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## **Administrator–Lecturer Relations and Lecturer–Lecturer Relations as Predictors of Lecturer Commitment in State-Owned Colleges of Education in the North-West Geopolitical Zone, Nigeria**

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**Abstract:** *The quality of interpersonal relations within the academic workplace between administrators and lecturers, and among lecturers themselves shapes whether institutions function as cohesive professional communities or fragmented collections of isolated practitioners. Both dimensions are theoretically linked to lecturer commitment but have not been empirically examined in state-owned Colleges of Education in Nigeria's North-West zone. This study examined: (i) the nature of administrator–lecturer relations; (ii) the nature of lecturer–lecturer relations; (iii) the level of lecturer commitment to work; and the relationships between each personnel relations dimension and lecturer commitment in state-owned Colleges of Education in North-West Nigeria. A correlational survey design was employed with 302 lecturers from four institutions. The Personnel Relations Lecturers Questionnaire (PRLQ, reliability = 0.85) and Lecturers Commitment Questionnaire (LCQ, reliability = 0.84) were used. Mean, standard deviation, and Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) were applied at alpha = 0.05. Administrator–lecturer relations were at a high level (mean = 2.89) with recognised administrator competence but deficiencies in communication (mean = 2.43) and cordial interaction (mean = 2.42). Lecturer–lecturer relations were at a high level (mean = 3.59) with strong academic collaboration and collegial solidarity. Lecturer commitment was at a high level (mean = 3.38). Both hypotheses were rejected: administrator–lecturer relations significantly predicted commitment ( $r = 0.114$ ,  $p = 0.028$ ) and lecturer–lecturer relations significantly predicted commitment ( $r = 0.128$ ,  $p = 0.046$ ). Both administrator–lecturer and peer relations are significant positive predictors of lecturer commitment. Institutional strategies must invest simultaneously in improving administrative communication quality and promoting structured academic collaboration among staff to sustain lecturer commitment.*

**Keywords:** administrator–lecturer relations; lecturer–lecturer relations; peer relations; lecturer commitment; level of commitment; personnel relations; Colleges of Education; North-West Nigeria

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## INTRODUCTION

The workplace relational environment constitutes the totality of interpersonal relationships that characterise day-to-day institutional life. It is theoretically established as a significant determinant of employee commitment across professional contexts (Mikkola & Valo, 2019; Caillier, 2017). In educational institutions, the nature and quality of these relationships are not merely peripheral to organisational functioning; they define the social architecture within which teaching, learning, and research take place. Specifically, in Colleges of Education, the relational environment encompasses several distinct dimensions, two of which are most practically proximate to the academic work environment: the administrator–lecturer relationship and the lecturer–lecturer relationship.

Conceptually, administrator–lecturer relations refer to the day-to-day professional interactions between academic staff and institutional managers, Heads of Department, Deans, Registrars, and Bursars who are responsible for the operational management and administration of the institution. These interactions occur at the most immediate level of academic governance and shape how lecturers experience institutional authority. When these interactions are characterised by open communication, professional respect, shared goal orientation, and collegial warmth, they create conditions favourable to organisational commitment. When they are marked by formalism, poor communication, or interpersonal distance, they undermine the psychological contract between the lecturer and the institution. Mikkola and Valo (2019) characterise such relationships as complex and multifaceted, involving collaborative goal pursuit, regular communication, resource management, and the mentoring of new staff.

Lecturer–lecturer relations, on the other hand, refer to the collegial bonds of academic collaboration, emotional solidarity, mutual support, and shared professional identity that develop among lecturing peers. These horizontal relational ties are distinct from hierarchical administrator–lecturer relations in that they emerge through voluntary professional association, shared academic interests, and a common occupational identity. Caillier (2017) designates peer relations as an important source of emotional support in an institution. Collegial relationships provide lecturers with a sense of belonging, mitigate occupational stress, and reinforce professional identity all of which are theoretical antecedents to affective organisational commitment.

