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The Influence of Policy Factors on the Quality of Secondary Education in the Rural Communities of South-Western Nigeria

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Abstract. Achieving the Quality of Secondary Education seems to have assumed a frightening dimension in South-Western Nigeria. This study, therefore, investigated the contributions of the policy factors (PF: Recruitment and Selection-RS, Salary and Compensation-SC and Training and Development-TD) to the Quality of Secondary Education (QSE) in the rural communities of South-western Nigeria (RCSN). The data were collected via a Secondary School Graduate- Aptitude Test (SSGAT) instrument from 467 secondary school graduates; and a total enumeration technique was adopted for the data collected from 134 teachers from 9 rural secondary schools. Six participants were purposely selected for the Key Informant Interviews, which comprised three principals and three senior officials from the Teaching Service Commissions and the Ministries of Education. Three research questions were developed, and one hypothesis was formulated for the study. The study was located within a post-positivist paradigm that incorporated the convergent parallel design in the collection, analysis, and interpretation of the qualitative and quantitative data. The data generated were analysed using descriptive statistics and a Pearson-Product Moment Correlation at the 0.05 level of significance; while the qualitative data were analyzed thematically. The RS ($\bar{X} = 3.08 \pm 0.82$), SC ($\bar{X} = 2.72 \pm 0.90$) and TD ($\bar{X} = 2.62 \pm 0.83$) strongly influenced the QSE in RCSN. The PF ($r=0.75$) had a negative significant relationship with QSE. The study concluded that urgently addressing the policy issues is highly essential in revamping the QSE in RCSN.

Keywords: policy; recruitment and selection; salary and compensation; training and development; quality of secondary education

1. Introduction

Policies are codes, which indicate the directions that actions may take. They set boundaries to secure and ensure the consistency of purpose or objectives; and they

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also prescribe guidelines for carrying out an action (Odunlami, 2008). In addition, the term policy refers to a standard set of principles that guide a course of action. In other words, policies serve as guiding tools, which help in preventing the taking of decisions haphazardly. Most definitions made by scholars established that policies relate to rules, decision-making, regulations and the administrative actions, which are directed towards problem-solving either in public or private organizations (Isah, 2020). However, the inconsistencies in the formulation and implementation of policies have occupied a front burner in Nigerian society for quite a while, continuing to impede the delivery of quality education that could produce self-reliant, innovative, and entrepreneurial citizens.

In addition, the lack of a participatory policy system that accommodates the views of teachers and other educational stakeholders, who determine the success of the curriculum, is another critical issue troubling the Nigerian educational system. Policy participation creates a sense of belonging and ultimately affects the quality of education in the country (Oyelola, 2015). Meanwhile, Salami (2018) sees beyond stakeholders' policy inputs; and this author opines that the current National Policy on Education is littered with great ideas and ideals; but its implementation has so far been fraught with complaints.

In the same vein, Nwaka (2015) also argues that Nigeria's challenge is never about the dearth of policy – because its policies were developed by the most prominent and brightest educational experts. Unfortunately, these propositions have remained mere statements of intent, without yielding any results. Nigeria's education policy is a veritable tool that should deliver, according to the yearnings and expectations of its educational stakeholders; however, the deteriorating educational standards betray the investment (Oyelola, 2015). In addition, it has been suggested that continuous policy changes and the lack of the thorough assessment of a policy before its introduction are the harbingers of what is currently manifesting in Nigeria's education system ("Confusion in Education," 2012).

This study therefore examines the labour issues within the context of the recruitment and selection policy, salary and the compensation policy, as well as the training and development policy, as they affect the quality of secondary education in the rural communities of South-Western Nigeria.

The recruitment and selection policy, the first indicator among policy factors, measures the processes of generating qualified candidates for secondary schools. Recruitment and selection are like two sides of a coin, but the functions of each differ. Recruitment has a positive valence through the attraction of potential candidates to an organization; while selection, on the other hand, has a negative valence; since it is a means through which an organization does the sieving from a pool of talents attracted during an application process. The two operations are inverse in relation to each other. The former attracts all the qualified individuals; while the latter does the sorting from the pool, based on quality and the strategic needs of an organization (Malik, 2018). A school system is only as good as the people it recruits. Thus, recruitment and selection are the keys to educational

learning outcomes. If schools fail in attracting the best teachers, the quality of secondary education remains no more than a dream; since performance is largely dependent on the quality of the workforce that an organization recruits, without compromising the merits and the pedagogical skills required (Ajayi, 2009a). The quality of an educational system is largely dependent on the teacher quality; and without teachers' devotion and commitment, the effectiveness of the educational system remains no more than a pipe-dream.

Even the educational planners with the best intentions, designs and policies would have to depend on the teachers for the ultimate realisation of their goals. Consequently, the processes of the recruitment and the selection of teachers will either negatively or positively impact the translation of the education policy into action and the principles into practice (Ogunyinka et al., 2015).

The salary and compensation policy are the second and third indicators among the policy factors in this study that appear to influence the quality of secondary education. The salary and the compensation policy involve determining the remuneration in terms of wages, salaries, bonuses, and incentives, in accordance with the contributions made by the employees to the realisation of the organisational objectives. Equitable and fair remuneration is pivotal to employees' performance; and only through competitive financial incentives, such as wages, salaries, bonuses, retirement benefits, and medical expense reimbursement, can the best teachers be attracted, and can their retention be assured (Akinsanya, 2009).

Despite the potential of these incentives to ensure quality education, Garba (2012) observed that the teaching profession in Nigeria still has a poor salary structure. Teachers' earnings are unappealing; and teaching is among the lowest-paid professions. As a result, potential new entrants into the teaching profession seem not to be attracted, due to the apparently poor remuneration offered.

The training and development policy is the third indicator, among the policy factors that influence the quality of secondary education. Training involves equipping prospective teachers with the necessary tools to perform optimally in the classroom; while retraining or development involves the continual updating of teachers with the current best practices within the teaching profession. Ogunyinka et al. (2015) maintain that the training and the retraining of new entrants, as well as those who are already in teaching service, are fundamental to realising the educational objectives. This is imperative, because teachers are at the core of the educational system. Therefore, investing in teachers would ultimately impact the learning outcomes of the school system.

