

A Study of Superior-Subordinate Relationship and Employees' Commitment to the Core Beliefs of Organisation in Public Universities of Southwest, Nigeria

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This paper empirically analysed the concept of superior-subordinate relationship and employees' commitment to the core beliefs of the organisation in the public universities of Southwestern, Nigeria by identifying various key issues in superior-subordinate relationship and employees' commitment; determining the effect of the superior-subordinate relationship on employees' commitment and also investigated the extent of the effect of superior-subordinate relationship on employees' commitment as well as the role of leadership styles in subordinates' commitment and those challenges encountered in the course of instituting acceptable superior-subordinate relationship and employees' commitment. The population for the study has a total number of twelve public universities in the Southwestern, Nigeria (Federal and State) with 12,346 academic staff from which a total number of 1,440 respondents were chosen i.e 120 respondents from each of the universities representing 12% of the population through the purposive sampling technique with reference to the stratified sampling procedure which ensures proportional representation of the population sub-group and random sampling technique was used in the course of administering the questionnaire to 1440 respondents. The result of the findings showed that the correlation between superior-subordinate relationship and employees' commitment was a positive but it was a weak relationship at 0.05 level of sig. thus, recommended that the culture of the organisation should be designed and tailored along the tradition, values, norms and beliefs of the people in that environment for acceptability of the ways things are being done in the organisation in order to sustain relationship and commitment.

Key Words: Commitment, superior, subordinate, supervision, leadership styles and public universities

Introduction

Every individual in every organization is involved in a superior-subordinate relationship. It is arguably the most important interaction that takes place within an organization. Organisation is made up of people who come together to achieve common objective through coordinated activities which is the hallmark of management (Nwachukwu, 1988). The description of Management by Mary Packer Follet (1868-1933) in Adebayo, et al (2005) that management is the art of getting things done through other people was further expatiated by Rao and Narayana (1989) to be an apt summation of what a manager does in an organisation and that underneath this apparent simplicity is manipulative character of management functions which is best understood when the statement is clearly examined. The examination of the statement revealed that a manager does nothing on his/her own but through people and that before the manager can get things done through these people, there must be use of authority, need for result accomplishment, and people. However, Akinsanya (2008) explained further the inherent deductions from the description of management by Mary Parker Follet which was an extension of that Rao and Narayana (1989) to

include use and coverage of authority, definition of superior and subordinate relationship, objective to achieve, communication network of intentions, structural relationship and the use of people to get result. In a nutshell, the need to manage resources through the use of people in order to accomplish the stated objective(s) is the hallmark of management as a concept and that in the course of managing these resources through the use of people, a structural relationship would emerge inform of hierarchical order where all the people will not be on the same pedestrian or level i.e master and servant relationship. It is the master and servant relationship that developed into what is known as superior and subordinate relationship (Oginni & Faseyiku, 2012).

A common feature of the relationship is supervision by which the works of subordinates are being monitored to follow expected result (Faseyiku et al, 2001) and this was also buttressed by the Drucker (1994) that the weapon of any manager is communication. In an organization, communication occurs between members of different hierarchical positions. Superior-subordinate communication refers to the interactions between organizational leaders and their subordinates and how they work together to achieve personal and organizational goals. In the views of Rao and Narayana (1989)

supervisory jobs differ widely in content, scope and implementation. Some supervisors oversees their units completely, others have authority in limited areas only, while others take marching orders from somebody else. The summation of Shokan (2001) with respect to managerial skills as developed by Robert Katz and levels of management has that whatever the case of supervisory jobs, what is certain is that supervisors come into direct contact with the workers from where formal and or informal relationship can be developed in furtherance to the accomplishment of the organisational objectives and that such relationship will leave certain impression in the minds of the workers which would mar or support the accomplishment of objectives of the organisation. This was equally supported by the views of Bakar and Mustaffa in their work on the relationship between superior-subordinate relationships quality and group commitment: the mediating factor of superior-subordinate communication.

