide for their personal and emotional needs. Teachers could be made to view themselves as important members of the educational system such that they would demonstrate a higher work performance. This is evident in the fact that when teachers or workers have an increase sense of inclusion they would often give greater job satisfaction and improved work performance. This has been attested by Noram (2010) who states that findings ways of motivating employees can be a challenging prospect for employers, but it is also a necessary component of teachers' job satisfaction. That is why when teachers are highly motivated, their performance is increased greatly and the school finally reaps the reward. From this discussion, one would realize that the added requirement for effective performance of teachers is typically a motivational one. In order to achieve a high level of performance, a teacher must have the ability and motivation to perform effectively.

Ensuring Job Satisfaction of Teachers

A lot of people have applied motivation theories in different ways in educational institutions. There appears to be a single universally acceptable theory on how to motivate people. The purpose of motivation is to create a good working environment in which the people could work enthusiastically with a high sense of responsibility, loyalty and discipline. School administrators have come to realize that a motivated and satisfied workforce can contribute meaningfully to the management of the institutions. Staff

motivation is therefore very essential to the success of any educational enterprise. One of the theories that continue to be relevant to staff motivation is Fredrick-Herberg motivation-hygiene theory. In this theory, Herberg describes two dimensions of conditions: motivator's hygiene theory factors. Motivators, akin to Maslow's higher level needs are what lead to job satisfaction and are associated with the nature of work itself. They include: achievement, recognition, responsibility and growth. School administrators can today imbibe these factors in order to enhance the performance of teachers since these factors have positive influence on morale, satisfaction, efficiency, recognition, the job itself, responsibility, achievement, growth and higher productivity. Motivational or satisfier factors would instill satisfaction in teachers as discussed below:

Recognition

This is a satisfier that can bring job satisfaction to the primary school teachers. Proper recognition of a worker's contribution by the management is highly morale-boosting.

Adamu (2007) states that when workers efforts, especially teachers are recognized, it gives them the feeling of worth and esteem. People feel happy and put in additional efforts when appreciated.

Achievement

Achievement as a satisfier, gives workers a great feeling of

accomplishment. The opportunities provided by the work must exist for meaningful achievements; otherwise workers will become sensitive to the environment and begin to find faults with it. Teaching career could be such that the professional will be able to use it to accomplish their goals in life.

Responsibility

Herzberg's theory identifies responsibility as one of the satisfiers. Musa (2006) states that teachers who are assigned responsibilities in schools feel belonged and recognized. Teachers who are saddled with higher responsibilities are more motivated and have a strong feeling that they are people of high integrity and intelligence to be given such a responsibility. Satisfaction could come as a result of the responsibility assigned to a teacher which in a long run can affect teaches job performance.

Growth

This is also another satisfier that can bring job satisfaction to teachers. Teachers just like other workers seek for growth and development in their chosen career. Where there are no prospects for advancement, the worker itself becomes bored. This also applies to teachers. Organizations such as schools can create avenues for self-actualization by involving teachers in the day to day administration of the schools. Primary schools teachers could be involved in the administration of the school by giving them assignments based on their skills, creating of structures that permit teachers growth and self development.

Hence teachers seek growth and development in their career, school administration has a critical role to play in this regard. Suffice is to say that any responsible school administration will realize that the welfare of staff is key to the success of any school program.

School Administration and Provision of Welfare Services.

The lean financial income of (Nigeria) teacher today is faced with a lot of competing demands. This has made it imperative for schools especially primary schools to look inward and fashion out ways of caring or taking palliative measures for their members. The school administrator through the internally generated revenue and externally sourced funds from school financial institutions or staff loans scheme could cushion the effects of irregular salaries and allowances.

The head teacher who occupies an important position as the chief executive of this level of education has a big role to play. The head teacher is the leader of the institution and the head teacher's responsibility in this regard cannot be neglected. Perhaps as a school administrator the head teacher cannot provide all the services needed but could create avenues for improved welfare. The head teacher can utilize the following suggestions such as the use of money as an incentive, formation of cooperative societies in the schools and career development programs for teachers.

Today money as a motivator comes in the form of wages/salaries, fringe benefits, bonuses, pension scheme,

loans and other forms of incentives. Money therefore cannot be overlooked as a major motivator especially in the present economic recession being experienced in the country. Cooperative societies could be formed under the leadership of the head teacher or a dependable representative. This will create avenues for teachers to borrow money and build comfortable homes, use it for life sustenance and a comfortable retirement life.

The school administration under the leadership of the head teacher could also provide for career development of the teachers. The head teacher as an educational administrator has certain responsibilities to perform to ensure that staff is effective in discharging their duties. Such responsibilities are: arranging for off-the-job training for staff, conducts on-the-job training, in service training programs, organizing workshops/seminars and continually co-coordinating the efforts of staff in acquiring new skills and knowledge for better performance. Career development programs for both the existing and incoming teachers could be fashioned out and followed strictly by the school. This will enable the teachers to rise through the ranks to the peak of their carriers.