Ajayi (2009b) alluded to this by stating that, given the rapid pace of change in today's society, new skills, life-long learning and training must be accorded to be matters of priority in the teaching profession. It is no more news that educational technology, through its various modes of instruction, has dominated the teaching-learning process in the 21st century. Nevertheless, many teachers still lack the essential competence, such as computer-related skills; and they would require

training, in order to deliver quality education in this day and age. To achieve the purpose of this study, three research questions were posed; and one hypothesis was formulated, as follows:

- i. What is the influence of the teacher selection and recruitment policy on the quality of secondary education in the rural communities of South-Western Nigeria?
- ii. What is the influence of the salary and compensation policy on the quality of secondary education in the rural communities of South-Western Nigeria?
- iii. What is the influence of the training and development policy on the quality of secondary education in the rural communities of South-Western Nigeria?
- iv. There is no significant relationship between the policy factors (recruitment and selection, salary and compensation, training, and development) and the quality of secondary education in the rural communities of South-Western Nigeria.

1.1 The Literature Review

1.1.1 Conceptual Clarifications

The term “policy” is familiar; and it is used on a daily basis by virtually everyone; however, due to the diversity of circumstances and perceptions, there is a variety of meanings attached to this concept (Dlakwa, 2014). Policy has been defined by Chandan (2004), as a statement or guideline that provides direction for action to be taken. However, a policy must be consistent with an organisation’s objectives, mission and philosophy. Babalola (2003) sees policy as comprising generally explicit or implicit statements – either written or unwritten – that guide future thinking, initiatives, and actions, containing both a ‘principle’ and a ‘rule of action’.

Policies are the agreed ways of operating an organization. Odunlami (2008) posits that policies are codes that provide the direction for actions. They set boundaries to secure and ensure the consistency of purposes or objectives, by prescribing the guidelines for carrying out an action. Dlakwa (2014) argues that there is no precise or universally acceptable definition of the term policy, but concurs with scholars like Babalola (2003) and Chandan (2004) that, generally speaking, it refers to the principles, guidelines or orientation adopted by a government body (organization) in guiding the affairs of people in a given direction. A policy ensures consistency of action. Although, It does not have to be rigid; since there should be room for modification if required after policy formulation (Okoroma, 2006). Dlakwa (2014) broadly classifies policy in the following three ways:

- I. Policy as a statement of intent;
- II. Policy as a set of activities; and
- III. Policy as a process of decision-making or choice.

Odunlami (2008) further explains that written policies are not limited to those stated in manuals, or that appear in annual reports, company charters, budgets, written plans, employee handbooks and public-relation materials. He maintains that policy may include any of these, as a guide to action, a tool for standardizing, a management tool for solving problems, a guiding emblem for fieldwork, a formal template for direction, a decision of the government, formal authorisation, programmes of activities, and a set of rules or a code of conduct. Furthermore,

Chandan (2004) and Odunlami (2008) observed that for policy to be sound, it should have the elements listed below:

- I. It should be stable and flexible.
- II. It should be comprehensive in scope.
- III. It should be clearly prescribed and understandable by all. The intent and content of the policy must be clearly expressed; and it should preferably be in writing.
- IV. It should prescribe general guidelines for conduct and establish criteria for current and future action.
- V. It must not contradict, nor conflict with any other policies of the organization.
- VI. It must be fair to all members of the organisation.
- VII. It must formulate a well-articulated and active implementation strategy and contain a clearly defined and practical implementation strategy.
- VIII. It must ensure internal consistency within an organization on all policy-related issues.

However, Babalola (2003) made a clear distinction between laws and policies. Policies are not laws; because they give room for the application of discretion; while, laws do not permit such allowance for personal initiative. The government enacts laws; while policies are made by the government or by organisations to run their affairs within given guidelines. The processes leading to policy-making may be similar to those of law-making. Odunlami (2008) explained that the policy-making process is not a static one, but a continuous process of decision and activities, which involve a sequential pattern of action, involving several stages, as follows:

- I. **Policy Initiation:** This refers to problem identification, bringing the problems to the attention of the policy-makers, and making pronouncements by the authorities. This stage is crucial; since it sets the tone for other stages of the policy-making process. In essence, without the conception or initiation of policy, nothing can be followed.
- II. **Policy Formulation:** After the policy-initiation stage, the next is policy formulation. Activities involved in the policy-formulation stage include the following: data-source identification; the collection of data and their analysis; the formulation of policy options; an organisation and institutional framework for policy formulation; deliberations and consultations; and the draft content of policy proposals.
- III. **Policy Implementation:** This involves the application of efforts, and human, material, and financial resources to the administration of policies. It also involves planning, coordination, communication, directing, staffing, organising, budgeting and other management functions.
- IV. **Monitoring and Evaluation:** Monitoring is more regular than evaluation, but easier, less costly, and less time-consuming than evaluation. It is concerned with checking the processes and activities and ascertaining whether the expected changes in a programme/project occur at the time and magnitude envisaged by the plan. In other words, it is a regular gathering of information to track progress. Evaluation is occasional and

not as regular as monitoring. It is sporadic, more difficult to carry out, more costly, and more time-consuming than monitoring.

- V. **Policy Analysis:** This is crucial, as it reveals the nitty-gritty or the worthwhileness of a policy. Taylor (1997) designed a policy-analysis framework that is centred around three elements, namely: context, text and consequence; while Bell and Stevenson (2006) provided an instructive meaning of each element, as follows:
- VI. **Context:** This refers to what informs the policy to be developed; that is, antecedents and pressures responsible for the initiation of a specific policy. For instance, what gives rise to a policy agenda could be economic, social, or political factors. To have a thorough understanding of how a policy agenda is set, and why policy-makers respond to the issue in the first place, there needs to be an understudy of the workings and roles of pressure movements. Thus, the context of a policy is very important, in order to have a full picture of what has transpired, and how the metamorphosis gradually developed into a policy text.
- VII. **Text:** This is the next stage in policy analysis; and it addresses the issues related to the policy content. This x-rays the policy frame or articulation. It aims to ask questions, such as: how explicit or implicit is the policy content? If action is required, who should be held responsible? It should be noted at this juncture that analysis of the policy text is a herculean task. Even in explicit policies, it is crucial to unveil the “silences” (what is hidden) and that which is expressly stated.
- VIII. **Consequences:** At this level, it is important to consider whether policy texts have any form of ambiguity that could be misinterpreted. This may likely impact negatively on policy implementation. Such distortions or gaps in the policy-implementation process are called policy-refraction. Thus, weighing the possible policy consequences is very critical in policy analysis.

1.1.2 Selection and Recruitment Policy and Quality of Secondary Education

Educational resources may be human, material, or financial. These three are very critical to the realisation of organisational objectives; and educational institutions are not exempted. It goes without saying that the place of human resources in educational institutions is indispensably important and pivotal to their survival. It is so because, human resources coordinate all other educational resources (Agabi, 2010). Several authors – such as Simentwa and Nyang’ori (2011), Nduta (2011), Wadesango et al. (2012) – have observed that teachers who are not well qualified for the positions for which they are hired could jeopardize the provision of quality education.

