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EMPLOYEE BENEFITS AND TEACHERS' COMMITMENT TOWARDS UNIVERSAL BASIC EDUCATION (UBE) IN SOUTHWEST, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated employee benefits and teachers' commitment towards Universal Basic Education (UBE) in Southwest, Nigeria. Three research questions and two hypotheses were raised for the study. Descriptive research design was employed. Population included 54,870 teachers and 2,398 principals. 3013 teachers and 911 principals were sampled using multi-stage procedure. Teachers' Commitment Questionnaire (TCQ) (α = .876)", and Employee Benefit Questionnaire (EBQ) (α = .805)" were used to collect data. Data were analysed using inferential statistics. Results showed employee benefits (Insurance benefit, fringe benefit and paid time off benefit) jointly contribute significantly to teachers' commitment to UBE ($F_{3, 904}$ = 7.928, P<0.05). Fringe benefits (β = .152; t = 3.808; sig. = .003) and paid time off benefits (β = .137; t = 3.235; Sig. = .008) except insurance benefits (β = -.060; t = -1.631; Sig. = .099) all have significant relative influence on teachers' commitment to universal basic education at P<0.05. In conclusion, employee benefits (fringe benefit and paid time off benefit) significantly influence teachers' commitment in universal basic education. It was recommended among others that attention should be given to improving teachers' commitment by ensuring more provision of employee benefits.

Keywords: Employee Benefits, Teachers' Commitment, UBE

Introduction

Teachers' commitment would not only make positive impact on the academic performance of students but overall effectiveness of the universal basic education (UBE) programme. The Universal Basic Education (UBE) in Nigeria is a nine (9) year basic educational programme launched on the 30th September, 1999 in Sokoto, Sokoto State by the Federal Republic of Nigeria to eradicate illiteracy, ignorance and poverty.

The scope of UBE includes free and compulsory six-year primary education and three years of junior secondary education. The vision and mission is to build numeracy, communication, and life skills that are able to make individuals employable, useful and possessing relevant ethical, moral and civic values (Asuk, 2023; Lorver & Thomas, 2022). However, commitment of teachers is needed for the vision, mission and objectives of the UBE programme to be achieved.

Teachers' commitment is the degree to which they feel devoted to the UBE. It is their psychological immersion to the UBE through sense of belonging, ownership of its goals and being ready to accept challenges associated with the programme (Wapmuk et al., 2022). Universal basic education teachers' commitment is categorized into: commitment to the school of the UBE, commitment to the learners of the UBE and commitment to teaching and their profession in UBE (Shu, 2022). Teachers who are committed to the school work harder, see the school's problems as theirs, are less inclined to leave the workplace, and devote more time to relevant activities in order to attain the goals of the school of the UBE (Moraal et al., 2024). Teachers who are committed to the students of the UBE constantly look for instructional strategies that would help learners understand better and reach their full potentials (Ogunjide & Odeleye, 2022). UBE teachers' commitment to teaching and profession is their loyalty to their profession, and high interest in engaging in refresher courses that would help them stay abreast of happenings in the profession (Moraal et al., 2024; Ogunjide & Odeleye, 2022).

Teachers' commitment to the UBE in Southwest, Nigeria have been observed to be grossly inadequate. This is seen in some teachers who seem interested only in their own success rather than that of the UBE which invariably affects their involvement to provide quality education and their ability in helping students towards academic achievement. Evidence in literature also confirmed poor teachers' commitment and shortage in the UBE in Southwest, Nigeria and also showed factors responsible to include - facilities, teachers' preparedness and work attitude (Ekundayo & Akinsuroju, 2022; Ojeniyi & Adegbesan, 2021). This study however considers a crucial factor such as 'employee benefits'.

