

SCHOOL COLLEGIALLY AS PREDICTORS OF TEACHERS' JOB COMMITMENT IN STATE PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN SOUTH EAST, NIGERIA

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Abstract

The study examined school collegiality as predictors of teachers' job commitment in state public secondary schools in South East, Nigeria. Two research questions guided the study and two null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance. The study adopted correlational research design. The population of the study consist 33,570 teachers in 1,410 state public secondary schools in 21 education zones in South East, Nigeria. The sample of 1,678 teachers in 282 state public secondary schools in 21 education zones in South East, Nigeria was used for the study. Simple random sampling technique was used for the study. The instruments for data collection are questionnaire titled: School Collegiality Questionnaire (SCQ) and Teachers' Job Commitment Questionnaire (TJCQ). The instruments were subjected to face and construct validation. Face validation was done by three experts. The reliability of the instrument was done using Cronbach Alpha method and the average coefficients were established at 0.77 for SCQ and 0.84 for TJCQ. Simple linear regression statistical tool was used to answer the research questions and test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The findings of the study revealed that ethical collegiality and interpersonal collegiality positively and significantly predicted teachers' job commitment in state public secondary schools in South East, Nigeria. The study concluded that school collegiality is a positive and significant predictor of teachers' job commitment in state public secondary schools in South East, Nigeria. Based on the findings, the study recommended that school authorities in charge of state public secondary schools in South East, Nigeria should inculcate good practices of ethical collegiality as it will help to school staff trust each other, share helpful teaching tools and talk openly about difficult issues leading to improved teachers' job commitment in state public secondary schools in South East, Nigeria.

Keywords: School collegiality, teachers' job commitment, state public secondary schools, South East, Nigeria

Introduction

Any society striving for restructuring and molding the character of its members economically, socially, morally and emotionally invest hugely in formal education. Formal education is delivered in school settings through primary, secondary and tertiary institutions of learning. The formal learning institution in which learners receive post-basic education is the secondary school. Secondary education is the intermediary between the primary and tertiary levels of education which train and supply middle-level manpower required for the development of the society. Secondary education equips its recipients with moral, intellectual honesty, respect for persons, compassion and courage and above all capacity, to live a righteous life. Secondary level of education is categorized into public and private schools. The concern of the study which the public secondary schools are established and controlled by the government through various ministries, commissions or boards, but is managed by the principal. The principals give direction and lead to achieve objectives, ensure the implementation of school plants with its facilities. Uke et al. (2024) opined that the leadership behaviour of the school principals influence teachers' job commitment.

Commitment is when individuals experience responsibility for the outcome of their work. Committed teachers complete their tasks diligently and are also willing to sacrifice their time and personal agenda whenever their attention is needed for the achievement of the school goals. The teachers need to be committed not only to their students but to the school authority as a whole. Committed teachers put their school and students first together with their personal needs and wants. Committed teachers are punctual and regular at work in such a way that they get to their schools on time and they are present on all working days, attendance at meetings and all other school functions such as assemblies, sports days and music festivities among others (Okaforcha et al., 2025). Teachers motivate the students and discover that not every child will learn in the same way and that they need to vary their teaching methods. Some teachers are committed to perform their duties without depending on any teacher or principal.

Teachers' job commitment is crucial for fostering productive and supportive educational environment that benefits both students and the broader school community. Ifediorah Okeke and Okaforcha (2019) asserted that job commitment in teachers also encompasses their emotional and intellectual involvement in their teaching tasks, which directly affects students' outcomes and school effectiveness. A committed teacher is actively engaged in their work, showing a high level of involvement in planning lessons, delivering instruction and participating in school activities (Ughamadu et al., 2024). Teachers with high job commitment are focused on enhancing students' learning outcomes, often going beyond the standard curriculum to meet the needs of their students. Okoli et al. (2024) highlighted that committed teachers are more likely to engage in innovative practices, work beyond stipulated hours and take personal responsibility for students' success. This commitment area involves two essential components namely pride in one's being in the teaching job and a strong desire for professional development. In fact, after joining the profession they

should fully understand as long as they are there, they have to develop pride knowing that this is a Nobel job charged with great responsibilities as the society hands over its students to this system for their wholesome education. Obi et al. (2025) posited that job commitment in teachers involves a proactive approach in lesson delivery, students' mentoring and participation in school development activities. It is characterized by a teacher's continuous effort to fulfill their professional responsibilities and obligations, reflecting a strong attachment to their institution and students.

