WORK ENVIRONMENT AS CORRELATE OF TEACHERS' COMMITMENT TO WORK IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN ANAMBRA STATE

By

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Abstract

The study examined work environment as correlate of teachers' commitment to work in public secondary schools in Anambra State. Two research questions guided the study and two null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level significance. The study adopted correlational research design. The population of the study comprised 5,133 teachers in 266 public secondary schools in six Education Zones in Anambra State. A sample of 513 teachers was drawn using proportionate stratified and simple random sampling techniques. The instruments for data collection were a researchers-structured questionnaire titled: "Work Environment Questionnaire (WEQ), and Teachers' Commitment to Work Questionnaire (TCWQ)". The face and construct validity of the instruments were established by three experts; one from Measurement and Evaluation and two in Educational Management. The reliability of the instruments were determined using Cronbach Alpha Coefficient method which gave coefficient values of 0.85, 0.86, and 0.91 respectively. Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient was used to analyze the data. The study revealed that social work environment ($r = 0.692$; $p < 0.000$) and psychological work environment ($r = 885$; $p < 0.000$) positively and significantly relate to teachers' commitment to work in public secondary schools in Anambra State. The study concluded that work environment positively and significantly relate to teachers' commitment to work in public secondary schools in Anambra State. The study recommended that school administrators should continue to address specific elements within the psychological work environment, such as workload and recognition, to implement targeted strategies aimed at enhancing teachers' commitment in these schools.

Keywords: *Work Environment, Psychological Work Environment, Social Work Environment, Commitment to Work, Public Secondary Schools*

Introduction

Education is a systematic process of acquiring knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes through various formal and informal means. It involves the transmission of information, development of critical thinking, and cultivation of social and cultural awareness. Education can take place in formal settings such as schools and universities, as well as through informal experiences in daily life. It aims to empower individuals, foster personal and intellectual growth, and prepare them for active participation in society. The importance of education cannot be overemphasized as it plays a pivotal role in the supply of manpower needed for national development (Ugochukwu et al., 2021). The primary goals of education include enhancing the overall quality of education across all levels, to make the outcomes more beneficial to society. Additionally, education is aimed at preserving its status as a key driver of development. However, the commitment of teachers to their work is required to meet the objectives of education.

Commitment means emotional status of employees which determine how they identify with the organization in which they work. It is an individual's attraction and attachment to the work and the organization. Teachers' commitment to work as stated by Muhammad and Chaudhary (2020) refers to the professional attitude as well as sense of devotion to duty which is displayed by a teacher on the job. The author maintained that teachers' commitment to work could be determined by their proper execution of basic tasks and additional responsibilities assigned by the management, active involvement in school functions, punctuality to work, remaining in school till the closing hour, willingness to help students to learn and regularity in school. Umeozor and Nnebedum (2022) opined that teachers' execution of assigned tasks for a specific period broadens their knowledge which could improve their commitment to work. Odoh (2021) noted that committed teachers work harder, demonstrate stronger affiliation to their school and show a desire to carry out the task of teaching. Committed teachers are the most important resource that a school should have to achieve greater and better results and impact students' academic performance

Some of the major factors that affect teachers' commitment to their work as noted by Kuncoro and Dardiri (2017) include unsuitable performance goals that are too high, unclear performance plans, lack of role clarity, confusion about priorities or targets, poor working conditions and environment, problems related to equipment and working groups, improper leadership and other environmental obstacles. Supporting Kuncoro and Dardiri's opinion, Edo and Nwosu (2018) added that teachers are also influenced by certain activities around their work environment. The author noted that

nothing impacts on teachers' commitment like the work environment where they carry out their assigned functions.

Work environment is an important place where various activities or different transactions take place. Kuncoro and Dardiri (2017) referred to work environment as the environment in which people work; from the physical environment, such as heat and equipment, job-specific characteristics such as workload and task complexity, broader organizational features such as culture and history, and to the extra-organizational factors such as local labour market conditions, industry sector, and work-home relationships, all are part of the work environment. The atmosphere within a school can influence how teachers approach their work. As highlighted by Muhammad et al. (2015), something as seemingly minor as the layout of furniture in the staffroom can shape how teachers engage with each other. A conducive work environment not only offers comfort and a sense of security but also supports teachers in effectively carrying out their instructional duties and other responsibilities. Such an environment plays a crucial role in enabling teachers to fulfill their roles with dedication and efficiency. Lankeshwara (2016) revealed that the problems of work environment including work environmental conditions, physical conditions, psychological conditions and social condition are issues always highlighted as the contributing factor to the poor performance of teachers in the school. Within the context of this study, work environment focused on social work environment and psychological work environment.