Employee benefits include various kinds of non-wage compensation, monetary and non-monetary extrinsic rewards provided to UBE teachers in addition to their regular wages or salaries for the time, efforts and competencies made available by them. These benefits are crucial for attracting, retaining and motivating UBE teachers (Kassim & Onyango, 2022). The findings of a study showed several effects of teachers' delayed employee benefits on the teaching and learning process, such as poor preparation of lessons, students' poor performance in examinations, the lack of practical learning and study tours, poor classroom attendance, poor teaching methods and classroom management in Cape Coast (Katete & Nyangarika, 2020). However, there are

serious lack of studies on the influence of employee benefits on teachers' commitment.

In the context of this study, kinds of employee benefits include: insurance benefits (health, dental, life, motor, and so on), all forms of fringe benefits (allowances, bonuses, housing, car, medical, retirement benefits and etcetera), and all forms of paid time off (sick leave, vacation, maternity, leave of absence, and so on and forth) (Omar, 2019). Insurance employee benefit is a type that makes sure a UBE teacher is well covered by the school management/government against certain unforeseen circumstances, risk or loss. Examples of insurance benefits include - auto, gap, health or medical, casualty, life, burial, property, liability and credit insurances to mention but a few (Avraham & Porat, 2023). Although this kind of benefit could boost a teachers' commitment to the goals and objectives of UBE, there are however serious lack of studies on the influence of insurance benefits on teachers' commitment.

Fringe benefit is seen as any form of compensation or total reward package provided for teachers other than wages or salaries that focuses on maintaining or improving the quality of life for teachers and providing a level of protection and financial security for them and their family members (Osime et al., 2023). Fringe benefits include perquisite perks such as relocation payments, flexible start dates, sign-on bonuses, use of firm-owned property, medical aid benefits, housing benefits, car allowance or cell phone allowance, tuition reimbursement, clothing allowances and financial planning (Kagan, 2025; Osime et al., 2023). These benefits could influence the satisfaction and commitment of UBE teachers. Studies revealed strong significant effect of financial and non-financial rewards on commitment among public secondary school teachers in Ogun State, Nigeria (Bawalla & Adenugba, 2021; Bawalla & Omolawal, 2023). The research showed significant relationship between institutional emolument/fringe benefits and job effectiveness of lecturers in public tertiary institutions in Cross River State, Nigeria (Udey, 2020). Search of literature reveals dearth of studies on fringe benefits and teachers' commitment.

Paid time off refers to any period of time that a teacher is paid while taking leave from school work. Generally, paid time off covers planned vacation, illness or personal circumstances. Examples of paid time off include – leave of absence, sick leave, maternity leave and so on and forth (Davison & Blackburn, 2023). Paid time off benefits could influence teachers' commitment in universal basic education. For instance, the findings of a study showed that educational leave with pay contributed 11% while salary contributed 42% to teachers' commitment in public senior secondary schools in Abia State. Similarly, it was revealed that educational leave with pay and salary significantly contributes to teachers' commitment in the study area (Mackenzie & Kaegon, 2020). Paid time off benefits and teachers' commitment to the UBE has however not been given attention. This study thus sought to shed light on the complex

interplay between employee benefits and its indices (insurance, fringe and paid time off benefits) and teachers' commitment to the UBE.

Problem Statement

Low to average level of teachers' commitment to Universal Basic Education have been observed in Southwest Nigeria. This is seen in frequent absenteeism, failure to assess students' work in time, negligence in examination malpractice by students, non-challant attitude towards the school, students and profession and high turnover intention among others. This observed low commitment of teachers to UBE could portray danger for education in Southwest Nigeria. In every school of learning in any country, employee benefits are extremely important in order to make teachers satisfied and committed to their work for better performance. However, it has been observed that employee benefits such as insurance, fringe and paid time off benefits seem not to be provided for teachers. There also seem to be delay in giving teachers their benefits accrued to them. Although there are other causes for the low commitment among teachers, employee benefits will be taken as upper hand in predicting commitment of teachers to the UBE.

