

Assessment of Core Subjects and Rural/Hard-To-Staff Allowances for Teachers in Ekiti State, Nigeria

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Abstract

the study assessed core subjects and rural/hard to staff allowances for teachers in Ekiti State, the study employed the descriptive survey research design; the population for the study comprised all core subject and rural teachers in public secondary schools in Ekiti State. The sample consisted 270 core subject/rural teachers using multi stage sampling technique; the instruments used for the study were Core subject Allowances Questionnaire (CSAQ) and Rural Allowance Questionnaire (RAQ) the instruments were subjected to face and content validity and their reliability coefficient were ascertained using test-retest method. The reliability coefficient of 0.083 was obtained. Two research questions were raised and one null hypothesis was formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance, The research questions were answered using descriptive statistics of frequency counts, percentage and mean while the null hypothesis formulated was tested using regression analysis. The findings revealed that core/rural allowances payment to teachers have a positive influence on teacher attitude and perceptions. Based on the findings it was recommended that Government should continue to pay core subject/rural allowances to teachers as this could promote effective teaching in our schools.

Key words: Core subjects, Rural/Hard-to-staff, Assessment, Teacher, Allowances.

Introduction

This paper focused on assessment of core subject and rural allowances in Ekiti state School, this paper discussed the influence of core subject and rural allowances on teachers attitude to teaching in our various schools.

Core subjects according to Collins dictionary are the three foundation subjects, Mathematics English Language and Science which include Physics, Chemistry, Biology Basic Science, that are compulsory throughout each key stage in the national curriculum. The national curriculum identified Science (Physics, Chemistry, Biology and Basic Science) alongside with English Language and Mathematics as core subjects. Despite the importance of core subjects in education, Over the years core subject teachers welfare seem to have been neglected because the small amount paid to teachers as science allowances is not encouraging According to Adedayo (2018) the meagre amount assigned as science allowance being paid by government even if there is accident in the laboratory such amount cannot convey the teacher to the closest clinic talk less of treatment.

The role of core subjects in education can-not be overemphasized; it is compulsory for student to have at least credit passes in English Language and Mathematics before he/she can proceed to study in any higher institution and for any science related courses credit passes in Physics, chemistry and biology is another additional requirement.

The introduction of core subjects allowances and rural allowances payment for teachers by Ekiti State government assisted by World Bank started in the year 2012 tagged: Core subject/rural allowance this was to motivate the core subject teachers towards effective teaching and those working in the rural/ hard-to- staff remote communities in Ekiti State. The payment of rural teachers allowance to teachers posted to rural areas in the state as well as a special allowance to teachers teaching core subjects in bid to motivate the teachers for optimal performance.

The importance of core subject in primary and secondary schools cannot be underestimated; in the technological growth of a nation without the application of science it would have been impossible to explore

the planets of the universe. Core subjects are important and globally recognised as the application assist mankind in day to day living. The application of knowledge of science is useful in the following areas medicine, pharmacy, engineering, agriculture, communication among others. A good understanding of these core subjects will enable students in their educational career.

Science is acknowledged as a means of providing knowledge and skill for developing various sphere of life, science subjects played a great role in developing technological skills, these subjects according to the national curriculum are, Physics, Chemistry, Biology, for senior schools and basic science for primary and junior school. According to Alebiosu and Michael (2018) Science is the activity and must be presented as such at all levels, it is taught through task-based and learner centred methods.

The national policy on Education recognizes the significance of science and place premium on effective science and learning at all levels of education (FRN 2013) in other to accomplish the aim, Science teachers should be provided enabling environment that foster scientific and technological growth of the children.

According to Olatubosun (2016), a good and experienced science teacher should be able to connect standard based curriculum with real world science topics this will enable students who think critically to develop interest in the topic at hand and therefore participate actively in classroom discussion of such topic. Adequate science teaching could be possible if teachers are encouraged in the profession.

