

**EFFECT OF WORK ENVIRONMENT ON TEACHERS' ORGANIZATIONAL  
COMMITMENT IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN NAKURU NORTH  
DISTRICT, KENYA**



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**A Research Project Submitted to the Graduate School in Fulfillment of the  
Requirements for the Award of the Degree of Master of Human Resource  
Management of Egerton University**



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## DECLARATION AND RECOMMENDATION

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This research project is my original work and has not been presented for an award of degree or diploma in this or any other institution.

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### Recommendation

This research project has been submitted for examination with our approval as University Supervisors.

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## **DEDICATION**

This work is dedicated to my benefactor Jai Prakash Mishra through whose hands God's grace shone upon me and my formative years became a stem upon which grapevine has grown and succulent fruits are borne for today and posterity

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## ABSTRACT

Employee commitment is a critical component of organizational success. However literature indicates that employees have differing levels of organizational commitment. Different factors account for the differences in commitment of employees to their work, including work environment. This study sought to find out the effect of work environment on teachers' commitment to their teaching stations in public secondary schools in Nakuru North District. Specifically, the study sought to find out the effect of social aspects of work environment such as supervision, co-worker and student-teacher relationships on teachers' commitment to their work stations. The study adopted a correlational survey method of data collection. The target population comprised 341 teachers from whom a sample of 184 teachers was randomly selected. Data was collected by use of structured questionnaires. It was analyzed with the aid of the SPSS computer package version 20. Descriptive statistics such as means were used to summarize the data. Correlation analysis was used to establish the effect of aspects of work environment on teachers' organizational commitment. Multiple regression analysis was used to determine the joint effect of supervision, co-worker relations and student-teacher relationships on teachers' organizational commitment. The findings were that the dominant nature of head teachers' supervisory style was laissez faire which correlated negatively with teachers' organizational commitment. The nature of co-worker relationship correlated positively with teachers' organizational commitment. Student-teacher relationship also correlated positively with teachers' organizational commitment. The results also revealed that aspects of work environment explain 21.5% variation in teachers' organizational commitment. Head teachers' supervisory style has the greatest effect followed by co-worker relationships. Student-teacher relationship has the least effect on teachers' organizational commitment. The results indicate that school administrators and human resource management practitioners can enhance their employee organizational commitment by creating conducive work environment. The study also recommends further research in organizational commitment.

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## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Background of the Study

Public institutions in Kenya, including educational institutions, are undergoing a transformation to reverse the falling trend in service delivery. They are increasingly adopting private sector practices aimed at institutionalizing a business culture where customer focus and results are the norm. Strategic and performance based management are therefore becoming mandatory in the management of public institutions. To realize these ideals, the productivity of the human resource is essential. However, low level of commitment among secondary school teachers in Kenya has been taking a worrying trend with a commitment level of only 50% (Mbwiria, 2010). Commitment is an indicator of the extent to which employees identify themselves with organizational goals, value organizational membership, and intend to work hard to attain the overall organizational mission. To achieve this, it is important to look into all those factors that would promote commitment of teachers.

A growing number of education reformers, policymakers and researchers have argued that many of the well-publicized shortcomings in education system are, to an important extent, due to inadequacies in the working conditions, resources, and support afforded to school teachers. Proponents of this view hold that teachers are underpaid, have too little say in the operation of schools, are afforded too few opportunities to improve their teaching skills, suffer from a lack of support or assistance, and are not adequately rewarded or recognized for their efforts (Riley, Smith & Forgione, 1997). Teachers who leave schools cite an opportunity for a better teaching assignment, dissatisfaction with support from administrators, and dissatisfaction with workplace conditions as the main reasons why they seek other opportunities (Easley, 2004). Talmore and Reiters (2005) suggest four dimensions according to which conditions of work environment can be described in relation to employee commitment. These are the psychological dimension, the structural dimension, the social dimension and the organizational/bureaucratic dimension.

The psychological dimension of the work environment includes mental and emotional factors such as independence, variation of work, workload, significance of work undertaken and opportunities for self-expression and professional development. The assumption is that when there is not a problem with overload, the work is varied and challenging, and when the worker independently finds that it has special significance for him/herself, the more the person will experience personal self-fulfillment at work. The structural dimension of the working environment includes several independent factors: space, architectural design and levels of noise, as well as dependent factors that relate to the level of flexibility afforded to the workers to make changes and to adapt the structural features of their working environment according to personal needs. The more the structure is pleasant and comfortable, the more the worker will feel that he/she can achieve his/her personal goals.

The organization/bureaucratic dimension includes variables such as red tape, overload of paperwork and lack of communication, as well as managerial factors which include laws and regulations, the inclusion of workers in decision-making and policy-making, and the status of the individual worker in the organization. Issues such as conflict between different roles, ambiguity concerning roles and tasks, disturbances at work and even harm to personal performance at work will contribute to a sense of burnout. Here, too, the assumption is that the more the organization is efficient and provides support for its workers, the more satisfied the workers will be in achieving the organizational goals.

According to Talmore and Reuters (2005), the social dimension of the work environment includes all the persons that come into direct contact with the worker, including clients, colleagues and bosses. This dimension includes the sub-culture of the organization, leadership, style of communication between colleagues and between worker and clients, the severity of problems encountered by clients and their attitudes towards the service providers.

Surveys of teachers indicate that a positive and collaborative school climate together with support from colleagues and administrators are the most important factors influencing whether they stay in a school (Leithwood, 2005). Therefore, the key to

improving teacher commitment lies in addressing the teachers' social dimension of work environment by focusing on their relationship with their immediate supervisors, co-workers and students who are the principal recipients of the teachers' services.

### **1.1.1 Social Dimension of Work Environment**

The relationship between bosses and the workers is reflected in the nature of supervision employees receive from their supervisors. The term 'supervisor' refers to one's immediate superior in the workplace. Supervision is the activity carried out by supervisors to oversee the productivity and progress of employees who report directly to them (Staker, n.d.). A supervisor is the main link between the organizational goals and the people who are responsible for performing daily service or production activities. Supervisors are key to establishing and enforcing processes, appropriate work behaviors and making goals a reality for the organization. An effective supervision will depend on effective leadership which will in turn depend on the leadership style adopted by the supervisor.

Co-worker relationships are equally important to individual employees. Co-workers are other individuals situated in the same stratum of an organizational hierarchy and with whom one executes tasks and has routine interactions (Fairlie, 2004). These are other workers one works alongside on a day to day basis and who can both support and antagonize their colleagues. Social interaction among colleagues may be beneficial in several ways (Jarzabkowski, 2002). First, social interaction may promote better working relationships, which in the longer term may improve the quality of work. Second, positive social interaction may improve the emotional health of the staff community, thus reducing emotional stress and burnout. Moreover, interpretation of organizational policies is done more by colleagues than by supervisors. Hence, an employee's colleagues may impact significantly to his satisfaction, dissatisfaction and level of motivation while working in an organization.

Student-teacher relationship is particularly important for both the student and the teacher. When teachers form emotionally warm and supportive relationships with and among their students they improve students' chances for academic success. According to

Pianta (1999), positive student-teacher relationships are characterized by open communication, as well as emotional and academic support that exist between students and teachers. Close relationship between the student and the teacher will make the teacher feel satisfied with their jobs as teachers job satisfaction is related to teacher-student interaction (Sava, 2001). The assumption is that supportive leadership, efficient communication between colleagues and respectful relations between service providers and receivers will enhance the worker's sense of controls—their sense of self-fulfillment—and hence increase the level of commitment experienced.

### **1.1.2 Organizational Commitment**

Commitment is an indicator of the extent to which employees identify themselves with organizational goals, value organizational membership, and intend to work hard to attain the overall organizational mission. Though there exists a considerable degree of diversity and controversy regarding how the construct of organizational commitment should be defined and subsequently measured, most researchers conceive of organizational commitment as involving some form of psychological bond between people and the organization. Porter and Steers (1982) defined organizational commitment as 'the relative strength of an individual's identification and involvement in a particular organization.' They viewed it as an attitudinal commitment characterized by an individual's identification with and involvement in a particular organization evidenced by a strong belief in and acceptance of the organization's goals and values.

### **1.1.3 Public Secondary Education in Kenya**

In Kenya, formal education is based on eight years of primary and four years of secondary education. Vocational, technical and academic courses are offered in post primary education and training institutions. The education system, particularly secondary education, is still centrally managed by the Ministry of Education. This service is provided by both the private sector and the government. The schools that are aided by the government through the public funds are referred to as public schools (Education Act 1980). The aid is mainly in the form of teachers who are posted to teach in these institutions and are paid by the government. With the introduction of free secondary

education in 2008, financial aid is also provided in the form of Free Secondary Education Fund (FSEF). Management of public secondary schools, middle level colleges and technical institutions is done by Boards of Governors (BOGs). The principals of the institutions act as the secretaries to the boards. They are also the principal administrators in the institutions. In the hierarchy of education administration and management, they are the supervisors and inspectors at the grassroots level. Their managerial duties are contained in the revised Scheme of Service for Graduate Teachers (2007). According to the manual, the principal is the chief executive officer in the school. He is responsible for the overall running and control of the school. He is responsible for all planning, organizing, directing, controlling, staffing, innovating, coordinating, motivating and actualizing the educational goals and objectives of the institution and the country as the inspector at the school level. Thus without a proper leadership style, effective performance cannot be realized in schools.