Statement of the Problem

Drawing inferences from the two elements of the 14 principles of management as postulated by Henri Fayol i.e chain of command/scalar chain and unity of command became paramount in the discussion of superior and subordinate relationship because they revolved around relationship between a superior and subordinate. The emphasis of the chain of command is on the inter-connectivity and unbroken set of reporting relationship from the top of the organisation to the bottom. It is a test on individual's performance against the expectations of a superior whereas unity of command placed emphasis on accountability of subordinates to only one superior. A subordinate receives assigned duties and authority from a superior and is accountable only to that superior. Emanating from these two elements of the 14 principles is that superiors do not have identical relationship across their subordinates in the work activities but rather develop unique dyadic

relationship with each subordinate as a result of role making behaviour. The implication of this dyadic relationship is high and low superior-subordinate relationships with different implications on employees' commitment to the core beliefs of the organisation which is further contingent upon performance and since supervisors do not have physical contact with work itself but oversees work activities of the subordinates at work, it then follows that the quality and quantity of work depends to a large extent on the quality of supervision on the operative workers and the work climate which is a function of interpersonal factor. Hence, the need to research into the study of existing relationship between employees' commitment and superior-subordinate relationship with reference to public universities in the Southwest of Nigeria.

Objective of the Study

The main objective of the study was to determine the effect of superior-subordinate relationship on the employees' commitment to the core beliefs of the organisation thereby generating the propensity to remain with or not decision through the following specific objectives;

1. To identify variables and key issues in superior-subordinate relationship and employees' commitment to the core beliefs of the organisation.
2. To examine the effect of superior-subordinate relationship on the employees' commitment to the core beliefs of the organisation.
3. To investigate the extent of the effect of superior-subordinate relationship on employees' commitment to the core beliefs of the organisation.
4. To identify the role of leadership styles in subordinates' commitment to the core beliefs of the organisation.
5. Identify various challenges confronting superior-subordinate relationship and subordinates' commitment.

Table 1: List Of Public Universities in South western, Nigeria

Names Of Universities	Location
University of Lagos (UNILAG)	Akoka, Lagos
Lagos State University (LASU)	Ojo, Lagos
Federal University of Agriculture (FUNAB)	Abeokuta, Ogun
Olabisi Onabanjo University (OOU)	Ago-woye, Ogun
University of Ibadan (UI)	Ibadan, Oyo
Ladoke Akintola University of Technology (LAUTECH)	Ogbomosho, Oyo
Obafemi Awolowo University (OAU)	Ile-Ife, Osun
Osun State University (OSUNUNI)	Osogbo, Osun
University of Ado-Ekiti	Ado-Ekiti, Ekiti
Adekunle Ajasin University	Akungba, Ondo
Federal University of Technology (FUTA)	Akure, Ondo
Ondo State University of Science and Technology	Okitipupa, Ondo

Source: University in Nigeria (2012)

Literature Review

The concept of superior and subordinate relationship is deeply rooted in the leadership concept which manifested through leadership styles. Flippo (1980) described leadership as a pattern of behaviour designed to integrate organisational and personal interests in pursuit of some objectives. However, Hollins (1971) in Adebayo et al (2005) expressed leadership as the ability to create ideas and instil into every member of the organisation a sense of confidence, loyalty, willingness, satisfaction and cooperation. From this definition, it can be deduced that a leader must have visions, develop team work, counselling wisdom, discipline, goal getter and influence the followers who may be referred to as subordinates in the world of work in order to achieve results. From Flippo's description, the behaviour designed and exhibited by a leader during the course of supervision of the subordinates is known as leadership styles (Rao and Narayana, 1989). There are many different styles of leadership as there are leaders and so also is the fact that some are more common than the others (Shokan, 1995). From common to uncommon i.e autocratic, democratic and laissez-faire (free rein), Likert's styles 1-4 system (exploitative autocratic, benevolent autocratic, consultative democratic and participative democratic), X and Y, managerial grid, Michigan studies and Ohio State University Studies (Shokan, 1995, Adebayo et al, 2005, Rao and Narayana, 1989, Drucker, 1994, Robbins, 1988, Kotler et al 1999 and Mullins, 2007).

Supervisor is seen in the light of superior as well as leader in the discussion while employees or workers as the case may be as long as there is accountability for action taken in the course of performing assigned task(s) is seen in the light of subordinates in the organisational context. Supervision revolves around overseeing employees at work, intelligent utilisation of human talents, motivating employees to peak performances and maintenance of good human relations (Faseyiku et al, 2001), the achievement in terms of efficient and effectiveness of these lies in the styles of supervision as adopted as well as adapted from styles of leadership. Supervision under autocratic means subordinates are compelled to follow superior's directions as well as instructions to the letter even if they are logically wrong while subordinates would avoid responsibility since they are simply carrying out instructions, the implication on the superior-subordinates relationship will be frustrating, low morale, fear and disaffections (Williams, 1981) and this can be likening to theory X of McGregor (Oginni and Faseyiku, 2012).

