

# Personnel Management Practices and Teachers' Retention in Public Secondary Schools in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria

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**Abstract:**-The study investigates personnel management practices and teachers' retention in Public Secondary Schools in Akwa Ibom State. To achieve this aim, three research questions and hypotheses were formulated to guide the study. The correlation research design was adopted for the study. The population of the study consisted of 5210 Public Secondary School Teachers. Stratified and simple random sampling techniques were adopted to select 521 teachers for the study. The personnel management practices and teachers' retention questionnaire (PMPTRQ) was used to elicit information for the study. The reliability coefficient of the instrument ranged from 0.71 to 0.91 using Cronbach Alpha Reliability Method. Pearson's Product Moment Correlation and Multiple Regression statistical tools were used for data analysis. The results of the study revealed that principal/staff relationship and promotion were related to teachers' retention in Public Secondary Schools in Akwa Ibom State. The result of the study further showed that principal/staff relationship and promotion a dimensions of personnel management practices when taken together significantly predicted teachers' retention in public secondary schools. Based on the findings of the study, it was recommended among others that adequate promotion of teachers' should be encouraged. Also there should be hormonal relationship among teachers in the study area.

**Keywords:** Personnel, Management Practices, Teachers', Retention, Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria

## I. BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Secondary education is the type of education people receive after primary education and before tertiary education. It occupies an essential position in the Nigerian educational system. It is aimed at providing functional education to the youths. Functional education emphasizes utilitarian purposes which deal with the preparation of the students for useful living in the society. In the present knowledge driven society caused by advent of new technologies that have influenced all facets of human endeavours including the education sector, secondary education needs dynamic and committed teachers who are willing to remain in the teaching profession. This is because teachers are the backbone of any nation's educational system and are central to the success of the schools. Therefore, teachers' retention is crucial in keeping the secondary educational system on track.

Employee retention in any work organisation refers to the steps or practices put in place to motivate the staff by the organization, to encourage its workers to stay in the organization in other to prevent its competent and valuable workers from leaving their job. It involves taking appropriate measures to encourage employees to remain in a work organisation for a maximum period of time (Hang, Hao, Kumar, Ramendran & Kadiresan, 2012). This means that recruiting teachers to teach in secondary schools is important but retention is equally as important as hiring. Teacher retention aims at addressing the needs of teachers to enhance their job satisfaction and to reduce turnover. If teachers are not well remunerated and their promotions are not regular, this is expected to have adverse affect on their retention in the teaching job. A good reward plan for teachers would motivate them to perform their job better and this would enhance their retention. Teacher retention is therefore a function of the "motivational factors they enjoy" (Ahiauzu, Dieprey & Onwuchekwa, 2011 p.29).

Palermo (2002) reported that poor work environment heavy workload and lack of promotion opportunities for teachers are factors contributing to teachers' turnover. Therefore, retaining the desirable teaching force in the secondary school system is imperative because it encourages better services and enhances high productivity and continuity of the school system. In recent times teachers' attrition rate in Akwa Ibom State has been on the increase. Many teachers in Akwa Ibom State secondary schools quit the teaching job out of frustration, poor motivation, poor salary and slow career progression evident in delay in promotion. Secondary school teachers are not well remunerated and their promotions are not regular and these affect their retention in the teaching job. This was evident when the State Secondary Education Board (SSEB, 2014) reported that in 2009, the state lost 10.90% of teachers as a result of attrition. In 2010, the percentage increased to 15.50% and in 2011, the percentage rose to 21.10%. This suggests that all is not well with the secondary school system in the state in terms of teachers' retention. The problem of teachers' retention in secondary schools could be influenced by personnel management practices.

According to Akpan (2011), personnel management is an aspect of organisation management designed to promote harmonious relations among employees and between employees and employers within an organisation. He further stated that personnel management involves activities relating to obtaining and maintaining a competent and harmonious workforce in which each worker is provided with opportunities for personal development and is well utilised in the interest of the organisation. This means that the way personnel (teachers) in secondary schools are managed will to a large extent, determine their commitment to the organisation and their intention to stay or quit. Various personnel management practices may influence teachers' decision to remain or quit the teaching profession. Such practices include training and ensuring job security of the teachers. Bell (2004) maintains that training and job security are two important determinants of employee retention.

It is against this background that the researchers' were driven to find out the relationship between personnel management practices and teachers' retention in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria.

