

# **AN ASSESSMENT OF TEACHER RETENTION AND JOB SECURITY IN PRIVATE SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN OGUN STATE, NIGERIA**

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**Abstract.** This study assessed the relationship between teacher retention and job security in private secondary schools in Ogun state, Nigeria. The study assessed adequacy in teaching and learning infrastructure, evaluated mode of recruitment of teachers, the factors responsible for high teacher turnover and teachers' retention strategies employed in private secondary schools. Descriptive research of the survey design was employed in this study. Data were collected using questionnaire. Multistage sampling technique was used for data collection among 200 teachers including the school principals. Data collected were analyzed with a mixture of descriptive and inferential statistics. Percentages, mean and frequency counts were used to answer the research questions raised while Pearson Moment Correlation Coefficient and t-test analysis were used to test the formulated hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The findings from this study revealed that teaching and learning infrastructure were inadequate in most of the schools. It was observed that books, classroom and teachers were very adequate in some of the schools. However, few of the schools had internet facility for knowledge transfer and student exposure to the worldwide web. The study also showed that the proprietors were

primarily responsible for staff recruitment although there were instances where formal advertisement for recruitment was made. The study further revealed a significant relationship between teacher retention strategies and job security in private secondary schools in Osun state. The study also showed a significant relationship between teacher turnover and job security in the schools. In addition, the findings showed a significant relationship between teacher turnover and job security in private secondary schools in Osun state. Lastly, the study revealed a significant difference in the mean rate and female teachers' turnover in the selected private secondary schools. Based on the findings, it was therefore recommended that teacher retention strategies should include prompt payment of salary, workers' welfare packages, good working conditions, teacher mentoring programme, teacher preparation and the provision of basic amenities for effective academic calendar in the secondary schools to ensure job security in private secondary schools.

*Keywords:* assessment, teacher retention, job security, private secondary schools, school administrator

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## **Introduction**

Teachers play crucial roles in the task of nation building for sustainable national development. Teachers are critical component in creating school environments that are conducive to teaching and learning. In fact, the recruitment and retention of quality school teachers are matters of great importance in today's educational system. Over the years, many educational researchers are sometimes not conclusive in what matters most in the educational process. There are also concerns about leadership structure in educational institutions which to a large extent determine the level of teaching and teachers' retention (Bolman & Deal, 2008). During the past decades, teachers' turnover has become a major concern in educational research and policy analysis because of

the demand it creates for replacement (Johnson & Birkeland, 2003; NCTAF, 2003).

Teachers play a wide variety of roles in a school, not the least of which is the creation of academically supportive environments for both students and teachers. Leithwood et al. (2008) posts that while teachers have the most influence on student performance, teachers are essential for setting the tone of the learning environment and modeling good teaching practice. The role of the principal is crucial in promoting and supporting teachers' achievements, creating a positive work environment for teachers, and improving staff morale, which also creates the right learning environment for students (Leithwood et al, 2008; Firestone et al., 2001).

Teacher accountability such as teachers' ability to take responsibility for student achievement, is often an indicator of the quality of a particular schools' educational practices in general (Vanderhaar et al., 2006; Firestone et al., 2001). Because teachers are educational leaders among their teachers, an effective teacher can shape the outcome of a school's performance on test scores by supporting creative and effective teaching (Firestone et al., 2001). In their in-depth study of teacher retention and mobility in Washington State (Plecki et al., 2005) finds that high teacher turnover was correlated with high teacher recruitment, in another study of teacher transience, Ingersoll (2001) finds administrative support to be one of four critical factors in teachers' decisions to remain in, or leave, teaching.

It is a known fact that concern regarding standards and the assurance of quality in all aspects of schooling has implications for the recruitment, retention, and development. The facts about the teacher retention problem speak for themselves. Turnover for teachers is significantly higher than other occupations in many schools (Ingersoll, 2002). Based on analysis of the study conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics 1999-2000 school years, it was estimated that almost a third of America's teachers leave the field sometime during their first three years of teaching, and almost half leave after five

years (Ingersoll, 2001). In many low-income communities and rural areas, the rates of attrition are even higher. The attrition rate for those who enter through some “alternative” pathways can be as high as 60 percent (Darling-Hammond et al. (2001). As a result of high attrition rates, despite their best efforts to recruit new teachers, many of the schools wind up with a net loss each year. In 1999, for many of the US schools hired 232,000 teachers who had not been teaching the year before. Ironically, the schools lost more than 287,000 teachers who left for other occupations that year 55,000 more than they hired.

