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## **Emotional Intelligence and Self Efficacy as Correlates of Career Commitment in Nigeria (Pp. 212-225)**

**Akpochafo, Grace O.** - Department of Guidance and Counselling, Delta State University, Abraka, Nigeria

**E-mail:** omejevvel@yahoo.com

### **Abstract**

*The purpose of this study was to examine whether emotional Intelligence and self efficacy can serve as correlates of career commitment. The sample consists of 180 secondary school teachers. (Male = 115, female = 65) randomly selected from Delta State in Nigeria. Four Hypotheses were formulated for the study. The study sample responded to three standardized instruments namely Emotional Intelligence Scale, General Perceived Self Efficacy Scale and Career Commitment Scale. Data collected were analyzed using Pearson Product Moment correlation and multiple regressions. The results indicated that emotional intelligence and self efficacy were not correlates of career commitment but teaching experience was related. The implications of these findings for the enhancement of emotional intelligence and self efficacy among the sample were discussed. It was suggested that emotional intelligence and self efficacy of teachers should be provided with good working conditions. Moreover, since teaching experience was related to career commitment new entrants to the profession should be motivated to get committed.*

**Keywords:** Emotional Intelligence, Self Efficacy; Career Commitment.

### **Introduction**

Career commitment according to Blau (1985) can be defined as ones attitude towards ones vocation including profession. North craft and Neale (1996) see commitment as an attitude reflecting an employer's loyalty to the organization and an ongoing process through which organization members

express their concern for the organization and its continued success and well being. Career commitment is very crucial in any organization and no doubt the teaching sector. Without real commitment the goals of schools and organizational settings cannot be achieved. When there is career commitment teachers will be motivated to put in their best and this will reflect in the way they handle their students.

There is no doubt that the choice of career is very crucial in the life of an individual. To this end, there are so many techniques put in place to enable individuals make appropriate occupational choice. Akpochofo (2004) worked on three techniques to foster appropriate occupational choice. The essence is to make individuals enter a career that they are well suited for which will make them to be committed if there is an enabling environment.

Evidences abound that the teaching career is fraught with dissatisfaction. (Uwaimeije and Onyewadume, 2001; Adeyoju, 1999). Teachers complain of poor working condition, low status, lack of motivation and for (Fagebo, 1998; Salami 1999) identified poor salary, intolerable conditions of service, low prospects, and low prestige as the reasons for high turnover attrition. Okorodudu and Okorodudu (2003) see the status of teachers in Nigeria as still being very low and attitude to work and productivity has been problematic. According to them facilities to aid teaching effectiveness are lacking, the teachers could hardly be expected to excel. The teachers are operating in stressful situations and under unfavourable conditions of service. They either opt out or adopt a passive job attitude and engage in petty business even during school hours.

Most persons who take to teaching see it as a stepping stone or as last resort (Adeyemo, 2001; Ajayi, 1999; Nwagwu and salami 1999). In Nigerian Universities one can hardly see students choosing teaching as a profession. They opt for Education courses when admission to other courses is not possible or when they are screened out of the departments of their choice. This is in line with the work of Goddard and O'Brien (2003) who asserted that 24% of the beginning teachers in their studies revealed that, if given another opportunity to choose their career they will not opt for teaching as their first choice.

If the aforementioned is the scenario in the teaching profession, will teachers be committed? Successive governments have made attempts to address the problems confronting teachers but to no avail. Since the factors mentioned above have been found to affect career commitment, there is need to

investigate other variables that can act as correlates to career commitment. It is against this background that the variables of emotional intelligence and self efficacy were conceived as correlates to career commitment. Also mediating variables of gender and teaching experience were investigated alongside emotional intelligence and self efficacy. Colarelli and Bishop (1990) were of the opinion that people high on career commitment will likely persist in pursuing career goals even in the face of obstacles and setbacks.

Researchers on career commitment in Nigeria are limited Aremu, (2005) and Salami, (2007). Aremu (2005) concentrated on the police while Salami (2007) studied work attitudes among secondary school teachers in south western Nigeria. These two studies concentrated on the south west zone and therefore there is need to replicate the study in another geo-political zone of the country.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The main purpose of this study was to find out if emotional intelligence and self efficacy are correlates of career commitment among secondary school teachers.