Though literature on teachers' organizational and professional commitment in Kenya is scanty, global statistics especially from the west indicate a worrying trend with regard to retention of teachers in the profession. Teaching tends to be characterized by comparatively lofty attrition compared to other professions such as engineering, medicine and law (Anderson, Stacey, Western & Williams, 1983). One study indicates that many graduates are there who never start a teaching career (Heyns, 1988). Of those who start, few expect to teach until their retirement. According to Murnane, Singer and Willett (1988), about 5% to 8% of teachers leave the profession each year. Recent statistics shows that approximately one third of new teachers leave their positions within the first 5 years of teaching (National Commission on Teaching and America's Future, 2002).

Teachers leave the profession for a number of reasons, including dissatisfaction with support from administrators and with workplace conditions, pay, location of the working station, student characteristics, and working facilities (Luekens, Lyter & Fox, 2004). A study in USA by Bobbitt, Broughman and Gruber (1995) found that 20% of teachers who left the profession in the 1990-91 school year cited salary and inadequate support from administration as primary reasons for leaving. New teachers leave the profession because



of the conditions in which they are exposed to. Achinstein (2006) underlines how new teachers are often placed in hard-to-staff schools and are constantly examined and inspected by administrators, colleagues, parents and students. New teachers in the United States and in most European countries are placed in high-needs urban or rural areas (Castro, Kelly & Shih, 2010).

Teachers in African countries work under difficult conditions that are different from those in developed countries. Osei (2006), notes that in many African countries teachers work in overcrowded classrooms (40-80 pupils in a class), mainly due to a considerable increase in student enrolment in primary and secondary schools. Poor school facilities and inadequate infrastructure also seem to add to the woes of the unmotivated teachers (Raina & Dhand, 2000). Sumra,(2005) reports that 50.9% of the teachers in Tanzania would leave teaching if offered an alternative, the main reason being low pay. Other reasons included the locality of working station and heavy workload.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

The education system in Kenya is undergoing structural transformation in response to the changes in the technological, economic and cultural realms. New goals of education such as Education for All (EFA) and education as a means to realize vision 2030 are being implemented (Ministry of Education,2012). In response to these challenges, there is need for a manpower that is highly skilled and committed to support the development of an efficient and responsive education and training system. However, global and domestic statistics indicate low levels of commitment among teachers (Anderson, 1983, Heyns, 1988, Sumra, 2005, Mbwiria, 2010). In spite of this, little study has been done to examine work environment in educational institutions and its effect on employee commitment. Studies done in the west on job satisfaction and commitment for teachers has focused on both physical (heavy workload, inadequate working facilities, location of the working stations) and psychological (low pay, security of tenure, student characteristics and lack of support from the administration.) aspects of work environment with little attention being given to the social dimension. This study therefore seeks to investigate the effect of the social dimension of work environment on teachers' commitment to their working stations in Nakuru North District, Kenya.

### **1.3 Objectives of the Study**

The overall objective of the study was to examine the effect of work environment on teachers' commitment to their teaching institutions for public secondary school teachers. The specific objectives of the study were to:

- (i) Determine the effect of head teachers' supervisory style on teachers' organizational commitment
- (ii) Determine the effect of co-worker relationship on teachers' organizational commitment
- (iii) Determine the effect of student-teacher relationship on teachers' organizational Commitment
- (iv) Determine the joint effect of the components of social dimension of work environment on teachers' organizational commitment.

### **1.4 Research Hypotheses**

The study sought to test the following hypotheses:

- (i) There is a positive relationship between head teachers' supervisory style and teachers' organizational commitment for secondary school teachers.
- (ii) There is a positive correlation between the nature of co-worker relationship between teachers and teachers' organizational commitment for secondary school teachers.
- (iii) There is a positive correlation between student-teacher relationship and teacher's organizational commitment in secondary schools.
- (iv) There is a positive relationship between the combined components of social dimension of work environment and teachers' organizational commitment

### **1.5 Significance of the Study**

The study findings will be valuable as they will enrich literature on teacher commitment, which is vital for the present and future scholars with regard to the effect of principals' supervisory style, co-worker and student-teacher relationships on teachers' commitment. The findings and recommendations will also be useful to practitioners in the management of employee commitment.

The findings will also stimulate further research on teachers' and general employee commitment especially with regard to contribution of parents and other stakeholders in education on teachers' commitment to their working stations. Further research will also be stimulated with respect to the effect of clients on employee commitment in business enterprises.

## **1.6 Scope and Limitations of the Study**

### **1.6.1 Scope of the Study**

The study focused on the relationship between nature of supervision, co-worker and student-teacher relationship on teachers' organizational commitment. It considered the working environment for 341 teachers in 21 public secondary schools in Nakuru North District in Kenya.

### **1.6.2 Limitations of the Study**

The study was limited to three variables (co-worker relationships, student-teacher relationship and the nature of supervision) as determinants of organizational commitment. The findings of the study may consequently not be generalizable since other factors such as convenience of the school to the teacher and geographical location of the school may affect a teachers desire to remain in a school. Generalizing may also be affected by the low reliability score in the student-teacher relationship scale.

## **1.7 Assumptions of the Study**

The study operated on the assumption that the respondents would cooperate and give accurate and honest information. It also assumed that supervisory styles of principals, student-teacher and co-worker relationships influence teachers' organizational commitment.

## 1.8 Definition of Terms

The following terms were used to refer to the description given after each term.

**Co-worker relationships:** The term co-worker referred to any individual with whom one works. Co-worker relationship referred to social relationships between teachers at the same work station when no formal authority is exercised over one another.

**Organizational commitment:** This refers to level of attachment a teacher has towards his or her working station as reflected in a teacher's willingness to remain in it, a teacher's identification with the goals, mission, problems and destiny of the station, and emotional attachment and loyalty to it. It is also reflected in a teacher's organizational citizenship behavior.

**Public secondary school:** This refers to an educational institution that receives aid from the government especially in form of teachers from the Teachers Service Commission.

**Social dimension of work environment:** The social dimension of work environment includes all the persons that come into direct contact with the worker including clients, fellow co-workers and school administrators. This therefore referred to work environmental factors that are social in nature such as nature of supervision, co-worker relationships and relationship with students.

**Supervision:** this is overseeing the performance or operation of a person or a group in an organization. It involves offering direction, guidance controlling, being in charge and offering stewardship.

**Supervisor:** The term 'supervisor' refers to one's immediate superior in the workplace. That is the person to whom one reports directly to in an organization. In an educational institutional set up, this would refer to a head of subject, head of department, deputy head teacher and the head teacher. In the study, the term referred to the head teacher as the head of a working station.

**Student-teacher relationship:** This referred to the working relationship between students and teachers. Students are teachers' clients.

**Teaching experience:** The period a teacher has been in the teaching profession

**Tenure:** The period a teacher has been teaching in the current working station

**Work environment:** It refers to all of the conditions and factors that influence work. In general, this includes physical, social, and psychological conditions. Elements of organizational working conditions include leadership style management practices, employee autonomy and control, social support and supervisory practices among others. In this study, it referred to supervisory, co-worker and student-teacher relationships in the work environment.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

This section reviews literature on the social aspects of work conditions such as nature of supervision in an organization and the co-worker relationships that exist in working stations. It also reviews the concept of organizational commitment, its dimensions as well as the factors that affect the level of commitment. Finally, the section reviews literature on the relationship between working environment and a worker's level of commitment.

#### **2.2 Social Dimension of Work Environment**

The social dimension of the work environment includes all the persons that come into direct contact with the worker, including clients, colleagues and bosses (Talmore, et al 2005). This dimension includes the supervisory style adopted by the leader and the relationship between colleagues and between workers and clients.

##### **2.2.1 Supervisory Style**

The term 'supervisor' refers to one's immediate superior in the workplace, that is, the person to whom one reports directly to in an organization (Campbell, 2011). For example, a top manager would generally supervise an employee who is a middle manager, a middle manager would supervise a first-line manager and a first-line manager would supervise a worker. Supervisors are responsible for their direct employees' progress and productivity in the organization.

Supervision often includes conducting basic management skills, organizing teams, noticing the need for and designing new job roles in the group, hiring new employees, training new employees, managing employee performance, and ensuring conformance to personnel policies and other internal regulations (Robbins & De Cenzo, 2001). Effective supervision not only involves getting others to perform in a desirable manner but also entails mentoring, coaching, monitoring, leading, as well as utilizing employees and other resources to accomplish a common goal. Supervisors also have the responsibility for implementing essential administrative functions such as staffing, planning,

organizing, directing, and controlling. Most supervisors spend much of their time directing and controlling (supervising) as opposed to planning and organizing (Yukl, 1989).

A supervisor's supervisory skills emanate from the leadership style adopted by the supervisor. Leadership style is defined as the pattern of behaviours that leaders display during their work with and through others (Hersey & Blanchard, 1993). Miller, Walker and Drummond (2002) view leadership style as the pattern of interactions between leaders and subordinates which includes controlling and directing. It relates to all techniques and methods used by leaders to motivate subordinates to follow their instructions. A number of leadership styles have been identified in leadership studies. Based on interest generated in leadership studies by Ohio State University in 1945, Hersey and Branchard (1993) identified four basic leadership styles which in effect described autocratic, human relations and democratic styles. Bass (1990) identified Laissez-Faire, Authoritarian, and Democratic leadership styles as the most common. It is the responsibility of the individual supervisor to find the most appropriate style or combination of styles that works best for them.

