

PRINCIPAL PATERNALISTIC LEADERSHIP STYLE, TEACHERS COMMITMENT AND PRODUCTIVITY IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN ILORIN WEST LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF KWARA STATE

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Abstract

The principal leads by organizing all jobs in the school. Teacher productivity in the school is determined by internal and external factors. Leadership style that allows principals to create positive school cultures and increase teachers' productivity has been the subject of discussion. Therefore, the study investigated mediating effect of teachers' commitment on the relationship between paternalistic leadership styles of school principals and teachers' productivity in Public Schools in Ilorin West Local Government. The study used descriptive research design to obtain the data from respondents. Stratified random sampling technique was used to select 300 respondents. Three instruments were designed tagged paternalistic leadership, teacher commitment, and teacher productivity. Structural Equation Modeling was used to analyse the hypotheses formulated. The findings revealed that paternalistic leadership style had significant relationship with teacher productivity where regression weight indicated $\beta=.859$ and significant at $p<0.05$. The finding further found that paternalistic leadership style had significant relationship with teacher commitment with regression weight of $\beta=.949$ and significant at $p<0.05$. Also, the finding revealed that teacher commitment had significant relationship with teacher productivity where regression weight indicates $\beta=.949$, $p<0.005$. Finally, the finding reported that teacher commitment mediates the relationship between paternalistic leader style and teachers' productivity with partial mediator. The findings concluded that principals' paternalistic leadership is the predictor of teacher productivity. Based on the findings, it was suggested principals should practices paternalistic leadership in the school so as to enhance teacher productivity.

Keywords: *Paternalistic Leadership, Teacher Commitment, Teacher Productivity*

Introduction

Effective school leadership is paramount for optimal management at the institutional level, necessitating that principals possess the requisite skills to oversee both external engagements and internal dynamics within the school community. This is underscored by the notion that

human influence is exerted through dialogue to achieve specific objectives. Good leadership enhances people's lives, fosters organizational improvement, and ultimately cultivates a more just and compassionate community (Masubelele, 2024; Difoni et al., 2025). Leaders, in particular, prioritize the needs of others, employing democratic principles to inform decision-making and implementation. Principals and teachers constitute the primary sources of effective leadership in educational institutions, which in turn, drive student academic achievement (Pardosi & Utari, 2022; Adetunmobi et al., 2025). However, the principals' direct and indirect influence on student success is a topic of ongoing debate, with some studies suggesting positive correlations (Liebowitz and Porter, 2019). Nevertheless, teachers play a pivotal role in students' personal and intellectual development, and their leadership and instructional practices significantly impact student academic achievement (Zhang et al. 2024; Bada et al., 2024).

To optimize educational achievement and enhance teacher productivity, school administrations must facilitate and improve modern knowledge management and classroom instructions (Chu, 2016). The style of leadership is a crucial factor in an organization's success and efficacy, influencing social interaction, members' opinions, and work behaviors (Shum & Cheng, 1997). Effective leadership styles are essential for schools to achieve their goals and provide instructors with job satisfaction. Educational leaders must possess the ability to persuade employees, parents, and other stakeholders to ensure that teachers perform their duties effectively and students achieve academic success. However, the impact of leadership styles on teachers' views and behavior has received limited attention in developing countries (Thann & Quang, 2022). In non-Western cultures, such as Nigeria, it is essential to validate the effects of leadership style aspects on teachers' productivity and performance. The standard of secondary education in Nigeria, particularly in Kwara state, has been a longstanding concern, sparking discussions about school administration (Olojo, 2013). Stakeholders, including teachers, parents, students, lawmakers, and social service providers, are tasked with making decisions about school operations, ranging from administrative and operational matters to high-level programmatic plans. School leaders are accountable for success on various metrics, including student performance, teacher productivity and graduation rates.