Social work environment is one of the most important factor for employee productivity. Justin and Asawo (2017) referred to social work environment as the psychological interaction that occurs between the employee and the employer within a specific process. Olomi and Nna (2021) asserted that an individual is born into a social environment and it is only through interaction with that environment that he is able to develop a consciousness of self and affective characteristics. Teaching and learning is a direct consequence of teacher-learner interaction with materials. The way the teacher relates with the learners, the way he treats them and the methods he uses in making them learn bear directly on students' learning in the school. On the other hand, if the management treats the teachers fairly, recognizes their individual differences and provides for them, teachers will no doubt develop positive self-concept of themselves, they will become more motivated in their job and consequently show better interest in the accomplishment of the school goals.

Psychological work environment is a set of work environment characteristics that affect the way workers feel. The environment provides a good description of the mental activities that an employee undertakes during working hours. The psychological environment includes good

descriptions and references to other sources of information on stress, harassment, job demands, co-operation, and conflicts (Irvianti &Verina, 2015). Organizations should, therefore, reflect conditions that support cooperation between superiors, subordinates and those who have the same position in the company. Nanda et al. (2019) noted that psychological work environment is all the conditions that occur relating to work relationships, both with superiors and with fellow colleagues or relations with subordinates. This sort of work environment is closely related to the relationship between workers and management or coworkers, the level of welfare, especially non-cash benefits, as well as factors related to the place of workers.

School organizations should reflect conditions that support cooperation between the teachers, students, the management and other members of staff. Taiwo (2013) opined that conditions that should be created are family atmosphere, good communication, and self-control. It is the responsibility of the school management team to provide suitable work environment where teaching and learning can thrive. Otherwise, the overall effectiveness of the educational institution may be compromised. Without a nurturing and collaborative atmosphere, the educational goals may become elusive, hindering both the academic and personal development of students. It is against this background that the researchers sought to examine work environment as correlate of teachers' commitment to work in public secondary schools in Anambra State.

Statement of the Problem

Teachers are professionals who have positive effect on students learning and development through their ability to deliver learning content. They are the most important cog in the educational machine and are highly instrumental to the success of any educational programme embarked upon by the government. However, there have been reported instances of teachers' misconduct in public secondary schools in Anambra State, such as lateness to work, absenteeism, and other behaviours that deviate from the expected professional standards. This development is gradually becoming a source of worry to stakeholders in education.

Observations by the researchers showed that some teachers exhibit little commitment in terms of carrying out their assigned jobs. There has been a case of teachers' inability to cover the scheme of work, and also portraying laissez faire attitude to matters that concerns the development of their school. Sometimes, some of the teachers are found under the trees having discussion instead of being in the classroom or in the staff room. It could be that work environment may have triggered unacceptable behaviour that teachers' exhibit in their schools. This could account for why teachers are always found under the trees during work hours. It seems that there is poor ventilation in the

staff rooms which could be the reason they prefer to spend most of their time outside. The ceiling of the staff rooms may have gone off thereby making the weather unfavourable for the teachers. To find answers to these unwelcomed development in public secondary schools in the State, the researcher sought to examine work environment as correlates of teachers' commitment to work in public secondary schools in Anambra State.

Purpose of the Study

The general purpose of the study was to examine work environment as correlates of teachers' commitment to work in public secondary schools in Anambra State. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. Examine the extent social work environment relates to teachers' commitment to work in public secondary schools in Anambra State.

2. Determine the extent psychological work environment relates to teachers' commitment to work in public secondary schools in Anambra State.

Research Questions

This study was guided by the following research questions:

1. To what extent does social work environment relate to teachers' commitment to work in public secondary schools in Anambra State?

2. To what extent does psychological work environment relate to teachers' commitment to work in public secondary schools in Anambra State?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance:

1. Social work environment does not significantly relate to teachers' commitment to work in public secondary schools in Anambra State.

