THE INFLUENCE OF PERCEIVED POWER SOURCES AND PROFESSIONAL DISTANCE ON WORK-RELATED COMPLIANCE

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Abstract
In order for influence to be exercised by a leader, he or she must have power to potentially influence decisions and control resources. This study therefore, investigated the influence of perceived power sources and professional distance on work-related compliance among university lecturers in south-west, Nigeria. A cross-sectional survey design and a multi-stage sampling technique were used in the study. A structured questionnaire was used to collect data for the study. Three instruments were used: power sources scale, subjective professional distance scale and work-related compliance scale. Data were analysed using descriptive statistics, multiple regressions and Pearson Product Moment Correlation at .05 level of significance. The results indicated that Perceived Heads of Departments' legitimate (\( \beta = 0.18; p < .001 \)) and reward power (\( \beta = -0.16; p < .01 \)) independently and jointly influenced work-related compliance (\( R^2 = .15; F=5.23; p < .001 \)), while referent and expert power did not. Perceived Heads of Department's subjective professional distance by colleagues did not influence their work-related compliance. Also, lecturers' age did not influence their level of work-related compliance. Government and university managements should recognize power needs and promote measures for improving lecturers' work-related compliance.

Keywords: Power sources, Professional distance, Work-related compliance, South West

Introduction
Power is the individual capacity to move others, to entice others, to persuade and encourage others to attain specific goals or to engage in specific behaviour, it is the capacity to influence and motivate others (Cangemi, 1992). Power is the ability of someone to influence someone else (Nelson and Quick, 2012)). Those in power have the ability and capacity to order others to do what they want them to do. It is the ability of one person to cause another person to comply with the wishes or instructions of the power holders (Raven & French, 1993). Thus, power can either be actual or potential and is inherently coercive requiring involuntary submission. Furthermore, emphasis here is not on power itself, but on the sources of power as resources to be mobilized. Social power is therefore, an important construct because of its hypothesized relationship with work-related compliance.
The assumption is that a person’s power relationship with members of another group will have important consequences for the perceptions and behaviours they direct towards them and the greater the power of the power holder the greater the influence exercised on the compliance of the target (Koslowsky and Ashuri 2001).

For this study, French and Raven (1993) sources of social power are used to identify those types of power that lecturers may perceive as influencing them more to comply to undertake assigned duties and responsibilities. French and Raven constructed these main sources of power and attempted to define them systematically to be able to make comparison according to the change they produce. In this study only the legitimate, referent, reward, and expert sources were examined due to fact that the academic and administrative culture of a university does not subscribe to coercion. Each of these sources of power however relies on the perception of the person who has influence applied against them. In other words, someone has one of the sources of power another person perceives them as having that power. For French and Raven, legitimate power is based on a person’s perception of an individual to have a legitimate right to order another person, to act in a certain way. Referent power is based on a person’s identification with and respect for the influencing agents. It is a situation where lecturers obey their head of department because of their respect and admiration for the head of department. But the most important aspect of this power is that, unlike reward, coercive, and expert powers, the presence of the head of department is not required for it to be used.

Reward power is based on a person’s belief that another can give rewards that are valued by others. Heads of departments has reward power when colleagues perceive them to have authority to issue rewards. Although, heads of departments can give few formal privileges and benefits, they may still give informal rewards (Hepburn 1985).

Finally, expert power is based on subordinates’ perception that the leader possesses superior skills necessary for the group to achieve its goal. In order words, a person who is believed to be knowledgeable or have expertise in a certain field would be powerful in that group. This is because people tend to respect and believe what expert says (Udegbe 2005). A departmental head has expert power if their colleagues perceive them as possessing those skill and knowledge required to influence them to comply to undertake assigned duties and responsibilities or the possession of special skill and knowledge (Hepburn, 1985). This power may be
more evident among lecturers in handling industrial conflict and human relations that may require the head of department to have special skills.

