



Organisational Correlates of Secondary School Teachers' Job Perception and Job Commitment in Southern Senatorial District of Cross River State, Nigeria

Ekpiken, William E.* and Atsu, Margaret E.**

**Department of Educational Administration and Planning
University of Calabar, Nigeria
williamekpiken@yahoo.com*

***Department of Educational Foundation, Guidance and Counselling
University of Calabar, Nigeria*

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to investigate organisational correlates of secondary school teachers' job perception and job commitment in Southern Senatorial District of Cross River State, Nigeria. The research design adopted was ex-post facto. The study sample of two hundred and eighty (280) teachers was drawn using simple random sampling method from seventy-four (74) public secondary schools in Southern Senatorial District of Cross River State. Data obtained were analysed using Pearson product moment correlation analysis to test the formulated hypothesis which was tested at 0.05 alpha level of significance. The major finding of the study revealed that teachers' job perception significantly relate to teachers' job commitment. Premised on the finding, it was recommended that all hands must be on deck, that the society at large should raise teachers' morale by viewing them as achievers. The teaching profession should be seen as one among other professions. This would go a long way to reduce tendencies of teachers' poor perception about the noble profession. Government should make available school material resources or involve teachers in skills acquisition programmes to enable them improvise such at an appropriate time for effective teaching and learning process.

Keywords: Organisational correlates, Teachers' job perception, job commitment.

INTRODUCTION

Education is instrumental to a nation's development. It provides national unity and minimizes ethnic rivalries through an enlightenment of the masses, among others. Thus 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 conscientious 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 pertinent to note that any nation which hopes to achieve maximum result 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.

Every organisation, including the secondary school, exists within an extensive and complex organisational correlate. These correlates tend to have social, psychological and administrative conditions which stimulates public officers' latent (invisible) creative abilities and facilitates their expressions and realizations in work place (Etuk, 2001).

Researchers in education and school leaders have been pondering over the reason why teachers are not very committed in secondary schools and possible ways of reducing or eradicating such ugly scenario so that teachers would be highly committed to their job.

However, scholars have also attributed the problems with factors, such as the organisational correlates. According to them, organisational correlates may lead to serious deteriorating conditions, which may not allow teachers to be highly committed. Such correlates as envisaged in the study include teachers' job perception, principals' leadership style, teachers' participatory role in the decision-making process, teachers' in-service training and availability of school material resources (Lezotte & Styder, 2013).

The American English Dictionary (2000) saw an organisation as a group whose members work together for a shared purpose in a continuing way. According to Wikipedia (2013), an organisation 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 organisational correlates are those distinct features that every organisation such as the school system possess that could make or mar its achievement of organisational 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 energy to something. Teachers' job commitment here is used to describe the readiness and willingness on the part of those who are engaged in instruction delivery in the school system. It further establishes the fact that to establish a correlation between two or more things, there must be a mutual relationship of interdependence of varied quantities. So job commitment on the part of the teachers in the school system requires them devoting themselves and time to carefully overcome problems posed to them by the prevalent correlates.

Job perception depends on individuals' belief. Teachers who are fully motivated with basic amenities of life and good working environment will have the right judgment of their capabilities to organize and execute courses of action that will enhance their job commitment (Decker, 2012). In recent times, there has been growing criticism of secondary school teachers and their job commitment especially in Southern Senatorial District of Cross River State. Students of these schools learn very little as a result of high rate of absenteeism, lateness of work, truancy and lack of commitment of teachers. The perceived poor quality of students produced by these secondary schools calls into question the job commitment of teachers (Ukpong & Ekpoh, 2011).

From the researchers' interaction with secondary school teachers in Southern Senatorial District of Cross River State, it is to be noted that they acknowledged that they have not put in their best. They complained that their level of motivation is very low, since they have no say in the affairs that concern them. In further reaction, they expressed loss of interest in their job and their dissatisfaction in the way the administrator manages the existing correlates in the schools. Thus, the commitment of teachers in terms of their participation in curriculum and extra-curricular activities may not be unconnected.

Statement of the problem

The role of teachers in secondary schools as well as other levels of education cannot be overemphasized. Secondary school education with its peculiar position in Nigeria is the stage where youths (students) receive basic education that enhances their advancement to higher institution for professional and academic pursuit in life. Educational 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 teacher is a mover and is accorded an important position in school setting. The success or failure of any school system lies solidly on the teachers' job commitment. But the said teachers are allowed to operate freely without being effectively managed to do their job. These laxities in administration usually create a scenario where teachers only manage to survive in the teaching-learning environment.