English Language as a core subject occupied important position in the school curriculum it is a medium through which other subject depend in teaching and learning process due to its uniqueness. It is recognized as the bed rock of several subjects in school as it facilitates the learning of all subjects. According to Babalola (2016) English Language is a medium of instruction in all educational institutions and also in industrial and business training centres, it is an important subject in school curriculum at primary, secondary and tertiary levels of education in Nigeria. English language is a pre-requisite to educational advancement because without a credit pass in the senior certificate examination conducted by West African Examination Council (WAEC) and National Examination Council (NECO) prospective candidates cannot be admitted to any higher institution of learning.

For effective service delivery in the teaching and learning process in our schools, appropriate motivation in form of incentives for teachers is highly essential before the stipulated curriculum content can be properly implemented it is pertinent to know that government should provide conducive environment for teachers, adequate incentives and remuneration should be provided from time to time. According to Azubuiké and Oko (2016) It is a well-known fact that a well-motivated teacher who is provided with working incentives, good working conditions and adequate remuneration is bound to be dedicated to his/her teaching responsibilities so as to bring about the needed learning among learners. Giving credence to this, Olatubosun, (2016) opined that, the science teachers have to be well remunerated with a bid to changing their attitude positively to the teaching of science.

Teacher remuneration in form of core subject's allowances in addition to other statutory salary allowances stimulates and triggers behaviour of teacher's thus effective teaching and learning could be enhanced. It is observed that the relative incidence of specific behaviour such as teaching and learning discipline and control could be undermined if teachers are not well remunerated, to support this assertion Mamman, Chadi and Jirgi, (2015) stated that if teachers have a comfortable living condition of working they will be more effective in the teaching-learning process.

Rural settlements are generally characterized by lack of social amenities like pipe borne water, good road network, banks, recreation centres, market among others. Sometimes ago teachers reject posting to rural communities due to the living conditions. According to Ayeni (2016) rural schools in Nigeria are generally regarded as schools located where the essential amenities may or may not be present for use, It was observed that teachers do not accept posting to rural areas because of lack of social amenities, and if they are posted, they seek deployment to any schools located in urban towns immediately. Miller, (2012) opined that poor social amenities such as shopping venues and housing make teachers retention in rural school a challenge.

According to Williams, (2005), teachers do not accept posting to rural areas because their conditions are not up to the expected standard as their social life in the areas is virtually restricted as a result of inadequate amenities; facilities are deficient, qualified teachers refused appointment in isolated villages. This corroborated the opinion of Olu-Ajayi (2018) who stated that teachers dodge postings to rural areas because the living conditions are not sophisticated, the social life in these areas is virtually restricted as a result of inadequate amenities.

Lack of social amenities like electricity, pipe borne water, accessible road network, market among others are major reasons while teachers prefer working in urban centre rather than rural villages, to prevent such occurrence the government of Ekiti State assisted by world bank made a provision of special remuneration for teachers working in the rural communities usually paid quarterly to encourage the teachers. According to Archibong, (2013), that the quality of education does not just occur miraculously but can be achieved through continuous and improved efforts by stakeholder in education enterprise especially by enhancing teachers motivation through several welfare packages. The study is set to assess core subjects and rural allowances for teachers in Ekiti State Public schools.

Statement of the Problem

Over the years the small allowances paid to science teachers was not encouraging also many teachers reject posting to rural school because of living conditions, It is observed that certain incentives such as rural allowances may entice teachers to work in the rural areas, also regular payment of core subject allowances may encourage teachers in discharging their duties effectively, however the introduction of the payment of core subject and rural allowances to teachers was a welcome development which was to motivate and improve teacher output in the public school system in Ekiti State, But the researcher observed that the payment of these allowances to teachers was not regular, and for some times now the payment of these allowances is not forthcoming. The study, therefore assessed core subject and rural allowances for teachers in Ekiti State

Research Questions

1. To what extent do payment of rural allowances influence teachers living in the rural communities?
2. What are the perceptions of teachers on core subjects' allowances?

Research Hypothesis

There is no significance influence of core subject allowances on teachers' attitude to teaching.

