

Teacher Motivation and Intervening Influence of Human Factor on Optimal Productivity in Secondary Schools in Nigeria

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INTRODUCTION

One fundamental problem bedeviling education in Nigeria generally and secondary education in particular is how teacher professional development and motivation can be more meaningfully and vigorously pursued as to lead to teacher optimal productivity. A key answer to this problem lies in reassessing the commitment of stakeholders in the education sector. How much commitment to teacher professional development and motivation has been exhibited by government, educational institutions, the society and the teachers themselves? In what way and manner has government instituted policies and programmes and then pursued the policies and programmes to logical conclusion? What is the perception of the society about teaching as a profession and teachers at the centre of curriculum implementation? How determined have the teachers been in pursuing further professional development?

It has been lamented that the quality of teachers educational institutions have turned out has been poor (Shuaibu, 2001). Some have blamed this problem on government, stressing that government has not done enough to professionally develop and motivate teachers such as to lead to their commitment towards optimal productivity (Oluwakemi, 2012). Others have blamed the problem on the society which does not see the teaching profession and teachers with the regard they deserve (Jikah, 2012). Consequently, teaching is seen as a job that “does not pay”.

According to Mbachu (2008), the so called teaching profession in Nigeria is characterised by poor funding, poor salary structure, delay or non-payment of salaries and other fringe benefits, and poor working conditions. The teaching profession offers unattractive conditions. Consequently, due to the bad societal perception of the teaching profession and the low level of motivation, the teaching profession in Nigeria has continued to experience brain drain. Trained teachers are now moving away from the teaching profession in search of greener pastures. Some of the teachers who have remained in the profession have engaged in funny practices like examination malpractices, all with the aim of earning more money to meet some life challenges. Furthermore, because the teaching profession is not accorded the kind of status it deserves, teachers in training do not devote themselves adequately to training, viewing that after all, the job pays very little (Jikah, 2012).

If teachers must be committed to their work and perform optimally, their motivation and professional development must be given serious attention. This paper therefore, examines the concept of the human factor, the human factor characteristics and the conditions for achieving optimal productivity based on the HF concept. who the teacher is. It treats teacher professional training and development. The paper examines the need for teachers’ effort at professional training and development. The paper looks at the paradigm for effective teacher training and development. The paper also considers motivation for enhanced teacher productivity. Finally the paper considers the need for school administrators’ continuous managerial training and development.

The Human Factor (HF)

A discussion of this nature will be meaningless without a clear understanding of the concept of the human factor (HF). According to Adjibolosoo (1995:33), the HF refers to the “spectrum of personality characteristics and other dimensions of human performance that enable social, economic and political institutions to function and remain functional over time.” Adjibolosoo added that no social, political and economic institutions can operate effectively without the support of a network of committed people who stand them firmly. Such people continually believe in and affirm societal ideals. Adjibolosoo (1998:27) argued that “the HF is the kingpin of every human endeavour. No human programme achieves its best results without it.” Muzvidziwa (2003) added that the HF is a necessary and a sufficient condition for organizational success.

The HF characteristics

For the HF theory to survive, it must be firmly anchored on the HF characteristics, which, in the words of Muranda (2003) involve commitment, responsibility, honesty, integrity, accountability in the conduct of activities in the workplace. Adjibolosoo (2003) explained integrity to mean individuals’ exhibition of a high degree of adherence and commitment to sound moral principles. Because of this, such individuals work as leaders, managers and subordinates and with others in sincerity and transparency. Responsible individuals are

those who are dependable. They are those people who do not betray the trust. They discharge their duties diligently. Because of their sincerity of purpose, other people rely on their ability, attitude and behaviours.

The HF and educational managers

For any meaningful progress to be made in the education sector, especially in the area of staff development, educational managers must embrace the HF characteristics. In other words, for education managers to record any meaningful progress they need to realize that organizational success does not just depend on people with the appropriate and relevant skills and knowledge but also on people who have imbibed the HF characteristics of honesty, commitment, selflessness, hard work discipline and hard work (Adjibolosoo, 1995). Even with this however, no meaningful results will be achieved if educational managers themselves do not embrace and possess the HF characteristics of sincerity, dependability, trust, responsibility and accountability.