As originally defined, each of these sources of power is socially dependent. In order words, there must be a social relationship between the influencing agent and the target. They do, however, change on the importance of surveillance. For coercion and reward power, surveillance is vital. In order for the agent to grant the reward or punishment, they must observe the target performing the behaviour. Surveillance is easier with reward power as people are less likely to hide behaviour if they are to be rewarded than if they are to be punished. Legitimate, referent and expert power do not require surveillance to induce behavioural compliance. Therefore, people perform behaviour because they feel they must, they want to please an individual or mimic their behaviour, or they think the influencing agent knows best (Raven 1988).

French and Raven in their study also focused on the interrelationships between different sources of power. For example, the use of reward power can lead to more referent power. As an influencing agent gives more rewards, the agent becomes more attractive to the target thereby eventually increasing referent power. In time, this transference makes surveillance less important: the person begins to comply and be committed to their job not because of any promise of reward but because of the built trust regarding the influencing agent. Also, coercive power and referent power are inversely related. A relationship in which a person see another as an enforcer or punisher can have a lack of trust or a decrease in “attraction” toward that individual (French & Raven 1959). Coercive power will always be seen to be dependent on surveillance while reward and referent power can eventually lead to less surveillance.

Carson, Carson and Roe (1993) stated that there is an implicit interconnection between legitimate power and reward and coercion power. In both cases, the target must perceive the rewards and coercion given as originated from a legitimate position. For example, rewards can lead to distrust or views of another getting special favour if the individual perceives the agent as having illegitimate reward power. Furthermore, although coercive power can reduce referent power, the legitimacy of the punishment can moderate this effect; the more legitimate they view the force or punishment, the less resistance or decrease in attraction.

Following from the above, the more sources of power the head of department has, the more likely that they will be successful in influencing colleagues to undertake those assignments that they would like them to do.
More importantly in organizations, power sources and usage are influenced by personal variables like professional distance. Professional distance is related to cultural context and may influence various measures of subordinate behaviour including the tendency to take over supervisory roles, if possible (Mulder, Veen, Hijzeen, and Jansen, 1973; Eylon and Au, 1999). It is the researchers’ contention that in a conflict situation, the smaller the distance, the more reluctant lecturers are to comply with request or assigned duties and responsibilities. Since in the study, the professional distance is determined by subjective professional distance that is, the actual gap in ability and knowledge between head of departments and colleagues’ as perceived by the colleagues. Thus, when applied to work-related compliance, it could be conjectured that, a lecturer who perceives their head of department as similar on professional distance subjectively will find it difficult to comply with the request of this head of department.

Among scholars in Industrial/organizational psychology and organizational behaviour, there has been criticism on the lack of clarity in defining these power sources (Bacharach and Lawler, 1976). Hinkin and Schriesheim 1989; Rahim 1989; Rahim and Buntzman, 1991), posited that this typology is widely used of all the power definitions. These sources of power have a wide application to organizations, they have been applied to numerous organizations and situations, including supervisor and subordinate interaction in business (example, Bachman, Smith and Slesinger 1968; Bachman, Bowers, and Marcus 1968; Hinkin and Schriesheim 1990, 1994; Rahim 1989; Rahim and Bantzman 1991; Koslowsky, Schwarzwald, and Ashuri 2001; sales person and customer satisfaction ( Lam, 1996; Zemanek 1995); and doctor and patient interactions (Raven 1988), teacher and student relationship (Aquins, Nesler, Quigley, Lee, and Tedeschi 1996; Robyak, Good year, Prange, and Donham 1986). The sources have also been applied to the prison environment as a way to understand correctional officers, administrators and inmate interaction (Hepburn 1985; Stojkovic 1984, 1986; Stichman, 2002). However, the influence of perceived power sources and subjective professional distance which could explain reasons for lecturer’s work-related compliance in universities has not been investigated. Hence, the main objective of this study is:

(1) To investigate the influence of perceived power sources and subjective professional distance on work-related compliance among university lecturers in south-western Nigeria. While the specific objective is:
(1) To investigate whether university lecturers’ age will significantly influence their level of compliance to assigned duties and responsibilities by their heads of departments.

Hypotheses

This study tested the following hypotheses:

1. Lecturers’ age will significantly influence their level of work-related compliance.

2. Perceived referent, expert, legitimate, reward power source of heads of departments by lecturers will significantly and independently influence their work-related compliance.

