

# Organizational Correlates of Secondary Schools Teachers' Job Commitment in Southern Senatorial District of Cross River State, Nigeria

WE Ekpiken\* and ON Ogban

Department of Educational Administration and Planning, University of Calabar, Calabar, Nigeria.

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The study was to investigate organizational correlates of secondary school teachers' job commitment in Southern Senatorial District of Cross River State in Nigeria. Two null hypotheses were generated to guide the study. The research design adopted was ex-post facto. The study sample of two hundred and eighty (280) teachers was drawn using a simple random sampling technique from seventy-four (74) public secondary schools in Southern Senatorial District of Cross River State. The instrument used for data collection was a 4-item point scale (Likert type). Data obtained were analyzed using Pearson product moment correlation analysis to test the formulated hypotheses at the 0.05 level of significance. The findings of this study revealed that principals' leadership style, teachers' participatory roles in the decision-making process significantly relate to teachers' job commitment. Thus the study recommended that school administrators should adopt an acceptable leadership style in the school system, so as to carry everybody along. That teachers should always be motivated to play an active role during meetings, deliberations and other decision-making processes.

**Key words:** Secondary schools, Organizational correlates, Teachers' job commitment.

## INTRODUCTION

The whole business of teaching and learning in school is to make learners better informed citizens who will be equipped to transform their society. For learners to achieve this success, the most important factor is the teacher. The role of teachers in the educational process is central to teacher education program because they remain the managers of knowledge (Lassa, 2000). Buttressing this assertion, Adegbite (2003) points out that the development of a student in terms of the quality of education he receives depends largely on the quality of the teacher to whom he is exposed to. The implication of this is that teachers and teacher education programs are the most important factors in the teaching-learning process. For effective teacher education and teaching-learning activity, other factors that can be considered include; principals' leadership, teachers' participatory roles in the decision-making process. The contribution of education to national development lies in the quality and quantity of teachers made available to the people by the government and other stakeholders in education. The federal government states that the purpose of teachers' education is "to produce highly motivated, conscious and efficient classroom teachers for all levels of our educational system and to enhance their commitment to national objectives

at all levels (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2004). Teachers' commitment to national objectives here refers to the achievement of the national objectives at all levels. Thus the teacher is the main actor in bringing about desired changes in the school.

It is worthy to note that any nation which hopes to achieve maximum results from its investment in education should consider the professional development of teachers as a major priority. Professional development in this context according to Perry (1980) implies the growth of individual teachers in their lives, the strengthening of their confidence, sharpening of their knowledge in what they teach. Based on this, teachers need to be properly managed and equipped for good instructional delivery. The task of teaching is a very complex one. This complexity makes it difficult for education to generally agree on who a committed teacher is. Commitment in teaching in this wise requires well-trained and motivated teachers. Therefore, teachers are generally expected to contribute to the improvement of the society and to participate in its activities. Consequently, they deserve to be given a conducive working atmosphere to operate optimally.

Researchers in education and school leaders have been pondering over the reason why teachers are not committed in secondary schools and possible ways of reducing or eradicating such ugly scenario so that teachers would be highly committed to their jobs. However, scholars have also attributed the problems with factors such as organizational correlates.

According to them, organizational correlates lead to serious deteriorating conditions, which may not allow teachers to be highly committed. Such correlates as envisaged in the study include principals' leadership style, teachers' participatory role in the decision-making process, teachers' in-service training and availability of school material resources (Lezotte & Snyder, 2013). Conversely, high or adequate organizational incentives are concerned with producing positive conditions, which motivate the hearts of educators, administrators and other workers alike to be diligent (Arop, 2003). Mgbekem (2002) holds the view that, to motivate a person to work harder means to cause him/her to do desirable things for the organization. According to him, it also involves attempts made by organizational leaders to cause employees in the organization to put up positive work-behavior, which enhances maximization of production. This supports the fact that, other school correlates play dominant roles in the school system. The American English Dictionary (2000) saw an organization as a group whose members work together for a shared purpose in a continuing way. According to Wikipedia (2013), an organization is a group of human beings working together towards the attainment of certain common objectives. Hornby (2012) saw a correlate as that which is likely to change or that which is to bring about a relationship. Concise Oxford English Dictionary (2012) saw correlates as things which have relationships in which one thing affects or depends on another. Estmond and Rosentengel (2008) held that organizational correlates are those distinct features that every organization such as school system possesses that could make or mar its achievement of organizational goals. Commitment, according to Lacey in Becker and Red (1999), is the investment in a particular career and in this case, teaching. Hornby (1998) defined commitment as a state of being willing to give a lot of time, work, and energy to something. Teachers' job commitment here is used to describe the readiness and willingness on the part of those who are engaged in instructional delivery. Lezotte and Snyder (2013) put it that organizational correlates are common characteristics that every organization, such as the schools shares.

