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**FACTORS HINDERING RETENTION OF BASIC SCHOOL TEACHERS IN BORDER AREAS AS
PERCEIVED BY EDUCATIONAL STAKEHOLDERS IN KATSINA STATE, NIGERIA**

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Abstract

This study is a descriptive survey research that investigated factors hindering retention of basic school teachers in border areas as expressed by education stakeholders (teachers and community members) in Katsina State of North-Western, Nigeria. A researchers-design questionnaire with psychometrics properties of content validity as well as 0.68 reliability index was administered to 234 respondents. Mean rating with 2.50 as accepted mean score value was adopted to answer the research questions raised in this study. The t-test was used to analyse the research hypotheses raised. The results revealed that lack of social amenities, lack of special package for teachers deployed to serve in the border areas, as well as insecurity of the border areas among others constitute the major factors hindering the retention of basic school teachers in the border areas of Katsina State. Based on the findings, this study recommends the provision of social amenities, adequate welfare package and adequate security to enhance high rate of teachers' retention in the border areas. It further recommends that teachers should develop a sense of patriotism and professional ethics to face the challenges of their profession.

Key words: Border Areas, Teacher Retention, Basic Education, Education Stakeholders and Border education

Introduction

Nigeria, with vast land of 983,000 kilometres shares common boundaries with four countries; Niger, Chad to the North; Cameroun to the East; and Republic of Benin to the South-West. Its border line is about 4,000 kilometres and the Northern part alone accounts for about 2,000 kilometres of that stretch (www.history-of-nigeria/htm).

Border communities are people living in villages and towns close to the boundary between two countries. It could have the feature of a highly cosmopolitan towns or flashpoint for international conflicts as well as isolated extreme rural areas, lacking basic necessities of life (Wills, 2010). Border

areas are characterised by various factors that negatively influence the delivery of quality education, such as Insecurity; Researches such as that of Folami and Karimu (2010) have shown that Nigerian border areas are so porous and have failed to curtail influx of illegal aliens and the challenges faced by the law enforcement agencies at the borders.

Natural phenomena, Political inadequacies and Government's neglect are other factors responsible for the sorry state of the Nigerian borders. With over 55 border posts in the Northern part of the country, the Immigration Service which is responsible for the management of the movement

of persons in and out of the country has less than 300 officers deployed in the areas and about ten vehicles to do the peripheral patrolling. The only patrol boat available is at the moment broken down and out of use, while there are less than one hundred motorcycles available for their use (Oluwalana, 2011). There are no clear-cut forms of demarcation between Nigeria and her neighbours and everybody moves in and out of the country in these areas as they wished with little regard for the rules or laws governing movement across international borders.

Nigerians in the Banki area of Borno state prefer to live in the Cameroonian end of the border, because there are virtually no infrastructural facilities at their own end. There are no light or health facilities in the Nigerian side, whereas the Cameroonians have adequate health facilities which service not only Cameroonians but also their Nigerian neighbours who move in droves to benefit from these facilities (Willis, 2010).

Singh and Rangnekar (2000) also highlighted the following as feature of border communities in the North-Western part of Nigeria. High rate of unemployment of educated and uneducated, skilled and unskilled youth poor economic situation, poor state of social infrastructures and problems of unmarked demarcation of the boundary among others. Typically, border areas are remote and relatively underdeveloped, as a result, many border communities and their schools are poor and disadvantaged, lacking basic infrastructural facilities such as water, roads, electricity and information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) among others. Education has become one of the most powerful weapons known for reducing inequality in modern societies. It is also used for laying the foundation for a sustainable growth and development of any nation. Basic education in particular is the level of education that develops in the individual, the capacity to read, write and calculate. In other words, it helps to eradicate illiteracy (Bruno, Mingat and Rakotamalala, 2003). Thus, basic education is the

only level of education that is available in both the developed and the developing countries (Akinbote, Oduolowu and Lawal, 2001). This explains why basic education is the largest sub-sector of any education system and offers the unique opportunity to contribute to the transformation of societies through the education of the young ones (UNESCO, 2001).

