

INNOVATION IN THE INCENTIVE AND REWARD SYSTEM FOR ENHANCING TEACHERS' PRODUCTIVITY IN NIGERIAN SECONDARY SCHOOLS

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Abstract

The paper discussed the innovation in the incentive and reward system in secondary schools in Nigeria. The concepts of innovation, incentives and reward were also discussed extensively. The paper pointed out that adequate reward and incentive as motivational factors will promote and improve the teachers productivity and encourage them to be proactive and possess the right attitude to work, which invariably will lead to the achievement of goals of secondary education. The paper finally pointed out some innovative incentive and reward system in secondary school that need to be adopted, they include payment of medical bills, installation of information and communication technology gadgets, free teacher accommodation in the school premises, special salary scale and allowances among others.

Remuneration of employees as a reward for their services in organizations is a known practice among individuals and organized business for centuries. Financial reward has always been important in managing employee performances. In recent times however, other elements of compensation have been developed to provide employers with more scope of reward to further motivate employees. Management influences performance by recognizing and rewarding good performances and by providing incentives to improve it. The success and the survival of any organization are determined by the workers remunerated and rewarded (Lawler, 2003). Therefore the reward system and motivating incentives will determine the level of employee's commitment and their attitude to work. An employee is often motivated by the salary he earns for working in a certain place or establishment, and the level of incentives he receives can have a direct impact or influence on his overall productivity. Incentives and

reward system are motivating factors that determine the level of their commitment and attitude to work.

Incentives are considered as one of the most important elements that help workers improve their efficiency in the work place. According to Gana and Bababe, (2011), the awareness of an incentive and reward system in an organization helps improve employee efficiency in achieving organizational goals. The absence of the incentives on the other hand, affects employee's performance and may also weaken his productivity by reducing the chances of attaining goals of the organization (Palmer, 2012). It is essential for the management of the school to provide incentive and rewards system to motivate their employee. Incentives are significant motivating factors that encourage teachers thereby increasing their enthusiasm to work, which will also improve the overall performance of teachers for higher productivity. Therefore, it is imperative for the school management and government to create more avenues and innovations in motivating these teachers for high productivity. In addition, incentives encourages teachers to put their best in teaching and learning in schools and they have the tendency to incite them to work harder, as rewards are given by the employee for the good job well done. There should be innovation in this regard for more effective and efficient performance of the teachers. This advice is necessary because of the increasing unproductive attitudes of teachers towards their job. Lack of incentives and reward systems could be contributing factors to this kind of behaviour of the teachers especially in the public schools. This paper will however become necessary because it will help to identifying the new incentives packages and reward systems that management or government needs to put in place to earn teachers job satisfaction, commitment and competition to work for high level productivity in secondary schools.

Concept of Innovation

The society is always changing and nothing is static except change as human beings always strive to improve their former status. Education is the hub of improvement and invariably, the educational system must change to take care of the societal changes which are deemed vital for the continuity of the society. Sternberg, Brown and Dornbusih (1996).

According to Koko and Nwiyi (2007), innovation is defined as a decisive operation carried out with a view to installing a given change to be accepted and used. It is the process whereby a new product is made available, spread through the system and infused into other operating practice. Innovation is a change that is deliberate, purposeful and can be on a small or large scale. However, educational innovation can be

defined as the art of improving the culture we transmit to the young generation so that they can cope with the challenges of today and tomorrow issues.

To remedy the situation for the present and future generations, it is necessary to implement educational innovation so as to achieve specified goals and objectives. To be successful in the process of innovation requires the simultaneous use of two types of implementation mechanism. The first is to encourage the people to actively accept the innovation ideals and to engage in its implementation through readiness to take risks. The second is designed to maintain organizational integrity which might be endangered by the risky innovative changes.

David (2011), sees educational innovation as the deliberate identifications and application of ideas, information, imagination, and initiative in deriving greater values and result.

