

## Perception towards Level of Job Commitment of Public Secondary School Teachers in Ogun State, Nigeria

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### Abstract

*This paper investigated the perceived decline of teachers' job commitment as compared to the past in the late 80s and early 90s among the present public secondary schools teachers in Ogun State. The study adopted rational choice theory which helps to model teachers in decision making of choice and alternative (cost and benefits). Six former top retired education officers and former retired Teachers union officials were interviewed through Key Informant Interview and In-depth Interview respectively. The findings revealed 80s and 90s teachers were more committed to academic work unlike most present day teachers who do not have flair for teaching but rather majority live a flamboyant lifestyle. In addition, participants highlighted some reasons for the poor academic performance of public secondary school teachers such as government not strictly adherent to policies on education as well as low remuneration package which paved for teachers to engage in moonlighting. The study however recommends, however, for proper monitoring and inspection team to visit public secondary schools on a regular bases to discharge their duties appropriately and also total compliance of government with the recommendation of UNESCO policy of 26 percent budget on education.*

**Keywords:** job commitment, secondary school teachers, performance, government

## **Introduction**

The fallout of Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) brought about a decline of education in Nigeria (Igbuzor, 2006). The funding of the schools and colleges started becoming a problem and ever since, the situation has gone from bad to worse. The Nigeria Government has failed to fund education appropriately as shown in its budget of education which is far short of stipulated recommendation. In the last decade, the highest on Nigeria budget education was 10.7% in year 2015 as against the recommendation of UNESCO of 26% on education. Other years of the Nigeria's budget on education in the last 10 years has ranged from 5.6 to 10.5 percent (Olufemi, 2021 Bawalla, 2022). Almost all state administered schools and colleges are in a deplorable state (Akande, 2000). Most of the physical structures are in a state of total neglect and disrepair. The schools lack basic textbooks, library, laboratory equipment and other tools for imparting knowledge. Payment of salaries (especially for teachers) in a number of states is epileptic. Unlike before the SAP era which there was a level of satisfaction and commitment among teachers which translated to high academic performance for students, during this era, Government schools are operated on the basis of teacher/pupil ration of 1:40, salaries of teachers are well attractive and commensurate with their standard of living as well teaching is strictly based on those with educational certificate (Bawalla, 2021).

However, with the introduction and practice of SAP, the school system and the teaching profession are gradually derailing, that the remnant of Nigerian teachers are largely a bunch of disgruntled, disillusioned, frustrated and depressed professionals (Federal Ministry of Education, 2002). Lacking any motivation or encouragement, their output in terms of teaching is low. Although, the SAP was designed to boom the Nigeria economy because its aim is to restructure and diversify the productive base of the economy so as to reduce dependency on the oil sector and imports, to achieve fiscal and balance of payment viability as well as to promote non-inflationary economic growth. All these failed and led to mismanagement of Nigeria economy and invariably affected government funding on the educational sector of the country.

The commitment of secondary schools teachers in the Ogun State as reflected in students' performances shows that the commitment of teachers to academic work is below expectation due to a number of factors such as incessant industrial conflicts between teachers and state government (Bawalla, 2020). The state government and public secondary schools teachers have been at logger heads over issues the Ogun State chapter of National Union of

Teachers (NUT) identified as ‘Teachers Plight’ and the problems bedeviling education and teachers in the state. This includes, fluctuation in gross net pay of staff salaries; delayed promotion, non-adjustment of salaries after acquiring additional qualification; inability of state government to pay the agreed 27.5% federal government increment, teachers poor condition of service, delay in payment of teachers’ salaries and so on (NUT, 2013). In the 1998s and 1990s, public secondary schools in the Ogun State were known for excellent academic performances. Then, they usually have one of the best results in the West Africa Examination Council in the Nigeria. The rate at which students in terminal classes failed in recent times are alarming and have become incessant and this should be taken serious by the concerned authorities. For instance, according to the Department of Research, Planning and Statistics of Ministry of Education, Ogun State (2014), the performance of students with five (5) credits including English and mathematics in 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012 and 2013 are 13.9 percent, 11.4 percent, and 18.22 percent 19 percent and 26.5 percent respectively (Bawalla & Nafiu, 2018)

This, no doubt, accounts for the number of private secondary schools which has continued to increase tremendously. According to the Department of Research, Planning and Statistics in the Ministry of Education (2014), the number of private secondary schools in the Ogun State had increased enormously in the previous decade. Unfortunately, majority of these students who attended public schools come from the less-privileged in the society who cannot afford to send their wards to private schools. Government officials and administrators who are currently in charge of directing governance affairs attended public schools. Yet, they now take their children to private schools. However, public secondary schools in the Ogun State during epoch of 1980s and 1990s were known for excellent academic performances, with one of the best results in West Africa Senior School Certificate Examinations in the country. The rate at which students in terminal classes fail in recent times is alarming. In view of the foregoing, it is pertinent to examine the commitment of present day teachers in line with the student’s performance, the stakeholders’ roles as a factor to student’s performance as well as teachers working environment vis-à-vis policies on education.