Adopting democratic style of supervision implies that subordinates are consulted with devolution of authority thus allowing the subordinates to use their initiatives and assume

responsibility with non pressure orientation that maximises subordinates participation in decision making. The implication of this on the superior – subordinates relationship would be that the subordinates feel the sense of importance and recognition, internal cohesion network, satisfying climatic conditions of work and morale (Robbins, 1988) and can also be likening to theory Y of McGregor (Oginni and Faseyiku, 2012). The other style of supervision is known as laissez-faire where the superior completely allows authority to reside with the subordinates. i.e complete devolution of authority. Thus, empowering the subordinate to plan, motivate, control and be responsible for their own actions. It is the superior that avoids the use of power through the application of authority because such superiors considered the costs associated with supervision are greater than the benefits (Dale, 1981). The implication of this style of supervision is disjointed and disunity among subordinate in the course of pursuing organisational objectives thus laying foundation for chaos. Confidence is at low ebb as there is unhealthy rivalry among subordinates, delegated decision making across board without adequate knowledge and train. Those common and the uncommon styles of supervision can equally be linked to these three styles discussed with the first two becoming more visible in reality.

Considering the situational theory of leadership, the choice of supervision styles would depend on many variables which cannot always be determined in advance but contingent on the prevailing circumstances in the environment. The studies of McCurdy and Efer as well Morse and Reine reported in Rao and Narayana, (1989) discussed that McCurdy and Efer investigated the effects of autocratic and democratic styles on three groups involved in problem-solving activities. The teams working under authoritarian supervisors were told to simply obey orders, while those working under democratic supervisors were told to offer suggestions and not to follow order blindly. At the end of the investigation, no difference in productivity between these two groups. In the other study by Morse and Reine, it was found that democratic supervision style results in higher job satisfaction to the subordinates and autocratic supervision style resulted in greater productivity. To them, the choice of supervision styles thus depends on the goals to achieve; if the immediate goal is to increase output autocratic style is appropriate and if the superior is willing to build a stable and highly motivated workforce then democratic style is better. The authors are of the opinion that supervision style is contingent upon prevailing situation at that moment going by the above studies which can be further buttressed by the fact that some subordinates enjoys working under autocratic style of supervision while some subordinates enjoys working under democratic style of supervision. However, the

laissez-faire style of supervision is said to be in existence for academic purposes but not in reality in absolute terms (Oginni, 2011).

Commitment and Organisation

In the views of Northcraft and Neale, (1996) Organizational commitment is determined by a number of factors, including personal factors (e.g. age, tenure in the organization, disposition, internal or external control attributions); organizational factors (job design and the leadership style of one's supervisor); non-organizational factors (availability of alternatives). On this basis, Northcraft and Neale (1996) described commitment as an attitude reflecting an employee'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. Mowday et al (1982) sees commitment as attachment and loyalty on account of identification with the goals and values of the organisation; desire to belong to the organization and willingness to display effort on behalf of the organization. Organisational commitment has been described as a psychological state that characterizes an employee's relationship with an organisation and has implications for the decision to continue membership of the organisation (Meyer and Allen 1991). Meyer and Allen (1991) based their discussions on the three components of commitment i.e. Affective commitment, Continuance commitment and Normative commitment which had equally turned to be the point of reference for many researchers that had contributed in one way or the other to organisational commitment (Salancik, 1977, Weiner & Vardi, 1980, Mathieu & Zajac 1990, Guest, 1991, Kim & Mauborgne 1993, Hackett, Bycio, & Handsdoff, 1994, Dunham, Grube & Castaneda 1994, Becker, Randal, & Riegel 1995, Ellemmer, Gilder, & Heuvel 1998, Armstrong, 1999). From the work of Meyer and Allen (1991) commitment can be inferred to be in form of the nature of relationship between an employee and the organisation or relationship to a variety of entities. i.e it has two facets; the first from the organisation's (employers) perspective and the second from the employee's perspective. To this extent, commitment can therefore be summarised as dedication to a particular organization, cause, or belief, and a willingness to get involved.

