



REWARD MECHANISMS AS PREDICTORS OF TEACHER JOB COMMITMENT IN PUBLIC SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN RIVERS STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

This study examined reward mechanisms as predictors of teacher job commitment in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria. The study was guided by three objectives, three research questions and three null hypotheses. The study adopted a correlation survey research design. The population of this study consist of 6,893 teachers of 291 public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. A sample size of one thousand, three hundred and seventy eight (1,378) teachers representing 20% of the entire population was used. The instruments for the study were questionnaires titled, Reward Mechanisms Scale (RMS) and Teachers' Commitment Scale (TCS) were used for this study. The instruments were validated and reliability coefficients of 0.80 and 0.87 for Reward Mechanism Scale and Teachers' Commitment Scale respectively were derived using Cronbach alpha. Research questions were answered using simple regression, while the hypotheses were tested with t-test associated with simple regression at 0.05 level of significance. The findings of the study revealed that promotion, work-life balance and remuneration predict teachers' commitment in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State to a very low extent. Based on the findings, it was recommended among others that government should ensure that teachers are promoted at when due to boost their commitment. The federal and state government through appropriate agencies should promulgate laws that will improve work-life schedule and activities of teachers. Where such law exist, efforts should be made to ensure proper implementation of it to create a good work-life balance.

KEYWORDS: *Reward, Mechanisms, Teacher, Job Commitment*

INTRODUCTION

Teacher job commitment is a key subject in education productiveness. While teachers are not just expected to perform their tasks, it is also expedient that they perform all their tasks with commitment. Commitment refers to dedication to doing what is required for the achievement of predetermined goals. Teacher job commitment therefore refers to the willingness of teachers to participate and give their best towards the achievement of the goals of the school where they work. A committed teacher is one that is self-motivated; one that enjoys his job and shows signs of job satisfaction. Teacher commitment is idiosyncratic. It varies from one teacher to another. It therefore could account for the differences in the productivity and performance of different teachers working in the same or different schools. A committed teacher is likely to be more productive and resourceful as a teacher than a non-committed teacher (Igbogi, 2018).

However, the commitment of the teacher must come with the relevant reward package in order to achieve increased productivity. The indicators of job commitment amongst teachers may include regular attendance to school, punctuality to school, effective classroom management, resourcefulness in usage of instructional materials in delivery of instruction, participation in extracurricular activities for development of students, teaching the required number of classes stipulated for the week, writing of lesson notes, evaluation of students during and after delivery of instruction, adhere to ethical and professional standards, acting as loco parentis to students, collaborating with colleagues to enhance service delivery, engaging in professional development programmes to enhance capacity and productivity. One of the rewards of the duties of school administrators is to ensure that they maintain high level of commitment amongst their teachers. There are several ways this can be achieved. One of such ways is known as 'rewards



mechanism'. Rewards mechanism is management tools or strategies to influence the attitude and commitment of teachers in the school system. The Skinner's reinforcement theory posits that reward system can be used for operant behavioural conditioning. Reinforcement theory shows how the consequence of past behaviour affects future actions in a recurrent learning process. This means that reward mechanism which teachers receive determine their future attitude and commitment to work.

In line with this, rewards are offered after the job had been completed and after the employer had approved their work. At the same time rewards can also be offered before the work is done and is aimed at improving performance of employees who are not meeting expected standard or established goals. Rewards can be in form of monetary or non-monetary. Monetary rewards may be in the form of salary, bonuses while non-monetary rewards include promotions, paid time off and flexible work hours. Yazdani, et al (2009) also posited that there are two kinds of rewards that have particular relevance to boosting teachers' commitment. They identified them as monetary rewards (which may be direct or indirect) and non-monetary rewards.

Direct monetary rewards include salaries, cash tied to specific performance, behaviour or condition while the indirect monetary reward include other financial resources that are used as reward like professional support (training) and improved work-life. In recognition of the fact that rewards given to teachers have implication on their level of job satisfaction and morale, in order to enhance the feeling of identification with organization, both the needs of teacher and the goals of the school must be carefully examined. For the teacher to perform his statutory duties, to the best of his ability, his welfare must be taken into cognizance.