### **Objective of the Study**

The objective of the study was to investigate the perceived decline of public secondary school teachers’ commitment to work as compared to the past (pre-1990s).

## **Empirical and Theoretical Positions**

### **Perception of Public Secondary School Teachers and Job Commitment**

Job commitment could be described as the extent to which employees like his/her work in the workplace. It is the level of favourableness or unfavourableness with which workers view their jobs (Werther & Davis, 1999). However, it is disheartening that today's public secondary school teachers are dissatisfied with their job due to some factors, ranging from instability in gross net pay of teachers' salaries, delay in staff promotion, failure to upgrade teachers' salaries after obtaining additional qualification or certificate; failure on the part of the Government to pay the agreed 27.5% Federal Government increment, teachers' poor and un-conducive environment of work, Government, delay in the payment of teachers' salaries, uncooperative parents and inadequate infrastructural facilities which include laboratory equipment and so on (Bawalla & Adenugba, 2021). The consequences of all these affect the perception of teachers and have become a contributing factor to teachers' job commitment in terms teachers getting late to work, absenteeism, undisciplined students and unwillingness of teachers to prepare lessons notes on time and poor performance of students in examinations (Bawalla, 2020). However, there is a relationship between teachers' level of job commitment and teachers' plights. The perception of today's teachers has largely been attributed to the poor performance of students in recent time in the Ogun State. Bawalla (2021) in the field of education identified some of the reasons for poor performance of students, which include following;

- (1) *Poor Remuneration for Teachers:* Rewards are germane and they play a vital role in the life of human beings (Omolawal & Bawalla, 2017). Remuneration entails the rewards that employees receive for services rendered to an organization. It a belief that teachers are poorly remunerated arising from the state of infrastructural facilities, delay in payment of salaries and promotion of teachers and the dilapidating state of facilities.
- (2) *Government's Misplaced Priorities:* The Government attaches more importance on some sector than others. For instance, placing more importance on workers in the oil sector and the salaries of politicians than investing in educational and agricultural sectors could be seen as misplaced priorities. We all know that education is the bedrock of the nation, and that development in the agricultural sector should not be undermined. In the educational system of Nigeria, past regimes placed too much importance on certificates, especially certificates of grammar

schools to the neglect of technical and commercial education. Misplaced priorities come in several other forms like approval of importation of tooth pick, importation of advanced technology equipment to public schools knowing fully that there are insufficient trained or qualified teachers to handle the equipment.

- (3) *Corruption or lack of integrity among some educational stakeholders/workers:* Corruption is like cancer in the system; it affects the entire structure and it is one of the major factors responsible for the decline in the quality of education in the country. Inspectorate officers and zonal education officers are not that sincere and honest any longer. This act of dishonesty is commonly found in the enrolment of new students through kickbacks and embezzlement of funds meant for projects in schools by government officials. Also, some teachers are often absent from school and there is a high level of ghost workers in the educational system. In consequence, school inspectors and supervisors have lost their integrity in most public schools.
- (4) *Promotion and Work Environment:* One of the benefits of teachers is promotion as it increases the salary of workers and makes them get assigned more responsibilities and position of authority, leading to a boost in their social status. Promotion gives teachers higher purchasing strength and opportunities to use their discretion in improving their competencies. According to Demaki (2012), promotions enhance job satisfaction because better pay and promotion enhance social prestige. Adegbite, Bawalla and Adedeji (2020) opine that employees' well-being is germane and good working environment, such as good offices, inspire workers and lead to good work performance. Good working environment includes: ventilation, well illuminated and good offices. Teachers in public school lack motivation and job satisfaction due to poor enrolment and delay in salary as well as lack of social amenities within the workplace (Okonkwo & Obineli, 2011)
- (5) *Unqualified teachers:* Most research on teacher education has linked low student success to a lack of expertise, which was caused by inadequacy of specialist teachers in schools (Akinduro, 2003). Producing quality teachers is one of the most difficult hitches or barriers to overcome in the educational system (Pelumo, 2007). According to the National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS, 2005) educational study, more than 49 percent of teachers in Nigeria are unqualified. It is, therefore, of paramount importance to examine the impact of teachers' qualifications on students' achievements. Poor academic achievement among students limits their potentials to compete effectively in an ever competitive global village.

- (6) *Lack of teachers' commitment:* Majority of teachers in recent time are not committed to the teaching job. Ajayi and Shofoyeke (2003) opine that factors like poor salary, delay in promotion and lack of job satisfaction are the major causes of the decline in teachers' commitment to their work. This leads to lack of enthusiasm to work, not attending to students promptly, and carelessness in handling school records among others (Bawalla & Rufai, 2021).
- (7) *Teachers and role conflict:* Due to a series of incessant industrial actions arising from teachers' plights, most teachers have divided their loyalty to their employer of labour as they have other engagements or businesses. Therefore, this has reduced the commitment of teachers and jeopardised the progress of the teaching profession.

