

Synoptic Analysis: Teachers' Commitment in Nigeria

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Keywords:

Teachers' Commitment,
Secondary School, Synoptic
Analysis

ABSTRACT

This study attempts to analyse the extent of teachers' commitment among secondary schools of Zamfara State, Nigeria. The study was designed as descriptive research. Population of the study consisted of 28 Public Secondary Schools in Gusau Local Government Area of Zamfara State with a total number of 367 in-service teachers. From the population of the study, 19 Public Secondary Schools were sampled, wherein 190 teachers were extracted as participants in the study through simple random sampling technique using Morgan and Krejcie's (1971) table of determining sample size. A structured questionnaire titled 'Teacher Commitment Questionnaire' with 15 items developed by Allen (1997) which was constructed on a 4-point Likert scale was employed as an instrument for data collection. Data analysis was made through descriptive statistics using mean and standard deviation. The paper portrayed that, teachers' commitment towards teaching profession among public secondary schools of Zamfara State was on moderate extent with reference to its average mean value of (M=2.62, SD=1.61). This paper recommends that, in order to improve teachers' commitment, more efforts should be offered by the stakeholders in education sector for ensuring a positive adjustment of successful course delivery of teachers and most importantly the academic achievement of the learners.

INTRODUCTION

Education has been considered as a crucial tool created to promote positive social adjustment and rapid progress in countries and nations around the world, particularly in terms of socio-economic, scientific and technological advancement (Lawal, 2021). Ideally, teachers are the primary players in teaching and learning processes and all other educational activities, thus giving them a great deal of official responsibilities to ensure the smooth running of the educational system (Lima & Allida, 2021; Getahun et al., 2016). Kotzé & Nel (2020) explain that commitment is a psychological state and set of behaviors that binds an employee and their employer to work together for the benefit of their organization or institution. Professional dedication has been highlighted as one of the most critical attitudes of an employee, which reflects their positive or negative attitude and physical actions in their workplace (Robbins & Judge, 2013). As reported by Abu Siri et al. (2020), commitment can be understood as the mental framework and behaviors of members towards achieving the original aims and objectives of a particular institution or organization. Commitment binds an individual or group to cultivate

loyalty, dedication and enthusiasm for their job duties to assist the organisation in achieving its goals, policies, and vision (Aisyah, 2019; De Massis et al., 2014).

Aranki et al. (2019) emphasized that commitment involves an employee's level of dedication and allegiance to an organization. Therefore, commitment is a key indicator of how well and how quickly employees fulfill their duties. Particularly, teachers' dedication to their profession is a systematic practice that allows them to be committed and productive by utilizing their knowledge, skills, and experiences in a successful educational journey, ranging from classroom instruction and curriculum implementation to extracurricular activities, all within the framework of the school environment (Ma, 2022). Akoto & Allida (2018) highlighted that teachers' commitment is a major dedication that plays a key role in achieving school goals, objectives, mission, vision, and educational reform efforts, as well as in the effective implementation of curriculum content to create a productive society. Onukwu et al. (2020) perceived teachers' commitment as the willingness and readiness of teachers to contribute to teaching and learning activities that can lead to an effective and successful course delivery, fulfilling their professional duties, and most importantly, producing positive learning outcomes for students.

Dahiru & Jafar (2020) asserted that teacher commitment is the combination of emotional and productive readiness on the part of teachers to contribute to the attainment of the school's objectives. Similarly, Demir et al. (2015) asserted that a committed teacher is a highly trained and well-educated member of a school system who is dedicated to fulfilling their duties professionally. Teachers' dedication in the educational system is of utmost importance for determining the level of job satisfaction, emotional connection, personality identification, and overall involvement of teachers in the teaching profession and its goals (Lawal, 2021). Therefore, the existing literature on teachers' commitment revealed that many instructional teachers had a tendency to dedicate the least amount of commitment to teaching those who were below average. This attitude appears to have had a detrimental effect on the successful teaching and learning of instructions as necessary (Aina, 2012). Zamfara state has been one of the most educationally disadvantaged states in Nigeria. In other words, education has been neglected in the state (Zamfara State Government: Education Sector Medium Term Sector Strategy, 2017).

Similarly, in the Gusau Local Government (the geographical area of the present study), only 53.55% of teachers were certified to teach, while the remaining 46.45% were not qualified to teach in a formal school setting, and their professional teaching dedication was found to be low (Arewa Research and Development Project, 2019). While numerous prior research studies have been conducted in various states of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, very few, if any, authoritative research works have been conducted specifically in relation to Zamfara State. This study therefore seeks to fill the literature gap by examining the level of teachers' commitment in Zamfara state, Nigeria. This study would be of great significance to policy-makers in the education sector, school administrators, and government education-related entities, as it would provide them with a reliable and authoritative measure of the empirical evidence on the level of teachers' commitment in public secondary schools of Zamfara State.