### **Emotional Intelligence**

In spite of its recency, Emotional Intelligence has enjoyed tremendous patronage from scholars. It was first formulated by Salovey and Mayer (1990), which refers to individuals' ability to monitor their own and others feelings and emotions, to discriminate among emotions and to use this information to guide thinking and action. Since its emergence there have been different views of the concept e.g. (Goleman 1995, Bar on 1997, Cooper and Swarf 1997) this had led to two distinct approaches. Petrides and Funham (2000) have shown distinguishing factors between trait emotional intelligence and information processing emotional intelligence. To them, trait emotional intelligence is concerned with cross situational consistencies in behaviour evident in specific trait. This approach uses self report measure e.g (Bar on 1997, Shutte, Malouff, Hall, Haggerty, Cooper, Golden and Dornheim 1998): while information processing emotional intelligence is concerned with abilities. The later approach uses maximum performance measures. The importance of emotional intelligence in schools and organizations cannot be over emphasized. Ciarroachi, Forgas and Mayer (2001) opined that being able to understand, perceive and express emotions in an appropriate way can determine whether an individual is successful or not as an employee. With particular reference to teachers it suffices to say

that the presence of high level of emotional intelligence and its components of self awareness, mood management, self motivation, empathy and managing relationships may be very important to their career commitment. Empirical studies abound that shows the relationship between emotional intelligence and career commitment (Carmeli 2003; Aremu, 2005; Salami 2007 and Aremu and Tejumola 2008).

### **Self Efficacy**

Self efficacy is another variable investigated in this study. According to Bandura (1998) perceived self efficacy refers to peoples' beliefs about their capabilities to produce designated levels of performance that exercise influence over events that affect their lives. A strong sense of efficacy enhances human accomplishment and personal well being in many ways. Persons with self efficacy set themselves challenging goals and maintain strong commitment to them. On the other hand people who doubt their capabilities shy away from difficult tasks which they view as personal threats. Thus they have low aspirations and weak commitment to the goals they choose to pursue. There is the tendency therefore to believe that people with high sense of self efficacy will be more committed to their career than those with low sense of self efficacy. Tschannem-Moran, Woolfolk, Hoy, and Hoy (1998) opined that teachers self efficacy refers to beliefs in their capability "to organize and execute course of action required to successfully accomplish a specific teaching task in a particular context".

Coladarchi (1992) asserted that high self efficacy teachers persist when things do not go smoothly and are more resilient in the face of setbacks. He noticed among efficacious in service teachers a high sense of professional commitment. According to (Coladarchi, (1992) and Minera Woolfolk Hoy, (1992) teachers with high self efficacy scores are related to their level of professional commitment for elementary and middle schools. Aremu (2005) found significant relationship between self efficacy and career commitment of young police officers that he studied. Salami (2007) also found that self efficacy was significantly related to career commitment.

The literature reviewed so far shows that persons with high self efficacy will be committed to their career. It is therefore equally expected that self efficacy can correlate with career commitment of secondary school teachers.

On the relationship among gender, emotional intelligence and self efficacy few studies are abound Adeyemo (2004) reported that gender was not significant in his work but Madonna and Gainor (2001) discovered that

female shows greater degree of emotional intelligence compared to their male counterparts.

On teaching experience which refers to years of teaching Extrenera, Fernandez-Berrocal, Duran (2003) discover in their work on occupational stress that length of service was not a predictor for emotional intelligence on stress. Aremu and Oluwayemis (2008) in their study on assessment of emotional intelligence among Nigerian Police revealed that years of experience do not influence emotional intelligence displayed on the Job.

### **Hypotheses**

The following hypotheses were formulated for this study.

- ❖ There is no significant relationship between emotional intelligence and career commitment of secondary school teachers.
- ❖ There is no significant relationship among Emotional intelligence, self efficacy and career commitment of secondary school teachers.
- ❖ There is no significant relationship among emotional intelligence, self efficacy, gender and career commitment of teachers.
- ❖ There is no significant relationship among emotional intelligence, self efficacy, gender, teaching experience and career commitment of Secondary School teachers.

### **Methodology**

This study adopted a descriptive survey design that utilized an ex post facto research type. The main interest was in finding out the influence of independent variables on dependent variable.