Methodology

The study employed the descriptive survey research design. The population for the study consisted of all core subjects teachers (Biology, Physics, Chemistry Basic Science, English Language and Mathematics) in the public Secondary schools in Ekiti State. The sample consists 270 core subject and rural teachers selected using multistage sampling technique. There are three senatorial district in the state three local government each were selected from the senatorial district using simple random technique. Three secondary school were selected from each local government using stratified sampling technique Core subjects teachers were purposefully selected making a total of 270 teachers

Two instruments used to collect data for the study were questionnaire tagged "Core subject Allowance Questionnaire (CSAQ) and Rural Allowance Questionnaire (RAQ). the questionnaire consists of two sections A and B. section A is teachers bio-data which includes qualification, subject of specialisation, subject taught, town, name of school, while section B consists of 10 items. The respondents were asked to tick one of the two options namely "YES" or "NO" based on their acceptance or rejection of the statement. The instruments were validated by experts in Test and Measurement to ensure face and content validity. Reliability of the instruments was ascertained by using a test-retest method and subjected to Pearson Product Moment Correction Analysis: the reliability coefficient of 0.083 was obtained.

Question 1

To what extent does payment of rural allowances influence teachers living in the rural communities?

Table 1: Influence rural allowances on teachers living in rural communities

S/N	ITEMS	YES		NO		MEAN
		N	%	N	%	
1	Rural allowances encourage teacher to live in rural community	270	100.0	-	-	2.00
2	Rural allowances payment contribute to effective teaching	270	100.0	-	-	2.00
3	The payment of the allowances is regular	-	-	270	100.0	1.00
4	I like working in the rural school because of the allowance	270	100.0	-	-	2.00
5	The method of payment is good	-	-	270	100.0	1.00
6	Rural-urban migration of teachers is reduced due to rural allowances	270	100.0	-	-	2.00
7	The payment of the allowances should be continuous process	270	100.0	-	-	2.00
8	I can cope with environmental factors in school due to the allowance	270	100.0	-	-	2.00
9	The environment does not affect my commitment to teaching	270	100.0	-	-	2.00
10	Monthly payment alongside with statutory salary is preferred	270	100.0	-	-	2.00

Table 1 presents the influence of rural allowances on teachers living in rural communities. The result showed that all the respondents (100%; n=270) agreed with nearly all the items.. Using a cut-off point of 1.50 for the rating scale, almost all the items had mean scores above the cut-off point. This implies that rural allowances influenced teachers living in rural communities.

Question 2

What are the perceptions of teachers on core subjects allowances?

Table 2: Perceptions of teachers on core subjects allowances

S/N	ITEMS	YES		NO		MEAN
		N	%	N	%	
1	The payment of core allowances stimulate my attitude to teaching	214	79.3	56	20.7	1.79
2	I have interest in teaching core subject	270	100.0	-	-	2.00
3	Payment of core subject allowances encourages me to be more dedicated to duties	239	88.5	31	11.5	1.89
4	Core subject allowances is regular	-	-	270	100.0	1.00
5	The payment of core subject allowances should be added to monthly salary	270	100.0	-	-	2.00
6	Other non-core subject teachers should be given certain percentage as additional remuneration	270	100.0	-	-	2.00
7	Special allowances to other teachers will boost their morale in teaching	270	100.0	-	-	2.00
8	I explain the importance of core subjects to my students	245	90.7	25	9.3	1.91
9	I often provide teaching aids to enhance my teaching	270	100.0	-	-	2.00
10	Core subject teachers are more dedicated to teaching	183	67.8	87	32.2	1.68
11	I sometimes spent money on improvisation of materials to teach my students	270	100.0	-	-	2.00
12	Non-payment of core allowances does not affect my commitment to teaching	220	81.5	50	18.5	1.81

Table 2 presents teachers' perception on core subjects allowances. The result showed that 214 (79.3%) agreed that payment of core allowances stimulate my attitude to teaching while 56(20.7%) disagreed. Regarding teachers' interest in teaching core subject, all the respondents agreed. 239(88.5%) agreed that payment of core subject allowances encourages more dedication to duties while 31(11.5%) disagreed. All the respondents; 270(100%) indicated that core subject allowances is not regular. All the respondents; 270 (100%) agreed that: the payment of core subject allowances should be added to monthly salary, other non-core subject teachers should be given certain percentage as additional remuneration, special allowances to other teachers will boost their morale in teaching, often provide teaching aids to enhance teaching and sometimes spent money on improvisation of materials to teach students in each case. Similarly, 245 (90.7%) respondents explained the importance of core subjects to students, 183(67.8%) agreed that core subject teachers are more dedicated to teaching and 220 (81.5%) reported that non-payment of core allowances does not affect their commitment to teaching. Using a cut-off point of 1.50 for the rating scale, nearly all the items had mean scores above the cut-off point. This implies that perceptions of teachers on core subjects' allowances were positive.

