Motivational Strategies and Staff Engagement of Public Secondary School Teachers in Rivers State

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Abstract

This study investigated the relationship between motivational strategies and staff engagement of public secondary school teachers in Rivers State. The objective of the study was to examine the influence of motivational strategies and staff engagement of public secondary school teachers. The study adopted survey research design. The population of this study comprised of ten selected public secondary schools teachers in Rivers State. A total of 100 respondents were sampled for the study through a convenient sampling techniques. Based on the research questions, a research questionnaire was designed and one hundred (100) copies were distributed. Eighty nine copies of the distributed questionnaire were retrieved. These copies were analyzed and the hypotheses were tested using the Spearman Rank Correlation Statistical tools via SPSS Package version 22.0. The result revealed that there was a significant relationship between remuneration and staff engagement. Also, recognition significantly influence staff engagement. Based on the findings, it was concluded that unfavorable working atmosphere in terms of poor remuneration and recognition offered by public secondary schools instills low levels of commitment by the staff. The study therefore recommended that the public school owners should seek to improve its remuneration strategies to ensure that it becomes a basis for enhanced engagement among the employees.

Keywords: Motivational strategies, staff engagement, remuneration, recognition, dedication

Introduction

The achievement of quality education rests squally on the shoulders of teachers who need appropriate motivation to produce the desired standard of education. The role of principals and teachers cannot be downplayed, given the fact that education is one of the important factors that help in bringing about rapid social and economic development in any given nation. However, concerted efforts are always made through effective and efficient motivational strategies by the school principals to ensure teachers' productivity in the school system. Motivational strategies has always been regarded as the internalized drive that is more dominant in an individual at a given moment which are integral and essential part of the secondary school administration. To this end,

no meaningful development can be achieve in the school system without the appropriate strategies to stir up the commitment of teachers on part of the school principal as regards their productivity (Orodho, Waweru, & Getange, 2014; Republic of Kenya, 2013)

Teachers often enter the profession because of their heartfelt desire to witness and support the physical, emotional and intellectual growth of their students. Yet a teacher's performance is measured largely by student achievements. Because motivation influences both developmental and performance outcomes, educators have a vested interest in their students' motivation. However, understanding that motivation is not an easy task. Motivation is a complex and dynamic construct that is a function of the past, present and future and is dependent on the organization and the individual employee (Hardré & Sullivan, & Pintrich, 2002). Teachers should view motivation as a key approach to the classroom and to their relationships with the students within that classroom (Schunk, & Pintrich & Meece, 2008). Students do bring all of their past experiences into a classroom with them and those experiences are often outside of the teacher's direct control. However, students' motivation is also dramatically influenced by a complex of interactions with their teachers, the context and culture of the school and community, and their personal experiences both in and out of the classroom (Hardré & Sullivan, 2001).

In many public secondary schools in Rivers State Nigeria you can find students outside the classroom while a teacher is teaching and even far away from the school environment during school hours. This situation can be attributed to lack of motivation in learning. In addition to that some students dislike some subjects especially science subjects for the reason that they are difficult and sometimes even tend to avoid the teacher of the subject concerned. Bennel (2009) explains that SEDP identified the teacher in the classroom as the main agent for bringing about qualitative improvements of motivation in learning science in secondary schools by emphasizing the role of a teacher in motivating students' performance. Then what are those key motivational strategies applied to enhance students' performance in science subjects' examinations? In the process of improving science in Tanzania the government has put emphasis in giving loans support for student teachers who pursue science in higher learning together with encouraging students to pursue science by buying laboratories resources and increase number of secondary schools for ensuring every student get equal chance in education according to government education development policy 2010-2025.

Little attention of researchers have cared to dwell on the teachers strategies that they use to motivate students in science subjects performance although various researches have indicated different strategies teachers can be motivated for their best job performance for high academic performance example A study done by Gitonga, & Lyimo, (2012) proved that with conducive working condition in schools, recognizing the teachers for their achievement, high payment of salaries and consistently payments of annual increments teachers would be motivated to perform better hence good students' performance in the examinations. It is further supported by Barasa (2015) who insisted that Teachers' motivation is influenced by a myriad of factors, including the prospect of promotion and career advancement, compensation through salaries, bonuses, training programs or special assistance motivation. Hence, much influence should be placed on teachers' motivation.

