

## **Influence of Demographic Variables on Teachers' Willingness to Stay on the Teaching Profession in Akwa Ibom State of Nigeria**

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**Abstract:** *This research was driven by an interest in finding out if the demographic variables (gender, age, education level) have significant difference on teachers' willingness to stay on teaching profession. Three null hypotheses were formulated to guide the study. The study adopted the ex-post facto research design. The sample size was 800 teachers. Data were analyzed using inferential statistics – independent t-test and one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA). The weight of statistical evidence showed that demographic factors have a significant difference on teachers' willingness to stay on the teaching profession in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. Based on the findings, it was recommended among others that employers of teachers should add retention packages such as 'Golden handcuff' to the existing ones in order to take into consideration demographic variables.*

**Keywords:** *Demographic variables, teaching, profession, tenure, talent*

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### **1. INTRODUCTION**

Conventionally, teaching has for decades been regarded as a noble profession, producing a significant set of externalities, benefiting not only the individuals but also the entire society. Within the framework of this concept of teaching, educators over time have tried to define teaching as an interpersonal influence which aims at changing the ways other persons will or can behave (Emah, 2008). This seems to insinuate that teachers are actors and that they play many roles in the classroom, in the school and in the community. In line with the above assertion, the Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRG, 2008) captured the essence by saying that no education system can rise above the quality of its teachers. The role of employees in organizational (educational) success is undisputed and teachers' both in-role and extra-role are critical for effective functioning of schools. The above resume set the stage for this academic debate.

### **2. TEACHER TENURE**

Teacher (academic) tenure is part and parcel of the education laws governing the conduct of affairs of secondary education in Nigeria. It is a policy which provides for teachers permanent contractual service (unless terminated by either employees or employers for good reasons) until the age of compulsory retirement which 60 years or 35 years of service, whichever ever comes first. By attracting and retaining talented teachers, tenure ensure that teachers do not suffers from the capricious actions of managers.

Manlove and Guzel (1997) opined that the notion of a permanent employee (teachers) has become obsolete. In the same vein, Lee (2001) argues that the psychological contract between employer and employee has changed significantly and that long term commitment to an organization (school) is no longer guaranteed by either party. The employment of a teacher is premised on the law of contract – a contract between the employee (teacher) and the secondary schools board. This contract to be viable or binding, should include all elements required by law namely mutual assent, consideration and legal bargain (Ajayi, 2008).

However, changes in global economics, and technology (high tech, high touch) and the like are currently affecting employee-employer relationships. According to Capelli (2000), it is the market not the company, that ultimately determine the movement of employees. Capelli believes that it may be difficult to counter the pull of the market – you cannot shield your people from attractive opportunities and aggressive recruiters’. Until recently, loyalty was the epitome of relationship between employee and employer. Capelli (2000) points out that ‘Golden handcuffs’ (loyalty bonuses) may be used as an inducement to stay but that there is a limit to the extent which teachers can be bribed to stay. He further argued that if teachers really want to go, any golden handcuffs can be countered by the ‘golden hellos’ offered by aggressive recruiters. The educational implications of this is that as attracting value talent (science and mathematics and teachers) becomes more competitive, organizations are likely to shift from increasingly expensive recruiting programs to lesser expensive imitative in effort to retain valuable talent.

### **3. EMPIRICAL REVIEW OF TEACHERS’ DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS**

The weight of empirical studies indicate that demographic factors are relevant to understanding teachers willingness to stay on teaching profession (Bhuain & Al-Jubri, 1996, Efanga, 2005).

Nkang (2004) conducted a study to examine the relationship between demographic variables and teaching effectiveness of teachers in Uyo Education Zone of Akwa Ibom State. The samples consisted of 400 teachers selected through stratified random sampling technique while data were analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) and tested at 0.05 level of significance. The study discovered a significant relationship between demographic variables, age, experience (length of service) education, gender and tenure and employees’ decision to stay or quit teaching profession.

In yet another related study, Efanga (2007) found that age was inversely related to teachers’ decision to stay on teaching profession. This is informed by the fact that younger teachers are lured to new opportunities by higher salaries and greater responsibility. Attraction bonuses for talented people (‘golden hellos’) are becoming increasingly popular (Armstrong, 2008).

Wallace (1997) found that younger workers care more about the upfront compensation and do not care as much about the benefits that come along with the salary.