#### *Statement of the Problem*

Effective and result-oriented personnel management for teachers' retention in Akwa Ibom State secondary school system is what many teachers and other stakeholders in education would want. Unfortunately, teachers' attrition rate in the Akwa Ibom State keeps on increasing every year. A large number of teachers leave the teaching profession in search of white collar jobs outside the secondary education sub-sector. Some stakeholders attribute this to ineffective personnel management practices. There is inadequate continuous training programme for teachers and the results of performance appraisal are not properly utilized for promotion and further training of teachers which would have served as a bond to keep the teachers in the school system. The compensation system are not properly managed particularly the incentives which are not adequate to motivate teachers to remain on the job. Teachers' promotion, salary payment and other entitlements are unduly delayed. In some secondary schools, there is poor management of decision-making and teachers are not involved in the process of decision-making. The relationships between the institutional administrators and teachers appear to be unhealthy, sometimes resulting in conflicts.

Similarly, the health programmes for teachers is not properly implemented and managed in the state. Premised on these problems the job security of teachers is threatened. These problems make the teachers lose interest in their teaching job and are inclined for lack of adequate and timely promotion and poor employee/employers relationship. Despite government efforts to encourage teachers in the teaching profession, the problem of teacher retention still persists. At this juncture, it is pertinent to raise the question "How do personnel management practices relate to teachers'

retention in secondary schools in Akwa Ibom State? This study sought to provide answers to this question.

#### *Research questions*

The following research questions were formulated to guide the study:

1. How does principal/staff relationship relate to teachers' retention in public secondary schools?
2. To what extent does promotion relate to teachers' retention in public secondary schools?
3. How does personnel involvement in principal/staff relationship and promotion procedure predict teachers' retention in public secondary schools?

#### *Research Hypotheses*

The following research hypotheses were formulated to guide the study:-

1. There is no significant relationship between principal/staff relationship and teachers' retention in public secondary schools.
2. There is no significant relationship between promotion and teachers' retention in public secondary schools.
3. Principal-staff relationship and promotion procedure, do not significantly predict teachers' retention in public secondary schools.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The study reviewed conceptual, theoretical and empirical literature as presented below

#### *Principal/staff relationship and teachers retention in public secondary School*

A number of researchers had made useful findings on the principal/staff relationship as it relates to teachers retention in schools. By giving workers more autonomy, their sense of powerlessness to humanized regimentation might be reduced, and, taking part in managerial functions might give his work more meaning. These chances would reduce the workers sense of isolation from himself, his fellow workers and from nature.

Ingersol and Smith (2003) carried out a study on the relationship between principals' interpersonal behavior with teachers and the school environment. The researchers presented findings of a study that investigated associations between the learning environments of schools and the principal's interpersonal behavior as perceived by teachers. It also described the development and validation of an instrument to measure principal's interpersonal behavior with their teaching staff. The questionnaire was completed by 50 principals and 850 teachers at 56 secondary schools from all states and non-government schools in Australia. Findings indicated that a positive relationship existed between the principal's leadership behaviour and the teachers' perceptions of the school as being innovative and empowering them in working environments. In the assessment of their

environment, teachers were least affected by their principal's leadership behaviour and whether they were granted independence to carry out their tasks. Principal's with critical admonishing or uncertain interactive styles negatively affected teachers.

Huling-Austin (2005) investigated employee commitment and control in social organizations like tertiary institutions and identified a set of initiatives which promoted cordial administration and labour (staff) unions relations in his findings. These initiatives were explained under five categories- increased information down the organization; increased information up the organization; changes in job design; financial participation, and changes in leadership/supervisory style towards a more participative mode. By implication, these initiatives were likely to produce committed workers who were willing to work hard and to say with the organization. Such workers might also be expected to collaborate in change and by identifying with the administration's goal of us, be less enthusiastic about trade unionism and militant action (Kirk & Olinger 2003).

Johnstone and Quinlan (2006) studied 47 respondents to describe a person they frequently and willingly followed at work. The respondents represented a diverse mix of workers in school and industrial organizations. Their job levels ranged from senior organizational managers, teachers, school inspectors to first-line supervisors. Their job type represented ten different schools and industries. Respondents provided 539 comments on why they followed their designated leader. Of this list, the majority of the comments (289 or 53.6%) indicated they followed because of the quality of exchange or how the leader treated the followers. The study showed that expected a leader to treat them in a particular way and to pay attention to them in a certain manner.