According to Nehmeh (2009) with respect to studies on commitment highlighted that commitment has a great impact on the successful performance of an organisation. This is because a highly committed employee will identify with the goals and values of the organization, has a stronger desire to belong to the organization and is willing to display greater organizational citizenship behaviour i.e., a willingness to go over and beyond their required job duties. And if human resources are said

to be an organization's greatest assets, then committed human resources should be regarded as an organisation's competitive advantage. Meyer & Allen, (1991) supported the human resources factor on the ground that human resource practices, such as recruitment and selection, also play an important role in gaining employee commitment. i.e by providing realistic job previews as well as accurate information, applicants are better able to determine whether the job is appropriate for them. If they are aware of the available choices, applicants will be more dedicated to the organisation that they opt for. Similarly, selection procedures try to identify those individuals who are likely to be committed to work. The work of Tannenbaum, (1991) was also in support that training is an important part of the socialisation process. He found a strong positive correlation between commitment and employee's motivation for training. Training should therefore be continuous to give employees a sense of recognition and the feeling that their development is valued by the organisation.

Guest (1991) concludes that high organizational commitment is associated with lower turnover and absence, but there is no clear link to performance because it is quite different from motivation. Commitment is a broader concept and tends to withstand transitory aspects of an employee's job. It is possible to be dissatisfied with a particular feature of a job while retaining a reasonably high level of commitment to the organization as a whole. The works of Dornstein and Matalon (1998) described eight variables that are relevant to organizational commitment which can bring about high or low organisational commitment to include interesting work, co-workers' attitudes towards the organization, organizational dependency, age, education, employment alternatives, attitude of family and friends. Armstrong (1999) was of the opinion that since it is difficult to deny that it is desirable for management to have defined strategic goals and values towards actualising organisational objectives, it is also desirable to instituting programmes and plans that would make employees to behave in a way that support those strategies and values. Therefore, when developing commitment strategies the following variables should be taken into consideration communication, education, training programmes, and initiatives to increase involvement, ownership, relationship network, the development of performance and reward management systems. The opinion of Armstrong (1999) can be said to an extension of the works of Dornstein and Matalon (1998).

Meyer and Allen (1991) in their work on job satisfaction and organizational commitment among blue collar workers reported through the use of factors analysis significantly predicted that promotion, satisfaction, job characteristics, extrinsic and intrinsic exchange, as well as extrinsic and

intrinsic rewards, were related to commitment. Scholl (1981) posits there are at least four possible commitment mechanisms known to be intrinsic elements namely investments, reciprocity, lack of alternatives, and identification. Scholl (1981) went further to adduce identification, success/status, security, validation and trust to be the focus as many of these elements are developed through the leader/employee relationship. This explains why many of the commitment-based organizations place a great deal of emphasis on developing transformation and participative leadership styles. Therefore, the way people are managed through the superior-subordinate relationship has a major impact on their commitment to the core beliefs and practices in the organisation as a whole. The rationale behind gaining employees' commitment has been perceived to be lower labour turnover, extra role behaviour and better product quality, employee flexibility leading to the firms' competitive advantage as well as healthy and stable workforce. Thus, given the contribution that keeping such practices should be a high priority to the organisation. Organisations can secure this commitment by engaging in fair HR practices such as procedural justice, good communication, increased participation, more supportive management and reasonable rewards.

Challenges of Subordinate-Superior Relationship and Commitment

Miles et al, (1996) identified four major dimensions of challenges in superior-subordinate relationship through communication namely positive relationship communication, upward openness communication, negative relationship communication and job-relevant communication. Positive relationship communication focused on superiors seeking and being open to feedback from subordinates, showing an interest in them as people, being able to relate to them in a casual manner, and allowing them to take part in decision making processes. Upward openness communication was displayed by subordinates who feel comfortable with questioning a superior's instructions and being able to disagree with his or her superior. Negative relationship communication was characterized by a superior ridiculing and criticizing subordinates. Lastly, job-relevant communication included job instructions, information about rules and policies, and supervisor's feedback on performance. This fact has serious implications for the study of superior-subordinate relationships in that problems are bound to arise when superiors/subordinates do not feel they are being treated fairly.