Laissez-faire leadership style places no emphasis on any basis of power. It is often referred to as the "hands-off" style. This approach is one in which the supervisor rejects control and allows the employees to have authority over decision making and group processes with minimal direction (Bass, 1990). They provide little if any direction. They let employees do whatever they want. They try to be as non-committal as possible and show little concern for people or their performance. In some instances, the leader may remain available for problem solving or consultation. Even though this type of leadership style gives the leader more opportunities to perform other tasks, it gives employees an opportunity to use their own initiative and judgment, and helps to foster the development of employees. The flipside of this type of leadership style is that it may establish an atmosphere where apathy and distrust exists among employees who exhibit low needs for autonomy. Such employees become disinterested and resentful of the organization and their leader. It results in the lowest employee productivity and satisfaction.

The Authoritarian style of leadership, which is often considered to be the classical approach, places emphasis on legitimate word and coercive power. It is characterized by high emphasis on performance and a low emphasis on people. In this approach, the leader is usually highly efficient and exercises strong command and control over decision making (Kouzes & Pozner, 2007). In most circumstances this type of leader does not obtain input from employees when making decisions, and employees are expected to obey orders without receiving any explanations. The motivation environment is produced by creating a structured set of rewards and punishments. Recognition is minimal and focuses primarily on obedience. The leader closely supervises and controls each employee, pushes them to work harder, and makes them redo anything that he doesn't like. Such a leader shows little interest in employees or their feelings and doesn't hesitate to reprimand anyone who challenges their authority or makes a mistake. Even though this method saves time, and often provides quick results, it frequently results in hostile attitudes, a suppression of conflict, distorted and guarded communications, high turnover and absenteeism, low productivity and work quality, and a preoccupation with rules, procedures, red tape, status symbols, and trying to cater to the whims of the boss (Brockbank & McGill, 2006).

Democratic leaders place a high emphasis on both people and performance. They are genuinely interested in their people but also expect a high level of performance in terms of both quality and quantity. They approach management as professionals and take time to establish clear objectives, define responsibilities and provide the necessary leadership by describing tasks, sharing objectives and organizing the workers. Once employees are organized, the bosses' job is to offer encouragement and assistance, give feedback and recognition when employees do a good job, and help resolve any problems that may arise (Bass, 1990). This results in high employee productivity, satisfaction, cooperation, and commitment. It reduces the need for controls and formal rules and procedures. It results in low employee absenteeism and turnover. It develops competent people who are willing to give their best, think for themselves, communicate openly, and seek responsibility

According to Kavanaugh and Ninemeier (2001), there are three factors that determine the type of leadership style a supervisor adopts. These are leaders' characteristics,



subordinates' characteristics and the organizational environment. More specifically, the personal background of leaders such as personality, knowledge, values and experiences shape their feelings about appropriate leadership that determine their specific leadership style. Employees also have different personalities, backgrounds, expectations and experiences. For example, employees who are more knowledgeable and experienced may work well under a democratic leadership style, while employees with different experiences and expectations require an autocratic leadership style. Some factors in the organizational environment such as organizational climate, organizational values, composition of work group and type of work can also influence leadership style. However, leaders can adapt their leadership style to the perceived preferences of their subordinates (Wood, 1994).

### **2.2.2 Co-worker Relationship**

Co-workers are other individuals situated in the same stratum of an organizational hierarchy and with whom one executes tasks and has routine interactions (Fairlie, 2004). These are other workers one works alongside on a day to day basis and who can both support and antagonize their colleagues. Individuals in every type of organization have co-workers who are partners in social and task interactions. The importance of coworkers is magnified by several recent firm and job-related trends. Flatter organizational structures and increased team-based work translate into more frequent and more meaningful lateral interactions. Likewise, the shift of job content from steady and routine individual tasks to more complex and collective tasks has enhanced coworkers' salience and their potential influence (Harrison, Johns, & Martocchio, 2000). In the U.S. for example, 90.2 percent of employees likely have coworkers (Chiaburu, 2008).

Employees have interactions with leaders and coworkers, and both types of relationships can be positive or negative. Theoretically, leaders can be supportive or antagonistic (Tierney & Tepper, 2007). Similar possibilities exist for coworkers. Coworkers can provide to their colleagues different valences of influence such as positive social support and antagonism. They also determine role perceptions, work attitudes, withdrawal and effectiveness. While vertical relationships are governed by authority ranking, coworker exchanges are based on reciprocation and turn-taking. Further, because of their greater

presence relative to leaders in almost any organization, employees are likely to interact more frequently with their coworkers (Ferris & Mitchell, 1987). The repository of emotional and behavioral resources from coworkers is thus larger and easier to draw from than the leader-based one. More frequent coworker interactions are also more likely because they have generally the same status as the focal employee and exchanges of all types are less restricted. Coworkers should, then, have a nontrivial influence on colleagues' role perceptions, attitudes, withdrawal, and effectiveness, even in the presence of other influences originating from the direct leader.

Social support is a useful resource for enhancing employees' proper functioning in organizations (Ng & Sorensen, 2008). Supervisor and coworker support are the most relevant forms of social support for employees in the workplace. If the supervisor is abusive, then coworker support becomes a more salient and important source of social support. Coworker support refers to employees' beliefs about the extent to which coworkers provide them with desirable resources in the form of emotional support and instrumental assistance (Chiaburu & Harrison, 2008). In the work engagement literature, coworker support is considered a job resource. Job resources refer to job aspects that are functional in the achievement of work goals, fostering of personal development, and reduction of job demands and their associated costs (Bakker & Demerouti, 2004). According to the buffering model of social support, social support protects people from the unhealthy influence of stressful events (Cohen & Wills, 1985). Also, according to Lazarus and Folkman's (1984) theory of stress, social support prevents stress by making threatening experiences appear less consequential or provide valuable resources for coping when stress occurs.

### **2.2.3 Student-Teacher Relationship**

Literature provides evidence that strong and supportive relationships between teachers and students are fundamental to the healthy development of all. (Hamre & Pianta, 2001; Zeller & Pianta, 2004). Positive student-teacher relationships serve as a resource for students at risk of school failure, whereas conflict or disconnection between students and adults may compound that risk (Ladd & Burgess, 2001). Although the nature of these relationships changes as students mature, the need for connection between students and

adults in the school setting remains strong (Crosnoe, Johnson & Elder, 2004). As children enter formal school settings, relationships with teachers provide the foundation for successful adaptation to the social and academic environment. Children who form close relationships with teachers enjoy school more and get along better with peers. Moreover, teachers who demonstrate respect towards their students will automatically win favour by having active learners (Affizal & Raidah, 2009).

Teacher factors show a fairly inconsistent association with quality of the teacher–student relationship. Teachers’ beliefs and perceptions about students and about their own roles are much more salient to the formation of supportive relationships. Brophy (1985) suggested that teachers view themselves primarily as instructors or socializers and that their perceptions in relation to these two roles affect the way they interact with students. Instructors tend to respond more negatively to students who are underachievers, unmotivated, or disruptive, whereas teachers who are socializers tend to act more negatively toward students they view as hostile, aggressive, or interpersonally disconnected. According to Kennedy and Kennedy (2004), teachers with a dismissing or avoidant attachment style may have unrealistic expectations for their students’ maturity and independence, as they themselves may have learned to be distant in their own interpersonal relationships. Teachers with a dismissing status may generally respond to students by distancing themselves, demonstrating a lack of warmth and understanding. Teachers’ self-efficacy beliefs may also affect the nature of the relationship they develop with students. Teachers who believe that they have an influence on students tend to interact in ways that enhance student-teacher relationships. (Midgley, Feldlaufer & Eccles, 1989). Teachers also report their relationships with students as being a source of emotional support and comfort (Zeller & Pianta, 2004).

### **2.3 Organizational Commitment**

Multiple definitions of commitment are found in the literature. Bateman and Strasser (1984) state that organizational commitment has been operationally defined as being multidimensional in nature, involving an employee’s loyalty to the organization, willingness to exert effort on behalf of the organization, degree of goal and value congruency with the organization, and desire to maintain membership. Porter, Steers,

on behalf of the organization, and a definite desire to maintain organizational membership”. Sheldon (1971) defines commitment as being a positive evaluation of the organization and the organizational goals. According to Buchanan (1974) most scholars define commitment as being a bond between an individual employee and the organization. Meyer & Allen (1997) define a committed employee as being one who “stays with an organization, attends work regularly, puts in a full day and more, protects corporate assets, and believes in the organizational goals”. This employee positively contributes to the organization because of his commitment to the organization. Meyer and Allen (1993) identified three types of commitment: affective commitment, continuance commitment, and normative commitment.

Affective commitment is defined as the emotional attachment, identification and involvement that an employee has with his organization and its goals (Mowday, Porter & Steer, 1982). According to Allen and Meyer (1990), Affective Commitment is the result of employee’s emotional attachment with the organization. Porter et al (1974) conceptualize it as a “belief in and acceptance of the organization’s goals and values, a willingness to focus effort on helping the organization achieve its goal’s, and a desire to maintain organizational membership”. Mowday and others (1982) further state that affective commitment is “when the employee identifies with a particular organization and its goals in order to maintain membership to facilitate the goal” (p.225). Meyer and Allen (1997) state that affective commitment to an organization is evident when employees retain membership out of choice.