In Kwara State public schools, paternalistic leadership style has not been investigated by the researchers. The school principals of public schools yet to know impact of the style on the teachers' productivity. Apart from this, most of the study merely conducted study on transformational, democratic and transaction leadership style. Still, few studies have examined the impact of paternal leadership on job productivity in the educational sector. In order to achieve teacher productivity, there is need to use a suitable leadership style that would lead to school improvement (Nir, 2021; Pardosi & Utari, 2022; Masubelele, 2024). As few studies on paternalistic leadership style in educational system, this prompts the researcher to investigate mediating effect of teachers' commitment on the relationship between paternalistic leadership style of school principals and teachers' productivity in public schools in Ilorin West local government. Based on this, these following hypotheses were developed.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study is to examine mediating effect of teacher commitment on the relationship between paternalistic leadership and teacher productivity. Specifically, the study sought to determine the:

H1: relationship between paternalistic leadership and teacher productivity

H2: relationship between paternalistic leadership and teacher commitment

H3: relationship between teacher commitment and teacher productivity

H4: mediating effect of teacher commitment on the relationship between paternalistic leadership and teacher productivity

Research Hypotheses

The following research hypotheses were formulated and tested in the study:

RH1: There is no significant relationship between paternalistic leadership and teacher productivity

RH2: there is no significant relationship between paternalistic leadership and teacher commitment

RH3: There is no significant relationship between teacher commitment and teacher productivity

RH4: There is no teacher commitment will mediate the relationship between paternalistic leadership and teacher productivity

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

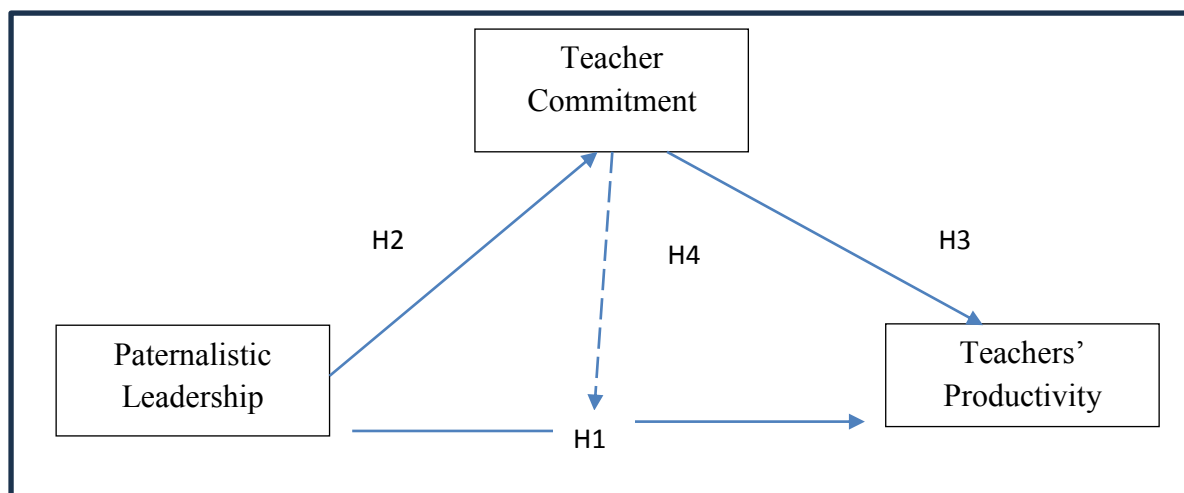


Figure 1: Conceptual framework Source: Developed by the researcher

As shown in figure 1, there three variables were developed in the conceptual framework. The independent variable was paternalistic leadership style while the dependent variable was teacher productivity and teacher commitment served as a mediator. The rationale for using mediator is to increase the relationship between paternalistic leadership style and teacher productivity.

Literature Review

Paternalistic Leadership Style Defined

Teachers' productivity in the school, sometime rely on the types of leadership style exhibited by the principal. Astrella et al. (2025) expressed that school administrators have a monumental role to play in the school. The effective teaching and learning in schools only succeed when school administrators and teachers work together toward the same goals (Nir, 2021). Consequently, one of the primary responsibilities of school administrators is to foster an environment that enhances teachers' productivity, which is essential for their success and productivity. Effective leaders are those who demonstrate managerial skills aligns with organizational goals while prioritizing the well-being and satisfaction of their employees. In achieving organizational success, teachers' productivity emerges as a critical factor in ensuring quality in educational institutions (Khan et al. 2021; Eze et al., 2023). Therefore, leaders must focus on enhancing the efficiency of their teachers, recognizing that success is a natural outcome when productivity becomes an institutional imperative.