Equally important to mention in relation to the perception and level of teachers job commitment, the secondary schools are faced with enormous obstacles in the education sector. Secondary education is important because it is an important link to tertiary education. Secondary education is where knowledge, skills, morals, culture, value and traits are acquired. All these attributes strategically position children for tertiary learning and teaching. Despite the role of secondary education, Ajayi (2004) and Omoregie (2005) note that learning and teaching at this stage is with a lot of dimensions and views. An overview of secondary education in Nigeria indicates that there are many problems that undermine the achievement of teaching and learning, and these range from inadequate financing inadequate and dilapidated infrastructural facilities, inadequate and low quality teachers, negative attitude of teachers, indiscipline of students, students' academic success suffers as a result of low-quality intakes, prevalence of examination malpractices, incidence of wastage and dilemma of disarticulation of schools.

### **The model of Job Commitment**

The Allen and Meyer's (2007) models of commitment correspond with different psychological states of employees. The perspective of the model was created for two reasons: first is the "to know the interpretation of the present state of research", and second "to establish a framework for future research". It should be noted that this study is strictly based on organizational commitment. The focus of the model is on the "mind set", that is, how employees are committed to their job.

*Affective Commitment:* If an employee has a positive emotional bond or feeling toward the organisation, it is referred to as affective loyalty (AC). AC is an aspect of corporate loyalty in which an employee firmly believes in the

company's priorities and wishes to stick with or continue as a member of one family within the organization. Employees who exhibit affective dedication are typically affected by demographic factors such as age, tenure, gender, and schooling. The obstacles with these characteristics can be seen but not well described and reported (Mowday, Porter & Steers, 2006).

*Continuance Commitment:* The continuance commitment is based on the “need” component or perhaps on the gains and losses for working in an organization. An employee may consider the gains he gets in an organization and decide not to leave the organization. The economic cost and social cost plays an important role in the employees’ decision whether to lose his/her membership or not. Employees do not really consider the positive cost to stay in the organization but take into account the availability of alternatives or options of better job opportunities.

*Normative Commitment:* The normative commitment is when an employee perceived or having a feeling of obligation with the organization. A good example is when an organization trains and invests in an employee and the employee feels a moral obligation to stay back and re-invest what the organization has imparted in him into the system. It may also come in the form of socialization processes or through family and the employee decides to be loyal to the organization that he/she works for.

## **Theoretical Framework**

### **Adams Smith’s Rational Choice Theory**

The rational choice theory is originated by a political economist and philosopher, Adam Smith. The theory is well known in disciplines like sociology, political science and economics. The rational choice theory basically address the economic cost and benefit why people will decide to act in a particular way. The theory is known as choice theory which provides understanding of modeling social and economic behaviour of employees. The theory helps to model human in decision making, most especially in the context of microeconomics. It also helps one to have a better understanding of the behaviour of a society in terms of individual actions as explained through rationality, in which choices are consistent because they are made according to scale of preferences The theory is based on rational choice about aggregate social behaviour of individuals’ actors on how decisions of individual are influenced. The theory focuses on the determinants of individual choices as well as preferences on ground among the available alternatives that allow them to state the option that they prefer.

However, the theory came up with some assumptions which are as follows;

- On the premise of basic assumption that rational choice entails decision making made by individuals actors which collectively produce aggregate social behaviour i.e. individual makes decision based on their own preferences and the constraints (or choice) they face.
- The theory also assume that an individual will decide on the action (or outcome) the most prefer (provided the outcomes are evaluated in terms of costs and benefits, the choice with the maximum net benefits will be chosen by the rational individual.
- Rational theory assisted in making rational decision which entails choosing among all available alternatives, the alternatives that the individuals prefer most.

Applying to this study at hand, it has been observed in the literature that the perception and level of job commitment of public secondary school teachers is relatively low somehow as some factors are attributed to the poor performances of students in public school as well as some challenges which may have contributed immensely to secondary education in Nigeria. One of the arguments on the perception and level of public secondary school teachers is the role conflicts of government with teachers (incessant strikes and industrial action between government and public secondary school teachers in the state), in which it is tagged teachers plights such as poor remuneration for secondary school teachers, lack of incentives, delay in payments of salaries and wages, unfavorable or unhygienic work environments, poor staff welfare packages, non-remittance of cooperative deductions on the part of the government, lack of motivation and inadequate infrastructural facilities which include laboratory equipment. All the aforementioned are indicators for job commitment in any organization. When this is lacking the commitment of employees reduced drastically and as such employees has options or alternative for a way of making economic gains in other to meet up with his or her reality expenses to take care of the home front. Also, the problems encountered in relation to secondary education in terms of inadequate funding, negative attitude of teachers, indiscipline of students, prevalence of examination malpractices and incidences of wastage such as government misplaced priorities could also been seen why individuals are rational and often decide to opt for better economic gains. Individuals have interest, different people with different interest and with different motives of purpose to actualize their dream. However, the era of frequent strikes by public secondary teachers agitating for different demands paved way for teachers' low commitment to academic work and perhaps resulting to absenteeism, late

coming, failure to assess students work, lack of sense of belonging and redundancy at work. All these are indicators of poor level of job commitment.