Administrators of secondary schools have faced allegations of falling standard of education, judging from the mass failure of students in their various external examinations (Ozurumba & Ebuara, 2002). Moreso, teachers shared the blame on the poor quality of the output of the school system in recent years due to their non-commitment in the teaching and learning environment. Teachers have been accused of abandoning their classrooms for selfish interests like to engage in trading, seeking political appointments and part-time contractors which have reduced their input as far as education production is concerned. The low productivity of teachers in schools as asserted by Akuegwu (2003) pointed to poor human resource management in our schools. This implies that a significant relationship might exist between principals' management of human resources and teachers' productivity. This shows that in any education venture, the way and manner a teacher is managed determines his/her level of commitment. So, the human relations approach should be adopted. The problem of low productivity of teachers in the education enterprise has also been attributed with absenteeism, lateness

to work and classes, lack of seriousness on duty, engaging in private business to the detriment of their primary assignment and lack of commitment to duty (Ukpong & Ekpoh, 2011).

High commitment occurs when the basic needs of teachers are given due consideration by the managers of the organization. Teachers are often committed to their jobs, when they are in addition to fulfilling their condition of service, due respect, love and recognition as human beings are given to them. In other words, teachers should be allowed full participation in the planning and the decision-making process in the system. The observation is that teachers show positive attitude in their workplace when they know that their managers or principals give them equal justice and show no favoritism and discrimination.

### 1.1 Statement of the problem

The current unsteady trend in secondary school students' academic achievement where students perform poorly generally has made concerned parents and educationists generally worried. The poor academic achievement has been noticed in the senior secondary school external examinations of the past recent years. Education attainment in secondary schools cannot be achieved without committed teachers, since they are important elements in the hands of school administrators in achieving the stated educational goals and objectives. The success or failure of any school system lies solidly in the teachers' job commitment. Failure to meet the teachers' demands by the administrators results in discontention, disloyalty, discouragement, truancy, redundancy, absenteeism and lack of commitment in the workplace. Nowadays, it is viewed that teachers' job commitment is contingent upon how they perceive the administration, taking other correlates into consideration. This calls to question "whether teachers are committed to their job." Measures such as workshops and seminars have been put in place to ensure conducive learning environment, but, teachers are still found wanting in the area. The researchers in carrying out this study hope that it may help to find out whether the principal's leadership style (autocratic), non-involvement in decision-making have any relationship with secondary school teachers' job commitment in Southern Senatorial District of Cross River State, Nigeria.

### 1.2 Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study is to investigate the relationship between principals' leadership style and teachers' job commitment; Examine how teachers' participation roles in the decision-making process relate to their job commitment.

### 1.3 Research questions

1. How does principals' leadership style relate to teachers' job commitment?
2. What type of relationship exists between teachers' participatory roles in the decision-making process and their job commitment?

### 1.4 Statement of hypotheses

1. There is no significant relationship between principals' leadership style and teachers' job commitment.
2. Teachers' participatory roles in the decision-making process does not significantly relate to their job commitment.

**Table 1:** Pearson’s product moment correlation analysis of the relationship between principals’ leadership style and teachers’ job commitment in terms of curricular activities and extra-curricular activities (n-280)

	$\Sigma X$	$\Sigma X^2$		
Variables	$\Sigma Y$	$\Sigma Y^2$	$\Sigma XY$	$r_{xy}$
Leadership style (X)	6716	164968		
Curricular activities (Y <sub>1</sub> )	7036	176890	168942	0.31*
Extra-curricular activities (Y <sub>2</sub> )	6966	174080	164968	0.37*

\* p <0.05 df = 278, critical r = 0.196

Source: Fieldwork, 2013

**Table 2:** Pearson’s product moment correlation analysis of the relationship between teachers’ participatory roles in decision-making and their job commitment in terms of curricular activities and extra-curricular activities (n-280)

	$\Sigma X$	$\Sigma X^2$		
Variables	$\Sigma Y$	$\Sigma Y^2$	$\Sigma XY$	$r_{xy}$
Participation in decision-making (X)	4919	87721		
Curricular activities (Y <sub>1</sub> )	7036	176890	123731	0.37*
Extra-curricular activities (Y <sub>2</sub> )	6966	174080	122808	0.43