Therefore, paternalistic leadership a management style where the leader acts as a protective and guiding figure for their team, often treating them as if they were family members (Pellegrini & Scandura, 2008; Oguejiofor, 2020; Ekmen & Okcu, 2021). In paternalistic leadership, principal is expected to take a personal interest in teachers and cater for their personal welfare (Liu, et al., 2021; Yusmen et al., (2024). Also, Paternalistic leadership is an administrative style where a leader of an organization takes their subordinates part of their family as well as extended family (Pellegrini et al., 2008; Ekmen & Okçu, 2021; Chukwuemeka et al., 2021). In paternalistic approach, people in authority consider it an obligation to provide protection to those under their care and in exchange expect loyalty and deference (Aycan, et al., 1999; Mansur, et al., 2017). As a matter of fact, paternalistic leadership is a common style employed in schools. Studies conducted on leadership have revealed that paternalistic leadership is a distinct approach that differs from Western leadership styles (Mansur et al. 2017; Imhangbe et al., 2019). Paternalistic is characterized by a blend of strong discipline and authority with paternal benevolence and moral honesty (Mansur et al. 2017; Oguejiofor, 2020). Paternalist leaders strive to create a family atmosphere in the workplace, establishing close relationships with subordinates, expecting loyalty, and emphasizing authority and status. Employees, in turn, perceive the work setting as a family environment, obey their leaders, and accept their authority without questioning, believing that the leader knows what is best for them (Maamari & Saheb, 2018; Igoni, 2020; Adetunmobi et al., 2025)

Furthermore, paternalistic leaders extend their influence beyond the workplace, addressing employees' personal issues and demonstrating behaviors that promote their welfare (Bedi, 2020; Bada et al., 2024). This approach fosters an informal communication environment, where administrators' care and control are not limited to work-related matters, and are supported by all employees (Denner et al. 2025). In a paternalistic relationship, leaders guide employees in both their professional and personal lives, protecting their well-being and creating an atmosphere of interest (Soylu, 2011). Teachers working under paternalistic leaders often demonstrate loyalty, remaining with the school despite potential offers of higher wages or better opportunities (Chai et al. 2020; Chukwuemeka et al., 2021). In the context of educational institutions, school administrators play a crucial role in maintaining and

achieving teacher productivity through active support for their development, allocation of resources, and programs that promote teacher growth.

Concept of Teacher Commitment

Teaching is a profession that demands unwavering dedication, commitment, and enthusiasm. Teachers play a vital role in promoting education by enhancing students' abilities through their work (Johnson, 2017; Ardo et al., 2024). The significance of commitment in teaching cannot be overstated, as it has a direct impact on teachers' performance and subsequently, students' academic achievement. Teacher commitment has been recognized as a crucial factor in determining teaching quality since the 1980s, when there was a notable exodus of teachers from the profession in search of more lucrative careers. Teacher commitment is used interchangeably with teacher quality, and a committed teacher is synonymous with a dedicated teacher (Hariri & Sumintono, 2020; Obiekwe et al., 2024). Teacher commitment as a strong emotional bond between educational workers and their schools (Johnson, 2017; Nkechi et al., 2024). Commitment is a job attitude that drives individuals to work harder to achieve objectives and remain employed (Mahmood et al. 2021; Eziuzo & Ezeanya, 2024). The level of commitment among teachers directly influences their performance and quality, making it an essential aspect of effective teaching.