### **4. LEVEL OF EDUCATION AS A DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLE RELATED TO TEACHERS WILLINGNESS TO STAY**

Steers (2014) found that level of education was negatively related to employees’ commitment to stay. Similarly, Mathieu and Zajacs (1990) meta-analysis confirmed this relationships. However, Meyer, Herscovitch and Topolnytsky (2002) found a converse and significant difference between employees’ commitment to stay and level of education. Maslove and Guzel (1997) averred that better educated employees are more likely to quit. However in recent times in the school management system, additional educational qualification is not a guarantee of enhancement of status, salary and position.

### **5. RESEARCH HYPOTHESES**

The following null hypotheses were raised for the study:

1. There is no significant difference between gender and teachers willingness to stay on teaching profession in Akwa Ibom State.
2. There is no significant difference between levels of educational and teachers willingness to stay on teaching profession in Akwa Ibom State.
3. There is no significant difference between teaching experience and teachers’ willingness to stay on teaching profession in Akwa Ibom State.

### **6. METHODOLOGY**

#### **Area of the Study**

The study was carried out in Akwa Ibom State. Akwa Ibom State is one of the 36 states of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

### **Design of the Study**

The design used for this study was ex-post facto research design, which involves studying phenomena in retrospective. The design is suitable when the researcher does not have direct control of independent variable because their manifestations have already occurred and they are inherently not manipulative.

### **Population of the Study**

The population consisted of all 6,400 teachers in the 2013/2014 academic session from public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom State (State Secondary Schools Board, Research and Statistics Unit, 2013/2014 school year).

## **7. SAMPLE AND SAMPLING TECHNIQUE**

The sample size for the study was 800 teachers from public secondary schools. The subjects that constituted the sample for the study were drawn through stratified random sampling technique. The basis of stratification is the senatorial districts three hundred and sixty (360) teachers were drawn from Uyo, 196 from Eket and 244 from Ikot Ekpene senatorial districts, using 'hat and draw' method.

## **8. INSTRUMENTATION**

The instrument used for data collection for this study was a structured questionnaire developed by the researcher and called Demographic Variables on Teachers' Questionnaire (DVOTA). It was a 4-point rating scale questionnaire with a 30 item which respondents were to indicate extent of their agreement or disagreement.

### **Validation of the Instrument**

The instrument for the study was face validated by three experts in measurement and evaluation from the Faculty of Education, University of Uyo. The comments received were used in restructuring and selecting the items that formed part of the final form of the instrument.

### **Reliability of the Instrument**

Test of internal consistency was performed on the instrument. By this method of reliability, the instrument was administered to 40 teachers in the area of the study who did not take part in the actual study. Data collected were analyzed using Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient. The result was 0.76 which was substantially high and was considered appropriate for the study.

### **Administration of the Instrument**

The instrument was administered by the researchers, with the assistance of some teachers who served in the schools sampled for the study. The mortality rate was zero.

### **Statistical treatment of data**

Data abstracted in this study were analyzed using independent t-test analysis and one way analysis of variance (ANOVA). The null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 alpha level of significance.

## **9. RESULTS**

### **Hypothesis one (H<sub>01</sub>)**

The null hypothesis (H<sub>01</sub>) stated that there is no significant difference between gender and teachers willingness to stay on teaching profession in Akwa Ibom State.

**Table1.** Independent t-test analysis of the difference between male and female teachers in their willingness to stay on teaching profession

N = 800

Variable	Gender	N	$\bar{X}$	SD	t-cal
Willingness to stay	Male teachers	319	10.85	2.76	4.10*
	Female teachers	481	11.08	3.06	

- Significant at 0.05, df 796, t-crit 1.96

Table 1 presented information on the tested hypothesis as measured by independent t-test to determine the significance or otherwise of the difference between gender and the willingness of teachers to stay in teaching profession. The result reveals the computed t-value of 4.10 which is greater than the critical t-value of 1.96 at 0.05 alpha level and 798 degree of freedom. The null hypothesis is therefore rejected. This implies that there is a significant difference between male and female teachers in their willingness to stay in the teaching profession, with female teachers having a higher mean ( $\bar{x}$ ) of 11.08.

**Hypothesis two (H<sub>02</sub>)**

The null hypothesis stated that there is no significant difference between educational levels and teachers' willingness to stay on teaching profession in Akwa Ibom State.