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This study addresses a critical gap in the existing literature by investigating the level of teachers' commitment in Zamfara State, Nigeria. The primary objective is to analyze the extent of teachers' commitment within public secondary schools in the state. The research is poised to offer valuable insights for policy-makers in the education sector, school administrators, and government entities involved in education. By providing a reliable and authoritative measure of empirical evidence, this study aims to contribute essential information that can inform decisions and strategies related to enhancing teachers' commitment in public secondary schools in Zamfara State.

METHOD

The research design employed for this study was a descriptive survey design, chosen to align with the characteristics of survey research. The population of the study encompassed 28 Public

Secondary Schools in Gusau Local Government Area of Zamfara State, housing a total of 367 in-service classroom teachers. Utilizing a simple random sampling technique based on Morgan and Krejcie's (1971) table for determining sample size, 19 public secondary schools were selected, and 190 teachers were sampled as participants in the study. To ensure data accuracy and reliability, a structured 'Teacher Commitment Questionnaire (TCQ)' was utilized. The questionnaire, consisting of 15 items, was developed by Allen (1997) and implemented on a 4-point Likert scale ranging from 1. Strongly Disagree to 4. Strongly Agree. A reliability test was conducted, yielding a reliability index of 0.65 through a test re-test on a small subset of respondents before the main research activities commenced. The adoption of this instrument was grounded in its acceptance and recognition as an international standard by numerous researchers (Dahiru, 2017).

Method of Data Analysis

Data analysis was made through descriptive statistics using mean and standard deviation. The statistical values of the constructs of the research variable were determined using Dahiru & Almustapha (2022) mean score interpretation table as shown below:

Table 1
Mean Score Value Interpretation

Mean Value	Level
1.00-2.33	Low
2.34-3.66	Moderate
3.67-5.00	High

RESULTS

Table 2
Descriptive Analysis of the Constructs of Teachers' Commitment

Statements/Constructs	Mean	SD	Extent
TC1 I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career with this school or any secondary school I found myself	2.14	1.46	Low
TC2 I have a strong sense of belonging to my school	2.96	1.76	Moderate
TC3 I really feel as if this school's problems are my own physically and cognitively	2.95	1.72	Moderate
TC4 I am emotionally attached to this school	2.89	1.07	Moderate
TC5 I am satisfied with my current salary and all other remuneration	1.34	1.16	Low
TC6 This school has a great deal of personal meaning for me	2.69	1.64	Moderate
TC7 Right now, staying with my school is a matter of necessity as much as desire	2.75	1.66	Moderate
TC8 It would be very hard for me to leave my school right now, even if I wanted to	2.93	1.71	Moderate
TC9 I can bear to take the responsibilities of converting scientific theories into physical practice/experimentation in my class instructions, for the academic achievement of my students	1.47	1.21	Low
TC10 I can sacrifice to provide necessary instructional materials for the benefit of my student	3.04	1.74	Moderate
TC11 If I had not already put so much of myself into this school, I might consider working elsewhere in public parastatals	3.28	1.81	Moderate
TC12 One of the few negative consequences of leaving this school would be the scarcity of available alternatives	3.02	1.74	Moderate
TC13 I do not feel any obligation to remain with my current colleagues	1.77	1.33	Low
TC14 Even if it were to my advantage, I do not feel it would be right to leave my school now	1.86	1.36	Low

TC15 I would feel guilty if I left my school now	2.29	1.51	Moderate
TC16 This institution deserves my loyalty	3.15	1.77	Moderate
TC17 I would not leave my school right now because I have a sense of obligation to the people in it	3.19	1.96	Moderate
TC18 I owe a great deal to my school and my teaching profession in general	3.42	1.85	Moderate
Overall Mean Score of Teachers' Commitment	2.62	1.61	Moderate

Note: TC = Teacher Commitment; SD = Standard Deviation

The results of teachers' commitment presented in table 2 indicated that TC item 18 "I owe a great deal to my school and my teaching profession in general" had the highest mean score ($M=3.42$, $SD=1.85$). This means that Zamfara State teachers do love their teaching profession and have a cognitive attraction to school environment. This is possible due to the fact that, in a school, teachers do interact amongst themselves and between the teachers and learners; a situation that allow teachers to feel that, school is like a home to them. This could also be confirmed as indicated by TC item 17 "I would not leave my school right now because I have a sense of obligation to the people in it" which had a high mean score of ($M=3.19$, $SD=1.79$). On the side of the teachers in Zamfara State, they were found in this study that, they have the interest of helping their students to understand their subjects of learning much better as shown in TC item 10 "I can sacrifice to provide necessary instructional materials for the benefit of my students" with a moderate mean score of ($M=3.04$, $SD=1.74$).