Welfare Services and Teachers Performance

The human resources or teachers as earlier mentioned are delicate and very important aspect of school management. Teachers who are the pinnacles of educational attainments need to be properly and carefully handled. This could be achieved by

ensuring that whatever is needed to make them satisfied is provided or put in place. Dunu (2001) identifies some incentives which encourage people or workers to greater action which enhance maximum output. These incentives include training, promotion policy and regular payment of salaries et cetera. Other welfare services that have compelling effects on teachers performance include:

Residential Accommodation

Man's need for shelter has been a growing concern since creation; God provided shelter for man in the Garden of Eden. A good shelter for teachers will makes them comfortable and provides a place for them to relax after a tedious day's work. An obvious conclusion of Maslow's theory is that employees first need a wage sufficient to feed, shelter and protect them and their families as well as a safe working environment. This is indication that this basic need of man when not satisfied will eventually affect his performance negatively. Stima (1994), also posits that the happiness and success of teachers are generally affected by their living conditions. If they have desirable rooms and apartments, good meals and adequate transportation facilities, their adjustments are much more likely to be satisfactory and consequently put up an impressive performance. The trend today is that most teachers reside in their homes hence the disappearance of staff quarters in most schools. Those who are not indigenes of such areas would be provided with residential accommodation to enable them settle down quickly for school business.

Loans could also be provided by government to enable the teachers put up structures that are befitting of teachers. Alternatively, staff quarters could be built through communal efforts to house the teachers in order to facilitate their attendance to schools.

Health Facilities

Almost all primary schools in the country do not have medical facilities. Facilities such as school clinics are absent in Nigerian primary schools. This makes teachers vulnerable to illnesses and disease. Government does not settle bills of teachers whom through their meager resources treat themselves to be fit for the job. The absence of trained medical personnel in these schools, places a financial burden on the teachers who are supposed to be treated at subsidized rates if these health centers were established in their schools. The quest for medical attention elsewhere even in times of minor injuries affects performance. This is more so that such teachers can spend days or weeks under the pretext of searching for health care. If however, their medical bills are settled; health centre's provided in the schools, the absenteeism would be reduced and consequently an affective performance.

It is also important to know that no reasonable staff performance in any educational institution can be realized without adequate provision and maintenance of the physical health of the personnel who perform the various services. Teachers in particular cannot carry out their duties effectively when periodic examination of their health status is not checked. This can be done

using the pre-employment model and the periodic model.

Under the pre-employment model, staff enlisted for employment is examined in order to meet the laid down standards of the school. One such standard that should be applied to all staff in educational organization is sound health, including mental physical and emotional vigor. (Akpakwu, 2012). Pre-employment health examination is aimed at eliminating applicants incapable of meeting health standard of the institution. Teachers who could not meet such standard could be eliminated so that their health standard would not have a tole on their performance when employed.

The periodic model on the other hand is a systematic procedure for periodic medical examinations. A periodic medical examination helps to prevent illness and to detect potentially serious physical, mental and emotional disorders and placement of individuals especially those approaching retirement or sufferings from physical in capabilities, in position compatible with their physical capacity, Akpakwu (2012). This model is essential in the sustenance of staff performance. Staff who could have declined in performance as a result of their illness are detected and immediate remedies taken either in form of referrals or in – house treatment where such a facility exist.

Another aspect of staff (teachers) health that can affect their performances is their mental health. Teachers in Nigeria have a mirage of problems that affect their performance.

When teachers are stressed up as a result of work hazards or other conditions of work, their contributions towards the achievement of goals and objectives of the institutions are denied. The school manager is to help create an atmosphere where teachers will be less stressful irrespective of their problems at work. Needful to mention that candidates with mental disorder and problems of maladjustment are not considered for employment in educational institutions as proposed by Grodbelt (1973), cited in Akpakwu (2012).

The ability of the school manager to detect teachers with mental restiveness will prevent a decline in performance. Irregular payment of salaries coupled with unwarranted deductions from their salaries make it increasingly difficult for them to defray their medical bills. "A healthy heart is a productive heart" If this adage is anything to go by teachers with medical or health challenges will perform below expectations. Nosai (2011), states that salaries of teachers are poor and other benefit like health care, study leave with/without pay, leave grant death benefits as well as retirement benefits is not regularly paid to teachers. These benefits as well as salaries if regularly paid to teachers will reduce the economic hardship they usually experience.

Payment of salaries

Teachers in Nigeria today appear to be synonymous with non-salary workers. In the field of work of teachers, salaries have become a privilege and not a right. This is made manifest where

primary school teachers go without salaries for months. This is where truancy, inadequate teaching, alternative means of livelihood mount the centre stage. "An empty stomach they say has no ears". These teachers cannot be blamed because a worker is worth his wages. Irregular or non-payment of salaries to primary school teachers has affected their performance more than any other factor. Their inability to pay their children's fees, settle medical bills, attend to other social needs problems have both psychological and emotional effects on their performance.

Teachers Social Needs

Man is a social animal. When it becomes difficult for man to attend to his social problems, the devastating effects is more felt by the beneficiaries of the skills and knowledge. For teachers to be effective, they have to be given time to attend to their social challenges. The human relations theory propounded by Mary PakerFollet (1868-1933), attests to this.

The principal view of this theory is that the psychological and sociological factors greatly influence individual performance at work. According to this theory the school administration is suppose to have a "human face" in dealing with staff. The theorist believes that effective use of human being hinged on motivating the staff as well as meeting their needs.

Emphasis is placed on both the objectives of the school, the interest, needs and aspirations of the staff. As a major component of staff welfare,

teachers tend to decline in their performance if the school administration does not act as a “brother keeper”. If however, allowed to see to their social needs, they become more relaxed and readily available to do their work.

Conclusion

This paper discussed the influence of staff welfare on teachers’ job satisfaction and performance. It identified some ways of ensuring job satisfaction of teachers. The paper went further to identify the roles of school administrators in the provision of welfare services to teachers and the place of Welfare services in teacher’s performance.

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