Rewards therefore, could be compensation reward, recognition reward and appreciation reward. Reward mechanism could be measured on how teachers perceive their job and how they assert themselves in their roles and responsibilities. Reward mechanisms are instruments used by employers and administrators to attract and retain the desired/required competence of workers and also get workers to perform their jobs effectively and efficiently. Other reward mechanism include: better offices, work space and lunch allowances. Rewards could be used to motivate or encourage one to do something. Reward is given to teachers in recognition of service, effort or achievement that meet certain targets or goals.

In the light of this, if a teacher is given a gift for his hard work, that is a reward. Some teachers work hard and exceed expectation because of the thought of receiving rewards. Man's need for money is perhaps one of his most essential needs. This explains why in other industries people subject themselves to working over-time or surpassing organizational targets. These organizations give their workers various forms of financial rewards like loan, subsidy for the educational and medical bills of their family members, overdrafts and many more. Andrews and Erwin (2011) identified components of reward system as; promotion, remuneration and improved work life, recognition, educational leave with pay and remuneration.

Promotion along the path of organizational stratification is a form of reward which workers work persistently to earn. It is usually given to workers on the basis of merit for working for a given length of years or for exceptional service delivery and productivity. Sometimes, workers get promoted for achieving a given level of professional development which consequently increases their market value. Furthermore, work-life balance is another form of reward. It is a conscious improvement of work-life of employees (teachers). Every teacher wants to work in a safer and more comfortable environment. Organizations have capitalized on this expectation by consciously making it a form of reward. They reward a worker by making his office more conducive (by providing air-conditioner, television, personal computer, internet facility and better office furniture); providing an official car, or assigning a driver to the worker. This gesture (of reward) provides morale and job satisfaction thus raises employees' professional commitment. One of the most interesting approaches to commitment is the improved working life program, which is a system approach to job design and promising development in the broad area of job enhancement.

In addition, remuneration is another reward mechanism that creates great commitment to teachers. It is defined remuneration traditionally as the total income of an individual and may comprise a range of separate payments determined according to different rules. Remuneration can also be referred to as monetary or financial benefits in form of salaries, wages, bonuses, incentives, allowances and benefits that is accrued or given to an employee or group of employees by the employer (firm) as a result services rendered by the employee(s), commitment to the organization



or reward for employment. Once workers perceive that certain behaviour or performance would earn them a specified amount of financial reward, they become self-driven and motivated to get such prospective reward. When teachers find it difficult to get financial rewards, their commitment towards their job begins to retard. Like every other employees, public secondary school teachers in Nigeria, need to be rewarded for job done. Hence, this research intends to explore whether promotion, work-life balance, and remuneration predict teacher job commitment in public secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Motivation of teachers to enhance commitment in the discharge of their duties in the education system has not always received due attention despite the obvious leading roles they play in the classroom towards realizing educational objectives. This situation has remained a very crucial problem. The International Labour Organization (ILO, 2016) lamented that the situation of teachers in the school system in West African region is so bad that it had reached “an intolerable low point”. The societal image of the teachers in terms of their purchasing power, social status, gender bias, etc, has made the profession unattractive. Its members had gone through harrowing experiences in the hands of the political office holders in the current political dispensation.

Researchers have observed that some secondary school teachers in Nigeria have demonstrated low level of commitment in carrying out the task of which they have sworn an oath to protect. Sometime, NUT engages in warning or full blown strike actions due to ill treatment and non-professionalization of teaching job which breeds disappointment and obstructs classroom effectiveness and output. More so, in-consistence in governmental policies such as non-payment of teachers’ allowances, embezzlement of teachers’ pension fund, and non-inclusion of teachers in long service award programmes have been said to be responsible for the low commitment of teachers at work, causing them to come to school late and leave at any time, some engage in more than one job in order to earn a leaving, while others sit in staff room buying and selling. This trend has become worrisome due to the alterations in the school programmes. Teachers are one of the least rewarded civil servants despite their high volume of work, critical role and contributions towards present and future development in the state. The issue of teachers’ re-occurring moonlighting activities, lateness to work and absenteeism could be traceable to lack of teachers’ reward mechanism. Therefore, the researcher is bothered whether promotion, improved work life and remuneration could predict teachers’ commitment in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria.

