

**Teachers' Recruitment As Correlate Of Staff Engagement In Public Senior Secondary
Schools In Edo State, Nigeria**

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Abstract

The study investigated teachers' recruitment as a correlate of staff engagement in public senior secondary schools in Edo State. Two research questions and two hypotheses guided the study. The study adopted a correlational design. The population was 5720 teachers in 298 public senior secondary schools in Edo State, with a sample of 572 teachers using the proportionate sampling technique. The instruments for data collection were a questionnaire titled; managing teachers' Recruitment Questionnaire and Staff Engagement Questionnaire. The reliability indexes are: Managing teachers' recruitment .83 and staff engagement .81 using Cronbach method. Out of 572 copies of the questionnaire administered, 554 were properly filled out and retrieved, representing 97% success. Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Statistics was used to answer the research questions, while the r-ratio was used to test the hypotheses at a 0.05 level of significance. The findings, among others, revealed that managing teachers' recruitment (job description and interview) correlated with predicted staff engagement in public senior secondary schools in Edo State. The study concluded that there is a high and positive correlation between managing job descriptions as well as managing interviews and staff engagement in public senior secondary schools in Edo State. It was recommended among others that the school management should fully adopt a job description system to ensure that vacancies are filled.

Key Words: Recruitment, Engagement, Job Description, Interview

Introduction

All the activities and services that are rendered to the students in the school are included in the teachers' engagement. Kamau (2020) observed that the functions of teachers in school include admission, registration, student organization, classification of students, guidance and counseling services, as well as the comprehension and development of activities in line with the interests and

needs of individual students. Teachers must organize a programme for the diagnosis of needs and counseling of students, a continuous orientation programme based on the principle of effective communication. This includes remedial assistance and professional guidance for both physical well-being and mental health as part of teachers' engagement after recruitment.

The purpose of recruitment is to attract and retain the interest of applicants suitable for the given job and to create a positive image of the people who come in contact with the organization. Section 79(a) of the National Policy on Education (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2014) requires the appointment of academically and professionally qualified individuals as teachers in public secondary schools. According to Section 17(2) of the Teachers' Registration Council of Nigeria (TRCN), Act 2019 stated that any unqualified person found performing the job of teachers have contravened this section and they shall be prosecuted in the law court (TRCN ACT, 2019). Recruitment simply refers to the process by which organizations fill vacancies and facilitate staff engagement.

Staff Engagement

Teachers' responsibilities in the twenty-first century extend beyond the classroom; they also include navigating various technical obstacles that arise in and out of the classroom. As a result, instructors need to possess various skills to succeed in the teaching profession. In light of the current cultural shift, a teacher needs to be knowledgeable about gender education, technology education, distance learning, peace education, and lesson planning (Karacaoglu, 2021). In light of the current technological transformation, it is crucial to examine the teacher selection process through a methodical policy. As a result, the selection process looks for the greatest personnel while taking the companies' physical and financial resources into consideration (Wilk & Capelli, 2019).

The supply and demand of teachers for public schools are out of balance. Due to population growth and attrition, this disequilibrium continues and gets worse every day. Given the economic consequences, it also leads to bad teaching and inappropriate selection. With the assistance of school administration, long-term planning is required to fill such teaching jobs (Hsieh et al., 2023). According to Carver-Thomas and Darling-Hammond (2019), even if teacher attrition is a significant problem for the adequate supply of teachers in schools, teacher training is still crucial. The majority of financial resources are used for hiring and mentoring because there is a lack of

training for teachers. Therefore, to make hiring more profitable and less costly for the educational sector, a review of the hiring method is required.