Akinwumi (2000) argued that effective motivation demands that teachers be so engineered to devote themselves to achieving the objectives of education, and meeting the goals and needs of individual teachers. Several writers have come to associate staff motivation with the satisfaction of the needs of the staff. The more the needs of the workers are satisfied within the organization, the more they are motivated to work and thus satisfy the needs of the organization. This implies that variables such as intelligence, ability, past experience and practice in the task as listed by Vroom (1964) and availability of text books, teaching aids and other such materials and also a good teaching/learning environment will go a long way in motivating teachers' productivity.

Statement of the Problem

From the background of this study, it can be assumed that teachers in public secondary schools in Rivers State are not adequately motivated due to the poor funding of education that cut across the country. Hence, high turnover, absenteeism, divided loyalty and lackadaisical attitude of teachers have become the order of the day. The attendant effect of these is the low level of productivity among the teachers.

Motivation is one of the key factors that determine success in learning and performance in science subjects. Studies on motivation are extensive such that many research studies have been done on teachers' motivations and how teachers can be motivated to perform well in their job functions (e.g. Gitonga, 2012; & Barasa, 2015; & Lyimo 2014). Few researchers have cared to dwell on the motivational strategies and how they enhance teachers' productivity and engagement. Moreover the literature on motivation explains more about what motivation is and how it can affect teaching and learning but few researchers have looked into the motivational strategies that school administrators can use to enhance teachers' productivity in Rivers State. However, it is not clear which motivational strategies school administrators uses to enhance staff engagement. Hence, our point of departure therefore is to fill the gap in literature by looking into the motivational strategies employed by school administrators of public secondary schools to enhance staff engagement in Rivers State.

Operational Conceptual Framework

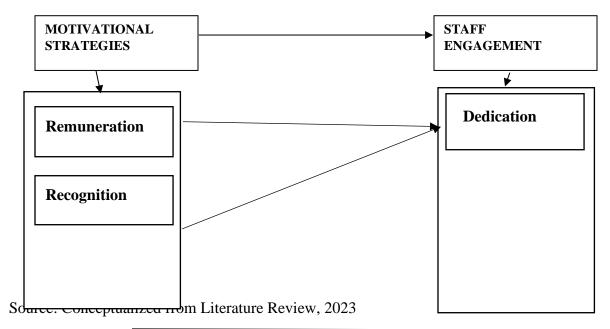


Fig 1.1: Operational Conceptual Framework on the relationship between motivational strategies and staff engagement of public secondary schools teachers in Rivers state

Aim & Objectives of the study

The aim of this study is to evaluate the relationship between motivational strategies and staff engagement of public secondary schools teachers in Rivers state. Specifically, the objectives of the study are to:

- 1. determine the relationship between remuneration and staff engagement of public secondary schools teachers in Rivers State.
- 2. examine the relationship between recognition and staff engagement of public secondary schools teachers in Rivers State.

Research Questions

In this segment of the study, the following research questions were highlighted;

- 1. To what extent does remuneration influence staff engagement of public secondary schools teachers in Rivers State?
- 2. To what extent does recognition influence staff engagement of public secondary schools teachers in Rivers State?

Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were highlighted for the study;

Ho1: There is no significant relationship between remuneration and dedication of public secondary schools teachers in Rivers State.

Ho2: There is no significant relationship between recognition and dedication of public secondary schools teachers in Rivers State.

Literature Review

Theoretical Framework

Herzberg's Two Factor Theory

Frederick Herzberg (1959) proposed a two-factor theory. The theory suggested that people have two sets of needs. Their needs as animals to avoid pain and their needs as humans to grow psychologically. Herzberg's study consisted of a series of interviews that sought to elicit responses to the questions. From the results, Herzberg concluded that the replies people gave when they felt good about their jobs were significantly different from the replies given when they felt bad. Clearly employees who feel good about their work as a result of better pay and other compensation related packages tend to attribute these factors to them. In contrast, dissatisfied employees tend to cite extrinsic factors such as supervision, pay, and company policies and working condition (Dieleman et al. 2004). This theory is relevant to this study because it mentions two factors that affect work performance. That is, extrinsic which include salary and promotion and intrinsic factors which include praise and recognition. Therefore, in this research, rewarding employees" in terms of both intrinsic and extrinsic rewards would be expected to have effect on work performance of employee work which when aggregated and collectively their performance is extrapolated at company level measures overall organizational performance.

