



Research Journal of Education

ISSN(e): 2413-0540, ISSN(p): 2413-8886

Vol. 3, No. 10, pp: 139-142, 2017

URL: <http://arpgweb.com/?ic=journal&journal=15&info=aims>

Promoting Best Practices in Secondary Schools through Teacher Commitment

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Abstract: Teachers constitutes the most important asset in teaching profession, thus, their readiness and interest towards work is important to the educational development. This study adopted a quantitative research of the survey type to provide a numeric description of portion of the population. The perception of teachers towards work and teaching profession were examined and the findings reveal that, teachers are willing to show more commitment to their work and the teaching profession. The study recommends that stakeholders should give support to teachers towards fulfilling the school objectives.

Keywords: Commitment; Teaching profession; Best Practices; Nigeria, Secondary schools.

1. Introduction

The concept of commitment has been widely adopted world-wide as a tool required for enhancing professional capabilities among experts. It is essential in describing the participatory level of an employee in any organization as well as the innovative characteristics of the organization (Demir, 2013). Globally, more emphasis has been placed on teacher education quality. This is in line with the submission of Niyozov (2008) which stipulates that, no nation can rise in its education above its teacher. Thus, teachers' commitment to her work place within which her services are rendered is specified by her sense of loyalty to the school values and goals (Thien and Razak, 2014). It emerges when they show a higher level of performance through taking additional responsibilities in their duties.

Secondary education is extremely important to the development of a child, in as much as it is the bridge between primary and tertiary education. It complements the knowledge, awareness, skills and learning experience acquired at the primary school level and prepares a child for higher education (Ekundayo, 2010; Matthew, 2013). Although, teacher commitment solely depends on the background of the school, attitudes demonstrated by their principals, school size and culture, and principal leadership (Huang *et al.*, 2016), higher teacher commitment has been found by Razak *et al.* (2010) to bring about important level of school outcomes. This is because, committed teacher shows enthusiasm towards teaching and learning, maintains exacting standards, set goals for student performance and promote orderly environment conducive for learning (Hoy *et al.*, 1990).

Teacher commitment as classified by Collie *et al.* (2012) are in two forms, (a) the level of attachment teacher has towards the teaching profession, and (b) the level of participation and empathy a teacher has with the organization (school). The zeal and willingness to put forth as shown by teacher towards the school, the teaching profession and students' learning in order to improve the general school performance particularly academic achievement is essential to school because; committed teachers are often satisfied, more productive and preserve school purpose of existence (Cerit, 2010). Teachers who feel the support of the school, principal, co-teaching staff, students and parents will feel more confidence and peace; this will increase teacher contribution to school and in turn bring about commitment to school (Nayir, 2012).

Over the years, studies have shown that, disregarding the professional needs of teacher has contributed to the retrogression of Nigeria education system and lack of commitment on the part of teachers. As noted by Idakwoji (2012), teacher is perceived to be responsible for failure or success in the school due to his centrality in the education system, this is why attributed many of the problems faced in Nigerian schools to teachers; It is therefore important to examine those challenges encountered by teachers in their commitment to work in order to shed more light on problems associated with teaching profession especially in Nigeria. This study therefore examines the perception of

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loyalty of teacher to the profession and school goals to ascertain if they are fully supported to fulfill the school objectives.

2. Research Questions

1. What is the perception of teachers' commitment towards the school goals?
2. What is the perception of teachers' commitment towards the teaching profession?

3. Methodology

This study adopted the quantitative research method of the survey type to gather relevant data on teachers' perception on commitment towards teaching profession. Descriptive statistics was used to find out the overall attitudes toward the teaching profession. A 11-item Teacher Commitment Scale. The population comprise of all teachers whose operation lies in classrooms, within school, between school. A sample of 309 teachers were selected from primary and secondary schools in Kwara State to participate in this study without any incentives for participation. The teachers were assumed to be fully trained teachers who operates within schools and classrooms. The demographic data on the sampled teachers is presented in Table 1. A letter of introduction stating the purpose of the study as well as assurance of confidentiality was attached as cover letter to each questionnaire. Demographic information of participants which include age, gender, employment status, highest level of education and years of teaching experience were required in the first section of the questionnaire followed by their response to all statements. Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient of the entire scale was calculated as 0.833, indicating adequate internal consistency reliability. The items were rated on a 7-point Likert Scale of Entirely Disagree (1), Mostly Disagree (2), Somewhat Disagree (3), Neither Agree nor Disagree (4), Somewhat Agree (5), Mostly Agree (6), and Entirely Agree (7).