Research emphasizes the importance of teacher commitment in creating an effective school environment, retaining teachers, and enhancing job performance (Manla, 2021). Studies have identified three stages of commitment in teaching, highlighting that the intensity and nature of commitment depend on factors derived from professional lives and individual characteristics (Karakus & Aslan, 2009). Committed teachers are distinguishable from their less dedicated counterparts by their hard work, dedication, and passion for teaching. Committed teachers prioritize students' progress, cater to their needs, and guide them towards achieving learning outcomes (Karakus & Aslan, 2009). They continually strive to improve their teaching methods and practices, taking into account individual differences (Kubat, 2018). These teachers view teaching as a calling or lifestyle, often going above and beyond their duties to ensure students' success. They may even organize extracurricular activities, such as excursions, to enhance students' learning experiences (Buckley & Lee, 2021).

Conceptualizing Teacher Productivity

Productivity in the education sector is intricately linked to the performance of teachers, as their output directly impacts the quality of education imparted to students (Odunlami, et al., 2017; Hidayat, et al., 2020). Babalola (2009) emphasizes that productivity in this context means better performance from teachers, resulting in graduates who are well-rounded and equipped to contribute to society and the labour market. Teachers bear the responsibility for the success or failure of the educational system, as their productivity reflects the productivity of the school (Odunlami, et al., 2017; Hart, 2025). Anisah et al. (2020) concur that teachers, as professional and functional staff, play a pivotal role in carrying out the school's primary duties, including implementing education and learning services for students. The quality of education is, therefore, heavily dependent on the productivity of teachers. Johnson and Birkland (2003) defined teacher productivity as a measure of the quantity and quality of outcomes, relative to inputs, in various aspects of their activities, such as test results, graduation rates, and teacher commitment. The success of students in the education and

learning process is contingent upon their teachers' work productivity. Getange (2016) explained that teachers' productivity is determined by their level of participation in the day-to-day running of the school, regularity, class attendance, and students' level of discipline.

Teachers' performance can be measured through annual reports, assessing their performance in teaching, lesson preparation, lesson presentation, mastery of subject matter, competence, commitment, and extracurricular activities. Productivity, in essence, is a measure of job performance, reflecting the extent to which an employee's commitment and performance contribute to achieving organizational goals. An employee's productivity can be high or low, depending on their input (Odunlami, et al., 2017; Hidayat, et al., 2020). In the context of education, productivity can be determined through job evaluation, appraising the extent to which educational objectives have been attained (Agustina, et al., 2021; Hart, 2025). This can be achieved by assessing classroom climate and management, teaching techniques, effective communication skills, and other relevant factors. Bello (2003) outlined the competencies of a good teacher, including knowledge of what to teach, how to teach, and how to motivate behavior. Teachers must also be able to help students develop critical thinking skills and examine their own values. The appraisal of teachers is essential in determining their level of performance and productivity, as it assesses the effectiveness of their classroom instructions and contributions to achieving educational goals.

METHODOLOGY

The research design used for this current study was quantitative research because questionnaire was prepared to collect information from the respondents. The sample size comprised of 321 teachers in Ilorin west public secondary schools. There are three research instrument which were paternalistic leadership (PL), teacher commitment (TC) and teacher productivity (TP). The instruments were validated and subjected to reliability test through the used Cronbach Alpha given reliability index of 0.95, 0.9 and 0.8 respectively. This affirmed that the instruments were reliable for the study.

Table 1

Cronbach Alpha value for the three constructs

Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Paternalistic leadership	988
Teacher commitment	716
Teacher productivity	890

Testing For Hypotheses with Structural Equation Modeling

H1: Testing the Relationship between Paternalistic Leadership and Teacher Productivity

