

LEVEL OF TEACHER COMMITMENT IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS

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Abstract

The role of teachers in promoting the quality of education in Katsina State is critical. This is because no a particular state can grow beyond the quality of its teachers. Allocation of a top priority to the determination of an accurate level of teacher commitment is very relevant and significant. The main objective of this paper is to determine the level of teacher commitment in Funtua Local Government Public Secondary Schools, Katsina State. The study population comprised of all the 14 public secondary schools in Funtua, Katsina State. Ten schools out of the total 14 schools were randomly sampled for the study using Morgan and Krejcie's. Survey design was employed to carry out the research. Teacher Commitment Questionnaire (TCQ) with eighteen (9) items which was developed by Allen (1997) was adopted to collect data from the respondents. The collected data were then analyzed using descriptive statistics. It was found that moderate level of teacher commitment ($M=2.75$, $SD=0.41$) existed in Funtua, Katsina State. The study was summarized and concluded. Implications for theories and practice were discussed and recommendations were proposed for future researches.

Keywords: *Level of Teacher Commitment, Public Secondary School*

Abstrak

Peranan guru dalam mempromosikan kualiti pendidikan di Negeri Katsina adalah kritikal. Ini kerana tiada negeri tertentu yang boleh berkembang melangkaui kualiti gurunya. Peruntukan keutamaan teratas kepada penentuan tahap komitmen guru yang tepat adalah sangat relevan dan signifikan. Objektif utama kajian ini adalah untuk menentukan tahap komitmen guru di Sekolah Menengah Awam Kerajaan Tempatan Funtua, Negeri Katsina. Penduduk kajian terdiri daripada kesemua 14 sekolah menengah awam di Funtua, Negeri Katsina. Sepuluh sekolah daripada jumlah keseluruhan 14 sekolah telah disampel secara rawak untuk kajian menggunakan Morgan dan Krejcie's. Reka bentuk kaji selidik telah digunakan untuk menjalankan penyelidikan. Soal Selidik Komitmen Guru (TCQ) dengan lapan belas (9) perkara yang dibangunkan oleh Allen (1997) telah diterima pakai untuk mengumpul data daripada responden. Data yang dikumpul kemudiannya dianalisis menggunakan statistik deskriptif. Didapati bahawa tahap komitmen guru yang sederhana ($M=2.75$, $SD=0.41$) wujud di Funtua, Negeri Katsina. Kajian ini telah diringkaskan dan dimuktamadkan. Implikasi terhadap teori dan amalan telah dibincangkan dan cadangan telah dicadangkan untuk penyelidikan masa depan.

Kata kunci: Tahap Komitmen Guru, Sekolah Menengah Awam

INTRODUCTION

The role of teachers in improving the quality of education is critical worldwide. Teacher commitment has been comprehensively defined by placing it within larger dimensions such as organization, occupation, and students (Firestone and Pennell, 1993) and operationalized as a global concept representing the extent of individual effort (Rowan, 1990b). Teacher commitment to a school has been displayed by the teachers trying to get involved in matters related to their schools and commitment to students has been represented by the extent to which teachers discuss students' work with them. Lee and Smith (1996) found that students attain more when their teachers take collective responsibility for students' learning.

However, in 1991, Meyer and Allen suggested that commitment is more accurately depicted through understanding an individual's desire, need, and obligation to remain with the organization. Meyer, Stanley, Herscovitch and Topolnytsky (2002) as cited by Aji (2017), considered affective, continuance, and normative commitment to be components and not different types of commitment. Utilizing these three components of organizational commitment, Meyer and Allen (1997) defined that a "committed employee is one who stays with the organization through thick and thin, attend work regularly, put in a full day, protect organization assets, and share organization goals". According to Powell and Meyer (2004), organizational commitment refers to the extent to which employees identify with their organization and the managerial goals of the organization, including process and procedures defining the work, and subsequently showing a willingness to devote effort, participate in decision making process and assume organizational values.

In 1982, Mowday et al proposed the view that organizational commitment is an affective bond that the employee feels towards his organization. Their view point was that organizational commitment is characterized by: A strong belief and acceptance of organizational values and goals, Willingness to exert considerable effort on behalf of the organization and strong desire to maintain organization membership (Mowday *et al.*, 1982).