As funding of Education programs continues to be undercut, the most affected of educational development are those living in border areas. Also, the attitudes of the children and teachers in the border area affect the quality of the schools. The overall enrollment into basic schools is very low, as about fifty percent of children living in these areas leave school before completion of the first primary cycle (Tefft, 2009). These children leave school for variety of reasons: some leave because of lack of interest; most leave so that they can work in the fields, etc. As these children grow into adults, many still remain illiterate by the age of forty. These illiterate adults are usually reluctant to send their own children to school because of their own level of education. This in turn creates a challenge for the next generation of school attendants.

The plausible reason why the children living in border areas are being deprived of quality education, could be attributed to the teachers. A large number of teachers lacked the impetus to teach in the border areas and those that do are usually under qualified (Bob, 2007). Also teachers' deployment and retention has constituted serious challenges to schools in the border areas. Several researchers have been conducted to identify the problem of education in the border areas. Bob (2007), Aina (2010), and Folami and Karimu (2010) using different variables such as geographical locations as sample scope, investigated the challenges, implications and prospects of teachers' retention on the quality of basic education in border areas of Katsina State. And they found that lack of teachers' retention has adverse effects on the quality of education in the border areas.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study is to investigate the factors hindering retention of basic school teachers in the border areas of Katsina State as perceived by educational stakeholders (Teachers and community members). Specifically, the study would examine:

- i. Teachers' perception of the factors hindering the retention of basic school teachers in the border areas of Katsina State, Nigeria.
- ii. Community members' perception of the factors hindering the retention of basic school teachers in the border areas of Katsina State, Nigeria.
- iii. Perception of teachers and community members on possible solution to the factors hindering retention of basic school teachers in the border areas of Katsina State, Nigeria.

Research Questions

The study provided answers to the following research questions:

- i. What are the factors hindering the retention of basic school teachers in the border areas of Katsina State?
- ii. What are the possible solutions to the factors hindering retention of basic school teachers in the border areas of Katsina state as perceived by the stakeholders?
- iii. Is there difference in the teachers and community members' perception of the factors hindering the retention of basic school teachers in the border areas of Katsina State, Nigeria?
- iv. Is there difference in the perception of teachers and community members on how best to enhance retention of basic school teachers in the border areas of Katsina State, Nigeria?

Hypotheses

1. There is no significant difference in the teachers and community members' perception of the

factors hindering retention of basic school teachers in the border areas of Katsina State, Nigeria.

2. There is no significant difference in the perception of teachers and community members on how to enhance retention of basic school teachers in the border areas of Katsina State, Nigeria.

Methodology

The descriptive survey design was used in this study. The choice of the descriptive survey was in line with Daramola (2006), who maintained that it is concerned with gathering of information on peoples' opinion. The target population for this study comprised all the teachers and border community members of Bugaje, Farfaru, Gangara, Gulbin Baure, and Jibiya Kusa of Jiba in Katsina State. There are 12,657 people living in these four border communities of Jiba Local Government Areas of Katsina State (National Bureau of Statistics, 2006), out of which 235 respondents (consisting of both teachers and community members) were purposively sampled (National Bureau of Statistics, 2009). This is in line with Research Advisors (2006) table for selecting the sample size. A 19 items Five Point-Likert scale type questionnaire designed by the researchers was used for eliciting the needed data from the respondents. The questionnaire was also translated into two other languages (Hausa and Arabic). The questionnaire items were validated by experts in the Department of Social Sciences Education, Faculty of Education, University of Ilorin and Linguists in the Department of Languages for Hausa and Arabic Language to ensure its content validity. This is in line with Sambo (2008) who maintained that the best procedure for validating research instrument is to give it to a panel of experts. A test re-test reliability method was carried out with a sample of 40 respondents (teachers and border community members) in Illela Local Government of Sokoto State. Three-week interval period was given. The scores of the first were correlated with the scores of the second using Pearson's Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient

and reliability index of 0.68 was obtained. The questionnaire contained two sections. Bio-data of the respondents constituted the first section while the second section contained 19 items with 5 point responses (Strongly Agreed (5), Agreed (4), Disagree (3), Strongly Disagree (2) and I don't know (1). The questionnaire was administered to the respondents by the researchers in the company of trained research assistants. The data collected was analyzed using mean and standard deviation with 2.50 as

Table 1: Stakeholders' Responses on the factors hindering retention of basic school teachers in border areas.

