

School Climate as Correlate of Teachers' Job Performance in Public Secondary Schools in Rivers State, Nigeria

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Abstract

This study investigated School Climate as correlate of Teachers Job performance in Secondary Schools in Rivers State. The study adopted a correlational research design. The study was guided by two (2) null hypotheses. The population of the study was 15,133 respondents comprising of 303 principals and 14,830 teachers in public secondary schools in Rivers State. A sample size of 757 respondents consisting of 15 principals and 742 teachers were selected using 5% of the entire population. Two sets of questionnaires titled: School Climate Questionnaire (SCQ) and Teachers' Job Performance Questionnaire (TJPQ) were developed by the researchers and used for data collection for the study. The data generated through the pilot testing of the instrument were analyzed using Cronbach Alpha reliability test to determine the internal consistency of the questionnaire items. Reliability coefficients of .79 and .91 were obtained for school climate and teachers' job performance respectively, which indicated that the instruments were highly valid and reliable for the study. The data collected were analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation to answer research questions and to test the hypotheses at .05 level of significance. Findings of the study revealed that leadership style and staff welfare to a positive high extent relates to teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Rivers State. Based on the findings of the study, it was recommended that principals should employ appropriate leadership styles in order to improve teachers' job performance in schools, administrators should ensure good welfare packages for teachers such as; granting leave as at when due, prompt payment of salary, good appraisal, promotion of staff, incentives and awards. This will not only boost their morale but increase their job performance amongst others.

Keywords: School, climate, teachers, job, performance.

Introduction

Secondary education is the second rung of the Nigerian education ladder. The Federal Republic of Nigeria (2013) defined secondary education as the education children receive after primary education and before the tertiary stage. Thus, secondary education is a stepping stone to higher education and provides an opportunity for primary school leavers to acquire more knowledge, develop skills and prepare them to live effectively in our changing society (Unuigbe, 2021). Secondary education is an indispensable educational level. This is because attaining the goals and objectives of secondary education is dependent upon the crucial roles of teachers. Thus, the role played by teachers cannot be undermined, as such, teachers have

very important responsibilities in secondary schools to ascertain its effectiveness based on teachers' job performance.

Teacher's job performance according to Ebose (2020) is defined as those duties performed by a teacher at any given time in school geared towards achieving both the daily school and classroom objectives and the entire set goals and objectives of education. Such duties could include among others: covering of scheme of work adequately, give and marking of continuous assessment regularly, be able to manage stubborn students in the class without distorting teaching and learning, preparing plan of any lesson to be taught to mention but a few. Njoku and Modebelu (2019) posited that teachers job performance indicates the level, way, manner, process and commitment of teachers' job performance in terms of performance of teaching, lesson preparation, presentation, actual instructional delivery and teachers commitment to their job, extracurricular activities, supervision, motivating and morale among others. Muraina (2014) described teachers' job performance as the duties performed by the teacher at a particular period in the school system in achieving organizational goals. From the foregoing definitions, it is understandable that teachers' job performance is important for the achievement of educational goal at large of which students' high performance is paramount.

Subsequently, if teacher's satisfaction level is high then he is more committed to his profession and it might increase job performance. Nonetheless, if the teacher's satisfaction level is low, he will not be committed to his profession and it might decrease his job performance. There are various factors which might cause low teachers job performance in school, one of such is school climate. School climate separates one school from the other by giving it a distinct personality and this has implications for the job performance of teachers. Thus, it therefore becomes a major concern for stakeholders.

School climate according to Bhasin (2020) refers to the element of a professional environment that has a strong influence on the action and performance of teachers working in the school. In line with the above definition, Tahir (2020) defined school climate as a construct referring to the shared meaning attached to educational policies, practices, and measures that are associated with teacher's experience. Commenting further, Dike and Eric (2019) asserted that school climate is perceived by teachers as that feelings concerning the arrangement and the activities in the school as it relates to the extent they feel the arrangement, interaction and activities creates a balance between the personnel need and the school goal. Also, Emu and Nwannunu (2019) defined organizational climate as the condition that support the motivation and performance of people in the workplace.

In summary, school climate has to do with fairness, support, pressure, autonomy, trust, cohesion, innovation, recognition which created a return for rewards and payments received from an organization by employees which make employee or teachers as the case may be to performed better. Savas (2014) opined that that when a teacher is supported, valued and recognized in a school, he or she will pay back in return with his or her energy, contributing to the better job performance in that particular school. Bhasin (2020) posited that school climate clearly influences the success of a school. This is because most schools cultivate the climate they need to succeed and retain excellent job performance of their teachers through leadership style, staff welfare, conflict management, amongst others. In this study, the attention of the researcher is on some aspects of school climate such as leadership style and

staff welfare as it correlates to teachers' job performance. The first sub-variable to be discussed is leadership style.