The HF Characteristics and Teachers' Productivity

We would not be wrong to ask the simple question, "Who is a teacher? Is everybody teaching in a school necessarily a teacher? What makes a teacher stand out distinctly?"

According to Okorie (1989), a teacher is one who guides pupils through planned activities so as to acquire the richest learning possible from their experience. Baba (2007) said that teachers are those people vested with the responsibility to undertake the task of helping learners to develop their potentials to the fullest, through carrying the distinct roles of instructing, managing and counselling. Such a person, according to Maduewesi and Eya (2007), is specifically selected, trained and educated for the work of dispensing knowledge to others.

In view of the above, the teacher is one who has acquired the necessary training in the art of teaching in a recognized and accredited institution, under the guidance and tutelage of a qualified teacher. This shows that for one to be a teacher, one must undergo training in an approved institution. Consequently, in the words of Okonkwo and Okonkwo (2008:95), "Many who go by the name teacher today cannot be regarded as such because they lack the basic skills and competencies which teaching demands." Therefore, to be efficient, as a teacher, one needs to update one's knowledge through training and retraining.

Teacher Motivation and HF Decay

Motivation is the process of influencing subordinates to work for a cause desired by the superior (Ejiofor, 1987). Obi (1997:110) defined motivation as "the perceptions, methods, activities used by the management for the purpose of providing a climate that is conducive to the satisfaction of the various needs of the employees so that they may become satisfied, dedicated and effective task performers. This broad and all-embracing definition entails that without motivation, there will be low productivity. In other words, staff members of the secondary school system are not likely to put in their best if they are not sufficiently motivated. Where members of staff are sufficiently motivated, they show commitment to duty. Furthermore, where members of staff are paid well, given a nice status and job security as well as a schedule of duties to stick to, such members of staff reciprocate by hard work and a good day's job, avoiding anything that will damage the good reputation of the school (Obi, 1997).

It has however, been generally observed that teachers in Nigeria have not been sufficiently motivated and that their condition of service has remained poor and pitiable. Besides their salaries being meagre, they are not regularly paid (Lassa, 1996; Isiaku, 2003; Igbudu, 2004, Obodoegbulam, 2007). A study by Oluwakemi (2011) on "Teacher personnel management as determinant of teacher productivity in Oyo State metropolis secondary schools" found that teachers needed to be well-motivated in terms of payments, status and recognition so that they could show more commitment to their job. Buttressing this point, Jikah (2012) asserted that the level of motivation of teachers in many schools across Nigeria is poor. Jikah explained that teachers have low status in the society, are held in low esteem and the teaching profession is not held in high esteem as other professions like medicine and engineering. All this, according to Jikah, is affecting the effectiveness of teachers.

A study that assessed the factors that influenced motivation and productivity of secondary school teachers in Thika District, Kenya, found that school leadership, job enrichment and opportunities for further training, promotion policies, and teachers' professional competence contributed positively to teacher productivity. The study called attention to the need for educational administrators to institute appropriate measures to inspire teachers to high performance (Kahenu, 2012)..

Lack of an effective motivation for teachers poses challenging consequences. In effect, the failure of an education system to guarantee job security, enhanced job motivation and job satisfaction has led to ineffectiveness and reduced productivity and commitment on the part of teachers (Mamman, 2006). The reduced teacher productivity has resulted in ugly situations that seem to have permeated Nigeria's educational institutions such as examination mal-practice, sexual harassment and moonlighting (Obodoegbulam, 2006). Year in year out, students are sent away from their studies on account of engaging in examination mal-practice. Unless urgent steps are taken to restore the past glory of the teacher by providing an environment conducive for his operation,

teacher ineffectiveness in secondary schools across Nigeria will remain a permanent feature in the nation's education system.

One is tempted at this juncture to ask the question, "Why are Nigerian teachers not sufficiently motivated for higher productivity in terms of improved pay packages, better working conditions and other fringe benefits? Are the nation's resources not sufficient to reach where teaching are? Why are teachers not accorded the kind of respect their counterparts in other professions are accorded?"

