



Causes of Attrition among Lecturers in Colleges of Education in North East, Nigeria

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Abstract

The main purpose of the study was to assess the Causes of Attrition among Lecturers in Colleges of Education in North Eastern Nigeria. Specifically, the study sought to determine the Impact of Work Condition on Attrition among Teaching Staff in the study area. A research question in line with the stated objective guided the study. The study employed survey research design where data collected was analyzed using mean. Finding of the study reveals that work condition is a factor that causes attrition among lecturers in Colleges of Education. The study recommends that government should do everything humanly possible in ensuring that the work condition for lecturers in Colleges of education is conducive, just and supportive for active participation.

Keywords: Attrition; Lecturers; Colleges of Education; Work condition

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Introduction

Colleges of Education (COEs) in Nigeria are the teacher training institutions vested with the responsibility of producing teachers with high personal and professional discipline at the basic educational level and beyond. The colleges train teachers at NCE level who are dedicated with appropriate knowledge, skills and attitudes that would facilitate easy achievement of the national goals (FRN, 2012). They therefore play a pivotal role of providing quality, highly motivated, conscientious and efficient education at all levels (FRN, 2013). Teachers are being recruited day in day out in the Nigerian colleges of education. When duly employed, it is expected that the teachers will be satisfied with their job and remain in it. For, the longer the teacher stays in the occupation, the more experience he acquires and the better for his students and the entire education system.

Teacher attrition is a situation in which teachers quit their current job by moving to a similar or different profession entirely mostly in demand of higher paying jobs which as a result renders the schools sorrowing of their much required teaching personnel. Miller and Chait (2008) described teacher attrition as an abrasion, where teachers leave the classroom and take up

other jobs inside or outside the educational system. Thereby leaving the school bereaved of its much needed teachers for effective delivery (Okeke and Okaforcha, 2019).

Attrition is one of the major problems affecting teachers in the Nigerian Colleges of Educational system. There has been a growing concern about how experienced teachers in general and particularly in Colleges of Education in Nigeria are leaving the job. Wushishi (2014) attributed the shortage to 'revolving door' syndrome where sizeable numbers of teachers leave due to reasons other than retirement. A situation described by Egu, Nwaju & Chinonye (2011) as wastage of educational asset and capital. It is more more disturbing in North eastern sub region being an area that suffers serious educational setbacks as a result of severe security challenges due to insurgency meted by Boko Haram.

The exit of teachers from Colleges of Education system to other institutions or professions is a costly phenomenon as it substantially affects both our primary and post primary institutions of learning. It increases the number of inexperienced teachers and limits the access of school-aged children to quality education (Aslami, 2013). it was found out that Schools with high rate



of attrition records lesser number of students that meet state standards in terms of assessments (Guin, 2004; Ronfeldt & McQueen (2017). Equally disturbing is the finding that among new lecturers, the best and the brightest appear to be those that mostly leave (Henke, Chen, & Geis, 2000; Murnane, Singer, Willett, Kemple, & Olsen, 1991; Schlechty & Vance, 1981). Also, that as much as 50% of new lecturers leave within the first 5 years of entry into the occupation (Huling-Austin (1990); Ingersoll & Smith (2003); Murnane et al. (1991).

So many factors like retirement, sickness, or death (Business Dictionary Online, 2019) account for attrition in the teaching profession which are all natural phenomena that cannot be avoided. It is pertinent to emphasize on work condition in the Colleges of Education for it is the most likely circumstance that may result from human action. Good, hardworking accounts for committed and job satisfaction (UKessays, 2016). In that direction therefore, it was observed that challenging work situation, inadequate support and large number of changes management makes in an establishment as causative elements of attrition in an organization (Russel, Williams & Gleason-Gomez, 2010; Business dictionary online, 2019) attributes as a factor that causes attrition rate among employees rises steeply.

Attrition in Colleges of Education causes a slowdown in stipulations to work connection and productivity (Shodhganga, 2019) as it leads to decrease in performance. In a kind of replacement, workers with little experience takes over the job where they may not be effective enough to convey optimized services to the organization (Shodhganga, 2019).

As Heller (2014) observed that teaching profession is having the highest attrition rate of all professions. Investigation has shown that attrition has negative effect on students' Performance in the core subject areas of English Language, Arts and Math (Ronfeldt & McQueen, 2017; Guin, 2004). These are the most essential subject areas of educational curriculum that produces most of the professionals needed for steering our economy and moving the nation forward.

Universal Basic Education programme came with a large increase in enrolment at the

primary and secondary levels of education without a corresponding increase in teaching staff in the schools. Teachers continue to retire, while others move to other jobs outside the education system for a variety of reasons best known to them. As teacher trainees in the country, teacher attrition in Nigerian Colleges of Education is startling and therefore a preoccupied problem in Nigerian education system generally and in the Northeast specifically. The situation is so startling that it becomes expedient to investigate the causes of attrition as a prevailing phenomenon as well as the possible strategies that could be employed to increase retention among lecturers in Colleges of Education in North East, Nigeria.

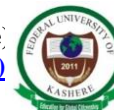
Statement of the problem

The high level of attrition among Teaching Staff in the Colleges of Education system is generating concern among the academics. The trend is posing a serious threat to the performance of the existing staff thereby affecting the productivity of the Colleges of Education as a whole.

For instance, it may sound unbelievable that in the school of Education, Federal College of Education (Technical) Gombe (where the researchers are working) alone, just from 2012 to 2019, about 22% of the teacher workforce left the service of the College (Statistics Unit, FCE(T) Gombe, 2019). These Teaching Staff in the Colleges of Education moved to the Universities or left the profession altogether. What is more disturbing is the further revelation by Statistics Unit, FCE (T) Gombe (2019) that Out of the number that left, about 60% are PhD holders in various fields.