Meyer and Allen (1990) describe continuance commitment as the result of cost associated with leaving the organization. Reichers (1985) describes continuance commitment as the willingness to remain in an organization because of the investment that the employee has with “non-transferable” investments. Non-transferable investments include things such as retirement benefits, relationships with other employees, or things that are special to the organization. According to Reichers, continuance commitment includes factors such as years of employment or benefits that the employee may receive that are unique to the

organization. Meyer and Allen (1997) further explain that employers who share continuance commitment with their employees often make it very difficult for an employee to leave the organization.

Normative commitment is the commitment that a person believes that they have to the organization or their feeling of obligation to their workplace (Bolon, 1997). Weiner (1982) discusses normative commitment as being a “generalized value of loyalty and duty”. Meyer and Allen (1991) supported this type of commitment with their definition of normative commitment being “a feeling of obligation”. Weiner (1982) argues that normative commitment is only natural due to the way we are raised in society. It can be explained by other commitments such as marriage, family and religion. Therefore when it comes to one’s commitment to their place of employment they often feel like they have a moral obligation to the organization.

Meyer, Allen and Smith (1993) observe that the three types of commitment are a psychological state “that either characterizes the employee’s relationship with the organization or has the implications to determine whether the employee will continue with the organization.” They also state that those employee’s with a strong affective commitment will remain with an organization because they want to, those with a strong continuance commitment remain because they have to, and those with a normative commitment remain because they feel that they have to.

## **2.4 Supervisory Style and Employee Commitment**

In traditional work environment structures, supervisors have long been recognized to play an important part in developing roles and expectations of employees as well as offering support. Supervisor support is the extent to which supervisors provide encouragement to employees within their work. The support and consideration is a strong determinant of job satisfaction in a wide variety of work settings (Yukl, 1989). Supervisors play an important role in structuring the work environment and providing information and feedback to employees. Immediate supervisors also provide information about the support of the broader organizational processes. As a consequence, supervisor’s behaviour has an impact on the affective reaction of workers (Durham, Night & Lockie 1997).

The importance of leadership was first researched in the 1920s with studies using surveys reporting that favourable attitudes toward supervision helped to achieve employee job satisfaction (Bass, 1990). Several studies were conducted during the 1950s and 1960s to investigate how managers could use their leadership behaviours to increase employees' level of job satisfaction (Northouse, 2004). These studies confirmed the significance of leadership in making differences in employees' job satisfaction (Bass, 1990).

Research indicates that the quality of the supervisor-subordinate relationship will have a significant, positive influence on the employee's overall level of job satisfaction (Robbins, 2003). Individuals are likely to have high levels of job satisfaction if supervisors provide them with support and co-operation in completing their tasks (Ting, 1997). The researchers generally hold that dissatisfaction with management supervision is a significant predictor of job dissatisfaction. According to Ramsey (1997), supervisors contribute to high or low morale in the workplace. The supervisor's attitude and behaviour toward employees may also be a contributing factor to job-related complaints (Sherman & Bohlander, 1992). Supervisors with high relationship behaviour strongly impact on job satisfaction (Graham & Messner, 1998). Wech (2002) supports this view by adding that supervisory behaviour strongly affects the development of trust in relationship with employees. The author further postulates that trust may, in turn, have a significant relationship with job satisfaction. Yousef (2000) showed that leadership behaviour was positively related to job satisfaction. Therefore, managers need to adopt appropriate leadership behaviour in order to improve it. Leadership style affects a range of factors such as job satisfaction, performance, turnover intention, and stress (Chen & Silverthorne, 2005) thereby contributing to organizational success.

Specifically, it is suggested that the autocratic leadership leads to lower levels of job satisfaction, while democratic leadership leads to higher level of job satisfaction. The level of job satisfaction under laissez-faire leadership is also less than under democratic leadership (Bass, 1990). Savery (1994) found that democratic leadership style related positively to employees' job satisfaction and commitment in federal organisations in Western Australian. In contrast, Rad and Yarmohammadian (2006) found no relationship

between leadership behaviours and employee job satisfaction in Isfahan University Hospitals in Iran, where a participative leadership style was prevalent. Erkutlu and Chafra (2006) found that laissez-faire leadership style in a boutique hotel led to negative results in organisational performance such as low satisfaction, high stress, and low commitment by followers. A study conducted by Packard and Kauppi (1999) found that employees with supervisors displaying democratic management styles experienced higher levels of job satisfaction compared to those who had supervisors who exhibited autocratic or laissez – faire leadership styles. Brewer and Hensher (1998) contend that supervisors whose leadership styles emphasise consideration and concern for employees generally have more satisfied workers than supervisors practicing task structuring and concern for production. Bassett (1994) maintains that supervisors bringing the humanistic part to the job, by being considerate toward their employees, contribute towards increasing the employee's level of job satisfaction. Chieffo (1991) maintains that supervisors who allow their employees to participate in decisions that affect their own jobs will, in doing so, stimulate higher levels of employee satisfaction. These findings are corroborated by Staudt's (1997) research based on social workers in which it was found that respondents who reported satisfaction with supervision were also more likely to be satisfied with their jobs in general.

Researchers (Knoll, 1987; Rettig, 2000) have written extensively about the importance of supervision in schools. Their research indicates that supervisory activities foster motivation, inspiration, and trust and thus help to improve teaching performance. Research indicates that principals play a vital role in the care for the personal welfare and emotional support for teachers (Leithwood, 2006). Principals' leadership emerges as a strong influence on teachers' self-efficacy beliefs. They have a positive influence on teacher efficacy by helping to develop a shared and inspiring sense of direction for the school, modeling appropriate behavior, and rewarding teachers for good work. Isherwood (1973) found that principals that demonstrated excellent human relations skills heightened teachers' loyalty and improved teacher satisfaction, whilst the lack in participatory management, lack of sensitivity to school and teacher-related problems and lack of support was reliably associated with teacher stress and burnout (Jackson, Schwab & Schuler, 1986). A study carried out to establish the working conditions that matter for

teachers found that while teachers expressed that time and empowerment were central in their abilities to help students learn, a collegial atmosphere and being led by a principal with a strong instructional emphasis mattered most in teachers decisions about whether or not to stay in the school in which they work (North Carolina Teacher Working Conditions survey, 2004). Teachers value school settings where they are not isolated, working together with leadership that supports their efforts.

## **2.5 Co-worker Relationship and Employee Commitment**

Coworkers are not only a vital part of the social environment at work; they can literally define it. There is empirical evidence that co-worker relations are an antecedent of job satisfaction (Morris, 2004). A number of authors maintain that having friendly and supportive colleagues contributes to increased job satisfaction and commitment (Johns, 1996; Kreitner & Kinicki, 2001). Findings of a survey conducted by Madison (2000) on more than 21000 women occupying the most demanding jobs indicated that those participants who lacked support from co-workers were more likely to suffer from job dissatisfaction. Another survey conducted amongst 1250 FoodBrand employees found that positive relationships with co-workers enhance job satisfaction (Berta, 2005). Empirical evidence indicates that relationships with colleagues have consistently yielded significant effects on job satisfaction of federal government workers in the United States (Ting, 1997). A study conducted by Viswesvaran, Deshpande and Joseph (1998) further corroborated previous findings that there is a positive correlation between job satisfaction and co-workers.

An individual's level of job satisfaction might be a function of personal characteristics and the characteristics of the group to which he or she belongs. The social context of work is also likely to have a significant impact on a worker's attitude and behaviour (Marks, 1994). Some studies have shown that the better the relationship between the employee and co-workers, the greater the level of job satisfaction (Wharton & Baron, 1991). According to Hodson (1997), such social relations constitute an important part of the "social climate" within the workplace and provide a setting within which employees can experience meaning and identity. Luthans (1998) postulates that work groups characterized by co-operation and understanding amongst their members tend to



influence the level of job satisfaction or dissatisfaction. When cohesion is evident within a work group it usually leads to effectiveness within a group and the job becoming more enjoyable. However, if the opposite situation exists and colleagues are difficult to work with, this may have a negative impact. Markiewicz (2000) found that the quality of close friendships was associated with both career success and job satisfaction of employees. Riordan and Griffeth (1995) examined the impact of friendship on workplace outcomes; their results indicate that friendship opportunities were associated with increased job involvement and organizational commitment, and with a significant decrease in turnover intention. Ramírez and Nembhard (2004) found that organizational commitment can only be achieved through the compatibility of the employees who work together to achieve goals. There is also evidence about how social support from coworkers is related to individuals' stress, burnout and physical strains (Halbesleben, 2006). Some studies have connected either positive or negative behaviors originating from co-workers to individual work outcomes other than health (Duffy, Ganster & Pagon, 2002).

In a research to find out the effect of co-worker motivational efforts on employee morale, Hasan (2011) concludes that co-workers various motivational efforts have a great impact on employee morale as co-workers are the ones who support and guide them at the work place and are the source of positive spirit which leads towards the accomplishment of objectives. However, in contrast, the motivational efforts do not necessarily guarantee employees' commitment towards their job as the employee's job commitment is affected largely by various other factors which include compensation, benefits, rewards, increments, promotions, chances to grow in the organization and supervisor-subordinate relationships.

