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Retention and Efficiency of Qualified Teachers in Rural Nigerian Secondary Schools

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Mary Abioye

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Walden University
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Abstract

Retention and Efficiency of Qualified Teachers in Rural Nigerian Secondary Schools

by

Mary A. Abioye

MSc, University of Liverpool, 2016

PGC, University of Liverpool, 2017

Professional Administrative Study Submitted in Partial Fulfilment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Public Administration

Walden University

November 2021

Abstract

Low retention rates and inadequate efficiency of qualified teachers in rural Nigerian secondary schools have negatively impacted the educational system in Nigeria. Rural communities have suffered negligent and untold hardship. The purpose of this qualitative study was to identify strategies that influence the retention and efficiency of teachers working in rural Nigerian schools. Although it is not unusual for a teacher to change schools, the rate of turnover of teachers in rural areas is quite high. Hence, it is instructive to consider the theories, concepts, and models that impact the retention and efficiency of teachers within these communities. Data from key stakeholders comprising educational administrators, principals, teachers, and nonteaching staff were analyzed to identify factors responsible for the high rate of turnover of teachers working in rural areas, strategies for achieving a higher retention rate, and strategies for achieving a higher level of efficiency of teachers. Data revealed a need for effective school leadership, improved remuneration system, provision of infrastructure, provision of learning and information and communication technology facilities, and the need for public policy to support rural schools. The findings have the potential to ijmpact positive social change by increasing teacher retention and job performance in rural Nigerian schools. The result of this case study may aid in the formulation of educational policies that are aimed at improving the quality of education available to rural learners and improving the working and living conditions of teachers working in rural public schools.

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Acknowledgment

My gratitude, to thank God for the privilege of this time in my life. He gave me all that was needed to complete this dissertation process, and also brought the gift of men and women of great minds to support me with good understanding, patience, and love throughout the journey.

I would like to acknowledge and thank my doctoral committee member and former chair Dr. Richard Deparis who also was one of my first instructors at Walden University for his interest in my progress, his guidance, encouragement, consistent feedback, and support throughout this intense landmark journey. I am particularly grateful sir.

I also appreciate and thank my chair, Dr. Mark Gordon, for his unreserved contribution, guidance. He facilitated an environment of respect for me in bringing my dream into reality. Dr. Lori Salgado & Dr. Brewer, my advisors, are also worthy of my thanks and gratitude for their scholarly advice and support throughout this journey.

My profound gratitude goes to my inestimable value husband, Bishop David Abioye, My teacher, Mentor, and contributor to my life. I am so privileged to be married to him & our loving and creative children. Thank you for your contributions and patience during this time. I feel greatly treasured to have you as part of my joy.

To my Secretary, Folashade and Pst. Timothy Adeyemo thank you for your contributions and availability.

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Section 1: Introduction to the Problem

Introduction

Rural settlements in Nigeria are associated with peculiar characteristics and are faced with unique situations compared to metropolitan areas. These characteristics and situations make it difficult for them to achieve a quality educational experience for their children (Hazel & McCallum, 2016). Rural communities like Karu Local Government Area (LGA) of Nasarawa State, Uke District, the case study of this work, have unique characteristics that affect the quality of education available in the community. An inadequate supply of qualified teachers in rural areas is one of the factors that makes achieving quality education very difficult (Abdullahi, 2019). Furthermore, achieving quality education has its peculiar challenges irrespective of the location or the student categories, and there are some locations where achieving quality education is desirable but the stakes are high.

Unavailability of social amenities, poor remuneration systems, and lack of career advancement opportunities, among many other complicating factors, are the reasons many professionals and teachers are not willing to live and work in rural areas (Omotoyinbo & Olaniyi, 2019). The reason that the population of professional teachers living in such locations may be limited is that most qualified teachers would prefer to stay in urban areas due to the convenience of working and living in such an environment (Addimando, 2019). The rate at which teachers are moving away from the teaching profession in rural areas is becoming alarming and this affects the children's ability to earn a quality education (Abdullahi, 2019; Olaniyi & Omotoyinbo, 2019). Some of the

factors that complicate the issue might be a lack of employment opportunities, poor and

low salary, lack of curricular and other materials such as textbooks, unavailability of

adequate classrooms, desks and chairs, school administration, and lack of adequate

involvement of the teachers in key decision-making processes (Addimando, 2019).

Many rural areas in Nigeria must contend with basic safety, financial insecurity,

increased crime rate, prostitution, robbery, and other similar problems related to poor

infrastructure and inadequate funding (Chiamaka, 2015; Haruna & Lima, 2015). It is not

unusual in these rural settlements to find teachers teaching subjects that are completely

out of their area of specialization or training due to a shortage of qualified or certified and

available teachers (Eteng, 2005). In such schools, teachers are stretched beyond their

effective capacity which leads to poor educational output. In such a working environment

as encountered by most rural settings, the task of retaining highly qualified teachers to

work in such a setting is becoming increasingly daunting. Hence, the need to investigate

workable strategies that can be used to motivate teachers in rural areas is long overdue.

Problem Statement

Education has been proven to be one of the foremost catalysts for social change

and development in Nigeria (Chiamaka, 2015; United Nations Department of Social and

Economic Affairs, 2019), and teachers are a vital tool for achieving quality education in

the school systems (Subair & Talabi, 2015). Unfortunately, lack of proper policy on

social infrastructure and effectiveness of teachers in rural settings are among the factors

that create a problem in achieving educational objectives in Karu LGA, Nasarawa State,

Nigeria (Addimando, 2019; Eteng, 2005). Hence, there is a need to discover how to strategically address these issues.

Allen and Sims (2018), Abdullahi (2019) revealed that there may be difficulties in recruiting and retaining quality teachers. The problem is acute in the rural areas for several reasons such as poor motivation and remuneration, lack of efficient working environment, poor implementation of educational policy, and limited opportunities for career and personal development, among others (Addimando, 2019; Eteng, 2005). Subair and Talabi (2015) also revealed that there is an imbalance in the demand and supply ratio on the subject of teachers to students. This challenge has caused a downward spiral in the efficiency of teachers in these areas (Schacter & Thum, 2004). The case with the Uke District of Karu LGA is unique. It is very close to the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), so it might be expected to have adequate amenities and good educational systems, but the reverse is the case. The majority of the menial workers who work in the FCT live in this community rather than the city because of their low income as well as the lower cost of living in such settings compared to the FCT.

I, having visited some of the schools in Karu LGA, observed that current working and living condition keeps people in abject poverty and this poses a threat to the educational development of those areas. Poverty is an important underlying factor in Nigeria (Olawale, 2016). No one wants to identify with it, which makes teachers unwilling to work and live in a rural setting where poverty is most prevalent. Other factors that discourage teachers to remain in the rural areas include insecurity, inadequate supply of electricity, increasing crime rate, and poor road networks (Addimando, 2019).

Such an environment does not naturally encourage teachers to be effective and stay on the job for a longer period. This is why the Ministry of Education in the area desired to have strategies to achieve higher retention for teachers as well as to increase their level of efficiency.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative professional administrative study was to identify and recommend primary strategies that can influence the retention and efficiency of secondary schools' qualified teachers in Karu LGA, Nasarawa State, Nigeria. This study will bridge the gap in organizational knowledge by identifying and recommending strategies that are useful for the Uke District- Karu Ministry of Education to achieve teachers' retention, and also for teachers to become more efficient and to be able to sustain that efficiency, thereby increasing the quality of learning available in the rural areas. My goal for this study was to find out, through the perception of interested stakeholders in education, what strategies can be used to both intrinsically and extrinsically motivate teachers to be more efficient, and what influence these motivating factors have in increasing the rate of retention of qualified teachers in the rural areas. The findings can be used by school leaders to create a multi-year plan to alleviate the deficit of teachers for rural communities.

There were two guiding questions for this study:

Research Question 1 (RQ1): What strategies will help to improve the rate of retention of qualified teachers in rural schools in Karu LGA?

Research Question 2 (RQ2): What strategies will help to improve teachers'

efficiency in rural schools in Karu LGA?

Nature of the Administrative Study

In this study, I employed qualitative methods to identify strategies that can

influence the retention and efficiency of qualified teachers in secondary schools. I

collected data from participants in a cross-section of schools which include schools

within the Ministry of Education in Karu LGA, Nasarawa State Nigeria. The signed

document regarding permission to carry out the study and collect data from the schools

involved is in Appendix A.

Each of these schools operates both the junior and senior secondary schools with

no fewer than 500 students each. I used a qualitative method to explore the opinions,

beliefs, and experiences of school teachers, non-teaching staff, and school administrators,

whom I purposefully selected from several schools in Karu LGA. I used interviews to

gather their opinions on potential strategies that impact the retention and efficiency of

qualified teachers working in rural settlements. According to Creswell (2013), the

purpose of conducting qualitative research is to explore a problem with a view of

providing a workable solution from the participants in the study. I used an open-ended

semistructured interview protocol to examine the experiences and beliefs of the

participants (see Guerra et al., 2015).

Significance of Study

This study may bring about improved retention and efficiency of secondary

school teachers by contributing a better understanding of the experiences and perceptions

of stakeholders, which can be used to develop strategies that are useful in improving the retention and efficiency of secondary school teachers. This same may be useful for a review of the educational policy by school administrators and government officials. Achieving retention and efficiency of teachers are major difficulties that secondary school administrators in rural areas face, considering the attendant challenges associated with such localities (Allen & Sims, 2018; Omotoyinbo & Olaniyi, 2019). This study is significant because in it I share actual encounters drawn from participants within the LGA and how these circumstances affect the retention of qualified teachers in secondary schools. I also recommend the right approaches to be adopted by school administrators and policy makers towards improving their level of efficiency. These approaches can be used by key policymakers to formulate the right strategies towards ensuring a high rate of retention and efficiency of qualified teachers.

My goal was to help interested persons, or stakeholders in characteristically similar communities around the world, by providing them with a template for dealing with similar problems. Finally, the study may also make an important contribution to the available literature on the topic as well as raise the bar for what is achievable in terms of the quality of education in rural areas.

Summary

In this section of the project, I introduced my goal for the study to highlight the strategies that influence the rate of retention and efficiency of secondary schools' qualified teachers in Karu LGA, Nasarawa State, Nigeria. The purpose was to understand what strategies will produce a positive increase in the efficiency of teachers as well and

encourage or motivate more teachers to stay on their job. I used qualitative research

methods to generate in-depth information on the applicable strategies that can be used to

increase the efficiency of teachers and influence the rate of retention of these qualified

teachers working in rural areas. The next chapter includes an examination of the

conceptual approach to the study and an exploration of the background of the study.

Section 2: Conceptual Approach and Background

Introduction

The state of rural schools in Karu LGA is a concern that requires quick attention from the government and stakeholders in the state. There is a gross imbalance in the ratio of teacher to student in rural areas. According to UNESCO (2010) and the Global Economy (2020), as of 2010, the average ratio of teacher to student in Nigeria stood at 32.23 students per teacher (UNESCO Institute for Statistic, 2010). The number of permanent teachers posted by the government to these schools is too low compared to the number of students available in those schools. For instance, in the Government Secondary Schools in Kodape, there are only seven teachers employed by the government school. The rest are volunteers from different organizations and those employed by the Parent Teachers Association to help bridge the gap. Most of the National Youth Service Corps members who are posted to teach in these schools usually find a means of getting redeployed to an urban settlement where the living and working condition is more preferable (Aremu, 2018).

More professional teachers in Nigeria are moving from rural to urban areas (Adede, 2012). The reason for this massive relocation includes lack of employment opportunities or limited opportunities for career advancement in rural areas, poor and low remuneration packages, lack of adequate educational materials like the updated curriculum and textbooks, unavailability of adequate facilities like classrooms, desks, and chairs, and lack of adequate involvement of the teachers in key decision-making processes (Allen & Sims, 2018).

Achieving quality education is a very demanding task (Adede, 2012). Where teachers are in short supply or there is no adequate infrastructure in the rural schools, achieving this goal becomes even more difficult. Rural schools present a more challenging environment for teachers to be efficient or even stay on their job as many rural dwellers are constantly enticed by the better environment and infrastructures available in the city (Eteng, 2005). Education administrators working in rural areas are confronted with the challenges of developing strategies to help teachers working in rural schools be more efficient and achieve a higher rate of retention in these schools (Aremu, 2018).

Theories, Models, and Concepts

The desire to investigate how to motivate qualified teachers working in the rural areas to achieve higher rates of retention and efficiency in their unique setting was born out of my observation of how difficult it is for most rural schools in the locality under study to retain qualified teachers and to achieve efficiency and effectiveness with those who are working with them. Although it is not unusual for a teacher to change schools, the rate of turnover of teachers in rural areas is quite high (Haruna & Liman, 2015).

This section includes a discussion of theories and models that relate to this thesis. These theories have important principles that have relevant applications for the development of strategies and concepts that are related to the study. The theories discussed in this section include motivation theory, transformational leadership theory, job demands-resources theory, and the theory of quality education for healthy communities. Other concepts described in this section include well-prepared teachers, the

efficiency of teachers, working condition available facilities, and available opportunities for career advancement.