3. Perceived subjective professional distances of heads of departments by lecturers will significantly influence their work-related compliance.

Power Sources and Work-related compliance

The relationships of the bases of leaders’ power (coercive, reward, legitimate, expert, and referent) to subordinates’ organizational commitment, satisfaction with work, attitudinal and behavioural compliance, and the relationships of the four latter variables to propensity to leave a job was conducted using 308 American accountants. The result indicated that expert and referent power sources were positively correlated with attitudinal compliance, whereas legitimate and referent sources were positively correlated with behavioural compliance (Afza, Mainuddin; Rahim, M.Afzalur, 1993).

The effect of legitimate power is often unclear; some researchers have found a positive relationship (example, Comer, 1980), whereas others have found either a negative relationship or no relationship (Martin & Hunt 1980; Rahim 1989; Rahim & Buntzman 1991). Legitimate, expert and referent powers have also been positively associated with work compliance (Rahim 1989), and referent power has been positively correlated with behavioural and attitudinal compliance (Rahim & Buntzman 1991). The use of all power sources, except coercive power maintained a negative relationship (Zemanek, 1995).

The effectiveness of the basis of leaders’ power, such as coercive, reward, legitimate, expert, and referent in influencing behavioural compliance with superiors’ wishes and satisfaction with supervision was conducted. The regression analysis of data from a national random sample of 476 managers after demographic, job-related, and other extraneous variable were controlled for. The result showed that
expert and referent power sources were positively associated with compliance and satisfaction; and legitimate power source was positively associated with compliance but negatively associated with satisfaction (Rahim, 1997).

An examination of the effect of power based on subordinates compliance and satisfaction among accountants in Singapore using 355 of them as respondents was also conducted. After controlling for age, gender, years of experience in the organization and years with supervisor. The multiple regression analysis indicated that the expert power and legitimate power of accounting supervisors were significantly and positively associated with the compliance of accounting subordinates. Secondly, expert and referent power were significantly and positively associated with subordinate satisfaction but legitimate power was significantly and negatively associated with subordinate satisfaction. Thirdly, the coercive power and reward power of accounting supervisors did not appear to have any significant or positive effect on the compliance or satisfaction level of the accounting subordinates (Koh and Low (1993).

In the study of Koslowsky, Schwazwald and Ashuri (2001), in adopting the new taxonomy of 11 power sources, which were derived from the original 5 bases of power. The 11-power sources in the study was subsumed into two major categories, harsh and soft. In their study, the findings were consistent with other underlying power structures discussed in the literature (Bui, Raven, and Schwarzwald, 1994; Kipnis, 1984; Yulk and Falbe, 1991; Bass, 1981). Though these investigators have suggested different headings or titles for this classification (example, position versus personal), essentially the same power source were included in each category.

Harsh sources are available to the influencing agent due to the position held in the organization. The usage of these sources may be perceived by the target as somewhat arbitrary, less task relevant, and utilizing one’s positional advantages in an attempt to gain compliance. This general category is referred to as a “downward” orientation in the exercise of power. For example, supervisor by informing a subordinate that a promotion is forth coming (or will be helped up) if the latter does (or does not) comply is exercising power sources that are not integrally related to the task or the request but are simply a function of the supervisor’s position prerogatives. By contrast soft sources such as information or expertise are more tasks relevant and gain compliance through personal rather than organizational resources. Similar to Yulk and Falbe “Laterial” power category, soft sources de – emphasise the positional advantage of the supervisor and focus on their personal resources. For one of the soft power bases, referent power, it can be argued that its usage involves a degree of arbitrariness as it is fewer tasks oriented. However, they believed that, among other characteristics, referent power
is strongly associated with experience and expertise. As such, it is perceived as more task relevant (especially as compared with coercion or reward) and is appropriately assigned to the soft category (Yulk and Falbe, 1991).

**Professional Distance and Work-Related Compliance**

Employing the new taxonomy of 11 power sources, on the objective and subjective professional distance of the nurses as potential correlates of work-related compliance, the respondents were expected to report greater work-related compliance as distance professionally increased among the nurses. The findings showed that, for both harsh and soft sources, nurses who were similar to their supervisors on objective professional distance criteria reported lower work-related compliance levels than those who were more dissimilar professionally (Koslowsky, Schwarzwald and Ashuri, 2001).