Purpose of the Study

The main objective of this study was to investigate employee benefits and teachers' commitment towards Universal Basic Education (UBE) in Southwest, Nigeria. The specific objectives were to;

1. investigate the joint contribution of insurance benefits, fringe benefits and paid time off benefits to teachers' commitment in universal basic education in Southwest, Nigeria; and
2. examine the relative influence of insurance benefits, fringe benefits and paid time off benefits to teachers' commitment in universal basic education in Southwest, Nigeria.

Research Hypotheses

The following null assumptions were tested at 0.05 level of significance:

$H_0$1: There will be no joint contribution of insurance benefits, fringe benefits and paid time off benefits to teachers' commitment in universal basic education in Southwest, Nigeria

$H_0$2: There will be no significant relative influence of insurance benefits, fringe benefits and paid time off benefits to teachers' commitment in universal basic education in Southwest, Nigeria.

Significance of the Study

This study would contribute immensely to principals, teachers and government. The study should serve as means of informing the school principals on the importance of administrative practices in the universal basic education. This would make them to realize the need to involve, consult and allow their teachers to participate in the decision-making process because the decision-making affects the teachers and the entire school members and thus their input

would help to make better decisions that they would be a part of. To the teachers, the findings of the study would make them understand the role of employee benefits (insurance benefits, fringe benefits and paid time off benefits) on their commitment. The findings would also make them move into action into ensuring that their employee benefits are provided for them as at when due because they could affect their commitment. The findings of the study would make the government swing into action in ensuring that principals are well trained to carry out their administrative practices and employee benefits are not only given to teachers to motivate and encourage them but should be provided for them as at when due without any form of delay. It would also contribute to knowledge on the subject area.

Scope of the Study

The variable scope of this study consisted of one independent variable which is 'employee benefits' and one dependent variable which is teachers' commitment towards universal basic education (UBE). Employee benefits was studied using insurance benefits, fringe benefits and paid time off benefits. Teachers' commitment towards UBE was studied using measures such as - commitment to the school of the UBE, commitment to the learners of the UBE and commitment to teaching/profession in the UBE. The geographical scope of the study covered all public junior secondary schools (universal basic education) in Southwest, Nigeria. The population scope consisted of all the public junior secondary school UBE teachers and principals in Southwest, Nigeria. The methodology scope covered descriptive survey research design, questionnaires as instrument for data collection and descriptive and inferential data analysis at 0.05 level of significance.

Literature Review

Theoretical Framework

Herzberg's Motivation-Hygiene theory, also known as the 'Two-Factor theory was propounded by Herzberg in 1967 (Herzberg, 1967). The core of the theory is how to create satisfied (and motivated) workers (in this case, UBE teachers). The theory identified predictors (factors) that lead to job satisfaction and predictors that lead to job dissatisfaction. These predictors are categorized into two different groups – 'hygiene predictors' and 'motivation predictors. The motivation predictors are; attainment, responsibility, nature of work, recognition and career advancement. These are intrinsic predictors, related to work content and contribute to long-term satisfaction which, when they are fulfilled would lead to self-actualization, personal growth and job satisfaction. Whereas the hygiene predictors are extrinsic, and related to work context. They include; policy practices, supervision (technical quality), interpersonal relations (with supervisor) physical working conditions, job security, salary and employee benefits (Gemeda & Tynjälä, 2015).

Herzberg argued that in order for the management to create motivated teachers, with great level of commitment and

performance, the hygiene predictors should be maintained at a satisfactory 'good' level. Subsequently, the motivational predictors should be available and present in order to instill satisfaction and motivation (Herzberg, 1967).