Transformational Leadership Theory

Transformational leadership theory has been applauded over the year for its effectiveness in helping subordinates and theme members to achieve a better result in the pursuit of their mutual objectives. Transformational leaders are ideal role models who influence their subordinates by providing inspirational motivation, showing genuine concern for their individual needs, and promoting the personal creativity of each of their followers (Breevaart & Bakker, 2018). Aside from the general attitudes of transformational leaders that motivate their team members to achieve greatness, Breevaart and Bakker (2018) noted that providing dynamic leadership, as a transformational leader is more effective in creating the enabling positive working environment for workers. Educational administrators may need a transformational leadership style to successfully motivate teachers working in rural areas to strive towards achieving the goal of quality education in their unique settings. Such leadership would focus on enhancing the quality of teachers' education and motivating them to strive towards achieving the best in their careers.

Some situations and circumstances could lead to variation in the leader's ability to provide needed inspiration, but being deliberate and dynamic can produce good outcomes as a leader. Although both the administrators and the teachers working in rural areas are faced with peculiar challenges associated with such a setting, an administrator with a transformational leadership style may deliberately adjust their behavior to accommodate

the needs of their subordinates irrespective of circumstances and situation. The working

environment provided for teachers in terms of the social support of a leader may have a

positive impact on their effectiveness and possibly also on their willingness to stay longer

on their job. When subordinates feel the support of their leader, they tend to be more

productive irrespective of how challenging the job may be. Tims et al. (2011) showed

that subordinates were more focused and efficient on their work on the days that their

leader is more deliberate in exhibiting transformational leadership behavior because

subordinates were more optimistic on these days.

Job Demands–Resources Theory

Job demands-resources theory postulates that the degree to which workers are

committed to and passionate about their work, and highly concentrated on their work, is

greatly influenced by the work environment (Breevaart & Bakker, 2018). The theory

further differentiates between two categories of job characteristics: job resources and job

demand. Job resources comprise those aspects of the job that encourage workers to seek

personal growth and accomplishment (Breevaart & Bakker, 2018). For instance,

providing teachers with the opportunity for career development may help meet their

aspirations for personal and career development and further reinforce their decision to be

more committed and stay on the job.

Job demands are a work process that involves depletion of energy and passion for

work which may result in job strain and health challenges (Breevaart & Bakker, 2018).

For instance, constantly struggling to teach students without adequate educational

facilities may wear the teachers out and deplete their willingness to stay on the job. The

theory has established that job resources such as career advancement opportunities and adequate tools for the job motivates employees to achieve a higher level of productivity and efficiency, whereas excessive job demands without resources are a demotivating factor for employees (Breevaart & Bakker, 2018).

Concepts

Several reform programs that call for the professionalization of teachers' education have been implemented to this end. The goal is to raise the bar for teachers and help improve the quality of teaching, which is believed to have a direct impact on the quality of learning outcomes on students (Olaniyi & Omotoyinbo, 2019).

The Concept of Motivation

The concept of motivation in any organization depends on the performance of the workers which determines the level of ability and level of motivation outcomes (Kutcy & Schultz,2006). In a bid to understand the perspective of the secondary school teachers, I collected data for this study by carrying out several one-on-one interviews of randomly selected teachers through email exchanges, to determine the nature of each teacher's frustration in their attempt to motivate their students. Omotoyinbo and Olaniyi (2019) discovered that while many teachers felt motivated just by doing their work, some teachers were more encouraged when a superior made an encouraging remark on their performance. Others said they were more motivated by improvement in their welfare packages and remuneration (Fati, 2010). Some were motivated by the level of respect their superior show to them and how their opinion was valued in decision-making (Lepper et al., 2005). The performances of students were part of the motivating factors

for others (Kadir, 2019). In some interviews, the researchers found that teachers were both intrinsically and extrinsically motivated (Lepper et al., 2005). Hence, their recommendations include the use of intrinsic rewards and a supportive working environment to motivate teachers and retain them in the profession (Lepper et al., 2005).

Most teachers do not want to work in rural areas largely because the level of motivation they receive for the work done is very low. Generally, motivation constitutes any financial and nonfinancial reward given to a worker for the services rendered and to encourage their peak performance (Oduwaiye, 2004). Therefore, remuneration is the most common form of motivation for workers, although there are other effective ways through which workers are being motivated. Some of these motivational packages are not monetary yet are very effective in getting people to perform at the peak of their potentials. Ultimately, the level of reward can provide workers with the encouragement they need to stay committed to and be more productive in the organization (Allen & Sims, 2018). Just like any other group of workers, teachers' motivation works in the same way, so the concepts of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation will be important to this research.

Intrinsic Motivation

Intrinsic motivation is the act of improving or achieving something without external reward, in the desire to progress with personal gratification through achievement that meets emotional or intellectual needs (Janssen et al., 2014). This also motivates behaviors that do not need external rewards to satisfy psychological needs; for example,

relationships, competence, and a sense of community that brings about expression of

what interests them (Lepper et al., 2005). Intrinsic motivation is tied to having enough

excitement for what is being done without necessarily being encouraged by external

factors (Lepper et al., 2005). While external motivation is valuable, internally motivated

people tend to achieve better results, even in the face of adverse external circumstances

(Lepper et al., 2005).

Salifu and Agbenyega (2013) described teachers' motivation as any form of

encouragement and provisions made to influence the teachers to do their best in the

classroom. Without teachers being motivated to teach, the search for excellent teaching

will be ineffective. Teachers need adequate motivation to carry out their daily activities

since their contact with learners influences not just their learning outcomes but an overall

developmental process (Adede, 2012; Oduwaiye, 2004). Through the consistent effort of

a teacher, the education program is converted to practical life experiences for students

(Omebe, 2015). The job of a teacher transcends the classroom, and every interaction,

relationship, and connection with the students contribute to helping the child develop into

a whole adult capable of reaching their potential (Kadir, 2019).

Hence, a teacher having such influence over the learners must be adequately

motivated to carry out their responsibility with utmost efficiency and commitment. If

teachers' motivation is low, their willingness to perform will be below, and the

educational outcome of the school will head in the same direction (Haynes, 2014).

Adequate motivation, therefore, fuels the passion of the teachers to not just achieve their

learning outcomes or objectives, but to do the same with utmost excitement, which influences the perception of the learners about education/learning as a whole.

Examples of intrinsic motivation for teachers include the freedom to choose what method or means to employ to achieve the appropriate level of result (Salifu & Agbenyega, 2013). Many teachers are happy to do their job when they experience a level of freedom in determining what they teach and how they teach. This freedom creates a sense of fulfillment which in turn motivates them to put in their best, not as a result of external factors only but as a result of excitement they derive from the freedom associated with discharging their duties. (Subair & Talabi, 2015).

Extrinsic Motivation

Extrinsic motivation is a form of motivation for work that is driven by external rewards which could be material remuneration or intangibles like verbal appreciation for the role played (Salifu & Agbenyega, 2013). This is practical in a situation where people engage in an activity to gain a reward which may include financial incentives, praise, or public acclaim from the audience or respected authorities (Omebe, 2015). Teachers, just like any other employees, are willing to modify their behavior to achieve a certain result in situations where external motivation like financial compensation or any other form of recognition for service is involved (Haynes, 2014). A good career advancement program can also be an effective external factor to motivate teachers to achieve increased efficiency at work and remain on the job for a much longer period (Lepper et al., 2005).

Some private schools in the region have a practice of rewarding subject teachers for the outstanding performance of their students during the external examination. (Bello

& Jakada, 2017). Most beneficiaries of such compensation feel valued and motivated to achieve a better result in the following years. However, such a program is not available in public schools in the region under study.

Concept of Quality Education for Healthy Communities

Quality in education is a fundamental concept (Allen & Sims, 2018). The full value of quality education was brought to realization when the United Nations began to promote the concept of sustainable development where it was ascertained that the quality of teachers is cardinal in achieving quality education. Teachers have been found to play very important roles in determining the quality of education in schools (Sanders, 2000). Olaniyi and Omotoyinbo (2019) emphasized the role of teachers in determining the standard and quality of learning available in any school, although there are factors other than the teachers that influence the quality of education or student performance.

The role of teachers in achieving quality education is so important that many of the factors identified by the above-mentioned researchers such as teachers' qualifications, teaching experience motivation/dedication, teachers' remunerations, and working conditions are directly related to teachers. This is a further indication that the teacher is a very vital factor in achieving quality education (Omebe, 2015). Among numerous teacher-related factors influencing the achievable quality of education, teachers' qualification seems to top the list (Arikpo et al., 2014). That is why many nations now focus on teachers' qualifications and improvement as a major way of achieving improved performance in learners.

Teachers

Scholars in different studies have established that the quality of teachers is a derivative of several factors, ranging from the level of training the teachers had undergone, teaching and nonteaching experiences, and whether they acquired a license in the subject they teach or not (Aghenta, 2000; Bennell, 2004; Makoelle, 2014; Mayer et al., 2000), and these researchers also asserted that competence is evidence of quality and this is dependent on the teachers' qualifications. Teachers' performance and their service delivery in providing quality education in any community are predicated on the teachers' qualifications.

The concept of the quality of teachers is such an important one that I believe that the effectiveness of an educational institution is a derivative of the quality of its teachers. Sustaining qualified teachers has a lasting effect on building social change and it is significant in the educational system which requires the joint responsibility of teachers and stakeholders and collaboration for effectiveness (Subair &Talabi, 2015). Olaniyi and Omotoyinbo (2019), through their study, demonstrated empirically that "no educational system can rise above the quality of its teachers." (p. 24). Respondents from this study affirm that the quality of teachers' training and experiences influence to a very large extent the performance of the students (Olaniyi & Omotoyinbo, 2019). Hence, to achieve a high level of quality in learning, there is a need to raise the bar in the quality of teachers. This is because quality teachers provide quality learning experiences for students.

Writing on the quality of teachers in Nigeria, Arikpo et al. (2014) observed that

the quality of teachers was greatly influenced by the teachers' training system that is

available in Nigeria. They noted that a larger percentage of the students admitted to study

education in the country are those with low cut-off points in the Unified Tertiary

Matriculation Examination compared to the credentials of those who gained entry into the

same institutions to study law and medicine. In other words, the majority of those

admitted are those who could not make it into other disciplines of their first choice but

who were offered choices of study in the education department instead; and rather than

staying at home, they accepted the offer to study education. These students of education

in turn are churned into the school system, not as persons who have a passion for

education but those who endure its rigors of training as a last resort, in the hope of a

better alternative to teaching.

Additionally, one of the determinant factors for student choice of course of study is

the lucrativeness of the discipline in terms of job security and income generation in the

future (Arikpo et al., 2014). However, the field of education in the country does not offer

such promises (Arikpo et al., 2014). This combination of factors possible inherent

disadvantage of the teacher training institutions in the country, and the nature of students

admitted as described above poses a limitation to achieving a higher quality of teachers at

the end of the training session. This is where the shortfall in the quality of teachers

available begins.

Despite these inherent challenges in the process of training teachers, some

qualified teachers emerged from the process. This study is, therefore, centered on

increasing the efficiency of these teachers and, where possible, increasing the level of

quality education for students in the process. The inherent challenges of raising quality

teachers make improving their level of efficiency and retaining their services within the

communities where their services are more needed very essential if there will be a

consistent increase in their level of productivity and retention, most especially where

there is little or no motivation for qualified teachers to remain at their duty posts. Hence,

where an increased level of quality is achieved in teachers such teachers will not only

impact quality education to the pupils but they will be sufficiently motivated to continue

to teach within the rural communities. While the quality of learning could be achieved by

a set of qualified teaching staff, the sustainability of this quality and achieving efficiency

is another important variable that requires adequate attention (Subair &Talabi, 2015).

The Efficiency of Teachers

The efficiency of a teacher is a multidimensional construct, considering the

numerosity of factors that are involved in teaching as a profession. Some of these

dimensions include subject mastering, effective communication, lesson preparation, and

presentation (Omotoyinbo & Olaniyi, 2019). A teacher is not just someone who passes on

a piece of information or helps to acquire knowledge, a teacher uses all they have, in the

form of relationship, understanding, interaction, and encouragement to help a learner

reach their full potential (Omebe, 2015). A teacher's objectives are not fully achieved

when a test is passed but when the learner is helped to develop in every area required to

be fully developed into a whole person capable of achieving their full potential as a

human being. This makes up a holistic perception of the measurement of the

effectiveness of the teacher. And since this could not be measured accurately in the immediate there is a periodic criterion for measurement put in place by the education institution to do this (Sanders, 2000).

Determining how the performance of a teacher should be measured in these various areas has been the subject of discussion of different scholars. Schacter and Thum (2004) opined that the effectiveness of teachers can be measured more accurately by the overall performances of the learners. Students' outcome on the average level most especially in major external and internal examinations is one of the most effective ways to measure a teachers' efficiency. That is why most schools in the area under study measures the efficiency of teachers by the ability to help pupils achieve the required level of literacy for their classes and improve performances in major Secondary Schools Certificate Examinations as conducted by the West African Examination Council and the National Examination Council. However, the real value of teachers' efficiency can be determined when the learners reach their full potentials. Different authors examine factors that can be influential in the efficiency of teachers. These factors include the following: working conditions, available facilities, and available opportunities for career advancement. Of course, the more these factors affect the efficiency of the teachers, the less likely are they to remain within the affected schools.

<center>**Working Condition**</center>

Working conditions or environment is another crucial factor that influences people's work experience. Organizational researchers have found that motivation for work includes much more than the remuneration of the workers (Herzberg et al., 1959).