### **Methodology**

This research employed a descriptive survey design. The study is strictly based on qualitative approach and it was carried out in Ogun State, comprising both male and female Officials of Academic Staff Union of Secondary Schools, retired officials of Nigeria Union of Teachers and retired Educationist officers in the late 80s and early 90s. The state was chosen as a result the poor performance of students in West African School Certificate Examination Council (WASCE) in recent times which speaks volume about secondary schools teachers' commitment to academic work as well as the rift between the state government and the union in the state. The targeted population for this study was limited to members of retired Nigeria Union of Teachers Ogun State Chapter (NUT) and former educationist officers in the late 80s, 90s and 2000s in the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology. The rationale for the selection of Teachers Union in the state was due to the decline in academic excellence that the State was known for in the past. The retired educationist were selected as a results of their experiences in the administration and management as education officers as well as field officers while in active services who knows the in and out of public secondary education in State when on inspection and monitoring evaluation task while officials of Academic Staff Union of Secondary Schools represent the views of currently employed public secondary school teachers in Ogun State, since the Union is the umbrella body of public secondary school teachers. The researcher is of the view that this set of respondents are in the best position to give report on the perception and level of teachers job commitment among public secondary school teachers in the state. Two qualitative methods of data collection were utilized in this study, namely Key Informant Interview (KII's) and In-depth Interview (IDI's). These two methods were triangulated to obtain adequate and valid data. Six (6) KII's for retired union officials and Six (6) IDI's for retired educationist officers were conducted. Both the KIIs and IDIs involved face-to-face interactions between the researcher and respondents with pre-determined structured and unstructured questions. The interactions were recorded with the aid of tape recorder. The In-Depth Interviews gave room for flexibility and provided the opportunity to probe deeper on some key aspects about education.

The data analysis recorded interviews for both (KIIs and IDIs) discussions were transcribed for analysis. The transcription was completed with notes taken during the interactive session. The content and thematic analytical

method of identifying and bringing out the similar thoughts or distinct opinions are expressed across the two methods adopted, this was done in line with the focus of study on the perceived decline of teachers job commitment as compared to the past in late 80s and 90s and early 2000s. Information obtained was reported as phrases in quotes from the recorded expressions of the participants. The instrument used for data collection was In-depth Interview and Key Informant Interview designed for retired educationist officers and former NUT officials in late 80s and early 90s respectively. The participant were purposively selected and based on principle of Confidentiality of data, Beneficence to participants, Non-Maleficence to participants and Voluntariness.

## Results

### Commitment of Teachers to Work

The study attempted to assess secondary schools teachers' commitment to work in contemporary Ogun State public secondary schools. Responses from the KIIs and IDIs expatiate on the views of attitude of teachers to academic work.

*The first thing here is the orientation of teachers, early teachers in the 70s and 80s were not living a buoyant life, but today look around and see teachers, majority of them are living large in the society, thereby giving other things attention than their work. Most teachers these days do have their own businesses and this led to divided loyalty on the government side. (IDI, Male Ex-NUT Officials, 2019)*

A female retired Director in Ministry of Education has this to say:

*Majority of the present teachers do not have flair for teaching but perhaps take the advantage of picking up any job that comes their way due to high rate of unemployment. People now see teaching as a dumping ground for jobs, when one has stayed home for some time or years after graduating, the next option parents or close allies will suggest is, why not start with teaching as a stepping stone thereafter you get the desired job of your choice. This category of people dominates teaching profession in both our private and public schools and this definitely*

*teachers' attitude to work. (KII, Female Retired Educationist, 2019)*

Past executive member of National Union of Teachers in the 80s commented thus:

*The attitudes of teachers in the 70s 80s and some of in early 90s cannot be compared to the present crop of teachers, teachers in the 70s and 80s are committed and highly disciplined because they were taught and trained by the whites and British teachers and during that time we read all through from standard 1 to standard 6, the quality of teaching was highly commendable and those that end up as teachers has passion and devotion not what we are encountering now. (IDI, Male Ex-NUT Officials, 2019)*

Another respondent speak thus:

*Teachers during our time have passion for teaching been a good profession; we are proud to be teachers and committed to the growth and development of any student who they see if he/she is of serious type, not the kind of teachers we have now in teaching profession, the society and their students doesn't see them as their role mole any longer today's teachers are relegated to background because they see them as a debtor. In the past our students see us a role model. And aside that, most teachers in teaching profession are not qualified to be a teacher; they are not committed and devoted to teaching. (KII, Female Retired Educationist, 2019)*