S/No	Statements' Challenges	Mean	SD	Decision
1	Poor infrastructural facilities in border schools	3.31	1.06	Agreed
2	Lack of teachers' use of teaching facilities in border schools.	3.55	0.96	Agreed
3	Poor monitoring of teachers in the border schools.	3.84	1.05	Agreed
4	Lack of special allowance to Teachers posted to border area schools	3.18	0.93	Agreed
5	Lack of access to professional training to develop basic school teachers.	3.71	1.10	Agreed
6	Insecure nature of border areas.	3.50	1.01	Agreed
7	Official neglect of teachers posted to the border schools.	3.74	1.13	Agreed
8	Family problems of basic school teachers that influence their retention in border schools.	3.53	1.04	Agreed
9	Poor accommodation for basic teachers deployed to border schools.	3.50	1.00	Agreed
10	Poor school environment at the border areas	3.10	1.01	Agreed
11	Inconducive teaching and learning environment in the border areas	3.61	1.04	Agreed

Table 1 reveals some factors hindering retention of basic schools teachers in the border schools. It was unanimously agreed that the factors listed above items (1 – 11) influenced teachers' retention in border schools, with the mean score values ranging from 3.10 to 3.84 which is above the acceptable value of 2.50.

Research Question Two: What are the possible solution to the factors hindering retention of basic school teachers in the border areas of Katsina state as perceived by the stakeholders.

Results
The results were presented in the tables below:

accepted means score value. The t-test was used to address the two research hypotheses.

Table 2: Stakeholder responses on the possible solution to the factors hindering retention of basic education teachers in the border areas.

s/no	Prospects	Mean	SD	Decision
1	Involvement of border school teachers in community work may help to retain more teachers in the border areas.	3.44	1.03	Agreed
2	Inclusion of border education as a course of study in the Nigeria teacher training institutes would help to prepare pre-service teachers for the task of teaching in the border areas.	3.58	0.95	Agreed
3	Allocation of more funds for education to Local Government Areas having border areas would positively influence retention of teachers.	3.83	1.05	Agreed
4	Adequate provision of in-service training for border teachers would promote high retention rate among border teachers.	3.30	0.99	Agreed
5	Adequate provision of social infrastructural facilities in the border communities would promote high retention rate among basic school teachers	3.81	1.07	Agreed
6	Adequate provision of security at the border areas to ensure retention.	3.55	1.00	Agreed
7	Adequate inspection and supervision services should be adequate at the border schools	3.56	1.02	Agreed

Table 2 revealed some possible solutions to the factors hindering retention of basic schools teachers in the border areas of Katsina State as perceived by both the teachers and the community members. With the mean score values ranging from 3.30 to 3.83 which is above the acceptable value of 2.50.

Hypotheses one: There is no significant difference in the teachers and community members perception of the factors hindering the retention of basic school teachers in the border areas of Katsina State?

Table 2: t-test table of teachers and community members' responses

Status	N	MEAN	SD	df	t-test	Sig(2-tail)	Decision
Teachers	12	38.5	3.74	232	0.56	0.58	Accepted
Community members	223	77.30	590.05				

P= 0.05

Table 3 reveals that t-value is 0.56 with significant probability value (P value) of 0.58. Since the probability value, P-value = 0.58 > 0.05 alpha level, the null hypothesis is therefore not rejected. This implies that no significant difference existed in the perception of teachers and community members as

regard the factors hindering the retention of basic school teachers in the border areas of Katsina State.

Hypotheses two: There is no significant difference in the perception of teachers and community members on how best to enhanced retention of

basic school teachers in the border areas of Katsina State.

Table 4: t-test table of teachers and community members' responses on possible solution

Status	N	MEAN	SD	df	t-test	Sig(2-tail)	Decision
Teachers	12	28.25	2.89				
Community members	223	28.91	3.05	232	-0.74	0.46	Accepted

P = 0.05

Table 4: reveals that t-value is -0.76 with significant probability value (P value) of 0.46. Since the probability value, P-value = 0.046 > 0.05 alpha level, the null hypothesis is therefore not rejected. This implies that both teachers and community members do not differ in the way they perceived the possible solution that has been able to promote retention of basic education teachers in the border areas of Katsina state.