In the same way, other factors get teachers motivated other than their salaries. The environment of work is such a factor. This encompasses both the physical and social environment where work takes place. It is determined by the amount of positive or negative energy generated as a result of the environment where work is taking place. Addimando (2019) observes that a school with positive social interaction among the teachers and students tends to motivate both students and teachers than a school saturated with negative energy. The leadership style of the school administrator is a very important influencer of the working environment (Onyechere, 2014). Where the administrator or the principal is bossy and autocratic, people tend to become dissatisfied with their work experience irrespective of what other better incentives they derive at work including higher salary.

Part of the working environment is having the needed tools for work. Quality delivery of educational instruction is dependent on the quality and quantity of instructional materials made available in the school (Chakraborty et al., 2018). Where there are no required resources for lesson delivery, the whole process of learning becomes discouraging to both teachers and students. For instance, having to teach a subject like computer education or using Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in a school without a single set of the computer for the learning process can be very frustrating for both the teacher and the student since the student will have to relate with the computer as something abstract instead of practical. This kind of condition is very common in rural areas where sometimes there is no electricity connected to the school let

alone any electrical appliances like a set of computers. In some cases, even the teacher may not have had access to a desktop or laptop (Haruna & Liman, 2015).

Another aspect of the work environment is the teacher's perspective of psychological resources in their work environment. These resources have to do with job satisfaction, social support, and autonomy that is available in the school. Addimando (2019) observed that there is a significant relationship between psychological resources and work engagement. In other words, there is a strong connection between psychological resources and job satisfaction. Where teachers feel a positive social connection, social support, and autonomy, they tend to be more committed and effective in the quality delivery of educational services than in a contrary environment (Saks & Gruman, 2018). These psychological resources are important promotional factors for efficiency, dedication, absorption, and commitment at work (Addimando, 2019).

Available Facilities

More than remuneration and other motivating factors, adequate learning and work facilities can have a compounding positive influence on the efficiency of teachers (Wiesman, 2016). Teachers who are provided with appropriate tools for learning are more excited about their work and are therefore inspired to put in their best. Teachers who are demotivated as a result of the unavailability of these facilities are more likely to consider relocation from rural schools to schools where adequate working facilities are available.

Studies have shown that the availability of learning space and infrastructure has a great influence on students' performances. Several factors can affect learning ability,

including seating, light, noise, and even color. Students who study in a positive learning environment are more motivated, engaged, and have a higher overall learning ability. On the other hand, students learning in poor environments – those that are uncomfortable, loud, or full of distractions – will find it far more difficult to absorb information and stay engaged. With this in mind, let's look at how your surroundings affect the way you study, and consider some of the best ways to create your ideal learning environment (Hendrix,2019). In the same vein (Mondal, 2019) also noted that environmental factors like classrooms, textbooks, equipment, school supplies, and other instructional materials, etc. are the physical conditions needed for learning. Adequate learning space and infrastructure do not impact the learner only, they have also been found to be a huge motivator for the teachers. In other words, the availability of appropriate educational infrastructure directly impacts the performances of both students and teachers (Kadir, 2019). A major part of teachers' efficiency is achieved through the provision of adequate infrastructure required to carry out their jobs in the most efficient and effective ways. Excellence cannot be achieved with work tools at the level of mediocrity.

The educational environment is one in which the use of appropriate infrastructure is directly influential on the output. This is because learning does not take place in a vacuum. School infrastructure that will positively influence the efficiency of the teachers should include the following: comfortable working and learning space for teachers, students, and school administrators; research and development spaces like libraries, and information technology, Biology, Physics, and Chemistry labs; space for talent and psychomotor skills development like sports event center. One common characteristic of

schools especially public schools in rural areas are the lack of adequate learning and working space. Learning space in rural areas can be as poor as learning under a tree or in an open field with stones as the only piece of furniture available to the pupils. Such an environment can be very depressing and demotivating for both teachers and learners. Many rural schools do not have functional libraries, laboratories, and staff rooms and this negatively impacts the learning process.

In a study,11 schools in a rural district of Kenya, Adede (2012) observed that eight schools (73%) with poor infrastructure got an average mean score of four points and below. The only school that attained the highest point had adequate learning infrastructures such as well-equipped classrooms, libraries, laboratories, and water supply. The other schools that attained lower grades of two points and below had inadequate classrooms, no libraries, no space for extra-curricular activities, and an inadequate water supply. These findings further reiterate the fact that school infrastructure is very essential for achieving higher learning outcomes. And if teachers' efficiency can be measured by the students' performance, one can safely conclude that adequate facilities impact positively on teachers' efficiency.

Available Opportunity for Career Advancement

The career path in teaching found in many schools is somewhat straight or linear leaving no space to make considerable and appreciable progress in ascending the leadership ladder in the teaching profession. The majority of teachers started and ended their journey in the classroom lacking the required opportunity to lead others as a result of their accomplishments or to develop only skills and experiences which they gleaned on

the job throughout the years of effective service. This narrowly linear career path currently found in most schools especially those in rural settings is below the expectation of a modern workforce (Bassett et al., 2016).

Having a clearly defined Career Advancement initiative is something that motivates people to want to put in their best in their job. It is a very important part of a school organization to have an established career advancement initiative that motivates and rewards teachers' commitment and efficiency of service in the school (Haynes, 2014). Having an established career advancement initiative creates positive organizational culture and enthusiasm for teachers in terms of opportunities for positive growth and collaboration (Natale et al., 2016).

Research has shown that a successful sustainable career advancement program has a positive impact on teachers' recruitment, retention, job satisfaction, and of course, student advancement (Mangi et al., 2015). In other words, teachers who felt appreciated and have a clear path to advance their careers were more likely to stay longer in an organization while striving to make their highest contribution and in the process scale higher on the organization leadership ladder.

There are indications that teaching as a profession in a rural setting is perceived by a younger generation as a less favorable profession with little or no opportunity for career advancement (Addimando, 2019). As a result, there has been a sharp decline in the number of students applying to do their teaching practices in rural schools. And it is even common to see those who are graduates and are posted to serve in rural schools often making attempts to seek re-deployment to avoid working in rural schools, and more than

40% of those who serve in such schools usually declined when offered full employment in those schools after their service years (Omorodion et al., 2012). This is because there are no visible career advancement programs that can provide a clear route to the top taking into consideration expertise, teacher effectiveness, and career advancement without leaving the classroom.

Providing an incentive for highly motivated qualified teachers to take up employment offers in such a setting and also remain longer in the profession, could enhance effectiveness. Therefore, any attempt to improve the efficiency of teachers as well as their rate of retention has a ripple effect on social change. Since this study is designed to bring about improved efficiency of secondary school teachers by contributing a better understanding of strategies that are useful in improving the retention and efficiency of these teachers, hence the outcome of the findings from this study may influence a positive social change, as a derivative of quality education, in a noteworthy way.

Definition of Terms

Efficiency: This signifies achieving a peak level of performance or the highest amount of output using the least number of resources or input (Haynes, 2014). Efficiency in rural schools can be described as using limited available human and material educational resources available in rural schools to help students achieve the required level of literacy and perform successfully in external school-leaving examinations such as the West African Examination Council and National Examination Council examinations.

Extrinsic Motivation: This is a form of interest developed due to external influence which drives the teachers to seek out innovation and encounters to extend and exercise their competencies to explore and teach (Ryan & Deci, 2000).

Intrinsic Motivation: is "doing something because it is inherently or enjoyable" (Ryan & Deci, 2003, p. 55). This accounts for the teachers' inner drive for success and maximal delivery irrespective of the external circumstances surrounding the job.

Motivation: It represents a set of similar beliefs and emotions that influence professional and personal behavior; what moves a person to do something, such as begin a new career or learn to work efficiently and achieve potential (Ryan & Deci, 2000).

Stakeholders: Generally, they are individuals or groups who are impacted by the outcome of a project (Landau, 2017). Stakeholders, as used in this study, comprise of but are not limited to the teachers, the non-academic staff of the school, and the education administrators.

Teachers Retention: It denotes the rate at which teachers continue or plan to stay in the same school in the rural setting (Johnson et al, 2004).

Teacher Turnover: This describes teachers moving from or leaving their teaching jobs (Ingersoll, 2003).

When I first came in contact with some of these rural schools and the settings in which they operate, I quickly realized how difficult it would be for qualified teachers to want to keep working in such an environment over a long period. The ministry of education in Uke District of Karu LGA, which plays a supervisory role in the schools in the area, also shares the same concern. Teachers play a pivotal role in achieving quality

education. The relationship between teachers, education, and students is interdependent. Teachers are the agents of change, who use education as a tool to stimulate the students. Students then play the role of receiving and preserving the change or value communicated (Chakraborty et al., 2018).

Relevance to Public Organizations

Several studies provide research about rural education; all these studies examine this phenomenon from a different angle. Some focused-on student motivation, the impact of school's infrastructure on the quality of education, the role of teachers in improving learning, and the role of parents' income on the quality of education their children can access, among others. There is, however, no known study examining strategies for achieving higher retention and efficiency among teachers working in rural areas of Nigeria in the Karu LGA. This is important because if the educational system in these rural areas will produce the expected level of impact, there is a need to seriously consider the issues around retaining competent teachers in rural schools.

Before this time the government has tried to ensure there is an adequate supply of teachers in the rural schools in Nigeria. One of the steps taken by the government is the policy to keep transferring qualified teachers to rural areas the same way they do in the city (Haruna & Liman, 2015). This, however, has not produced many results as the majority of teachers sent to rural villages soon find their way back to the city either through transfer or a complete change of job. For some reason, many qualified teachers do not want to live and work in rural settings. Some of the authors on the subject have noted that people generally may consider working and living in rural areas if there is an

adequate supply of social amenities among other things (Haruna & Liman, 2015; Hazel & McCallum, 2016).

This study consists of useful and relevant researched-based information on achieving this milestone, and public administrators, especially in the educational sector, will find the results very useful using education as a tool for engineering social change. The place of quality education in achieving social change cannot be overemphasized. Generally, education is one of the greatest catalysts and a key asset with massive social and economic profits accruing from it (Oladunjoye & Omemu, 2013). Many advanced nations today who before the influence of education were poor and under-developed both in infrastructure and socially, remain viable evidence of the positive effect of education on social change. Education brings change both to the individual and the community at large (Chakraborty et al., 2018).

Organization Background and Context

The organizations involved in this research include schools approved for learning by the Ministry of Education in Karu LGA, Nasarawa State Nigeria. Karu is the administrative headquarters of the Nasarawa state, one out of the 13 LGA that make up Nasarawa State. Karu LGA has several public schools, most of which are located in rural areas of the LGA, while a large part of this LGA is an urban area located in Central Northern which shares the boundary with the Nigerian FCT, Abuja, having an area of about 40,000 hectares 400km2 (Rikko & Laka 2013). However, several small villages are part of the LGA; one of which is the Uke-District the area of concentration of this work. Despite the facts that (a) the pay in most villages is very low, (b) most people in northern

villages do not attach premium value to Western education, and (c) many religious

extremists are hostile towards Western education, the population of teachers and other

professionals in those villages is quite high although most are not willing to work in the

schools located within the villages.

There are a lot of professionals and qualified teachers living in these villages due

to the inability to afford the rent in the FCT, and while they decide to live there, none of

these people are willing to work as teachers in these villages (Adede, 2012). Many

qualified teachers living in these villages prefer to take up other menial jobs in the more

developed area in the FCT rather than work as teachers in these rural schools (Subair &

Talabi, 2015). In most cases, it is only when a trained teacher could not find a well-

paying job in town that they reluctantly accept the offer to work as teachers in these rural

schools, pending the time they can find a more lucrative job (Haruna & Liman, 2015).

And many are quick to quit the job and relocate once a better-paying opportunity presents

itself (Subair & Talabi, 2015). This challenge is most common in rural areas.

There is also a history of hostility towards Western education in the northern parts

of Nigeria (Oladunjoye & Omemu, 2013). That is why among all geopolitical regions in

Nigeria, the northern region is the most backward and deprived of education (Segun et

al., 2016). The thought that Western education is a taboo in Islam has helped to promote

the negative disposition that some locals have towards education (Oladunjoye & Omemu,

2013); the communal crisis, as well as terrorist activities targeted toward eliminating

western influences including education from the north, has also contributed to the

severity of the situation in such regions.

One of the targets of Boko Haram during terrorist attacks is the burning down of schools, churches, and other facilities that have the touch of western education and targeted the killing of Christians, and teachers inclusive. There are constant struggles in these regions as the Islamic extremists and terrorists fight to gain more control of territories and villages in the northern region. According to the survey conducted by the Pew Research Centre's Forum on Religion and Public Life, it was estimated that 49.3% of Nigerians are Christians, 48.8% of Muslims, and the remaining 2% belong to other religions (International Religious Freedom Report, 2018). According to this demographic information, the level of division that exists between Nigerians along religious lines is troubling.

The impact of this division on politics and education is very conspicuous. The incessant crisis motivated by religious differences accounts for some of the reasons professionals of all kinds including teachers are unwilling to live and work in the rural settings of northern Nigeria because the level of insecurities in those regions can be high. And the availability of quality teachers is a very important requirement for achieving quality education (Subair & Talabi, 2015).

This inability to attract qualified teachers is an urgent call on the Ministry of Education to devise strategic means of retaining the already existing teachers in these rural areas, and also to generate ideas on how to improve their level of efficiency while on the job. Hence, in this study, I investigate the opinion of the teachers and other stakeholders within the education community to facilitate an understanding of what factors will motivate teachers to continue working in the rural areas despite the prevailing

social and economic condition of the setting, and what can help to increase their

efficiency.