The excerpts on the decline in the commitment of teachers to the teaching profession showed that the present state of teachers' attitude to academic work is below expectation. Akande (2000) notes that teachers are the least remunerated workers in Nigeria, and over the years, Nigerian teachers have been seen as prone to poverty such that the profession does not really attract first-class graduates. Many young graduates of today no longer wish to take up a career in teaching; many of them pick up chalk when their desired job is not forthcoming and decide to remain in the teaching profession till they find the job of their choice. Graduates with good qualification such as Ph.D. in English or Chemistry sometimes decide to pick up job in oil and gas sector

than jobs in university or colleges of education. Also, holders of M.Sc. in Sociology prefer to take up job in the banking industry. The present Nigeria society rates a newly employed clerical officer in the oil and gas sector above school principals with experience of over thirty years.

Also, it was revealed that the present state of public school teachers' attitude to academic work was not all that encouraging. It is noteworthy to mention the fact that teachers on their part used to be well respected among all other professions in the past unlike now which it is not so, some of the factors attributed to this include the fact that teachers in the 70s and 80s are highly committed and dedicated, they are proud of teaching profession as well as most not living a flamboyant life as compared to the present crop of teachers in our society, teachers not having flair for teaching and most were without education qualification but due to unemployment decided to pick teaching job up temporary. According to (Olulobe, 2005) the scholar had argued that professional teachers with degree holders in teaching qualification; holders of NCE or equipment qualification; holders of Teachers Grade 1 and 11 certificates and their equivalent; and holders of Advanced Technical and Commercial Certificates with teaching qualifications are ideal to be recruited to teaching profession and not non professional teachers with degree holders and holders of advanced and commercial certificates without teaching qualifications and auxiliary teachers; intermediate and craft certificate, Grade 111, Grade 1V etc. HSC, WASC, GCE etc which are in various secondary schools. The educational analysis carried out in Nigeria by National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS, 2005) indicated that more than 49percent of the teachers in Nigeria are unqualified. It is therefore of paramount importance to examine the impact of teachers' qualifications on students' achievement on a regular basis. Poor academic achievement among students limits their potential abilities to compete effectively in an ever increasingly competitive global village (Muraina & Bawalla, 2019)

### **Students Performance**

The study also attempted to inquire into the assessment of performance of students in terminal classes of SS3 in WASSCE in the last five years. Questions were asked on the woeful performance of students in WASSCE which has generated controversy and also worrisome for the officials in the educational sector and stakeholders.

A male respondent commented thus:

*The performance of students in WASSCE in recent time was very woeful, nothing to talk about at all. No more seriousness in the heart of the students coupled with some teachers not committed to academic work, how can a student performed credibly well when the school environment is not conducive, overpopulation of students in our classrooms, lack of adequate facilities and no textbooks in our libraries with rats and ants moving round in our laboratories with obsoles equipments. (KII, Male Retired Educationist, 2019)*

Another retired female educationist commented thus:

*The performance is no doubt a poor one, the parents, the teachers, government and students are all at fault. In the past, Primary 6 is compulsory for all primary pupils, and hardly will you see double promotion for any students to move from primary 4 to 6. Today, parents enforced proprietress or proprietorship to give their wards double promotion. Parents are in hurry, they want their wards to complete education in no time. In education you do not rush, our children are pushed around; this is a major problem on the parent side. (KII, Female Retired Educationist, 2019)*

There was a woeful performance from students in recent times owing to a number of factors. The factors include: over-population of students in the class, unsuitable learning environment in schools, doubled promotional exercise for students who do not deserve such and constant change in school curriculum. In addition to this, the facilities in most schools are dilapidated and inadequate. Nigeria Primary Education Commission (1998) also argues that teachers' working environment in Nigeria is the most impoverished of all sectors of the labour force. Kazeem (1999) advocated that greater attention be paid to improving teachers' working conditions in order to increase educational efficiency. To enhance students' learning, the availability of teaching and learning resources, as well as the general classroom setting, should be improved.

### **Stakeholders Role as a Factor to Students Performance**

The study also sought the position of the union officials as part of the stakeholders in the educational sector on how it affects the students' performance, most especially those in the terminal classes of SS3. Two former National Union of Teachers (NUT) executive have this to say:

*Though students are not also serious because of the attraction to recreational activities in the society, the government is not fair enough, they ought to make education attractive by giving awards to students who emerge as the best in quiz, debates etc. Students prefer to engage in recreational activities, like cultural dance, sports and entertainment, because they knew all these attract lots of instant benefits to students and parent will also be proud of them. For instance, our government pretends to promote best students; best students in our secondary schools were given a laptop worth of 50,000 each. Whereas our government, communities and multinational companies give excellent awards to extracurricular activities, like playing football, dancing etc. (IDI, Male Ex-NUT Official, 2019)*