4. Discussion and Findings

Table-1. Participants' Demographic Data

Statement	Category	Percentage
What is your gender?	Female	57%
	Male	43%
How old are you?	≤ 25	24%
	26-45	40%
	46-55	30%
	56 and above	6%
What is your employment status as a teacher in this school?	Permanent	84%
	Contract	16%
What is the highest level of formal education that you have completed	Nigeria Certificate in Education	27%
	Bachelor Degree in Education	44%
	Master Degree in Education	19%
	Others	9%
How long have you been working as a teacher?	≤ 10 years	22%
	11 - 20 years	36%
	21 - 30 years	24%
	≥ 31 years	18%

5. Results and Discussion

Descriptive statistics are presented in Table 1. The data on frequencies of respondents as shown in the table revealed that 57% of the respondents were female and only 43% are male; about 70% of these respondents are between ages 26-55years, while 24% are less than 25 years and only 6% are more than 56 years. Majority of the sample teachers have many years of experience in their various responsibilities. The factor loading, mean and standard deviation are calculated for each item of the scale were presented in Table 2.

Research Question 1: *What is the perception of teachers' commitment towards the school goals?*

As shown in Table 2 below, the 7 items used in measuring teachers' commitment to school goals were having a high factor loading >0.50 and high mean value which ranges from 4.91 to 5.15. These values are greater than the required average threshold of 3.5, thereby indicating that most teachers shows a high level of commitment to the

school goals through their work. Furthermore, the perception of the respondents does not differ as the table revealed that the standard deviation for all items have a close value ranging from 1.60 to 1.91.

Table-2. Teacher commitment to school goals in Nigeria (N=309)

Items	Description	Loading	Mean	SD
1	I see my school as a suitable place to work.	.818	5.08	1.75
2	I use variety of teaching strategies to help student learn.	.867	5.15	1.70
3	I use available resources efficiently.	.870	4.99	1.66
4	I want to be identified with this school.	.886	4.91	1.60
5	I get involved in school activities.	.813	4.81	1.66
6	I am willing to put significant effort in my work.	.841	4.86	1.77
7	I enjoy teaching.	.835	5.06	1.91

Research Question 2: *What is the perception of teachers' commitment towards the teaching profession?*

As shown in Table 3 below, the four items used in measuring teachers' commitment to teaching profession were having a high factor loading >0.50 and high mean value which ranges from 4.29 to 4.69. These values are greater than the required average threshold of 3.5, thereby indicating that most teachers shows high level of commitment to teaching profession from their perception. Furthermore, the opinion of respondents does not differ as the standard deviation for all items have a close value ranging from 1.52 to 1.86 as shown in the table.

Table-3. Teacher commitment towards teaching profession (N=309)

Items	Description	Loading	Mean	SD
1	I have no regret to have chosen the teaching profession	0.694	4.53	1.53
2	If I had to choose a profession again, I would prefer becoming a teacher	0.763	4.69	1.52
3	The teaching profession is appropriate for me	0.758	4.29	1.79
4	If I could get a different job from being a teacher and paying the same amount, I would not take it.	0.783	4.60	1.86

6. Conclusion

This study gives an insight into the way teachers perceived their work in school and the profession as a whole. The findings from this research revealed that, perception of teacher's shows that they have no regret to have chosen the profession and consequent upon that, they are willing to put in more effort in ensuring they show more commitment to duty and teaching profession. Therefore, the leadership of the school should ensure they give full support to professional teachers towards fulfilling the school objectives.

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