The kind of relationships that can occur between superiors and subordinates were studied by Kets de Vries (1999). He identified four main types of interaction patterns that could emerge in this

relationship namely the narcissistic, the controlling, the paranoid, and the sadomasochistic. The first type, narcissists can be described as people who are preoccupied with wanting to be superior, experiencing a sense of uniqueness, exaggerating their talents, and engaging in boastful and pretentious behaviour. This type of relationship occurs when subordinates are in a one-down position and are especially needy and submissive. The second type of relationship is controlling. Here, individuals want to master and control everything and everyone around them. Subordinates in these relationships can either be overly submissive, passive-aggressive, or dependent. A paranoid relationship is the third type of Superior-Subordinate. Here, executives believe that the world is a very dangerous place, full of imminent danger. They are hyper vigilant and overly concerned about others' hidden motives and intentions, which often leads to distorted perceptions, thoughts, and memories. This relationship with a subordinate can lead him or her to also have a paranoid outlook or they play along out of frustrated dependency. The last type of the relationships is sadomasochistic. Executives, who are sadist in nature, behave aggressively and frighten others into submission. Thus, to retain the upper hand as well as be in power takes precedence and priority over everything else. Masochists, on the other hand, are self-demeaning and believe themselves to be worthless. Sadists, when paired with a masochist subordinate, create a collusive relationship. All four of these interaction patterns are obviously problematic for both individuals involved and need to be identified and ended before they can create severe organizational repercussions.

Andrew & Sue (2010) in their study on challenges of commitment identified that unclear or missing personal vision, incompatible personal visions, no shared vision, poor partnership systems and competing commitments were the factors at the heart of the challenges in commitment. Nehmeh (2009) posits that all individuals vary in their propensity to become committed, due to personal characteristics, pre-entry expectations or organisational choice variables. She therefore sees these factors as challenges to commitment in the relationship between superior and subordinate. Booker (2011) identified culture as another major challenge in employees' commitment and superior-subordinate relationship which was illustrated in this way. "You may think you're doing a great job, but your supervisor may think otherwise and may encourage you to seek training or other resources to enhance your skills. Perhaps management thinks you're suited for a different position – maybe they see something in you that you don't see in yourself". Situations like these could cause a person to wonder if the company is as committed to him as he is to the company and to her

change is inevitable which may further affect the level of commitment of such employee.

To overcome these challenges, the following strategies for superior-subordinate relationship can be adopted to get subordinate commitment towards the core beliefs of the organisation namely informal interactions, formal interactions, appear impressive and maintenance. The informal interactions, such as joking and non-work related conversations emphasize creating friendship. The formal interactions, such as politeness and respect for the superior's authority, do help to create a professional superior-subordinate relationship. Another is to appear impressive to the superior, such as a hesitancy to deliver bad news or being enthusiastic. The final relationship maintenance strategy includes open discussion about the relationship with the superior, including explicitly telling them how they want to be treated in the workplace.

Research Hypothesis

Evolving from the review of literature to guide the direction of the study was the below hypothesis;

H0: superior-subordinate relationship has no effect on employees' commitment to the core beliefs of the organisation.

H1: superior-subordinate relationship has effect on employees' commitment to the core beliefs of the organisation.

Methodology

The research work made use of both primary and secondary data. Information extracted from journals, textbooks and other documented materials were used as secondary data. Questionnaire was used as the primary data instrument which was developed in accordance with Likert 5 point rating scales i.e Strongly Agree = 5, Agree = 4, Neutral =3, Disagree = 2, and Strongly Disagree = 1 to elicit relevant information from the respondents who were chosen through the purposive sampling technique with reference to the stratified sampling procedure which ensures proportional representation of the population sub-group and random sampling

technique was used in the course of administering the questionnaire. Items for measuring the superior-subordinate relationship and employee's commitment to the core beliefs of the organisation were adapted from organizational commitment questionnaire by Mowday, Steer, and Porter (1979) and Akinboye (2001) studies. The overall reliability co-efficient value of the instrument yielded an $r = 0.85$ Cronbach Alpha.

The population for the study has a total number of twelve public universities (Federal and State) namely University of Lagos, Lagos; Lagos State University, Ojo; Federal University of Agriculture, Abeokuta; Olabisi Onabanjo University, Ago-Iwoye; University of Ibadan, Ibadan; Ladoke Akintola University of Technology, Ogbomosho; Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife; Osun State University, Osogbo; University of Ado-Ekiti, Ado- Ekiti; Ondo State University of Science and Technology, Okitipupa; Federal university of Technology, Akure and Adekunle Ajasin University, Akungba with 12,346 academic staff from which a total number of 1,440 respondents were chosen i.e 120 respondents from each of the universities representing 12% of the population.