*The attitude of some parents to academic is not encouraging at all, this can be witnessed among parents who are not enlightened or perhaps illiterate, all they care is their wards to be through with SSCE, thereby enroll such wards to an apprentices work. They do not care whether their wards read or not, no proper monitoring since the government is responsible for payment of their WASSCE in terminal class, had it been the parents are responsible for this task, there will be an improvement in WASSCE result because parents will not only follow up on their wards but also ensure that they provide a good lesson teachers and extra classes for their wards. (IDI, Male Ex-NUT Official, 2019)*

The government, teachers, parents and students are all seen as stakeholders in the educational sector, they are all have roles to play towards actualisation of educational goals. The need for the government to do the needful by focusing on students' academic work rather than giving attraction to recreational activities in the society which seems to be of great in importance to the

government (Bawalla, 2022). Demaki (2012), had argued that it would be a misplaced priority if government is not fair enough in rewarding and making education attractive by giving awards to students who emerge as the best in quiz competition, literary and debates in the public secondary schools but rather lay emphasis or much attention in rewarding students for recreational activities such as dancing, entertainment and sports. This to the scholar sees as demotivating and demoralizing other serious students to be committed to their academic work. This is because education is the bedrock of any nation towards the actualization of the nation's building towards development. Also parents are expected to monitor their wards and follow up on their school activities as this will enhance students' performance in the terminal class.

### **Teachers working Environment**

The study also sought to know the teachers working environment. The retired unionist officials and educationist officials responded thus;

A respondent describes the situation thus:

*The Yoruba's will say that 'ori dundun lo mu ori ya' what do we have in our secondary schools this days, no facilities, classrooms and offices are leaking, staff room is nothing to talk about, the working environment of teachers is below average, some teachers even use under the tree has their office, all these affected the status of education in State. There is no meaningful and effective teaching in our schools anymore except few schools. (KII, Female Retired Educationist, 2019)*

A respondent had this to say;

*Primarily, every worker needs to be motivated for effective productivity, the working environment is a motivating factor and source inspiration to teaching, teachers are not happy and can't perform or discharge its duties effectively because the working environment is very poor, the teaching premises is not conducive and also not appropriate for there to be any meaningful teaching. (IDI, Male ASUSS Officials, 2019)*

Also in another way, another respondent further justify the above foregoing on the assessment of teachers in public secondary schools in the state,

*The UNESCO subscribes that student ratio in the primary school is a teacher to 35 students and in secondary school a teacher to 40 students. Because our government is running free education, we are witnessing a teacher to 150 students in our secondary schools, what meaningful academic studies students will get. There can't be effective teaching in that atmosphere, these also limit or lessens the performance of teachers in our public school. (IDI, Female ASUUSS Officials, 2019)*

A male respondent responded thus:

*I want to tell you, for the past six terms, schools have not be giving running cost and we are saying no students should pay for any PTA levy, the working environment isn't okay at all, just imagine this how do you intend to curb examination malpractices when government refuses to pay running cost, where will a principal get money to buy chalk, registers and diary for students and no principal dear not sent any students out of school because government is claiming to be running free education. That is why you see most parents withdrawing their wards away from public secondary schools and putting them in private school, is simply because of the decadence in our public secondary school. Policies are supposed to be formulated in tandem to the reality of what is on ground. (IDI, Male ASUSS Officials, 2019)*

A society that does not manage its educational sector properly like Nigeria is preparing to increase the level of illiteracy. Drawing from the above statements, it can be deduced that the state of infrastructural facilities in the state public school was not adequately alright. This implies that there are poor facilities of infrastructures in state public primary and secondary schools and this was supported by scholars such as Sanusi (1998) and Adelabu (2003) which opined that facilities in most schools are dilapidated and inadequate, Nigeria Primary Education Commission, (NPEC, 1998) also argued that the teacher's working environment in Nigeria has been described as the most impoverished of all sectors of the labour force. Kazeem, (1999) also assert that there should be improvements in the supply of teaching and learning materials and general classroom environment to improve student learning

towards the actualization of both students and teachers in achieving the desired results not only for themselves but for the society at large. On the aspect of government not funding the school adequately, it has even been the practice of states to make provision for secondary education from the allocation to the education sector, which in most cases has been in form of running grant to schools, on term or session basis and depending on the size of enrolment of each school. Unfortunately, complaints of inadequate fund for the development of secondary education in Nigeria abound, in literature (Omoregie, 2005; Federal Ministry of Education, 2003), which is attributed to lack of inadequate as well as decay infrastructural facilities in secondary schools (Omoregie, 2005; Ahmed, 2003). To worsen the situation, the limited allocation to secondary education is being threatened by increase in enrolment as a result of the rise in the demand for it (Federal Ministry of Education, 2007; Jaiyeoba & Atanda, 2003).