Contextually, the researcher referred to teachers' job commitment as their willingness to dedicate effort toward students' achievement and institutional goals. It is the dedication that teachers believe or perceive towards particular work and the job they carry out in the school. It should be noted however that teachers do not automatically give their best performances or abilities to the achievement of the school goals and objectives. Fostering commitment among teachers is important because teachers, who are highly committed stay longer, perform better, actively involved in the work and engage in collegial relationships. Thus, collegial relationships also known as collegiality is a friendly relationship between staff that work together.

For collegiality to thrive, the school environment and instructional climate would be conducive for principal, teachers and students to express a shared vision that will enable every member of the school community to succeed. Member of the school community found here feel so free to learn from others who are better in what they do. Principals can work as a team to evaluate and modify the curriculum, improvise for instructional materials, handle teachers and students' discipline without any feeling of threat. Esiaba (2023) however, defined collegiality as individuals' involvement with their peers on any level, be it intellectual, moral, political, social, and/or emotional. Esiaba further list the components of collegiality to include ethical collegiality, interpersonal collegiality, professional collegiality, social collegiality, leadership collegiality, emotional collegiality, mentorship collegiality, administrative collegiality and intellectual collegiality. In the words of Edo and Bulopakaye (2024), collegiality has a friendly, collaborative effect and can be compared to a large family, that is, a clan, where people have a lot in common and strong bonds of loyalty. They added that collegiality is categorized as professional collegiality, interpersonal collegiality, social collegiality, mentorship collegiality, ethical collegiality and leadership collegiality. Edo and Bulopakaye further maintained that the collaboration and cooperation in schools would as a source of motivation to sustain its practices when accompanied by recognition of good job.

School collegiality is the cooperative relationship of teachers in schools. Hossein and Aziz (2023) reiterated that school collegiality is the cooperative relationship and collaboration between the principal and other staff. It involves mutual respect, shared responsibilities, and a supportive atmosphere contributing to a positive to a positive and effective school environment. School collegiality can often lead to improved communication, teamwork and the collective pursuit of

common goals in school. Hossein and Aziz enumerated the components of school collegiality to include interpersonal collegiality, emotional collegiality, ethical collegiality, leadership collegiality, mentorship collegiality, administrative collegiality, professional collegiality, social collegiality and intellectual collegiality. Hence, collegiality is the means to effective teamwork.

Contextually, the researcher referred to school collegiality as the cooperative, respectful, and friendly relationship among teachers, often characterized by shared authority, teamwork, and mutual support in school. It acts as an organizational ethos essential for fostering teamwork, trust, and productive collaboration in schools. Collegiality is friendship, caring and respect for work mates. It is the cooperative relationship of colleagues. It stimulates enthusiasm among teachers and reduces emotional stress and burnout. In this study, collegiality was delimited to ethical collegiality and interpersonal collegiality.

Ethical collegiality refers to the promotion of ethical behaviour and principles in academic relationships. It involves fostering a collaborative environment where principals share a commitment to moral values, integrity, and responsible conduct. Eze et al. (2024) asserted that ethical collegiality encourages mutual respect, honesty and accountability among teachers, contributing to a positive and trustworthy learning environment. This type of collegiality emphasizes the importance of upholding ethical standards and values in all aspects of academic interactions. In essence, Ikegbusi et al. (2025) noted that ethical collegiality forms the foundation for a principled and harmonious working environment where the school principal and teachers can collaborate with confidence and integrity. Thus, ethical collegiality promotes good interpersonal collegiality/relationships in schools.

Interpersonal collegiality refers to the positive and collaborative relationships among individuals within an academic setting. It emphasizes effective communication, mutual respect and supportive interactions between the principal and the teaching staff. Obeta (2025) noted that in an environment characterized by interpersonal collegiality, people work well together, share ideas, and contribute to a positive workplace culture. This type of collegiality is crucial for building a sense of camaraderie and creating a collaborative atmosphere where people work together harmoniously. Okaforcha et al. (2025) asserted that interpersonal collegiality is crucial for creating an academic environment where individuals feel valued, supported and motivated to collaborate effectively. Thus, interpersonal collegiality breeds improved job commitment in schools.