Luschei and Carnoy (2010), too, reported that teacher quality matters if there is to be student success in terms of literacy and numeracy skills. It is in this regard that the selection and recruitment policy of quality teachers should be transparently and objectively carried out, in order to attain quality secondary education. Thus, compromising on this policy could quite easily jeopardise the expected learning outcomes.

Research findings from other countries support the claim that there are challenges to quality recruitment in the provision of teaching services. In a study, Makori and Onderi (2013) adopted a quantitative survey, in order to study the challenges in the achievement of the effective recruitment of secondary school teachers in Kenya. The study sampled 81 secondary principals with the purposive sampling technique. The data were collected with a questionnaire; while descriptive statistics were employed for the data analysis. It was discovered that the Board of Governors (BoG) jettisons merit for favouritism and paid less attention to competence and qualifications. Similarly, Abdou (2012) looked at teachers' recruitment and selection practices within public and private schooling systems in Egypt. The findings revealed that there are hidden criteria, such as gender and religious affiliation in teacher recruitment and selection. The results also showed that principals in public schools lacked the autonomy to recruit teachers into those schools they head; while teachers were not happy with their working conditions and societal perceptions.

A similar experience with teachers was found in private schools, when proprietors interfered with the school's autonomy. This further shows that there are issues surrounding the selection and recruitment of teachers into the teaching service, both in public and private schools. Consequently, there is a need to tighten the noose around the selection and recruitment systems, so that those who are taking advantage of the existing loopholes may be curbed. Previous studies also produced similar results, thereby confirming that there is a positive and significant relationship between recruitment and selection, in addition to organisations' performance (Gamage, 2014). Syed (2012) also revealed that maintaining high-quality assurance in the recruiting processes is positively related to organisational performance.

1.1.3 Salary and Compensation Policy and Quality of Secondary Education

Salary and allowances are fundamental factors in the motivation of workers both in public, or in private organisations. It is expected that when salaries are attractive, teachers would be encouraged to devote their time and energy to their duties. Conversely, if motivation is lacking, teachers' commitment to duties may be affected negatively; and the students then bear the brunt (Lambert, 2004). Ali (2009) conducted a study on the impact of teachers' wages on the performance of students. The scores of the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) of 2000, 2003, and 2006 survey data were used as secondary data. Among the factors used for measuring impact were starting salary and earnings after 15 years in service, in addition to the country scores.

A regression analysis was done, which revealed that there is a positive impact of teachers' wages on students' performance. Gbenga and Yakub (2018), in their study in Ogun State, Nigeria, investigated the challenges facing public secondary-school teachers in the state. Key informant interviews were conducted with the six respondents drawn from the state Ministry of Education and its agencies. The results revealed that teachers were not satisfied with their pay and were not motivated by any rewards. Thus, achieving quality education among secondary-school graduates could be linked to teachers' motivation and satisfactory wages.

Similarly, Arain et al. (2012) evaluated the impact of teachers' remuneration on the performance of students. It was argued that the salary remuneration of teachers is an important factor in students' performance. For this reason, the data on teachers' remuneration and PISA scores for the years 2000, 2003 and 2006 of fifteen-year-old pupils enrolled in lower-secondary schools in the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) member countries were used as secondary data for the study. This study showed that teacher remuneration was found to be positively related to the students' performance.

In a study in Nigeria, Akande (2014) used a descriptive survey to investigate the relationship between the conditions of service and teachers' job performance in secondary schools in Kogi State. Samples of 81 principals, 215 teachers and 86 supervisors were selected by a simple random method. The data were obtained by a questionnaire. Hypotheses were tested with the Pearson Product-Moment correlation (PPMC). The findings indicated that four out of five of the hypotheses revealed that there were significant relationships among the prompt payment of salaries, promotion, fringe benefits, staff development and staff-job performance. In a related study on the influence of wages on academic performance, Varga (2017) used the data from PISA scores between years 2003 to 2012 and national-level teacher salary data from the OECD, in order to examine the effects of policies concerning teachers' wages on students' performance. The results showed that higher teacher salaries increase students' mathematics and science performance; but the effect on reading performance was less significant. Thus, the remuneration of teachers has a pivotal role to play in learning outcomes – which is the quality of education in the context of this study.

Hanushek et al. used a uniquely matched panel dataset for a study titled "Do higher salaries raise the quality of teaching?" The study estimated the relationship between teacher test scores and the starting salaries of four cohorts of new teachers in Texas, using the district fixed effects. It further estimated the relationship between student achievement and district salary. The findings showed that mobility is partially related to pay; and this suggested that differences in pay can inform why teachers would act in those ways that they do.

In a similar pattern, Fozia and Sabir (2016) employed a survey design to study the impact of teachers' financial compensation on their job satisfaction at the higher secondary level in Islamabad. A convenient sampling technique was used to select 30 teachers. The data were obtained with a questionnaire for the study. The results showed that compensation practices had a strong influence on job satisfaction. However, the gender factor was not significant among teachers, while the teachers' experiences contributed significantly to their job satisfaction.

Babirye (2011) also established the relationship between teachers' remuneration and the performance of schools under the Universal Primary Education (UPE) system in Uganda. Quantitative data were collected from a sample of 100 respondents that were teachers. The data were analysed by using descriptive statistics. The findings from the study showed that there was a strong and positive relationship between teachers' remuneration and school performance. It also revealed that teachers' conditions of service influenced their performance greatly.

In a related study by Xuehui (2018) on employment policy in rural China, it was shown that salary and benefits not only affect attracting, training, and retraining high-quality secondary teachers, but are also highly essential in determining the quality of teaching in schools. The study reported that government-implemented policy tagged 'living allowance', in order to enhance social-security benefits for rural teachers. This study underscores the place of teaching personnel, as an important factor in secondary school education and its improvement. Thus, salary and other benefits may be crucial factors in meeting the expectations and the demands of educational stakeholders in delivering quality and relevant education at the secondary level.

1.1.4 Training and Development Policy and the Quality of Secondary Education

Chiemeka-Unogu (2018) investigated principals' participation in staff-development programmes for effective performance in public secondary schools in Rivers State in Nigeria. The study employed a descriptive survey design, in which 124 principals were selected through a stratified-random technique. The data were obtained by a Staff-Development Questionnaire (SDQ). The data were analyzed, showing the mean and z-test for the research questions and the hypotheses, respectively. It was found that workshops and in-service training should be made available for the staff development of principals.