## **2.6 Student-Teacher Relationship and Teachers' Commitment**

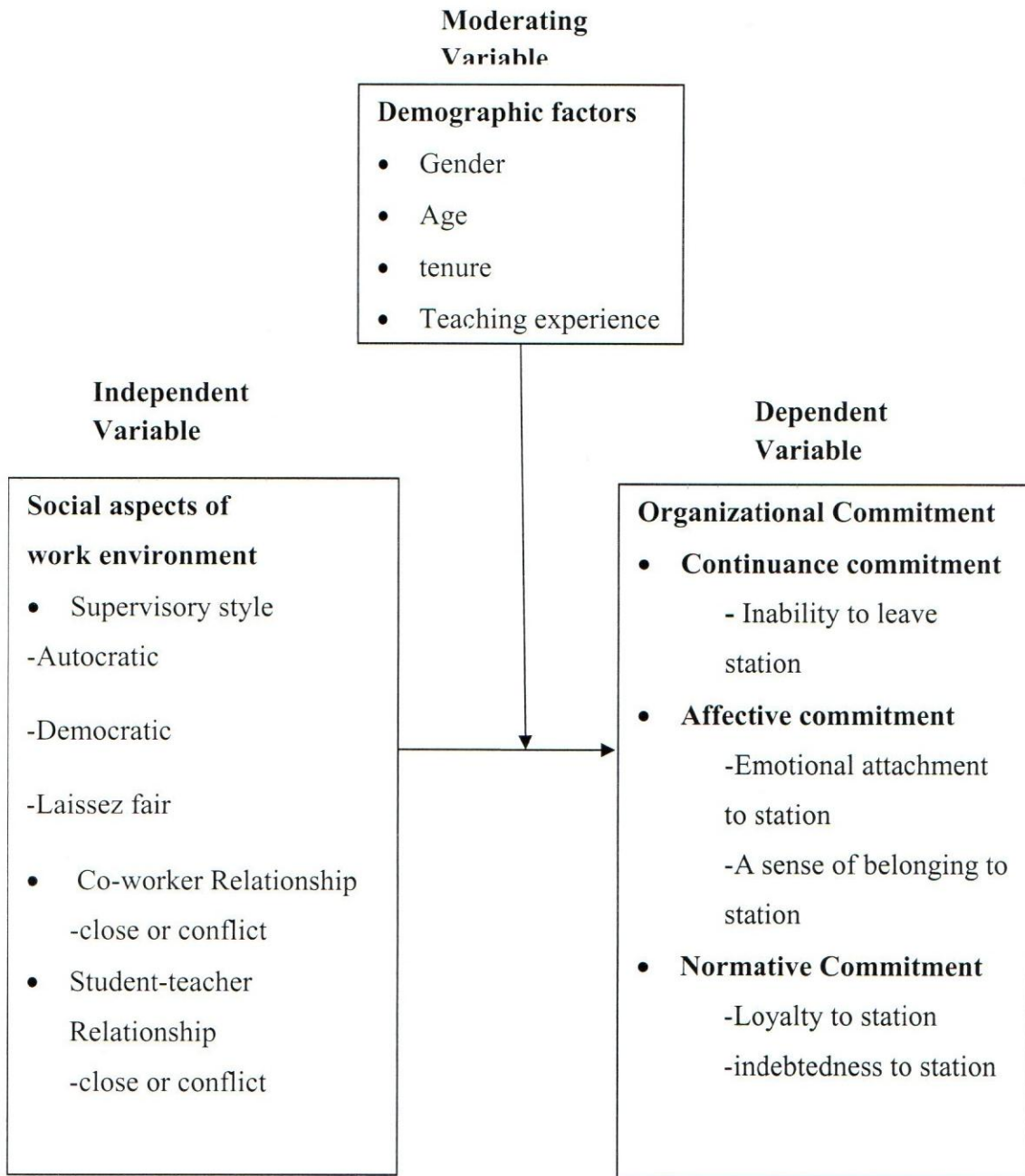
Student-teacher relationship is one of the most challenging aspects of teachers' job. Teachers encounter a multitude of challenging student behaviors on a daily basis including disrespect, verbal abuse, fighting, student tardiness, and/or general disorder (DeVoe et al., 2004). Over time, the culminating frustration of addressing these behaviors builds up and significantly affects their overall job satisfaction (Hastings & Bham, 2003). Challenging behaviors can cause teachers to feel less effective and more stressed and

frustrated (Friedman, 2000). Eventually, after repeated failed attempts to correct challenging behaviors and get back to teaching, many teachers become disheartened, burnt out, and feel like quitting the teaching profession altogether (Hastings & Bham, 2003; Zabel & Zabel, 2002). In a research conducted in public school classrooms in Israel, Friedman (1995) determined that student behaviors including disrespect, inattentiveness, and sociability accounted for 22% of teacher burnout. Overall, student discipline is a well-documented source of teacher stress. In a study to determine the school conditions relating to teacher dissatisfaction, it was found that student discipline problems and poor motivation, both of which are antecedents of teacher-student relationship, accounted for 25.5% and 20% respectively for urban public schools (Ingerso, 2002). However, teachers who experience stress as a result of other factors may perceive student behavior more negatively (Whiteman, Young & Fisher, 1985) and therefore inflate its significance as a stressor. Nevertheless, discipline issues rate consistently among the strongest of teacher stressors. Miller, Brownell and Smith (1999) conducted a study with 1,576 special education teachers and their results suggested that 20 % of these teachers transferred to regular education and 21 % left the field entirely. Furthermore, both those who transferred and those who left the field entirely indicated high stress significantly contributed to their decision.

Another factor affecting teacher morale is the gap between the expectations created in pre-service training and the experiences of teachers in the field. Pre-service public school teachers come to expect through their training that they will be accorded professional autonomy and professional respect. They often feel that teaching is a calling and that their students will eagerly accept the knowledge that they have to offer. Their experiences are at considerable odds with their expectations. They are often treated with little respect and much abuse (LeCompte & Dworkin (1991)

## **2.7 Conceptual Framework**

The study aimed at establishing the effect of the social dimension of work environment on employee commitment to an organization. The independent variables of the research were the nature of supervision, student-teacher relationship and co-worker relations. These features of work environment were expected to have an effect on teachers' commitment to work and the organization. This was to be judged by the degree to which teachers manifest organizational commitment in the affective, normative and continuance domains as reflected in their desire to remain in an organization, identification with organizational goals and shortcomings and their loyalty to the organization. The moderating variables are individual characteristics such as gender, age, teaching experience and a teacher's tenure in the working station. These teacher factors affect the extent to which the teacher is affected by the social aspects of work environment and the subsequent level of commitment. This relationship is shown in figure 2.1.



**Figure 2.1: Relationship between Social Aspects of Work Environment and Employee Organizational Commitment**

Source: Author's conceptualization (2012)

As shown in figure 2.1, the independent variables relate to the human relations aspects of work environment. They relate to interpersonal relations and administrative practices in the work environment. When these factors are out of line with employee expectations, they can be a source of difficulty and complaints, which are symptoms of dissatisfaction at work. This leads to low levels of commitment to the organization as reflected in employee turnover intentions, tardiness, and disloyalty (Caulton, 2012). Such employees are also not likely to engage in organizational citizenship behavior.

There have been mixed findings regarding what characteristics influence greater commitment. DeCortis and Summers (1989), argued that a commitment profile does not exist. Therefore there can be no connection between one's personal characteristics and their commitment to an organization. However, Mowday, Porter & Steer (1982) investigated the role of personal characteristics and found that the characteristics and experiences that a person brings to an organization can predict their commitment to the organization. Allen and Meyer (1993) have also found that there is a positive relationship between an employee's age and time with the organization and their level of commitment. This is also supported by career development theories propounded by Levinson (1986), who point out that development and maintenance of organizational commitment will differ across career stages as represented by age and tenure. Teachers commitment is the result of Personal characters like, marital status, gender, education level (Iverson and Buttigieg, 1999), job related characteristics, perceived organizational support and relations with coworkers (Ahmed and Islam, 2011). A large study at united state revealed that female and married women having children are more committed and likely to remain in this profession (Heyns,1988).

## CHAPTER THREE

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents research procedures and techniques that were employed in the investigation. It includes research design, population, sample and sampling procedure, instrumentation, and data collection procedure and data analysis technique.

#### 3.2 Research Design

The study used correlational survey design in that it sought to establish relationships between variables. Data was collected using survey method. This design was chosen because it is an efficient method of collecting data regarding characteristics of a sample of a population. The design allows the researcher to gather information regarding the respondent's opinion, perceptions, attitudes and views in highly economical way. Mugenda and Mugenda (1999) describe a survey design as an attempt to collect data from members of a population in order to determine the current status of that population with respect to one or more variables.

#### 3.3 Location of the Study

The study was conducted in public secondary schools within Nakuru North District. This is because it was economically convenient for the researcher in terms of travel during questionnaire administration and collection.

#### 3.4 Target Population

The target population were the 341 teachers in twenty (21) public secondary schools in Nakuru North District (Table 3.1) This population excluded head teachers of the twenty one schools as supervisors were not included in the study.

### 3.5 Sample Design

A sample of 184 teachers was used in the study. A sampling formula developed by Israel (1992) was used to determine sample size,  $n$ , for the research given the population size  $N$  as shown in equation 1 below.

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where;

$n$  = sample size(s)

$N$  = population (p)

$e$  = probability of error (i.e., the desired precision, e.g., 0.05 for 95% confidence level).