The target populations for this study are all secondary school teachers in Ethiope East local Government Area and Ika Northeast Local Government Area of Delta State. The Sample for his study consists of one hundred and eighty (180) secondary school teachers. The sample was made up of 115 Males and 65 Females. The simple randomly sampling was used to select the sample. The age range of the teachers was from 21 to 55years. The qualifications of the teachers were B.A (Ed)/B.Sc (Ed)/ B.Ed, B.A/B.Sc The teaching experience of teachers was from 2 to 34years. A total of 183 questionnaires were distributed to the teachers and 180 were returned. They were personally distributed and collected by the researcher.

The instrument used for this study consisted of two parts. The first part contained the demographic data of the respondents. This includes age, gender, years of experience, qualification, location of school, rank and marital status. The second part is made up of three sections of three different instruments of Emotional Intelligence Scale (EIS) General Perceived Self Efficacy Scale (GPSS) Career Commitment Scale (CCS) that were used for the study. The instruments are described below.

### **Emotional Intelligence Scale (EIS)**

Emotional intelligence was assessed with emotional intelligence scale developed by Shutte, Malouff, Hall, Haggerty, Cooper, Golden and Dornheim (1998): It is a thirty-three (33) item scale structured on a 5 point likert format ranging from Strongly disagree (1) to Strongly agree (5). High score indicated increased level of emotional intelligence, while low scores indicated decreased level of emotional intelligence. The scale reported reliability co-efficient Cronbach alpha of 0.78 using a two week test re-test reliability technique (Shutte et al, 1998). Examples of items on the questionnaire are:

- 1) I am aware of my emotions as I experience them
- 2) When I am in a positive mood, solving problems is easy for me.
- 3) I like to share my emotions with others
- 4) I have control over my emotions

### **General Perceived Self Efficacy Scale (GPSS)**

The English version of general perceived self efficacy scale developed by Schwarzer and Jerusalem (1995) was used to assess the self efficacy of the participants. It is a 10item statement using a four point scale ranging from (1) Not at all true to (4) Exactly true. The scale reported high internal consistency with a cronbach ranging from .75 and .90 (Schwarzer and Jerusalem, 1995). Examples of items on the questionnaire are:

1. I can solve most problems if I invest the necessary effort as a teacher
2. I can handle whatever comes my way as a teacher

### **Career Commitment Scale (CCS)**

Career commitment was measured using a scale developed and validated by Carson and Bedeian (1994), based on the conceptualization and definition of

career commitment as one's motivation to work in a chosen vocation. The scale consists of twelve (12) items designed on a 5-point likert format ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. Increasing scores imply higher career commitment while decreasing scores imply the converse. The scale has reported an internal consistency of 0.76 and a reliability of 0.87 using a two week test re test procedure. Some of the items on the scale are (1) My Line of work/career field is an important part of who I am (2) I do not feel emotionally attached to this line of work/career field. (3) I strongly identify with my chosen line of work/career field.

### **Content and Construct Validity of the Instruments**

The instruments were revalidated by the researcher. The Content and Construct validity of the instruments were estimated using the Exploratory Factor Analysis. The Principal Component Analysis (PCA) using the extraction methods with Kaiser Normalization was utilized in estimating the content and construct validity. The evidence of the content validity of each of the instrument shown by the total cumulative variance of factor components which yielded 79.59% for emotional intelligence, 76.50% for self efficacy and 76.72% for career commitment. The construct validity was estimated by the rotated factor loadings matrixes and Emotional Intelligence had factor loading matrixes that range between .45 and .96, self efficacy .51 and .92 while career commitment had .52 and .95. The results show that the instruments were culturally acceptable and culturally adaptable.

### **Reliability of the Instruments**

The Cronbach alpha was used to estimate the internal consistency of the instrument. Emotional intelligence yielded a coefficient alpha of .79 self efficacy has .78 and career commitment had .49. The instruments were thus considered to have a good reliability measures.

### **Procedure**

The three scales, EIS, GPSS and CCS, were administered by the researcher to the teachers in the secondary schools used for this study.

### **Data Analysis**

The data were analyzed using Pearson product moment correlation, multiple regression and descriptive statistics.