This Abrasion may not be unconnected with several factors like salaries and unsatisfactory work condition. The situation is beginning to devastate the college of education system. This is as lamented by Beaugez (2012) that students lose the benefit of being taught by experienced and quality teachers as a result.

The consequences are loss of resources for the recruitment and induction/training of new teachers. The revolving effect will gradually impact on teacher education and subsequently the economy of the nation. It is imperative therefore, to consider the causes



of attrition and how it can be curtailed in the Colleges of Education in North-eastern Nigeria.

Research Question

The study was guided by the following research question:

1. What are the causes of attrition among lecturers in colleges of education in North-East, Nigeria?

Methodology

The study was a quantitative survey. Survey is a design that allow researchers to study large population more easily, by seeking opinions of the respondents mostly through sampling (Jackson, 2012). Survey research was therefore appropriate to this study because the study involved large population where their opinions were sought.

The study was carried out in North-East, Nigeria. The North-East of Nigeria comprises of Adamawa, Bauchi, Borno, Gombe, Taraba and Yobe States. It is convenient because all the states have at least one college of education (either state, Federal or both).

The population for this study was 2039 lecturers from five selected Colleges of Education in the North-East Nigeria. Five colleges of education were sampled for the

study due to their homogeneity in terms policy, administration, certification and operation. A total of 334 respondents were used as sample for the study. The sample size was determined using Taro Yamane statistical formula for drawing sample size.

Eight (8) items structured questionnaire titled Causes of Attrition Among Lecturers (CAL) was used for data collection was used in the study. The questionnaire had 5-point Likert scale of 'Strongly Agreed' to 'Strongly Disagreed'. The instrument was validated by two lecturers from School of Education, Federal College of Education (Technical), Gombe and its reliability was determined using Cronbach alpha where a reliability coefficient of 0.89 was found.

Data obtained was analyzed using mean. Considering the five Likert type scale used in the instrument, a decision rule was drawn where all items within the mean interval of 4.01 - 5.00 were considered as Strongly Agreed (SA), those items within the mean range of 3.01 - 4.00 were considered as Agreed (A), from 2.01 - 3.00 were considered as Undecided (UD), items within the mean of 1.01 - 2.00 were considered as Disagreed (D), whereas those items within the mean interval of 0.01 - 1.00 were considered as Strongly Disagreed (SD).

Results

Table 1: Causes of attrition among lecturers in Colleges of Education in North-East, Nigeria

S/N	Items	Mean	Remarks
1.	Teachers leave Colleges of Education because the environment is not good and conducive for work	4.31	Strongly Agreed
2.	Challenging work condition in the Colleges of Education is the reason why teacher leave their jobs	3.72	Agreed
3.	Teachers quit teaching in Colleges of Education due to lack of job satisfaction	3.46	Agreed
4.	There are inadequate support for teacher progression in the colleges of education	3.20	Agreed
5.	The available teacher preparation programs are not properly focused on gearing up and encouraging teachers in the fundamental stages of their careers	3.68	Agreed
6.	Teachers are discouraged by unequal work distribution among teaching staff in the colleges of education system	3.81	Agreed
7.	Lack of teachers active involvement in decision making process is a frustrating factor that send the teachers away from the colleges of education system	2.9	Agreed
8.	Excessive teacher workload in the Colleges of Education system discourage teachers from continuing working in the institutions	3.84	Agreed
Grand Mean		3.72	Agreed



Table 1 shows the responses of the respondents on causes of attrition among Teaching Staff in Colleges of Education in North Eastern Nigeria. The analysis shows that the respondents strongly agreed to item 1 with a mean value of 4.31 as they also agreed to all the remaining 7 items within the mean of 3.20 - 3.81 which are all above the cutoff mean of 3.0 for the 5 likert scale's rating. The table's grand mean was above the mean interval of 3.00 which revealed that the respondents have agreed that one of the causes of attrition among lecturers in Colleges of Education in North East Nigeria is work condition. The major finding of this study therefore, is that work condition is a factor that causes attrition among lecturers in colleges of education in North-East, Nigeria.

Discussion of findings

In this study, eight factors that contributes to attrition among Lecturers in colleges of education in North East Nigeria were identified. These factors are that the college of education environment is not good and conducive for work, challenging work condition, teachers quit teaching in Colleges of Education due to lack of job satisfaction, inadequate support for teacher progression and that available teacher preparation programs are not properly focused on gearing up and encouraging teachers in the fundamental stages of their career. Others are that teachers are discouraged by unequal work distribution among teaching staff, lack of teachers' active involvement in decision making process and Excessive teacher workload.

The study therefore found that work condition leads to attrition among teaching staff in Colleges of Education in North Eastern Nigeria. This is in agreement with UKessays (2016) who stated that no matter how good, hardworking and committed a teacher is, if the environment is not good and conducive there is no way the teacher can stay to efficiently perform duties as expected. The finding also corroborates that of Russel (2006) who observed challenging work situation and inadequate support as causative elements that leads to teacher attrition. It also affirms the position of Business dictionary online (2019) who attributes attrition to too many number of

changes management makes in an establishment.

Conclusion

From the finding of this study, it was concluded that attrition among teachers in colleges of education in North East, Nigeria are due to provocative work condition. These can largely be attributed to in conducive work environment, challenging work condition, poor satisfaction, inadequate support for teacher progression. Others are unequal work distribution among teaching staff, lack of teachers' active involvement in decision making process and excessive teacher workload.

Recommendation

Based on its finding, the study recommends that government should do everything humanly possible in ensuring that the work condition for lecturers in Colleges of education is conducive, just and supportive for active participation.

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