The total number of secondary school teachers within Nakuru North district that were to be included in the study were 341. Substituting for population ( $N=341$ ) in the equation gave the sample size ( $n$ ). Thus the sample size ( $n$ )= 184 as shown below:

$$n = \frac{341}{1 + 341(0.05)^2} \approx 184$$

To select the sample from the population, proportionate sampling was used to ensure each school was represented in the sample. A number of teachers equivalent to the proportion of teachers in a school to the desired sample were randomly selected. The population and sample for each school are shown in Table 3.1.

**Table 3.1 Sample Distribution Procedure**

	<b>School</b>	<b>Population (p)</b>	<b>Sample (s)</b>
1	Jomo Kenyatta High School	50	27
2	Moi Forces, Lanet	41	22
3	Moi Ndeffo Sec School	25	14
4	Kiamaina Sec School	23	12
5	Bavuni Sec School	22	12
6	Bahati Girls Sec Sch.	21	11
7	Ndundori Sec School	19	10
8	St. Joseph Kari	17	9
9	Bahati PCEA	16	9
10	St. Anthony Engoshura	16	9
11	St. John's Bahati	16	9
12	J. M Kariuki Sec School	12	6
13	St. Joseph's Kirima	10	5
14	Ndungiri Sec.School	9	5
15	St. Marks Oldonyo	8	4
16	Rigogo Sec School	8	4
17	Murungaru Sec School	7	4
18	Rurii Sec School	7	4
19	Menengai Hill Sec Sch.	7	4
20	Murunyu Sec. School	4	2
21	Bishop Edward Sec Sch.	4	2
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>341</b>	<b>184</b>

Source : District Education Office, Nakuru North District



### **3.6 Data Collection**

Primary data were collected regarding the nature of supervision, student-teacher and co-worker relationships and organizational commitment using a structured questionnaire. The choice of the instrument was informed by the literate characteristic of the teachers who were the respondents. Questionnaires were self administered to the teachers in the identified schools. Data on co-worker relationship was collected using a modified questionnaire developed by New-Ffoundland and Labrador Statistics Agency, NLSA (2009). Data on student-teacher relationship was collected using a short form of Student-Teacher Relationship Scale developed by Pianta (2001). Data on organizational commitment was sought using a structured questionnaire developed by Meyer and Allen (1997). Where applicable the questionnaire was in the form of modified Linkert five point scale. A total of 160 questionnaires were returned, representing 86.9% return rate.

### **3.7 Reliability and Validity**

Cronbach alpha coefficients for the scales were worked out using the SPSS package. Alpha coefficient for questions on the nature of supervision was .786 and that of coworker relationships was .796. The coefficient for the short form of the Student-Teachers Relationship Scale (composed of the Conflict and Closeness subscales) was .572, and that of the commitment scale was found to be 0.772.

The content and face validity of the instrument was improved through expert judgment. The researcher sought assistance of his University supervisors to help improve content validity of the instrument.

### **3.8 Data Analysis and Presentation**

The data was analyzed with the aid of the SPSS computer software version 20 and Microsoft Office Excel 2003. Seven items in the commitment scale were reverse coded (Appendix I). Data for all scales was summarised using descriptive statistics. Means of each scale were worked out and entered into the SPSS programme to generate statistics such as correlation and regression coefficients. To determine the joint effect of the

independent variables on teachers' organizational commitment, the following **multiple** regression model was developed:

$$Y = a + b_1s_1 + b_2cw_2 + b_3st_3 + e$$

Where:

Y = Teachers' organizational commitment

a = The constant

s<sub>1</sub> = Head teachers' supervisory style

cw<sub>2</sub> = Coworker relationship

st<sub>2</sub> = Student-teacher relationship.

b<sub>1</sub> - b<sub>3</sub> = Regression coefficients

e = Error term

## CHATER FOUR

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

#### 4.1 Introduction

This chapter covers data analysis and findings of the study. The chapter is organised into sections, with the first section covering the background data of respondents followed by the findings on the social dimension of work environment and employee commitment. Other sections address the relationship between elements of the social dimension of work environment (supervision, co-worker relations and student-teacher relationship) and teachers' organizational commitment.

#### 4.2 Background Information

The target population of the study was 341 teachers from 21 public secondary schools in Nakuru North District. Among these, 184 had been sampled for the study. However, only 160 respondents representing 86.9% of the sample actually participated in the study. Of these, 89 were male and 71 female, representing 55.6% and 44.3% of the respondents respectively. The respondents' profile is analysed in terms of age, tenure in a working station, and teaching experience. Table 4.1 gives a summary of the age brackets of respondents.

**Table 4.1: Age Distribution of Respondents**

Age in years	Number of teachers	percentage
22-30	23	13.4
31-40	53	33.0
41-50	70	43.8
50+	14	8.8
Total	160	100

Source: Field data

Table 4.1 shows that majority of the teachers are in the middle age level of between 41 and 49 years (43.8%). Those between 31 and 40 years account for 33.0% and those

between 22 and 30 years account for 14.4%. Only 8.8% of the teachers are aged over 50 years.

Information was also sought on the period of time a teacher has worked in the station. The findings are presented in Table 4.2.

**Table 4.2: Teachers' Tenure in a Working Station**

Tenure(yrs)	Number of teachers	Percentage(%)
1-5	86	53.8
6-10	43	26.8
10+	31	19.4
Total	160	100

Source: field data

Table 4.2 shows that majority of the teachers have been in their current station for five years or less at 53.8%. Those whose tenure is between six and ten years account for 26.8%, while those with over ten years account for 19.4% of the respondents. Analysis of the teaching experience for the respondents was also carried out and summarised in Table 4.3

**Table 4.3: Respondents' Teaching Experience**

Teaching experience(yrs)	Number of teachers	Percentage (%)
1-5	29	18.0
6-10	19	11.9
11-15	38	23.8
16-20	48	30.0
21+	26	16.3
Total	160	100

Source: Field data

Table 4.3 shows that 30% of the teachers have a teaching experience of between 16 and 20 years, followed by those of 11 to 15 years at 23.8%. Those with between 1 and 5 years

were 18.0% and those with 21 years and above account for 16.3%. Those with between 6 and 10 years account for 11.9%.

### 4.3 Social Dimension of Work Environment

Regarding the social dimension of work environment, the study established the nature of the social dimension of work environment as reflected in the nature of supervisory style, co-worker relationship and the relationship between teachers and students in order to correlate it with teachers' organizational commitment. A measurement scale for each variable was developed and administered in the research instrument (Appendix I). The respondents were expected to state the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with the statements. Each scale had a minimum score of 1 and a maximum score of 5. The nature of co-worker and student- teacher relationship was to be determined by the distribution of the scores on the disagreement-agreement scale of between 1 and 5. The lower mean scores reflected a conflict relationship. The higher scores represented closer relationship. The mean scores for each variable are presented in Table 4.4.

**Table 4.4 Mean Scores for Supervisory Style, Co-worker and Student-Teacher Relationship**

Variable	N	Mean	Standard Deviation
Supervisory style	160	2.5045	0.77249
Co-worker relationship	160	3.7711	0.61475
Student-Teacher relationship	160	3.5765	0.48742

Source: Field Data

Table 4.4 shows that head teachers' supervisory style was predominantly laissez faire with a mean score of 2.5045 and a standard deviation of 0.77249. There is also a close relationship between teachers in the working stations as reflected by the high mean score of 3.7711 with a standard deviation of 0.614.75. Similarly, there is a close relationship

between teachers and students as shown by the high mean score of 3.5765 and an average standard deviation of 0.48742.

#### **4.4 Teachers' Organizational Commitment**

The study also established the level of commitment for public secondary school teachers to their working stations. This was assessed using an eighteen item commitment scale developed by Meyer and Allen (1997). General commitment was measured with a mean score of between 18 and 90. These scores were then divided by 18 in order to obtain a mean score for each respondent of between 1 and 5. The higher the score represents a higher level of commitment. The findings were that teachers in Nakuru North District have a slightly above average level of organizational commitment with a mean score of 3.1314 and a standard deviation of 0.51781. These findings are consistent with those of Mbwiria (2008) who found that public secondary school teachers in Imenti South District were averagely committed to their profession at 51.7%. Sumra (2005) had also found that 50.9% of teachers in Tanzania would leave teaching if offered an alternative.

Demographic factors of respondents had no significant effect on teachers' commitment scores. Male respondents were more highly committed with a mean score of 3.2007 and a standard deviation of 0.50888 compared to female respondents with a mean score 3.0468 and a standard deviation of 0.51955. An independent samples t-test revealed no significant difference in scores between male and female respondents. Revene's t-value was 1.88 (Sig. 2-tailed = 0.61). Literature on gender and organizational commitment has inconsistent results. According to some researchers, women are more committed to their organizations than men (Wahn's, 1998; Mathieu and Zajac, 1990). However, Ngo and Tsang (1998) found insignificant relationship between gender and organizational commitment. Table 4.5 gives a summary of the mean scores for demographic factors of the respondents.