Theoretically, the relationship between interpersonal workplace relations and organisational commitment is grounded in multiple frameworks. Meyer and Allen's (1990) three-component model of commitment, distinguishing between affective, continuance, and normative commitment provides the foundational taxonomy for understanding how relational experiences translate into different modes of attachment to the organisation. Affective commitment, in particular, which refers to the emotional identification with and involvement in the organisation, is most directly influenced by the quality of interpersonal relations. When lecturers experience positive, supportive, and respectful relations with both administrators and peers, affective commitment is enhanced. Social exchange theory further illuminates this mechanism: positive interpersonal exchanges generate felt obligations of reciprocity, and lecturers who receive professional respect,

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recognition, and collegial support from administrators and colleagues are theoretically predisposed to respond with heightened organisational commitment (Blau, 1964).

Empirically, the literature from various educational settings establishes that interpersonal workplace relations are significant predictors of teacher and lecturer commitment. Alsiewi and Agil (2014) found that feelings of belonging and emotional attachment to colleagues through group activities both in and out of work produce high levels of commitment. Jo (2014) established that peer relationships are a defining dimension of school climate, which in turn shapes lecturer motivation and professional attitude. Akinfolarin and Ehinola (2014) demonstrated that any management that succeeds in bringing together the lecturing workforce, enabling each member to make their best contribution to institutional success, is bound to elicit maximum discharge of professional duties. These findings converge on the conclusion that relational quality both hierarchical and peer is not merely a social luxury but a structural determinant of institutional commitment.

Despite this theoretical and empirical consensus, the specific relational dynamics within state-owned Colleges of Education in Nigeria's North-West geopolitical zone remain empirically underexamined. The dominant literature on Nigerian higher education commitment has focused primarily on federal universities and southern Nigerian institutions, leaving a significant geographical and institutional gap. The North-West zone presents a distinctive context characterised by its specific governance arrangements, cultural dimensions of institutional life, and documented patterns of personnel management that differ materially from other geopolitical zones. The four state-owned Colleges of Education examined in this study; Gumel, Dutsin-Ma, Sokoto, and Maru operate within this specific institutional and socio-cultural environment, making them appropriate sites for generating contextually specific empirical evidence.

This paper, therefore, examines administrator–lecturer relations and lecturer–lecturer relations as predictors of lecturer commitment, drawing on primary data from 302 lecturers across four state-owned Colleges of Education in the North-West geopolitical zone (Saidu, 2026). The study also establishes the empirical baseline of the level of lecturer commitment as the dependent variable, identifying both its high-level overall profile and its sub-dimensional vulnerabilities in professional development access and academic autonomy. The findings are intended to contribute to the evidence base for personnel management policy and practice in Nigerian Colleges of Education, and to extend the theoretical literature on interpersonal relations and commitment into a geographically specific Nigerian institutional context.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Lecturer commitment is a foundational condition for institutional effectiveness in Colleges of Education. Without sustained commitment, lecturers are unlikely to deliver quality teaching, engage in productive research, or contribute to the broader institutional mission of teacher preparation. The personnel relations environment comprising the quality of administrator–lecturer and lecturer–lecturer interactions is theoretically and empirically linked to this commitment.

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However, whether these relational dimensions are functioning at levels that support or undermine commitment in state-owned Colleges of Education in the North-West geopolitical zone of Nigeria remains empirically unanswered.

Anecdotal and structural evidence suggests significant personnel relations challenges in these institutions: communication gaps between management and academic staff, limited platforms for structured collegial collaboration, and personnel management styles that are perceived as formal and insufficiently relational. These conditions, if empirically confirmed, represent identifiable institutional risks to lecturer commitment. Yet, without a rigorous empirical examination that separates the contributions of administrator–lecturer relations and lecturer–lecturer relations as distinct predictors of commitment, policy responses cannot be appropriately targeted. This study was therefore designed to fill this gap by providing evidence-based answers to the specific research questions and testing the associated hypotheses.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The specific objectives of this study were to:

1. Examine the relationship between administrator–lecturer relations and lecturer commitment to work in Colleges of Education in North-West Nigeria.
2. Evaluate the relationship between lecturer–lecturer relations and lecturer commitment to work in Colleges of Education in North-West Nigeria.
3. Examine the level of lecturer commitment to work in Colleges of Education in North-West Nigeria.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What is the relationship between administrator–lecturer relations and lecturer commitment to work in Colleges of Education in North-West Nigeria?
2. What is the relationship between lecturer–lecturer relations and lecturer commitment to work in Colleges of Education in North-West Nigeria?
3. What is the level of lecturer commitment to work in Colleges of Education in North-West Nigeria?