AIM AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The aim of the study was to examine reward mechanisms as predictors of teacher job commitment in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. Specifically, the objectives of the study sought to:

1. Find out the extent to which promotion predicts teacher job commitment in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.
2. Investigate the extent to which work-life balance predicts teacher job commitment in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.
3. Determine the extent remuneration predicts teacher job commitment in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following research questions guided the study

1. To what extent does promotion predict teacher job commitment in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State?
2. To what extent does improved work-life balance predict teacher job commitment in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State?
3. To what extent does remuneration predict teacher job commitment in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State?

HYPOTHESES

The following hypotheses tested at 0.05 level of significance guided the study.

1. Promotion does not significantly predict teacher job commitment in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.



2. Work-life balance does not significantly predict teacher job commitment in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.
3. Remuneration does not significantly predict teacher job commitment in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a correlation survey design to ascertain if there is a relationship or co-variations among the variables using a quantitative method of research. The population of this study was made up of all the 6,893 teachers (i.e. 3,490 male and 3,403 female) of 291 public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. The sample size for this study was one thousand, three hundred and seventy eight (1,378) teachers representing 20% of the entire population. The sample size was drawn from the entire population using the proportionate stratified random sampling technique. This ensured that all members of the population are given equal opportunity of being selected. The research instrument titled: Reward Mechanisms Scale (RMS) and Teachers’ Commitment Scale (TCS) were used for this study. The instruments have two sections (A and B). Section A elicited demographic information from the respondents, while section B elicited information on Private Sector Participation Scale and Quality Education Delivery. The instruments were structured on four-point Likert-scale of Very High Extent (4), High Extent (3), Low Extent (2) and Very Low Extent (VLE) respectively. Cronbach Alpha reliability statistics was used to test the reliability of the two instruments. The reliability coefficients of Reward Mechanisms Scale (RMS) and Teachers’ Commitment Scale (TCS) are 0.80 and 0.87. Research questions one to three were answered using simple regression. Consequently, t-test associated with simple regression was used to test hypotheses one to three at 0.05 level of significance.

RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

Research Question 1: To what extent does promotion predict teacher job commitment in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State?

Table 1: Simple Regression on the Extent Promotion Predict Teacher Job Commitment in Public Senior Secondary Schools in Rivers State

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Extent of prediction	Decision
1	.234 ^a	.055	.052	5.5%	Very Low extent

Decision Rule: 100%- 75% (Very High Extent), 74% - 50% (High Extent), 49%-25% (Low Extent) and 0% - 24% (Very Low Extent)

Table 1 revealed that the regression (r) and regression square (r²) coefficients are .234 and .055 respectively, while the adjusted r square is .052. The extent of prediction (coefficient of determinism) is 5.5% (.055×100). By implication, the result shows that promotion to a very low extent predicts teacher job commitment in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State by 5.5%.

Research Question 2: To what extent does work-life balance predict teacher job commitment in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State?

Table 2: Simple Regression on the Extent Work-Life Balance Predict Teacher Job Commitment in Public Senior Secondary Schools in Rivers State

Model	R	r Square	Adjusted r Square	Extent of prediction	Decision
1	.007 ^a	.000	-.003	0.0%	Very Low extent

Decision Rule: 100%- 75% (Very High Extent), 74% - 50% (High Extent), 49%-25% (Low Extent) and 0% - 24% (Very Low Extent)

Table 2 revealed that the regression (r) and regression square (r²) coefficients are .007 and .000 respectively, while the adjusted r square is -.003. The extent of prediction (coefficient of determinism) is 0.0% (.000×100). By implication, the result reveals that work-life balance to a very low extent predicts teacher job commitment in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State by 0.0%.

Research Question 3: To what extent does remuneration predict teacher job commitment in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State?



