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Impact of Quota System and Vacancy Based Promotion on Teacher's Mental Health in Fct, Abuja, Nigeria

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Abstract: This study investigated the impact of quota system and vacancy based promotion on teachers' mental health in FCT, Abuja, Nigeria. There were two research objectives, two research questions and one hypothesis. Descriptive research design was used in this study. A total population of 18,584 teachers was obtained and a sample of 350 teachers was drawn from the total population using multi-stage sampling technique. Data collection instrument used was a self-structured questionnaire entitled: "Impact of Quota System and Vacancy Based Questionnaire (IQSVBQ)". Frequency counts and percentages were used to analyze data gathered. The mean scores and standard deviations were used for the analysis of the answers to the research questions. The hypothesis was tested by using t-test at 0.05 level of significance. The research found that quota system and vacancy based promotion in FCT was not automatic, but depended on the availability of vacancies, limited number of teachers can only be promoted at a time and among others, and that promotion was not automatic even after meeting the requirements. It was also revealed that teachers are negatively affected by quota system and vacancy based promotion as many teachers were frustrated, develop high blood pressure, sleepless night, anxiety, emotional trauma and denied promotion. However, the result from the tested hypothesis revealed that both male and female teachers experience the same negative impact such as frustration, increase of blood pressure, sleepless night, anxiety, emotional trauma and denied promotion. It was therefore recommended among others that stakeholders particularly the Nigeria Union of Teachers FCT branch (NUT) should stand up and reject in its entirety the quota system and vacancy based promotion for teachers as there is no vacancy in the classroom.

Keywords: Quota System; Vacancy-Based Promotion; Teachers' Mental Health; Teacher Promotion; FCT Abuja.

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1. Introduction

The teacher plays the central role in the intellectual and moral development of learners in any society because he/she has the responsibility of developing the learners' abilities and skills. Teachers are required to make many sacrifices in fulfilling this duty, such as dedicating time and energy, and even personal resources to the school, and experiencing long working hours in lesson preparation and instructional delivery. Even with all these commendable efforts, the incentives offered to the teachers are mostly restricted to salary and promotion. Empirical evidence shows that many teachers remain in the profession for five years or more, sometimes as long as 20 years, without the benefit of professional development, workshops or retraining programmes. Thus, promotion and monthly salary are the most important sources of motivation to the teachers with emphasis in the Federal Capital Territory Abuja.

The education system in the FCT has therefore adopted and put in place the quota system and vacancy based promotion as tools for managing teachers' careers in response

to the demands of the administration and structures (Burns & Rapee, 2019). The quota system is a system of promotion where teachers are selected according to their geopolitical or administrative zones rather than on the basis of their performance in the promotion exams. Vacancy based promotion, on the other hand, is a promotion based on the availability of position or level rather than their qualifications, competence and performance. These systems are created to allow for balance within an organization, but can also lead to frustration, stagnation, and a sense of injustice among teachers.

Mental health refers to emotional, psychological and social health and it plays a key role in the effectiveness of teachers, as well as their quality of life. Good mental health is essential to everyone's ability to function in their community and in the classroom in order to create a positive learning environment for students. Researchers have linked poor mental health to stress, anxiety, depression, burnout, and a decrease in job satisfaction, which negatively affects teaching quality and students' academic outcomes (Jacques, Erick, Desire, Simon-Decap, Leyka, Amuli & Daniel, 2026). Emotional and behavioural issues in teachers, especially as a result of work-related factors, have also been reported to be increasing in the world.

The adoption of the quota system and vacancy based promotion can play a big role in these mental health issues. Teachers who are not promoted for reasons of no vacancy may suffer from psychological distress caused by lack of fairness in the system and career progression. This sustained frustration may turn to negative behaviours such as absenteeism, decreased commitment to job task, poor class preparation, and lack of involvement in class. In severe instances, it can even cause physical ailments or unhealthy coping habits like drug or alcohol abuse (Henri, Widya, Machfudz & Isah, 2025).

Additionally, mental health affects the educational outcomes of students, as well as the mental health of teachers. Teachers with high stress and emotional instability levels may subconsciously pass on negative emotions to students, which will impact classroom environment and students' psychological growth. Workplace stress, such as the stress associated with uncertainties about promotion, has been shown to cause anxiety, dissatisfaction and give the teachers a lower morale (Fassl, Muth, Hofleitner & ftenegger, 2015). In FCT, many teachers serve for years and yet major stagnation occurs in a given grade. This can lead to frustration, dissatisfaction with the job and neglect. Teachers face the psychological stress of being subject to promotion with irregularity and uncertainty under the quota system, and the limited promotion opportunities under the vacancy based system. Consequently, teachers might suffer from emotional trauma that includes anxiety, continual concern and a sense of helplessness with regards to career advancement.