### **Null Hypotheses**

The following null hypotheses were formulated and tested at  $\alpha = 0.05$ :

1. There is no significant relationship between administrator–lecturer relations and lecturer commitment to work in Colleges of Education in North-West Nigeria ( $H_0$ ).

2. There is no significant relationship between lecturer–lecturer relations and lecturer commitment to work in Colleges of Education in North-West Nigeria (Ho2).

## **METHODOLOGY**

A correlational research design, as prescribed by Creswell (2014), was adopted for this study. The design was considered appropriate because the study sought to establish the degree and direction of relationships between the independent variables (administrator–lecturer relations and lecturer–lecturer relations) and the dependent variable (lecturer commitment to work), without experimental manipulation of the variables.

The population comprised 3,242 lecturers from state-owned Colleges of Education in the North-West geopolitical zone. The accessible population was drawn from four institutions: Federal College of Education (Technical), Gusau; College of Education, Gumel; College of Education, Dutsin-Ma; and College of Education, Sokoto — giving an accessible population of 1,610 lecturers. A proportional sampling technique was applied to derive a sample of 306 respondents: Gumel (n = 41), Dutsin-Ma (n = 69), Sokoto (n = 157), and Maru (n = 39). A total of 302 questionnaires were returned and found usable, representing a response rate of 98.7%.

Two structured instruments were used for data collection. The Personnel Relations Lecturers Questionnaire (PRLQ) was used to measure both administrator–lecturer relations and lecturer–lecturer relations dimensions, while the Lecturers Commitment Questionnaire (LCQ) was used to measure the level of lecturer commitment to work. Both instruments were validated by experts in Educational Administration and Measurement and Evaluation, and their internal consistency reliability was established using Cronbach's Alpha: PRLQ (alpha = 0.85) and LCQ (alpha = 0.84). All items were rated on a four-point Likert scale (Strongly Agree = 4, Agree = 3, Disagree = 2, Strongly Disagree = 1). A decision criterion mean of 2.50 and above was interpreted as a High Level, while a mean below 2.50 was interpreted as a Low Level. Data were analysed using mean, standard deviation, and Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) at a significance level of alpha = 0.05 via SPSS Version 20.

## **RESULTS**

### **Research Question 1: Nature of Administrator–Lecturer Relations**

Research Question 1 sought to determine the nature of administrator–lecturer relations in Colleges of Education in North-West Nigeria. Respondents' perceptions were computed and the results are presented in Table 1.

**Table 1**

*Perception of Participants on Administrator–Lecturer Relations in Colleges of Education, North-West Nigeria (N = 302)*

S/N	Item Statement	High Freq.	Low Freq.	Mean	SD	Decision
1	In my college administrators and lecturers work together toward achieving mission, vision, and goals of the school.	194	108	3.27	1.80	High Level
2	In my college there is effective communication between administrators and lecturers of the school.	67	235	2.43	1.55	Low Level
3	In my college administrators have professional ability to perform their job.	279	23	3.84	1.95	High Level
4	In my college there is a working relationship between administrators and lecturers.	77	225	2.51	1.58	High Level
5	In my college there is cordial relationship between administrators and lecturers of the school.	65	237	2.42	1.55	Low Level
	<b>Weighted Mean</b>			<b>2.89</b>	<b>2.90</b>	<b>High Level</b>

Table 1 shows that administrator–lecturer relations were rated at a High Level with a weighted mean of 2.89 and standard deviation of 2.90. An examination of individual items reveals a nuanced picture. Collaborative goal pursuit between administrators and lecturers (mean = 3.27) and recognised administrator professional competence (mean = 3.84) returned strong high-level scores. However, two items fell at Low Level: effective communication between administrators and lecturers (mean = 2.43) and cordial relationship quality (mean = 2.42). The working relationship item barely crossed the high threshold (mean = 2.51). This pattern indicates that formal administrative competence is perceived as adequate, but the relational quality of daily administrator–lecturer interactions, specifically communication warmth and interpersonal cordiality requires structured institutional improvement.