Also from the above findings, it can be adduced that teachers are not motivated by their employer, the public schools witness over population of students in classes, lack of adequate facilities for students and government not in compliance with UNESCO policy on education. This support, Kazeem (1999) and Akinwumi (2000) found that private school teachers appear more motivated than teachers in public schools. Regular payment of salaries and much lower pupil-teacher ratios are key reasons for this. Adebeyeje (2000) found that the conditions for teaching are more conducive in private secondary schools especially because the maximum class size is only 30 in private schools compared to well over 80 public schools. It has also been observed that in all discourses that student of public secondary schools in the state have extremely large class size which is against the required standard. It is noteworthy that the National Policy on Education (NPE) recommends that an ideal classroom should contain 40 pupils and a teacher must be in charge at a time although this deviates from the UNESCO's recommendation of teacher-pupil ratio of 1:30, which is believed would make teaching and learning efficient and effective better than a larger class. But unfortunately, this is less so, as there are classrooms operated in ratio 1:90, especially in the State schools. In fact, in states where they brandish the political slogan "30 pupils per classroom", three arms of students are put in a class for a single teacher to handle and in most cases, there is no helper to assist with classroom control. While Sofolahan (2000) was reviewing the NPE, he pointed out that most urban centers violate the teacher/pupil ratio of 1:40 as there are 80 pupils in classroom built for 40 pupils in primary schools and over 60 in classes built for 40 pupils in secondary schools.

### **Policy on Education**

On the issue of policy on education, respondents of both former member of NUT and retired educationist were asked about their taught on National Policy on Education of (1981/1986) whether it enhances teachers commitment to academic work compared to present policies in education.

The respondents speak thus:

*Usually the National Policy on Education of 1981\1986 enhance teachers commitment to academic work compared to frequent changes in policies we are experiencing in recent time, changing from 6-3-3-4 to 9-3-4 wasn't the best as it affect the students and school curriculum by introducing vocational subjects to secondary school. (IDI, Male Ex-NUT Officials, 2019)*

Another respondent speaks further:

*Policy or no policy, the policies are still almost the same thing, just a slight modification, officials then are not as corrupt as compared to officers now, in this present country, the problem is not associated with the teachers or policy makers alone, is an institutional problem, most government officials use this various policy to exploits money or fine tune this policy that will short change activities of teachers which pave way for loophole for teachers to exploits, when teachers are found wanting, it doesn't get to the office for the officials to take appropriate disciplinary actions on default workers, majority of officers in charge are corrupt having been owned months of salaries, and have a lot of commitment begging for attention in their various homes. (KII, Female, Retired Educationist, 2019)*

A male retired educationist explains the situation more succinctly as follows:

*I can tell you that the present policy on education in Nigeria as of today is well developed and structured in such a way that the policy state teachers will be highly*

*motivated and rewarded, efficient classrooms for our student, teachers attending workshops and seminars as at when due, government to produce intellectual and professional teachers and so on, but the problem is that our leaders do not have the political will to abide to comply the policies, they defaulted in so many ways, leaving our teachers to live in penury and agony. (KII, Male, Retired Educationist, 2019)*

*It is porous, the government alternating curriculum often affects students' performance by not covering syllabus and other related factors. The curriculum is always reviewed at intermittently although some had argued that the frequent changes in our curriculum are to favour the northerner's. (IDI, Male Ex-NUT Officials, 2019)*

The study also sought to know about the policy 1981/86 policy on education as compared to the present, it was revealed that the 1981/86 policy was strictly adhered to and very effective, still very much in use at present but with a slight modification and been revised. Implicit from the above, it was deduced government policy on education in the last three decades has not been stable as well as also affecting both primary and secondary curriculums. These according Ediho (2009) governments adopt 6-3-3-4 policy on education; the government had planned secondary education of six-year duration in two stages; junior secondary school and senior secondary school stages, each being of three year duration. Students who leave school at the end of the junior high school stage may then go on to an apprenticeship system or some other scheme for out-of school vocational training. The senior secondary school will be for those able and willing to have a complete six-year secondary education. Since the national policy on education came into operation, it has become universally accepted as the reference point for the development of secondary education in Nigeria.

According to Uwaifo & Uddin (2009) the 6-3-3-4 system of education came into being in Nigeria in 1983 with the primary focus of meeting the educational needs of its citizenry and equipping the youths with sellable skills that will make them to be self-reliant. Twenty-five years after (in year 2008), a new system of education called the Universal Basic Education (UBE) otherwise known as the 9-3-4 was re-introduced, whose curriculum is expected to meet the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by 2020. The UBE scheme popularly known as 9-3-4 curriculum means that, under the system, the Nigerian child shall have 9 years of primary education, 3 years of

senior secondary school education, and 4 years of university or tertiary education. According to Uwaifo & Udidin (2009), the new 9-3-4 system of Education curriculum which took off in 2006 has the first nine years of basic and compulsory education up to the JSS 3 level, three years in the senior secondary school, and four years in the tertiary institution. The system was designed to streamline the over-crowded nature of subjects offered at the basic education level. Furthermore, under the 9-3-4 educational system, primary school level shall (covering children aged 6 to 11) consist of three lower basic and three middle basic classes