Teachers' level of commitment to their jobs in state public secondary schools in South East, Nigeria appears to be fluctuating. The multiplier effects of the declining level of job commitment of teachers are visible in their level of dedication to their daily tasks as they engage in more responsibilities without adequate mentorship or guidance from the principals. The unethical and uncommitted attitude of teachers towards their job might be traceable to inadequate practices of collegiality which might be demotivating factors among teachers in state public secondary schools

in South East, Nigeria. The poor practices of collegiality in state public secondary schools in South East, Nigeria may lead to teachers' low productivity and poor performance which may also breed misunderstanding, suspicion, mistrust, rumors, creates conflict between the management and members of teachers which might bring out low commitment of teachers. As a result, some state public secondary schools in South East, Nigeria seem not to be living up to the expected standard due to low level of commitment from teachers to school activities. The low level of commitment from teachers might have resulted to teachers' truancy in the schools, unseriousness with class work on the part of the teacher, lack of motivation, insubordination to authorities, withdrawal of teachers from the profession, poor teachers' and students' performances among others. This prompted the researcher to determine school collegiality as predictors of teachers' job commitment in state public secondary schools in South East, Nigeria.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of the study is to examine school collegiality as predictors of teachers' job commitment in state public secondary schools in South East, Nigeria. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. determine the predictive value of ethical collegiality on teachers' job commitment in state public secondary schools in South East, Nigeria.
2. find out the predictive value of interpersonal collegiality on teachers' job commitment in state public secondary schools in South East, Nigeria.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What is the predictive value of ethical collegiality on teachers' job commitment in state public secondary schools in South East, Nigeria?
2. What is the predictive value of interpersonal collegiality on teachers' job commitment in state public secondary schools in South East, Nigeria?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses will be tested at 0.05 level of significance:

1. Ethical collegiality does not significantly predict teachers' job commitment in state public secondary schools in South East, Nigeria.
2. Interpersonal collegiality does not significantly predict teachers' job commitment in state public secondary schools in South East, Nigeria.

Research Methods

The study was carried out in state public secondary schools in South East, Nigeria. Two research questions guided the study and two null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance. The study adopted correlational research design. The population of the study consist 33,570 teachers in 1,410 state public secondary schools in 21 education zones in South East, Nigeria. The sample of 1,678 teachers in 282 state public secondary schools in 21 education zones in South East, Nigeria was used for the study. Simple random sampling technique was used for the study. The instruments for data collection are questionnaire titled 'School Collegiality Questionnaire (SCQ) and Teachers' Job Commitment Questionnaire (TJCQ).' The instruments were subjected to face and construct validation. Face validation was done by three experts, one in Measurement and Evaluation, two in the Department of Educational Foundations, all in the Faculty of Education, Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University, Igbariam Campus while construct validation was carried out with Principal Component Analysis approach using SSPS version 26 and the results showed that the construct validity was met. The reliability of the instrument was done using Cronbach Alpha method and the average coefficients were established at 0.77 for SCQ and 0.84 for TJCQ. Direct method of data administration was utilized by the researcher together with nine research assistants. Out of 1,678 copies of the instrument administered, 1,597 copies representing 95% of the instrument were correctly completed and returned. Simple linear regression statistical tool was used to answer the research questions and test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

Results

Research Question One: What is the predictive value of ethical collegiality on teachers' job commitment in state public secondary schools in South East, Nigeria?

Table 1: Summary of Simple Regression Analysis on the Predictive Value of Ethical Collegiality on Teachers' Job Commitment in State Public Secondary Schools in South East, Nigeria

	Unstandardized	Std. Dev.	Standardized	Decision
	β	β	β	
Constant	25.318	5.265		
Ethical Collegiality	0.592	0.314	0.581	Positive
r	0.581			
r ²	0.543			
Adj. r ²	0.502			

The summary of the simple regression analysis as shown in Table 1 indicated that the regression line has a positive intercept as presented by the constant value of 25.318. This means that if all the variables are held constant or fixed (zero) at the expense of ethical collegiality, teachers' job commitment will be valued at 25%. The analysis showed that ethical collegiality positively predict teachers' job commitment in state public secondary schools in South East, Nigeria as shown by the regression coefficient ($r = 0.581$). However, the standardized beta was also values at $\beta = 0.581$ which revealed that ethical collegiality is a positive predictor of teachers' job commitment in state public secondary schools in South East, Nigeria. This implies that a unit increase in ethical collegiality led to 58% increases in teachers' job commitment in state public secondary schools in South East, Nigeria. The coefficient of determination (r^2) value of 0.543 indicated that the explanatory power of the variable was moderately strong. This implied that 54% of the variations in teachers' job commitment in state public secondary schools in South East, Nigeria were accounted for by the variations in ethical collegiality. The adjusted r^2 supported the claim of the r^2 with a value of 0.502 indicating that 50% of the total variation in teachers' job commitment was explained by ethical collegiality. Thus, adjusted r^2 supported the statement that the explanatory power of teachers' job commitment moderately depends on ethical collegiality in state public secondary schools in South East, Nigeria.