#### *Promotion and teachers' retention in public secondary schools*

Promotion is a way of recognizing and developing the abilities of employees within the organization instead of filling skilled and responsible positions from outside. It is often a reward to an employee for work contributions. The most important policy in promotion is the relative significance of seniority and competence. It also the advancement of an employee to a higher job better in terms of greater responsibilities, more prestige or status, greater skill, and especially, increased rate of pay (wages and salaries) (Inyang & Akpama, 2002). Recognizing the importance of promotion in an educational establishment, the 1969 National Curriculum Conference suggested that the teaching profession be not designed and administered as a dead end for prospective teachers. It recommended that teachers should be encouraged with prospects of being promoted within the level of their training and experience in order to reduce their turnover rate. Promotion is not to be based on merit and not on other special considerations nor should it be, according to this document, politically motivated. Reiterating its stance on the issue of promotion in the teaching profession, the Federal

Government of Nigeria states in its policy that promotion opportunities shall continue to be created for professional growth at all levels. (FRN, 2013).

Promotion involves the re-assignment of an employee to a position of higher rank, the new level makes more demands on the employee. Pigors and Myers (2001) explain that on-the-job advancement can as well mean higher wages and all the things that an increased income can purchase. According to them promotion also means an enhanced status and prestige both within the organization and in the large community.

Edem (2007) carried out a study on public school teachers in Akpabuyo, Cross River State, to demonstrate how teachers' promotion contributes to students' academic performance. The sample was made up of 140 secondary school teachers (80 males and 60 females). The Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Analysis was used for data analysis. Interviews were conducted with teachers to see how well they are competent in teaching under improved welfare packages. Teachers were also assessed side by side their students through inspection of continuous assessment records. The results indicated that a significant relationship existed between teachers' promotion and their students' performance. The findings also indicated that the morale of teachers were likely to fall if there were noticeable disparities between their promotion, salary, in-service training, working environment, social status and those of other workers. It was concluded that employers' performance is an important predictor of teachers' classroom exhibition competence.

Asindi (2002) sought to find out the extent to which staff recruitment and retention correlated with the institutional task performance of teachers in Federal Government Colleges in Nigeria and how motivated teachers were. Her investigation was prompted by allegations that the standard of education in Nigeria's post-primary institutions was declining owing to teacher's incompetence in task performance, dissatisfaction with the teaching job and low motivation. She used a five-point likert scale questionnaire which was administered on 600 teachers, 100 heads of department and 540 students randomly selected from 9 Federal Government Colleges in the Eastern states of Nigeria. The data obtained were analyzed using Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient, analysis of variance, independent t-test and fisher LS multiple comparison tests. Results of analysis showed that teachers' rate of promotion had significant influence on their institutional task performance. It was also found out that the level of need for redeployment by teachers was significantly influenced by motivation.

A study on teacher job motivation conducted by Essien (2002) sought to identify factors which contributed to the motivation of primary school teachers. Sixty (60) trained primary schools teachers who had abandoned teaching were used as subjects for the study. The lack of prospects for promotion was identified as one of the negative factors responsible for the phenomenon.

According to the Cross River State Civil Service Rules (2004), promotion of teachers has been delegated to the Primary and Secondary Education Boards. No promotion is considered unless it has been approved by the State Civil Service Commission after clearance from the Head of Service. By it all teachers qualified for promotion were to be considered except they were under disciplinary measures. The minimum number of years spent in a post before being considered eligible were as follows: grade level of teachers/number of year in a particular post: 05-14; 3 years, 15-16; 4 years. These provisions justify the need for regular promotion to be done as a means of encouraging teachers or any other worker to perform exceedingly well in their profession.

Ayang (2003) studied the effect of teachers’ promotion on senior secondary school students’ academic performance in Ikom Education Zone. A sample of 260 teachers and 310 students was used. The statistical tool adopted was independent t-test. He found out that majority of teachers agreed that promotion encourages them to make greater effort to work. He further stressed that the school survives at the mercy of teachers. Therefore, where teachers’ promotions are shifted and suffocated, performance of students is negatively affected. Teachers are caused to be incompetent in their job.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study adopted the correlation research design thus, Akaninwor (2006) see correlational design as the type of design that is desirable for the collection of information that is based on the opinion of the respondents. The choice of the design was considered necessary because the study dealt with the relationship between variables i.e. personnel management practices and teachers’ retention variables. The population of the study consists of 5210 public secondary school teachers which is made up of 3209 females and 2001 male teachers, in all the 29 local Education Committee (LECs) in Akwa Ibom State (State Secondary Education (SSEB), (2014). The stratified and simple random sampling technique was adopted for this study. It is a sampling technique that ensures that all the sub-unit in the population are adequately represented in the study. The choice for this technique was considered necessary because it enables the selection of sample that is adequate for the study. The basis for stratification was the Local Education Committee (LECs) in the study area. Using this method, 15 LECs were randomly selected, representing 50 percent of the 29 LECs in the study area. Fifty percent

(50%) of the total number of public schools in the 15 LECs were selected for the study. This gave a total of 61 secondary schools. To ensure adequate representation of teachers, 20% of teachers in each of the sampled public secondary schools were selected using simple random sampling technique. A breakdown of the sample shows that there were 321 females and 201 male teachers were sampled for the study.