For subjective professional distance the findings was replicated only for soft sources. It was observed by these authors that the general reluctance of nurses to report a high work-related compliance when professionally similar to their supervisors can be understood in terms of social comparison process as described by Schwarzwald and Goldenberg (1979). The questionnaire administered to their participants involved a job relevant conflict situation requiring a decision to be made. As a result of this, these authors argued that if a subordinate felt equal on professional qualifications to the lack of a clear advantage for the supervisor, in addition, to receiving greater outputs than the subordinate, for similar inputs, feelings of inequity were likely to be aroused. Therefore, reported reluctance to comply according to them, may express an attempt to restrict the supervisor’s control and, thereby restore equity.

The examination of seniority and type of promotion independently, in the study did not produce differential reported compliance. These personal characteristics did not result in a supervision advantage (or disadvantage) vis a vis the subordinates, yet their interaction was significantly associated with reported compliance to harsh sources. For supervisors who were promoted from within the department, nurses indicated greater resistance to comply if the supervisor had been promoted recently. For longer duration, the type of promotion did not have any impact when trying to gain work-related compliance. Also, newly promoted supervisors were resented or discomforted by the subordinates. However, over time such feelings decreased due to either habituation or other coping methods adopted by the subordinates.

In trying to reconcile the inconsistencies observed in the relationship between professional distance and reported work-related compliance, Koslowsky
et. al. (2001), argued that compliance to soft sources is predominantly affected by personal resources of the supervisor and compliance to harsh sources by organizational resources delegated to them. In their study, the subjective professional distance scale focused entirely on personal resources, it was found to be associated with soft sources. In contrast, the interaction of type of promotion and seniority, which are predominantly related to organizational characteristic, was associated with compliance to harsh sources. However, objective professional distance which contains personal as well as organizational resources was found to be related to both.

Furthermore, the supervisors with professional advantage also benefited from greater organizational resources and reported work-related compliance to harsh sources. This interpretation was however consistent with organizational culture found in the hospital. Personal interview with the hospital administrators after data collection showed that supervisors with professional advantage are paid more and given greater responsibility in decision-making committee in the hospital. As such, work-related compliance to harsh sources by these supervisors carried great weight and is taken more seriously (Koslowsky, Schwarzwald and Ashuri, 2001).

Methodology
Research Design
The study adopted a cross-sectional survey design where questionnaire instruments were used to collect data from the respondents on the studied variables.

Sample and Sampling technique
The study was conducted among lecturers in seven (7) private and nine (9) public (Federal and state) universities within the south western states of Nigeria. A total of 900 lecturers in all ranks in these universities who were on the payroll of such universities and excluding those who were on annual or sabbatical leave formed the participants.

The sample was drawn using the multi-stage sampling technique. In adopting this technique, the population was first divided into a cluster of public and private universities, departments, colleges and a list was drawn for each.

Secondly, the proportional sampling technique was adopted to select nine hundred (900) lecturers from all of these universities for questionnaire administration, since the Academic staff strength of these universities were unequal due to disparity in the number of lecturers employed in each of them.
This type of sampling strategy is also accepted for gathering participants for a study when the population is comprised of several subgroups that are vastly different in number. The number of participants from each subgroup is determined by their number relative to the entire population (Barnett, 1991).

Instruments
Data collection in the study was through the aid of a carefully designed and valid questionnaire. Three instruments were used: perceived power sources scale, subjective professional scale and work-related compliance scale.

Perceived Power Source Scale
Power sources were measured by the perceived power sources scale developed by Hinkin, and Schrieshein (1989) with a reliability coefficient of .87. The 20-items scale was modified and revalidated by the researcher. The four dimensions of power sources were measured with four items each on a five (5) point Likert type response of Strongly agree (5), Agree (4), Undecided (3), Disagree (2), and Strongly disagree (1). For the present study the scale yielded a Cronbach alpha of .81.