Educational questions concerning the optimum approaches for effective recruitment and retention of teachers have become matters to which increasing concern has been devoted in education system globally. In some countries national inquiries have been set up to analyze the dimensions of what is seen as a problem in the provision of educational leadership including teachers’ retentions. Though, evidence suggests that, there are no shortage of teachers in many developed economy, there is however concerns about the quality of leadership and the question of whatever the structures and cultures within which teachers work, and through which they are trained, are adequate. Politics, formal and informal structures, enduring cultural values, and norms have all been variously identified are defined as impacting on the success of strategies to improve teachers’ recruitment and retention around the globe. Moreover, the loss of leadership experience, expertise, knowledge, and wisdom has the potential to impact adversely on school quality and students learning

Of particular concern in some setting are the difficulty of attracting and retaining women and members of particular ethnic and minority groups, and the difficulty of filling teaching positions in rural, remote, and disadvantage areas such as lack of provision of basic infrastructural facilities. For these reasons many are claiming that the education profession needs to move towards an approach to career planning, that is systematic, integrated, and interrelated.

Job security is an important determinant of job retention among teachers. It is one of the non-quantifiable factors that characterized the level of reliability and dependability of a job. 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. Teachers' job security is ensured after confirmation of appointment. In other words, the staff is accorded the tenure status. This means that the teacher cannot be dismissed from the job arbitrarily. Tenure, therefore, gives the teacher a sense of job security. Nowadays however, the job security of teachers has been threatened.

Khan & Khan (2012) in their study discovered that job safety/ security significantly related to commitment and performance. Job security induces employee commitment in any work situation. Teachers who perceive threats of job security would not put in their best for the achievement of institutional goals and objectives and would not take their job seriously. They would be less committed to the institution they are working for.

### **Statement of the problem**

There is increasing emphasis on the need for coherent, integrated, consequential and systematic approaches to teacher recruitment and retention. This requires that schools and school system require a cadre of qualified and experience educators to provide them with a number of suitably qualified and trained aspirants to apply for and assume positions of leadership in schools. Unfortunately, in many parts of Nigeria the numbers of teachers' vacant positions have been occupied by non-professional teachers due to high unemployment rate as well as political interference in some quarters. These factors have been identified as constituting problems for the provision and delivery of effective schooling and quality teacher retention in Nigeria. Hence, the present study will take a critical look at some of this concerns as it affects teacher re-

tention and job security among private secondary schools in Osun state, Nigeria with a view to contribute to existing knowledge in the field of educational research.

### **Purpose of the study**

The aim of this study is to establish the relationship between teacher retention and job security among private secondary schools in Osun state. This will be achieved through the following specific objectives which are set to: (1) assess the adequacy of teaching and learning infrastructure of the selected schools; (2) evaluate the mode of recruitment of teachers among the selected schools; (3) investigate factors responsible for high teacher turnover among secondary schools; (4) investigate teacher retention strategies employed among private secondary schools

### **Research questions**

The following research questions will be answered in the course of this study: (1) what is the mode of recruitment and selection of teachers in private secondary schools; (2) what are the factors being responsible for high teacher turnover in private secondary schools.

### **Hypotheses**

- (1) There is no significant relationship between teacher retention and job security;
- (2) There is no significant relationship between teacher turnover and job security;
- (3) There is no significant difference in the mean of male and female teachers' turnover in private secondary schools in Ogun state.

### **Significance of the study**

This study will be of significance considering the start of teacher turnover and job security among private schools in Nigeria. It is expected that the outcome of this study will benefit not only the teachers but also school administrators. This study will help its readers comprehend the significance of effective teacher retention programme among school administrators for successful teaching and learning in high schools. The outcome of this study will benefit students, teachers, principals and parents including government in the areas of policy intervention and supports programmes. This study will contribute to understanding of teacher retention by modeling the relationship between teacher turnover and job security in school.

### **Methodology**

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. This is to enable the researcher to describe the situation the way it was found. It also allows opinion pull from a large population. The population of the study comprised of 37 registered private secondary schools the senatorial districts. Out of which 10 were selected for the study comprising the principal and classroom teachers in different subject areas. Precisely, 10 principals and 190 teachers in the ten schools were selected for the study making a total of 200 respondents. Multi-stage sampling techniques were used to select the sample for the study. The first stage involved the use of simple random sampling technique to select a senatorial district. Stage two is purposive sampling technique to select the registered private secondary schools in the area, out of which 10 were selected. The last stage involved the use of simple random sampling technique to select 200 teachers including the school principal's A questionnaire titled '*Teacher Retention and Job Security in Private Secondary Schools*' (TRJSPSS) was used for data collection. The questionnaire comprised five sections A-E; with section A assessed respondent's socio-demographic information such as age, sex, status, level of education etc. section B measured the adequacy of teach-

ing and learning infrastructure of the schools. Section C elicited information on mode of recruitment of teachers in the schools. Section D investigated factors responsible for high teacher turnover in secondary schools, and lastly, section E sought information on teacher retention strategies. All items in the questionnaire followed a five-points Likert scale rating.