However, the teachers lack commitment to give necessary support for the advancement of the academic performance of their students, this could be seen as indicated by TC item 9 "I can bear to take the responsibilities of converting scientific theories into physical practice/experimentation in my class instructions, for the academic achievement of my students" which had mean score of ($M=1.47$, $SD=1.21$). This could be resulted by the improper teachers' salary scale which teachers do expressed that, the salary is not sufficient for them as indicated in TC item 5 "I am satisfied with my current salary and all other remuneration" which had the lowest mean score of ($M=1.34$, $SD=1.18$). Thus, despite the fact that, teachers in Zamfara State do love their teaching profession and school environment, but, inappropriate welfare package scale (Salary, remunerations and all kinds of incomes and incentives) for teachers is lacking in Zamfara State. This situation led the teachers to loss their positive emotional feelings towards teaching profession and loss interest with school environment. This was confirmed in TC item 11 "If I had not already put so much of myself into this school, I might consider working elsewhere in public parastatals" which had the mean score of ($M=3.28$, $SD=1.81$).

Furthermore, lack of better salary scale for teachers in Zamfara State leads the teachers to reject their love for teaching and prefer to leave teaching profession and get another transitive employment from other public service departments. Additionally, one of the major reasons that prevent teachers from resigning from teaching profession is; the lack of job opportunities that could be considers as alternatives for the teachers (If resigned). This has been confirmed in TC item 12 "One of the few negative consequences of leaving this school would be the scarcity of available alternatives" which had a moderate mean score of ($M=3.02$, $SD=1.74$).

On the overall, teacher commitment in public secondary schools of Zamfara State was found at a 'Moderate Extent' with reference to its average mean value ($M=2.62$, $SD=1.61$) as shown in the results of table 2 presented above.

Discussions

In general, the commitment of teachers in public secondary schools of Zamfara State was found to be moderate, as indicated by the overall average mean score ($M=2.62$, $SD=1.61$) as seen in the results of Table 2. Thus, it can be inferred that teachers in public secondary schools of Zamfara State are performing moderately or in line with their professional supervision. This implies that the more supervision a school provides, the more dedicated the teachers are to their profession. Similarly, when teachers are given due consideration by the relevant authorities through the implementation of supervision results, they become more dedicated to their work. Consequently, the Zamfara State Government should enhance its oversight of teachers in its secondary schools. Supervision should be

comprehensive, taking into account factors such as upward review of teacher pay, in-service studies, improved social welfare, management acknowledgment, and job performance authority. Despite this, the lacks of regular school supervision and failure to act on the post-supervision findings have had a negative effect. Inadequate infrastructure, poor working conditions, low pay and high turnover rates all contribute to a moderate level of commitment to the schools in question. The results of this research are in line with some previous related studies.

Aji (2017) discovered that teachers' overall organizational commitment was of a moderate level. Even though educators are aware of the essential role they play in nation building, which requires a high level of commitment, their commitment to their organizations is only moderate. He suggested that the lack of facilities in many Nigerian educational institutions, such as inadequate infrastructure, poor working conditions, low pay, and high turnover rates, all contribute to the moderate level of commitment to their respective institutions. Afolakemi & Adebisi (2012) conducted a study to assess the influence of teachers' motivational factors on students' academic achievement in Nigerian senior secondary schools. They discovered that there is a strong correlation between supervision (which determines the level of teachers' motivational indices) and teachers' commitment, and the level of students' academic performance. They concluded that inadequate or inadequate levels of supervision can negatively impact teachers' motivation, which in turn will have a detrimental effect on students' academic performance in the subjects they are studying.

Additionally, Jafar (2018) studied the level of teacher empowerment and commitment in Katsina State, can be compared to the results of this research for further insight. Jafar (2018) determined that teachers' empowerment must be increased, which he believes can only be accomplished through the consideration and/or implementation of post-supervision reports, thus encouraging teacher dedication. He concluded that the greater the teacher empowerment (resulting from the implementation of findings supervision), the higher the overall teacher commitment.

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study was to examine the level of teachers' commitment in public secondary schools in Zamfara State, Nigeria. The study determined that teachers' commitment to the teaching profession in public secondary schools of Zamfara State was at a moderate level, with an average mean value of (M=2.62, SD=1.61).

This paper suggests that, in order to enhance teachers' commitment, stakeholders in the education sector, including policy-makers, school administrators, other relevant education authorities and the government, should make more efforts that could lead to a successful course delivery by teachers and, most importantly, an improved academic performance of students.

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First publication right:

Journal of Social Science

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