### **Research Question 2: Nature of Lecturer–Lecturer Relations**

Research Question 2 sought to determine the nature of lecturer–lecturer relations in Colleges of Education in North-West Nigeria. The results are presented in Table 2.

**Table 2**

*Perception of Participants on Lecturer–Lecturer Relations in Colleges of Education, North-West Nigeria (N = 302)*

S/N	Item Statement	High Freq.	Low Freq.	Mean	SD	Decision
1	In my college there is strong academic relationship among the lecturers.	272	30	3.79	1.94	High Level
2	In my college there is cordial relation among lecturers.	192	110	3.26	1.80	High Level
3	In my college lecturers collaborate with other lecturers to publish papers in reputable journals.	296	6	3.95	1.98	High Level
4	In my college I am satisfied in the relation with staff members.	171	131	3.12	1.76	High Level
5	Most of the lecturers in the school are members of the COEASU.	280	22	3.84	1.95	High Level
<b>Weighted Mean</b>				<b>3.59</b>	<b>1.88</b>	<b>High Level</b>

Table 2 reveals that lecturer–lecturer relations were at a High Level with a weighted mean of 3.59 and standard deviation of 1.88. All five items returned high-level scores. Collaborative publication with colleagues achieved the highest mean (3.95), reflecting a strong norm of academic collaboration. COEASU membership (3.84) and strong academic relationships (3.79) further characterise a cohesive collegial environment. Satisfaction with colleague relations (3.12) was the lowest-scoring item, suggesting the presence of residual interpersonal tensions; however, this does not undermine the overall positive peer relational climate.

**Research Question 3: Level of Lecturer Commitment to Work**

Research Question 3 examined the level of lecturer commitment to work as the dependent variable empirical baseline. The results are presented in Table 3.

**Table 3**

*Perception of Participants on Level of Lecturer Commitment to Work in Colleges of Education, North-West Nigeria (N = 302)*

S/N	Item Statement	High Freq.	Low Freq.	Mean	SD	Decision
1	In my college lecturers have good knowledge in their subject matter.	221	81	3.45	1.85	High Level
2	In my college lecturers have freedom to initiate the goals of teaching.	181	121	3.19	1.78	High Level
3	In my college academic staff have freedom to use their own judgement in academic and non-academic issues.	79	223	2.49	1.57	Low Level
4	I am satisfied with my professional ability to perform my job efficiently.	161	141	3.06	1.74	High Level
5	In my college I feel a sense of belonging to the lecturing profession.	250	52	3.65	1.91	High Level
6	In my college I am in lecturing because of a sense of loyalty to the profession.	165	137	3.08	1.75	High Level
7	In my college I voluntarily accept the role of the lecturing profession.	175	127	3.15	1.77	High Level
8	In my college I have attended development training and workshops in my area of specialisation.	46	256	2.29	1.51	Low Level
9	In my college lecturers are given permanent and pensionable appointment after two years.	302	0	4.00	2.00	High Level
10	In my college retirement benefits are paid promptly.	302	0	4.00	2.00	High Level
11	In my college lecturers are not arbitrarily dismissed.	302	0	4.00	2.00	High Level
12	In my college I have freedom of association.	298	4	3.96	1.98	High Level
	<b>Weighted Mean</b>			<b>3.38</b>	<b>1.80</b>	<b>High Level</b>

Table 3 confirms that lecturer commitment was at a High Level with a weighted mean of 3.38 and standard deviation of 1.80. Structural job security dimensions pensionable appointment (4.00), retirement benefits (4.00), non-arbitrary dismissal (4.00), and freedom of association (3.96) anchored a strong high-level commitment baseline. However, two items fell at Low Level: professional development training attendance (mean = 2.29) and academic autonomy in judgement

(mean = 2.49). These represent specific commitment quality vulnerabilities that institutions must address to sustain the depth of professional engagement beyond its structural presence.