2. Psychological work environment does not significantly relate to teachers' commitment to work in public secondary schools in Anambra State.

Research Method

The study adopted correlational research design. The population of the study comprised 5,133 teachers in 266 public secondary schools in six Education Zones in Anambra State. A total of 513 teachers was drawn proportionate stratified and simple random sampling technique from the study. The sample size comprised 10% of teachers. The choice of 10-25% was in line with the recommendations of Nworgu (2015) who stated that 10 to 80 percent of any given population is adequate for the research work. The instruments used for the data collection were researchers developed instruments titled "Work Environment Questionnaire (WEQ), and Teachers' Commitment to Work Questionnaire (TCWQ)". The instruments were divided into sections A and B. Section A which has two clusters elicits information on social work environment and psychological work environment with 10-item statements each; Section B "Teachers' Commitment to Work Questionnaire (TCWQ)" with 15-item statements elicits information on teachers' commitment to work. The instruments were on four point rating scale of Very High Extent (VHE) (4 points), High Extent (HE) (3 points), Low Extent (LE) (2 points), and Very Low Extent (VLE) (1 point). The face and construct validity of the instrument were established by three experts; one from Measurement and Evaluation and two in Educational Management. All the experts are all from the Faculty of Education, Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University. The questionnaire reliability was ascertained through a pilot test. The data collected were analyzed with Cronbach Alpha method and coefficient values of 0.85 for Social Work Environment, 0.86 for Psychological Work Environment and 0.91 for Teachers' Commitment to Work. Out of 513 copies of the questionnaire administered to teachers, 492 (96%) of them were correctly completed and returned, while 21(4%) were either misplaced or not correctly filled. Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient was used to answer the research questions and hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

Results

Research Question 1: To what extent does social work environment relate to teachers' commitment to work in public secondary schools in Anambra State?

Table 1: Summary of Pearson Product Moment Correlation on the Extent Social Work Environment Relates to Teachers' Commitment to Work in Public Secondary Schools in Anambra State

Variables	N	r	r^2	Remark
Social Work Environment	492			
		.692	.479	High Extent
Teachers' Commitment to Work	492			

****Significant at p < 0.05*

The summary result of Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient in Table 1 showed that social work environment positively relates to teachers' commitment to in public secondary schools in Anambra State with: r = 0.692, r^2 = 0.479 and percentage (%) = 47.9. The analysis revealed a positive correlation coefficient value of 0.692, indicating a positive relationship between the social work environment and teachers' commitment to work in public secondary schools in Anambra State. This suggests that teachers' commitment to their work is influenced by the quality of the social work environment in their school. In other words, the commitment of teachers to their work depends on the effectiveness of the social work environment. A unit increase in the social work environment leads to a significant 69.2% increase in teachers' commitment to work in public secondary schools in Anambra State. The coefficient of determination (r^2), calculated at 0.479, indicates a high level of explanatory power for the variable. This means that the social work environment has a substantial impact on teachers' commitment, explaining 47.9% of the variance in their dedication to their work in public secondary schools in Anambra State. Therefore, an improvement in the social work environment is associated with a greater level of commitment from teachers.

Research Question 2: To what extent does psychological work environment relate to teachers' commitment to work in public secondary schools in Anambra State?

Table 2: Summary of Pearson Product Moment Correlation on the Extent Psychological Work Environment Relates to Teachers' Commitment to Work in Public Secondary Schools in Anambra State

Variables		N	r	r^2	Remark
Psychological	**Work**	492			
Environment					
			.885	.784	Very High Extent
Teachers' Commitment to		492			
Work					

**Significant at p < 0.05

The summary result of Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient in Table 2 showed that psychological work environment positively relates to teachers' commitment to work in public secondary schools in Anambra State with: r = 0.885 and r^2 = 0.784, percentage (%) = 78.4. The analysis revealed a highly positive correlation coefficient value of .885, indicating a strong positive relationship between the psychological work environment and teachers' commitment to work in public secondary schools in Anambra State. This suggests that teachers' commitment to their work is influenced by the psychological work environment. The coefficient of determination (r^2), calculated at 0.784, indicate an exceptionally high level of explanatory power for the variable. This means that the psychological work environment has a significant impact on teachers' commitment, explaining 88.5% of the variance in their work in public secondary schools in Anambra State. Therefore, the psychological work environment plays a crucial role in fostering teachers' commitment to work. A unit increase in the quality of the psychological work environment is associated with a substantial 88.5% increase in teachers' commitment to their work in public secondary schools in Anambra State.