The instrument used for the collection of data for the study was a questionnaire titled ‘Personnel Management Practices and Teachers’ Retention Questionnaire (PMPTRQ)’. This was administered on the teachers. The instrument had three sections; A, B and C with 45 items. Section A sought for demographic data of the respondent. Section B contained 35 items constructed on a four-point response scale with each item having four response options; Very High Extent, (VHE), High Extent (HE), Low Extent (LE) and Very Low Extent (VLE). Section C contained 10 items constructed in a four points modified likert scale of Strongly Agree (SA) Agree (A) Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD) Each respondent was required to check one option against an item to indicate the extent of his/her agreement or disagreement with the item.

In order to validate the instruments, draft copies were presented to the study supervisor and experts in Measurement and Evaluation to vet the items for face validity. Ambiguous items were discarded and replaced with valid ones. The instrument was certified appropriate before the researcher used it for the study. The instruments were administered to 46 teachers who did not take part in the final study. The data collected from the 46 respondents were analysed using Cronbach Alpha reliability estimate. The result of the analysis yielded a reliability coefficients which ranges from 0.81 to 0.93 the data was analysed using Pearson’s Product Moment correlation and multiple regression analysis as presented below.

IV. RESULTS INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION

This section deals with the results of the statistical analysis of data gathered for this study through the use of questionnaire, interpretation and discussion of findings were also presented as shown below.

*Hypothesis one:* There is no significant relationship between principal/staff relationship and teachers’ retention in public secondary schools. The hypothesis was tested with Pearson Product Moment Correlation Statistics. The summary of the result of the analysis is as presented in Table 1.

TABLE 1 Pearson Product Moment Correlation Analysis of the relationship between principal/staff relationship and teachers’ retention in public secondary schools (n=521).

Variables	$\sum x$	$\sum y$	$\sum x^2$	$\sum y^2$	$\sum xy$	r-value
principal/staff relationship (x)	12041		195293			
					339766	0.82*
teachers’ retention in public secondary schools (y)		23350		677332		

\*Significant at 0.05, df=519, critical r=0.062

The results of analysis presented in Table 1 show that the calculated r-value of 0.82 was statistically greater than the critical r-value of 0.062 at .05 level of significance with 519 degrees of freedom. With these results, the null hypothesis was therefore rejected and the alternate hypothesis is upheld. This meant that there was a significant relationship between principal/staff relationship and teachers’ retention in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom State. The finding of the study depicted that principal/staff relationship was associated with teachers’ retention in public secondary schools.

*Hypothesis two*

There is no significant relationship between promotion and teachers’ retention in public secondary schools. The hypothesis was tested with Pearson Product Moment Correlation Statistics since the independent and dependent variables were measured continuous. The result of the analysis is presented in Table 2.

TABLE 2 Product Moment Correlation Analysis of the relationship between promotion and teachers’ retention in public secondary schools (n=521).

Variables	$\sum x$	$\sum y$	$\sum x^2$	$\sum y^2$	$\sum xy$	r-value
Promotion (x)	9725		122623			
					302165	0.87*
Teachers’ retention in public secondary schools (y)		23350		677332		

\*Significant at 0.05, df=519, critical r=0.062

The results of analysis presented in Table 2 show that the calculated r-value of 0.87 was greater than the critical r-value of 0.062 at .05 level of significance with 519 degrees of freedom. With these results, the null hypothesis was therefore rejected. This meant that there was a significant relationship between promotion and teachers’ retention in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom State. The finding of the study depicted that promotion was associated with teachers’ retention in public secondary school. This meant that the more teachers are promoted the higher the teachers’ retention in

public secondary schools. In other words, the lower teachers are promoted, the lower the teachers’ retention in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom State.

*Hypothesis three*

Personnel management practices (principal-staff relationship and Promotion) do not significantly predict teachers’ retention in public secondary schools. Simple regression was used for the analysis of data collected in respect to this hypothesis. The result of the analysis is as presented in Table 3.