Hypothesis

There is no significant influence of core subject allowances on teachers' attitude to teaching.

Table 3: Regression analysis showing the influence of core subject allowances on teachers' attitude to teaching

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	p
	B	Std. Error	Beta (β)		
(Constant)	2.298	.460		4.993	.000
Core subject allowances	1.214	.043	.865	28.226	.000

Multiple R= 0.865, Multiple R²=0.748, Adjusted R²=0.747, F_{1,268}=796.706

*p<0.05

Table 3 showed that there was significant influence of core subject allowances on teachers' attitude to teaching (t=28.226, p<0.05). The result showed that there was significant positive and high multiple correlation between the predictor variable (core subject allowances) and teachers' attitude to teaching (r=0.865, p<0.05). The value of coefficient of determination (r²=0.748) indicates that the predictor variable accounted for only about 74.8 (r² X 100) of the total variance in teachers' attitude to teaching while the remaining 25.2% unexplained variance was largely due to other variables outside the regression model. The calculated F-ratio (796.706) was significant at 0.05 level of significance. This implies that the predictor variable provides a significant explanation for the observed variance in teachers' attitude to teaching. The multiple regression equation showing the relationship between the dependent and independent variable can therefore be given as follow:

$$Y = a + bX$$

$$Y = 2.298 + 1.214X$$

Where

$$X =$$

Core subject allowances

$$Y = \text{Teachers' attitude to teaching}$$

$$b = \text{Regression Weight Coefficient}$$

$$a = \text{Constant (other variables other than X)}$$

Discussion,

On the first research question which states that, To what extent does payment of rural allowances influence teachers working in the rural communities? From the result it could be seen that the payment of rural allowances to teachers teaching in the rural communities influenced teachers in the rural communities this make them to work there without seeking transferred to urban towns, The result corroborates the report by Archibong (2013) who reported that the quality of education does not just occur miraculously but can be achieved through continuous and improved effort by stake holder in education enterprise especially by enhancing teacher motivation through several welfare packages. Also the findings is at variance with the opinion of Olu-Ajayi (2018) who stated that teachers dodge posting to rural areas because the living conditions are not sophisticated social life in these area is virtually restricted as a result of inadequate facilities. On research question two, what are the perception of what are the perceptions of teachers on core subject allowances in Ekiti State, The findings of the study revealed that teachers perceptions on core subjects allowances were positive, This supported the assertion of Olatubosun (2016) which stated that the Science teacher have to be well remunerated with a bid to changing their attitude positively to the teaching of science. The hypothesis for the study, there is no significant influence of core subject allowances on teachers attitude to teaching, The findings showed that there was significant influence of core subject allowances on teacher attitude to teaching this is in line with the opinion of Olatubosun (2016) who stated that Science teachers have to be well remunerated with a bid to changing their attitude to teaching of science.

Conclusion

The results of the study shown that the provision of working incentives for teachers inform of core subject allowances for teachers boost their morale in the profession as well as rural allowances for teachers working in rural community schools in Ekiti state encourages the teachers to work in the rural school without seeking transferred to urban community.thus effective service delivery is enhanced.

Recommendations.

1. Continuous payment of core subject allowances and rural allowances for teachers in Ekiti State is encourage
2. Nongovernmental organisations (NGO) should continue to assist the state government for the continuous payment of these allowances to teachers.
3. Monthly payment of core subject allowances/ rural allowances alongside with other statutory salary allowances is preferred
4. Government should extend the payment of allowances to all other subject teachers to encourage them as this will foster effective service delivery in our schools.

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