The administered questionnaire has three sections labelled as section A, B and C. The section A has information on the bio data of the respondents while section B has information inform of questions on the superior-subordinate relationship of the respondents and the section C with information in question form on the employees' commitment to the core beliefs of the organisation. In all 1,440 copies of questionnaires were administered by the researchers with each of them covering two states since Southwest of Nigeria is made up of six states, out of the 1,440 copies of questionnaire administered, 1,235 copies were returned but the researchers found 1,226 useful for analytical purposes thus representing 85% rate of responding. Descriptive statistics, factor analysis and inferential analysis such as regression analysis and analysis of variance were used to analyse the data collected and to test the hypotheses stated at 0.05 level of sig.

Data Analysis and Interpretations

Table 2: Demographic Information about the respondents
Table 2a: Information about Respondents Gender

Variables	Frequency distribution	Percentage
Gender		
• Male	835	68%
• Female	391	32%
Total	1226	100%

Source: survey 2012

Table 2a above has 835 male respondents representing 68% of the population and 391 were female respondents representing 32% of the population. The implication of this was that there were more of male respondents than female

respondents in the public universities thus indicating that the responses to superior - subordinate relationship tended towards male as result of being the majority.

Table 2b: Information about Respondents Marital Status

Variables	Frequency distribution	Percentage
Marital status		
• Single	268	22%
• Married	923	75%
• Divorced	23	2%
• Widow	5	0.40%
• Widower	7	0.57%
Total	1226	100%

Source: survey 2012

The information provided in table 2b above has that 268 respondents representing 22% of the population were still single as at the time of the research, 923 respondents representing 75% of the population were married as at the time of the research while 23 respondents representing 2% of the population were divorced and 5 respondents representing 0.40% of

the population were widows as well as 7 respondents representing 0.57% of the population were widowers. The implication was that the majority of the correspondents were married thus implying that the respondents are matured and emotionally stable to express their opinions without bias or prejudice.

Table 2c: Information about Respondents Educational Levels

Variables	Frequency distribution	Percentage
Educational level		
• Professor with PhD	124	10%
• PhD	187	15%
• M.Phil	236	19%
• M.Sc / M.Ed	679	55%
Total	1226	100%

Source: survey 2012

Table 2c above reveals four levels of educational qualifications possessed by the respondents in order to lecture in these public universities i.e professor with PhD has 124 respondents representing 10% of the population, 187 respondents representing 15% of the population were PhD holders, 236 respondents representing 19% of the population were M.Phil while 679 respondents representing 55% of the

population were masters degree holders. The implication of this information was that it showed that the respondents were knowledgeable to understand the questions as contained in the questionnaire without complication in the interpretation of questions. This also explains why the number of questionnaires found not useful to be on the lower side.

Table 2d: Information about Respondents work experience

Variables	Frequency distribution	Percentage
Work experience		
• Less than 1 year	102	8%
• 1-3 yrs	112	9%
• 4-6 yrs	334	27%
• 7 yrs and above	678	55%
Total	1226	100%

Source: survey 2012

The above table 2d showed that 102 respondents representing 8% of the population were respondents that have spent less than a year, 112 respondents representing 9% of the population were between 1-3years, 334 respondents representing 27% of the

population were between 4-6years while 678 respondents representing 55% of the population were respondents that have spent more than 6years in the service of their various universities. The implication of the information for the research work

was that majority of the respondents have spent more years in their respective universities thus indicating that they are in tune with what superior-

subordinate relationship is all about via-a-vis their commitment to the core beliefs of the organisation.

Table 2e: Information about Respondents Age Limit

Variables	Frequency distribution	Percentage
Age limit		
• Less than 30 years	115	9%
• 30-40 years	234	19%
• 41-50 years	465	38%
• 51-60 years	265	22%
• 60 years and above	147	12%
Total	1226	100%

Source: survey 2012

From table 2e above, the majority of the respondents were between 41-50 years of age representing 38% of the population followed by respondents within the age bracket 51-60 years representing 22% of the population. Next to this were respondents within the age bracket 30-40 years representing 19% of the population, 147 respondents were within the age bracket of 61 years and above representing 12% of

the population while 115 respondents were within the age bracket of less than 30 years representing 9% of the population. The implication of this for research work was that the respondents are matured to understand the purpose of the research work thus enabling them to provide information without distortion, bias or prejudice.