Imaowaji (2018) also examined the relationship between in-service training and teachers' job performance in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria. The study employed a correlational design; and it used stratified random sampling to select 845 public senior-secondary school teachers for the study. The data were obtained through questionnaires, and descriptive and inferential statistics were used for the data analysis. The results showed a mean rating, which was above average for those teachers who participated in in-service training sessions. The study also established strong and positive relationships among teacher-learning, teacher-growth, teacher-needs, teacher-collaboration and job-performance.

In addition, Okotoni (2015) employed a survey-research design to examine staff training and development and quality education delivery in public secondary schools in Osun State, Nigeria. The sample was selected randomly from three schools in three Local Government Areas of Osun State. The data were obtained through questionnaires and interviews. The findings revealed that there is a strong connection between learning outcomes and the quality of human resources deployed to execute educational programmes in schools.

2. Theoretical Framework

2.1 Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory of Motivation: Lately, motivational theories have been receiving a lot of attention from behavioural scientists, as well as from industrial psychologists. This is attributed to the effects of motivation on individual behaviour and job performance (Chandan (2004). Although there are many theories of motivation being used in research, Fredrick Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory of motivation stands out as one of the most acknowledged theories of motivation (Atali et al., 2016). Porter et al. (2003), too, affirm that the two-factor theory of Herzberg, Mausner and Snyderman (1959) is a practical approach in

addressing the problem of teacher-job satisfaction in respect of leaving or staying in their jobs. Herzberg's Motivation-Hygiene study was conducted among 200 engineers and accountants.

Herzberg and his friends were interested in finding out what leads to the improvement or decline in the level of job satisfaction. Based on the outcomes of the study, those factors that determine job satisfaction were established and called 'motivators; while those factors that demotivate were called 'hygiene factors' (Atalic et al., 2016). Raymond (2018) further explains that according to the two-factor theory, an individual's job satisfaction is influenced by two factors: motivating factors that contribute to an individual's intrinsic growth and hygiene factors that contribute to extrinsic growth. This dichotomy is referred to as a 'two-need system'.

Raymond (2018) adds that Herzberg's Motivation-Hygiene theory states that 'motivators' can influence job satisfaction in several ways, namely, a sense of achievement, recognition, the meaningfulness of the work, responsibility, growth and promotional opportunities. On the other hand, hygiene factors can lead an individual to experience job dissatisfaction. These job dissatisfiers or 'hygiene factors' may surface and manifest in company policy, supervision, workplace relationships with supervisors, workplace conditions, salary, workplace relationships with co-workers and peers, personal life, workplace relationships with subordinates, status, and job security.

Thus, Herzberg's Motivation-Hygiene theory claims that both job satisfaction and job dissatisfaction are the products of different causes. That is, job satisfaction relies on motivators; while job dissatisfaction is the product of hygiene factors (Atalic et al., 2016).

2.1.1 The relevance of the Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory of Motivation

In the context of this study, Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory is useful in determining the factors that cause satisfaction or dissatisfaction in the workplace. It is thus deemed suitable for a school as a workplace. This theory propounds that hygiene factors; for example, policy, can pacify the employees (teachers) to restrain them from becoming dissatisfied. These dissatisfiers or maintenance factors could be in the form of incentives, or any other fringe benefits to cushion the effects of staying in rural or segregated communities. The application of this theory to schools in rural areas is ideal and appropriate in mitigating the effects of job dissatisfaction, which may lead to teachers quitting the job.

Hasley (2017) affirms that attracting and retaining teachers in rural and remote schools remains a daunting challenge on the educational agenda. This suggests that rural schools may be experiencing a dearth of teachers both in quantity and quality. It is a common cause that, with regard to benefits, hygienic factors would exist concurrently with motivating factors for teachers in rural areas. This is not only a Nigerian phenomenon; since the research shows that there are acute shortages of teachers in rural communities globally. This is affirmed by Hasley (2017), who found that rural schools in Australia are encountering challenges of staffing, as the teachers are not willing to relocate from urban to rural areas due

to the lack of incentives. The Herzberg's motivation-hygiene theory is suitable for determining the factors that cause satisfaction or dissatisfaction in a workplace, so that these issues can be remedied.

In the context of this study, the hygienic factors may indicate the level of treatment from the government through its agency – the Ministry of Education or the Teaching Service Commission – as it relates to salary and compensation, as well as to government policy. The examples of motivators, such as achievement, recognition, responsibility, and advancement in the workplace, may come into play in the school setting in the form of recognition from government and school administrators/principals and opportunities for training and development. Motivation in an educational setting, such as a school, is very important and probably ranks among the core issues in personnel management (Babalola (2015). In other words, the application of the theory of motivation in the school as a workplace, is essential in bringing about satisfaction and stemming teachers' dissatisfaction. Thus, whatever would enhance the motivation of teachers and ultimately increase educational performance or quality in this study context, is worth pursuing for the good of the students, and for that of society as well.

3. Materials and Methods

3.1 Study Design

This study adopted a convergent parallel design for the collection of data from teachers and secondary-school graduates on policy factors and the quality of secondary education in rural communities of South-Western Nigeria. In essence, both the numerical and the textual data collected complemented each other in achieving the objectives of this study.

3.2 Sampling and the sampling procedure

The multi-level mixed-method sampling technique was used to select samples for the study from the three sampled states in South-Western Nigeria. At the first stage, the researcher used the purposive- sampling technique to select the three states with the most rural demography that make up 50% of the six states in the region, namely, Oyo, Ekiti and Osun. At the second stage, a cluster-sampling method was used to select each local government area with the most rural demography across the three senatorial districts of each state from the zone. At the third stage, simple random sampling was used to select a secondary school from each local government area of the senatorial district. Lastly, the proportionate sampling technique was used to select 467 (90%) secondary-school graduates from the selected schools, in which the total enumeration technique was adopted in selecting 134 teachers from the selected schools.

3.3 The data-collection Instruments and Procedures

Questionnaires for each school were taken physically to the sites. The Secondary School Graduates' Aptitude Test (SSGAT) instrument was used to evaluate the quality of secondary education; while the Policy-Factor Teachers' Questionnaire (PFTQ) was used to collect the data from the teachers. Interviews were conducted by using the Interview Guide for the key informants – which are Secondary School Principals and Teaching Service Commission/Ministry of Education

senior officials of the Planning, Research and Statistics (PR&S) Department in each of the 3 states.

3.4 Ethical Considerations

The current study followed all the ethical requirements in the Postgraduate Guide of the University of Fort Hare. Thus, the researcher sought ethical clearance from the University of Fort Hare's Research Ethics Committee (UREC). The researcher further sought and obtained permission from the Teaching Service Commission (TESCOM) and the Ministry of Education of Ekiti, Oyo and Osun states in Nigeria.