Research Question Two: What is the predictive value of interpersonal collegiality on teachers' job commitment in state public secondary schools in South East, Nigeria?

Table 2: Summary of Simple Regression Analysis on the Predictive Value of Interpersonal Collegiality on Teachers' Job Commitment in State Public Secondary Schools in South East, Nigeria

	Unstandardized	Std. Dev.	Standardized	Decision
	β	β	β	
Constant	28.156	4.367		
Interpersonal Collegiality	0.635	0.301	0.623	Positive
r	0.623			
r^2	0.561			
Adj. r^2	0.534			

The summary of the simple regression analysis as shown in Table 2 indicated that the regression line has a positive intercept as presented by the constant value of 28.156. This means that if all the variables are held constant or fixed (zero) at the expense of interpersonal collegiality, teachers' job commitment will be valued at 28%. The analysis showed that interpersonal collegiality positively

predict teachers' job commitment in state public secondary schools in South East, Nigeria as shown by the regression coefficient ($r = 0.623$). In the same vein, the standardized beta was also values at $\beta = 0.623$ which revealed that interpersonal collegiality is a positive predictor of teachers' job commitment in state public secondary schools in South East, Nigeria. This implied that a unit improvement in interpersonal collegiality led to 62% improvements in teachers' job commitment in state public secondary schools in South East, Nigeria. The coefficient of determination (r^2) value of 0.561 indicated that the explanatory power of the variable was moderately strong. This implied that 56% of the variations in teachers' job commitment in state public secondary schools in South East, Nigeria were accounted for by the variations in interpersonal collegiality. The adjusted r^2 supported the claim of the r^2 with a value of 0.534 indicating that 53% of the total variation in teachers' job commitment was explained by interpersonal collegiality. Thus, adjusted r^2 supports the statement that the explanatory power of teachers' job commitment moderately depends on interpersonal collegiality in state public secondary schools in South East, Nigeria.

Test of Hypotheses

Hypothesis One

H₀₁: Ethical collegiality does not significantly predict teachers' job commitment in state public secondary schools in South East, Nigeria.

Table 3: Test of Significance on the Simple Regression Analysis on Significant Predication of Ethical Collegiality on Teachers' Job Commitment in State Public Secondary Schools in South East, Nigeria.

	Unstandardized β	Std. Dev. β	Standardized β	t-value	p-value	Decision
Constant	25.318	5.265		17.512	0.000	
Ethical Collegiality	0.592	0.314	0.581	20.486	0.000	Significant
r	0.581					
r^2	0.543					
Adj. r^2	0.502					
F	33.708				0.000	

The summary of the test of significance of simple regression analysis as shown in Table 3 showed that the regression line is held at constant at the value of 25.318(25%), the simple regression

coefficient (r) is valued at 0.581(58%) while the r^2 is valued at 0.543(54%) and Adjust r^2 is valued at 0.502(50%). The F-ratio associated with regression is valued at 33.708, while the t-test is valued at 20.486 and the p-value = 0.000. Since p-value (0.000) is less than the specified level of significance 0.05, the study therefore rejected the null hypothesis that ethical collegiality does not significantly predict teachers' job commitment in state public secondary schools in South East, Nigeria and accepted the alternative hypothesis that ethical collegiality significantly predicts teachers' job commitment in state public secondary schools in South East, Nigeria.

Hypothesis Two

H₀₂: Interpersonal collegiality does not significantly predict teachers' job commitment in state public secondary schools in South East, Nigeria.

Table 4: Test of Significance on the Simple Regression Analysis on Significant Predication of Interpersonal Collegiality on Teachers' Job Commitment in State Public Secondary Schools in South East, Nigeria.