Subjective Professional Distance Scale
An unmodified version of a six (6) item scale developed by Koslowsky, Schwarzwald, and Ashuri (2001) was used to measure the subjective professional distance of the lecturers’ heads of department as perceived by the latter. The scale has a response format of a 7-point Likert type scale ranging from very untrue (1) to very true (7). The authors reported a reliability coefficient of 0.85. For the present study the scale yielded a Cronbach alpha of 0.87 with a split- half reliability of .81.

Work-Related Compliance Scale
Work-related compliance was measured by reluctance work-related compliance scale developed by Essien (2008). The scale contains 15 items that measured work-related compliance level of lecturers. The scale indicated a reliability coefficient of .90 (Cronbach Alpha) with a split- half reliability of .84.

Procedure
A set of questionnaire for assessing demographic data, power sources (legitimate, expert, referent, and reward), subjective professional distance and work-related compliance were administered on the sample through some research assistants.
and the administrative officers in each department, faculties and colleges of the universities used for the study. A total of One thousand six hundred (1600) questionnaires were distributed in the course of the survey while 1256 were retrieved giving a response rate of 78.50% but 900 were found useable. This 900 questionnaires was used for data analysis.

Data Analysis

Data were analysed using descriptive statistics, multiple regressions, Pearson Product Moment Correlation at 5% level of significance. The criterion or dependent variable was work-related compliance, the predictor variables were power sources (expert, referent, legitimate and reward) and subjective professional distance.

Results

The results of the zero-order correlation showing relationships between each of the variables as presented in Table 1 indicates that age had no significant positive relationship with work-related compliance \( r = .04 \). Power sources had a positive significant relationship with subjective professional distance \( r = .33^{**} \), a positive significant relationship with work-related compliance \( r = .11^{**} \), a positive significant relationship with reward \( r = .74^{**} \), a significant positive relationship with expert source \( r = .79^{**} \), a significant positive relationship with referent power source \( r = .81^{**} \), and a significant positive relationship with legitimate power of heads of departments \( r = .70^{**} \).

Subjective professional distance had no significant relationship with work-related compliance \( r = .02 \), a significant positive relationship with reward power source \( r = .20^{**} \), and a significant positive relationship with expert power sources \( r = .33^{**} \), a significant positive relationship with referent power source \( r = .31^{**} \), a significant positive relationship with legitimate power source \( r = .2^{**} \).

Reward power source did not have any significant relationship with work-related compliance \( r = .03 \) except expert source \( r = .10^{**} \), referent source \( r = .11^{**} \), and legitimate source \( r = .2^{**} \). Expert power source had a significant positive relationship with reward power source \( r = .5^{**} \), referent power source \( r = .43^{**} \), and legitimate power source \( r = .32^{**} \).

Referent power source was found to have a significant positive relationship with expert power source \( r = .60^{**} \). Legitimate power source indicated a significant positive relationship than expert power source \( r = .40^{**} \). Lastly, referent power source was found to have a significant positive relationship with legitimate power source \( r = .44^{**} \).
**Table 1:** Summary of Zero Order Correlation Showing Interrelationships of variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Age Power Source</th>
<th>Subjective PD</th>
<th>Work-Related Compliance</th>
<th>Reward Power Source</th>
<th>Expert Power Source</th>
<th>Referent Power Source</th>
<th>Legitimate Power Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age Power Source</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subjective PD</td>
<td>-.16</td>
<td>.33**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work-Related Compliance</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.11**</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reward Power Source</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.74**</td>
<td>.20**</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expert Power Source</td>
<td>-.07</td>
<td>.79**</td>
<td>.33**</td>
<td>.10**</td>
<td>.46**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Referent Power Source</td>
<td>-.07</td>
<td>.81**</td>
<td>.31**</td>
<td>.11**</td>
<td>.43**</td>
<td>.60**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legitimate Power Source</td>
<td>-.02</td>
<td>.10**</td>
<td>.2**</td>
<td>.17**</td>
<td>.32**</td>
<td>.40**</td>
<td>.44**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Key:  
*Correlation is significant at .05 1-tailed  
** Correlation is significant at .01 1-tailed  
PD- Professional Distance