3.5 The results

3.5.1 Research Question 1: What is the influence of teacher selection and recruitment policy on the quality of secondary education in the rural communities of South-Western Nigeria?

Table 1: Influence of Teacher Selection and Recruitment Policy on the eQuality of Secondary Education

Teacher Selection and Recruitment Policy	Very Strongly	Strongly	Weakly	Very Weakly	Mean \bar{X}	Std. Dev.
Teaching advertisement in newspapers, radio and TV before employment	51 (38.1%)	57 (42.5%)	15 (11.2%)	11 (8.2%)	3.10	0.903
Accepting Teaching application by Teaching Service Commission	57 (42.5%)	60 (44.8%)	11 (8.2%)	6 (4.5%)	3.25	0.795
Short listing of applicants for teaching jobs	62 (46.3%)	58 (43.3%)	13 (9.7%)	1 (0.7%)	3.35	0.686
Conduct of tests such as aptitude test	54 (40.3%)	66 (49.3%)	13 (9.7%)	1 (0.7%)	3.29	0.67
Conduct of selection interview	53 (39.6%)	50 (37.3%)	25 (18.7%)	6 (4.5%)	3.12	0.867
Physical/health examination of prospective teachers	49 (36.6%)	43 (32.1%)	31 (23.1%)	11 (8.2%)	2.97	0.965
Induction/orientation for new entrants into the teaching profession	22 (16.4%)	69 (51.5%)	37 (27.6%)	6 (4.5%)	2.80	0.764
Compliance with other levels of selection and recruitment processes before employment	32 (23.9%)	58 (43.3%)	28 (20.9%)	16 (11.9%)	2.79	0.943
Weighted Average	380 (35.4%)	461 (43%)	173 (16.1%)	58 (5.4%)	3.08	0.82

Note: Mean value decision ranges from 0 – 1.24 (VW), 1.25 – 2.49 (W) 2.50 – 3.74 (S) and 3.75 – 4.99 (VS).

Table 1 reveals the influence of teacher selection and recruitment policy on the quality of secondary education in rural communities in South-Western Nigeria. The weighted average score of 3.08, which can be rated as 77% shows that the respondents believed teacher selection and recruitment policy strongly influenced the quality of secondary education in the rural communities of South-Western Nigeria. This further implies that selection and recruitment are strong factors that impact the quality of secondary education. To get an in-depth understanding of

how teacher selection and recruitment were being carried out in various states of South-Western Nigeria, the participants (secondary school principals (SSP) and Teaching Service Commission officials (TCO) were further interviewed on the procedures employed for selection and recruitment. Some of their comments were as follows:

SSP2 commented:

“Currently in Ekiti State, before you can be adopted, you will have to undergo a test and pass it. In the past, it was an all-comers’ affair. Now, the government advertises for recruitment. If the applicants pass now, they move to the interview stage. It is no more a profession for “Tom, Dick and Harry”. An educational qualification, such as a Postgraduate Diploma in Education (PGDE) is compulsory; and those who have been recruited without PGDE, do not get the promotion. This serves as a pathway to professionalising education. Merit is being restored, unlike in the past.”

SSP1 corroborated:

“In the past, there was nothing like advertisement; merit was never considered. During the time of [Governor] Ajimobi between 2011 and 2019, some people submitted fake results. I have one in this particular school, who claimed that he has a Higher National Diploma (HND) from one school. It was inside their room that they “manufactured” the result. In those days, when they wanted to recruit teachers, there wasn’t any examination to test the ability, no interview, nothing whatsoever. It was whom you knew.

Even during this political era, they already knew those that would be selected; and they would have been given letters without any recruitment process. I can remember the one they did last. Some of the teachers placed by the Oyo State Teaching Service Commission (TESCOM) here found it difficult to face the students; some of them who could perform very well were not recruited. It was based on whom you knew, the political party you belonged to. They shared recruitment slots among themselves.

For instance, if they wanted to recruit 50 teachers, they would share these posts among party loyalists, “you take two, you take that.” In other word-sharing slots among themselves without any procedures to be followed]. Someone that cannot even ask “where are you going”? But because he knows politicians, s/he would find his/her way to the classroom. I had someone like that in my school here, who has been transferred now. Thank God, it is getting better now.

Both SSP 2 and SSP1 agreed that the teaching profession was an all-comers’ affair in the past. Merit was never considered in the past; but things are changing now. This speaks volumes and may account for the present level of quality of secondary education in the rural communities investigated.”

SSP3 revealed:

"To an extent, the immediate past Government followed merit through advertisements, written tests and interviews; however, they gave some consideration to the quota system, and also to satisfying people from different geopolitical zones.

Likewise, the Teaching Service Commission Officials working in Planning, Research and Statistics shed light on the history, processes and procedures of selection and recruitment in these states."

TCO1 noted:

"On the selection procedure, if merit was observed in the past recruitment, as in 2010, when 70% of applicants were picked on merit; but the remaining 30% went to PR (Political Patronage). Meanwhile, this year appointment was done on the basis of merit; and those who failed were not employed, not even inclusive of my younger brother. For recent recruitment, this Government places adverts on print media/Radio/Television. Candidates apply by purchasing forms; but now it is free. This is followed by short-listing, based on the criteria set by the TESCOM, followed by the conducting of an examination. This year's test was a Computer-Based Test (CBT). The cut-off mark will be set; and then interviews for those who make the cut-off date will be conducted."

TCO2 added:

"Those employed now are being subjected to examination, in order to ascertain their suitability. The questions for the recruitment test contain both reliability and validity. They are subjected to oral interviews and a rigorous screening of their credentials. There is a standard set for those to be employed in terms of the cut-off points. The procedures are clearly listed in the media. They are advertised, then tested and the applicants are then interviewed. So overtly, merit is observed in the processes and in the procedures of employment of both teaching and non-teaching staff."

TCO3 revealed:

"In the past, there was no examination for recruitment, except during the Aregbesola administration. Currently, we are being told, that Government will recruit; and that the applicants should prepare for a recruitment test. Recruitment procedures are being followed now; but it is too early to judge, as the processes are still ongoing and we cannot predict the outcome but, in the past, these were not followed. The political era leaves room for political considerations in recruitment. Between 2010 and 2013, politics was not allowed to influence the recruitment. Merit was used in selection, but the political class was also given the opportunity to nominate the candidates.

