

Gender Attitude and Commitment to Teaching in Tertiary Educational Institutions in South Eastern Zone, Nigeria

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Abstract

This study examined the attitudes and level of commitment of lecturers towards teaching in tertiary educational institutions in south Eastern Nigeria. Five hypotheses guided the study. The sample consisted of 1991 lecturers and 828 students drawn through proportionate stratified random sampling techniques. Three sets of questionnaires, interviews and document analysis were the main research instruments employed in the study. Mean, mean set, rank order, t-test and ANOVA were employed to find solution to the research questions and test the hypotheses.

The findings reveal, inter-alia, that there is no significant difference between male and female lecturers' attitudes and commitment to teaching in tertiary institutions. It is recommended that university authorities should start operating advancement procedures that reward both teaching and research so that lecturers are totally committed to their work.

The Background/ Theoretical Framework

There have been complaints about declining quality of tertiary education in Nigeria. The problems include: inadequacy of financial allocations to these educational institutions; internal mismanagement; influence of the students' background and how the students utilize their time; the social composition of lecturers; the scarcity of trained staff/teachers in many departments; and the absence of job satisfaction. All these problems impinge on the goals and quality of tertiary institutions. They negatively affect the attitude and commitment of the teaching staff of our higher institutions of learning.

The goals of tertiary education as delineated by the National Policy on Education (1998:30) are loyalty {**something missing**}. The goals cannot be achieved without teaching, research and publications. To teach in a tertiary

educational institution one must have one or a combination of the following: academic qualifications, professional qualifications, experiential background and publications. It is only in tertiary institutions that a teacher does not require formal education and training in teaching. Advancement procedures require that teaching plays second fiddle to research and publications. Essentially, academic staff are hired as teachers and assessed as researchers.

It is no wonder that bad teaching is the order of the day in various institutions of higher learning and all that is required in our results. No person seems to be interested in what the teachers does in the classroom. Some come late to lectures, hurry through classes, others do not come at all and yet all set examinations. For the fact that teaching remains the prime function of academics, there was need to investigate the attitude and level of commitment of academic staff towards teaching in tertiary educational institutions.

There are many theories of administration that are important to this study. However, because of the scope of this research the study is anchored on the following motivational theories: Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs theory; Herzberg's two-factor theory; and MacGregor's theory X and Y, and Ouchi's theory Z.

Motivation has been defined in a variety of ways. Hoy and Miskel (1987:176) defined motivation as the complex forces, drives needs, tension states or other mechanisms that start and maintain activity towards the achievement of personal goals. According to Mondy, Holmes and Flippo (1980:263), motivation is the process of influencing or stimulating a person to take action that will accomplish a desired goal. According to Nwaoku (2005:68), theory of hierarchy of needs postulates that a person's needs are hierarchical and that higher order needs become motivation to the extent that lower order needs become satisfied. According to him, one's lower order needs relate to physiological and safety needs (need for food, water, sleep, sex, need for protection from danger). One's higher order needs relate to psycho-social (need for love, affection, status, self-fulfilment). Higher order needs are not met unless lower order needs are satisfied and a satisfied need ceases to motivate.

In most organised institutions individuals' attitudes and commitment to work buttress their need. Some workers show negative or positive attitude to work depending on the level they operate in Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (Nunnery and Kimbrough, 1983:274).

Herzberg also theorizes that in work situations there are two rather different sets of factors: those that relate to the extent of job dissatisfaction (pay, fringe benefits, nature of supervision, company policy and administration) and those that relate to job satisfaction (job content, achievement, recognition responsibility and advancement or growth). According to Nunnery and Kimbrough (1983:274), the dissatisfies (hygiene factors) can be seen as roughly paralleling Maslow's lower order needs. Thus, if a worker's physiological needs are met by employers, he will show negative

attitude to work and will not perform adequately. Herzberg postulate that enhancing the hygiene conditions is not likely to improve performance greatly because a satisfied need is not a motivator.

On the other hand, Macgregor postulates theory X and theory Y which equally explain the concepts of attitude and commitment. In theory X, it is held by managers that people are lazy, dislike and avoid work and that administrators should use carrot and stick' to motivate them (Hoy and Miskel 1982:172). Theory Y is related to Maslow's and Herzberg's theories. Hoy and Miskel maintain that theory Y in Maslow's terms assumes that people strive for self-actualization and in Herzberg's terms workers want intrinsic satisfier or motivator factors from their jobs under theory Y. Employees want to like their jobs and look for advancement.

Workers under theory X are coerced to comply with the management's directives to perform their job. They seem to show poor attitude to work and are not personally committed to their jobs. On the contrary, employees under theory Y like their jobs and are personally committed to it.