**Table 4.5: Mean Scores for Demographic Factors and Teachers' Organizational Commitment**

Democratic Factor	Description	Mean	N	Std. Deviation
Gender	Male	3.2007	88	.50888
	female	3.0468	72	.51955
Age	22-30 years	3.2896	23	.43121
	31-40 years	3.1077	57	.55975
	41-49 years	3.1241	70	.46531
	50 years & above	2.9979	14	.704446
Tenure	1-5 years	3.1282	85	.53288
	6-10 years	3.2256	43	.48814
	11 years & above	3.0084	32	.51380
Teaching experience	1-5 years	3.2328	29	.49196
	6-10 years	2.9974	19	.49782
	11-15 years	3.1037	38	.55542
	16-20 years	3.1256	48	.44497
	20 years & above	3.1677	26	.63154

Source: Field data

Table 4.5 shows that in terms of age, commitment scores generally reduced with advancement in age. Younger respondents of between 22 and 30 years had the highest level of commitment at 3.2896, those aged between 31 and 40 scored 3.1077, those between 41 and 49 scored 3.1241 while those aged 50 years and over scored the least at 2.9979. Tenure had a curved effect on commitment. Those who have been in a station for between one and five years scored 3.1282, those with six to ten years scored 3.2256 while those with above ten years scored 3.0084. Teaching experience has a curvilinear effect on commitment. Those with between 1 and 5 years of experience scored 3.2328, those with between 6 and 10 years scored 2.9974. Those with between 11 and 15 had 3.1037. Those with between 16 and 20 scored 3.1256 while those with above 21 years had a mean score of 3.1677.

#### 4.5 Head Teachers' Supervisory Style and Teachers' Organizational Commitment

The first objective of the study was to determine the effect of the nature of head teacher's supervisory style on teachers' organizational commitment. To determine this, one tailed partial correlation analysis was done between supervisory style and organizational commitment. The controlled variables were co-worker and student-teacher relationships. Table 4.6 and represents a summary of the findings.

**Table 4.6 Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Matrix between Head Teachers' Supervisory Style and Teachers' Organizational Commitment**

	Correlation	supervision	Organizational Commitment
Supervision	Pearson Correlation Sig. (1-tailed) N	1.000 - 160	-0.384 0.000 160
Organizational Commitment	Pearson Correlation Sig. (1-tailed) N	-0.384 0.000 160	1.000 - 160

Correlation is significant at  $< 0.05$ (1-tailed)

Table 4.6 shows that there is a medium and significant negative correlation between the laissez faire supervisory style and organizational commitment ( $r = -0.384$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ). This means that as the head teacher's supervisory style becomes less employee-friendly, employees lose loyalty to the organization. Since correlation between the nature of supervision and teachers' organizational commitment is negative, the hypothesis that there is a positive correlation between the nature of supervision and teachers' organizational commitment is therefore rejected.

The negative correlation agrees with the current literature on commitment. According to Ramsey (1997) supervisors contribute to high or low morale in the work place. Erkutlu and Chafra (2006) had found that laissez faire style in a boutique hotel led to negative results in organizational performance such as low satisfaction, high stress and low commitment by followers. A study conducted by Packard and Kauppi (1999) found that employees with supervisors displaying democratic management styles experienced higher



levels of job satisfaction compared to those who had supervisors who exhibited autocratic or laissez faire styles.

#### 4.6 Co-Worker Relationship and Teachers' Organizational Commitment

The second objective was to determine the effect of co-worker relations on teachers' organizational commitment. To determine this, one tailed partial correlation analysis was done between scores in co-worker relationship scale and organizational commitment. The controlled variables were supervisory style and student-teacher relationships. Table 4.7 presents a summary of the findings.

**Table 4.7 Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Matrix between Co-worker Relationship and Teachers' Organizational Commitment**

		Co-worker Relationship	Organizational Commitment
Co-worker Relationship	Pearson Correlation	1.000	0.224
	Sig.(1-tailed)	-	0.002
	N	160	160
Organizational Commitment	Pearson Correlation	0.224	1.000
	Sig.(1-tailed)	0.002	-
	N	160	160

Correlation is significant at  $< 0.05$  (1-tailed)

Table 4.7 shows that there is a small positive and significant correlation between close co-worker relationship and teachers' organizational commitment ( $r = 0.224$ ,  $p = 0.002$ ). Since correlation between the nature of co-worker relationship and teachers' organizational commitment is positive, the hypothesis that there is a positive correlation between the nature of co-worker relationship and teachers' organizational commitment is therefore accepted.

These findings are consistent with those of a number of authors who maintain that having friendly and supportive colleagues contributes to increased job satisfaction and

commitment (Johns, 1996; Kreitner & Kinicki, 2001). Another survey conducted amongst 1250 FoodBrand employees found that positive relationships with co-workers enhance job satisfaction and commitment (Berta, 2005). A study carried out to establish the working conditions that matter for teachers found that a collegial atmosphere accounted for 34% of what mattered most in teachers' decisions about whether or not to stay in the school in which they work (North Carolina Teacher Working Conditions survey, 2004). Teachers value school settings where they are not isolated, working together with colleagues and leadership that supports their efforts.

#### 4.7 Student-Teacher Relationship and Teachers' Organizational Commitment

The third objective was to determine the effect of student-teacher relations on teachers' organizational commitment. This was determined through one-tailed partial correlation analysis between scores in student-teacher relationship scale and organizational commitment. The controlled variables were supervisory style and co-worker relationships. Table 4.8 presents a summary of the results.

**Table 4.8 Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Matrix between Student-Teacher Relationship and Teachers' Organizational Commitment**

		<i>Student-Teacher Relationship</i>	<i>Organizational Commitment</i>
<i>Student-Teacher Relationship</i>	Pearson Correlation	1.000	0.168
	Sig. (1-tailed)	-	0.018
	N	160	160
<i>Organizational Commitment</i>	Pearson Correlation	0.168	1.000
	Sig. (1-tailed)	0.018	-
	N	160	160

Correlation is significant at  $< 0.05$  (1-tailed)

Table 4.8 shows that there is a small but significant positive correlation between student-teacher relationship and teachers' organizational commitment ( $r = 0.168$ ,  $p = 0.018$ ). Since correlation between student-teacher relationship and teachers' organizational commitment is positive, the hypothesis that there is a positive correlation between the

nature student-teacher relationship and teachers' organizational commitment is therefore accepted.

The weak effect could be explained by the feeling that teachers are often treated with disrespect and much abuse by students (LeCompte & Dworkin (1991). They encounter a multitude of challenging student behaviors on a daily basis including disrespect, verbal abuse, fighting, student tardiness, and/or general disorder (DeVoe et al., 2004). However, positive student-teacher relationship is beneficial to both the student and the teacher. It serves as a resource for students at risk of school failure. Conflict or disconnection between students and adults may compound that risk (Ladd & Burgess, 2001). Teachers also report their relationships with students as being a source of emotional support and comfort (Zeller & Pianta, 2004).

#### **4.8 Supervisory Style, Co-worker and Student-teacher Relationship and Teachers' Organizational Commitment**

To determine the correlation between the variables in the study, a bivariate correlation analysis was conducted between head teachers' supervisory style, co-worker relationship, student-teacher relationship and teachers' organizational commitment. The resultant correlation coefficients reveal the inter-relationships of the variables. Table 4.9 presents the results of the analysis.

**Table 4.9 Pearson Product-Moment Co-relation Matrix between Independent and Dependent Variables**

		Supervisory style	Co-worker Relationship	Student-teacher Relationship	Organizational commitment
Supervisory behavior	Pearson Correlation Sig.(1-tailed) N	1 - 160			
Co-worker Relationship	Pearson Correlation Sig.(1-tailed) N	-.013 .436 160	1 - 160		
Student-teacher Relationship	Pearson Correlation Sig. (1-tailed) N	.047 .278 160	.293 .000 160	1 - 160	
Organizational commitment	Pearson Correlation Sig. (1-tailed) N	-.376 .000 160	.262 .000 160	.235 .000 160	1 - 160

Correlation is significant at < 0.05 (1-tailed)

Table 4.9 shows that head teachers' supervisory style does not only significantly affect teachers' organizational commitment ( $r = -.376$ ,  $p = .000$ ), but also the collegial relationship between teachers ( $r = -.013$ ,  $p = .436$ ) and between teachers and students ( $r = -.047$ ,  $p = .278$ ) although to a less significant extent. Co-worker relationship is also significantly correlated with student-teacher relationship ( $r = .293$ ,  $p = .000$ ).

#### **4.9. Effect of the Social Dimension of Work environment on Teachers' organizational Commitment**

To determine the joint effect of the independent variables (supervision, co-worker relations and student-teacher relationships) on teachers' organizational commitment, multiple regression analysis was carried out for the model  $Y = a + b_1s_1 + b_2cw_2 + b_3st_3 + e$ . Tables 4.10 and 4.11 present the findings of the regression analysis.

**Table 4.10 Regression Model Summary: Social Dimension of Work Environment and Teachers' Organizational Commitment**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of estimate
1	..479 <sup>a</sup>	.229	.215	.45890

a. Predictors: (constant), student-teacher relationship, Supervisory style, co-worker relationship.

**Table 4.11 Full Regression Model: Social Dimension of Work Environment and Teachers' Organizational Commitment**

Model	Unstandardised coefficients		Standardized coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std.Error	Beta		
(Constant)	2.481	.336		7.391	.000
Supervisory behavior	-.245	.047	-.366	-5.197	.000
Co-worker Relationships	.178	.062	.211	2.873	.005
Student-Teacher Relationships	.166	.078	.156	2.125	.035

Dependent variable: Commitment to working station.