Agommuoh (2013), viewed innovation as a tool intentionally used to bring into existence and practice something new, so as to enhance performance and growth through improvement in efficiency and effectiveness based on these definitions and explanations, innovation in incentives and reward system in secondary schools will help and enhance the teachers performances which would invariably increase productivity among the teachers. Innovation has to do with the introduction of new things, ideas or ways of doing something that has been introduced or discovered. This is why Hornby 2010, refers to it as a renewing, changing or creating more effective processes, products or ways of doing things.

An innovation is sometimes original, new, important and helpful in enhancing improvement in that field. Note that innovation differs from improvement. While innovation is the notion of doing something different, improvement refers to doing the same thing better. It relates to the search for motivated teachers who will promote the development of the teaching/learning process, through incentives and reward system in the secondary schools.

Conceptual Clarification of Incentives and Personal System

Provision of adequate incentives has proven to be one of the means in which organizations motivates and increases its' workers performance. Incentives are defined as external persuading factors that encourage the employees positively into working harder to meet up with the required performance in the organization. Incentives can also be seen as methods used by organizations to encourage employees to work with high spirit as well as a concrete and desired moral to work. Palmer (2012) defined incentives as the external temptations and encouraging factors that lead the individual to work harder as to produce more effectively when he feel satisfied in the organization.

According to him, incentives are factors of excellent performances, assuming that the salary is enough to make the employer appreciate the value of the job that also satisfies his basic needs in life.

However incentives generally refer to all the motivations that organizations provide to positively encourage their employees in a way that it enhances the employee's performance and productivity. Incentives satisfy the employee's desire and guarantee a loyal attitude towards the organization. An incentive is a material of value and a central point for different activities amongst employee's performance and work stability in the institutions and work environment. Therefore all the stake holders in secondary education should provide incentives for high productivity.

Rewards System in Secondary Education

Rewards are very important in every organization because the survival of any organization depends on the compensation and reward strategies of the organization (Lawler, 2013). The reward system and motivation strategies of the organization will be commensurate with the effort of the employees and their attitude to work. Dixit and Bhati (2012) stated that poor reward system is the major factor that affects the commitment of teachers and their attitude to productivity. For secondary education to achieve its goals and objectives, the teachers must be well motivated for superior performances. Adequate reward and motivation will promote improved teachers and encourage them to be proactive and possess the right attitude to work. No wonder, Armstrong, (2017), opined that in dynamic and mobile organization, reward strategies are developed by employers to ensure that the best brains are retained in the best interest of the organization. Rewards positively influence the attitude of the teacher in school to foster efficiency, responsiveness and communication between the manager of the school, government and the teachers which will potentially result to increase and unprecedented performance in the school (Barbara, 2003). The reward packages are instruments that improve employees' behavior for maximum performance and retention of productive employees (Arnold, 2013).

Secondary education like every other establishment can develop different ways of employee reward system to improve performance (Sat 2003). In a nutshell, rewards should be given according to the level of performance in order to persuade the employees into doing their best to improve their performance as reward is associated with improving the performance and vice versa, without having any vested interest.

Incentives and Education Productivity

The dynamic nature of the society has altered the values and expectation of employees, thus putting pressure on employers to review upwards the content of reward packages. The unstable nature of the nation's economy has radically changed in recent time such that the cost of living has shut up drastically. The cost of doing business has increased and competition has become more intense. Employees are more sensitive to the value they create and the reward they get in form of wages and benefits. The educational sector of the Nigerian economy is not left out in the quest for better rewards by using their unions to agitate for better wages and incentives.

The teacher as the educator is the one that transforms educational philosophy and objective into knowledge and skill and in turn transfers them to students in the classroom. If a teacher perceives that the classroom is a safe, healthy, happy place with supportive resources and facilities for teaching and learning, he or she tends to participate more actively than expected in the process of productivity and improvement of the school. The role of the teacher is a complex one, as teachers are expected to help the students to work in complex multicultural educational settings and to provide good educational experiences for all students. Teacher motivation and effective performance reward are crucial to the survival of education (Richard, 2001).

The teachers most obvious reward from their organization include salaries, packages, allowances, promotions and so on, as rewards to motivate them to carry out their task. Therefore, the educational organization is required to treat the teachers as its most important resource to attain potentials (Lynch, '2000).