Table 3: Simple Regression on the Extent Remuneration Predict Teacher Job Commitment in Public Senior Secondary Schools in Rivers State

Model	r	r Square	Adjusted r Square	Extent of prediction	Decision
1	.119 ^a	.014	.012	1.4%	Very Low extent

Decision Rule: 100%- 75% (Very High Extent), 74% - 50% (High Extent), 49%-25% (Low Extent) and 0% - 24% (Very Low Extent)

Table 4.6 revealed that the regression (r) and regression square (r²) coefficients are .119 and .014 respectively, while the adjusted r square is .012. The extent of prediction (coefficient of determinism) is 1.4% (.014×100). By implication, the result reveals that remuneration to a very low extent predict teacher job commitment in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State by 1.4%.

Test of Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: Promotion does not significantly predict teacher job commitment in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

Table 4: t-test Associated with Simple Regression on the Extent Promotion Significantly Predict Teacher Job Commitment in Public Senior Secondary Schools in Rivers State.

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	p-value	Alpha level	Decision
	B	Std. Error	Beta				
1	(Constant)	2.121	.136		15.606	.000	
	Promotion	-.164	.035	-.234	-4.710	.000	H0 ₁ Rejected

a. Dependent Variable: Teacher Job Commitment

Table 4 revealed that standard beta value and t-test are -.234 and -4.710. The p-value of 0.000 is less than the level of significance of 0.05. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. By implication, promotion significantly predicted teacher job commitment in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

Hypothesis 2: Work-life balance does not significantly predict teacher job commitment in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

Table 5: t-test Associated with Simple Regression on the Extent Work-Life Balance Significantly Predict Teacher Job Commitment in Public Senior Secondary Schools in Rivers State.

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	p-value	Alpha level	Decision
	B	Std. Error	Beta				
1	(Constant)	1.487	.099		15.043	.000	
	Work-Life Balance	.004	.030	.007	.145	.885	H0 ₂ Accepted

a. Dependent Variable: Teacher Job Commitment

Table 5 revealed that standard beta value and t-test are .007 and .145. The p-value of .885 is greater than the level of significance of 0.05. Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted. By implication, work-life balance does not significantly predict teacher job commitment in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

Hypothesis 3: Remuneration does not significantly predict teacher job commitment in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.



Table 6: t-test Associated with Simple Regression on the Extent Remuneration Significantly Predict Teacher Job Commitment in Public Senior Secondary Schools in Rivers State.

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	p-value	Alpha level	Decision
	B	Std. Error	Beta				
1	(Constant)	1.287	.097	13.288	.000	0.05	H ₀ Rejected
	Remuneration	.061	.026	.119	.019		

a. Dependent Variable: Teacher Job Commitment

Table 6 revealed that standard beta value and t-test are .119 and 2.351. The p-value of .019 is less than the level of significance of 0.05. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. By implication, remuneration significantly predicted teacher job commitment in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Promotion and Teacher Job Commitment

The first finding of the study revealed that promotion to a very low extent predicted teachers’ commitment in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State by just 5.5%. This evidence provided a logical explanation for the reason of low teacher job commitment in public senior secondary school in Rivers State. This is in line with Ugboro (2013) who saw teachers’ promotion as a good tool for reinforcement. It would curtail the problem of teachers leaving the profession for other personal ventures as they are expected to remain in the job for a period of time before they would be entitled for a promotion. According to him, newly recruited teachers would also find this reinforcing thus they would be committed to their job. A teacher who realizes that his/her counterpart (who possess the same qualification as he/she does), had gained reoccurring promotions would be demoralized and would do anything to leave the profession or even cut down on his input to reduce the perceive inequality.

In support of the above, Shahzad (2008) conducted a study on relationship between promotion practices and University teachers’ performance in Tanzania and it was found that a positive relationship exist between the various promotion practices and University teachers performance. Also, Ogunleye (2016) conducted a study on civil servants promotion implementation in Kwara State and productivity implication, and it was found that the majority of the civil servant in Kwara State were found to experience low productivity as a result of lack of implementation of promotion.

