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Teachers' perception of the Welfare Packages for Teaching Staff in the Lagos State Primary Schools: Implication for Teacher Productivity

Kayode Asoga-Allen

Department of General Studies in Education School of Education
Michael Otedola College of Primary Education
Noforija-Epe, Lagos State, Nigeria

Abstract:

This paper examined teachers' perception of the welfare packages for teaching staff in the Lagos state primary schools. A total of 300 teachers were selected for the study from 25 primary schools in five Local Education Districts. A questionnaire titled Teachers' perception of Welfare packages (TPWSQ) was developed and administered by the researcher. The data collected were analysed by calculation of weighted means. The study found that the welfare packages provided by the Government for the teachers in the Lagos state primary schools were very inadequate and unsatisfactory. Based on this finding, it was recommended that the issue of welfare packages should be adequately addressed positively towards enhancing teachers' productivity in Lagos state.

Keywords: teachers' perception welfare package productivity

1. Introduction

In any organization or system, staff welfare is an indispensable tool in enhancing productivity of workers towards organizational goals. That is, there is a strong relationship between adequate staff welfare and job performance. Staff welfare packages are those employee-centred variables that affect workers either positively, if adequate, or negatively, if inadequate, on the jobs. In the words of Awogboro (2004) staff welfare packages constitute the following:

- Financial reward and adequate promotion as at when due;
- Free medical services;
- Official accommodations and housing loans;
- Transport services and vehicle loan;
- Reward excellence and display of ingenuity;
- Good work environment; and
- Staff training and development programmes.

The greater the access to good welfare packages, the greater the possibility of commitment and productivity an employee is able to afford. According to Ejiofor (1984), fair and adequate welfare package for employees is unquestionably one of the most significant elements in the maintenance of a satisfied and efficient workforce. As observed by Asoga-Allen (2000) any work that a man does and he cannot meet the needs, would not take his full attention.

The welfare packages in the teaching service in Nigeria today are ridiculous compared to packages in the professions such as medical, banking and accountancy. Teachers are regularly owed arrears of salaries in many states. In Lagos state, conditions of service in the teaching profession have not satisfied teachers, especially in the areas of irregular payment of salaries and arrears, delayed promotion, epileptic staff development and the like. These dilemmas have degenerated to pathetic situation to the extent that academic excellence is being jeopardized in our schools. Olowoye and Alani (2000) noted that the quality of the school system and the students (the finished products of the school system) depend on the quality of the teachers. To effectively provide qualitative education that will improve the standard of academic performance, there is critically a need to improve welfare packages provided for the teachers in Lagos state so that efficiency, functionality and effectiveness will be attained in our school system.

It was against this background that the paper examined teachers' perception towards the welfare packages for the primary school teachers in Lagos state.

2. Statement of the Problem

The welfare packages in the Lagos state teaching service have degenerated to the extent that students' academic performance is being affected negatively. One finds that teachers are no longer interested in teaching. They are not committed and motivated

towards duties; and as such they have become traders and agents of different businesses. They attend to other matters that will improve their financial stand, leaving their primary assignments to suffer. Teachers in Lagos state primary schools complain that the 'take home package cannot take them home'. The 27% of basic salary (academic allowance) approved for Nigerian teachers are not paid in full according to teachers in the state, their salaries are heavily taxed and they find it difficult to make ends meet. Teachers' needs as human beings must be met if meaningful contributions are expected from them towards school excellence. This paper therefore was an attempt to assess the perception of teachers on the provision of welfare packages for teaching staff in the Lagos State primary schools.

3. Research Questions

- Are financial reward and promotion packages adequate for the Lagos state primary school teachers?
- To what extent is the provision of free medical services for the Lagos state primary school teachers adequate?
- Is there provision of official accommodation and housing loan scheme for the Lagos State primary school teachers?
- How adequate is the staff training and development programme for the Lagos state primary school teachers?

4. Methodology

Population of this study consisted of all the public primary schools in Lagos state. A total of 300 teachers were selected randomly from 25 schools in 5 local Education districts. A Like questionnaire titled teachers' perception of welfare Packages (TPWSQ) was used to collect data from the respondents. Section A elicited information on each respondent's background and section B elicited data on the responses of teachers to the provision of welfare packages in Lagos state primary schools. The data collected were

5. Data Analysis and Results

5.1. Research Question 1

Are financial reward and promotion packages adequate for the Lagos state primary school teachers?

	Items	SA	A	D	SD	x	Remarks
1	Monetary incentive is used to reward excellence	150	145	208	132	2.12	Disagree
2	My educational qualifications determine my salary	341	381	155	18	2.98	Agree
3	Teachers earn salary increment regularly and promptly	53	173	256	65	1.82	Disagree
4	I receive my promotion promptly	35	42	203	185	1.55	Disagree
5	Teachers' poor public image is as a result of teachers' poor salary	381	336	48	77	2.81	Agree

Table 1: Analysis of Responses on Financial reward and promotion packages

Table 1 reveals the analysis of Responses of the subjects on financial reward and promotion packages using weighted average (X). The respondents disagreed with items 1, 3 and 4 with various mean (X) values less than 2.5. These indicate that monetary incentive is not a predicate for rewarding excellence, teachers do not earn salary increment regularly and promptly, and the promotion is not promptly. The table further shows that items 2 and 5 have mean values greater than 2.5 respectively. This indicates that teachers' educational qualification does determine their salaries and teachers' poor public image is as a result of teachers' poor salary.