Teachers' Recruitment

Recruitment is a process by which a school ensures that it has the largest and strongest pool of qualified applicants for a position. Recruitment is part of a human capital strategy that matches the needs of a public school (Gross & DeArmond, 2023). Rather than waiting to see who applies for a posted position, they constantly seek candidates through formal and informal activities. Often, the most effective schools take an ongoing and more proactive approach to teachers throughout the school year (Gross & DeArmond, 2023). Recruitment simply referred to the process by which organizations fill vacancies to ensure that there is no vacuum in service delivery. Ololube (2019) added that recruitment is the process of finding and attracting teachers who are qualified to fill teaching vacancies. Both descriptions and job specifications are vital in the recruitment process because they specify the nature of the teaching and the qualifications.

Therefore, the success of any organization, such as a school system, can largely be attributed to the efforts of workers within it. The recruitment process is the activity undertaken by an organization to attract a pool of suitable applicants for a vacancy. Job vacancies are usually made public through advertisements and publications using different media such as newspapers, notice boards, paid advertisements on radio, television stations, social media, etc. Applicants are often given deadlines with which to make their applications (Okogbaa, 2019). Applicants who meet the set criteria are invited to the next phase, which could be written or oral examinations, including standardized and aptitude tests (Okogbaa, 2019).

Recruitment or employment is the process by which personnel or manpower resources are made available through appointment as in the case of board members, or directors of government enterprise, especially in public organization. It also involves getting all prospective applicants for job position in an organization. Abah cited in Ikvesi (2020) regarded recruitment as the act of seeking, evaluating, obtaining commitment from, placing and orienting new employees to fill positions required for the successful conduct of an organization. For him, the recruitment process involves seeking and attracting a pool of people from which candidates who are to fill job vacancies can be selected. Cole (2019) also opined that the principal purpose of recruitment is to attract sufficient and suitable employees to apply for vacancies in the organization.

Zweig in Ikwezi (2020) defined recruitment as the set of activities an organization uses to select candidates who possess the abilities and attitude necessary for the enterprise especially with the aim of achieving its objectives. In the same vein, Kuntz and Donnel in Ikwezi (2020) saw recruitment as attracting qualified candidates to fill any vacancies. According to them, it is a process of choosing from among the candidates.

Managing Job Description

The recruiting manager is responsible for describing the role and responsibilities clearly, concisely, and accurately within the job description/person specification. The HR team can assist in ensuring the job description and person specification align with legal and statutory requirements, organizational standards, and appropriate templates. The HR Department will ensure role requirements are clear, specific, and competency-based. Flexible working will be offered wherever possible, and application forms will not require applicants to disclose their current salary. Behaviours and competencies that are required will be articulated, rather than character traits (e.g. ‘has held management responsibilities’ rather than ‘is a natural leader’).

The HR Department will check that the job description has been evaluated. Therefore, if the recruiting manager has or intends to revise the job description and person specification, they should notify the HR Department, as revisions may impact the job evaluation score. The recruiting manager is responsible for ensuring the job description/person specification includes all the essential and desirable qualifications, knowledge, skills, experience, and competencies required for the role, ensuring that the stipulated criteria are measurable and non-discriminatory. The manager also proposes the hours, employment status (e.g. full-time, part-time, term-time, permanent, and fixed-term), and working pattern. Managers are encouraged to consider flexible working options for the role, and they should seek advice from HR colleagues (Vanden-Brink et al 2024).

When completing or checking the job description/person specification, the recruiting manager should consider how each aspect will be measured. Care must be taken when writing/reviewing the job description/person specification as this is used as a baseline for the recruitment and selection process (i.e. applicant’s suitability for the post is measured against this throughout the process). Care can also be taken to avoid the inclusion of unnecessary, marginal, or blanket requirements as this could lead to allegations of discrimination and unfair treatment (e.g. ability to

drive may be viewed as discriminating against disabled applicants unless justifiable). Competencies should align with the competency framework. The HR Department can provide advice and support in reviewing, applying, or developing competencies.