### Results and discussion

Data collected were analysed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. Frequency counts, percentages, mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions raised while the formulated hypotheses were tested using t-test and Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient. All hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance.

*Research question 1:* what is the mode of recruitment of teachers among the selected schools?

Table 1 shows that the mode of recruitment with the highest mean 2.7 on the scale of 5 was principal/proprietors/ proprietress followed by direct employment and with advertisement and through recruiting agencies with a mean of 2.6. Other report includes indirect employment without advertisement with a mean of 2.4 while board of directors accounted for the least mean rank 2.0 on the scale of 5points. One could then deduce from the above that the authorities of the sample schools fully utilized the most common methods of recruitment of staff into their school for knowledge transfer between students and teachers.

**Table 1.** Mode of recruitment of teachers among the selected schools

Mode of recruitment and selection of teachers	Definitely true of us	True of us	Not true of us	Definitely not true of us	Do not practice	Mean	Std . dev

Direct employment without advertisement	25(13.0)	75(39.1)	46(24.0)	43(22.4)	3(1.6)	2.4	1.0
Direct employment with advertisement	57(30.0)	54(28.4)	24(12.6)	51(26.8)	4(2.1)	2.6	1.2
Recruiting agencies	51(27.0)	41(21.7)	63(33.3)	32(16.9)	2(1.1)	2.6	1.1
Board of directors	24(12.6)	26(13.7)	60(31.6)	78(41.1)	2(1.1)	2.0	1.0
Principals/proprietors determine mode of recruitment	73(38.0)	35(18.2)	38(19.8)	43(22.4)	3(1.6)	2.7	1.2

*Research question 2.* What are the factors responsible for high teacher turnover in the secondary schools?

Table 2 presents the details of the retention strategies adopted by the schools. The table shows that good salaries structure (mean =3.6), good working conditions (mean =3.4), teacher adequate preparation (mean =3.5), teacher mentoring (mean =3.4), good student – teacher relationships (mean =2.9), staff participation in school management (mean =3.3) and schools safety programme were tops on the list of teacher retention strategies. Others include physical environment (mean =3.1), opportunities to contribute (mean =3.1), activities that engage students (mean =2.9) and service learning programme (mean =2.9).

**Table 2.** Factors responsible for high teacher turnover in secondary schools

Factors	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Mean	Std. Dev.
Good salary structure	89(45.6)	67(34.4)	22(11.3)	17(8.7)	3.2	0.9
Working condition	100(51.5)	41(21.1)	50(25.8)	3(1.5)	3.2	0.9
Teachers' adequate preparation	83.(42.6)	66(33.8)	46(23.6)	0	3.2	0.8
Beginning teacher mentoring	53(27.0)	96(49.0)	28(14.3)	19(9.7)	2.9	0.9
Student-teacher rela-	67(34.4)	47(24.1)	73(37.4)	8(4.1)	2.9	1.0

tionships						
Student-student relationships	48(24.7)	87(44.8)	43(22.2)	16(7.2)	2.8	0.9
Teacher-staff administrator relationship	50(25.8)	109(56.2)	30(15.5)	5(2.6)	3.1	0.7
School-parent-community relationship	45(23.9)	68(36.2)	70(37.2)	5(2.7)	2.8	0.8
The physical environment	54(27.7)	100(51.3)	40(20.5)	1(.5)	3.1	0.7
Staff participation in school management	63(32.3)	68(34.9)	54(27.7)	10(5.1)	2.9	0.9
Opportunities to contribute	63(32.6)	88(45.6)	32(16.6)	10(5.2)	3.1	0.8
Activities that engage students	49(25.3)	87(44.8)	49(25.3)	9(4.6)	2.9	0.8
Service learning programme	54(28.4)	84(44.2)	42(22.1)	10(5.3)	2.9	0.9

### Testing of hypotheses

*Hypothesis 1:* There is no significant relationship between teacher's retention and job security.

Table 3 shows that r-calculated value of 0.230 is greater than the r table value of 0.19. The null hypothesis is therefore rejected and alternative accepted. Hence, there is a significant relationship between teacher retention strategies and job security of private secondary schools in Ogun State.

**Table 3.** Analysis of the relationship between teachers' retention and job security.

Variables	N	r- calculated	r- tabulated
Retention strategies	200	0.230	0.1946
Job security			

*Hypothesis 2:* There is no significant relationship between teacher turnover and job security.