Hypothesis 1: Social work environment does not significantly relate to teachers' commitment to work in public secondary schools in Anambra State.

Table 3: Summary of Pearson Product Moment Correlation on the Significant Relationship between Social Work Environment and Teachers' Commitment to Work in Public Secondary Schools in Anambra State

Variables	N	r	r^2	p-value	Remark

Social Work Environment	492				
		0.692	0.479	.000	Significant
Teachers' Commitment to Work	492				

***Significant at p < 0.05*

The summary result of Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient in Table 3 showed social work environment and teachers' commitment to work in public secondary schools in Anambra State with p-value = .000. Since p-value (.000) is less than 0.05 level of significance, the study rejected the null hypothesis that social work environment does not significantly relate to teachers' commitment to work in public secondary schools in Anambra State and accepted the alternative hypothesis that social work environment significantly relates to teachers' commitment to work in public secondary schools in Anambra State.

Hypothesis 2: Psychological work environment does not significantly relate to teachers' commitment to work in public secondary schools in Anambra State.

Table 4: Summary of Pearson Product Moment Correlation on the Significant Relationship between Psychological Work Environment and Teachers' Commitment to Work in Public Secondary Schools in Anambra State

Variables	N	r	r²	p-value	Remark
Psychological Work Environment	492				
		0.885	0.784	.000	Significant
Teachers' Commitment to Work	492				

***Significant at p < 0.05*

The summary result of Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient in Table 4 showed psychological work environment and teachers' commitment to work in public secondary schools

in Anambra State with p-value = .000. Since p-value (.000) is less than 0.05 level of significance, the study rejected the null hypothesis that psychological work environment does not significantly relate to teachers' commitment to work in public secondary schools in Anambra State and accepted the alternative hypothesis that psychological work environment significantly relates to teachers' commitment to work in public secondary schools in Anambra State.

Discussion of Findings

Findings on the extent social work environment relates to teachers' commitment to work in public secondary schools in Anambra State revealed that social work environment positively and significantly relate to teachers' commitment to work in public secondary schools in Anambra State to a high extent. The findings of the study are in agreement with the work of Kuo et al. (2021), Ahmad et al. (2021) and Wang et al. (2020) which found out that supportive work environment are positively associated with teachers' job satisfaction and commitment to work. Olomi and Nna (2021) also revealed that when workers perceive that they are adequately provided with both tangible and intangible comfort at work place, chances are that performance will be on the high side. Similarly, when employees perceive low level social support from their work environment, interdependency and teamwork within the organization are likely to be impinged and this will affect the level of synergy and productivity of the organization.

Findings on the extent psychological work environment relates to teachers' commitment to work in public secondary schools in Anambra State revealed that psychological work environment positively and significantly relate to teachers' commitment to work in public secondary schools in Anambra State to a very high extent. In contrast with the findings of this study, Nanda et al. (2019) revealed that psychological work environment has a negative and significant influence on employee turnover intention. Taiwo (2013) also noted that psychological work environment has a negative and significant influence on employee turnover intention. The finding of the study is also in agreement with the findings of Jameel and Hala (2014) whose study revealed that improvements in psychosocial working conditions help to diminish conflicts and exclusion. Promoting good interpersonal relationships at work may reduce the risk of employees developing depression.

Conclusion

Work environment play a critical role in shaping the culture and overall success of a school. The atmosphere within the school is influenced by its work environment, directly impacts the motivation and productivity of both educators and students alike. Based on the findings of the

study, it was concluded that work environment positively and significantly relate to teachers' commitment to work in public secondary schools in Anambra State.

Recommendations

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

1. Public secondary school principals should always prioritize improving the social work environment within schools, as it has should to improve productivity among teachers.

2. To optimize teachers' commitment, principals should continuously address factors influencing psychological well-being by implementing stress-reduction measures, enhancing communication channels, and fostering work-life balance in schools.

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