**Table 2** Summary Table of Multiple Regression Showing Main and Joint Influence Of Power, Subjective Professional Distance on Work-Related Compliance.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Beta</th>
<th>T</th>
<th>P</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>R²</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Age</td>
<td>0.32</td>
<td>.540</td>
<td>&gt;.05</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Referent</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.882</td>
<td>&gt;.05</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Expert</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>1.154</td>
<td>&gt;.05</td>
<td>0.23</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>5.23</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Legitimate</td>
<td>0.18</td>
<td>3.645</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reward</td>
<td>-0.16</td>
<td>-2.999</td>
<td>&lt;.01</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Subjective PDS</td>
<td>-0.02</td>
<td>-0.347</td>
<td>&gt;.05</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Multiple Regression Analysis

Hypothesis 1 stated that Lecturers’ age will significantly influence their level of work-related compliance; this was tested with multiple regression. The results on model 1: table 2 above indicated no significant positive influence of age of lecturers on their level of work-related compliance ($\beta = 0.3$, $p > .05$). Therefore the hypothesis was not supported.

Hypothesis 11 stated that perceived heads of department’s referent, expert, legitimate, reward power sources by colleagues will significantly and independently influence lecturers work-related compliance; this was tested with multiple regression. The results on model 1: table 2 above indicated a significant perception of heads of departments’ referent, expert, legitimate, reward power sources, on colleagues compliance ($R = 0.234; R^2 = 0.15; F = 5.232; P < .001$). The joint percentage is 15% while referent power source had a percentage contribution of 5%, expert 7%, legitimate 18% and reward power source 16%. Only legitimate and reward power sources had significant independent influence on work-related compliance ($\beta = 0.18$, $p < .01$), ($\beta = -0.16$, $p < .01$) while referent and expert power sources did not have any significant independent influence on compliance: ($\beta = 0.1$, $p > .05$) and ($\beta = 0.07$, $p > .05$) respectively. Therefore the hypothesis was supported.

Hypothesis 111 stated that perceived subjective professional distance of heads of departments by lecturers will significantly influence their work-related compliance; this was tested with multiple regression. The results on model 1: table 2 above indicated that subjective professional distance did not have any significant independent influence on work-related compliance: ($\beta = -0.02$ $p > .05$). Therefore, the hypothesis was not supported.

Discussion

From the results of the analysis, the model was found to have predictive utility indicating that perceived power sources and subjective professional distance influenced work-related compliance of lecturers. Hypothesis 1 stated that Lecturers’ age will significantly influence their level of work-related compliance. This hypothesis was not supported, meaning that the compliance of university lecturers to assigned duties and responsibilities is not based on their age categories.

Hypothesis 11 which predicted a significant and independent influence of perceived referent, expert, legitimate, reward power sources of heads of departments by lecturers will significantly and independently influence lecturers’ work-related compliance.
This indicates that when the heads of departments’ colleagues perceived their heads of departments to have a combination of positive referent, expert, legitimate and reward power sources, they tend to comply with assigned duties and responsibilities. From the study only legitimate and reward power sources perceived by the heads of departments’ colleagues influenced their compliance on request or assigned duties and responsibilities. This particular finding partially corroborated most works and research positions about the relationship and or influence of power sources and compliance, for example, (Bachman, Bowers and Marcus, 1968) revisited the issue of power sources to examine why people comply with request of their organizational superiors and reported that legitimate and expert powers were the most important reasons for complying. Expert and referent power sources were the strongest and concisely had positive correlations. The effect of legitimate power on compliance was reported to be positive (Comer, 1980) and also a negative relationship with compliance (Rahim, 1989). According to Rahim and Buntzman (1991), referent power source was positively correlated to behavioural and attitudinal compliance. The use of legitimate power is that the employees respond more positively to legitimate power than coercion (Thibult and Recken, 1955; Hurwitz, Zander, and Hymoritch, 1968).

Referent and expert power operate in a more direct than indirect manner. Thus employee is likely to associate either of these with specific attempt to influence their behaviour, even though they may be aware of their presence and extent in general. They submitted that when such influence modifies then the employee will see the change as a function of his or her own choice, but with the positive support of the supervisor (Raven and French, 1968).