### **Results**

Regression statistic was performed to examine the degree of association among emotional intelligence, self efficacy, and demographic variables of

gender, teaching experience and career commitment of teachers. The models consisted of the above named independent variables (antecedent variables) and career commitment as the criterion or dependent variable. The data analysis for the Pearson Product Moment correlation and regression statistics are presented in table 1.

Table 1 presents the results of regression analysis of the effects of emotional intelligence and self efficacy on career commitment. Emotional intelligence was not significantly related to career commitment. The models 1, 2, 3 and 4 relates to the four hypotheses formulated for this study. The results of data analysis of model 1 in table 1 shows correlation of .13 with a Computed  $F(1, 179) = 3.08, P > .05$ . Hypothesis I was therefore accepted. This indicates that there is no significant correlation between emotional intelligence and career commitment of the secondary school teachers. The conclusion is drawn that emotional intelligence is not a correlate of teachers' career commitment.

The results of data analysis of Model 2, in table 1 also show that there is no significant correlation among emotional intelligence, self efficacy and career commitment. The results of data analysis of model 2 in table 1 shows correlation of .13 with a computed  $F(2,179) = 1.57 P > .05$ . The conclusion is drawn that both emotional intelligence and self efficacy combined has no significant relationship with teachers' career commitment. The researcher determined the degree of association between self efficacy and teachers' career commitment, when the effects of emotional intelligence were controlled. The results show that the unstandardized coefficient.  $B = -.00, SEB = .02, \beta = -.02 t = -.26 p > .05$  level of confidence

The model 3 in table 1 presents the regression analysis of emotional intelligence, self efficacy, gender and teachers career commitment. The results of data analysis shows a correlation value of .15 with a computed  $F(3,179) = 1.27 P > .05$ . The conclusion is drawn that emotional intelligence, self efficacy and gender are not significant correlates of teachers' career commitment. The researcher also determined the degree of association between gender and teachers' career commitment, when the effects of emotional intelligence and self efficacy were controlled. The results showed a non-significant relationship with an Understandardized coefficient .65,  $SEB = .79, \beta = .06. t = .82, P > .05$  level of confidence. The conclusion is drawn that gender is not a moderator of teachers' career commitment

Model 4 in table 1 presents the regression analysis of emotional intelligence, self efficacy, gender, teaching experience and teachers' career commitment.

The results of data analysis shows correlation of .24 with a computed  $F(4,179) = 2.68 < .05$ . The conclusion is drawn that emotional intelligence, self efficacy, gender and teachers experience are significant correlates of teachers career commitment. The researcher also determined the degree of association between teaching experience and teachers' career commitment, when the effects of emotional intelligence, self efficacy and gender were controlled. The results show that the Unstandardized Coefficient 2.05, SEB 4.54,  $\beta = .20$ ,  $t = 2.61$ ,  $P < .05$  level of confidence.

The conclusion is drawn that teaching experience is a moderating variable. It has significant relationship with teachers' career commitment. All the four antecedent variables produced an  $r^2$ adjusted value of .04 which accounted for 4% amount of variance in teachers' career commitment at the 95% confidence interval. The F change statistics attributed to the inclusion of teaching experience in the model 4 produced an  $F(1, 175) = 6.82$ ,  $R^2$  change = -.037,  $P < .05$  level of significance. This revealed that teaching is the most relevant or important variable that explained or accounted for teachers' career commitment more than other variables in the study.

### **Discussion**

The main aim of this study was to examine how emotional intelligence and self efficacy correlate with career commitment of secondary school teachers. The results showed that emotional intelligence and self efficacy were not related to career commitment. This is not corroborated by the work of previous researchers who found that emotional intelligence and self efficacy were related to career commitment (Carmeli, 2003; Aremu, 2005; Salami, 2007; Coladarchi, 1992; Miner and Woolfok Hoy, 2002). The finding could be because the teaching job is a frustrating one due to low pay, lack of societal recognition and the absence of facilities to work with. This is in line with Okorodudu and Okorodudu (2003) who asserted that teachers' status is low, that they lack facilities to aid teaching effectiveness, while teachers are operating under stressful situations and under unfavourable conditions of service. They went further to assert that the teachers either opt out or adopt a passive job attitude and engage in petty business even during school hours.