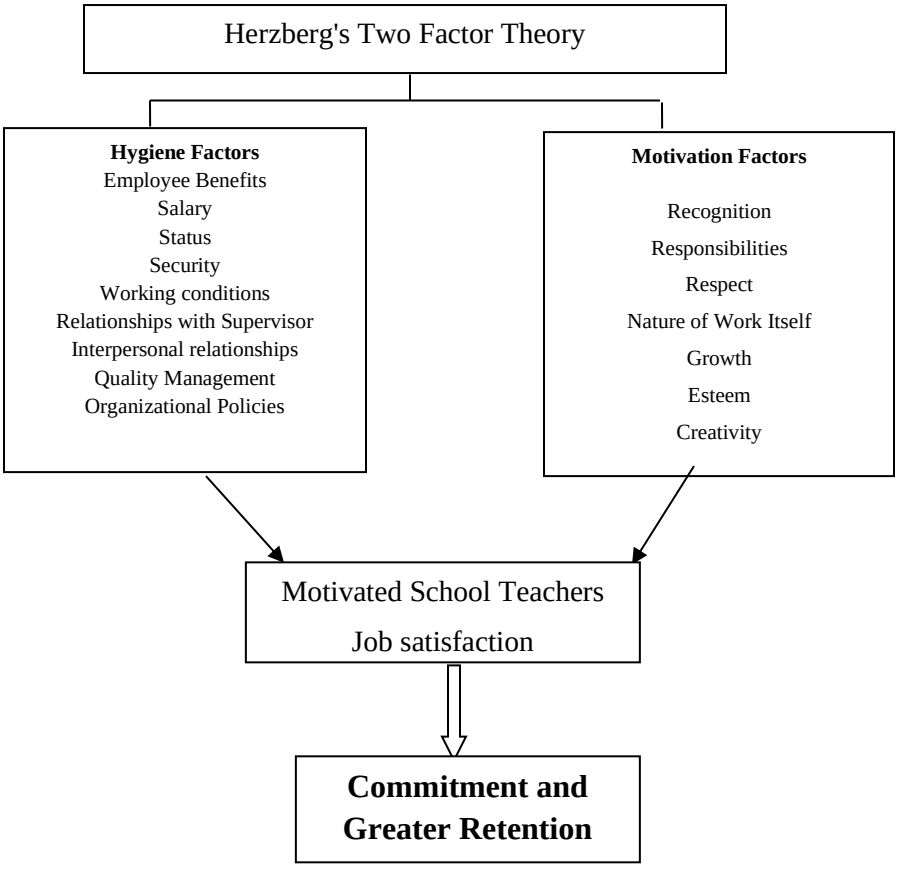


Figure 2.1: Herzberg's Two Factor Theory (Source: Herzberg, 1967)

Conceptual Model

The conceptual model shows the relationship between employee benefits and teachers' commitment to the UBE as depicted in figure 2.2:

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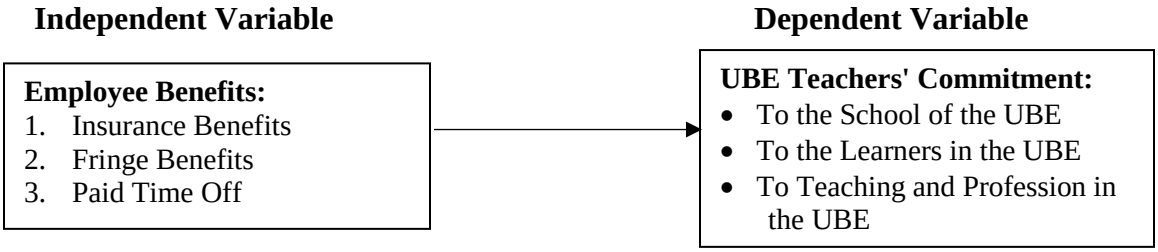


Figure 2.1: Conceptual Model (**Source:** Researcher, 2024)

Methodology

The descriptive survey research design was adopted for this study. The population consisted of 2,398 principals and 54,870 teachers in all 2,398 UBE junior secondary schools in Southwest, Nigeria. A multi-stage sampling procedure comprising of stratified random sampling technique, Yamane (Slovin) sample size determination technique and proportionate to size sampling technique were used to select 911 UBE junior secondary schools, 911 UBE junior secondary school principals and 3,013 UBE junior secondary school teachers. Data were collected primarily through the use of two self-constructed questionnaires titled: "Teachers' Commitment Questionnaire (TCQ)" and "Employee Benefit Questionnaire (EBQ)".