The person specification details the knowledge, skills, expertise, and competencies required for the successful delivery of the key responsibilities detailed in the job description. The recruiting panel or the HR Department should not shortlist a candidate who does not meet the essential criteria for the post, as essential means the role cannot be delivered without that key knowledge, skill, expertise, or competency. Desirable criteria help the recruiting managers differentiate between satisfactory and outstanding candidates. The job description/person specification is finalized before the vacancy is advertised, as prospective candidates often use the advert, job description, and person specification as a means of selecting or deselecting themselves.

Managing Interview

The HR Department is responsible for organizing interviews and advising managers on the suitability and options regarding the interview process, ensuring that it does not breach legislation, good practice, or safer recruitment guidelines. As a minimum, the interview process will include shortlisting and an interview, and candidates invited to interview will be advised of the interview process. The HR Department will advise on the best approach when measuring candidates against the set criteria, ensuring that the interview tools are appropriate, justifiable, and in line with legislation, best practice, and statutory guidelines. The HR Department will ensure that appropriately qualified, trained, experienced, and knowledgeable staff will assess candidates, providing training and support as appropriate. Pupils or stakeholders involved in the recruitment process will have access to training, advice, and guidance, and they will have clear parameters for their involvement. They will provide feedback to the recruiting panel. The recruiting panels prepare questions and interviews with the HR Department, advising the HR Department of the preferred schedule for the interviews. Templates for competency-based interview questions, presentation briefs, scoring sheets, and interview templates are available from the HR Department, alongside advice and guidance (Vanden-Brink et al 2024).

A set of common questions relating to the requirements of the post will be asked of each applicant. Their response will determine whether that is followed up through further questioning. Any gaps in employment history are explored during the interview process. Candidates shortlisted for an

interview will be asked about their suitability to work with children. They will also be required to disclose and then discuss criminal convictions and cautions which are not protected under the amendments to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 (2024 and 2020) that may deem them unsuitable. In line with KCSIE, HR colleagues will undertake online checks on candidates, and will flag any concerns with the Administrator (Thebe & Van der Waldt), 2014) On the interview day, the HR Department will check the candidate's identity (including the candidate's eligibility to work in the UK), qualifications, and membership of a professional body (where appropriate). The HR Department will notify the panel of any issues arising from these checks. The interview panel consists of at least two people, preferably three. One of them should have been involved in the shortlisting process, and one of the panel members should be the person to whom the post reports. The HR Department will ensure that, where required, reasonable adjustments are made for disabled candidates. If the recruiting panel has any concerns regarding a disabled candidate's ability to perform the role for which they have applied, they should seek advice from the HR Department (Thebe & Van der Waldt, 2014).

Statement of the Problem

Some educational stakeholders have faulted the recruitment process of teachers in schools and advised the government to review the recruitment process of the secondary education sector. One of the challenges facing the education sector was the prevalence of unqualified people. Sometimes, unqualified teachers are recruited and cannot manage the process of teaching and learning in schools effectively, which consequently brings dissatisfaction among parents regarding the performance of schools. This is because poor instruction and ineffective teaching reduce the demand for education, which in turn reduces the pool of qualified teachers. Most unqualified teachers lack the competence to deliver quality teaching to their students. Such teachers have not been trained in employing 21st century skills in teaching, and most of the teachings are teachers-centered.

These observations are proof of a poor recruitment process that is marred by who-knows-who and political interference for government officials or appointees of the government. Therefore, the researcher is bothered whether teachers' recruitment could independently correlate with staff engagement in public senior secondary schools in Edo State.

Aim and Objectives of the Study

The study aimed to examine teachers' recruitment as a correlate of staff engagement in public senior secondary schools in Edo State. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. Determine the correlation between managing job descriptions and staff engagement in public senior secondary schools in Edo State.
2. Examine the correlation between managing interviews and staff engagement in public senior secondary schools in Edo State.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What is the correlation between managing job descriptions and staff engagement in public senior secondary schools in Edo State?
2. What is the correlation between managing interviews and staff engagement in public senior secondary schools in Edo State?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses, tested at the 0.05 level of significance, guided the study:

1. There is no significant correlation between managing job descriptions and staff engagement in public senior secondary schools in Edo State.
2. There is no significant correlation between managing interviews and staff engagement in public senior secondary schools in Edo State.