I chose a qualitative case study to provide accurate data that is based on the direct

experiences of teachers, principals, administrators, and other key stakeholders in the

schools covered in this study. Both the administrators and the teachers are equally

concerned with the high rate of teacher turnover that these schools have experienced.

This is because when a group of teachers leaves a school within a term, they create an

imbalance in the academic system, and other teachers may be forced to take on additional

subjects temporarily until appropriate replacements were made. The administrators also

face the challenge of having to maintain the situation to avoid a drastic fall in the quality

of learning within such a period (Oduwaiye, 2004).

Role of the DPA Student/Researcher

An important aspect of qualitative research is the involvement of the researcher in

every step taken in the conduct of the research, in the process of data collection for this

study (Cresswell, 2013). The context of this research is the secondary schools in the rural

areas of Karu LGA. The areas covered by this research are the adjoining villages to the

Karu LGA which are very close to the FCT, Abuja, Nigeria. I have worked as a pastor

alongside my husband in one of the Pentecostal churches in the area and I have made

close observations of these schools as we carry out our evangelistic work. Some of the

parents, teachers, and students of these schools are our parishioners and through them, I

can have a feel of the impact of how difficult it is for children to access quality education

due to the short supply of qualified teachers in the area. It has always been my genuine

concern to be a part of the process of having a solution to this problem. Hence, my decision to use this project to research a way out of the problem.

Throughout my research, I interacted and collaborated with the participants directly. I will be interacting directly with the participants. My role as the researcher in this study varies from an interviewer who gets the information first-hand from each participant to a data analyst. My motivation regarding this subject of research is the quest to ensure that children in rural areas have access to quality education. Education is a fundamental human right and no child deserves to be deprived of it irrespective of their location or living condition.

The issue of bias in qualitative research is very important which must be adequately addressed. Every researcher has personal biases that must never be allowed to interfere with the research process or outcome. My personal bias includes a pre-conceived idea that most qualified teachers would not want to work and live in rural areas due to the infrastructural deficit that characterizes the environment. I addressed this bias by allowing the participants to freely express themselves during interviews, especially concerning the reasons why most qualified teachers frequently change their job. I also discovered what these teachers consider effective in helping them to achieve efficiency.

Another bias similar to the first one is my reasoning that qualified teachers who are currently working in the rural setting are doing so because they are yet to find a better job elsewhere. While this can easily be assumed considering the prevailing circumstances of teachers working in the rural setting, others are motivated by factors other than

financial benefits and social amenities to stay on their job. Once again, I tackled this bias by allowing teachers to freely share their experiences about what greatly motivates them.

Summary

The Ministry of Education under Uke District of Karu LGA has been concerned about how to increase teachers' efficiency and the rate of retention of teachers working in rural schools. For teachers to increase their efficiency several factors are put into consideration such as the level of motivation, available teaching and learning resources, the living and working conditions among others. The conditions of the rural schools are so critical that some students don't have seats or textbooks, and the buildings are collapsing. As a result of this most teachers in rural settings have low morale, where higher productivity is desired motivation is very effective in achieving efficiency in teachers. According to Mangi et al., (2015) leaders need to be able to motivate their workforce, either by intrinsic or extrinsic factors, to achieve better their organizational goals. For example, an employee motivated by extrinsic factors will perform a task to gain recognition, this includes salary and job security. The next section describes the data collection process and the analysis of data collected from the participants. The section will also address the overall design and the data collection instruments.

Section 3: Data Collection Process and Analysis

Introduction

In Section 3, I reviewed research methods that include the overall design, instruments used, data collection, and data analysis that aligns with the problem statement and research questions. The purpose of qualitative research is to derive meanings from the words and to recognize patterns among words such as meaningful pictures can be derived from the whole pattern without neglecting the important aspects of the information provided (Leung, 2015). In this study, I used this research style of using meaningful pictures to answer the research questions:

RQ1: What strategies will help to improve the rate of retention of qualified teachers in rural schools in Karu LGA?

RQ2: What strategies will help to improve teachers' efficiency in rural schools in Karu LGA?

The purpose of this qualitative professional administrative study was to identify and recommend primary strategies that can influence the rate of retention of qualified teachers and will help to improve their efficiency in the rural secondary in Karu LGA, Nasarawa State, Nigeria. According to Creswell (2013), open-ended interviews provide viable answers. Therefore, I employed semistructured, open-ended interview methods to retrieve viable answers from school administrators. I used those open-ended questions to generate robust data for the study and proffer a holistic view of the issues of retention and efficiency of teachers in the respective schools and the findings will also be useful for other rural schools in similar communities.

I obtained raw data through recordings that were also transcribed before coding and generating themes. MacLean et al. (2004) noted that recording and transcribing of data is a standard practice in a qualitative study that researchers use to process data before they are available for coding and theme generation. Coding data and generating themes can be deductive or inductive based on coding design. For this study, as recommended by Bengtsson (2016); Elo and Kyngäs (2008), I used a deductive data analysis approach that allowed me to justify the existence of correlating concepts through the categorization of data by creating codes and generating themes.

From the information gathered from the participants, I have used a holistic perspective from their information to form an opinion that forms the basis for the outcome of the study. At the end of data collection, I coded, categorized, reviewed, and drew conclusions from the information. I used this coded information throughout this study.

The conclusions in this study are directly based on the responses collected from the participants in the research, devoid of my personal opinions, and insinuations. I have compiled those data into a report that will be given to the Ministry of Education in Uke District of Karu LGA. I expect that as the education administrator in the area, the Ministry will work towards the implementation of these recommendations to achieve a higher retention rate and efficiency in the rural schools under its administration.

Practice-focused Interview Questions

Achieving efficiency and a higher rate of retention of teachers in the rural schools is one very pertinent challenge that requires that the educational administrators in Karu

LGA of Nasarawa state provide a viable solution. In this professional administrative study, I used semistructured, open-ended interviews to ask teachers, non-teaching (or nonacademic) staff, and administrators questions regarding what factors are responsible for the constant movement of teachers from rural schools to other jobs, and what factors affect teachers' efficiency. Yin (2017) shared that data collection from a qualitative case study in research must be not be sourced from a single source of evidence for the work. This is why I gathered data from at least two primary groups: teachers and administrators. The questions asked were open-ended questions that allowed each respondent to freely express their opinions on the topic of inquiry. These insights can help the key policymakers to develop strategies to retain teachers and help the teachers become more efficient in working with the pupils towards achieving their academic objectives.

Evidence Generated for the Administrative Study

There are multiple potential research methods used to analyze and explore any phenomenon: qualitative, quantitative, and mixed research methods (Yin, 2017). The best research method for this study was a qualitative method as it indicates a comprehensive account of a purposively selected population of teachers. Data collected under qualitative research could include a review of archival records, semistructured interviews, documentation, and observations (Rudestam & Newton, 2015). Therefore, I employed the use of semistructured interviews in collecting the data. This research method is one of the most commonly used data collection strategies in qualitative research. I have used that strategy because, like Creswell (2013) opined, it allows the participants to express a more honest opinion on their experience of the phenomenon. Just like Kallio et al. (2016)

mentioned, the understanding of this principle has helped me to gain an in-depth understanding of a phenomenon, especially where the topic is sensitive. I sent out emails of invitation (Appendix B) to participants who indicated interest, requesting their voluntary participation in my study research. I organized the interviews around six open-ended interview questions (Appendix C). Using those questions, I was able to appropriately focus on the topic and encourage conversations with the participants and elicit more responses from the interviewees.

Sources of Evidence

In this professional administrative study, I employed a qualitative research method to collect data. This method can be used by school administrators and school boards to create strategies that will be instrumental to achieving a higher retention rate for teachers and increasing efficiency in rural schools. The goal of the study was to research potential strategies that contribute to the perspective of relevant stakeholders in education from the schools under study. The participants in this research were teachers, nonacademic staff, and administrators who voluntarily gave their consent to express their views on the subject as well as articulate what they perceive as solutions to the problem being addressed by the study.

In this study, I employed the use of the interview method through the data collection and analysis stage. Before the interview, I sent an invitation letter to all participants via email (Appendix B). I also created a research consent form to ensure that all participants understood their rights and roles in this study. In the course of the interview, I briefed the participants about the interview protocol (Appendix D) which

involved explaining the interview process as well as the impact of the process to ensure a social change in the educational system in rural areas. I also informed them of the contents of the interview process and their right to stop the interview whenever it became uncomfortable or when they could no longer participate in the interview. I distributed Fliers (Appendix E) which described the research project. I also got participating schools under the Uke district of Karu LGA from the distribution of those fliers.

Semi-Structured Interviews

Babbie (2007) defined an interview in a qualitative study as a conversation between the interviewer and the respondent in which the interviewer guided the conversation and expanded on the topics raised by the respondent. According to Creswell (2013), research interviews should explore the views and experiences of individuals in a particular matter. In the same vein, Leung (2015) stated that direct feedback can be got from the core people who had first-hand experiences on the phenomenon under study. Therefore, I got direct feedback from the respondents of the interviews, being teachers who experienced the conditions shared with me. Patton (2015) assumed that semistructured interviews were versatile strategies that were composed of open-ended questions. According to Patton (2015), interviews are basic in qualitative data collection. Patton also explained that if they focused on emotions, participants were likely to provide raw data that showed how their feelings such as anger, fear, and intimidation were associated with their lived experiences. As such, notwithstanding the planned interview questions, I asked questions as the conversations progressed rather than sticking to the interview questions as planned to derive qualitative information from the participants and

gather raw data. According to Galleta (2013), the interview process should involve asking open-ended questions to get participants to share appropriate answers based on their knowledge and experience on the subject matter. Therefore, I carried on the interviews using these question styles.

For this research, I used a self-constructed data collection tool in the form of a semistructured interview protocol (Appendix D) which I used to prompt answers from participants. I paid close attention to ensuring that the questions asked were open-ended such that participants freely expressed their opinions. I used this type of interview so that the participants could spontaneously explore relevant issues peculiar to each participant in line with the research questions. This provided a very rich insight into the phenomenon under study. This qualitative perspective yields more robust data and useful insight which may not be achievable with a structured interview.

Interview Questions

The research questions for this study were as follows:

RQ1: What strategies will help to improve the rate of retention of qualified teachers in rural schools in Karu LGA?

RQ2: What strategies will help to improve teachers' efficiency in rural schools in Karu LGA?

I set up interview questions (Appendix C) to answer the above research questions and to provide in-depth information regarding strategies that may be effective in achieving higher retention and efficiency of well-trained teachers working in rural schools in Karu LGA.

Participants

I purposefully selected the participants in this study to include teachers, non-teaching staff, and education administrators from the participating schools. The criterion that I used in the selection process was: individuals who have lived and worked in the rural school district within the last 12 months (at least). I used this selection criterion because of its importance in answering the question of qualified teachers and the retention of those teachers in these areas. I preferred the mix of participants that included teachers, nonteaching staff, and administrators, to ensure a thorough representation and analysis of the data collected from each participant as well as to retrieve sufficient data that answered the research questions and proffered relevant solutions to the problems faced in these rural schools. Based on the current level of interaction with the participating organizations, it was evident that most people eagerly participated as the study addressed a specific problem that impacts their job and the level of satisfaction, they derive from it. Where in a group of participants only the administrators were willing to participate, I made efforts to educate the others on the purpose and benefit of the study to the organization and how the outcome would benefit them. This understanding inspired more people to participate.

Procedures

In the course of this research, I applied due process to ensure professionalism and efficiency throughout the process. The participants of the research were typical representations of secondary schools in the rural areas of the state, in particular, and the country at large. I selected participants through a purposeful sampling of teachers,

nonteaching staff, and school administrators in the educational sector who were willing to participate in the process. The entire data collection was scheduled to take about 4 weeks, to allow me adequate time to cover all the participants that were part of the study. After that, about another 3 weeks were required for collation, data analysis, and write-up. I adopted an individual, semistructured, open-ended interview with the participants.

I scheduled each interview for 60 minutes per participant. Although I asked for 1 hour, I recognized that some participants chose to end the interview when they wished. As such, I yielded a few extra minutes to allow participants who expressed a desire to continue. Some interviews took place on Zoom Video Conferencing App, due to the global COVID-19 pandemic. In cases where teachers did not have access to internet-enabled phones, or who could not access the internet as a result of no data network in their location, I scheduled physical meetings with them at an agreed time and in a public place, with strict compliance with the COVID-19 protocols. I recorded the Zoom meetings using the recording button in the zoom application. Then, I transcribed the recorded interview for a proper analysis of the information obtained and stored the transcribed version in a flash drive for safekeeping. According to Devault (2018), asking participants to examine transcripts of the interview ensures the precision of the data collected, contributing to the credibility of the study. Therefore, I showed the interviewees transcripts of the interview sessions as soon as I completed the transcriptions and each of them confirmed the respective transcriptions as true representations of our sessions.

To attract diverse participants, I arranged with secondary school Principals to allow the distribution of fliers on the description of the research project and seeking volunteers to be distributed in the rural schools under Uke district of Karu LGA. These mixed participants were necessary to obtain rich data that provide information regarding a cross-section of schools in the area. Such information provided by each participant from different schools made it possible to compare experiences and draw an inference. From the level of support that I received from administrators of participating schools, it was obvious that more people wanted to participate in the study, as such participants were drawn from several schools within Karu.