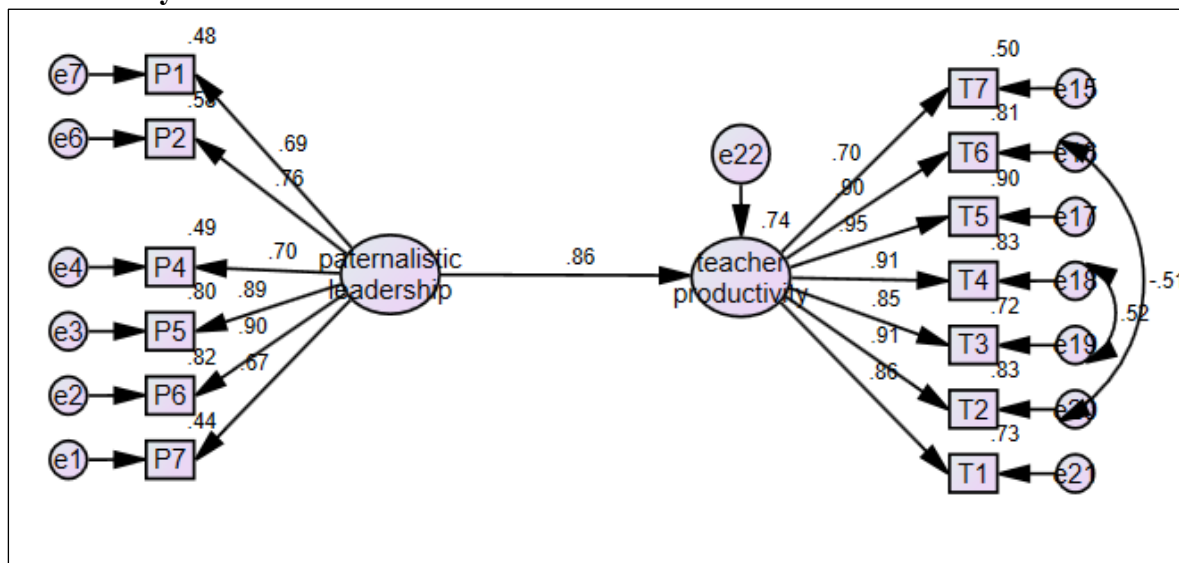


Figure 3. The Relationship between Paternalistic Leadership and Teacher Productivity

Structural equation modelling (SEM) was utilized to determine the impact of paternalistic leadership and teachers’ productivity. Based on the direct effect results, paternalistic leadership has a significant relationship with teachers’ productivity with beta value of 0.859 where $P < .000$. The hypothesis which stated that there is no significant relationship between paternalistic leadership and teachers’ productivity is rejected. The hypothesized model indicated that when paternalistic leadership goes up by 1 unit, teachers productivity goes up by 0.859. Thus, this hypothesis one in this study is significant.

Table 3

Standardized Regression Weights on the relationship between Paternalistic Leadership and Teachers’ Productivity

Dependent	Path	Independent	Estimate loading	S.E.	C.R.	P-value	Decision
teacher productivity	<---	paternalistic leadership	.859	.084	8.435	***	Significant

H2: Testing the Relationship Between Paternalistic Leadership and Teacher commitment