Methodology

The research design for the study was a correlational survey design. The population of the study was 5720 teachers in 298 public senior secondary schools in 18 Local Government Areas with three (3) senatorial districts in Edo State. The sample for the study consisted of 572 teachers in 298 schools using a proportionate sampling technique. The instruments for data collection were titled: Teachers' Recruitment Questionnaire (MTRQ) and Staff Engagement Questionnaire (SEQ). The questionnaire has two sections (A and B); Section A contains 20 items for independent variables, while 10 items for each variable. Section B addressed the dependent variable with 20 items. In all, there are 40 items for the study. The instruments were structured on a four-point modified Likert-type rating scale of Strongly Agree -4, Agree-3, Disagree -2, and Strongly

Disagree -,1 and for joint correlation was Very High Extent -4 points, High Extent -3, Low Extent -2, and Very Low Extent -1 point respectively.

The face and content validity were determined by one expert in Test and Measurement, University of Port Harcourt. The reliability coefficients are as follows: teachers’ recruitment was .83, and staff engagement was .81, while subscales are managing job description was .79, and managing interview was .81, respectively. Out of 572 copies of the questionnaire administered, 554 copies were properly filled and retrieved, which represented 97% success. Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Statistics was used to answer the research questions, while the r-ratio was used to test the hypotheses at a 0.05 level of significance using SPSS.

Results

Research Question 1: What is the correlation between managing job descriptions and staff engagement in public senior secondary schools in Edo State?

Table 1: Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Analysis on the Correlation between managing job description and staff engagement

Variable	Σ	Σ^2	n	df	ΣXY	r	Decision
Managing job description (X)	10521	1106	554	552	2250	.78	high Positive Correlation
Staff engagement (Y)	11981	1435					

The result from Table 1 reveals a correlation coefficient = 0.78. This value is high and positive, indicating that there is a high and positive correlation between managing job descriptions and staff engagement. This implies that improvement in managing job descriptions increases staff engagement in public senior secondary schools in Edo State.

Research Question 2: What is the correlation between managing interviews and staff engagement in public senior secondary schools in Edo State?

Table 2: Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Analysis on the Correlation between managing interview and staff engagement

Variable	Σ	Σ^2	n	df	ΣXY	r	Decision
Managing interview (X)	7333	5377	554	552	1931	.74	High Positive Correlation
Staff engagement (Y)	11981	1435					

The result from Table 2 reveals a correlation coefficient = 0.74. This value is high and positive, indicating that there is a high and positive correlation between the managing interview and staff engagement. This implies that improvement in managing interviews leads to a corresponding increase in staff engagement in public senior secondary schools in Edo State.

Hypothesis

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant correlation between managing job descriptions and staff engagement in public senior secondary schools in Edo State.

Table 3: Transformed t-test on the Correlation between the managing job description and staff engagement

Variable	Σ	Σ^2	n	df	ΣXY	r	t-trans	z-crit	Decision
Managing job description (X)	10521	1106	554	552	2250	.78	21.08	1.96	Sig. Rejected H_0
Staff engagement (Y)	11981	1435							

The result from Table 3 reveals that a high positive correlation exists between managing job descriptions and staff engagement. To establish the significance of the correlation, a transformed t-value was computed, and an index of 21.08 was obtained. This was compared to the critical z-value of 1.96 at the 0.05 level of significance with a degree of freedom of 552, indicating that there is a significant correlation between managing job description and staff engagement (calculated $t = 21.08 < \text{critical } z = 1.96$ at $p < 0.05$ and $df = 552$). Therefore, there is a significant correlation between managing job descriptions and staff engagement in public senior secondary schools in Edo State.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant correlation between managing interviews and staff engagement in public senior secondary schools in Edo State.

