



## **Teachers' Decision-Making and Job Engagement in Public Secondary Schools in Bayelsa State, Nigeria**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The study investigated decision making and teachers' job engagement in public secondary schools in Bayelsa State. One research question and one hypothesis guided the study. The study adopted a correlational research design. The population of the study comprised all 219 vice principals in the 191 public secondary schools in Bayelsa state. Two instruments titled "Decision Making Questionnaire (DMQ) and Teachers' Job Engagement scale (TJES) were used for data collection. The sample size of 175 was determined using stratified random sampling technique. Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient of 0.79 was computed for DMQ and TJES respectively. Simple regression was used in answering the research question while t- test associated with simple regression was used in testing the null hypothesis at 0.05 alpha level. It was revealed that decision making significantly predicts 51% to teachers' job engagement. Sequel to this findings, it was recommended that school administrators and Ministry of Education should adopt transformational or democratic leadership style that will enable teachers participate fully in decision making for the day-to-day school activities, as this would enhance their commitment and job satisfaction for the overall attainment of school goals.

**Keywords:** decision making, job engagement, teachers, secondary schools.

### **INTRODUCTION**

Teachers' job engagement is a critical issued mainly in secondary school education. Teachers' work is to develop school environment that promote teaching, learning, critical thinking and team work. Teachers' job engagement is extremely an important tool and a prerequisite for effective secondary school teaching and learning to meet the present demands for teachers' improvement, job satisfaction and excellent job performance. Therefore, engaged teachers used quality time, energy, willingness and hard work to accomplish their jobs to achieve school goals and objectives. A teacher who is engaged sees work as a vital part of life that requires great amount of attention and enthusiasm as well as determination.

According to Bakker and Demerouti (2008:209) "job engagement refers to a state that demonstrates vigour, dedication and absorption in the job". Teachers' job engagement is an important concept that gives explanation and understanding of the nature of relationship to succeed in achieving the goals of their respective schools. It shows that decision making is an essential instrument to equip and empower teachers with useful knowledge, skills, ability and experience for high level of job engagement.

Teachers' empowerment refers to allowing teachers to be genuinely involved in decision making. Teachers should be provided the opportunity to express their ideas, knowledge and skill in solving school problems with school administrators through participatory decision making. Therefore, teachers should be genuinely involved in making decisions in the school regarding all aspects of teaching and learning to include curriculum, textbooks, scheduling, personnel selection and goal setting (Davison and Dell, 2003; Sweetland and Hoy, 2000). Also, allowing teachers to be part of decision making in school will result in teachers being responsible for solving problems; they will no longer just identify the problems (Short, 1994). As a matter of fact, for secondary school teachers to demonstrate high sense of job engagement, teachers should be seen as decision making actors in school organization.

Furthermore, participatory decision making is defined as “higher level individual effort to provide those lower levels (teachers) with a greater voice in organizational performance and achieving targeted goals (Glew, O’ Leary-Kethy, Griffin and Van, 1995). Therefore, teachers’ participating in school decision making represents a deliberate change from traditional management in which school administrators predominantly make decisions regarding functioning in the school system. Also, participatory decision-making is a motivational technique used as a means of raising job satisfaction, which in turn fosters school outcomes.

Barnard (1938) observed that decision that seemingly would be appropriate for a participant determining more would be those following clearly outside the teachers’ zone of indifference that is, decision in which teachers have high personal stake and the expertise to resolve, and for which complete agreement is imperative. However, not all teachers want to be involved in decisions; in fact, some teachers’ are quite comfortable leaving all the major decisions to the secondary school administrators. Others want to be involved in every decision. Most teachers are somewhere between these extremes. A healthy perspective involved in decisions when they can make contributions. To be effective, in the empowerment of teachers, school administrators have an education role as well as sharing roles. First, teachers have to learn and then show that the well-being of their students and school takes precedence over personal agendas. School administrator must also demonstrate authenticity with teacher-straight talks, openness consistency and no game playing.

#### **Aim and Objective of the Study**

The aim of this study is to investigate the extent to which teachers’ decision-making predicts teachers’ job engagement in public secondary schools in Bayelsa State. Specially, the study sought to:

1. find out the extent teachers’ decision-making predicts teachers’ job engagement in public secondary schools in Bayelsa State.

#### **Research Question**

The following research question guided this study;

1. To what extent does decision making predicts teachers’ job engagement in public secondary schools in Bayelsa State.

#### **Hypothesis**

The following null hypothesis was tested at 0.05% alpha level guided the study.