On the 6-3-3-4 system, emphasis is placed on mathematics, English, and science, while electives such as Agricultural Science, Home Economics and Arabic are offered. Like the 6-3-3-4 scheme, the 9-3-4 system stresses the importance of non-academic vocational pursuits by introducing pre-vocational studies at the upper basic level. The Senior Secondary School curriculum is currently under review and was scheduled to be introduced to schools in 2011 (Adenipekun, 2009). Also, on the aspect of respondents reacting to the frequent change in schools curriculum, according to Ogunlade (2011), the secondary education programme is of a very high level, but in order to get the highest content out of the curriculum, the classroom teacher should not be overlooked. This is due to the fact that the instruction is implemented in the classroom with the supervision of the teacher (Akinsolu, 2004).

### **Advice for the Government on Improvement of Students' Performance and Teachers' Job Commitment**

Finally, the respondents were asked to give advice for government on the improvement of students' performance and teachers' job commitment. Here are the comments of the respondents:

*My candid advice to the Government on teachers' commitment to academic work for better improvement on students' performance; the Government should do the needful by paying teachers' salary regularly, promotion should not be delayed further, remuneration should be given to teachers as and when due to encourage further interest in the job, teachers should be motivated. **IDI, Male Ex-NUT Officials, 2019)***

*Rehabilitation of all public secondary schools in the state should be done. Government should value teachers*

*because where they are today, teachers play a significant role; all leaders pass through teachers. So why do they deny teachers payments, promotions and allowances? (IDI, Male Ex-NUT Official, 2019)*

*The monitoring and inspectorate unit from the ministries should be committed and devoted by discharging their duties diligently, not corrupt officials who inspect schools around and take bribes from school principals. These inspectors should also be assessing the performance of schools. (KII, Male, Retired Educationist, 2019)*

*The Government should adhere to UNESCO's policy/specification by devoting 26% of the budget to education. With that, there will be a massive development in our schools and students' performance will increase tremendously. (KII, Male, Retired Educationist, 2019)*

The need for this question arises as a result of the teachers' challenges and issues rose so far. And where there are challenges, it is expected to be a kind of proffering solutions, thus there is a need to probe more on the way forward to the teachers' plights. With respect to the rational choice theory, when workers are not well paid, it leads to lack of commitment on the part of the workers thereby prompting them to venture into moonlighting by engaging in other secondary jobs (Bawalla, 2022).

From the extracts above, a retired educationist raised the issue about monitoring and inspection in schools. According to Ayodele (2002), cited in Ekundayo (2010), the heads of departments are the internal supervisors; principals, vice-principals and officials in the Ministry of Education are said to be the external supervisors and are saddled with responsibilities to ensure high standards are assured and maintained, and more importantly ensure schools are run in accordance with stipulated rules and regulations. Most heads are no more committed to ensuring that teachers discharge their duties appropriately. Teachers' lack of a lackadaisical attitude to work; in the forms of lateness, absenteeism, negligence of duty and many others, affects the performance of students, most especially students in terminal classes. Also, on the part of the Ministry of Education, their officials make matters worse as their visits to schools are not effective as such they arrive late and are

always concerned about the benefits they can get from the treasury of the Government or the schools they visit. Hence, it is difficult to scold erring school teachers or principals and the end result of this is a decline in the educational system.

### **Conclusion and Recommendation**

The aim of this study was to examine the perception towards level of job commitment of public secondary schools teachers in Ogun state. The researchers had conducted the study among the former NUT officials in the 80s, 90s and early 2000 as well as former education officers in that epoch. Drawing from the findings, I came to the conclusion that teaching education in the past was far better than the 21<sup>st</sup> century of teaching profession as well as government not totally in support and funding of secondary education which could account for a lot of factors as rightly mentioned and discussed in the findings of the result. Reflecting on the foregoing in relation to rational choice theory, the level of job commitment among teachers in Ogun State is relatively low due to the role conflicts between the teachers' union and the Government on some germane issues such as lack of incentives, delay in payments of salaries and wages, unfavorable or unhygienic work environments and poor staff welfare packages. All these paved way for some basic assumptions of rational choice whereby individuals makes certain decisions based on their own preferences and constraints that they face. This has somehow led to moonlighting among public secondary school teachers, thereby engaging in secondary jobs while their primary job suffers. However, based on the advice of the former educationists and officials of the NUT, the study recommends that there is a need for the Government to do the needful for secondary schools and teachers in terms of prompt and regular payment of salary and other entitlements, proper monitoring and inspection team to visit schools on regular bases with utmost in discharging their duties appropriately, total compliance of government with the recommendation of UNESCO policy of 26 percent on education.

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