Table 4.10 shows that the social dimension of work environment explains variation in teachers' organizational commitment (Y) by 21.5% (adjusted R square). The other percentage (78.5%) could be as a result of other factors not included in the model.

From the full regression model in table 4.11, the following regression equation was developed:

$$Y = 2.481 - 0.245s + 0.178cw + 0.166 st$$

The equation shows that of the three variables, the head teachers' supervisory style has the greatest effect on teachers organizational commitment at -0.245 ( $\beta = .366$ ) followed

by co-worker relationships at 0.178 times ( $\beta = .211$ ). Student-teacher relationship is the least effective at 0.166 times ( $\beta = .156$ ).

## CHAPTER FIVE

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a summary of the findings as well as the conclusions that arise out of the findings. It also discusses the implications of the study to human resource management practitioners and recommendations for further inquiry.

#### 5.2 Summary of the Findings

The study sought to determine the effect of the social dimension of work environment on teachers' organizational commitment. The first objective was to determine the effect of head teachers' supervisory style on teachers' organizational commitment. It was found that the dominant head teachers' supervisory style was laissez faire which had a negative effect on teachers' organizational commitment

The second objective was to find out the effect of co-worker relationship on teachers' organizational commitment. The study established that there is a close relationship between teachers and their co-workers in Nakuru North District. This has small but positive effect on teachers' organizational commitment.

In the third objective, the study sought to find out the effect of student-teacher relationship on teachers' organizational commitment. It was established that there is a close relationship between teachers and students in the district. This relationship has a small but positive effect on teachers' organizational commitment.

The final objective was to determine the combined effect of head teachers' supervisory style, co-worker and student-teacher relationships on teachers' organizational commitment. Regression analysis shows that they account for 21.5% variability in teachers' organizational commitment. Head teacher's supervisory style has the greatest effect accounting for 36.6% ( $\beta = .366$ ), followed by the collegial relationship between teachers at 21.1% ( $\beta = .211$ ). The least effective is the student-teacher relationship at 15.6% ( $\beta = .156$ ).

### **5.3 Conclusion**

This study has shown that the social dimension of work environment has little effect on teachers' commitment to a working station as it accounts for only 21.5% variability in teachers' organizational commitment. Of the three independent variables, the nature of supervision has the highest effect followed by co-worker relations. The least effective is the relationship between teachers and their students. However, as individual variables, they have important policy implications for human resource management practitioners and administrators of schools. Conducive social environment needs to be created in the work settings to enhance commitment of employees.

### **5.4 Recommendations**

#### **5.4.1 Recommendations for Practice**

The study recommends that head teachers adjust their supervisory skills to be more employee- friendly as this would enhance commitment of teachers. Supervisory styles of head teachers have the greatest impact on teachers' organizational commitment among the social aspects of the work environment.

It also recommends that administrators create conditions that would enhance formal and informal social interactions. This is because strong collegial relationships account for a greater influence on a teacher's commitment to working in a particular station than relationships between teachers their students.

School administrators should also put in place administrative structures that facilitate good relationship between teachers and their students. Although student-teacher relationship has the least effect on teachers' organizational commitment, its value can not be under rated. They are the reason for the teachers' presence in the station.



#### **5.4.2 Recommendations for Further Research**

The study recommends further research to determine the level of teacher commitment in situations where more employee friendly supervisory styles are practiced. These include the consideration, participative, democratic and initiative styles, among others.

Part of the study focused on relationship between students (clients) and teachers who offer a service. The findings were that students have a weak but significant effect on teachers' commitment. The study recommends a similar study to be carried out in a business environment to establish the role of clients in enhancing employee commitment.

The findings of this study indicate that the social dimension of work environment accounts for 21.5% of the factors that influence teachers' organizational commitment. Since it focused on three aspects of the social dimension of work environment (supervisory style, co-worker relations and student-teacher relations) further research is recommended for the contribution of other social stakeholders in education such as parents and school management boards and committees.

Since the study was conducted in a peri-urban setting, teachers could have been committed to their working stations because of other conveniences such as accessibility to the working station and teachers' residential status and preferences. The influence of these factors calls for further investigation. There is also need to carry out a similar but comparative study in a rural setting.

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## APPENDIX 1: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHERS

### INTRODUCTORY LETTER

Egerton University,  
Department of Business Studies  
Nakuru Town Campus  
P. O. Box 13357  
Nakuru.

Dear Respondent,

Date .....

Ref. A Research Project

I am a student at Egerton University, Nakuru Town Campus, pursuing a Masters of Human Resource Management degree. I am carrying out a research on “ *The Effect of Work Environment on Teacher’s Organizational Commitment in Public Secondary Schools in Nakuru North District.*” This questionnaire therefore seeks your opinion on various issues in your work environment. The information you provide will be used for research purpose only and will be treated with utmost confidentiality. Your sincerity will therefore be highly appreciated.

Thanks for your cooperation.

Yours

John Kariuki Wainaina

CH11/00116/09

## SECTION A: BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1. Please indicate whether you are:

a. Male [ ] b. Female [ ]

2. Please tick against your age bracket.

(a) 22 -30 years [ ] (b) 31-40 years [ ]

(c) 41-49years [ ] (d) 50 years & over [ ]

3. How long have you been teaching in this school?

(a) 1-5 years [ ] (b) 6-10years [ ] (c) Above 10years [ ]

4. For how long have you been in the teaching profession?

(a) 2 to 5 years [ ] (b) 6 to 10 years [ ]

(c) 11 to 15 years [ ] (d) 16 to 20 years [ ]

(e) 21and above [ ]

## SECTION B: SOCIAL ASPECTS OF WORK ENVIRONMENT

i) The questions below seek your opinion on the nature of supervisory practices adopted by your head teacher, and relationship with colleagues and students in your work station. Please fill in the tables as sincerely as possible using the scale below:

1) Strongly Disagree (SD)

(2) Disagree (D)

(3) Undecided (U)

(4) Agree (A)

(5) Strongly Agree (SA)

Supervisory Style						
	Autocratic style	SD	D	U	A	SA
		1	2	3	4	5
i	The head teacher does not consider teachers' suggestions and ideas in decision making					
ii	The head teacher uses threats and punishment to get the objectives of the school achieved					
iii	The head teacher has the tendency to neglect the rights and personal needs of teachers					
iv	The head teacher regards teachers with opposing views as enemies to his/her administration					
v	The head teacher insists on teachers absolute obedience and compliance to his/her directives					

**Democratic style**

vi	The head teacher uses free communication style in his/her administration				
vii	The head teacher takes the interest and welfare of teachers into consideration in decision making				
viii	The head teacher allows teachers a high degree of initiative and creativity in their work				
ix	The head teacher encourages interpersonal relationships among teachers				
x	The head teacher uses praise and encouragement as motivational strategies				

**Laissez faire style**

xi	The head teacher allows teachers to go about their work the way they want				
xii	The head teacher is unable to make necessary decisions				
xiii	The head teacher shies away from his responsibilities as the leader				
xiv	The head teacher is unable to specifically consider the welfare and feelings of teachers				
Xv	The head teacher is unable to offer strict supervision to teachers				

**Co-Worker Relationship**

	<b>Statement</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>U</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>SA</b>
i	My colleagues have helped me to understand work procedures in this institution					
ii	I like to socialize with my colleagues in and out of work					
iii	If it were not for the good working relationship between teachers, I would find it hard to work in this school					
iv	When I am emotionally upset, I get relieve from my colleagues					
v	My colleagues have contributed a lot in shaping my personality					
vi	My colleagues regard me as their close friend					
vii	I feel that my fellow teachers are my closest friends					
viii	I look forward to school sessions to meet with my colleagues					

**Student-Teacher Relationship**

i	My students try to please me					
ii	It is easy for me to read the mood of my students					
iii	When students are upset, they seek me for support					
iv	I value my relationship with students in this school					
v	Students copy my behavior and ways of doing things					
vi	In my opinion, the fate of my students is in my hands					
vii	Students react strongly when they are separated from me					
viii	Students share their feelings and experiences with me					

## SECTION C: TEACHERS ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT

ii) The table below presents 18 items measuring your attitude towards working in your current station. Please fill it in as sincerely as possible

	statements	SD	D	U	A	SA
	<b>Continuance commitment</b>					
i	It would be very hard for me to leave this school right now, even if I wanted to					
ii	One of the few negative consequences of leaving this school would be the scarcity of available alternatives **					
iii	I do not feel a strong sense of “belonging” to this school**					
iv	I feel that I have too few options to consider leaving this school**					
v	If I had not already put so much of myself into this school, I would consider working elsewhere**					
vi	Too much of my life would be disrupted if I decided to leave this school now					
	<b>Affective Commitment</b>					
vii	I do not feel any obligation to remain in this school **					
viii	I would be very happy to spend the rest of my teaching career in this school					
ix	I really feel that the problems of this school are my own					
x	I do not feel “emotionally attached” to this school**					
xi	I do not feel like part of the family of this school**					
xii	This school has a great deal of personal meaning to me					
	<b>Normative Commitment</b>					
xiii	Even if it were to my advantage, I do not feel it would be right to leave this school now					
xiv	Right now, staying in this school is a matter of necessity as much as a desire					
xv	I would feel guilty if I left my organization now					
xvi	This school deserves my loyalty					
xvii	I would not leave this school right now because I have a sense of obligation to the people in it					
xviii	I owe a great deal to this school					

\*\* Reverse coded