The students' grade and test score are not good indicators of the quality of teacher performance. Teachers are critical of the use of students achievement scores as indicators of teacher's competence, performance or effectiveness. The teacher's roles involve more than simply standing in front of the children and teach. They analyze test results direction of their instruction and make changes in their classrooms.

Teachers design lesson plans to teach the students and engage them in sundry activities while taking in consideration of each student's interest and instructional needs. Teachers also play the role of evaluators constantly assessing students abilities through formal and informal assessment, provides suggestions for improvement and assign grades.

Innovations in Incentives and Reward in Secondary Education

1. Payment of Medical bills: It is very necessary for the school management and government to take care of the medical bills of the teachers as it will give them sense of belonging like their counterparts in other organizations. Teachers get frustrated when

hospital bills from their family are beyond their financial strength, especially when their wives give birth through surgery. Within this period the teacher may not go to school how much more concentrating in teaching and learning because he will be on the road regularly to raise the money for such medical bills, but if lie government or the school management takes care of it, then he will concentrate and be motivated to put in their best performance that would yield high productivity.

2. Installation of Information Communication Technology Gargets: the teacher should be motivated through the provision of internet facilities in their offices for global knowledge acquisition. This will boast their ego and propel them to perform their duties effectively, which would invariably lead to high productivity hence teaching and learning become easy and interesting.

3. Teachers should be given free accommodation in the school premises. All the teachers both in rural and urban cities should as a matter of policy be accommodated free at the school, compulsorily.

4. The children of the teachers should be given scholarship in the school where their parents are teaching. No tuition fees to be paid by the teachers rather the children will attend school without paying till graduation.

5. Compulsory attendance to function by the school management and government: The author of this paper is advocating for compulsory attendance to functions organized by the teachers by the school management and the government as an innovation to the incentive and reward system in the school to boast the morale of the teachers for high productivity. Such functions include wedding ceremonies, burial ceremonies, book launch and so on. It is worthy to note that teachers will always put on their best when the school management and the government recognizes their inputs by attending their functions outside the school for any reason, as this will make them have sense of belonging, loved and appreciated for the job they are doing in the school, hence they will double their efforts in carrying out their prescribed functions.

6. Termly award to the best performed teacher: It is also important to recognize the best performed teachers every term with an award. The framed picture of the teacher be hung in the staff room for both students and visitors to see and appreciate such teacher. They may also be given a gift item to appreciate the teacher in recognition for a good job well done. This is an innovation in this regard.

7. Special Salary Scale and Allowances: Due to the important roles played by teachers in moulding the character of learners and in transmitting the needs and aspiration of the society from one generation to the other, it is pertinent to give them a special salary scale and allowances as teachers because the future of the society lies in their hands. Therefore to boost their ego for high productivity, special salary scale and

allowance be given to them at the end of every month as this will yield positive result as regard to performing their duties effectively and efficiently for the academic growth and advancement of the Secondary Education in Nigeria.

8. Rural Teachers and Science teachers allowances should be made attractive: It is unfortunate to note that as little as Two thousand Naira only is the monthly allowance paid to the teachers posted to secondary schools in rural areas and that of the science teachers. Too poor, hence the author of this pa-per is advocating for teachers teaching in the rural area be paid an attractive allowance that will make them perform their duties well even in the rural area. And the science teachers should also be encouraged to put their best by paying them attractive allowances that will boost their ego and make them stay in the job.

Conclusion

Teachers are very indispensable in the achievement of the goals of Secondary Education and it is very necessary for them to be treated with respect and be recognized by the school management and the government who are their employers. The roles the teachers play in the school cannot be over emphasized as the future of the society lies in their hands because the needs and aspirations of the society that are transmitted from generation to generation by these teachers make them unique among other workers in the school system. Based on these, it is a matter of importance and necessary for the teachers to be motivated through incentives and a robust reward system for high productivity. The innovation in incentive and reward system made in this paper, if adopted will go a long way in making the teachers perform their duties effectively and efficiently for the growth of the Secondary Education and the society at large.

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