Ouchi's theory Z also has to do with workers attitudes and commitment. The theory emphasises concern for people and participative and consultative decision-making. It concentrates on the organisational and behavioural side of management. According to Peretomode (2001:33), the basic premise of theory Z is "that involved workers are the key to increased performance in an organisation". In this theory performance productivity is believed to be dependent upon commitment to an overall philosophy, participative decision making, trust, subtlety and intimacy. The secret of Japanese success in management of employees is the great concern managers have for the well being and development of employees. When workers are genuinely involved in the organisation, they exhibit positive attitude and become committed to the organisation's ideals.

From the above theories, we can deduce that workers who show positive attitude to work and personal commitment to organisational philosophy operate at a higher order need (Maslow) show satisfaction with their Jobs (Herzberg); operate at the level of theory Y (McGregor) and are involved in the Job (theory Z). Conversely, workers that show poor attitude to work and are not committed to it, still battle with the physiological needs, operative under hygiene factors, are within the level of theory X and are not involved in decision-making.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to determine the attitude and level of commitment to teaching shown by lecturers in tertiary educational institutions in the south Eastern Nigeria.

- 1) The attitude and level of commitment of male and female lecturers in the universities, polytechnics and colleges of education.

- 2) Students perceptions on the attitude and commitment to teaching by male and female lecturers in tertiary institutions of learning.
- 3) Level of commitment of male lecturers in the universities, polytechnics and colleges of education.
- 4) Attitude of female lecturers in the universities polytechnics and colleges of education.

Research Hypotheses

Five hypotheses were posited to guide the study.

- i) There is no significant difference between the attitude of male and female lecturers toward teaching in tertiary institutions.
- ii) There is no significant difference between the level of commitment of male and female lecturers to teaching in tertiary institutions.
- iii) There is no significant difference between the perceptions of students on male and female lecturers commitment to teaching in tertiary institutions.
- iv) There is no significant difference in the level of commitment of male lecturers in the universities, polytechnics and colleges of education towards teaching.
- v) There is no significant difference in the attitudes of female lectures in the universities, polytechnics and colleges of education towards teaching.

Methodology

This study employed survey design that collected and described data on lecturers' attitude and commitment to teaching in the tertiary institutions. The object studied comprised all (19638) academic staff of the tertiary educational institutions in the South Eastern Nigeria.

The proportional stratified random sampling method was used to include the gender, all grades of lecturers (1991 lecturers) and 828 final year students of the faculties/schools of education and engineering in the universities, polytechnics and colleges of education sampled.

The following instruments were used in collecting the data for that study: the Lecturers Attitude and Commitment to Teaching Questionnaire (LCTQ) for lecturers, Lecturers Attitude and commitment to Teaching Questionnaire (LACTQ) for students, and structured interview schedules (SIS) for Heads of Departments and Deans of Faculties. They consisted of items that elicited information relevant to the problems under investigation. The questionnaires consisted of 62 items that related to male and female lecturers attitude and commitment to teaching in tertiary institutions. The structured interview schedule was used to buttress and support the responses got from the field.

Presentation and Analysis of Data.

The data collected is presented here as tables followed by logical deductions and analysis.

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant difference between the attitudes of male and female lecturers toward teaching in tertiary educational institutions.

Tables 1: T-test of difference between attitudes of male and female lecturers toward teaching in tertiary educational institutions

Subject	N	X	SD	DF	t-cal	T-crit	Level of significant	Decision
Male	1058	3.45	0.83	1989	0.25	1.96	0.05	Accept Ho
Female	933	3.44	0.96					

Table 1 shows that the calculated t-value of 0.25 is less than the t-critical values of 1.96 at degree of freedom (df) 1989 and 0.05 level of significance. We therefore, fail to reject the null hypothesis and uphold that:

There is no significant difference between the attitudes of male and female lecturers to teaching in tertiary institutions.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant difference between the commitment of male and female lecturers to teaching in tertiary educational institutions.

Tables 2: T-test on difference between the commitment of male and female lecturers and to teaching in the tertiary educational institutions.

Subject	N	X	SD	DF	t-cal	T-crit	Level of significant	Decision
Male	1058	2.09	8.50	1989	0.47	1.96	0.05	Accept Ho
Female	933	2.73	7.73					

Table 2 shows that the calculated values of 0.47 is less than the critical t-value of 1.96 at 1989 degree of freedom and 0.05 level of significance. We therefore fail to reject the null hypothesis and uphold that:

There is no significant difference between the level of commitment of male and female lectures to teaching in the tertiary institutions.

Hypothesis 3: There is no significant difference between the perceptions of students on the attitudes of male and female lecturers to teaching in tertiary institutions.