Also in line with the finding, Nwideduh (2004) in his opinion opined that the promotion of an individual directly shows that his performance is recognized and this may make him work harder to justify the recognition. It puts new life in the individual and activates his efforts. The principal therefore has to avoid any personal feelings or personality clash that may make him fill the staff progress report subjectively, which will in turn hinder the staff promotion. He must read his report to the staff individually before sending these out to the ministry. Nwideduh (2004) added that promotion may be reward for performance, but only if there is evidence of potential competency; otherwise, the person may be promoted to a level at which they are incompetent. Therefore, promotion significantly predicted teacher job commitment in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

Work-Life Balance and Teacher Job Commitment

The second finding of the study revealed that work-life balance to a very low extent predicts teacher job commitment in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State by 0.0%. This is in tandem with Lau and May (2018) who observed that improved work life can be perceived as an important factor of the overall life quality. Where such is lacking employees will tend to decline effective service delivery. According to Lau and May (2018), it involves strategies that increase satisfaction of employees and aims to improve working conditions in the organizations. Improving teachers work life can improve their overall health and general well-being, and most importantly, it improves or retard their commitment, leading to improved/poor performance in the school.

In support of the above, Vedder (2005) buttressed that without managerial support, employees can become stressed and unproductive, which can lead to a negative impact on the overall behaviour of teachers. In organizations and on the home front, the challenge of work or life is rising to the top of many employers and employees consciousness. In today’s fast-paced society, human resource professionals seek options to positively impact the bottom line of their companies, improve employee morale, retain employees with valuable company knowledge, and keep pace with



workplace trends. Vanwyk and Pienaar (2008) noted that employer's improved work-life has to do with flexible working hours, part-time work, alternate working hours and working from home have been shown to considerably increase commitment, productivity and lead to higher performance. Providing more flexible work arrangements to employees can also lead to reduced staff attrition, increase retention and can curtail absenteeism. In view of these, Ezeala (2017) identified the worries and fears of teachers as regard to their safety and health in the school system as the engaged in their statutory responsibilities. Hence, work-life balance does not significantly predict teacher job commitment in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

Remuneration and Teacher Job Commitment

Finally, the third finding of the study showed that remuneration to a very low extent predicts teacher job commitment in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State by 1.4%. This substantiation provided a commonsensical account for the reasons of decline in teachers' commitment in public senior secondary school in Rivers State. This is in consonance with Prasetya and Kato (2011) in Bernardin and Russell (2013) who opined that "remuneration has a big influence in the recruitment of employees, motivation, and productivity and employee turnover". According to them, the level and magnitude of remuneration should be of concern to management because the level of compensation will determine the lifestyle, self-esteem, and the value of the company. Concurring to this, Beenbulem (2004) opined that good remuneration has been found over the years to be one of the policies that organizations adopt to increase their workers' morale and hereby increase the organizations productivity. This is in tandem with Ibiene (2003) who conducted an empirical study on wage earnings and job attitude among workers in public and private secondary schools in Port Harcourt local government area in Rivers State and it was found that high wage and its regular pay are tantamount with high productivity. Also in agreement with the study, Ansarud and Adebajo (2014) study on reward system and employees performance in Lagos State showed that there is a significant relationship between employee's performance and salary package. Based on this proposition, effective remuneration by the organization enhances performance and rewards can have a major impact not only on morale and productivity but also its ability to attract and retain staff. Thus, remuneration significantly predicted teacher job commitment in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

CONCLUSION

Based on the finding of the study, it can be concluded that reward mechanisms such as promotion, work-life balance and remuneration to a very low extent predict teacher job commitment in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. The implication of this is that when teachers are not adequately rewarded with promotion to move up in the ladder of their career, or their work-life balanced to enable them have time for their family, nor properly remunerated for skill update and careers advancement in their various field of work, it brings about lack of commitment towards achieving set goals and objectives of the school.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following are hereby recommended:

1. Government should ensure that teachers are promoted at when due to boost their commitment in the job.
2. The federal and state government through appropriate agencies should promulgate laws that will improve work-life schedule and activities of teachers. Where such law exist, efforts should be made to ensure proper implementation of it to create a good work-life balance for teachers.
3. Government should embark on regular upward review of teachers' remuneration to encourage teachers to be more committed to their work.

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