Concept of Motivational Strategies

Motivational strategies according to Onyali and Nnebedum (2016) are energizers to staff performance. They further stressed that motivational strategies direct and control the behaviour of teachers to achieve maximum output. Osakwe (2010) opined that motivated teachers are resilient, creative and committed in the quest for enhancing teaching and learning in the school, thereby offering the kind of qualitative education needed for achieving a sustainable economic development. In his own view Enoh (2002) asserted that school principals should use various incentives to motivate teachers because human behaviour is very difficult to understand. However, there are many factors that motivate people to work. These factors are divided into two types called extrinsic motivation and intrinsic motivation (Anyim, Chidi & Badejo 2012). Intrinsic motivators influences individuals from inside while extrinsic motivators influence individuals from outside. Researchers have found that both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation can have different effects on behaviour and how people pursue goals. Udoh and Akpa (2012) asserted that both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation are very important in teaching and learning process. In support of this assertion, Double (2013) pointed out that teachers' motivation can be in form of allowances, bonuses, on-the-job training programmes, promotion of teachers, provision of good working environment, maintaining high degree of relationship with teachers and improving the teachers' general well-being. Motivation can be classified into intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation, intrinsic motivation is the pleasure and interest in

activities that exists within an individual rather than outside pressure. It is the foundation of having enjoyment in performing activity without any external incentives. Whereas individuals who are extrinsically motivated need, rewards and the punishments to engaged in any activity. For students rewards can be in the form of grades and marks in examination. Achievement motivation is concerned with achieving the successful outcomes at the end of the process. Obviously, in teaching and learning process with the help of motivated teachers, teaching as well as students' academic performance can be enhanced.

Teachers can utilize successful strategies and tactics to make the learning effective because motivation plays a significant role to arouse the teachers' teaching quality. Teacher who focuses on student interest toward studies should actively involve learner in the teaching and learning process. Activities to direct towards the learning of important processes or skills involve acquisition of useful knowledge. There is nothing more discouraging to a teacher more to spend hours preparing a lesson than to show concern about how students are going in the acquisition of knowledge. For this teachers may use positive reinforcement because it plays a significant role in achieving the student academic achievements. In schools setting teachers often use positive and negative reinforces for motivations positive reinforces includes praise, group activities grades, whereas negative reinforcement is another way to strengthen students behavior through reinforces through an escape from an unpleasant situation or a way of preventing something unpleasant from occurring (Slavin, 1998). Within the class of positive reinforces first motivational technique implemented in the teaching learning process is praise. It is expression of admiring words used to appreciate individual achievement and appropriate behavior. Praise is the frequent intermittent and occasional comments that effect favorable action.

Dimensions of Motivational Strategies

Remuneration

Remuneration thus appears to be the sum of compensations that an individual receives at the place where he makes occupational input in expectation of drawing a living out of his or her services and expertise. Teachers also require remuneration for their services as employees in the school organization. In this study's context, teacher remuneration can be seen as the totality of earnings, emoluments, salaries and allowances a teacher is paid or receives in the course of his or her service. Remuneration is a component of an entire set of reward management practices. According to Adesulu, Abayomi, Youdeowei, Ekwenuya, Iruoma & Enwere (2015), teaching is the greatest and most impactful profession of all, as every professional was once taught by a teacher. Adesulu, et al (2015) however, lamented that coupled with the fact that the salaries are meagre and irregular, the welfare package of the Nigerian teacher is among the worst globally.

Recognition

Recognition as an intrinsic reward is defined as ratification, confirmation, or acknowledgment that something was done in one's name and authority by another person (Danish et al., 2016). According to Nel et al. (2011), intrinsic rewards like recognition, growth, feedback, opportunities lead employees more towards high job performance and motivation than extrinsic rewards like salary. Robbins (2014) described that through the recognition employees get appreciation of status which make them feel part of an organization. Barton and Gold (2013) described that recognition

is considered the most important factor among non-financial rewards in order to increase job satisfaction level of employees and thus their performance. Romano (2013) pointed out that recognition is the component that is used to strengthen the relationship between organization and people. Through the recognition employee feel rewarded and motivated. He states that giving recognition to the employees, competitive advantage can be achieved and consequently improved performance.