**Table 4.** The analysis of relationship between teacher turnover and job security

Variables	N	r- calculated	r- tabulated
Teacher turnover Job security	200	0.375	0.1924

*Hypothesis 3:* There is no significant difference between male and female teachers' turnover in private secondary schools in Ogun state.

**Table 5.** Test of significant difference between male and female teachers' turnover in private and public secondary schools in Ogun state

Sex	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	DF	t-calculated	t- tabulated
Male Female	47 153	50.4255 49.7712	11.70980 12.04514	198	0.333	0.103

Table 5 shows that t-calculated value of=0.33 is greater than t-table of 0.10.

Hence, the null hypothesis is therefore rejected. Therefore, there is significant difference between male and female teachers' turnover in private secondary schools in Ogun State.

Hence, the null hypothesis is therefore rejected. Therefore, there is significant difference between male and female teachers turn over in private secondary schools in Ogun state.

### **Discussion of findings**

In the course of this study, teaching and learning infrastructure such as books, schools, library, basic amenities, classrooms, students, and worker's salaries, availability of staff rooms and health facilities as well as provision of

portable water supplied to the school were grossly inadequate basic amenities in some schools while the majority had most of the identified infrastructure. The study further showed that there were just few schools that have modern school libraries conducive for reading and learning. Besides, the study showed that very few of the selected schools had internet facility. The lack of basic amenities in these schools may be due to inadequate funding of the school by the owner-managers.

Lack of internet facility and ICT devices for learning and training in particular can negatively affects students learning outcomes in this information society. Also, inadequate infrastructures have the potential to affect the extent of teachers' retention in secondary schools in the state. This agrees with previous studies such as Walker et al. (2003) who documented the significance of adequate resources in school administration. The need for adequate funding will go a long way in enhancing the performance of the students as well as success stories of the schools. Policy makers need to develop strategies that will compel these schools to provide basic infrastructure as requirements for renewal of licenses operation. Government also has the responsibility of complementing the efforts of these private schools through the provision of basic amenities in the various communities for the benefits for the affected school to tap from.

On mode of recruitment of teachers, the study showed that the proprietors in almost all the schools were responsible for the staff recruitment. However, the study showed that the schools employed through direct and indirect methods of recruitment such as formal advertisements both internally and externally. In agreement with previous studies, proprietors' responsibility for teachers' selection have been found to discourage people who might otherwise apply for teaching job in secondary schools. The study also showed that almost all the schools regardless of size, similar mode of recruitment was being employed. This significantly revealed the direction and quality of staff recruitment and performance structure.

With regards to factors responsible for teacher retention, this study in agreement with the previous studies have shown that administrative support is one of four critical factors in teachers' decisions to remain in or leave teaching job. This can be better maintained if the school administration encourages participatory system of leadership where teachers and other administrative staff are informed of the recruitment processes. Besides, it has been argued that high teacher turnover can lead to decreased teacher satisfaction and tenure (Ingersoll 2001; Plecki et al., 2005). This implies that management most of most of these schools were quite aware that each of these strategies will contribute significantly to teacher retention in the schools. Hence, the authorities of these schools need to be proactive in ensuring that each of the identified strategies is immediately implemented among the schools, these findings showed that among that although with varying mean scores, each of the factors were considered important in determining teacher high turnover in private secondary schools in Osun state. In agreement with Washington State, Plecki et al. (2005) who found that high teacher turnover was correlated with high teacher recruitment.

The study further revealed a statistically significant relationship between teacher retention strategies and job security in private secondary schools in Osun state. The study also showed a statistically significant relationship between teacher turnover and job security in the schools. In addition, the findings showed a significant relationship between teacher turnover and job security in private secondary schools in Osun state.

Lastly, the study revealed a significant difference in the mean rate of male and female teachers' turnover in the selected private secondary schools.

### **Conclusion and recommendations**

Based on the findings of this study, it is concluded that teachers' retention and job security in private secondary school is not a local phenomenon but a worldwide of concern. Although major factors responsible for poor teachers'

retention may include poor working conditions, inadequate salary structure and other administrative bureaucracies. Nevertheless, it is concluded that best strategies should be employed including good salary structure, good working conditions, teacher mentoring programme, teacher preparation and provision of basic infrastructural amenities.

It is recommended that association of private schools across the country at large should agree on the basic prerequisite for the operations of private secondary schools that will be comprehensive enough to accommodate major barriers associated with higher teacher turnover by regularly organizes meetings that will allow for discussion among their members.

Government should formulate policies that will compel the owners of the private school on the basic salary structure for teachers or other employee with a certain educational qualification who is employed in private schools. This can be achieved through the ministries of education across the country.

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