PROBLEM STATEMENT

This study was ignited by Katsina state government in 2017 when 22,000 teachers were sacked for failing competency test. It was believed to be due to lack of empowerment, especially amongst the secondary school teachers (Katsina State Ministry of Education, 2018). Their pays were not encouraging enough to make them commit to their jobs. They were not empowered in terms of their professional development, facilities procurement and personal welfares. That made them not properly settled and ready to do their various jobs. The state empowerment is majorly at tertiary level where lecturers were released frequently to further their studies (Tertiary Education Training Fund (TETFUND), Katsina, 2018).

The shortages of teachers in the state secondary schools led to crowded classes above the official Student Teacher Ratio (STR) and therefore poor teacher morale, low levels of learning, and student dropout. In 2017/2018, the Annual School Censuses (ASC) indicated that the STR in Junior and Senior Schools stood at 68:1 and 46:1 respectively (Katsina State Ministry of Education, 2018). Both the ratios were not in line with the national official student-teacher ratio of 40:1 and therefore, the implication was that the teachers were overloaded without being empowered which led to poor teaching and learning atmosphere. Therefore, this paper aims at the determination of a true level of teacher empowerment in the entire public secondary schools of Funtua Local Government, Katsina state.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The main objective of this paper is to determine the level of teacher commitment in Funtua, Katsina State.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The finding of the paper will provide cogent and enough empirical evidence concerning the level of teacher commitment in Funtua, Katsina State and also help future researches in terms of their references.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Concept of Teacher Commitment

The conceptual definition of teacher commitment differs from among researchers. This is because of the composite and diverse nature of the concept. According to Park (1998), commitment has been identified in various methods. Commitment has a significant implication for teachers. Rowan, (1990b), and Firestone and Pennell (1993) stated that teachers' commitment varies according to the purposes they are committed to. That is, teachers can be committed to teaching itself, to their school organizations, or to their students collectively or individually. Teacher commitment to a school has been displayed by the teachers trying to get involved in matters related to their schools and commitment to students has been represented by the extent to which teachers discuss students' work with them. Studying commitment is complicated by the lack of agreement concerning how to conceptualize and measure the concept (Mowday, Porter, and Steers, 1982).

A straight forward definition given by Dey (2011) is that organizational commitment is the level of attachment, both emotionally and functionally, to one's current place of employment. Dahiru (2017) stated that organizational commitment is considered to be a two split concept, delineated into the attitudinal and behavioral perspectives. According to Mowday *et al.*, (1982) the description of these two split concepts are as follows: (i) attitudinal commitment concentrates on the process by which people come to think about their connection with the organization. In numerous ways it can be thought of as a mind set in which individuals study the extent to which their own values and goals are compatible with those of the organization. (ii) Behavioral commitment relates to the process whereby individuals become institutionalized into a certain organization, they work in pursuance of the organizational goals, they accept the organization's processes and procedures and they learn to deal with problems arising out of the work processes and expected outcomes.

Types/Dimensions of Teacher Commitment

Meyer and Allen (1991) who identified three types of commitment as follows:

Affective Commitment

This is defined as the emotional attachment, identification, and involvement that an employee has with its organization and goals (Meyer and Allen, 1993; O'Reilly and Chatman). James (2014) further characterized affective commitment by three factors: (a) Belief in and acceptance of the organization's goals and values, (b) A willingness to focus effort on helping the organization to achieve its goals, (c) A desire to maintain organizational membership. Mowday et al (1982) cited by James (2014) further stated that affective communication is "when the employee identifies with a particular organization and its goals in order to maintain membership to facilitate the goal. Meyer and Allen (1997) continued to say that employees retain membership out of choice and this is their commitment to the organization.

Continuance Commitment

This is the willingness to remain in an organization because of the investment that the employee has with “nontransferable” investments. Nontransferable investment includes things such as retirement, relationships with other employees, or things that are special to the organization (Reichers, 1985).

Continuance commitment also includes factors such as years of employment or benefits that the employee may receive that are unique to the organization (James, 2014). Meyer and Allen (1997) further explain that employees who share continuance commitment with their employer often make it very difficult for an employee to leave the organization.

Normative Commitment

Bolon (1993) defined normative commitment a set of believes that persons have to the organization or their feeling of obligation to their workplace. It is perceived to be the extent to which a teacher dedicates his loyalty and absolute duty to his school. In 1982, Weiner discussed normative commitment as being a “generalized value of loyalty and duty”. James (2014) cited Meyer and Allen (1991) who supported this type of commitment prior to Bolon’s definition, with their definition of normative commitment being “a feeling of obligation”. It is argued that normative commitment is only natural due to the way we are raised in society. Normative commitment can be explained by other commitments such as marriage, family, religion, etc. So, when it comes to one’s commitment to their place of employment, they often feel like they have a moral obligation to the organization (Wiener, 1982).