Concept of Staff Engagement

Wellins, Bernthal & Phelps (2005) also define engagement as "the extent to which people enjoy and believe in what they do and feel valued for doing it" and divide into three aspects: enjoyment, belief and value. Enjoyment means people tend to be more satisfied in what they do if they are in the jobs that match their interest and skills; belief means people feel more engaged if they feel their contribution to the job is meaningful; and value comes from the recognition and reward for their contributions.

Employee engagement is defined by Robinson, Perryman and Hayday (2004) as "a positive attitude held by the employee towards the organization and its value. An engaged employee is aware of the business context, and works with colleagues to improve the performance within the job for the benefit of the organization. The organization must work to develop and nurture engagement, which requires a two-way relationship between employer and employee." (Markos & Sridevi, 2010).

Engagement is not only about the aspect bringing employee to work hard in their jobs, but also the process of how individuals give their best effort to perform (Saks, 2006). Consequently, this process is a two-way relationship, which involves both the employer and the employee. Employees will feel valued, want to stay and contribute to the success of the organization if they feel the employers value them and vice versa, the employers will provide sufficient facilities and excellent working environment when they feel that the employees are truly engaged in the workplace.

Measures of Staff Engagement

Dedication

The term dedication has no one distinct definition accepted by scholars in the field. But then, dedication simply refers to the type of engagement in which the employee engaged due to the feeling that his services are retained in the organization, and there will be no need to think of looking for job elsewhere (Williams, Maha & Zaki, 2010).

Dedication is an individual deriving a sense of significance from work, feeling enthusiastic and proud about the given job, and feeling inspired and challenged by the job (Song, Kolb, Lee & Kim, 2012). Further evidence points to the fact that there is a direct linkage between employee engagement behavior such as dedication and profitability (Czarnowsky, 2008).

Motivational Strategies and Staff Engagement

tions employed "to consciously generate and enhance student motivation, as well as maintain ongo-

ing motivated behaviour and protect it from distracting and/or competing action tendencies" (Dö-

rnyei & Ushioda, 2011, p. 103)

Motivation is used in education to elicit positive behaviours from teachers for the purpose of achieving optimal performance. Motivation is employed in school administration to energies all employees and maintain behaviour geared at fulfilling personal objectives, which impacts on job performance. Nwachukwu (2007) stated that motivated behaviour has three basic characteristics, which includes that motivation is sustained, goal directed and results from a felt need.

Daniel (2000) in his book made the proposition that the factors associated with the company police, for example incentive systems, promotion and security can to a large extent contribute to satisfaction or dissatisfaction on the job. When they are suitable, the workers are satisfied. If they are frustrating, the workers become conscious of their inadequacy. They are dissatisfied with their job.

Strauss and Sayless (2001) opined that employees look forward to enjoying services and security programmes from their employers. They also evaluate their organization in terms of its willingness and ability to provide their benefits. When this leisure are deprived, job dissatisfaction ensures. Employee's satisfaction is the aim of most managers. The contention is that, a satisfied employee has a better attitude to work than one who is dissatisfied. Job satisfaction is important because it influences absenteeism, tardiness and to a less extent labour turnover. However, it costs much money to recruit and train employees and no company can stand continuous high turnover of employees or unexcused absence.

Remuneration and Staff Engagement

According to Aswathappa (2003) as cited by Namansa (2010), remuneration is the compensation an employee receives in turn for his/her contribution to the organization. It occupies an important place in the life of an employee. This is because the livel ihood of an employee depends on remuneration, that is his/her standard of living, status in society, motivation, productivity and loyalty are all dependent on remuneration. Remuneration is essential in today's competitive employment market if organizations are to employ and retain the talented staff they need. Aswathappa (2003) continues to say that an effective system of remuneration is highly significant because many problems related to human resource center around remuneration. This means that remuneration must fulfill the expectations and aspirations of the employee, attractive remuneration allows an organization to attract, retain and motivate competent people who will help the organization achieve its objectives and goals. Figlio (2007), asserts that a carrot for teachers helps the students to stick to their books; merit pay for instructors equates to better test scores for their pupils. Pay incentives for teachers 15 have more positive effects on students' test scores than such school improvement methods as small class sizes or stricter requirements for class room attendance. This research provided the first systematic evidence of a relationship between individual teacher performance incentives and student achievements in the United States. Figlio (2007), further noted that students learn more when teachers are given financial incentives to do a better job. Students at schools with teacher pay for performance programs scored an average of one to two percent points higher on standardized tests than their peers at schools where no bonuses were offered