I sent out emails of invitation (Appendix B) to participants who indicated interest, requesting their voluntary participation in my study research. I selected the actual participants based on the selection criteria; that is, those who had been working in rural schools within Karu LGA for at least 12 months. After approval from Walden University's Institutional Review Board (IRB), I sent invitation emails to selected participants to get their interest in the study and to consent to progress in the interview stage. The interview took place over the phone, via Zoom Video Conferencing App, and in person (with adherence to COVID-19 protocol). During the interviews, I recorded the conversations using the recording option in the Zoom application to ensure that no information was omitted as well as to act as a backup for the note-takings. After the interview process, I transcribed the recordings and shared a copy of each transcription with the respective participants for crosscheck and verification of answers given. Once the participant confirmed the data, they were ready for analysis using NVivo 12 for

theme creation and meaning-making. Zamawe (2015) stated that NVivo 12's features include character-based and thematic coding and rich text capabilities that are crucial for qualitative data management and are compatible with multiple research designs.

Because the IRB required a consent form, I availed each participant a copy of the consent form to sign electronically or endorse by other forms of acknowledgment. Grady et al., (2017) stated that each form should clearly that participants were at liberty to continue with the study or withdraw at any point they no longer wished to do so. Therefore, I made sure that liberty was clearly stated on the consent form for each participant. I placed priority on the confidentiality of each participant's information by ensuring that no particular participant could be identified by their respective responses. In the same vein, I used my office with a closed door for the Zoom meeting interviews because; it was important to ensure a suitable space for in-person to gather information. Before the Zoom interviews, I advised each participant using Zoom to choose locations that they were most comfortable with and which they considered being secure. All information obtained in the study was stored in a personal computer using passworded files for 5 years to be accessible only by me.

Protection

There is a possibility of participants risking being identified based on the information provided in the interview. To make provision for this possible risk of exposure have not disclosed the names of any participants or other identity markers such as gender that may result in the unwanted exposure of participants. Aside from this, the study posed no other known risk for the participants. Rather, the outcome of the study

can help the partnering organization to improve the working condition and experiences of all the participants. Because all the participants worked directly in the schools involved in the study, the application of the research outcome will no doubt benefit them also. The information provided is stored in a password-protected file on my personal computer. As an additional method of protection, the data are stored on a USB device. This device along with consent forms and the questionnaire are stored in a locked cabinet where they will be kept for 5 years.

During the research, I gathered data from administrators, Principals, teachers, and non-teaching staff, purposefully selected from some rural Public Schools under the ministry of education in Karu LGA. I obtained a Letter of Participation Approval from each of the participating schools and the Ministry of Education (See Appendix A for copies of approved letters). The outcome of the study will be of benefit to the Ministry of Education and the schools involved which will, in turn, benefit the teachers directly if the recommendations are implemented. The summary of the study shall also be made available to any interested persons or organizations.

<h2 style="text-align:center">Data Analysis and Synthesis</h2>

The data analysis for this research involved coding and retrieval for thematic purposes. To be specific, I arranged the interviews in semistructured format for a wide range of discussions and the result indicates a means for data context. I used NVivo 12 software coding program to organize and analyze data using strategic steps, revolving around the impression and interpretation of the findings. According to Creswell (2014), NVivo facilitates the process of qualitative content in data analysis, codes creation, and

generating themes. Therefore, I used several items in the NVivo interface during data analysis for this study accordingly. To start with, I inputted data into the software using the data icon in the interface. From the file previously created using Microsoft Word, I also imported the data to the software.

In addition to this, I also made use of the code icon in the interface to create codes. New nodes can be created using the Node option under which codes were created to capture individual participants' responses. Where the responses were already typed out and kept in a file, I used the drag and drop icon to create nodes by dragging and dropping the file in the software. Another very useful option was the note. I used the memo option of this icon to file away additional information within the actual data. According to Lodhi (2019), Memos can be linked to the actual sources which contain additional information about data that is not captured in the original data. Therefore, I linked actual sources of information to already entered data accordingly. This could be information such as previous knowledge about a particular or an observation made during the interview which was not mentioned by the participant but which has the potential of providing useful insight into the phenomena under study.

To ensure the integrity of evidence in this study, the first thing I had to do as a researcher is to ensure that personal bias does not stand in the way of accurate data analysis. Being a Nigerian and having to see all the challenge the nation and the educational sector is experiencing constantly; it may be difficult to not be biased. However, I have taken important measures to ensure that my personal biases are eliminated. To achieve this, I had to be meticulous in taking information and ensuring

consistency in the interpretation of data collected and to ensure transparency. All the conclusions drawn were from the data generated from participants. I also include participants' verbatim descriptions to support my findings. There are no outliers in the study as most of the participants share similar experiences.

Issue of Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness relates to the validity or degree of confidence in data, to which the study results and procedure can be, trusted (Pilot & Beck, 2014). To ensure data authenticity in qualitative analysis, as a determinant of trustworthiness, the establishment of credibility with research is an utmost necessity (Patton, 2015). As a result, semistructured interviews were conducted using an interview guide that consisted of open-ended questions for consistency in data collection and a wide range of discussion. This study is based on four criteria listed as follows: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability.

Credibility

Creswell (2014) described credibility as the quality of being trusted to establish validity and truth in research findings to carry out data and participant checks. Without credibility, research becomes baseless (Leung, 2015). Very crucial to the issue of trustworthiness is demonstrating that the conclusions drawn in the research are a product of more than one source and that the relevant sources are appropriately acknowledged and detailed description is provided about the relationship between research questions, the method of data collection, and how conclusions are drawn. I used member check techniques to ensure internal validity. Lincoln & Guba (1985) stated that the member

check technique should be used to represent the data collected accurately. Therefore, I used the technique to examine the veracity of data that was collected, and the conclusions of the stakeholders that emerged related or mutual perspectives were accurately represented. Also, I reviewed each participant's transcripts to ensure previous information was checked for accuracy and consistency.

Transferability

Transferability refers to the degree to which one provides readers with evidence that in qualitative research study's findings could apply to other contexts, situations, times, and populations (Leung, 2015). All these factors help to enhance the transferability of the study's findings and the possibility of replicating the research in a similar setting or situation. In the course of this study, I employed an adequate methodology description of the research context and process to make transferability easier. This information will guide anyone willing to apply the research findings of the study to other settings.

Dependability

Dependability has to do with the consistency and reliability of the research findings over time and the method of how the research was conducted (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). The fact remains that time is changing, and such changes as regards time and other factors cardinal to this research may make it difficult to achieve the same result when next this research is reconducted. According to Tod (2006), a researcher must ensure flexibility in a study to make room for modifications and adjustments where necessary and such flexibility must reflect in the findings. Therefore, the procedure of this research

and the outcome generated can be a springboard for conducting a similar study whose result can be an improvement in the outcomes of this study.

Confirmability

Confirmability focuses on what objectivity the researcher brought into the study. It assumes that each researcher brings a unique perspective to the study. It is a framework for trustworthiness that reflects how genuine is the researcher in bringing objectivity into the research (Houghton et al. 2013). To enhance confirmability, I used a reflexive journal which was used to document my thoughts throughout the research process. I did this to separate my personal opinion from the verifiable data that emerged throughout the research process. With this, I was able to mitigate personal bias and enhance reliability and objectivity.

Ethical Procedures

All participants were provided with consent forms educating them on the confidentiality of the research of the study, as part of the requirements and guidelines of IRB study for permission to research the study. Once I got the approval, I continued with collecting the data collection. Furthermore, for virtual Zoom and face-to-face interview sessions, each participant was assured of their privacy and confidentiality. Detailed information regarding privacy and confidentiality is contained in the research protocol and informed consent (Appendix D). Participants were free to discontinue the interview at any point they wished to withdraw their participation. I discussed the study with the Ministry of Education under Uke District of Karu LGA for permission to research the retention and efficiency of qualified teachers in rural Nigerian secondary schools.

I put measures in place to protect the study participants. The information obtained is adequately stored on my personal computer using a password-protected file that no one will be able to access except myself. Participants were adults who were teachers, non-academic staff, and school administrators from the Local Government not less than 12 months before the time of the interview. No minors participated in the study. I gave each consent form to sign by each participant; I also informed each of them of their right to withdraw at any point during the interview as participation was voluntary not forced. This is why everyone willing to participate was encouraged to make their interest known without the involvement of any superior. Personal identifiers such as name, age, address, and gender were not collected. Only relevant information that helped to explore participants' personal opinions on the subject of the investigation were collected.

Summary

I designed this professional administrative study to investigate the strategies that are effective in increasing the rate of retention and to improve the efficiency of qualified teachers in the rural schools in Uke district of Karu Local Government. I used a qualitative semistructured interview protocol with teachers, staff, and administrators to investigate this phenomenon. I also used NVivo 12, which is a qualitative and thematic analysis software program, to facilitate the process of analysis. For data gathering, I used semistructured open-ended interviews as a medium. In this section, I addressed the issue of participants' protection and research procedures, along with issues of trustworthiness. In the next section, I will address evaluation and recommendation from an analysis of

data gathered. In that section, I will not only report and analyze data collected but I will

also state my evaluation and recommendation from this analysis

Section 4: Evaluation and Recommendations

Introduction

The purpose of this exploratory qualitative study was to identify and recommend primary strategies that may influence the retention and efficiency of secondary schools' qualified teachers in Karu LGA, Nigeria. In this research, I used a general qualitative method to identify strategies that could influence the retention and efficiency of teachers working in rural schools. Creswell (2013) opined that the purpose of research design should be to gain a robust understanding of the subject. Therefore, I worked on this research to assess the importance, significance, and impact of retention and efficiency of qualified teachers in rural Nigerian secondary schools, and findings may also be useful for other rural schools in similar communities. I acted as the primary data collector throughout the interview process using semistructured interviews with open-ended questions to answer the central research questions

The research questions that I used to guide this study were:

RQ1: What strategies will help to improve the rate of retention of qualified teachers in rural schools in Karu LGA?

RQ2: what strategies will help to improve teachers' efficiency in rural schools in Karu LGA?

I selected several participants randomly from each participating school so no one was stigmatized for being eliminated or included in the study. All participants signed a document regarding permission to carry out the study and collect data from the schools involved (Appendix A) in Uke district of Nasarawa State. The interview participants

provided details of their experiences, which indicated a detailed analysis of the research problem. According to Lodico et al. (2010), a flexible interview process aids in-depth information. Therefore, I obtained data by using semistructured interviews, and recordings of the participants during the interviews accordingly. The results of the raw data served as the input for further analysis. There was a total of 25 participants, 18 of which were teachers, three of who were administrators while four were nonteachers. I employed this mix of participants to achieve robust research on the subject and to harness the opinions of those most affected within these communities.

In this section, therefore, I show the analysis from this study including a narrative of the data collected and communicated in a meaningful manner to indicate the strategies that emerged from the interviews. While interview data demonstrated reasonable subjective combined feedback, the combined analysis reflects my opinion on strategies for achieving a higher rate of retention and efficiency of teachers in rural schools. According to Silverman (2021), recommended solutions should be presented in the form of themes, categories, priorities, and action items. Therefore, I have included such recommendations that will guide the decision-makers in the development of infrastructure policies, protocols, standards, as well as plans for retention of teachers in rural schools as well as helping them to attain a higher level of efficiency. I asked a total of six questions during each interview, focused on the issues of retention of teachers and strategies for achieving a high rate of retention.

Upon obtaining approval from the IRB (approval number 06-29-21-0268898), the data collection process began. This stage began with sharing and posting fliers around the

school district to create awareness about the research as well as making consent forms available for interested participants. After I distributed the fliers, I informed those interested in the research about their roles in the research and gave each one a consent form to complete. This consent form showed their willingness to be part of the study and to be instrumental in answering the main research question. All registered participants were drawn from schools in the Uke District and they consisted of teachers, nonteaching staff, and the education administrators or principals.

Due to the COVID-19 restrictions and security challenges in the country, I collected the data primarily through online means. All participants partook in an individual semistructured interview via Zoom due to easier access for all participants, except for a handful who could not access data network connection. In respect of the latter, I conducted physical meetings with them adhering strictly to COVID-19 protocols. Before the interview began, I thanked all participants individually for their willingness to be part of the research. I also briefed each one on the process of research which entailed a minimum of 30 minutes of the interview, their choice to pass any uncomfortable question or stop the interview whenever they felt uncomfortable. I also encouraged them to be free in giving answers as the final research will not carry any individual names. The data collection phase also involved recordings (which the participants were informed about), the target population from which participants were drawn was made up of five schools, and the participants comprised teachers, nonteaching staff, and the education administrators or principals. Patton (2015) offered this process of the open-ended

interview as a tool to ensure the accuracy, completeness, fairness, and perceived validity of their data analysis.

After the data collection process, the data analysis stage began which involved listening to recordings, collating, and transcribing notes. I manually transcribed data from the semistructured interviews and automatically saved the transcribed notes in a Word document. Then, I transferred the word document generated from the transcription and saved them in the NVivo 12 software which has been protected with a password. I have also saved the data stored in NVivo 12 in the form of word documents and video. I have sorted, coded, organized, analyzed, and arranged the information from the data collected into themes using the NVivo 12 software. A set of categories and themes emerged for both strategies for increasing the retention rate and strategies for achieving a higher rate of efficiency. I have, using the foregoing methods, identified only priorities and actions of participants to continue or implement immediately. In this section, I have reviewed the data collected in the previous section along with an NVivo 12 frequently used word search. By the word search, I discovered five top words from each topic to use as themes.