The information above shows that selection and recruitment policy in the past were mostly based on political considerations, or on those "whom you know". Merit was not consistently followed. Forms would be sold to party loyalists only; and letters of employment were issued. Consideration was given to the quota system and geographical locations. However, according to the participants, they believe that things are changing now; as

governments are employing an open and transparent policy in the selection and recruitment through the placement of advertisements in both the print and electronic media, and via a computer-based tests (CBT) and interview. Although, some are still sceptical, until the process is concluded, they cannot believe that the procedures will be consistently followed."

3.5.2 Research Question 2: *What is the influence of salary and compensation policy on the quality of secondary education in the rural communities of South-Western Nigeria?*

Table 2: The influence of Salary and Compensation Policy on the Quality of Secondary Education

Salary and Compensation Policy	Very Strongly	Strongly	Weakly	Very Weakly	Mean \bar{X}	Std. Dev.
My salary affects quality education	63 (47%)	38 (28.4%)	26 (19.4%)	7 (5.2%)	3.17	0.922
My salary affects my commitment to teaching	41 (30.6%)	41 (30.6%)	38 (28.4%)	14 (10.4)	2.81	0.990
The conditions of service of encourages teachers.	29 (21.6%)	43 (32.1%)	40 (29.9%)	22 (16.4%)	2.59	1.005
The existence of incentives such as rural and transportation allowances contribute to effective teaching.	22 (16.4%)	57 (42.5%)	38 (28.4%)	17 (12.7%)	2.63	0.907
The incentives are attracting new entrants into teaching profession.	21 (15.7%)	51 (38.1%)	54 (40.3%)	8 (6%)	2.63	0.818
Teaching job emoluments retain teachers in rural areas.	23 (17.2%)	50 (37.3%)	53 (39.6%)	8 (6%)	2.66	0.833
The remunerations are in accordance with my grade level/step	18 (13.4%)	52 (38.8%)	52 (38.8%)	12 (9%)	2.57	0.836
Weighted Average	217 (23.1%)	332 (35.4%)	301 (32.1%)	88 (9.4%)	2.72	0.90

Note: Mean value decision range from 0 – 1.24 (VW), 1.25 – 2.49 (W) 2.50 – 3.74 (S) and 3.75 – 4.99(VS)

Table 2 above shows the influence of salary and compensation policy on the quality of secondary education in rural communities in South-western Nigeria. The table reveals that 75.4% (101) of the teachers claimed that their salary affects the quality of secondary education; while 24.6% (33) maintained that their salary did not affect the quality of secondary education ($\bar{x} = 3.17$). The table further shows that 53.8% (72) of the respondents agreed that incentives are attracting new entrants into the teaching profession; while 46.2% (62) disagreed that incentives are attracting new entrants into the teaching profession ($\bar{x} = 2.63$).

Thus, the weighted average score of 2.72, which can be rated as 68% shows that the respondents believe that salary and compensation strongly influence the quality of secondary education in the rural communities of South-Western Nigeria. The

responses from the respondents [secondary school principals (SSP) and Teaching Service Commission officials (TCO) interviewed] show that teachers are not adequately motivated. Most of the interviewees expressed frustration and noted that, if given an opportunity elsewhere, they would not hesitate to leave the teaching profession. Most considered the profession only as their last resort. Their comments were as follows:

SSP1 revealed:

"In the past, teachers were not treated well. Actually, during a particular Governor's administration, teachers were not treated well. They had to find alternative means to take care of their family. They only managed to do whatever they could do in the school; and they had to find other ways, in order to take care of their families. Thank God, things are getting better nowadays. Let me tell you, this has lost teachers to other areas, apart from teaching. Some have been engaging in farming, trading, and so on. Teachers are not treated well at all. Meanwhile, those teaching in colleges of education are far better; while in universities, they have a special scale for them, but secondary school teachers say that they don't know why they are being treated in this way. There is no satisfaction with respect to salary and other benefits.

Salaries are nothing to write home about, except an allowance of 3.7% called Teaching Salary Scale (T.S.S.), which is given; but the salaries are nothing to write home about. One of my kids, after graduating, said she could not take a teaching job. She quizzed me about how much she would be earning, and I told her certain thousands of naira. She exclaimed and asked: "Fresh graduate? Mum, I can't stay at home until I get a better job." If it were the bank or a company, then one would know how much one would be earning.

Even in retirement, the stipend would not come on time. People go into teaching because there is no alternative. Despite teaching in rural areas, there is no special allowance (normal allowance)."

SSP2 added:

"To be candid, teachers are not well treated. Rather, they are being treated as second-class citizens. And most of their entitlements are being deprived, such as allowances and even promotion. For instance, personnel in the ministry appointed on the same day as a teacher, would be on a level ahead of one, as a teacher. There is deliberate discrimination against the teaching profession. Teachers are not happy with the profession. Give them an opportunity to take another profession, they would not hesitate to leave. For instance, my leave bonus since 2017 till this year 2020 and other several benefits are still pending. We are not happy. This is discouraging. This is not encouraging; and it is affecting our performance. Conditions of teaching service are not encouraging. New entrants to the teaching profession are trying to back out. They took the job as a last resort. I, myself, after some years, went for another course in Medical Laboratory Science (MLS). I now have my license. If I had another alternative, I would have pulled out of teaching."

SSP3 responded:

"The conditions in the teaching service are poor. A lot has to be done to motivate teachers."

TCO1 commented:

"No special policy for teachers, no meal allowance. All allowances are general, except [for the] 27.5% (Teaching Service Scale Allowance T.S.S.A.)."

TCO2 noted:

"The Government is worker-friendly; but there are inadequacies on the part of the government. Salaries are being paid promptly; but the deductions for workers are not adequately returned. There are arrears in salaries, leave bonuses and workers' promotions."

TCO3 argued:

"Teachers are not well paid. They are working assiduously; but their inputs are not in accordance with what they are earning. Teachers are not satisfied with what they earn. Although, it comes when due, we advise teachers to have other sources of income, due to government's adverse policies on teaching service. There was a time, when government paid only a half salary for teachers. Those on grade levels 2-7 were paid a full salary. Those on Level 8-12 were paid 75 per cent of the salary; while those on level 13 and above were paid only 50 per cent. The remaining levels were paid only 29 per cent.

The information gathered revealed that teachers are not happy with their salary and the compensation policy. They believed that the teaching profession is not being treated fairly; and that teachers deserve more than what they are currently earning. Some noted that the teaching profession is seen as the last resort; and given an opportunity elsewhere, they would quit teaching. Hence, the level of motivation is not encouraging."