Another finding of this study was that gender as a mediating variable was not significant. Although there is no work on emotional intelligence, self efficacy, gender and career commitment but the work of Aremu and Tejumola (2008) comes close to it where they discovered that gender was insignificant in emotional intelligence Adeyemo (2004.) reported that gender

was not significant in his work but Madonna and Gainor (2001) discovered that females show greater degree of emotional intelligence compare to their male counterpart. Also found was that teaching experience has significant relationship with teachers' careers commitment. This result corroborates the finding of Aremu (2005) which revealed that career experience is a significant positive predictor to career commitment of the participants. It does not agree with the work of Extremora, Fernandez-Berrocal and Duran (2003) who in their study on occupational stress discovered that length of service was not a predictor of emotional intelligence or stress. In the same vein the findings also contradicts the work of Aremu and Oluwayemis (2008) whose study review that years of experience do not in any way influence emotional intelligence shown on the job.

### **Implications of the Findings**

The results of this study showed that emotional intelligence and self efficacy are not correlates of career commitment. Since it is well known in literature that emotional intelligence and self efficacy are related to career commitment, it means a lot has to be done to enhance the emotional intelligence and self efficacy of teachers. This can be done by including emotional intelligence in the training programme for teachers.

There should be guidance and counseling services designed to enhance emotional intelligence and self efficacy of teachers. During the training of teachers, their programmes should be such that high self efficacy beliefs are included. The four main sources of self efficacy which are mastery experiences, vicarious experience provided by social models, social persuasion, reducing peoples stress reactions and alter their negative emotional proclivities and interpretations of their physical states-should not be overlooked in their training programmes of teachers.

Moreover, the ministry of education and groups responsible for employing teachers should provide good working conditions to reduce teacher attrition. This is due to the fact that teaching experience was significant in this study. The older the teacher the more committed they are to their career and so teachers should not be frustrated from the profession.

### **Limitations**

The sample of 180 was delimited to only secondary school teachers in two local government areas leaving the other levels of teachers and local government areas. This is a serious limitation which calls for caution in trying to generalize the findings of the study. Despite these limitations the

study has revealed that emotional Intelligence and self efficacy are not correlates of career commitment. Future researchers should cover the other parts of the state and other levels of teachers.

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**Table 1: Analysis of multiple regressions of emotional intelligence, self efficacy, gender and teaching experience as correlates of career commitment**

Variables	df	Ss	Ms	F	r	r <sup>2</sup> adj	B	SEB	Beta	t	P
<b>Model 1</b>											
Regression	1	79.78	79.78	3.08	.13	.01	.05	.03	.13	1.76	.08
Residual	178	4610.41	25.90	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Constant	-	-	-	-	-	-	31.04	3.87	-	8.02	.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>179</b>	<b>4690.19</b>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Model 2</b>											
Regression	2	81.60	40.80	1.57	.13	.01	-	-	-	-	-
Residual	177	4608.59	26.04	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Constant	-	-	-	-	-	-	31.39	4.11	-	7.65	.00
Self Efficacy	-	-	-	-	-	-	-.00	.02	-.02	-2.6	.79
<b>Total</b>	<b>179</b>	<b>4690.19</b>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Model 3</b>											
Regression	3	99.01	33.00	1.27	.15	.00	-	-	-	-	-
Residual	176	4591.18	26.09	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Constant	-	-	-	-	-	-	30.84	4.17	-	7.40	.00
Gender	-	-	-	-	-	-	.65	.79	.06	.82	.42
<b>Total</b>	<b>179</b>	<b>4690.19</b>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Model 4</b>											
Regression	4	271.15	67.79	2.68	.24	.04	-	-	-	-	-
Residual	1	4419.04	25.25	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Constant	-	-	-	-	-	-	25.72	4.54	-	5.66	.00
Teaching Experience	-	-	-	-	-	-	2.05	.78	.20	2.61	.01*
<b>Total</b>	<b>179</b>	<b>4690.19</b>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

**N = 180 \*P<0.5**

**Mode 1:** Predictors: (Constant). Emotional Intelligence, **Mode 2-** Predictors (Constant) Emotional Intelligence and Self Efficacy, **Model 3** Predictors (Constant) Emotional Intelligence, Self-Efficacy and Gender. **Model 4** Predictors (Constant) Emotional Intelligence, Self Efficacy, Gender and Teachers Experience