Koh and Low (1993), gave a little credence to the study in that, they found expert power and legitimate power of accounting supervisor to be significantly and positively associated with work-related compliance of accounting subordinates. Expert power and referent power were significantly and positively associated with subordinate satisfaction but legitimate power was significantly and negatively related to satisfaction and finally they reported that reward power source did not appear to have any significant or positive effect on the work-related compliance of accounting subordinates.

The results of this present study confirms a major assumption of the power interaction model (Raven, 1992, 1993) which states that the influencing agent act rationally and takes into account effectiveness and acceptability. They argued that by comparing the degree of reported work-related compliance for each source as reported independently by the participants in their study (as it is done in this present
study) and their supervisors. Their findings of high agreement across and within departments on the degree of reported work-related compliance supported the argument of the model.

Hypothesis 111 which stated that perceived subjective professional distance of heads of departments by lecturers will significantly influence their work-related compliance was not supported. This study, supported the study of Koslowsky, Schwazwald and Ashuri (2001) employing the power interpretation model, which focused on both objective and subjective professional distance, but we were interested in the subjective professional distance. In their findings, they indicated that nurses who were similar subjectively reported lower work-related compliance than those who were dissimilar subjectively to their supervisors. They observed that the general reluctance of the nurses to report compliance when professionally similar to their supervisors can be understood in terms of social comparison process as described by Schwarzwald and Goldenberg (1979). Their questionnaire however involved a job related conflict situation requiring a decision to be taken. They also argued that if a subordinate felt equal on professional qualification to the lack of a clear advantage for the supervisor, the supervisor receives greater reward than the subordinate for similar inputs; feelings of inequity were likely to be aroused.

This present study also confirmed the second assumption of the model concerning the relationship between head of departments’ characteristics and reported work-related compliance of their colleagues. The focus here was on perceived subjective professional distance of heads of departments’ influence on work-related compliance by their colleague. It was the researcher’s expectation that the respondents would report greater compliance to assigned duties and responsibilities as the distance increased. The findings showed that the lecturers who were similar to their heads of department on subjective professional distance indicated lower work-related compliance.

The perceived power sources (referent, legitimate, reward and expert) and subjective professional distance of heads of departments were found to jointly predict work related compliance. This is an indication that lecturers compliance to assigned duties and responsibilities is not a one dimensional phenomenon rather it is multidimensional with several factors coming together to determine a lecturer’s compliance to assigned duties and responsibilities. Even though there is no existing literature to backup or refute this claim, Koslowsky, Schwazwald and Ashuri (2001) reported that for both soft and harsh power sources (which comprise referent, expert reward and legitimate power sources), nurses who were similar to their superiors on subjective professional distance criteria reported lower compliance level than those who were dissimilar.
Implication of the Study
This study has shown that a single factor is not sufficient to predict a lecturers’ work-related compliance; rather several factors jointly enhance its prediction. Also it should be noted that both power sources and subjective professional distance are important irrespective of lecturers age in gaining work-related compliance. However the degree of their importance differ, power sources proved to be more important and should be given priority in issues relating to compliance.

It therefore follows that the perception of heads of departments power sources and subjective professional distance should be of interest to government at all levels as well as organized private sector organizations, communities, religious leaders; since this will strongly influence how the subordinates or colleagues perceive their superiors and or unit heads in order to achieve work-related compliance.

Limitation and Suggestions for Further Studies
In the study, only lecturers in both private and public universities in the South-Western State of Nigeria were sampled, indeed a wider generalization is hindered. This is because there may be issues that are particular to the sampled universities which may not be present in other universities in other geo-political zones in Nigeria which may bring about difference in outcome. It is as a result of this, that future research is suggested to accommodate other universities in other geo-political zones in Nigeria to enhance generalization.

Result from the analysis indicated that perceived power sources and subjective professional distance cannot be said to be the only variables responsible for the observed influence, this means that other factors not considered in the present study may be important in enhancing our knowledge of lecturers work-related compliance, as a result of this; additional power sources and objective professional distance should be considered in future research to afford a deeper understanding of the subject matter.
References


Koslowsky, Schwarzwald and Ashuri (2001). The Relationship between Subordinate’s Compliance to Power Sources and Organizational Attitude.