Leadership style of a principal plays a crucial role in creating the factor which affect organizational climate in the school. To this end, Ebose (2020) defined leadership style as the behaviour a leader exhibits while guiding organizational members in appropriate directions. The leadership style of a principal can influence the behaviour of teachers and students for effective teaching and learning in the school. This implies that principals are the most visible and directly accessible representatives of schools who highly influence the job performance of teachers positively or negatively due to principals' leadership style. Thus, for principals to be effective, they need wide range of leadership styles according to the situation and context of their school (Ebose, 2020). Similarly, Iwuoha and Ohia (2020) in their study found out that working relationship and leadership style as variables of school climate have significant positive relationship with teachers' job satisfaction. In collaboration with the above findings, Akpomi and Ezekiel-Hart (2021) in their study affirmed that leadership style predicted teachers' job performance. Also, Emu and Nwannunu (2019) also found out in their study that principal's leadership styles significantly influence teachers' job performance. Thanh, Quang and Mai (2022) also, revealed that leadership styles all have statistically significant positive correlations with teachers' commitment. The next sub-variable to be discussed is staff welfare.

Staff welfare are the strategies employed in motivating teachers for better job performance. These are in form of salary increment, gratuity, and regular promotion, ensuring job security and establishing cordial relationship among teachers (Oyetakin, Ajalode & Alen, 2019). Notably, Fozia and Sabir (2016) defined staff welfare as the total compensation and remuneration for workers such as; provision for vacation, study leave, sick leave, relocation expenses, paid holiday, staff training, transportations and accommodation benefits among others. Staff welfare packages are critical element of human resources management system and should be designed to work together with other elements of the system. It is generally believed that money not only helps people to attain their basic needs, but it is also instrumental in providing higher level need performance. As a result, most employees value work according to how much they gain from it.

Furthermore, Oyetakin, Ajalode and Alen (2019) in their study ascertained that the provision of welfare package such as improvement in wages and salary, merit for good work done, improved health package and bonus significantly relate to teachers' job performance. Yesufu (2014) affirmed that staff welfare such as; provision of well-ventilated offices, drinking water, end-of-year-parties, good rest room, first aid, infrastructural facilities among others significantly correlate with employees work rate and job performance. In affirmation with the above findings, Ahmad and Salisu (2019) submitted that there is a significant relationship between teachers' salaries, promotion and teachers' job performance. Thus, teachers' salaries should be paid regularly and promotion should be given at the right time by the government to improve their productivity. More so, Fadeyi and Gbadeyan (2015) in their study revealed that there was a significant relationship between teachers' salary, promotion and fringe benefits. As such, necessary attention should be given to teachers' welfare which would bring about positive development in the educational system. Thus, teachers should be placed on

meaningful salary scale and given opportunities to further receive training in their various disciplines for better performance to be achieved.

Arguably, in most public secondary schools in Rivers State, there seems to be closed principal and teacher relationship as a result of keeping a social distance from teachers by practicing excessive rules and regulations. However, Meador (2019) noted that the main reason why some principals choose to keep themselves at distance from teachers and avoid intimating with them is because they are very strict about the rules and regulations, rigid leadership styles, poor staff welfare, poor communication skills and failure to resolve conflict amicably. Little wonder why Langer, Feeney and Lee (2017) noted that some school climates are bureaucratic oriented. Thus, teachers would see everything done in the school as theirs (the management) and not ours (excluding him/herself). In this regard, the value systems that promote staff interest to work for any organization include the ones that promote team work, collegial support, innovation, freedom, autonomy, risk taking, use of creativity, supervisory support, empowerment, informal communication, opportunity for advancement, objective feedback and the likes.

Additionally, school climate ought to promote team work, innovation, freedom or discretion to take risk, supervisory support, use of equitable reward, relationship among teachers and colleagues and with that of principal being open to all which arise as a result of goal clarity and goal alignment widely shared among teachers in order to achieve school goal. A situation where the climate of a school system is not welcoming, some teachers might even be looking elsewhere for greener pasture. This will give room for other negative attitudes among the teachers such as: non-commitment to duty, absenteeism, low morale, lack of interest and dissatisfaction in their teaching job. It is against this backdrop that the study sought to investigate school climate as correlate of teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Rivers State.