Findings and Implications

Semi-structured interviews provided a great deal of information regarding the major challenges that teachers working in those environments are facing. The conversation also shed light on what the participants considered as ways out of the problem. Each participant enumerated what they considered as the strategies that would work to provide a lasting solution to the problem of an increased rate of turnover of teachers working in rural schools in Karu local Government. The data also revealed

strategies that the participants considered as effective in helping to increase the efficiency of teachers. These strategies were considered as having the capacity to help the rural schools to perform better in the external examinations in which they are currently performing below the average compared to students from urban schools. Participants identified several factors that are deterring teachers from wanting to live and work in the rural setting. Some of the factors identified are related to the strategies that were suggested in the conversations.

Reports and Analysis of the Interview

Participant interviews yielded a lot of specific and relevant information. There were three categories of themes that emerged. The first category includes some of the factors responsible for the high rate of teacher turnover being experienced by rural schools. In the second category of themes, I present strategies for achieving a higher rate of retention of teachers, and the third categories address strategies for achieving improved efficiency of teachers.

Factors Responsible for a High Rate of Turnover of Teachers

Participants identified factors responsible for the high rate of turnover of teachers and those solutions suggested by the participants are all related to these factors. These identified factors can be used by stakeholders and policymakers to establish tools to work with. During the interview, I discovered the following relevant factors responsible for less retention of teachers within Karu LGA: poor learning facilities, shortage of teachers, poor remuneration, and lack of adequate social amenities. The number of times each of these factors was mentioned is shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1

High Rate of Turnover of Teachers

Theme Name	Frequency of mention	Number of Participants	Percentage of participants mentioned it
Poor Learning Facilities	13	8	32%
Shortage of Teachers	2	2	8%
Poor Remuneration	30	25	100%
Lack of Adequate Social Amenities	18	25	100%

Poor Learning Facilities

Poor learning facilities are one of the factors that negatively affected the efficiency of teachers. The infrastructures are dilapidated and facilities are grossly inadequate, also many subjects that require important facilities like laboratories were being offered without such provision. An information technology (IT) teacher from one of the schools noted that since he had been teaching the subject, the school has no single computer or even a computer component to help illustrate his lesson to the student. Though the curriculum required that a school offering information technology and preparing students to write the subject in an external examination must have a working IT laboratory, yet there is no provision made for any laboratory or equipment in the school where he is teaching. None of the schools that participated in the study had a working IT laboratory. Ayeni (2005) reported that in the majority of public schools in Nigeria, there were insufficient teaching facilities such as textbooks, maps, world globes, laboratory apparatuses, and other tools for instructors and learners to work and study.

The importance of having facilities was emphasized by many of the participants because most if not all of the participating schools are grossly deficient in infrastructure. Most of the schools do not have a library, a science laboratory, computer laboratory, public toilet, functional blackboards, or whiteboards. Such schools lacked furniture for both students and teachers, with the classrooms either too small for the few students or completely dilapidated with falling ceilings and exposure to the weather (both rain and heat), and environmental elements, including rodents, during school hours.

Shortage of Teachers

The shortage of teachers is another important factor that is responsible for the inefficiency of teachers since most of the classes are overcrowded with a high population and poor ventilation. In this study, there were teachers made to teach subjects that were out of their area of specialization to compensate for the shortage of teachers. In one school there were only four teachers for which the government was responsible. Others were either volunteers or those employed by the Parent-Teachers Association to complement the efforts of the four employed by the government. In such a situation, there was no way teachers could be effective especially where they are burdened with more work than is expected. As a result of this exertion, the efficiency of teachers is greatly affected.

Poor Remuneration

During my research, I discovered that even the few teachers that were employed by the government in public schools were not paid their monthly salary for an entire school term. They often received their remuneration towards the end of the term; that is,

after working for three months. There were instances where teachers in private secondary schools were paid as low as ₦9,000 (the equivalent of $18), which sometimes was paid in installments of half per payment.

Lack of Adequate Social Amenities

Most of the schools that I visited lacked electricity, had no lighting and no connection to public water sources, and were without motorable roads. During the wet season, teachers either stayed at home or were stranded in school or they waded in the rain to or from school. With no access to public mass transit service, they spent most and, in some cases, all their meager earnings on transportation to and from school.

Strategies for Increased Teacher Retention Rates

Study participants also suggested possible strategies to tackle the identified challenges. These strategies are what the participants think most teachers and workers in rural schools would want the government to put in place to be able to make the work environment more conducive, motivating, and productive. These recommendations include the following themes: career development opportunities, good leadership, improved remuneration system, provision of accommodation for workers, provision of adequate security, and provision of infrastructure. The number of times each of these themes was mentioned is shown in Table 2.

Table 2

Strategies for a Higher Retention Rate

Theme Name	Frequency of mention	Number of Participants	Percentage of participants mentioned it
Career Development Opportunities	17	9	36%
Improved Remuneration System	23	10	40%
Provision of Accommodation for Workers	8	6	24%
Provision of Adequate Security	18	25	100%
Provision of Infrastructure	8	6	24%

Career Development Opportunities

Career development opportunity is one of the factors that most participants (36% of the participant) consider highly motivating. One participant noted that:

There is a level of promotion you cannot have if you are not a degree holder for instance. Once you enter into the teaching service with a qualification lesser than a degree such as National Certificate in Education you need to work on getting your degrees to enjoy a reasonable promotion. But the opportunity to achieve this goal is very difficult to come by in rural schools. Most degree-awarding institutions are in the city and to enroll for further studies you may have to resign from your job. But if you are in the city, it is easy to be working and be studying at the same time. This lack of opportunity for career advancement has kept back many teachers working in rural schools.

Another participant noted that:

Teachers working in rural schools are looking up to the government to come up with a career development opportunity for teachers in a rural area as part of the compensation for their sacrifice. This will be a huge motivation to want to accept offers of jobs in rural settings. Most of the possible means of career advancement for teachers and workers are available in the urban centers. The city is where you can have access to many professional pieces of training compared to what is available in the villages. Where professional teachers would have loved to take advantage of online platforms to advance their careers, the lack of internet facilities and constant electricity has made this career advancement option less attractive to rural dwellers.

As a result of the difficulty posed by living in the rural area, many participants would have been eager to use online learning programs, but the unavailability of electricity and internet facilities presented another problem. A participant stated that:

I would have loved to take advantage of the many learning opportunities online to take a course that will help my profession but the internet facility in the area is very poor or almost non-existent. If you have to make a call it's difficult finding a location where the network is stable. Such a challenge as this makes it very difficult if not impossible to take advantage of numerous opportunities available online to boost one's learning and advance one's career.

Many participants suggested that if the government can facilitate such a learning program by making provision for every needed facility and resource, teachers working in rural schools would be grateful beneficiaries. Having opportunities to advance their

career as a teacher or worker in a rural area will motivate many people to want to give

their best at their job.

Improved Remuneration System

Similar to many public-school systems around the world, a primary factor that

was most complained about by participants is the remuneration system-all participants,

without exception, communicated that the remuneration system is very poor, not

forthcoming, and teachers are not compensated for their services promptly. The salary

paid to teachers working in rural areas is meager when compared to skilled workers in the

same community. In addition, the pay scale is not the same with teachers working in

urban areas, so for this reason, the teachers in this study lacked passion for the profession,

had no motivation, and lacked job satisfaction as well. Most rural schools are under the

local government and the payment cannot be compared to those at the state or federal

government administration levels. One participant lamented that:

> Even though the payment is poor, it is also not regular. Currently, we are owed
>
> two months' salaries yet they are expecting us to report for duties despite not
>
> being paid for the previous months. I am just working with the hope that the
>
> arrears would be paid. If we are being paid well and on time no matter how hard
>
> the working condition is, one might be encouraged to continue for the payment.
>
> But now, the payment is poor and not even coming on time, nothing is more
>
> discouraging than this. I believe that if the salary payment becomes regular and
>
> upgraded more people will be encouraged to keep their jobs in rural schools. I
>
> have to make use of a generator for electricity and with an increase in the price of

petrol, maintaining a generator is quite expensive. This put pressure on my

income.

Another teacher stated that many have to depend on external jobs to augment their

pay. She noted that:

Most teachers here have to look for something else to do by the side to make ends

meet. Most of us here are involved in farming also to keep life going. This has

helped us but you know it is not easy to farm alongside teaching. Farming is best

in the morning and then we have to go to school. That is why some teachers are

absent from work sometimes to attend to their farm. Some of our students often

offer assistance sometimes on the farm. If the payment is better than what it is

now, I will be more focused on the work because I won't need to add farming to

this job.

Goldhaber et al. (2007) found that increased remuneration enhances teachers'

quality, retention rates, and performance. Most participants believe that if the

remuneration system can be improved, such that the monthly salary be increased and paid

on time from month to month, then the performance of teachers and other workers will be

improved; and more teaching and nonteaching staff will be willing to stay longer on their

jobs. The government can investigate what teachers are offered and improve so that more

people working in rural areas can be motivated to be more productive and committed to

their job.

Provision of Accommodation for Workers

Accommodation is another problem with workers in rural schools in Karu LGA. Most participants noted that because the area is quite close to the FCT, housing is quite expensive because most people who work in the FCT cannot afford accommodation in the area. As a result of the high cost of accommodation within the city, more FCT workers resort to living in the suburbs in search of cheaper accommodation compared to those in the FCT. As a result, the price of accommodation in those suburbs areas increased. For the teachers in rural schools, the impact is almost unbearable. The state and the local government have no accommodation provision for teachers working in rural schools. Narrating his experience, a teacher noted:

> As a teacher working in a rural school with a meager salary, paying house rent in this place is a burden. It is kind of senseless comparing the cost of accommodation to what you earn as a salary. I need up to my three-month salary to cover the cost of my apartment for a year, this does not include electricity bills, gas, and water. Those are separate bills on their own. The cost of housing is especially expensive in Karu local government as a result of its proximity to the FCT. If the government can take away the accommodation burden from rural teachers it will be a great relief.

Teachers who are posted into the rural areas but without adequate accommodation will find it difficult to be efficient at work. Some participants noted that the distance between their house and the school is quite far.

Provision of Adequate Security

Insecurity has become a very prevalent issue in Nigeria, and kidnapping school children and teachers have become a very lucrative business for the kidnappers. It has been a very challenging situation and most teachers in rural schools are afraid for their own lives and those of their loved ones. Most participants are living and working with a constant fear that one day they might be kidnapped. The effort of the government to provide adequate securities in those schools has not yielded any positive result.

Kidnappers have made rural schools their main targets because the security in those places is porous and inadequate to address the threat. Most government boarding schools in northern Nigeria are in rural areas (BBC, 2021). As a result, it makes it easier for criminal elements to kidnap those pupils with ease. According to a BBC report, more than 1000 students have been reportedly kidnapped since December 2020, and more than 200 of these pupils are still in captivity at the time of this writing while nine have been killed (BBC, 2021). The participants expressed worries over this level of insecurity.

For example, one of the participants spoke of his awful feeling of not knowing if they will ever return home to their families after leaving for work each day. Most expressed concerns about the disposition of the government of the day to these horrible experiences. The participant noted:

The majority of Nigerians feel that the government lacks the political will to deal decisively with the menace of kidnapping. For this reason, many teachers and staff working in rural schools feel unsafe and unwilling to continue to work in such an

insecure environment. Having to go to work daily knowing you might not return is a very terrible feeling that kills your morale for work.

Another participant noted that:

Anytime there is an alert of insecurity or crisis, workers tactically evade their duties. In high-risk periods such as during elections many staff completely travel out of their station for fear of insecurity. This kind of situation makes it impossible for one to give his or her best to the work. If the government begins to pay attention to the issue of insecurity and address the matter decisively, the rural schools will become a safer place to work and the level of efficiency of staff will increase.

Such an unattended level of insecurity negatively affects the efficiency of both teachers and non-academic workers of these schools. Therefore, all the participants emphasized the importance of improving the security of the country, most especially dealing decisively with the bandits who have made kidnapping of teachers and pupils a recurring experience in the last year if any level of efficiency will be achieved by schools in rural areas.

Provision of Infrastructure

One of the major factors contributing to the decline of the participant to work in rural locations is the lack of public infrastructure. According to Addimando (2019), unavailability of social amenities, such as portable water, adequate roads, and reliable electricity among many other complicating factors, are compounding reasons many professionals and teachers are not willing to live and work in rural areas. I have found in

this study that this has made living and working in those areas very difficult. the Majority of participants consider the provision of social infrastructure as something that will be highly motivating. Generally, working in an environment deficient in infrastructures can contribute to inefficiency.

A participant noted:

The rural areas are heavily infrastructurally deficient. Something as common as portable water is not available in most places and it could be difficult and expensive trying to buy when you intend to do so. Good road and electricity are unavailable in most of the rural settings. There is a lot that infrastructure can contribute to the people's living experiences that make life a little difficult without them. In most villages, there is an infrastructural deficiency. This makes life more difficult for both teachers and students who are working with limited available resources to achieve the best academic performances possible.

In their observation of how the infrastructure affected their activities, some of the participants provided their opinion about their experiences:

Life in a village is pretty difficult. It is almost impossible to have a week of uninterrupted power supply. Most times you don't even have electricity for 4 to 5 days in a row. Hence you have to find a way of living a meaningful life without depending on the general power supply. I have to make use of a generator for electricity and with an increase in the price of petrol, maintaining a generator is quite expensive. This put a lot of pressure on my income.