TABLE 3: Effect of Superior-Subordinate and Employees' Commitment at 0.05 level of sig

Variables	Number	Mean	Std Dev.	t. cal.	t.tab
SS	1,226	60.25	7.69	3.89	1.96
EC	1,226	59.24	8.74		

Source: survey 2012 (SS = Superior-Subordinate and EC = Employees' Commitment)

The stated null hypothesis has that there is no effect of superior-subordinates relationship on employees' commitment to the core beliefs of the organisation. The calculated **t** value is 3.89 and the tabulated **t** value is 1.96 therefore **t** calculated is greater than **t** tabulated i.e $t_{cal} > t_{tab}$ ($3.89 > 1.96$). The alternative hypothesis (H1) is hereby accepted and null hypothesis is rejected (H0) i.e superior-subordinate relationship has effect on employees' commitment to the core beliefs of the organisation. On this basis, it can be deduced that there is relationship in terms of effect that superior-subordinate has on employees' commitment towards the core beliefs of the organisation which can be positive and negative

relationship, strong and weak as well as high and low.

Table 4: Regression analysis measuring extent of Relationship between SS and EC

The obtainable result from the above hypothesis through statistical test indicated the need to investigate the extent of the effect of superior-subordinate relationship on employees' commitment to the core beliefs of the organisation. i.e the outcome of the statistical test accepted H1 and reject H0. - Superior-subordinate relationship has effect on employees' commitment to the core beliefs of the organisation.

Variables	Coefficient				
	R	R ²	Fcal	Ftab	t-sig
SS and EC	0.437	0.005	1.331	1.190	0.529

Source: survey 2012 (SS = Superior-Subordinate and EC = Employees' Commitment)

The use of SPSS model reveals the following predictors and variables for explanation. **R** explains the existing linear correlation of coefficient, **R²** represents coefficient of determination which explains the amount variation in the variables, and **F** statistic of ANOVA explains the effect of the

variables while **t**- significance measures the extent of the relationship. Therefore, **R = 0.437**, **R² = 0.05**, **Fcal = 1.331**, **Ftab = 1.190** and **t - sig. = 0.529**. The model summary shows that there is linear correlation relationship between the variables (independent and dependent) because the **R** which is

the predictor variable is 0.437 therefore there is a positive correlation between superior-subordinate relationship and the employees' commitment. i.e an increase in the superior-subordinate relationship will increase employees' commitment. Although there is positive correlation in relationship but the value of $R = 0.437$ suggests that the positive relationship is not too strong (weak) and this was confirmed by $R^2 = 0.05$ which is the coefficient of multiple determination shows that superior-subordinate relationship has only been able to explain 5% of the total variation in employees' commitment to the core beliefs of the organisation. The remaining 95% is explained by other variables not mentioned in the model. This was further confirmed by the value of t which was 0.529; the implication was that the effect of the superior-subordinates relationship was minimal and not too significant to out rightly determine the commitment of employees to the core beliefs of the organisation.

Discussion of Findings

The findings of this study revealed that a correlation relationship exists between perceived superior-subordinate and employees' commitment, although correlation between superior-subordinate relationship and employees' commitment was a positive but it was a weak relationship. The outcome of this superior-subordinate relationship and employees' commitment corresponds with the views of Guest (1991) that commitment is a broader concept and tends to withstand transitory aspects of an employee's job. It is possible to be dissatisfied with a particular feature of a job while retaining a reasonably high level of commitment to the organization as a whole. The outcome of this study negate Hulpia et al (2009) in their study on the impact of the distribution of leadership and leadership support among teachers and how that affected job satisfaction and commitment found that there was a strong relationship between organizational commitment and the cohesion of the leadership team and the amount of leadership support. The works of Dornstein and Matalon (1998) described eight variables that are relevant to organizational commitment which can bring about high or low organisational commitment to include interesting work, co-workers' attitudes towards the organization, organizational dependency, age, education, employment alternatives, attitude of family and friends. Scholl (1981) supported this by explaining why many of the commitment-based organizations place a great deal of emphasis on developing transformation and participative leadership styles. Therefore, the way people are managed through the superior-subordinate relationship has a major impact on their commitment to the core beliefs and practices in the organisation as a whole.