3.5.3 Research Question 3: *What is the influence of training and development policy on the quality of secondary education in the rural communities of South-western Nigeria?*

Table 3: The influence of Training and Development Policy on the Quality of Secondary Education

Training and Development Policy	Very Strong	Strongly	Weakly	Very Weak	Mean \bar{X}	Std. Dev.
Teaching Service Commission periodically organizes seminar.	28 (20.9%)	46 (34.3%)	44 (32.8%)	16 (11.9%)	2.64	0.945
Opportunity for induction/orientation for new teachers	12 (9%)	42 (31.3%)	60 (44.8%)	20 (14.9%)	2.34	0.842
Teaching Service Commission trains on new skills\teaching methods.	42 (31.3%)	63 (47%)	22 (16.4%)	7 (5.2%)	3.04	0.830

Teaching Service Commission trains on new emerging pedagogy.	18 (13.4%)	61 (45.5%)	42 (31.3%)	13 (9.7%)	2.63	0.838
Teaching Service Commission trains on usage of new instructional materials.	35 (26.1%)	61 (45.5%)	26 (19.4%)	12 (9%)	2.89	0.898
Training and development programs available to all without knowing Teaching Service Commission Officers	13 (9.7%)	45 (33.6%)	60 (44.8%)	16 (11.9%)	2.41	0.825
Use of experienced teachers for in-school mentoring	14 (10.4%)	46 (34.3%)	62 (46.3%)	12 (9%)	2.46	0.801
Availability of Continuous Professional Development (CPD)	24 (17.9%)	66 (49.3%)	39 (29.1%)	5 (3.7%)	2.81	0.767
Opportunity for further studies	7 (5.2%)	43 (32.1%)	70 (52.2%)	14 (10.4%)	2.32	0.732
Weighted Average	193 (16%)	473 (39.2%)	425 (35.3%)	115 (9.5%)	2.62	0.83

Note: Mean value decision range from 0 – 1.24 (VW), 1.25 – 2.49 (W) 2.50 – 3.74 (S) and 3.75 – 4.99(VS)

Table 3 shows the influence of training and development, as an aspect of the policy factor on the quality of secondary education in the rural communities in South-Western Nigeria. The Table reveals that 55.2% (74) of the teachers agreed that the Teaching Service Commission (TESCOM) organises seminars periodically; while 44.8% (60) of them disagreed that seminars are organised periodically ($\bar{x} = 2.64$). The table further shows that 56.7% (76) of the teachers disagreed that training and development programmes are available to all without Teaching Service Commission officers' influence, while 43.3 per cent (58) agreed ($X = 2.41$). Thus, the weighted average score of 2.62, which can be rated as 65.5 per cent shows that the respondents agreed that training and development strongly influence the quality of secondary education in the rural communities of South-Western Nigeria. This implies that training and development are strong factors that influence the quality of secondary education. The interviews with the respondents (secondary school principals [SSPs] and Teaching Service Commission officials (TCO) also revealed the following on training and development:

SSP1 commented:

“They organise training for Mathematics and Computer teachers, and Science teachers as well. Basically, for core subjects, while other subjects have their associations, such as Egbe Akomolede for Yoruba Teachers. Geography teachers have their own too; but they are not controlled by government. Each association organises its own seminar/training. Principals, too, attend seminars on how to administer schools.

Even for the core subjects, principals are asked to mobilize them for transportation. They sponsor themselves sometimes. They are asked to pay a sum of money individually to an account, in order to get registered. It does not attract any monetary benefits, except knowledge. The conditions of service are not motivating; and there is nothing to be glad about.”

SSP3 commented:

"A lot has to be done in capacity building."

TCO1 revealed:

"Last year we trained about 5000 principals and vice-principals on leadership and school management in about six Education Zonal Offices (Oyo, Saki, Ogbomoso, Eruwa, Ibarapa I & Ibarapa II). Currently, we plan to train teachers in English and Mathematics, Science Subjects, ICT; and we intend also to train teacher supervisors."

TCO3 noted:

"The training is always conducted by the Ministry of Education; and because it offers only a little stipend, the selection for training is always influenced; and the staff from the Ministry of Education are part of this."

The responses on training and development show that government is not wholly committed to the training and development of teachers. Sometimes, when the training is organised, the selection for who attends is not based on need and merit due to the small monetary compensation, as revealed by a respondent. At the same time, it was revealed that sometimes teachers were asked to pay for themselves, in order to attend seminars."

3.5.4 Hypothesis 1: *There is no significant relationship between the policy and the quality of secondary education in the rural communities of South-Western Nigeria.*

Table 4: Comparison of policy factors and quality performance

<i>Variable</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>R</i>	<i>Sig</i>
<i>Policy factors</i>	601	12.77	24.30	-.752**	.000
<i>Quality performance</i>	601	9.12	6.39		

Correlation is significant at 0.01 level (2 tailed).

Table 4 shows the estimated mean score for policy factors and secondary school graduates' quality performance scores, which are 12.77 and 9.12, respectively, while the S.D. are 24.30 and 6.39, respectively. The calculated R-.752 (Sig, .000) shows that there is a significant relationship between the policy factors and the quality of secondary education in the rural communities of South-western Nigeria. Hence, the null hypothesis was rejected. The correlation was negative, which implies that an inverse correlation existed between the policy factors and the quality of secondary education in the rural communities of South-Western Nigeria. The inverse correlation is significant.

4. Discussion

The results of Table 1 revealed that teacher selection and the recruitment policy strongly influence the quality of secondary education. This implies that the selection and the recruitment policy have a strong impact on the quality of secondary education. Likewise, the qualitative data generated through Key Informant Interviews conducted among the secondary school principals and Teaching Service Commission Officials agreed, that the selection and recruitment policy strongly

influences the quality of secondary education. Some of the interviewees believed that, sometimes, merit was jettisoned for party affiliation, or other forms of favouritism. SSP1 respondent for the qualitative interview corroborated this by noting that, “in the past, nothing like an advertisement, merit was ever considered.”

This has brought unqualified personnel into the teaching force; and it has negatively influenced the quality of secondary education. This finding is consistent with those of Makori and Onderi (2013), who adopted a quantitative survey to study the challenges in achieving the effective recruitment of secondary school teachers in Kenya. They discovered that school boards of governors were culpable in jettisoning merit in recruitment; and they preferred to have their kith and kin employed in the teaching service. This finding is also in line with those of Abdou (2012), who examined teachers’ recruitment and selection practices within public and private schooling systems in Egypt. The study revealed that there are hidden criteria in teachers’ recruitment and selection. This finding is also in agreement with those of Ekwoaba, Ikeije and Ufoma (2015), which revealed that the quality of procedures followed in the recruitment and selection matter most in determining an organisation’s performance. In essence, recruitment based on merit has a positive influence on the performance of an organisation. This study also validates the works of Gamage (2014) and Syed (2012), which showed that there is a positive and significant relationship between recruitment and selection as well as an organisation’s performance. The current study is equally in support of the existing literature, such as those of Aloo et al. (2011), Nduta (2011), Wadesango et al. (2012). These all observed that teachers who are not well qualified for the positions for which they are hired, could jeopardise the provision of quality of education.