**Table2.** Independent t-test analysis of the difference between educational levels and teachers willingness to stay in the profession

Variable	N	$\bar{X}$	SD	t-cal
Bachelor degree	500	11.31	2.66	3.35*
Others	300	10.51	2.81	

- Significant at 0.05, df 796, t-crit 1.96

Table 2 presents the computed t-value as 3.35. This value was tested for significance by comparing it with the critical t-value at 0.05 alpha level of significance with 798 df. The weight of the evident shows that the calculated t-value (3.35) was greater than the table value (1.96). Hence the null hypothesis was rejected and the alternative accepted. This implies that educational levels has a significance influence in teachers' willingness to stay on the teaching profession.

**Hypothesis three (H<sub>03</sub>)**

The third null hypothesis stated that there is no significant difference between teaching experience and teachers' willingness to stay on teaching profession in Akwa Ibom State.

In order to test the hypothesis analysis of variance (ANOVA) was employed to test for the significant

**Table 3.** Analysis of variance (ANOVA) of scores of teachers of different years of experiences on their willingness to stay on teaching profession

Variable	Sum of squares	Df	Mean	f-cal	f-crit
Corrected mode	187.42	2	89.23	14.82*	
Intercept	32722.05	1	32722.05	2.81	3.06
Experience	184.53	2	89.31		
Error	121.20	797	5.44		
<b>Total</b>	<b>33304.78</b>	<b>800</b>			

- Significant at 0.05, df 796, t-crit 1.96

As presented in Table 3, the statistics showed computed f-value of 14.83 which is greater than critical f-value of 3.06 at 0.05 alpha level. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected in favour of alternative hypothesis. Based on the observed significant difference of experience on teachers willingness to stay on the profession, the Scheffe post hoc multiple comparison was considered to determine the actual direction of significance.

**Table 4.** Scheffe's post-hoc test for multiple comparison of teaching experience with teachers' willingness to stay on the profession

(I) Teachers years of experience	(J) Teachers Experience	Difference in means (I-J)	Std. error
1-10 years	11-20 years	-1.09*	0.39
	Above 20 years	-2.49*	0.44
11-20 years	1-10 years	1.09*	0.39
	Above 20 years	-1.39*	0.42
Above 20 years	11-20 years	2.45*	0.44
		1.39*	0.42

- Mean difference is Significant at 0.05

Table 4 showed that those with teaching experience of 20 years and above were more willing to stay in profession than those with length of service less than 10 years.

## **10. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS**

The finding of this hypothesis revealed that there is a significant difference between male and female in their willingness to stay in teaching profession. The result shows that female teachers were more likely to stay in the teaching profession. The finding is consistent with the study of Efanga (2007) who found out that female employees (teachers) stay longer with an organization than male counterparts. The finding may have been informed by cultural orientation of people of Akwa Ibom State, where female and always reluctant to relocate from their family. However, according to Capelli (2000) it is the market not the organization that determine the movement of employees. The educational implications of this is that introduction of "golden hellos" could change the perception of male teachers in their willingness to stay in the profession.

### **Influence of Education and Willingness to Stay**

The finding of this hypothesis showed that there is a significant difference between level of education and teachers willingness to stay on the profession. This finding was in agreement with studies of Meyer, Herscovitch and Topolnytsky (2000) who found a significant difference between level of education and employees (teachers) willingness to stay. This was corroborated with Manlove and Guzel (1992) who reported that better educated employees are more likely to quit. This may be informed by the fact that their enhance certificate conferred on talented employees greater fluidity in labour market.

### **The Influence of Experiences on Willingness to Stay**

The finding of this hypothesis showed that here a significant influence of experience on teachers willingness to stay on the profession. This finding agreed with the study of Nkang (2008) who reported that demographic variable such as length of service has a significant effect on teachers' willingness to stay on the profession. This trend may greatly be due to the tenure nature of teaching profession.

## **11. CONCLUSION**

Giving the outcome of this study, it was therefore concluded that demographic factors as perceived by the teachers in Akwa Ibom State significantly influenced teachers willingness to stay in the profession. However, outstanding, talented employees (science teachers) may leave teaching because they are either underpaid or unmotivated.

## **12. RECOMMENDATIONS**

Based on the findings and the conclusion drawn, the following recommendations were made:

1. The employers of teachers should add retention packages – like 'Golden handcuff' to the existing ones in order to take into consideration demographic variables such, gender, age, and educational qualification.
2. Retention plan should focus actions on areas in which lack of willingness and dissatisfaction can arise.

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