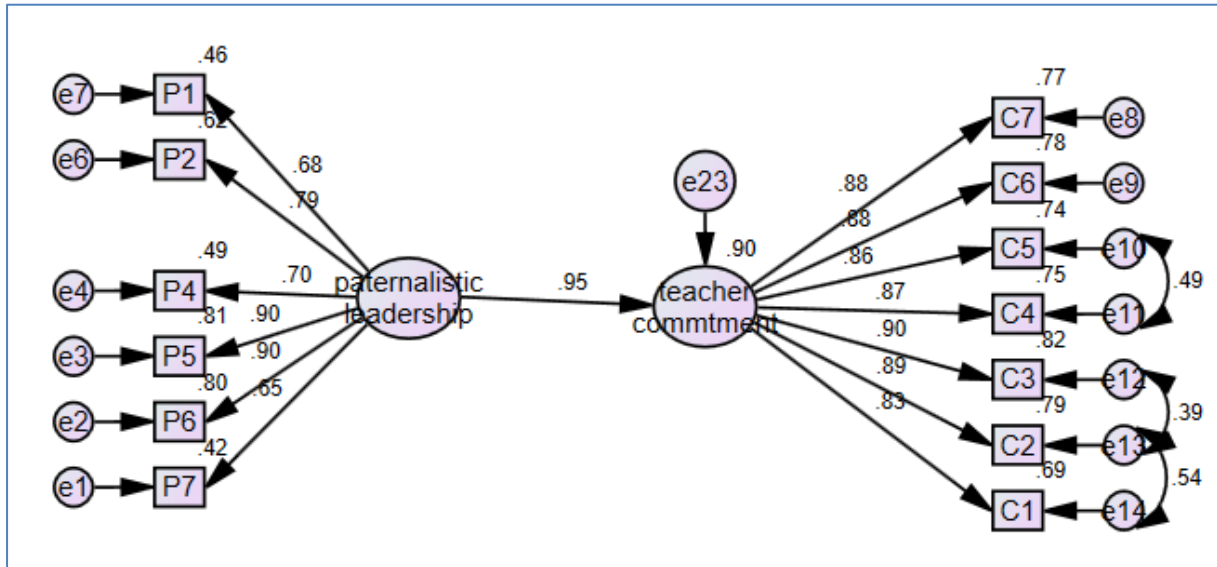


Figure 4. The Relationship between Paternalistic Leadership and Teacher Commitment

As showed in Figure 4 on the relationship between paternalistic leadership and teacher commitment where the result revealed that beta value of 0.949 and $P < .000$. This indicated that paternalistic leadership on teacher productivity. The hypothesis which stated that there is no significant relationship between paternalistic leadership and teachers’ commitment is rejected. The hypothesized model indicated that when paternalistic leadership goes up by 1 unit, teachers productivity goes up by 0.949. Thus, this hypothesis two in this study is significant.

Table 4

Standardized Regression Weights on the Paternalistic Leadership and Teacher commitment

Dependent	Path	Independent	Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P-value	Decision
Teacher commitment	<---	Paternalistic leadership	.949	.105	10.277	***	Significant

H3: Testing the Relationship between Teacher commitment and Teacher Productivity

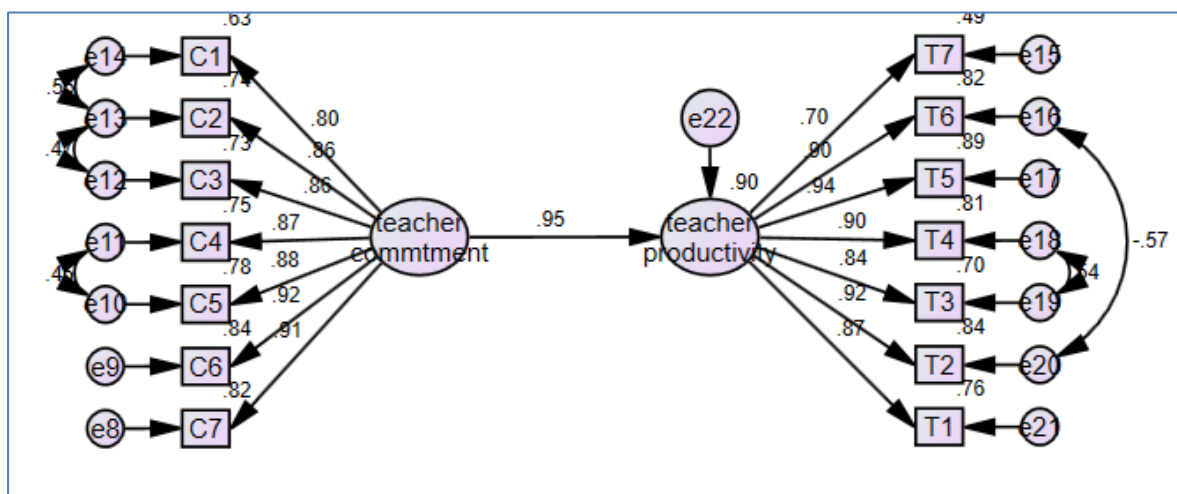


Figure 5. The Relationship between Teacher Commitment and Teacher Productivity

As reported in Figure 5 on the relationship between teacher commitment and teacher productivity using SEM. The result revealed that the relationship between teacher commitment and teacher productivity has beta value of 0.949 where $P < .000$. This showed that teacher commitment has significant relationship with teacher productivity. The hypothesis which stated that there is no significant relationship between teachers' commitment and teachers' productivity is rejected. The hypothesized model indicated that when teacher commitment goes up by 1 unit, teachers productivity goes up by 0.949. Thus, this hypothesis three in this study is significant