Furthermore, this study also agrees with the findings of Vitale (2009) that teachers are central to education and that those factors considered in teacher recruitment are primarily the knowledge of content, the knowledge of teaching-learning processes, and that of classroom management. The current study, also, underscores the fact that teacher quality is the most important among all of the educational factors. No educational system can be greater than its workforce. Thus, teachers as human resources, are fundamental to achieving educational goals.

Table 2 revealed that teachers’ salary and compensation policy strongly influenced the quality of secondary education. This means that salary and compensation policy strongly impact the quality of secondary education. Qualitative data generated through Key Informant Interviews conducted among the secondary school principals and Teaching Service Commission officials in this study agreed that salary and compensation strongly influence the quality of secondary education. At the same time, the qualitative data generated from the respondents confirmed that teachers are not being taken care of adequately. Some respondents (**SSP1 and SSP2**) categorically expressed their displeasure that teachers were not treated well, and that the conditions of the teaching service were not satisfactory. They argued that when giving teachers other job alternatives rather than teaching, they would not hesitate to quit the teaching profession.

Thus, both the quantitative and qualitative results indicate that teachers’ salary and compensation policy strongly influence the quality of secondary education. The current study is in agreement with the work of Gbenga and Yakub (2018), who in

their study investigated the challenges facing teachers in public secondary schools. They found that teachers were not satisfied with their pay; and they were not motivated by their rewards. Thus, achieving quality education among secondary graduates could be linked to teachers' motivation and good wages. The current findings are also in agreement with those of Xuehui (2018), who revealed that salary and benefits not only affect attracting, training, and retraining high-quality secondary teachers; but they are essential in determining the quality of teaching in schools.

In China, this consideration led to the government implementing a policy that tagged living allowance in schools in rural areas of the country to enhance social security benefits for rural teachers. The geographical scope of the current study equally needs such a rural-allowance policy for teachers in the rural communities of South-Western Nigeria.

The current study is consistent with that of Ali (2009), in a study conducted on the impact of teachers' salaries on the students' performance using the scores of the International Student Assessment (PISA) of 2000, 2003 and 2006 survey data; the results showed that teachers' salaries had a positive effect on students' learning outcomes. This implies that salary and allowances are fundamental factors that motivate teachers to perform optimally. Hence, when it is attractive, teachers would be encouraged to devote their time and energy to the teaching-learning process. The current study is also in consonance with that of Fozia and Sabir (2016), who studied the impact of teachers' financial compensation on their job satisfaction at the higher secondary level in Islamabad.

The results showed that there was a high correlation between compensation practices and job satisfaction. The findings of the current study also support the findings of Babirye (2011), which revealed that there was a strong and positive relationship between teachers' remuneration and school performance. This study, too, is in line with the findings of Akande (2014), which revealed that the prompt payment of salaries was found to be positively related to teachers' job performance in secondary schools. The current study's findings are also in line with those of Varga (2017), who also used a Programme for International Student Assessment between the years 2003 and 2012 and national-level teachers' salary data from the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), in order to examine the effects of policies concerning teachers' wages on students' performance. The results showed that higher teacher salaries increase students' performance. Consequently, the remuneration of teachers correlates with the performance of secondary school graduates.

The results of Table 3 revealed that teacher training and development policy influence the quality of secondary education. On the other hand, however, qualitative data generated through Key Informant Interviews conducted among the secondary school principals and Teaching Service Commission officials also revealed that government is not wholly committed to the training and development of teachers. In some instances, when training is organised, the selection of who to attend is not based on need and merit; this is owing to the monetary compensation, which is involved for the attendees

The interviews also revealed that sometimes teachers were asked to pay, in order to attend seminars. The current findings also validate those of Imaowaji (2018), who established that there is a positive relationship between teacher learning and job performance in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria. The current study also supports the findings of Okotoni (2015), which revealed the current state of in-service training and the development of teachers in public schools in Nigeria. The result showed a strong connection between learning outcomes and the quality of human resources deployed to execute educational programmes in schools. The study by Chiemeka-Unogu (2018) – which investigated principals' participation in staff development programmes for effective performance in public secondary schools – equally supports the findings of this current study.

5. Implications and Limitations of the Study

The findings of the study have provided empirical data that could be of immense benefit to both academics and researchers, who may wish to apply these findings in their research endeavour, or in their academic writings. The findings from this study also have implications for secondary school administrators, policy-makers, government officials, researchers, parents, private and public sector employers, society, and students on labour policy-related matters. Another implication of the study is that there is an urgent need to enact labour-friendly policies with regard to rural allowances and other benefits, in order to attract and retain teachers and other personnel in rural schools. This motivation would ultimately enhance the quality of secondary education in rural communities.

This study had its limitations, however. Measures were put in place to mitigate the adverse effects on the outcome of the study. The geographical location of the study was conducted in areas hard to reach by motorcar; however, motorcycles were used to access some of these schools. The other limitations were time and funds for data collection during the fieldwork, considering the large geographical scope of the study. Also, engaging administrative bureaucracy, in order to secure approval for the study from the ministries of education of various states in the South-West, was a daunting challenge; but due to the resilience of the researcher, this issue was resolved after persistent visits.

The limitations to this study were also manifested in its conceptual and theoretical scope. The researcher would have wanted to extend the study beyond the present scope by examining more variables, but due to time and funding constraints, this could not be achieved.

6. Conclusion

The findings of the study revealed that there is a significant relationship between policy factors and the quality of secondary education in the rural communities of South-Western Nigeria. The correlation was negative for the independent variable of policy factors. Thus, the negative relationship indicates that the existing policy factors (recruitment and selection, salary and compensation, training, and development) did not enhance the quality of secondary education. This study has, therefore, shown the need for government and education stakeholders to urgently address labour policies, so that they can enhance the quality of secondary education. Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are hereby

made, which the researcher believes would be of immense benefit to all the educational stakeholders:

- There is a need for a review of the existing policy on recruitment and selection, so that it is wholly merit-based and devoid of favouritism and any political interference.
- Salary and compensation need to be reviewed by incorporating rural allowances for teachers and other personnel working in rural schools, in order to continue attracting and retaining them.
- Periodic training and development programmes should be introduced in the form of workshops and seminars, in order to expose teachers to the newest pedagogical policies and the best practices.

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