The answers to these questions and numerous other ones are not farfetched. According to Anyanwu and Adebayo (2003:153), "Nigeria is characterised by HF decay ranging from economic mismanagement to poor governance, embezzlement of public funds, bribery and corruption...budget misappropriation, indiscipline, incidence of ghost workers and dishonesty." Consequently, in the words of Anyanwu and John (2003) favouritism, lack of effective supervision, frequently changes in leadership, incessant strikes, too many "wasted" days considered public holidays have led to low productivity among teachers.

To remedy decaying HF there is need to re-examine existing principles, practices and policies. Failure to do this will only result in a wasteful venture. As Adjibolosoo (2003:33) argued, if there are any plans, programmes, policies and projects people engage in and the plans, policies and programmes "fail to identify the key HF deficiencies in their citizens and labour force, they must recognize and become aware that they are engaged in dead works."

Teacher Education and Professional Development for Quality

According to Barth (1990:49), "nothing in a school has more impact on students in terms of skill development, self-competence, or classroom behaviour than personal and professional growth of the teacher." Buttrressing this point, Okorie (1999) argued that regardless of a teacher's pre-service training, there is need to constantly renew, upgrade and update the teacher's knowledge, skill and capabilities so as to keep pace with the rapidly changing society. Obike (2007) added that one should not be satisfied that one is a trained teacher. In order to excel in the teaching profession, one must continue to update one's knowledge and skills so as to cope with the changing problems of education. Obike argued that teacher development is therefore, necessary because many teachers appear to be professionally trained but occupationally incompetent.

In the words of Mohammed (2001), the effectiveness of an educational system depends on the quality of the teaching staff., stressing that where competent and qualified people are given the appropriate training, quality will result. In view of this, there is apparently the need to ponder on the question, "How qualified are teachers in secondary schools?" This qualification will encompass both paper qualification and job competence and an up-to-date knowledge of the principles and practice of education. For the primary school, the minimum teaching qualification is the Nigeria Certificate in Education (NCE). For the secondary school, the minimum teaching qualification is a degree in relevant field (Mohammed, 2001). However, one does not dispute the fact that in many secondary schools in Nigeria, there are holders of the Nigeria Certificate in Education teaching various subjects. It is sad to "bemoan the fact that nowadays most NCE teachers are disappointingly incompetent even in those subjects they are said to have specialized in" (Mohammed, 2001:29). In view of this, there is apparently the need to reappraise from time to time teacher education and training, as according to the National Policy on Education (Federal Republic of Nigeria, FRN, 2004), no education system can rise above the quality of its teachers. Buttrressing this point, Achuonye (2007) argued that no matter how well organized an education system is, and no matter how well equipped a school is, not much will be realized in the absence of adequately trained and motivated teachers. Consequently, Oluwakemi's (2011) work on teacher personnel management as determinant of teacher productivity recommended among others, that teachers needed to acquire more knowledge through in-service training such as seminars, conferences and regular workshops in order to improve their competencies.

It need be stressed that every step taken to train teachers to enhance their productivity must take into cognizance the five-point value objectives of teacher education, as enshrined in the National Policy on Education (FRN, 2004). The five-point value objectives are:

1. To produce highly motivated, conscious and efficient classroom teachers for all levels of our educational system
2. To encourage further the spirit of enquiry and creativity in teachers
3. To help teachers to fit into the society at large and to enhance their commitment to national objectives
4. To provide teachers with intellectual and professional background adequate for their assignment and to make them adaptable to any changing situation not only in the life of their country but in the wider world
5. To enhance teachers' commitment to the teaching profession

Conscious Desire for Training and Development

Continuously staying on a job without in the least, personal study for professional development is a serious disadvantage to the practising teacher. It is not gainsaying the fact that many teachers teaching in many

secondary schools in Nigeria know the same things they learnt while in training at school, and teach the same things with the same methods they were taught. For such teachers, they are not growing. In effect, they are not developing. Just as the society is dynamic, human knowledge too is dynamic. While basic facts remain such basic facts however, knowledge of those basic facts must be improved upon. Similarly, knowledge of the methods of disseminating facts in the instructional process requires better knowledge of the ways and methods of disseminating them. Besides, human knowledge is susceptible to decay. By constantly and consciously subjecting such knowledge to tests and reviews, it is regained, retained and refined.