	Items	SA	A	D	SD	X	Remarks
1	The SUBEB provides free medical services for teachers and their dependents	11	25	276	157	1.56	Disagree
2	Drugs are available at the school clinic and government hospitals	15	27	281	126	1.50	Disagree
3	My employer refunds medical expenses incurred by me and my dependents	10	21	225	178	1.45	Disagree
4	Special attention is given to teachers in Government hospital	9	61	172	215	1.52	Disagree

5	I am satisfied with the medical services provided by my employer	16	24	253	184	1.59	Disagree
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Table 2: Analysis of the responses on the provision of free medical services

5.2. Research Question 2

To what extent is the provision of free medical services for the Lagos state primary school teachers adequate?

Table 2 reveals the analysis of the responses on provision of free medical services in Lagos state primary schools using weighted mean (X). The respondents disagreed with the items 1-5 with various mean (X) values less than 2.5. This indicates that no provision was made on free medical services for teachers and their dependants by the government in the Lagos state primary schools. The table reveals further that drugs are not available in the school clinics, government does not refund medical expenses incurred by teachers and their dependants, special attention is not given to teachers in the government hospitals but rather treated like any other patient, and that they are not satisfied with the medical services provided for them by their employer (the government).

5.3. Research Question 3

Is there provision of official accommodation and housing loan scheme for the Lagos state primary school teachers?

	Items	SA	A	D	SD	X	Remarks
1	My employer provides residential accommodation for almost all her teachers	15	21	185	219	1.47	Disagree
2	My employer operates a housing loan scheme for her teachers	8	78	264	153	1.68	Disagree
3	I have benefitted from my employer's housing loan scheme	0	0	184	226	1.37	Disagree
4	Teachers are not adequately catered for in the allocation of residential quarter in the civil service	475	227	105	52	2.86	Agree
5	The teaching profession is being discriminated against in the allocation of landed property in Lagos state.	481	201	89	53	2.75	Agree

Table 3: Analysis of the responses on the provision of Official accommodation and housing loan scheme.

Table 3 shows the analysis of the responses of the teachers on provision of official accommodation and housing loan scheme. The analysis reveals that the respondents disagreed with items 1, 2 and 3 with mean (X) values of 1.47, 1.68 and 1.37 respectively. These shows that the teachers disagreed with the premises that their employer provides residential accommodation, operates a housing loan scheme, and the teachers do not benefit from the employer's housing loan scheme. However, items 4 and 5 have mean (X) values of 2.86 and 2.75 respectively, meaning that, the teachers are not adequately catered for when it comes to allocation of residential quarters in the Lagos state civil service and that the teaching profession is being discriminated against in the allocation of landed property in Lagos state.

5.4. Research Question 4

How adequate is the staff training and development programme for the Lagos State primary school teachers?

	Items	SA	A	D	SD	X	Remarks
1	Newly employed teachers undergo induction programmes in my school	250	385	113	45	2.64	Agree
2	A qualified and experienced teacher does not need any more training	16	27	355	51	1.83	Disagree
3	Seminars, workshops and conferences are organized from time to time for teachers in my school	52	282	335	3	2.37	Disagree
4	I have benefitted from such in-service training programmes	43	185	357	83	2.23	Disagree

Table 4: Analysis of the responses on the adequacy of staff training and development programme.

Table 4 reveals the analysis of the responses of the teachers on the vision of staff training and development programme. The analysis shows that the items 1, 2, 3 and 4 have mean (X) values of 2.64, 1.83, 2.37 and 2.23 respectively. These indicate that newly employed teachers undergo induction programmes in schools, qualified and experienced teachers need more training, despite the importance of seminars, workshops and conferences, they are not organized from time to time for teachers in schools, and finally, majority of teachers do not benefit from in-service training programmes.

6. Discussion of Results

It was found in this study that the financial reward and promotion packages for primary school teachers in Lagos state are not regular and adequate. It is obvious that the teachers were dissatisfied with their financial reward and how they are promoted by their employer. Salary has a great symbolic value and its acquisition provides innumerable psychic satisfaction. Novix(1998) observes that without the inducement of financial compensation, it would be difficult to obtain any substantial productive efforts from workers.

The study found that no provision was made on free medical services for teachers and their dependants by the Government in the Lagos state primary schools. Teachers expressed dissatisfaction with the medical services given to them.

The findings of this study indicated further that there was no provision of official accommodation and housing loan scheme for teachers in the Lagos state primary schools. The study shows that the housing loan scheme operated by PP-TESCOM for teachers was grossly inadequate and had not favoured the teachers at all. This agrees that Blackmore and Cooksey (1991) stressed that owing a house of modern design, a motor car or smart clothes are out of the reach of most teachers. This however differs from emphasis made by Miles (Ejiogu, 1990) that certain factors such as security and comfortable living, pleasant working conditions and a sense of belonging lead to satisfaction.

Finally, the study found that though there was provision for staff training and development programmes for teachers it is not adequate. The teachers were dissatisfied with the mode of training and development programmes in the state. Bishop (1990) maintains that most skills are not readily developed and if employees are to develop and use their highest skills and abilities, then they must be given opportunities for staff development.

7. Conclusion

The study had examined the perception of teachers towards the provision of welfare packages for teaching staff in the Lagos state primary schools, and had discovered that the welfare services provided by the government for the teachers are very unsatisfactory. The study further discovered that this problem had developed in the teacher's negative attitude towards teaching in Lagos state.

8. Recommendations

The department in charge of staff welfare should recruit the issue of provision of adequate welfare services for the teachers. Allocations of lands, giving out car loans, and distribution of essential commodities to teachers are very necessary. The state government should give financial assistance to teachers when there is need for it. The Government should also ensure that salaries are paid and promotions are given as at when due. The 27% basic salary approved as academic allowance should be paid in full. Furthermore, training and development for teachers through seminars, conferences, workshops and the like should be encouraged by the Government.

Finally, if welfare packages for teachers improve, their attitude to work will be positive and this will enhance their productivity and effectiveness in the schools, thus having a productive primary school system in the state.

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