At present, it is observed that teachers' job commitment is contingent upon how they perceive the administration, taking other correlates into consideration. Teachers' behaviour in the schools results from a conscious and unconscious desire to satisfy some of their complex needs. Therefore, failure on the part of the administrators, government to meet these needs results in discontentment, disloyalty, discouragement, truancy, absenteeism, redundancy and lack of commitment in the work place. All these amount to poor teachers' job performance, and by this there exists troubling discrepancies between their goals. This gives rise to the question "Are teachers committed to their job?"

Of recent, officials of the State Ministry of Education (Inspectorate Department) paid an unscheduled visit to one of the rural secondary schools and found teachers chatting, cracking jokes among themselves in the staff room as if they were redundant. This may be attributed to the mismanagement of the prevailing correlates in the school. Teachers are members of the role set in the school system and can perceive issues differently from the wider society. The way they perceive the organisational correlates vis-à-vis the school administrators can impact positively or negatively on their job performance and commitment to their job. The question is; how does teachers' perception of these organisational correlates affect their job commitment? This study is poised to provide answers to this question.

Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study is to investigate the organisational correlates of teachers' job perception and job commitment in secondary schools in Southern Senatorial District of Cross River State in Nigeria.

Research question

How does teachers' job perception relate to their job commitment?

Statement of hypothesis

Teachers' job perception has no significant relationship with their job commitment.

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted the ex-post facto design. The design was used because the level of teachers' commitment had already been observed in the study area and cannot be further manipulated by the researchers. A sample of two hundred and eighty (280) teachers was selected using stratified sampling technique from 14 secondary schools for the study. The researchers designed the instrument titled "Organisational Correlates and Teachers' Job Commitment Questionnaire (OCTJCO)" were used for the study. The instrument had two sections. Section 'A' provided information on the personal data of respondents such as name of school, size, location, sex, age, teaching experience and rank; section 'B' elicited information on organisational correlate (job perception). The instrument was validated by two experts in Measurement and Evaluation, while the trial test was done using thirty (30) secondary school teachers in two public secondary schools that were not part of the study sample. The questionnaire were administered to the teachers simultaneously. Two weeks later, they were again administered to the same teachers. The scores from the two measurements (questionnaire) were correlated using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Analysis. The correlation coefficient gave reliability estimate between 0.77 and 0.91.

Table 1: Pearson's product moment correlation analysis of the relationship between teachers' job perception and their job commitment in terms of curricular activities and extra-curricular activities (n=280).

Variables	$\sum X$	$\sum X^2$	$\sum Y$	$\sum Y^2$	$\sum XY$	r_{xy}
Job perception (X)	4980	89776				
Curricular activities (Y ₁)			7036	176890	125256	0.36*
Extra-curricular activities (Y ₂)			6966	174080	124239	0.35*

* $p < 0.05$ $df = 278$, critical $r = 0.196$.

Source: Fieldwork, 2013

DISCUSSION

It was found that there is a significant positive relationship between teachers' job perception and their job commitment in terms of curricular and extra-curricular activities. The result revealed that, increase in teachers' job perception will lead to their job commitment in terms of curricular and extra-curricular activities. On the contrary, the reverse is the case as teachers reported poor perception with their overall career as teachers, their contributions to students' success, assistance to students, but with low pay, little or no opportunity for promotion and career advancement. So all these lapses in the educational system must be corrected for teachers to do absolutely well. The findings of this study is in line with the findings obtained by Uchendu (2003) who found out that a significant relationship between teachers' job perception and their job commitment exists. She observes that the teachers who perceive their principals' ability to maintain discipline as high will be able to present his/her lesson well, control students' behaviour inside and outside the classroom, motivate the students and also manage his/her classroom very well, since the head has the ability to manage the climate. In other words, the performance will improve.

This finding is also in agreement with the study of Eke (2002) who in her study on job satisfaction among secondary school teachers in Aba North discovered that there exists a significant relationship between teachers' perception of the job and their job commitment. Groeschland and Weteknaup (2002) findings are in line with the finding of this study. It was noticed also that females prefer the teaching profession than do their male counterparts. The teaching profession is believed to afford one enough time for other businesses. For instance, teachers observe shorter house of work.

They also enjoy their holiday periods. All these is believed to make females prefer the profession because it allows them enough time for other activities like household work etc. Nevertheless, male teachers need to be encouraged so as to be committed in the school system.

CONCLUSION

It was concluded that the society place teachers among others and that teachers' perception to their job must be that of nation builders rather than destroyers.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this study, it was recommended that:

- All hands must be on deck
- That the society at large should raise teachers' morale by viewing them as achievers
- The teaching profession should be seen as one among other professions. This would go a long way to reduce tendencies of teachers' poor perception about the noble profession.
- Government should make available school material resources or involve teachers in skills acquisition programmes to enable them improvise such at an appropriate time for effective teaching and learning process.

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