Strategies for Improved Efficiency of Teachers

The efficiency of teachers formed one of the core questions the participants

responded to in this study. Throughout the conversations with the participants, the factors

highlighted in Table 3 are discussed below:

Table 3

Strategies for Efficiency of Teachers

Theme Name	Frequency of mention	Number of Participants	Percentage of participants mentioned it
Student-Teacher Relationship	2	1	4%
Provision of Learning Facilities	27	12	48%
Provision of ICT Facilities	7	4	16%
Encouraging Teamwork	3	3	12%
Encouraging teamwork	5	4	16%

Student-Teacher Relationship

One of the themes that I found from my conversations with the participants, is the

relationship between teachers and students. Many opined that the way teachers related to

the students are an important factor that influences the performance of the pupils. Where

the relationship is cordial and affirming, students tended to be open to learning and

eventually perform well. A participant stated that:

> I have found that having a good relationship with the students helps them to learn
>
> better. Most time I focus on my relationship with the student as much as I pay
>
> attention to their learning content. And I have found out that they did perform

better when the relationship is good. But when pupils have difficulty relating with a teacher most times they do not perform well in their subjects.

This goes to show that learning is beyond having good content and excellent delivery. A key part of the strategy for delivery is the teacher-student relationship. Another participant confirmed this by stating that:

Children learn more in an affirming and inspiring environment. And teachers must create this kind of inspiring environment of learning. Some of the pupils are going through certain difficulties which makes it difficult for them to concentrate on learning. Things are very difficult as a result of the pandemic and many pupils do not even have breakfast before coming to school. And are facing another kind of difficulty but if you do not create a good relationship with them, they may not tell you about it. Most times it is not that I have all it takes to solve their problems but encouraging them while they deal with it has proven very helpful and that way many of these children can still maintain good performance despite what they are going through.

This goes to show that a good relationship between teachers and pupils is an important strategy to help achieve higher efficiency as a teacher.

Provision of Learning Facilities

This is the most suggested solution by the participants (48% of participants mentioned it). Those participants considered the provision of learning facilities as the most important strategy for improving the efficiency of teachers and as an important part of lesson delivery. Many of the respondents noted that though they know what is

expected of them as teachers there are no required facilities to deliver their job. Most

schools participating in the study do not have a working library or even a laboratory. A

science teacher said that:

> I find it difficult to explain certain concepts to students while all I should be doing
>
> is carrying out practicals to help them have an experience of what is being taught.
>
> But currently, our school has no science laboratory and most of the required
>
> experiments have to be explained theoretically to the student. In this case one
>
> does not expect them to understand as they would have done should they learn
>
> through a laboratory experiment.

This shows how difficult it has been for teachers to pass knowledge across

without the most relevant teaching aid. In most of these schools, there are no basic

facilities such as libraries, science laboratories, and other extra-curricular facilities.

Teachers have to improvise or even use their imaginations in a desperate effort to explain

difficult concepts to the learners.

Provision of Information and Communication Technology Facilities

The world has gone digital, and so has education in most parts of the world.

However, this is not the same in rural areas, especially within Karu LGA. Most students

in rural areas, where ICT facilities are nonexistent for use by both teachers and students,

have to write the same examinations as students in the cities where advanced ICT

facilities are provided. A computer teacher who participated in the interview stated that:

> It is very difficult teaching this subject to pupils because the required ICT
>
> facilities that should be my teaching aid are unavailable. In this school, there is no

single set of computers with which I can show the pupils some of the concepts I

am expected to teach them. Although some of the courses required that they have

practical knowledge but what can I do, I just have to explain things to them

theoretically. This way I cannot accomplish much as a teacher.

Another teacher advocated for the need for ICT facilities to assist teachers in taking

online lessons as a way of advancing their careers when stating that:

There are many opportunities to learn and advance your career online but there

are no ICT facilities in the school to take advantage of these online opportunities.

Most universities have online programs that you can enroll for and be learning

while working but not having access to internet facilities in the rural area make

this almost impossible to achieve around here. Although I can access the internet

through my phone it is not efficient in helping me to complete an online program.

One will need a computer and internet facility that is stable. Most schools have

these facilities in the urban area and many teachers there are taking advantage of

these facilities to participate in distance learning.

Encouraging Teamwork

Many participants discussed the need to advance collaborations between the

school management and teachers as a means to achieve a higher level of efficiency. In

most rural schools, the teachers and school administrators have no way of interacting

with policymakers to jointly design a learning process that is efficient in helping pupils to

learn. The relationship gap between the policymakers and the teachers is responsible for a

proportion of the inefficiency that is visible in the academic landscape of the rural schools. A participant noted that:

There is a need for teamwork when it comes to policymaking. Most of the policymakers are not in touch with the situation in the rural schools and how these prevailing conditions affect the learning process and the efficiency of teachers. If those who are in leadership involve teachers and other staff from rural schools, they would have been more aware of the current state of a thing and its impact on the learning process. Going forward, there is a need for collaboration among all that are involved in the academic decisions and implementation for there to be improved efficiency.

Effective Leadership

An overwhelming majority of the participants noted that there seemed to be a great connection between the efficiency of teachers and the environment provided by the leadership of the school. Teachers seemed to want to stay longer on their job where the leader of the school was highly motivational or transformative. Most teachers' descriptions of the kind of school administrators or principals they feel comfortable working with fit perfectly into the transformational leadership model. One participant noted:

The situation of schools in the rural setting would have been different if our leaders were visionary, relational, caring, motivating, and inspiring. Most times, you just keep putting your best without any form of appreciation from even the

principal or the ministry of education. Most times it appears that the government does not even believe that rural teachers exist.

Another participant commended the effort of the school principal, who remained one of the reasons she still wants to put in her best at work. Concerning the school principal, she said:

My principal is like a father to me, not just to me but to all the teachers. He motivates us and keeps encouraging us to do our best even in the face of difficulty. When there is an opportunity that would help to advance our career, he makes it available to us and even encourages us to make the most of it. Working with a visionary and inspiring leader makes you want to go to work every day.

Recommendations

From the responses of the participants, I have found that there is a lot that needs to be put in place to address the issues of retention of teachers in rural schools as well as the efficiency of these teachers. No single recommendation will work without a concerted effort by policymakers and implementers, teachers, administrators, and community leaders. Nevertheless, to address the problem, I have presented my recommendations in four categories which are policies, practices, standards, and plan elements.

Policies to Address the Problem

For better and smoother operations, I present the following as recommendations for the Ministry of Education and all the educational policymakers within Karu local government, to enact policies that can help in the formulation of all the strategies that have been discussed above to address these issues. As I have said before, no single

strategy will work without additional effort; rather, a multi-pronged approach and collaboration are necessary to begin to address this complicated issue. Strategies that require the use of policy include:

An Improved Remuneration System

There is a need to devise certain tactics by managers of policy and educational services to stem the tide in retaining teachers in rural areas. Increased remuneration enhances both teachers' quality, retention rate, and stability within these areas. To adequately reward efforts made by an improved remuneration system can result in improved employee performance and the retention of teachers even in rural areas.

In this study, most participants identified the poor remuneration package and the need to improve it as the most important factor, mentioned 30 times by all participants (100%). According to Dolan et al. (2012), if the majority of the workers feel under-remunerated, there is a need for the government to determine how much teachers are paid and establish a system to increase compensation based on experience and performance. Therefore, to adequately increase the rate of retention of teachers in the rural schools and further motivate them for higher efficiency, the government should place priority on paying teachers well and on time.

Owing to the existing poor remuneration system in rural schools, the plight of Nigeria's teachers is pitiful because many of them have died of hunger, diseases, and frustration. A good number of them have resorted to begging to live, and to living as destitute. This kind of living condition does not inspire the younger generation, leading to their dread of becoming teachers in the future. Adesulu et al. (2015) has said that if our

teachers are not appreciated and recognized, they would be forced to turn their noble job of inspiring the youth to higher academic excellence into positions of creating 'yahoo boys' and 'runs girls' in our schools. In the same vein, speaking at a symposium organized to mark World Teachers' Day in 2015, the Director-General, National Teachers' Institute, Dr. Aminu Ladan remarked that Nigerian teachers are de-motivated in Nigeria because their remuneration is abysmally low. He, therefore, called on employers of teachers to consider increasing salaries and other remunerations for teachers to put them at par with their counterparts in other sectors. Buckland (2005) has also said that the lack of effective teacher salary systems both denies young people their rights to an education and also hinders the 'peace dividend' that usually comes with quickly restoring equitable access to education. Therefore, I recommend that the remuneration system of teachers be reviewed urgently.

Making a Career Development Plan a Part of the Incentive for Rural Teachers

There is a need for government to formulate policies that provide ample opportunities for teachers to develop their careers as an important incentive. One very important reason that participants gave for leaving rural schools was to meet their need for career development. Therefore, I recommend that the government can provide training opportunities and help to fund further academic studies for teachers in rural areas. I recommend that this type of policy can contribute to motivating the teachers in these settings to improve their performance at work and inspire them to deliver more qualitative teaching services to students in rural areas. Remember that the higher the motivation the better the performance. According to Kelvin (2016), this kind of

motivation is so important because it increases the teacher's morale, performance, and result in achieving school goals efficiently. I also recommend that a suitable career plan that includes fresh course offerings in the offline and online learning worlds, sponsored online and/or offline seminars or workshops will be a great initiative to contribute to the career development of teachers. Another worthy incentive is the investment in relevant industry books or night classes for teachers in rural communities.

A Public-Private Partnership for Better Internet Access

Seeing that internet access was mentioned by some participants, it will make a lot of difference if the Ministry of Education networked with his counterpart in the Ministry of Communications to mandate telecommunications companies to enhance or provide internet access specifically for teachers in rural areas. I know that such a Public-Private Partnership will be an effective strategy for better internet access needed by these teachers both for communication and to access the global village. The teachers within Karu LGA can also enjoy some sort of subsidy to acquire or own internet-enabled devices, thereby accessing and connecting with their counterparts in the city, without any feeling of being left out. According to Kalsoom et al. (2017), rewards are essential to motivate teachers and to make their performance effective. The reward that employees most noticeably receive from their organization is pay, allowances, and promotions, etc. These rewards are used to encourage the employees to perform their tasks at full potential. In the same manner, this kind of partnership and specific subsidy aimed at teachers to enhance their access to a very important tool if they are to be efficient, and to

match their counterparts in the cities, can be an important motivation because it increases teacher morale and their performance, in turn.

Practices to Address the Problem

Several strategies shared in the previous section can be effectively handled as practices by each school administration and staff, requiring little or no assistance from the government. These strategies include student-teacher relationships and encouragement of teamwork. These are practices that can be achieved on personal levels by teachers and workers within rural schools.

Enhancing Teachers-Learners Relationship

I recommended that teachers should work to improve their relationships with learners and one another to achieve a higher level of efficiency. To achieve this, teachers have to be intentional and see themselves as agents of change and world development. A teacher can create a cordial relationship and build trust with the student if the teacher became more interested in the student. The teacher can achieve such a quality relationship with the students by constantly checking the student's knowledge and understanding of the subject to find if the student can practically apply the knowledge imparted. This method will be more productive for achieving both a higher level of efficient learning and enhancing the teachers-learners relationship. It is important to note that success without a successor is a failure. Thus, those in the teaching profession have the responsibility to teach others to become future generational builders. According to Camp (2011), students with declining academic performances as the school years progress also show a corresponding increase in behavioral issues over the academic

years. An evaluation of this trend through discussion with the students shows that most have dislike or distrust for the teachers. It is, therefore, expedient for teachers to build a relationship of trust with their students while at the same time paying careful attention to the influence of their activities on the learners' perspectives.

Introduction of Staff Mentoring and Support System

There should be a system in place to enforce regular monitoring of teachers for productivity and performance towards achieving a higher level of efficiency among them, especially in these rural areas. Through a monitoring system in place, the school administrators can constantly check the time of arrival of teachers to the school, ensure their regular attendance to their respective classes, regularly inspect their lesson notes, and conduct a follow-up of the success of the teacher-learner relationship. According to Schut et al. (2020), when emerging academic needs are brought to the knowledge of the appropriate authorities, proper action should be taken to enhance teaching and learning processes in schools. Therefore, this type of monitoring system recommended above can be effective in improving the efficiency of teachers and yield a more productive learning environment in rural schools.

Providing Leadership Training for Principal Officers and Administrators

School administrators will do well to create opportunities for principal officers and staff within the schools to attend seminars and in-service training for enhancing their leadership abilities and surmounting the leadership challenges raised by some of the participants. Participants at these kinds of leadership training will have the occasion to make themselves better professionals at leadership techniques and qualities that are more

suitable for teaching and learning. By organizing such leadership training for teaching and nonteaching staff of their respective schools, the school administrators will have invested in the school's human capital in a way that impacts the quality of leadership for a more effective school organization. Because a school's leadership ability limits its effectiveness and potential and because continuous change is a function of leadership, school administrators need to institute such appropriate mechanisms as regular focused training to harness the human resource within the school for a better learning environment. During such training, the participants will be equipped with the required tools for optimal performance in school administration.

According to NTI (2006), as cited by Usman, (2016), it is the responsibility of a school administration to effectively manage various resources at its disposal towards achieving the institutions' objectives. More particularly, Usman (2016) stated that some school administrators are not capable of providing adequate leadership for their subordinates. He also said that most times such leaders do not have relevant experiences to create an atmosphere of effective leadership that inspires others to follow. Such leaders are lacking in the area of providing adequate checks and implementing discipline when necessary, leading to a lack of professionalism in the way the school runs. Hence, he proposed and I agree that school administrators and personnel be trained regularly while on the job.