**Test of Null Hypothesis One (Ho1)**

Ho1 stated that there is no significant relationship between administrator–lecturer relations and lecturer commitment to work in Colleges of Education in North-West Nigeria. The PPMC result is presented in Table 4.

**Table 4**

*PPMC Result for the Relationship between Administrator–Lecturer Relations and Lecturer Commitment (Alpha = 0.05)*

Variable	N	Mean	SD	df	r-cal	p-value	Decision
Administrator–Lecturer Relations	302	2.89	2.90	318	0.114	0.028	Significant, Ho1 Rejected
Lecturer Commitment	302	3.38	1.80				

Table 4 shows that the calculated r-value is 0.114 with a p-value of 0.028. Since the p-value (0.028) is less than the significance level of alpha = 0.05, the null hypothesis Ho1 is rejected. There is, therefore, a statistically significant positive relationship between administrator–lecturer relations and lecturer commitment to work in Colleges of Education in North-West Nigeria. The significance of this result, despite its moderate effect size, confirms that the daily working relationship between lecturers and their departmental and faculty administrators is a meaningful contributor to commitment. The communication and cordiality deficiencies identified in Table 1 represent the specific relational sub-dimensions whose improvement would most directly strengthen this predictor of commitment.

**Test of Null Hypothesis Two (Ho2)**

Ho2 stated that there is no significant relationship between lecturer–lecturer relations and lecturer commitment to work in Colleges of Education in North-West Nigeria. The PPMC result is presented in Table 5.

Table 5

*PPMC Result for the Relationship between Lecturer–Lecturer Relations and Lecturer Commitment (Alpha = 0.05)*

Variable	N	Mean	SD	df	r-cal	p-value	Decision
Lecturer–Lecturer Relations	302	3.59	1.88	318	0.128	0.046	Significant, Ho2 Rejected
Lecturer Commitment	302	3.38	1.80				

Table 5 shows that the calculated r-value is 0.128 with a p-value of 0.046. Since the p-value (0.046) is less than the significance level of alpha = 0.05, the null hypothesis Ho2 is rejected. There is, therefore, a statistically significant positive relationship between lecturer–lecturer relations and lecturer commitment to work in Colleges of Education in North-West Nigeria. The descriptive data showing academic collaboration (mean = 3.95) as the strongest peer relations item supports the theoretical mechanism: lecturers who collaborate professionally develop shared institutional identity and purpose that reinforces organisational commitment beyond individual duty compliance.

### SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The following findings emerged from the study:

1. Administrator–lecturer relations in state-owned Colleges of Education in North-West Nigeria were at a high level (weighted mean = 2.89), with administrator professional competence perceived as adequate (mean = 3.84) and collaborative goal pursuit rated high (mean = 3.27). However, effective communication (mean = 2.43) and cordial interaction (mean = 2.42) fell at a low level, indicating significant relational deficiencies in the communication and interpersonal dimensions of administrator–lecturer relations.
2. Lecturer–lecturer relations were at a high level (weighted mean = 3.59). All items returned high scores, with collaborative publication (mean = 3.95), COEASU membership (mean = 3.84), and strong academic relationships (mean = 3.79) indicating a robust collegial and collaborative peer environment.
3. The level of lecturer commitment to work was at a high level (weighted mean = 3.38). Job security-related items pensionable appointment, retirement benefits, non-arbitrary dismissal, and freedom of association all scored at the maximum (4.00). Professional development training attendance (mean = 2.29) and academic autonomy (mean = 2.49) fell at low level, representing sub-dimensional vulnerabilities.

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4. There was a statistically significant positive relationship between administrator–lecturer relations and lecturer commitment to work ( $r = 0.114$ ,  $p = 0.028$ ). Ho1 was rejected.
5. There was a statistically significant positive relationship between lecturer–lecturer relations and lecturer commitment to work ( $r = 0.128$ ,  $p = 0.046$ ). Ho2 was rejected.