The study also revealed some of the challenges encountered in the course of superior-subordinate relationship and employees' commitment such as communication, unclear or missing personal vision, interaction pattern of behaviours, personal characteristics, pre-entry expectations or organisational choice variables and culture (Miles et al, 1996, Kets de Vries 1999, Andrew & Sue 2010, Nehmeh 2009 & Booker 2011). Furthermore, the study also identified key issues in superior-subordinate relationship as well as employees' commitment to include goals and values of the organization, organizational citizenship behaviour, human resources factor, interesting work, co-workers' attitudes towards the organization, organizational dependency, age, education, employment alternatives, attitude of family and friends, relationship network, the development of performance and reward management systems (Nehmeh 2009, Meyer & Allen, 1991, Tannenbaum, 1991, Dornstein & Matalon 1998, Armstrong 1999).

Conclusion

Emerging from the findings of this study were some salient issues identified in the superior-subordinate relationship and employees' commitment which were cornerstones serving as the impetus and catalyst for what is to be done to get true commitment of employees to the core beliefs of the organisation. It was found that there is relationship between superior-subordinate and employees' commitment although the existing relationship between superior-subordinate and employees' commitment were found to be relatively low simply because commitment to a course is a function of many variables which is contingent on short and long terms objectives of the organisation and thus the effect of the relationship on the commitment of employees. It is therefore imperative for management of public universities in the Southwestern, Nigeria to understand the objectives or demands at hand whether it is short or long so as to know which of the identified key issues in the superior-subordinate relationship and employees' commitment to work on in order to achieve what is to be achieved. The works of Hulpia et al (2009) found that there was a strong relationship between organizational commitment and the cohesion of the leadership team and the amount of leadership support which was not in agreement with the outcome of this research may be as a result of environmental factors that are peculiar to the country – Nigeria. At the same time, accommodating the challenges identified so that the superior-subordinate relationship and employees' commitment would be managed to flourish within the stipulated time frame to achieve the organisational objectives. It was however, crystal clear that the role of leadership styles in

subordinates' commitment to the core beliefs of the organisation was another determinant as a result of the transactional relationship evolving because of work network arrangement between the two. To this end, the authors were of the opinion that the existing relationship between superior and subordinates will continue to affect the level of employees' commitment to the core beliefs of the organisation whether it is in the short or long run.

Recommendations

On the basis of the above discussions, the following recommendations are being adduced forward to strengthen superior and subordinates relationship in order to obtain the right levels of commitment from employees to the core beliefs of the organisations;

1. That management should understand the need to incorporate individual aspirations and goals into the overall objectives of the organisation as well as developing effective communication network that will aid clarity of purpose.
2. That the culture of the organisation should be designed and tailored along the tradition, values, norms and beliefs of the people in that environment for acceptability of the ways things are being done in the organisation.
3. That the supervision of the subordinates should be carried out in accordance with the principles of unity of command as well as chain of command in order to avoid confusion in terms of which order is to be carried out and loose supervision i.e Role ambiguity and conflict.
4. That supervision styles should be contingent upon prevailing situation at that moment with reference to the objectives to be achieved, however, whatever choice that is adopted explanation should be provided to the subordinates in order to understand the rationale behind such decision.
5. That superior (leaders) should lead by examples in all ramifications. This should be achieved by actions, in words and interactions thus providing enabling environment where trust can give employees a sense of commitment by taking every word, action or interaction on value i.e literal meaning (Be open and clear about the mission, principles, and goals of your organization).
6. That management should allow commitment grows when people work together, feel successful at what they do, make decisions together, work through conflicts, and support one another's leadership. In addition, have fun and play together, overcome obstacles, hold each other to high principles, appreciate and respect one another, challenge one another to take the next step, build relationships, experience a victory together, learn from

mistakes and setbacks as well as see their leaders model commitment.

7. That management should develop a unique strategy to maintain the relationship between superior and subordinates which differ greatly and also contingent upon the expectations of the individual parties (a close friendship with their superior, a professional relationship with their superior and a civil relationship with their superior).

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