Moreover, teachers might experience depressive symptoms due to the failure to be promoted according to their merits and qualifications, which might make them feel undervalued and unrecognized. This chronic stress may also have physical ramifications, resulting in such health issues as high blood pressure and other stress-related diseases. The bad effects of these promotion practices are not only on the teachers themselves but also affect the classroom. As a result, teachers with mental health issues might be less motivated to teach, less committed to the job, feel irritated or less effective teachers. This, in turn, negatively impacts students' learning activity, and the quality of teaching, classroom management and teacher-student interaction is also reduced. Students' academic performance and overall educational outcomes as a result, may be affected.

Teachers' well-being has gained importance in recent years as it has been established that it is a key factor of educational quality in the FCT, Abuja. Yet, despite this increasing awareness, empirical evidence to explore the relationship between administrative policies centre on quota system and vacancy based promotion system with mental health of teachers in FCT is still lacking. This gap in the literature in relation to researchers' experience as victim of quota system and vacancy based promotion. Therefore, this study

seeks to examine the impact of the quota system and vacancy based promotion on teachers' mental health in the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja, Nigeria.

Purpose of the Study

The primary aim of this study was to assess the impact of the quota system and vacancy based promotion on teachers' mental health in FCT, Abuja, Nigeria. Specifically, the study were to:

- i. examine what quota system and vacancy base promotion is all about in FCT, Abuja, Nigeria.
- ii. investigate the impact of quota system and vacancy based promotion on mental health of male and female teachers in FCT, Abuja, Nigeria.

Research Questions

This study was guided with the following research questions.

1. What is quota system and vacancy based promotion in FCT, Abuja, Nigeria?
2. What is the impact of quota system and vacancy based promotion on mental health of male and female teachers in FCT, Abuja, Nigeria?

Hypothesis

H01: There is no significant difference on the impact of quota system and vacancy based promotion on mental health of male and female teachers in FCT, Abuja, Nigeria.

2. Methodology

The design of this study was descriptive survey research. The selection of this design was suitable since the data collected was systematic from a representative sample of the population with the objective of describing and analysing the existing situation. Survey research is a technique that allows the researchers to gather data and then statistically analyze and test the hypotheses, according to Nworgu (2016). Therefore, the effect of quota system and vacancy based promotion on the mental health of teachers in FCT, Abuja was considered appropriate for the study.

A total of 18,584 teachers in the Federal Capital Territory FCT, Abuja were the population of the study as retrieved from FCT UBEB/SEB records. A multi-stage sampling technique was used to select a sample of 350 teachers. During the first stage three schools were chosen from each Area Council giving a total of 18 schools. Subsequently, teachers were selected from these schools. The sample size determination was based on the Yamane (1967) formula at the 5% level of precision which gave the sample of 350 respondents. A questionnaire was used to collect the data, which was self-structured and titled "Impact of Quota System and Vacancy Based Questionnaire (IQSVBQ)". The questionnaire was split into two parts: Section A: Asked for information about the personal details of the respondents. Part B: Impact of the quota system and vacancy based, structured on a 4-point Likert scale of Strongly Agree (4), Agree (3), Disagree (2), and Strongly Disagree (1).

The questionnaire was face, content and construct validated by two lecturers in the Department of Guidance and Counselling, Faculty of Education, University of Abuja. Some changes were made and some items were deleted based on their observations, corrections and suggestions, which improved the overall quality and validity of the instrument. The instrument was tested with the test-retest technique to ensure its reliability. Twenty teachers of Tugamaje Secondary School who were not in the main study were selected for a pilot study. The same group was given the questionnaire twice with a two week interval between the administrations. The scores from both administrations were correlated by the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMCC) which

gave a reliability coefficient of 0.70, which means that the instrument was reliable for the study.