Teachers' Commitment Questionnaire (TCQ) consisted of a section used to elicit responses on the level of UBE teachers' commitment. The rating scale was Strongly Agree (SA) = 4; Agree (A) = 3; Strongly Disagree (SD) = 2; and Disagree (D) = 1. Employee Benefit Questionnaire (EBQ) also consisted of a section used to elicit responses on the level at which employee benefits (insurance benefits, fringe benefits and paid time off benefits) are provided for teachers in universal basic education. The rating scale was Very High Level (VHL) = 4; High Level (HL) = 3; Low Level (LL) = 2; Very Low Level (VLL) = 1.

The questionnaires were subjected to face and content validity type while Cronbach's alpha reliability method was used to ascertain the reliability of the instruments. Coefficient reliability values of .876 and .805 were obtained for Teachers' Commitment Questionnaire (TCQ) and Employee Benefit Questionnaire (EBQ) respectively. These values were reliable. Teachers' Commitment Questionnaire (TCQ) was administered on 911 principals but 901 were retrieved and valid. Also, Employee Benefit Questionnaire (EBQ) was administered on 3,013 teachers but 2,998 were returned and valid. Bio-data of the respondents were presented using frequency counts and percentages. Multiple Regressions was used to analyze the hypotheses one and two at 0.05 level of significance.

Test of Hypotheses

$H_0$1: There will be no joint contribution of insurance benefits, fringe benefits and

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paid time off benefits to teachers' commitment in universal basic education in Southwest, Nigeria

Table 1: Multiple Regression Analysis and Model Summary for Joint Contribution of Insurance Benefits, Fringe Benefits and Paid Time Off Benefits to Teachers' Commitment in Universal Basic Education

ANOVA

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Decision
1	Regression	243.725	3	81.242	7.835	.001*	Significant
	Residual	9373.879	904	10.369			
	Total	9617.604	910				

Model Summary

R = .158
R Square = .025
Adjusted R Square = .022
Standard Error of the Estimate = 3.22009

Dependent Variable: Teachers Commitment to UBE
Predictors: (Constant), fringe benefits, paid time off benefits, insurance benefits,
*_**Anova value is significant at P<0.05**_

Source: Field Work, 2024

Table 1 showed that there exists a significant joint contribution of employee benefits (insurance benefits, fringe benefits and paid time off benefits) to teachers' commitment in universal basic education in Southwest, Nigeria ($F_{3, 904}$ = 7.835, *P<0.05*). In the model summary (R = .158; R Square = .025; Adjusted R Square = .022), the R value of 0.158 indicates a good relationship between the variables. The positive sign of "R" means that as the independent variables increase, the dependent variable tends to increase. The R-squared value of .025 shows that 2.5% proportion of variance in teachers' commitment can be explained by insurance benefits, fringe benefits and paid time off benefits. However, the adjusted R square value of .022 indicates that the predictors (insurance benefits, fringe benefits and paid time off benefits) explain 2.2% variation in UBE teachers' commitment in Southwest, Nigeria. Therefore, the other 97.8% could be caused by errors or predictors other than those included in the model 1.