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design:

This paper employed the use of survey design to determine the level of teacher commitment in Funtua, Katsina State. The study was plotted on survey design because it was in conformity with the characteristics of the survey research observed by Kerlinger (1986).

Population and Sampling:

The population of the study comprised of all the 14 Public Secondary Schools of Funtua, Katsina state with 307 total population of teacher (ZEQA Funtua, 2018). The researcher randomly selected the sample of the schools and the teachers using Morgan and Krejcie’s (1971) table of determining sample size, just to simplify and justify the work. Total number of Public Secondary Schools in Funtua Local Government were 14 and 10 were sampled. Total number of Public Secondary School teachers in Funtua Local Government was 307 and 169 were sampled.

Instrumentation:

The instrument (Teacher Commitment Questionnaire) used was adopted from Allen (1997) to collect data from the respondents of the research. The instrument had a total number of eighteen (18) items which were measured using four rating scales i.e. Strongly Disagree (1), Disagree (2), Agree (3) and Strongly Agree (4) respectively. The research instrument was validated by subjecting it to expert review in Katsina Polytechnics and Ahmad Bello University Zaria.

The reliability of the instrument was ascertained through a test re-test which was carried out for a small number of the respondents and the outcome was found reliable. In addition, the instrument was adopted for the reason that majority of researchers on school effectiveness have proven it reliable (Marzano, 2000; Saleem, 2012). Allen (1997) who developed the instrument was also the proponent of teacher commitment dimensions which the instrument must measure to achieve the research objective.

The researcher distributed and collected the instrument to and from the respondents personally and with the help of a trained research assistant.

METHOD OF DATA ANALYSIS:

The data collected from the respondents were analyzed using descriptive statistics to describe the respondent information and to determine the level of the research variable.

FINDINGS

Respondents Demography of the Respondents

Findings revealed that 145 teachers participated in the study. Out of the total 145 number of the respondents, 113 (77.9%) of the teachers were male. While 30 (20.7%) of the teachers were female. So, this indicates that male teachers were far more than their counterparts in Funtua public secondary schools. The results further shows that 41 (28.3%) of the teachers had Masters' Degrees, 71 (49.0%) had Bsc/Bed Degrees and 32 (22.1%) had NCE. Therefore, this indicates that most of the respondents had Bsc/Bed certificates. The table also shows that 47 (32.4%) of the respondents had 1-5 teaching experience; 43 (29.7%) had 6-10 teaching experience and 49 (33.8%) had 11 above teaching experience. So, this explains that most of the teachers had 11 above teaching experience.

LEVEL OF TEACHER COMMITMENT

Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation for Items Related to Teacher Commitment

Items	Construct	Mean	S.D	Level
TC1	I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career with this school	2.86	1.02	
TC2	I feel a strong sense of "belonging" to my school	2.90	0.78	
TC3	I really feel as if this department's problems are my own	2.92	0.94	
TC4	I feel "emotionally attached" to this school	2.86	0.85	
TC5	I feel like "part of the family" at my school	2.99	0.91	
TC6	This school has a great deal of personal meaning to me	3.01	0.82	
TC7	Right now, staying with my school is a matter of necessity as much as desire.	2.93	0.80	
TC8	It would be very hard for me to leave my school right now, even if I wanted to.	2.54	1.05	
TC9	Too much of my life would be disrupted if I decided to leave my school now	2.46	0.97	
TC10	I feel that I have too few options to consider leaving this school.	2.58	0.89	
TC11	If I had not already put so much of myself into this school, I might consider working elsewhere	2.63	0.94	
TC12	One of the few negative consequences of leaving this school would be the scarcity of available alternatives	2.50	0.96	
TC13	I do not feel any obligation to remain with my current colleagues	2.43	0.98	
TC14	Even if it were to my advantage, I do not feel it would be right to leave my school now	2.64	0.89	
TC15	I would feel guilty if I leave my school now	2.42	0.98	
TC16	This institution deserves my loyalty	3.11	0.54	

TC17	I would not leave my school right now because I have a sense of obligation to the people in it.	2.84	0.90	
TC18	I owe a great deal to my school	2.91	0.86	
Overall Average Mean Score of Teacher Commitment		2.75	0.41	Mode rate