The researchers with the help of two research assistants obtained permission from the management of schools selected before administering the instrument. The questionnaires were given to the respondents in the school halls during briefing sessions. The study purpose was explained to participants and confidentiality and anonymity were assured. Completed questionnaires were retrieved as soon as they were completed in order to achieve a high response rate. The data collected were processed and analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Demographic information of the respondents was analysed using descriptive statistics which included frequency counts and percentages. Mean scores and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions. The hypothesis was tested using the t-test statistical tool, since comparisons was made between two groups. The mean scores of 2.50 or higher were interpreted as agreed and scores below 2.50 as disagreed in the research questions. If p value ≥ 0.05 , the null hypothesis was accepted as not significant, otherwise, if p value < 0.05 , the null hypothesis was rejected as significant.

3. Presentation of Results

In this section, data on gender was presented.

Table 1. Distribution of Respondents based on Gender .

Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	153	43.7
Female	197	56.3
Total	350	100.00

Table 1 shows the distribution of respondents based on gender. The number of male respondents were 153 representing (43.7%), while the female respondents were 197 representing (56.3%). This means that there were more female respondents than their male counterparts in this study.

Research Question One: What is quota system and vacancy based promotion in FCT, Abuja, Nigeria?

Table 2. The Quota System and Vacancy Based Promotion in FCT, Abuja, Nigeria. N=350

SN	Statements	Mean	SD	Decision
2	Vacancy-based promotion depends on the availability of positions.	2.95	0.986	Agreed
3	Promotion under vacancy-based system is not automatic even after meeting requirements.	2.87	0.958	Agreed
4	Vacancy-based promotion limits the number of teachers promoted at a time.	2.89	0.883	Agreed
5	Promotion delays occur when there are no available vacancies.	2.84	0.998	Agreed

6 Vacancy-based promotion means teachers can only be promoted when positions are available.	2.89	0.899	Agreed
7 The quota system ensures regular and predictable promotion opportunities.	2.92	0.984	Agreed
8 The quota system delays promotion even when teachers meet the required qualifications.	2.96	0.968	Agreed
Sectional Mean	2.90	0.954	Agreed

The table 2 shows the mean answers of 350 teachers regarding the quota system and vacancy based promotion in FCT, Abuja, Nigeria. The results indicate that all the seven items have mean score higher than the decision benchmark and the mean score of the items is 2.90 with the standard deviation of 0.954. The respondents agreed with all the items related to the quota system and vacancy based promotion. The means, where the teachers' availability for promotion depends on the position ($M = 2.95$, $SD = 0.986$); that the availability of position is not automatic even when teachers meet requirements ($M = 2.87$, $SD = 0.958$); that limited number of teachers were promoted at a time ($M = 2.89$, $SD = 0.883$); there were no available vacancies ($M = 2.84$, $SD = 0.998$); positions were available ($M = 2.89$, $SD = 0.899$); ensuring predictable promotion opportunities ($M = 2.92$, $SD = 0.984$); and delays promotion even when teachers meet the required qualifications ($M = 2.96$, $SD = 0.968$). The results suggest that in the FCT system of promotion, teachers are promoted based on the availability of vacancies, promotion is not automatic even after meeting the requirements, limited number of teachers are promoted at a time and among others.

Research Question Two: What is the impact of quota system and vacancy based promotion on mental health of male and female teachers in FCT, Abuja, Nigeria?

Table 3. The Impact of Quota System and Vacancy Based Promotion on Mental Health of Male and Female Teachers in FCT, Abuja, Nigeria.

N=350				
SN	Statements	Mean	SD	Decision
9	I experience frustration due to Vacancy-based promotion	2.68	0.867	Agreed
10	The uncertainty of promotion increase my blood pressure	3.34	0.986	Agreed
11	The recent promotion system in FCT gives me sleepless night	2.94	0.970	Agreed
12	Lack of promotion opportunities creates anxiety in me	2.98	0.969	Agreed
13	Deliberate denial of Promotion make me unstable psychological	2.68	0.968	Agreed
14	Delays in promotion put me into emotional trauma.	2.93	0.959	Agreed
	Sectional Mean	2.93	0.953	Agreed

Table 3 revealed the respondents response on the impact of quota system and vacancy based promotion on mental health of male and female teachers in FCT, Abuja, Nigeria. In general, the results show that teachers generally agree that the impact of quota system and vacancy based promotion on the mental health of teachers include frustration ($M = 2.68$, $SD = 0.867$), increase in blood pressure ($M = 3.34$, $SD = 0.986$), sleepless night (M

= 2.94, SD = 0.970), anxiety in teachers (M = 2.98, SD = 0.969), unstable psychological (M = 2.68, SD = 0.968) and emotional trauma (M = 2.93, SD = 0.959).