The contention here is that teachers will be doing a lot of disservice to themselves and to the society if they just fold their hands and wait to be sent on further studies. Where opportunities appear to close in on teachers who need further training, there is a lot that they can do. One way is for such teachers to develop themselves informally through taking part in professional associations, staff meetings and independent study (Ojike, 2007). Personal studies by way of reading professional articles, journal papers, news papers and as well listening and watching new theories and strategies in the electronic media assists teachers in no small measure (Obike, 2007).

Recognizing the need for teachers to update their knowledge, the National Policy on Education (FRN, 2004) stresses the importance of in-service education and development for teachers, the aim of which is:

1. To advance knowledge, skills on the job of teaching and competencies
2. To reorientate the individual teacher towards new dimension in teaching and learning
3. To advance the frontiers of knowledge
4. To rejuvenate the flagging and reawaken it to the realities of modern development in education industry

Teachers need in-service training because of several factors. These factors include changes in society, technological development and advancement, career changes, change in curriculum and change in government policy (Kpangban in Achuonye & Ajoku, 2007). The needs and aspirations of the society may change with time. Changes in career aspirations are eminent. Government on her part may be required to re-examine existing policies on education to reflect the needs and aspirations of the society. This, in the end, affects what teachers will teach, taking into cognizance the technological age in which we live.

In-service Training and Development Programmes

According to Obike (2007:2), "Teacher development is a process of guided experience to change the serving teachers' attitudes, behaviours or opinions." Obike stressed that this means investing in serving teachers in order for them to perform better. It entails empowering them to make the best use of their natural abilities. Consequently, in-service and development programmes in Nigeria are of several types. According to Mbachu (2008:9), the following are in-service training programmes for teachers:

1. Sandwich programme
2. Continuing education programme
3. Distance education programme; and
4. Conferences, seminars and workshops

The sandwich programme, according to Mbachu (2008), is essentially a holiday teacher education and training programme. If pursued rightly, it does not affect the school term or year. As students finish the term examinations and proceed on (long) vacation, teachers who patronize the sandwich programme report at their study centres and stay on until their study year is over. If there is however, a lot of pressure of duty which requires teachers to attend to their official duties in the school term, such teachers can pursue a continuing education programme which is essentially a part-time or evening lessons programme.

Distance education enables teachers to update their knowledge through an on-line training programme. Here, teachers receive their lectures on-line, have contact with their lecturers (facilitators) on-line and do tests and assignments on-line. On the other hand, government, professional bodies and well meaning individuals who see the need to do so will organize conferences, workshops and seminars so as to update the knowledge and skills of teachers (Mbachu, 2008).

Sometimes teachers stay for a very long time on their jobs without undertaking further training and development. The common reasons, more often than not, advanced by such teachers are that family responsibilities are great and monthly pays cannot cater for these responsibilities and for their further education. In cases of this nature, Obike (2007) pointed out that some State Governments send teachers on study leave with pay or give them scholarships. Beside these, induction and orientation courses can be organized for new staff, to equip them with the school condition. Sometimes, as Obike stressed, teachers can undertake team teaching or acquire useful teaching skills and knowledge from supervisors who carry out demonstration teaching before teachers. All these measures enhance the professional development of teachers and as well improve their financial fortunes.