Recognition and Staff Engagement

Yavuz (2004), said that recognition covers monetary and non-monetary rewards and it refers to crediting, encouraging and appreciating individuals and teams who contribute through their behavior and efforts to the success of the organization; examples of recognition are giving public praise, celebrating and communicating successes. Employee recognition is not just a nice thing to do for people, it is a common tool that reinforces and rewards the most important outcomes people create for a business. When you recognize people effectively, you reinforce the actions and behaviors you most want to see people repeat. In addition, White (2007), says that the federal Education, science and training minister in Australia, Julie Bishop announced that like other professions, teachers should be recognized and rewarded on merit. This creates an incentive in the employee (teacher) to improve his or her work performance in order to improve quality of output (Education) that customers (students) receive. While Leigh & Mead (2005), claim that higher salaries are not the only way to reward the most talented teachers; professional recognition, greater responsibilities and official acknowledgement by educational officials are all important ways of encouraging the best teachers to remain in the profession. According to the public service bulletin (2001) as cited by Kakuhikire (2009), in a bid to recognize and encourage performance, the then minister of public service Hon. Amanya Mushega Awarded outstanding performers in 2001. The action began as far back as 1999 and is said to be a means of promoting a performance culture. Recognition of employees for good performance should be an ongoing process for expressing appreciation and for affirming the constructive efforts of employees. The action communicates to the employees that such effort is desirable and the employee continues to respond appropriately.

Wiscombe (2002) as cited by Natwenda (2010), opines that recognition programs have the purpose of keeping employees motivated and productive and are seen to be effective methods of reinforcing company expectations and goals. Private and public recognition are two of the mostly commonly used forms of recognition, Private recognition refers to a quiet thank you or a pat on the back, while Public recognition is more formal. Public recognition is an important part of rewards as the performance of the individual affects more than just one employee, stating publicly why the person received recognition and how it links to the organization goals could act as a motivator to the employees.

Empirical Related Studies

Babagana & Dungus (2015) examined the effects of staff remuneration on the performance of Ramat Polytechnic Maiduguri students from 1995-2011 in Borno state. Questionnaire was served to 45 respondents who are academic staff of the polytechnic from the five schools within the polytechnic (school of environmental studies, school of engineering and applied science, school of agricultural science and technology, school of management studies, and school of vocational and technical education). The data was analyzed using Pearson's Product Moment correlation and regression analysis using Microsoft excel. The findings showed strong positive relationship between staff remuneration (fringe benefits and staff nature of working conditions) and performance of Ramat Polytechnic Maiduguri students

Edirisooriya (2014) examined the impact of extrinsic rewards and intrinsic rewards on employee performance: With Special Reference to ElectriCo Sri Lanka. Self designed questionnaire was

used as the primary data collection method. The data was analyzed using descriptive statistics and inferential statistics. The representative sample of 100 employees are selected from a population of 1075 employees in the ElectriCo. The results revealed that there is a positive relationship between extrinsic reward, intrinsic reward and employee performance.

Hameed, Ramzan, Zubair, Ali & Arslan. (2014) examined the impact of compensation on employee performance (empirical evidence from banking sector of Pakistan). A questionnaire was designed to solicit response from the respondents on factors related to compensation like indirect compensation, wages, salaries and employees performance. Approximately 45 banks were included to collect data. 200 Questionnaires were distributed among the full time working employees of banks and they were selected randomly. Correlation analysis and Regression analysis using SPSS 17.0 version to analyzed the collected data. The findings suggest that Compensation has positive impact on employee performance. It is proved from correlation analysis that all the independent variables have weak or moderate positive relationship to each other. Regression analysis shows that all the independent variables have insignificant and positive impact on employee performance.