TABLE 3 Simple regression analysis on the relationship between personnel management practices such as principal-staff relationship and Promotion on teacher’s retention.

Model	R		R square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.89 <sup>a</sup>		0.79	0.72	5.261
Model	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients	t	p-value
	B	Std Error	Beta		
(Constant)	18.712	1.15		11.241	.000
Relationship	.081	.080	.066	2.002	.001
Promotion	.710	.072	.90	1.881	.004

a. Dependent variable: Retention

The result presented in Table 3 showed an R<sup>2</sup> value of 0.79. This implied that about 71% of teachers’ retention in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom State is promoted by personnel management practices in terms of principal/staff relationship and promotion.

*Discussion of findings*

This section is dealt with the findings and discussion of the study. This discussion is based on the objectives of the study. The findings revealed that principal/staff relationship

significantly related with teacher’s retention in public secondary schools. This positive nature of correlation means that the more school principals relate with teachers the higher their desire to remain in the teaching profession in Akwa Ibom State. This finding can be attributed to the fact that school principals relate well with teachers, it brings more understanding and create a conducive atmosphere in the system. This is because the extent of relationship shown by the employer determines the behaviour of his teachers. This is because it has to do with the way in which the principal regard

and behave with his teachers in secondary schools. The principal/staff relationship goes a long way to bring peace, harmony among the two working bodies, but when on the contrary, that is when the principal is so erratic towards teachers, it brings disharmony and conflict. A good principal/staff relationship enables the principal and teachers to stay together and work together as a team towards achieving organizational goals.

The finding agrees with the research findings of Johnstone and Quinlan (2006) which showed that expected a leader to treat them in a particular way and to pay attention to them in a certain manner.

The findings of hypothesis two revealed that promotion significantly correlated with teachers' retention in public secondary schools. The positive nature of correlation showed that the more teachers are promoted, the higher the teachers retention in public secondary school in Akwa Ibom State. The possible explanation for this findings is that teachers like every civil or public servant are happier when they are regularly promoted. Delay in teachers' promotion or failure to promote teachers engenders decline in productivity of teachers. Teachers' would want to be promoted from one rank to another. Promotion brings not only, financial benefit but also happiness and recognition of an individual's performance. This serves as a source of motivation for teachers. The findings agree with that of Edem (2007) whose results indicated that a significant relationship existed between teachers' promotion and their students' performance. The findings also indicated that the morale of teachers were likely to fall if there were noticeable disparities between their promotion, salary, in-service training, working environment, social status and those of other workers. It was concluded that employers' performance is an important predictor of teachers' classroom exhibition competence. Also, Asindi (2002) results of analysis showed that teachers' rate of promotion had significant influence on their institutional task performance. It was also found out that the level of need for redeployment by teachers was significantly influenced by motivation. Ayang (2003) found out that majority of teachers agreed that promotion encourages them to make greater effort to work. He further stressed that the school survives at the mercy of teachers. Therefore, where teachers' promotions are shifted and suffocated, performance of students is negatively affected. Teachers are caused to be incompetent in their job.

#### V. SUMMARY OF THE STUDY

The main purpose of this study was to investigate personnel management practices and teachers' retention in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom State. To achieve this purpose, three research questions and hypotheses were formulated to guide the study. Literature review was done according to the variables under study, Correlation research design was adopted for the study. A sample size of 521 secondary school teachers was used in the study. The selection of sample was done through stratified random sampling technique. The personnel management practices and

teachers' retention questionnaire (PMPTRQ) was the main instrument used for data collection, Pearson product moment correlation and simple regression were adopted for data analysis. The result of the study indicated that when the variables were taken individually, principal/staff relationship and promotion significantly related to teachers' retention in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom State. The result of the study also revealed that personnel involvement principal/staff relationship and promotion when combined and tested were significant predictors of teachers' retention in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom State.

#### VI. CONCLUSION

Based on the major findings of this study, it was concluded that personnel management practices relate to teachers' retention in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom State. This emphasizes the need for personnel involvement in principal /staff relationship and promotion to be given adequate attention by the state secondary education board and school administrators in Akwa Ibom State. This implies that the more effective personnel management is the higher the level of teachers' retention in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom State.

#### VII. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Government of Akwa Ibom State should ensure regular promotion of teachers especially in public secondary schools to encourage teacher's retention.
2. Principals of public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom State should ensure harmonious relationship with their teachers so as to encourage them to retain their job in the teaching profession.

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