The above Table 1 indicates that TC item 16 “Right now, staying with my school is a matter of necessity as much as desire” had the highest mean score (M=3.11, SD=0.85). This means that Katsina State teachers consider it as a matter of compulsion to stay with their schools as much as they desire. This is possible due to the fact that the teachers had no alternative job when they leave. However, the table shows that TC item 13 “I feel emotionally attached to this school” had the lowest mean score (M=2.43, SD=0.98). Therefore, this explains that Katsina State teachers have no feeling of emotional attachment to their various schools. This is in support of the above TC item 16 that the teachers can stay with their schools without being emotionally attached to the schools. On the overall, teacher commitment in public secondary schools of Katsina State is on the moderate level with reference to its average mean score (M=2.75, SD=0.41).

DISCUSSIONS

On the overall, teacher commitment in public secondary schools of Funtua, Katsina State was found to be moderate with reference to its overall average mean score (M=2.75, SD=0.41) as shown in the results of Table 1. Thus, it can be derived that teachers in public secondary schools of Katsina State are committing moderately to their jobs. Therefore, Katsina State Government needs to improve on its commendable effort to make the teachers commit themselves, more than moderate, to their various assignments. The commitment improving factors should be characterized by upward review of the teachers’ remuneration, in-service studies, better social welfare, management recognition and jobs’ performance authority. Perhaps the inadequacies of facilities such as inadequate infrastructure, poor working conditions, low pay and high turnover rates all collectively contribute to the overall moderate level of the teacher commitment to their respective schools.

The findings of this paper are in conjunction with some prior studies. Aji (2017) found that lecturers’ overall organizational commitment was moderate. Although as educators, they are aware of the critical nature of their career in nation building where high commitment is expected and necessary, yet their commitment to their organizations is moderate. Perhaps, he said that the inadequacies of facilities in many Nigerian HEIs such as inadequate infrastructure, poor working conditions, low pay and high turnover rates all collectively contribute to the overall moderate level of commitment to their respective institutions. It was also sourced from Chebet (2013) who carried out a research with an objective to determine the level of teacher commitment on school performance in Bomet County, Kenya. His findings showed that teachers’ commitment level was at 67% which was a high level.

IMPLICATIONS

The finding of the research confirms that a moderate level of teacher commitment existed in Funtua, Katsina state. It appears to be in line with the existing literature on the effect of organizational commitment as referred to in the impetus researches just made mentioned above. Clearly, this paper shows that teacher commitment level in Funtua, Katsina state can be determined by a better attendance to the commitment inputs. These inputs include making teachers’ job meaningful; impacting; self-efficacy; having status; autonomous; competent and professionally growing.

The paper also has some implications for practice as it provides policy makers, administrators and practitioners with policy direction regarding the empirical evidence on teachers’ commitment among public secondary schools of Funtua, Katsina State. It establishes that more efforts need to be made in

Funtua public secondary schools to improve the teacher commitment level. Effective and efficient school structures, teamwork, autonomy and participatory leadership in the schools need to be emphasized. The paper finding also indicates that the schools should engage their teachers in decisions that are relevant to their work and career path. This will make them feel committed, thereby lifting the level of the teachers' empowerment in the local government. They should further sustain the teachers' professional growth and perception of self-efficacy through various training opportunities.

To obtain more consistent and authenticated findings, the researcher recommends that future studies should cover the entire Katsina state public secondary schools and other states of Nigeria. Moreover, it will be beneficial to future researchers to include private schools so as to get more pervasive results and generalizations with regard to the research variable.

This paper used questionnaire instrument for data collection. So since self-reported data are sensitive to probable sources of bias, future researchers should use other data collecting instruments to collect data from their respondents in more objective ways. Future studies should widen their investigations on this paper's variable to include teachers at other levels of education system like primary and tertiary levels. This may help in proving adoptable generalization outside the present research context. Finally, further studies should include more demographic data to find out if teachers felt more committed under different settings.

CONCLUSIONS

The result from the research indicates that the level of teacher commitment in Funtua local government, Katsina State was found moderate ($M=2.75$, $SD=0.41$). Therefore, the paper hereby concludes that teachers' work should be characterized by meaning; impact; self-efficacy; status; autonomy; competence and professional growth so as to promote to a higher level the teacher commitment in the local government.

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