Methodology

This study adopted quantitative research design using a survey method. The study population comprised of ten public secondary schools randomly selected by the researchers. The sample size consisted of one hundred respondents who are made up of teachers of the selected public secondary schools, this selection was based on the researchers' convenience. The frame of 100 teachers (staff) from nineteen (10) public secondary schools were surveyed through questionnaire administration. The questionnaire was divided into three parts involving questions relating to respondents' profile. After data cleansing 89 copies of the questionnaire were retrieved and used for data analysis. The items that were used to measure the variables in this study were based on theory and largely drawn from the literature. Reliability analysis was performed in order to ensure the internal consistency and reliability of measures. Cronbach's alpha was calculated to confirm the reliability of the study constructs. The reliability coefficient obtained was 0.87 which exceeded the rule of thumb cut-off mark of 0.70 as suggested by Hatcher (1994) thereby confirming that the items are internally related to the factors they are expected to measure. The Spearman's Rank Order Correlation Coefficient statistical tool of analysis was adopted in testing the relationship between these variables under study.

Analysis and Results

The dimensions of motivational strategies:-remuneration and recognition; were all correlated against the dependent variable measures which include, dedication. The aim was to ascertain if there is a significant relationship between the dimensions of motivational strategies and the measures of staff engagement (dedication), the correlation values with their related significant values are shown in table 1-2 below.

Ho1: There is no significant relationship between remuneration influence dedication of public secondary schools teachers in Rivers State.

Hypothesis One

H0₁: There is no significant relationship between remuneration influence dedication of public secondary schools teachers in Rivers State

Table 1: Statistical Analysis for Hypothesis One

			Remuneration	Dedication
Spearman's rho	Remuneration	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.845**
		Sig. (2-tailed)		
		N	89	89
	Dedication	Correlation Coefficient	.845**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)		•
		N	89	89

^{**.} Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

From the result of the above table, the correlation coefficient (r = 0.845) between remuneration and dedication is very strong and positive. The coefficient of determination ($r^2 = 0.85$) indicates that 85% of dedication can be explained by remuneration. The significant value of (p < 0.05) reveals a significant relationship. Based on that, the null hypothesis was rejected. Therefore, there is a significant relationship between remuneration and dedication of public secondary schools in Rivers State. In submission of the findings; Ikenyiri, and Ihua-Maduenyi (2011) believe that organizations should implement remuneration systems that encompass both financial and non-financial aspects as this would ensure the satisfaction of different employees' needs, thus, increasing levels of employee commitment and performance.

Hypothesis Two

Ho2: There is no significant relationship between recognition and dedication of public secondary schools teachers in Rivers State.

Table 2: Statistical Analysis for Hypothesis Two

			Recognition	Dedication
Spearman's rho	Recognition	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.766**
		Sig. (2-tailed)		
		N	89	89
	Dedication	Correlation Coefficient	.766**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)		
		N	89	89

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

From the result of the above table, the correlation coefficient (r = 0.766) between recognition influence dedication is very strong and positive. The coefficient of determination ($r^2 = 0.77$) indicated that 77% of dedication can be explained by recognition. The significant value of (p<0.05) reveals a significant relationship. Based on that, the null hypothesis is rejected. Therefore, there is a significant relationship between recognition and dedication of public secondary schools in Rivers State. Deci (2010) emphasized the importance of reward in influencing workers performance. He believed that workers do not like to feel that they are performing their task not necessary for money. This shows clearly the extent of value placed on intrinsic motivation. In other word the relevance of motivational factors depends not only on its ability to meet the needs of the employees, but also that of the organization as well.

Conclusion and Recommendations

In conclusion therefore, the results of the study indicated that there is a strong and significant relationship between the dimensions of motivation strategies (remuneration, and recognition) and measures of staff engagement (dedication)

As regards to remuneration of staff, it was found that when remunerated, it would provide job satisfaction and subsequently good performance in schools. It was concluded that, remuneration have a strong effect on staff engagement. Therefore, good performance in schools was linked to teacher's allowances paid, and recognition indicators. With reference to teachers' demand for remuneration, it was concluded that unfavorable working atmosphere in terms of poor remuneration and recognition offered by public secondary schools instills low levels of commitment by the staff, no job satisfaction and subsequently poor performance by the teachers and so this leads to demand for remuneration.

Recommendations

Following the findings and conclusions, the study made the following recommendations:

- 1. It is therefore recommended that the public school owners should seek to improve its remuneration strategies to ensure that it becomes a basis for enhanced engagement among the employees.
- 2. The study also recommends that public administrators should place a lot of emphasis on recognizing employees for their efforts and hard work in order to enhance their level of engagement.
- 3. Public school administrators should enhance policy of promotion of employees as it plays an important role in enhancing the level of engagement of the employees. Most employees have a feeling that they are not rewarded effectively when it comes to promotion.

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