	Unstandardized β	Std. Dev. β	Standardized β	t-value	p-value	Decision
Constant	28.156	4.367		18.452	0.000	
Interpersonal Collegiality	0.635	0.301	0.623	21.391	0.000	Significant
r	0.623					
r^2	0.561					
Adj. r^2	0.534					
F	36.842				0.000	

The summary of the test of significance of simple regression analysis as shown in Table 4 showed that the regression line is held at constant at the value of 28.156(28%), the simple regression coefficient (R) is valued at 0.623(62%) while the R^2 is valued at 0.561(56%) and Adjust R^2 is valued at 0.534(53%). The F-ratio associated with regression is valued at 36.842, while the t-test is valued at 21.391 and the p-value = 0.000. Since p-value (0.000) is less than the specified level of significance 0.05, the study therefore rejected the null hypothesis that interpersonal collegiality does not significantly predict teachers' job commitment in state public secondary schools in South

East, Nigeria and accepted the alternative hypothesis that interpersonal collegiality significantly predicts teachers' job commitment in state public secondary schools in South East, Nigeria.

Discussion of Findings

Findings on the predictive value of ethical collegiality on teachers' job commitment in state public secondary schools in South East, Nigeria revealed that ethical collegiality has a positive predictive value of 0.581 on teachers' job commitment in state public secondary schools in South East, Nigeria. This means that increase in ethical collegiality will bring about 58% increases in teachers' job commitment in state public secondary schools in South East, Nigeria. The study also showed that ethical collegiality significantly predicted teachers' job commitment in state public secondary schools in South East, Nigeria. The finding is in consonance with the findings of Obasi (2022) that teachers show kindness to students and colleagues help to improve their happiness in the school and get teachers to be committed to their job. In the findings of Ikpa and Obilor (2022), they affirmed that teachers willingly share the responsibility involved in classroom activities and they are seriously committed in discharging their duties in the school. Ali et al. (2023) findings aligned that teachers are sincerely sensitive to students' diversity and put in their best on a daily basis to maximum good job result in the school. Similarly, Uke et al. (2024) findings indicated that teachers are motivated to provide meaningful learning experiences for all students and they are enthusiastic for stimulating students' creativity. In line with the findings of Edo and Bulopakaye (2024), they established that teachers moderate students' behaviour in the classroom and adapt good teaching styles to respond to the needs of all students. The similarities found among these studies are as a result of the fact that ethical collegiality is the moral commitment of teachers to support, respect, and collaborate with their colleagues in order to achieve school common goal. It is vital because it breaks teachers' isolation, models positive behaviour for students, and unites staff around the shared goal of helping students succeed.

Findings on the predictive value of interpersonal collegiality on teachers' job commitment in state public secondary schools in South East, Nigeria revealed that interpersonal collegiality has a positive predictive value of 0.631 on teachers' job commitment in state public secondary schools in South East, Nigeria. This means that improvement in interpersonal collegiality will bring about 63% improvements in teachers' job commitment in state public secondary schools in South East, Nigeria. The study also showed that interpersonal collegiality significantly predicted teachers' job commitment in state public secondary schools in South East, Nigeria. The finding is in line with the findings of Ajuwon (2022) that teachers bring their diverse perspectives to problem solving and create culture of more team work than individual work in the school. Lazaro and Victor (2022)'s findings indicated that teachers promote exchange of thoughts that are useful in the school and work together to identify school problems. In the findings of Esiaba (2023), he disclosed that teachers create more positive attitudes toward teaching and exhibit high morale for school activities. Edo and Bulopakaye (2024) findings revealed that teachers imbibe increments in the

levels of trust in the school and create new ideas from relating to one another. Similarly, the findings of Akinnubi et al. (2024) affirmed that teachers share personal work difficulties with colleagues for better job commitment in the school. The similarities found among these studies are as a result of the fact that interpersonal collegiality in education is teachers' trust, support and collaboration with each other. It replaces isolation with teamwork. This collaboration improves teachers' job satisfaction and lowers burnout. Ultimately, it creates a positive environment that directly boosts students' achievement and school quality.

Conclusion

School collegiality is a vital and essential variable to be considered in order to improve the job commitment of teachers in state public secondary schools in South East, Nigeria. The study therefore concluded that school collegiality is a positive and significant predictor of teachers' job commitment in state public secondary schools in South East, Nigeria.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made:

1. School authorities in charge of state public secondary schools in South East, Nigeria should inculcate good practices of ethical collegiality as it will help to school staff trust each other, share helpful teaching tools and talk openly about difficult issues leading to improved teachers' job commitment in state public secondary schools in South East, Nigeria.
2. State public secondary school principals in South East, Nigeria should create enabling environment in their school by prioritizing good practices of interpersonal relationships as in the way students, teachers and staff interact and connect in the school to build trust and improve commitment in state public secondary schools in South East, Nigeria.

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