Table 5

Standardized Regression Weights on the Teacher commitment and teacher productivity

Dependent	Path	Independent	Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P-value	Decision
teacher productivity	<---	Teacher commitment	.949	.057	11.831	***	Significant

H4: Testing mediating effect of Teachers’ Commitment on the relationship between Paternalistic Leadership and Teachers’ Productivity

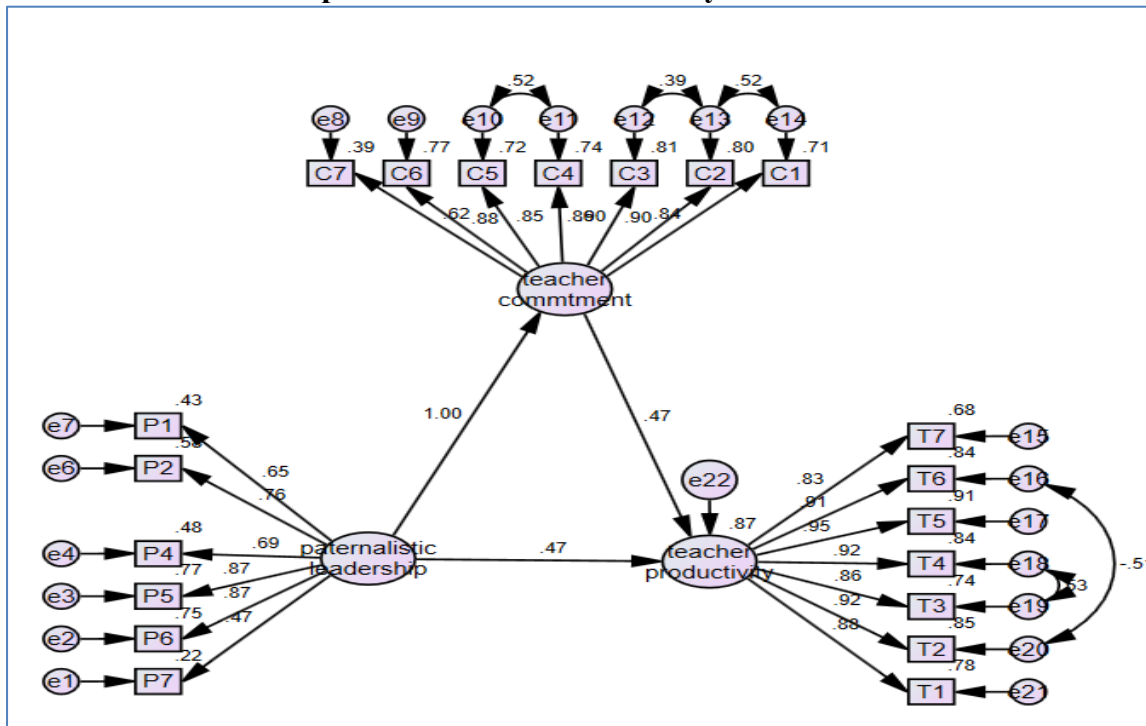


Figure 6. The Teacher Commitment mediates the relationship between Paternalistic Leadership and Teachers’ Productivity

As shown in the figure 6 mediating effect of teachers’ commitment on the relationship between paternalistic leadership and teachers’ productivity. Therefore, the indirect effect of paternalistic leadership to teachers’ productivity (dependent variable) has regression coefficient of 0.465 which was significant. The indirect effect of paternalistic leadership to teacher commitment (mediator) has regression coefficient of 1.00 which was also significant while indirect effect of teacher commitment (mediator) to teachers’ productivity with regression coefficient of 0.465 which indicates significant. Thus, in this situation, partial mediator occurs because, when mediator enter the relationship B_1 and B_2 are still significant. Alsheikh, et al. (2021) expressed that partial mediation occur if these conditions were met. That is the hypothesis testing for regression coefficient B_1 is significant; the hypothesis testing for regression coefficient B_2 is significant. Thus, in this study, teacher commitment mediates the relationship between paternalistic leadership and teachers’ productivity.