\* p <0.05 df = 278, critical r = 0.196

Source: Fieldwork, 2013

**2.0 METHODOLOGY**

The study adopted the ex-post facto design. The design is best suited for the study because the level of teachers’ commitment has already been observed in the study area and cannot be further manipulated by the researchers. The population of the study consisted of 2,405 teachers in 74 public secondary schools in the study area. The stratified sampling technique was used to select 280 teachers from 14 secondary schools for the study. An instrument was developed by the researchers for data collection, titled “Organizational Correlates and Teachers’ Job Commitment Questionnaire (OCTJCO)”. The instrument was divided into two sections. Section ‘A’ elicited information on the personal data of respondents such as the name of school, size, location, sex, age, teaching experience and rank. Section ‘B’ elicited information on organizational correlates (principals’ leadership style, participation in and decision-making). The instrument was face-validated by two experts in test and measurement. The trial test and re-trial was done using (30) secondary school teachers in two public secondary schools that were not part of the study sample. The questionnaire was administered to the teachers simultaneously. Two weeks later, the questionnaire was administered to the same teachers. The scores of the response from the two questionnaires were correlated using Pearson product moment correlation analysis. The correlation coefficient gave a reliability estimate between 0.77 and 0.91.

**3.0 DISCUSSIONS**

The finding of the study showed that there is a significant positive relationship between the leadership style exhibited by the principals and the job commitment of their teachers. This implies that principals who put on a democratic leadership style have their teachers more committed to the job than principals with autocratic leadership style. Also, it is not in all occasions that the principal should exhibit the democratic leadership behavior. When the situation demands it, the principal can adopt any other form of leadership style to enable him manage the group at that moment. This finding is in agreement with the finding arrived at by Eyong (2003), who conducted a study on the influence of principals’ leadership style on teachers’ performance and found out that, a principal who is able to communicate effectively with his/her subordinates is able to create an atmosphere of approval and security in which subordinates feel free and without fear relate well. This finding is also in line with the finding obtained by Etor (2002) who carried out a study in order to find out the relationship between principals’ supervisory effectiveness and teachers’ work performance in secondary schools in Cross River State. The author discovered that there is a significant influence of principals’ human relations skill in overall teachers’ work performance; subject matter mastery is significantly influenced by principals’ level of commitment to the professional growth of teachers. This shows the need for principals of schools to exhibit a democratic leadership so as to carry teachers along, create friendly atmosphere, elicit teachers’ motivation to work

and accept constructive criticisms and corrections from them in order to enhance their job commitment.

This study found out that there is a significant positive relationship between teachers' participation roles in decision-making and their job commitment. This implies that teachers' active involvement in the school decision-making process gives a deep sense of belonging. It was found out that teachers reported high participation in decision-making when guiding students in their academic progress and future career choice, but less participation in decision-making on development and operation of the school budget, matters of school governance and school personal issues. Such partial involvement of teachers, kill their interests, as such the need for full involvement. This finding is in line with the finding obtained by Okure (2000) who found out that there exists a significant relationship between teachers' participatory role in decision-making and their level of job commitment. The finding also corroborates the finding by Edem (2007) who contended that using team work or sharing responsibilities to motivate teachers and assure high morale, must not be interpreted to mean "Administration by the gang".

Decision-making is a function of group members, for those who participate in making them will feel more committed to carrying them out, than those who did not participate in decision making. On the other hand, leaders who do not involve employees in decision-making will always experience the greatest conflicts from them. This finding is also in line with the study of Uchendu (2003) who conducted a study to find out the influence of organizational climate on secondary school teachers' job performance in Cross River State and discovered that there exists a significant relationship between teachers' perception of their involvement in decision making and their job commitment. However, teachers need to be carried along in decision making.

#### 4.1 CONCLUSION

Premised on the findings of the study from the analysis of the hypotheses, there are prevalent correlates which tend to mar or improve teachers' job commitment especially in the secondary school system. Correlates such as leadership, decision-making when mismanaged weigh down teachers' commitment. On the other way round, teachers can only be committed where there exists proficiency by the administrators in managing the existing correlates for quality assurance. Invariably, all hands must be on deck. Principals of secondary schools need to be democratic in nature to carry majority of their subordinates along. In addition, teachers' commitment at this point in time requires their active involvement in decision-making in achieving educational goals and objectives.

#### 4.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

As a consequence of the above findings and conclusion, it was recommended that school administrators should adopt an acceptable leadership style in the school system, so as to carry everybody along. This helps them to overcome conflicts, stress and other problems that might have occurred in the school. There is a need for regular leadership training workshops to be organized for school administrators. Teachers should always be motivated to play an active role during meetings, deliberations and other decision-making processes. Teachers are advised to put in their best despite the poor conditions of service. They need to be mindful of the fact that, they are the nation's builders.

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