$H_0$2: There will be no significant relative influence of insurance benefits, fringe benefits and paid time off benefits to teachers' commitment in universal basic education in Southwest, Nigeria

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Table 2: Coefficients of Multiple Regression Analysis for the Relative Influence of Insurance Benefits, Fringe Benefits and Paid Time Off Benefits to Teachers' Commitment in Universal Basic Education

Coefficients					
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Standard Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	54.021	2.147		25.161	.000
	Insurance Benefits	-.137	.084	-.060	-1.631	.099
	Fringe Benefits	.297	.078	.152	3.808	.003*
	Paid Time Off Benefits	.262	.081	.137	3.235	.008*

Dependent Variable: Teachers Commitment to UBE

t-value significant at *P<0.05

Source: Fieldwork, 2024

Table 2 showed that fringe benefits (β = .152; t = 3.808; sig. = .003), paid time off benefits (β = .137; t = 3.235; Sig. = .008) except insurance benefits (β = -.060; t = -1.631; sig. = .099) all have significant relative influence on teachers' commitment to universal basic education (UBE) at *P<0.05*. Lastly, the positive (+) unstandardized coefficient (B) value showed that holding other variables constant, a unit increase in fringe benefits and paid time off benefits would result to an increase in teachers' commitment to UBE by 0.297 and 0.262 respectively.

Discussion of Findings

This research work study investigated employee benefits and teachers' commitment towards Universal Basic Education (UBE) in Southwest, Nigeria. The analysis of hypothesis one showed a significant joint contribution of insurance benefits, fringe benefits and paid time off benefits to teachers' commitment (to the school, students and teaching/profession) in universal basic education in Southwest, Nigeria. The findings are supported by that of Ogunjide and Odeleye (2022) which showed joint contribution of incentives (fringe benefits, bonuses and allowances) on teachers' job satisfaction and commitment in public secondary schools, Southwest, Nigeria. This finding somehow agrees with that of Atanda and Abikoye (2023) which revealed a significant joint contribution of school support services (fringe benefits and paid leave) to teacher job commitment in public secondary schools in Ogun State, Nigeria. This finding is in line with that of Akuche and Fadipe (2022) which revealed a significant joint influence of employee benefits (insurance benefits, fringe benefits and paid time off benefits) on teachers' job satisfaction in public primary schools in Southwest, Nigeria (Ileuma and Adegoke, 2021).

The analysis of hypothesis two revealed that fringe benefits and paid time off benefits except insurance benefits have

significant relative influence on teachers' commitment to universal basic education (UBE) at P<0.05. The findings are partially supported by that of Ogunjide and Odeleye (2022) which showed relative influence of incentives (fringe benefits, bonuses and allowances) on teachers' job satisfaction and commitment in public secondary schools, Southwest, Nigeria. This result is supported by that of Eze et al. (2023) which showed a high positive relative significant influence of staff welfare such as benefits and bonuses on teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Obollo-Afor Education Zone of Enugu State, Nigeria. This finding somewhat agrees with that of Atanda and Abikoye (2023) which revealed a significant relative influence of health incentives on teacher job commitment in public secondary schools in Ogun State, Nigeria. This result almost completely disagrees with that of Akuche and Fadipe (2022) which revealed that only fringe and insurance benefits had relative significant influence on teachers' job satisfaction. Paid time off had no significant relative influence on teachers' job satisfaction in public primary schools in Southwest, Nigeria.

Conclusion

It can be concluded that high provision of fringe and paid time off benefits and low provision of insurance benefits could be responsible for the high level of teachers' commitment to the school and students but low level of commitment to the teaching profession.

Recommendations

1. Efforts should be made specifically to understanding why teachers still have low level of commitment to the teaching profession. This should be done by organising indoor meetings for teachers and administrators to discuss and pour out their thoughts and reasons for low commitment among them.
2. In this study, the commitment of teachers to the school and students was high. However, efforts should still be made to ensuring that teachers' level of commitment to the UBE schools and students improve from a high level to a very high level to ensure greater performance and productivity of the teachers. This can be done by increasing various incentives that would motivate teachers to be more loyal to the school and their students.
3. The level at which fringe and paid time off benefits are provided to teachers should be improved from high level to a very high level by the government. Attention should be specifically given to improving the low level of provision of insurance benefits for teachers by the government. This is because improvement in the provision of fringe and paid time off benefits will invariably improve teachers' commitment to the school, students and teaching profession.

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