Table 6

Standardized Regression Weights Teacher Commitment mediates the Relationship Between Paternalistic Leadership and Teachers' Productivity

Dependent	Path	Independent	Estimate loadings	P-value	Decision
Teacher Commitment	<---	Paternalistic Leadership	1.000	.000	Significant
Teacher Productivity	<---	Paternalistic Leadership	.465	.000	Significant
Teacher Productivity	<---	Teacher Commitment	.465	.000	Significant

Findings and Discussion

The study investigated the mediating effect of teachers' commitment on the relationship between paternalistic leadership styles of school principals and teachers' productivity in public schools in Ilorin west local government. The hypothesis one of this study stated that there will be significant relationship between paternalistic leadership style and teacher commitment. This indicated that there is significant relationship between paternalistic leadership style and teacher productivity. These finding strongly agree with study conducted by Ekmen and Okcu (2021) which revealed that paternalistic leader is one that create a family atmosphere in the work setting, establishes close and personal relationships with subordinates, gets involved in non-work-related domains, expects loyalty, and wants employees to pay attention to authority and status. Also, the study concurred with Yusmen, et al. (2024) that paternalistic use by top management on subordinate in an organization enhance job commitment.

The finding of the second hypothesis revealed that significant relationship exist between paternalistic leadership style and teacher commitment. These findings corroborate Yusmen, et al. (2024) who found that commitment of employee in the work allow them to achieve organizational goals. Similarly, the study conducted by Liu (2021) supported this result that leaders should adjust the combination of paternalistic leadership styles in time according to the environment to promote the optimal performance of subordinates

Mores so, the third hypothesis states that there is no significant relationship between teacher commitment and teacher productivity. The finding showed that teacher commitment determine teacher productivity. Based on this result, the finding of the study done by Orunbon, and Modupe (2021) revealed that teacher commitment is the emotional attachment that can allow teachers to achieved productivity in the school. Likewise, Sappa, et al. (2023) expressed that teacher commitment has significant effect work productivity and the way works is being done. Uwaleke (2023) expressed that an employee who is committed to the organization or emotionally attached to the organization, believed in the values and goals of the organization, work for the success of the organization.

Lastly, the hypothesis four which states that teacher commitment will be mediating effect on the relationship between paternalistic leadership style and teacher commitment. The finding of the study indicates that teacher commitment mediates the relationship between

paternalistic leadership style and teacher commitment with partial mediate. The finding of Atika, et al. (2022) was in line with is result that leadership has a significant effect on employees' commitment. The study of Putra, et al. (2023) which revealed that Organizational commitment is one of the determinants of employees' performance.

Conclusion

The study concluded that paternalistic leadership predict teacher productivity in Ilorin public schools. Specifically, it can be said that practicing paternalistic leadership in the school could lead to better performance of teacher which in turn lead students' academic performance. Also, if teacher show commitment in teaching, there would be more productivity in teaching job. Commitment of teachers and paternalistic exhibited by the schools would enhance productivity as well as educational goals. Additionally, given the findings of the study, it can be said this study has contributed to the body of knowledge. The study findings will serve as a template for the management of public school Kwara State on how teacher productivity can be further enhanced. With this, the study has established a strong relationship between paternalistic and teachers' productivity in in Ilorin public school. In this way, therefore, a significant contribution has been made.

Recommendations

Based on the study findings, these following recommendations were offered:

1. Principal should exhibit paternalistic leadership style to boost teacher productivity and morale thereby facilitating an improvement in students' academic performance.
2. Teacher of public schools should be commitment to teaching job so that productivity seen in the performance of the students.
3. Concerted efforts should be made by the principal of public schools to create welfare package for teachers so as to have commitment on the job.

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