## DISCUSSION

The finding that administrator–lecturer relations significantly predicted lecturer commitment ( $r = 0.114$ ,  $p = 0.028$ ) confirms Mikkola and Valo's (2019) characterisation of administrator–lecturer relations as complex and multifaceted, with commitment implications at every relational dimension. The finding is also consistent with Akinfolarin and Ehinola (2014), who established that institutional management which successfully brings together the lecturing workforce and enables each member to make their best contribution is bound to generate maximum professional performance. The present study extends these theoretical propositions into the specific context of North-West Nigerian state-owned Colleges of Education, providing empirical confirmation that even a modest positive shift in the quality of administrator–lecturer relations produces a statistically significant effect on commitment.

Particularly noteworthy is the institutional paradox revealed by the administrator–lecturer relations data: technically capable administrators (mean = 3.84) are simultaneously failing at the relational dimensions of their roles communication (mean = 2.43) and cordiality (mean = 2.42) the very dimensions that this study identifies as commitment-significant. This finding suggests that technical administrative competence, while necessary, is insufficient as a driver of lecturer commitment. Relational competence the capacity to communicate transparently, engage collegially, and create an emotionally safe institutional environment is a distinct and equally important administrative skill set. Training administrators in relational leadership is therefore the most precisely targeted intervention for improving this predictor of commitment.

The finding that lecturer–lecturer relations significantly predicted lecturer commitment ( $r = 0.128$ ,  $p = 0.046$ ) confirms Alsiewi and Agil's (2014) proposition that the sense of belonging and strong interpersonal ties with colleagues tend to have positive effects on affective commitment within the institution. The result is also consistent with Jo's (2014) argument that peer relationships define the school climate dimension most directly linked to lecturer motivation and professional attitude. The present data add granularity to these theoretical positions: collaborative publication emerged as the strongest peer relations item (mean = 3.95), suggesting that academic collaboration joint research, co-authorship, and shared intellectual endeavour functions as a commitment-sustaining social practice that institutions can strengthen through targeted structural incentives.

At a broader theoretical level, both significant findings support the theoretical proposition grounded in social exchange theory (Blau, 1964) and the affective commitment component of Meyer and Allen's (1990) model: positive interpersonal workplace exchanges whether hierarchical or peer generate reciprocal organisational attachment. The present study confirms that this

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mechanism operates in the specific institutional context of state-owned Colleges of Education in North-West Nigeria, extending the empirical reach of these theoretical frameworks beyond the dominant western and southern Nigerian higher education literature.

Importantly, lecturer–lecturer relations emerged as a slightly stronger predictor ( $r = 0.128$ ) than administrator–lecturer relations ( $r = 0.114$ ), though both were statistically significant. This differential, while modest, may reflect the more frequent and emotionally immediate nature of peer interactions compared to hierarchical administrator interactions in the daily work life of a lecturer. It may also reflect the specific institutional culture of North-West Nigerian Colleges of Education, where collegial solidarity evidenced by strong COEASU membership rates (mean = 3.84) constitutes a significant social resource for lecturers. Future research is needed to examine whether this differential is consistent across different institutional types and geopolitical zones.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings and discussion of this study, the following recommendations are made:

1. Heads of Department and Deans in state-owned Colleges of Education in the North-West zone should receive structured training in relational leadership, specifically focusing on communication competence, empathy in administrative interactions, and collegial partnership, in order to improve the administrator–lecturer relations dimension that this study identifies as a significant predictor of lecturer commitment.
2. Institutions should create and institutionalise structured platforms for academic collaboration including joint research groups, co-authorship workshops, interdepartmental seminars, and institutional conference support to further strengthen the peer relations environment that this study identifies as a significant predictor of lecturer commitment.
3. Administrators in state-owned Colleges of Education should be explicitly assessed on relational quality indicators including communication transparency, responsiveness to staff concerns, and interpersonal cordiality as part of their formal performance appraisal processes, thereby creating institutional accountability for the relational deficiencies identified in this study.
4. College management should prioritise and expand professional development opportunities for lecturers, including training, workshops, conferences, and sabbatical provisions, to address the professional development attendance deficit (mean = 2.29) identified as a sub-dimensional vulnerability in lecturer commitment.
5. Future research should examine the moderating role of departmental culture in the administrator–commitment and peer relations–commitment relationships identified in this study, and should assess whether structured peer mentoring programmes produce measurable improvements in both peer relations quality and institutional commitment levels in Nigerian Colleges of Education.

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