HO<sub>1</sub>: Decision-making does not significantly predict teachers’ job engagement in public secondary schools in Bayelsa State.

#### **METHODOLOGY**

The study adopted a correlational research design. The population of the study comprised all the 219 vice principals academic and administration in the 191 public secondary schools in Bayelsa State. The sample size of the study consisted of 175 vice principals drawn using stratified sampling technique. Two self-designed instruments titled: Decision Making Question (DMQ) and Teachers’ job engagement Scale (TJES). The instrument was structure in line with Likert response of very high extent, High Extent (HE), Moderate Extent (ME) and Low Extent (LE) respectively. The instrument was validated by the three experts from the department of Educational Management, Measurement and Evaluation. The reliability of the instrument was determined using Cronbach’s Alpha method. This gave a reliability estimate (DMQ) and (TJES) as 0.79 respectively and was accepted for the study. The researcher with the help of three trained research assistants administered the questionnaire items and out of which only 171 copies were retrieved representing 98% retrieval was used to answer the research questions while t-test associated with simple regression was used to test null hypothesis at a probability level of 0.05.

**RESULT**

**Research Question One:** *To what extent does decision-making predicts significantly teachers’ job engagement in public secondary schools in Bayelsa State?*

**1a: simple regression analysis on the extent decision-making predicts teachers’ job engagement in public secondary schools in Bayelsa State.**

| Model | R                 | R.Square | Adjusted R. Square | Std. Error of the Estimate |
|-------|-------------------|----------|--------------------|----------------------------|
| 1     | .712 <sup>a</sup> | .507     | .502               | 3.67                       |

Table 1a: revealed that the computed regression coefficient R is .712 while the squared regression value was computed to be .507. This implies that decision-making predicts teachers’ job engagement by 51% as indicated by coefficient of determinism. Therefore, the remaining 49% is accounted by other factors.

**Hypothesis One:** Teachers’ decision-making does not significantly predict job engagement in public secondary schools in Bayelsa State.

**Table 1b:** T-test associated with simple regression analysis on the extent teachers’ decision-making predicts job engagement in Public Secondary Schools in Bayelsa State.

| Model           | Unstandardized Co-efficient |            | Standardized Co-efficient | T      | Sig. |
|-----------------|-----------------------------|------------|---------------------------|--------|------|
|                 | B                           | Std. error | Beta                      |        |      |
| 1. Constant     | 54.509                      | 2.587      |                           | 21.071 | .000 |
| Decision Making | .183                        | .084       | .165                      | 2.178  | .31  |

Table 1b: Revealed that standardized beta co-efficient is .165. the t-calculated of 2.178 associated with simple regression is statistically significant at 0.31 when subjected to 0.05 alpha level. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. By implication, decision-making significantly predicts teachers’ job engagement in Public Secondary Schools in Bayelsa State.

**DISCUSSION OF FINDING**

The findings showed that decision-making predicts 51% of teachers’ job engagement as indicated by the coefficient of determinism while 49.3% could be accounted for by other factors. The hypothesis also revealed that decision-making significantly predicts teachers’ job engagement in Public Secondary Schools in Bayelsa State.

This is in line with the arguments that teachers’ cannot be fully committed in their job when they are not part of the school decision-making or when they are seen as inconsequential in school decision making matters.

The evidence was corroborated by Oguntoye (2002) when he supported participatory leadership style in which teachers’ are encouraged to contribute their individual ideas and information for effective and efficient administration of school organization. This was also corroborated by Abraham (2013) when he opined that the success or failure of organization including school lies considerably on decision-making.

**CONCLUSION**

Based on the findings of this study, it was concluded that teachers’ decision making independently relates significantly to job engagement in Public Secondary Schools in Bayelsa State. The evident is shown in the findings where decision making predicts 51% of teachers’ job engagement as indicated by co-efficient of determinism.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings and conclusion of the study, the researcher therefore recommended that:

1. School administrators should adopt transformational or democratic leadership style that will enable teachers especially in secondary schools participate fully in decision making for the day-to-day school activities to increase their commitment and job satisfaction for greater productivity in achieving school goals.
2. School administrators should give teachers' sense of belonging by ensuring that decision making responsibilities are shared among them for the reduction of excess work load for speedy completion of teaching and learning tasks as this will increase teachers' level of commitment and job satisfaction.

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