Table 4: Transformed t-test on the Correlation between managing interviews and staff engagement

Variable	Σ	Σ^2	n	df	ΣXY	r	t-trans	z-crit	Decision
Managing interview (X)	7333	5377	554	552	1931	.74	17.11	1.96	Sig. Rejected H_0
Staff engagement (Y)	11981	1435							

The result from Table 4 reveals that a high positive correlation exists between managing interviews and staff engagement. To establish the significance of the correlation, a transformed t-value was computed, and an index of 17.11 was obtained. This was compared to the critical z-value of 1.96 at the 0.05 level of significance with a degree of freedom of 552, indicating that there is a significant positive correlation between managing interviews and staff engagement (calculated $t = 17.11 < \text{critical } z = 1.96$ at $p < 0.05$ and $df = 552$). Therefore, there is a significant correlation between managing interviews and staff engagement in public senior secondary schools in Edo State.

Summary of Findings

The findings of this study are summarized as shown below:

1. The study revealed that there is a high and positive correlation between managing job descriptions and staff engagement in public senior secondary schools in Edo State. There is a significant correlation between managing job descriptions and staff engagement in public senior secondary schools in Edo State.
2. The study revealed that there is a high and positive correlation between managing interviews and staff engagement in public senior secondary schools in Edo State. There is a significant correlation between managing interviews and staff engagement in public senior secondary schools in Edo State.

Discussion of Findings

Managing job descriptions and staff engagement

The study revealed that there is a high and positive correlation between managing job descriptions and staff engagement in public senior secondary schools in Edo State. The finding is in agreement with Carver-Thomas and Darling-Hammond (2019), even if teacher attrition is a significant problem for the adequate supply of teachers in schools, teacher training is still crucial. The majority of financial resources are used for hiring and mentoring because there is a lack of training for teachers. Therefore, to make hiring more profitable and less costly for the educational sector, a review of the hiring method is required.

While hiring new teachers is a significant source of revenue for the state, the quality of education is in jeopardy in public sector schools due to the inadequate supply of teachers. The labor market's competition has reduced these public schools' contribution to the labor market (Green et al., 2021). Considering job description efforts that encourage capable secondary school dropouts to enter the field, positively portray the profession by using outstanding teachers as role models for leadership, and best practices. Therefore, there is a significant correlation between managing job descriptions and staff engagement in public senior secondary schools in Edo State.

Managing interviews and staff engagement

The study revealed that there is a high and positive correlation between managing interviews and staff engagement in public senior secondary schools in Edo State. In the context of this study, Olarewaju (2020) opined that interviewers make notes throughout the interview, recording key elements of candidate responses. Time should be allocated at the end of each interview for scoring to take place. Each interviewer scores each question, and their comments on the form should ensure that the rationale for each score is clear and that constructive feedback can be given. The panel should complete the scoring sheet and return all documentation to the HR Department upon completion of the interview process, as it will be retained in the job file for 6 months.

The principal function of human resource management in schools has to do with staff recruitment and management. The education sector today is repeatedly facing troubles in recruiting and managing effective teachers and school leaders for students. Recruiting and managing high-quality staff has usually been problematic for rural and urban schools. Staff recruitment is the process of attracting, selecting, and appointing suitable individuals or personnel for temporary and permanent

jobs in an institution. Therefore, there is a significant correlation between managing interviews and staff engagement in public senior secondary schools in Edo State.

Conclusion

Based on the research findings, the study revealed that there is a high and positive correlation between managing job descriptions as well as managing interviews and staff engagement in public senior secondary schools in Edo State. All the hypotheses showed that there is a significant correlation between managing job description, managing interview, and staff engagement in public senior secondary schools in Edo State.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are proffered:

1. School management should fully adopt a job description system to ensure that vacancies are filled.
2. Institutional management should carryout proper interviews during employment processes for teachers' engagement.

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