Summary of the findings

i. Poor infrastructural facilities in border school, Lack of teachers' use of teaching facilities in border schools, Poor monitoring of teachers in the border schools, Lack of access to professional training to develop basic school teachers and insecure nature of border areas, are some of the factors hindering the retention of teachers in the border areas of Katsina State.

Inclusion of border education as a course of study in the Nigeria teacher training institutes would help to prepare pre-service teachers for the task of teaching in the border areas. Allocation of more funds for education at the border Local Government Areas would positively influence retention among teachers. Inspection and supervision services should be adequate at the border schools and Adequate provision of security at the border areas, are perceived by the stakeholders as required to retain teachers in the school at the border areas.

Discussion of the findings

The findings in this study revealed that both teachers and community members perceived factors such as; lack of access to professional opportunities where the teachers can develop their professional skills (seminars/workshop), training and re-training programmes as hindering retention of teachers in the border area of Katsina state. Other factors include; low teachers' salary, lack of special allowance for teachers deployed to serve in the border areas, lack of social infrastructure in the border environment. The challenge of insecurity of the border areas is an added problem. Basic schools in the border areas also lacked social facilities and infrastructures such as electricity, drinkable water, functional laboratories, good usable toilets, among others. Again, the schools lacked adequate supervision and inspection from the States Ministry of Education. These views are in support of Willis (2010) who emphasized the need for social amenities in the border areas.

Findings of this study have also revealed that low retention rates of basic school teachers in

iii. No significant difference in the teachers and community members perception of the factors hindering the retention of basic school teachers in the border areas of Katsina State

iv. There was no significant difference in the perception of teachers and community members on how best to enhanced retention of basic school teachers in the border areas of Katsina State.

the border areas have negative implications for quality education. The quality of teachers' output was due to poor educational and material facilities, poor school enrollment, poor attendance, completion and achievement rates among school-age children in border areas. This is because border school teachers carry out their duties with inadequate financial and material support from the government. Also with inadequate supervision, and poor remuneration for teachers could demoralize even the dedicated ones. This is why many of these teachers often request for redeployment to the urban areas, leaving the border areas understaffed. Tefft (2009) in this regard, pointed out the various challenges of retention and completion of educational programmes in disadvantaged areas such as in the borders. Among the strategies that would help border schools retain teachers as perceived by both teachers and community members are the involvement of teachers in the community activities. Also, enlightenment programmes on the problems of border schools is required. This would help people develop interest in border schools and leading to their development.

Adequate security provision is needed in order to promote high retention rate among teachers in the border schools. This is because there cannot be development in any society when her citizens are living in fear. This may be one of the reasons why Stuart (2009) pointed out that the primary responsibilities of any leader in a state or nation is to preserve the security of the people occupying its territory. Accordingly, policies should be focused on protecting homeland, rural / border security, freeing people from fear and pushing forward with development.

Conclusion

Rethinking basic schools in the border areas require reviewing the characteristics of the border areas, particularly in developing countries like Nigeria and then considering the place of education in the policy and programmes of the Government. To a large

extent, Katsina State international border communities have been suffering from low or poor retention teacher rate in her Basic Schools. This has put its population at disadvantaged educationally. This is because low teachers retention in her schools creates many obstacles for the basic school students in border schools. Also, the lack of school facilities is detrimental to their teaching learning process, which could in turn affect the output of the teachers and the learners in the border areas of Katsina State.

Recommendations

The strategy to retain high-calibre teachers in border areas must focus on the issue of teachers' salaries and other financial incentives. First, all teachers should receive salaries that reflect the value of being part of the teaching profession and their contributions to the society. Second, to attract and retain teachers in isolated communities such as the border areas, they should be compensated with additional financial incentives in form of hardship and travel allowances.

Sufficient funding to Local Governments in the border areas is considered necessary so as to adequately take care of teachers and other school problems in border areas. This would afford the Local government the opportunities of allocating special allowances for the teachers teaching in the border schools, it will also ensure adequate provision for the necessary teaching and learning materials. This would enhance productivity and retention among teachers. Also there is need for effective redistribution of trained teachers and a determination to ensure that teachers remain in their duty posts.

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