Table 3: T-Test on difference between the perceptions of students on male and female lecturers commitment to teaching in tertiary education institutions

Subject	N	X	SD	DF	t-cal	T-crit	Level of signif	Decision
Male	1058	3.37	1.28	1989	0.53	1.96	0.05	Accept Ho
Female	933	3.34	1.25					

Table 3 shows that the critical t-value of 0.53 is less than the critical t-value of 1.96 at degree of freedom 1989 and 0.05 level of significance. We therefore, fail to reject the null hypothesis and uphold that:

There is no significant difference between the perceptions of students on the commitment of male and female lecturers to teaching in the tertiary institutions.

Hypothesis 4: There is no significant difference in the level of commitment of male lecturers in the universities, polytechnics and colleges of education towards teaching.

Table 4: ANOVA on the level of commitment of male lectures in the universities, polytechnics and college of education towards teaching.

Source	DF	SS	S ²	F-cal	F-crit	Decision
Among group	2	6.17	0.11	1.87	3.17	Accept Ho
Within group	57	0.41	0.21			
Total	59	6.58				

Table 4 shows that calculated F-value of 1.87 is less than critical F-value of 3.17 at 2 degree of freedom and 0.05 level of significance. We, therefore, fail to reject the null hypothesis and uphold that:

There is no significant difference in the level of commitment of male lecturers in the universities, polytechnics and colleges of education towards teaching.

Hypothesis 5: There is no significant different in level of commitment of female lecturers in universities, polytechnics and college of education, towards teaching.

Table 5: ANOVA on the level of commitment of female lecturers in the universities, polytechnics and colleges of education to teaching.

Source	DF	SS	S ²	F-cal	F-crit	Decision
Among group	2	2.87	1.44	1.49	3.14	Accept Ho
Within group	63	60.59	0.96			
Total	65	63.46				

Table 5 shows that calculated F-value of 1.49 is less than critical F-value of 3.14 at 2 degree of freedom and 0.05 level of significance. We, therefore, fail to reject the null hypothesis and uphold that;

There is no significant difference in the level of commitment of female lecturers in universities, polytechnics and colleges of education, towards teaching.

Discussion of Findings

Lecturers attitudes to teaching

The study revealed that both male and female lecturers in tertiary institutions in the south East Zone of Nigeria exhibit positive attitude to teaching. This finding contradicts the views of Jimba (2002) and Nwana (1992) who observed that most lecturers in tertiary educational institutions relegate teaching to the background because researches are more highly rated in promotions than teaching. They also maintained that lecturers are not vigorously supervised in the course of their teaching and therefore tend towards spurning teaching.

It was found that lecturers do have some negative traits when it comes to teaching. For example, the study revealed that both male and female lecturers do not submit students results on time, read textbooks while teaching and hate giving extra lectures. However, the negative points are minor when compared with the overwhelming positive attitude revealed by this study.

The study also revealed that there are no significant differences between male and female lecturers' attitudes to teaching. This is significant because both male and female lecturers work in the same academic environment with similar conditions of service. Hence, their attitudes to teaching should not differ.

When lecturers exhibit positive attitudes to teaching they are bound to translate this into practical reality by putting in their best to educate children under their care. This they would do cheerfully and enthusiastically. The educational implication is that when teachers at whatever levels are highly motivated and supervised to some extent, they are bound to exhibit positive attitudes that will invariably translate into higher productivity and educational goals will be achieved.

Lecturers commitment to teaching:

The study revealed that males and females lecturing in the tertiary educational institutions exhibit high level of commitment to teaching. The finding is at variance with the views of Okeke (2001), Okeke and Oluwuo (2003), Essex (1992) and Ubulom (1998). They opined that most lecturers lack commitment to teaching because they perceive inequality in the system. Okeke specifically stated that because the university system rewards research and publication at the expense of teaching, faculty members lack commitment to teaching. Also Tanji (2001) stated that lecturers lack life job commitment and a strong union that can address issues of their profession. Nevertheless, the Deans and Head of Department interviewed differed with this view. They believe that lecturers are really committed to their jobs. The study maintains that lecturers in tertiary educational institutions have high level of commitment to teaching. The reasons for the high level commitment could stem from their personal determination to reciprocate government's effort to improve the lots of teacher in tertiary institutions; or that most lecturers would want to justify their pay at the end of the month by becoming totally committed to their duties.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The attitude and commitment of lecturers in tertiary educational institutions are relatively high. Gender is not an issue in terms of remuneration and advancement procedures, hence male and female lecturers put their best in making sure that quality teaching is actualized in the tertiary institutions.

It is therefore, recommended that university authorities should start operating advancement procedures that reward both teaching and research so that lecturers would be totally committed to their work. Also Deans and Heads of Department should assist the ethics committees to monitor the lecturers in their teaching so that they take their jobs more seriously.

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