Paradigm for Continuous Teacher Training and Development

Teacher training and development is so crucial that sometimes organizations do not seem to see the need to pursue it with all the vigour it deserves. To see this as a simple thing means toying with the educational future development of Nigeria. Equally, to disregard training for the category of staff that needs it is clearly a misplacement of priority. In other words, the type of teachers that need professional training and development and the type of training they need are crucial issues that must be taken into consideration. Consequently, it is important to identify the areas that teachers need to develop themselves in order to deliver education effectively to the society. It does not pay to embark on a programme of staff development without identifying the areas of staff needs for further training. Furthermore, so long as teachers are involved in the business of disseminating information, their professional development must and ought to be a continuous one. Consequently, Armstrong (1992:422) postulated a paradigm for continuous teacher training and development as follows:

1. Identify and define the training needs
2. Define the learning required
3. Define the objective of development
4. Plan the development programme
5. Decide who will provide the training
6. Implement the training
7. Evaluate the training
8. Amend and extend training if necessary

Importance of Continuous Professional Development of Teachers

There are several ways that indicate the importance of the continuous professional development of teachers. Obike (2007:3) listed the following as the importance of the continuous professional development of teachers:

1. Ensures promotion of professional growth
2. Helps to improve pedagogical skills
3. Keeps teachers abreast with new knowledge
4. It meets particular teacher needs
5. Helps in leadership responsibility
6. Helps new teachers to adjust to teaching field
7. Recognises the need for modern teaching methods

Continuous teacher education and development is one way to motivate the teacher towards optimal performance. The inability of the school system to guarantee job security accounts for one reason why teachers, for fear of losing their jobs, deliberately are without further training and educational development. Where teachers are assured of their jobs as they undertake further studies, they have the opportunity to improve upon their knowledge and pedagogy. The training accords the teachers the opportunity to train for effective leadership in the school system.

Intensifying the Internship System

The internship training system popularly referred to as teaching practice, needs a form of restructuring and intensification. Until it is viewed with all seriousness for assessing the effectiveness of a teacher, it will only be one of those courses that are pursued as in a classroom setting where students study and sit for examinations. In addition, teachers who are involved in teaching practice must view it with all seriousness as an avenue for them to acquire practical exposure in their fields of study (Mamman, 2006). Mamman viewed that it is during the internship that the trainee teacher has opportunity to update his knowledge by putting into practice the principles, theories and skills he acquired in the classroom. Mamman however, lamented that in many schools, the period devoted to teaching practice is inadequate, stressing that the period of six Weeks to twelve Weeks given to teaching practice is insufficient, compared to other fields of study such as medicine and pharmacy.

Educational Training and Development for School Administrators

School administrators, though teachers in their own right, require special education and training in order for them to be effective in their responsibilities. To be effective as a school administrator, Ezeocha (1989) posited three major administrative skills which school administrators need to possess. These skills are technical skills, human skills and conceptual skills. Technical skills, according to Ezeocha, relate to the ability of the school administrator to effectively utilize tools, methods, processes and techniques towards the goal achievement. Human skill deals with interpersonal skill of the administrator in working effectively with and through members of staff, while conceptual deals with the ability of the school administrator to coordinate and integrate the entire interests of members of staff.

The above skills are achieved through the administrative process of planning, organizing, directing, staffing, reporting and budgeting. School administrators need to be trained continuously in order to update their

knowledge and be effective. According to Aliu (2001), planning entails formulating and forecasting goals and objectives which enable educational administrators to highlight time, people and material resources needed in goal achievement. Planning as viewed by Edem (2006:7) is “an important administrative component through which educational purposes are initiated, translated into programmes and implemented”. To do this, school administrators require training and retraining.

The school administrator needs to be trained to undertake the task of organizing effectively. In the words of Kochhar (2002), three things are organized, namely, human beings into schools, classes, committees, groups..., materials into buildings, furniture and equipment, libraries, laboratories..., and ideas and principles into school systems, curricular and extracurricular activities. In essence, organizing requires building up material and human resources needed for the successful attainment of the goals of the school (Edem, 2006).

As a management function of school administration, coordinating is the process whereby all the elements, namely, persons, materials and ideas, knowledge and principles are harmonized in a uniform programme, to interweave them as to achieve a common objective. In order for the school administrator to undertake the difficult task of coordination, he or she must have the administrative competence to see clearly the relations among people, the allocation of tasks, and the division of labour necessary for organizational achievement (Kochhar, 2002).