The mean impact of quota system and vacancy based promotion on mental health of the male and female teachers in FCT, Abuja was 2.93 which is greater than the decision rule of 2.50 with standard deviation of 0.953. This means that, when teachers are subjected to quota system and vacancy based promotion, many of them feel frustrated, develop blood pressure, trouble sleeping, anxiety and emotional trauma, and their promotions are denied.

H01: There is no significant difference in the impact of quota system and vacancy based promotion on mental health of male and female teachers in FCT, Abuja, Nigeria.

Table 4. t-test on significant difference in the impact of quota system and vacancy based promotion on mental health of male and female teachers in FCT, Abuja, Nigeria.

Gender	Number	Mean	S.D.	t-value	df	Sig(2-tailed)	Decision
Male	153	2.63	0.753	.367	348	0.060	Accepted
Female	197	3.23	1.153				

Table 4 showed the significant difference in the mean score of male and female teachers on the impact of quota system and vacancy based promotion on mental health in FCT, Abuja, Nigeria with the significant values of 0.060 (more than the 0.05 level of significance). The null hypothesis, which stated that there will be no significant difference between quota system and vacancy based promotion on the mental health of male and female teachers in FCT, Abuja, Nigeria was accepted, and the conclusion drawn was that, both the male and female teachers were negatively affected by the two promotion systems, with female teachers being the most affected.

4. Discussion of Results

The results of research question one showed that quarter system and vacancy based promotion in FCT involves the promotion of teachers based on vacancy, whereby the teacher was not automatically promoted even after fulfilling the requirements, whereby only a few teachers were promoted at a time and among others. This policy as it were was based on personal and self-centeredness just to stagnate teaches whose only benefit is promotion. This is because, many teachers at level 15 are still in the classroom teaching. For teachers who are serving in the classroom, one may wonder how is quota system and vacancy based promotion affecting them. This findings is similar to the study by Jacques, Erick, Desire, SimonDecap, Leyka, Amuli and Daniel, (2026) the found that, teachers experienced mental health as a result of delay remuneration, poor salary, lack of workshops and promotion denied. The findings is further consistent with Isaksson, Marklund and Haraldsson (2017) they found that, teachers views mental health as the effect excessive workload, poor remuneration and the perception of the society about teachers and value place on them among many others.

The findings from research question revealed that, quota system and vacancy based promotion affect teachers negatively as many teachers experience frustration, increase of blood pressure, sleepless night, anxiety, emotional trauma and denied promotion. The hypothesis one confirmed that the negative effect on teachers, such as frustration, high blood pressure, lack of sleep, anxiety, emotional distress and lack of promotion, while the

group of teachers who felt the impact most is the female group. People think that emotions are linked to their expectations and if their expectations are not met, it can result in emotional trauma and thus mental trauma. The findings of this study is related with the study of Morris, Kim, Milton and Glozier (2025) they discover that the teachers experience emotional trauma due to delay promotion, lack of encouragement from the designated authorities and poor welfare among others. As for the other side, according to the study conducted by Morris, Kim, Milton and Glozier (2025), many teachers suffered from psychological issues and other mental health issues due to job demands. In views with the consistency, similarities and correlation with findings of the present study and study of others, one can said that emotion is a sensitive aspect of human being which can be trigger by the situation or policy that infringe on people's right and efforts like the cases of quota system and vacancy based promotion in FCT, Abuja.

5. Conclusion

The study revealed that quota system and vacancy based promotion in FCT, Abuja Nigeria entails among others promoted based availability of positions; that is, when teachers are not automatically promoted after fulfilling the requirements. It further established that the effect of quota system and vacancy based promotion on teachers in FCT, Abuja entail frustration, raised blood pressure, sleepless night, anxiety and emotional trauma to the teachers. Recommendations

The following recommendations were made based on the findings of the study.

1. The stakeholders especially the Nigeria Union of Teachers FCT branch (NUT) should rise and reject in totality quota system and vacancy based promotion for teachers as there is no issue of vacancy in the classroom.
2. Teachers at all level should always crying out when their right is infringe on and ensure they reclaimed the right in order to prevent frustration and other psychological problems. More so, the Federal Government should provide adequate welfare for teachers thereby removing quota system and vacancy based promotion in order to strengthen their psychological well-being.

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