Standards to Address the Problem

Provision of Security

Given the increased state of insecurity across the country, especially in Northern Nigeria, with staff, pupils, and students of schools as direct targets of bandits and kidnappers disguised as herders within rural and semi-urban locations in Kaduna, Niger, Zamfara, Plateau, and Katsina States, there is an urgent and pressing need to give full attention to the security, and safety of workers and students. More specifically, the government in Nasarawa State needs to tighten the security measures to schools across the state, especially in rural areas. I recommend that Karu LGA authorities should, in addition to the already established presence of security operatives, collaborate with the local vigilante to implement a 24-hour patrol of security forces around all schools.

The Karu LGA Chairman can collaborate with the local vigilante to beef up security around schools within his jurisdiction. It is also not out of place to build or urge upon the State Government to build more police outposts, especially around all schools within rural communities in the State. The government and school administration should enhance the physical security of school hostels across the LGA to address the insecurity of students in boarding schools within its territory. To complement the efforts of the military and other federal security agencies, the LGA Chairman can advance community policing measures in fighting insecurity, preventing abduction of school children and other criminalities within the LGA. Although the incidences of abduction of school children have been minimal within Karu LGA, it is important to take proactive steps and

measures towards tackling the problem and preventing its occurrence within its communities.

The LG Chairman as the administrator of the local government remains the "defacto Chief Security Officer" of the communities within its territory. His primary role is to enforce the security of lives and properties, including those of workers and students of schools within rural communities. He can further do so by engaging in comprehensive collaboration with critical stakeholders to eliminate the risk associated with targeted attacks on schools and also to proactively engage in intervention measures aimed at addressing barriers to learning. According to Uzuegbu-Wilson (2019), those in government can collaborate with other critical stakeholders including to attain societal goals. Therefore, the LGA Chairman can collaborate with proprietors, law enforcement agencies, civil society organizations/non-governmental organizations, international partner agencies and donor agencies, community leaders, vigilante groups, religious leaders, parents, and students to achieve better and more robust security architecture within his sphere of control. In the same vein, suspected bandits and kidnappers, both those caught in the act and those who aid and abet them, should be prosecuted, convicted, and punished immediately with no mercy or option of fine.

Provision of Learning and ICT Facilities

A prominent theme in the interview of all the participants is the need for the provision of learning and ICT facilities. No excellent delivery of educational content is possible without adequate teaching facilities, such as science laboratories, ICT facilities, and other learning infrastructures. These facilities are very essential tools for teaching

and learning activities without which it is difficult for teachers to be efficient in their work. In today's modern technological society, a competent teacher requires skills and techniques for providing successful teaching. Therefore, teachers in rural communities need to be provided with facilities that encourage successful training in the use of ICT.

With the increase in the demand for technology and since the coronavirus pandemic where a lot of education is now done digitally, the relevant authorities must now equip all schools, including those within rural communities, with ICT resources such as laptops, computers, tablets, Smart Boards, projectors, and other electronic interactive devices. Teaching staff should also be trained on how to use these devices well and become digitally proficient to match their contemporaries in urban communities. This will, in turn, be a great motivating incentive that can be used by school administrators and policymakers to encourage teachers' retention in these communities. Consequently, these digitally proficient teachers can teach the students to develop skills and learn more effectively using ICT. Further, school authorities should establish Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation mechanisms for schools in rural communities for both students and teachers to use more technology. By so doing, teaching-learning will become more attractive to the teacher and the learner in those rural communities.

Plan Elements to Address the Problem

Provision of Social Infrastructure

One of the responsibilities of government is the provision of social amenities These high capital-intensive projects cannot be left in the hands of the local communities or the school administrators. Therefore, the representatives of the government, in the

Ministry of Education, can bring the need of the educational communities to the

knowledge of the government so that those needs can be prioritized in the budget. Doing

so will address the pressing need for infrastructure in the rural schools, in turn, learning

and teaching will become more enjoyable and efficient for teachers and students, alike.

Such pressing social infrastructure includes safe drinking water, healthcare (hospitals),

standard and improved school structures, public facilities (restrooms, etc.), and

transportation (better motorable roads and means of transportation).

Provision of Low-Cost Accommodations for Teachers

The Karu LGA authority can, in conjunction with the local chiefs and well-

meaning members of the community, embark on projects to provide low-cost

accommodation for teachers and other workers in rural schools by developing staff

quarters to provide decent and adequate accommodations for teachers. Such a

government-funded project will be a great solution to the problem of accommodation that

teachers working in those rural areas currently face. Alternatively, the government can

give rural teachers accommodation allowance to boost their morale. In addition, the

communities where these schools are located can also provide some form of incentive to

teachers working in rural schools by providing rent discounts for them. This could be

achieved through Parents-Teachers-Association who can, with the cooperation of the

community leaders, tackle the high cost of accommodation.

The result of carrying out these recommended strategies will be an increased

amount of budgetary expenditures and investment on the part of the government and

cannot be left for the schools to handle. In addition, stakeholders and policymakers

should be willing to and show readiness to identify and give teachers the much-needed support to meet their needs for better performance. I also recommend that, in a project for the schools, the government and the private sector can combine forces to provide adequate funding to boost the retention and efficiency of qualified teachers within these rural communities. Ultimately, no single school can achieve all the foregoing without the help of the aforementioned stakeholders.

Strength and Limitation of Study

One of the strengths of this study is embedded in the research methodology. Being a qualitative study, I have accessed in-depth insight into the perspective of the participants. My conclusions in this study are valid because they are based on quality data drawn from those directly affected by the phenomenon under study. The COVID-19 pandemic restrictions posed a strong limitation as they affected the data collection procedure. During the lockdown season which was also the time allocated to collect data, there were a lot of restrictions schools were shut down and it was difficult to reach out to some of the prospective participants. As a result, I took more time for the data collection process than was scheduled. Yet another limitation was that although the data collection process was supposed to contain one-on-one, in-person interviews due to the pandemic and the restrictions from the government, all interviews were conducted and recorded via Zoom. Consequently, I took more time for the interview process than the time allocated for the process.

I experienced another limitation with recording the interview sessions because some of the participants were not conversant with the use of Zoom or other digital

technology for the conduct of meetings. I spent additional time training them. Even after

the training, some participants could not use certain functions on Zoom properly. For

instance, some participants could not use the microphone properly; as a result, I exerted

more energy and spent more time than necessary in transcribing the conversations. I

would have encountered fewer limitations if I had in-person contacts with all the

participants.

Because of these limitations, I recommend that future researchers in similar topics

invest time and resources in social media campaigns and surveys. They can engage in a

brief yet focused local outreaches/training of the target audiences in the use of digital

technology, and also partner with religious bodies, local town halls, and other meeting

points of members of this audience, to collect data more easily. It is my opinion that more

of these rural teachers and other stakeholders can be better reached through

collaborations with the local chiefs and their respective religious bodies.

Summary

Education in rural areas needs to be given attention. The schools in the region

have difficulty in retaining teachers as well as helping them to achieve optimal

performance. Hence, this research set out to find, from the perspectives of the teachers

and other stakeholders, what strategies can be used to achieve a higher rate of retention

and increased efficiency of teachers. From the responses of the participants, the following

factors are responsible for a high rate of turnover include lack of social amenities,

absences of career advancement opportunities, poor leadership, and poor remuneration

system among other factors. To these problems, the participants suggested different strategies to help in dealing with the stated challenges.

Some of the participant-recommended strategies for achieving a higher rate of retention include an improved remuneration system, making a career-development plan an important motivating incentive for rural teachers. They added that the administrators and key policymakers within the LGA can partner with non-governmental organizations to provide accommodation for teachers working in the rural school, harness the already existing security architecture to provide adequate security of lives and properties, among other strategies. Participants also suggested strategies that can be implemented by teachers and school administrators for a higher rate of and better teacher-learner relationships. Introducing leadership training for principal officers, provision of learning, and ICT facilities are among the suggestions of these participants. In closing this chapter, I have included recommendations for addressing the problem of retention and efficiency of teachers within rural communities in the LGA. My recommendations include needed policies and practices, standards, and planned elements to address these problems.

Section 5: Dissemination Plan

I will disseminate the findings from this research through a project report, which I will submit to the research department of the ministry of education, Karu branch. This was the partnering organization lent its support to the project by giving me the required permission to carry out the study. I will also give copies of this report to each school principal and to major educational stakeholders who have shown significant interest and made valuable contributions in the course of the interviews conducted during this study. Because these individuals are influential enough to implement some of the recommendations I have made, I look forward to seeing the issues I have raised in this study becoming a thing of the past sooner than later.

In addition to the printing of the project report, I will present the manuscript at a meeting that I will organize in collaboration with the Ministry of Education. To attend that event, I will invite important stakeholders and policymakers so that the key players in the education sector of Uke District of Karu LGA will be enlightened about the findings of this research. Such a gathering where I will share my findings from this research is an opportunity to not only share the information but also gather practical feedback.

Summary

I have outlined 5 sections in this scholarly project where I have highlighted the very procedures that I employed in researching the retention and efficiency of qualified teachers in rural Nigerian secondary schools in Uke district of Karu LGA. Because teachers have the greatest potential in the center of the education configuration, I placed

priority on seeking ways to improve their retention and efficiency. After IRB approval, I

gathered information from participants drawn from some schools in the Karu LGA. I

analyzed the data that I gathered and I presented the themes as strategies for achieving a

higher rate of retention and efficiency of teachers working in schools in rural areas. In

this last chapter, I highlighted the dissemination plan for a great step forward towards

social change in rural communities.

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Appendix A: Organization Participation Approval

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION NASARAWA STATE
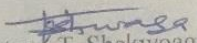AREA INSPECTORATE OFFICE, UKE
P.M.B 1008, KEFFI

Our Ref: _____   Your Ref: _____   Date 15 – 05 – 2020

Dear Ma,

This is to acknowledge that the Ministry of Education through the schools is willing to participate in the study. The expectation is that the study will be able to help by identifying strategies that influence sustainability and efficiency of qualified teachers in rural secondary schools within our jurisdiction.

The organization also wishes to clearly state that, where necessary, the names of the schools may be mentioned but mentioning the name of individuals school be avoided completely.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Satese .T. Shekwoaga
DCEO (Monitoring & Evaluation)
For: Chief Evaluation Officer,
Area Education Quality Evaluation Office,
Uke.

Appendix B: Email to the Potential Participants

Hello,

I am a doctoral candidate at Walden University, and I am conducting research that is focused on Retention and Efficiency of Qualified Teachers in Rural Nigerian Secondary Schools

The purpose of this research interview is to explore the views of teachers, non-academic staff, and administrators on the above subject. I believe that your participation as regards this process would be helpful and enable the required information for the research topic.

The results of this research aim to help education policymakers to create a multi-year plan to alleviate the deficit of teachers for rural communities in Karu Local Government. The study also has the potential to create positive social change in other rural areas by providing a template to deal with similar problems.

All information gathered will be confidential and the analysis will be done anonymously. Therefore, I kindly request your participation in this process to aid my discovery of the research topic. If you are interested in taking part or need more information, kindly respond to this email by stating your interest and consent to participating in this research.

Thank you in anticipation of your favorable reply.

Appendix C: Open-Ended Interview Questions

The interview questions will be asked of the participants.

Interview Questions

1. What are the effective strategies in achieving a higher rate of retention of teachers in the rural setting?

2. What strategies should be put in place to achieve a higher level of efficiency by teachers in rural schools?

3. What career advancement plan/ program is available to teachers working in rural schools?

4. What recommendations can you give on how to reduce the turnover rate among qualified teachers working in rural schools?

5. What role has the Government/ the educational bodies played in motivating teachers in the rural area?

6. What role do you think the government/ the educational bodies should play in retaining qualified teachers within these schools?

Appendix D: Interview Protocol

Location:

Date:

Start Time:

End Time:

Good day, thank you for participating in this interview. The duration of the interview will be 30 minutes maximum. I am conducting a qualitative case study to explore the retention and efficiency of qualified teachers in rural Nigeria secondary schools. It will be through skype, recorded and notes will be taken. All the recording processes will be transcribed and copies will be given for proper analysis and it will be shared with the participant for corrections and consent. Please feel free if you are not comfortable with the process or questions you may stop anytime to excuse yourself without any adverse consequences. It may require additional time to check through the transcript, please don't hesitate.

Thank you for your participation in this study.

<u>Things to Recall</u>

- Collect the signed consent form

- Get approval to record the interview

- All responses will be confidential

- Observe the participant for non-verbal body language and signal

- Detailed responses to the interview questions

- Ask follow-up probing questions

- Listen carefully and no interruption with the participant.

Appendix E: -Participant Flier

Participant Needed For Research Study on Retention and Efficiency of Qualified Teachers in Rural Nigerian Secondary Schools

Are you a qualified teacher working in rural schools with the attendant challenges ? You may be eligible for a study which can help to improve the teachers welfare and the educational programme of rural schools.

You May Qualify, If You

- Are a qualify teacher, non-teaching staff or administrator.
- Are working in any rural school in karu local Government
- Have worked and lived in the environment for atleast 12 month

Participation Involves

- Providing information regarding your work experience over a zoom call

Participant will receive

Data subscription for making calls

Potential Benefits

Participating in the study may help improve the welfare partern of teachers working in rural schools