Control in school management refers to the methods of regulating, curbing, and checking the excesses of individuals and bodies in pursuance of organizational duties (Edem, 2006:9). School administrators will not only learn to control staff and students. They will also need to be trained on ways to rouse the interest of staff and students. They need to be trained to have the skills and knowledge to stimulate staff to diligently perform their duties. According to Wiles in Okoro (2006:95), the school administrator may be required to do the following, among others: 1) Take the lead in working for good salaries and working conditions of staff; 2) Keep the staff informed of actions that are being taken in their behalf; 3) Try to keep all teachers well supplied with up-to-date materials; 4) Be willing to help teachers work out their difficulties with pupils, parents and other teachers; and 5) Work to increase the friendliness and group feeling in the staff. To achieve all these however, administrators must have initiative, integrity, impact and influence.

Challenge of Teacher Training for Retention and Productivity

Because of poor working conditions, one vital challenge of teacher training is the issue of brain drain. In the words of Ezeani in Okonkwo and Okonkwo (2008), teacher training institutions continue to produce teachers who join the teaching profession but sooner or later move away. The teachers abandon their job for greener pastures. This trend creates gaps in subject areas in many schools. This issue is a serious challenge for governments and stakeholders in education. Teachers need to be adequately trained and retained for optimal performance in the school system.

Another serious challenge deals with the teaching profession. The question is, “Is the teaching profession a dumping ground?” In spite of government’s efforts over the years, to fund secondary education, the teaching profession is only a profession in name. Today, there are all kinds of people who have gotten into the teaching profession handling various subjects in schools. Many of these teachers do not have the basic pedagogy to function effectively as teachers. Having lost a job in the banking industry or in the civil service, many have turned to teaching. The consequence of all this is that the teaching profession is a dumping ground. As a dumping ground, it is difficult to achieve the level of professional development that is required of the teaching profession. And because trained teachers are not treated differently from their untrained counterparts, there is reduced productivity in the school system. This is a serious challenge for government and all stake holders in the education business.

CONCLUSION

An educational institution is established to train individuals to be useful members of the society. The members of the society are expected to contribute their quota to national development. Secondary education is one aspect of the education provided to citizens. At the centre of secondary education is the issue of manpower training and development. Teachers and school administrators need to be trained in order for them to be effective. The teachers however, cannot be effective without their being adequately motivated. Government, the society and all stakeholders in education need to take up the challenge to motivate teachers for higher productivity.

There are several ways to undertake training and development of the teacher. Some of the ways are distance education, sandwich programme, in-service training, induction courses, seminars and conferences. Teachers who are working and whose income will not warrant them to go for further studies can be assisted by being given scholarships and grant of study leave with pay. Teachers must also make effort to develop themselves educationally by reading educative books, journals and newspapers. They can also listen to teachings on the electronic media and undertake team teaching with colleagues.

Training and retraining of secondary school teachers is necessary for several factors such as changes in

societal needs, technological development, career choices and curriculum needs. Continuing professional development of teachers will help the teachers to improve their pedagogical skills, keep abreast of new knowledge and improve their professional growth and development. School administrators also, though teachers in their own right, need training for the managerial positions they occupy. They need managerial training and development in order for them to function effectively. By being equipped with technical, human and conceptual skills, the administrators will be able to motivate teachers and students for greater productivity. They will also be able to use their managerial skills to motivate the community to contribute meaningfully to the development of secondary education.

Key challenges to teacher training and development are brain drain and the teaching profession being made a dumping ground. Because of the poor societal perception of the teaching profession, many trained and useful teachers have moved away from the profession in search of greener pastures elsewhere. Again, the teaching profession is unfortunately seen as a dumping ground where every Dick and Harry, Jig and Jack is found. This trend needs to be reversed. There is therefore, the need for more commitment from government and all well meaning Nigerians to secondary school education in general and secondary school teachers in particular. Government needs to show commitment to professionalizing teaching, increasing funding to teacher education and development and then motivating teachers with better working conditions in order for them to stay on their jobs. This way, teacher training, development and motivation will be enhanced for greater productivity.

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