Statement of the problem

School climate needs to be supportive and provide a positive atmosphere where teachers would be motivated to work and improve on their job performance. Unfortunately, the researchers observed that some teachers in public secondary schools in Rivers State seem to be underrated due to poor school climate. To this end, staff rooms are poorly ventilated and ill furnished, needless to say that some classrooms do not even have sufficient chairs, tables, instructional materials, laboratory equipment and infrastructural facilities to promote effective teaching and learning. Also, some teachers have taught for several years without any form of retraining or professional development to update their knowledge and skills in this 21st century. Nonetheless, the attitude of some principals seems to be devastating as they issue orders arbitrarily, use abusive languages on teachers and usually take side where there is a problem among staff or students. These exhibitions might have untold effects on teachers' job performance which would possibly demoralize them. It is on this basis that the problem of the study put in question form is: To what extent does school climate serve as correlates of teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Rivers State?

Hypotheses

HO₁: There is no significant relationship between leadership style and teachers' job performance in secondary schools in Rivers State.

HO₂: There is no significant relationship between staff welfare and teachers' job performance in secondary schools in Rivers State.

Methodology

This study investigated school climate as correlate of teachers' job performance in secondary schools in Rivers State. The design of the study was a correlational research design because the study sought to establish the relationship and direction of relationship that existed between two variables, that is the independent variable (school climate) and the dependent variable (teachers' job performance). The population of the study was 15,133 respondents comprising of 303 principals and 14,830 teachers in public secondary schools in Rivers State. (Rivers State Post Primary schools' Board, 2022). A sample size of 757 respondents consisting of 15 principals and 742 teachers who were selected using 5% of the entire population. Two sets of questionnaires titled: School Climate Questionnaire (SCQ) and Teachers' Job Performance Questionnaire (TJPQ) were developed and used for data collection for the study. The questionnaires were validated by three experts in the Department of Educational Management, Michael Okpara University of Agriculture, Umudike. The validates were required to ensure the suitability of language used, adequate content coverage, clarity of items, relevance of items to the study and the extent to which the items content addressing research questions relate to the objectives. A pilot test was carried out with 35 principals and teachers randomly selected from Ibeku High school Umuahia, Abia State which is entirely outside the area of study but have similar characteristics with the target respondents by the virtue of training and work environment. The data generated through the pilot testing of the instrument were analyzed using Cronbach Alpha reliability test to determine the internal consistency of the questionnaire items. Cronbach Alpha is used for instruments that are not dichotomously scored. Reliability coefficients of .79 and .91 were obtained for school climate and teachers' job performance respectively which indicated that the instruments were highly valid and reliable for the study. The data collected through the administration of the instruments were analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation to answer research questions and to test the hypotheses at .05 level of significance.

Results

Hypothesis one

There is no significant relationship between leadership style and teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Rivers State.

The data for answering research question 1 and testing hypothesis 1 are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Correlation Matrix of Leadership Style and Teachers' Job Performance in secondary schools

		Leadership style	Teachers' job performance
Leadership style	Pearson Correlation	1	.716*
	P-value		.032
	N	757	757
Teachers' job performance	Pearson Correlation	.716*	1
	R ²	0.512 (51%)	
	P-value	.032	
	N	757	757

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed), N = Number of respondents.

Table 1 showed a correlation coefficient of .72 which is positive and within .70 to .99 correlation coefficient of Creswell (2008). Therefore, there is positive high extent of relationship between leadership style and teachers' job performance in secondary schools. The coefficient of determination (R^2) of 0.512 indicates that 51% of the variance observed in teachers' job performance in secondary schools was attributed to leadership style. The result also revealed a p-value of .032 which is less than the alpha value of .05. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected. Hence, there is a significant relationship between leadership style and teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Rivers State.

Hypothesis Two

There is no significant relationship between staff welfare and teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Rivers State.

The data for answering research question 2 and testing hypothesis 2 are presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Correlation Matrix of staff welfare and teachers' job performance in secondary schools

		Staff welfare	Teachers' job performance
Staff welfare	Pearson	1	.837*
	Correlation		
	P-value		.013
	N	757	757
Teachers' job performance	Pearson	.837*	1
	Correlation		
	R ²	0.705 (71%)	
	P-value	.013	
		N	757

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed), N = Number of respondents.

Table 2 revealed a correlation coefficient of .84 which is positive and within .70 to 1.00 correlation coefficient of Creswell (2008). This indicates that staff welfare to a positive high extent relates to teachers' job performance in secondary schools. The coefficient of determination (R²) 0.71 implies that 71% of the variance observed in teachers' job performance in secondary schools is as a result of staff welfare. The data presented in table 2 also showed a p-value of .013 which is less than the significant value of .05. Thus, the hypothesis that there is no significant relationship between staff welfare and teachers' job performance in secondary schools is rejected. This means that staff welfare significantly relates to teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Rivers state.

Discussion of Findings

Findings of the study in table 1 revealed that leadership style to a positive high extent relates to teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Rivers State. The coefficient of determination (R²) 0.51 indicates that 51% of the variance was observed in teachers' job performance in secondary schools. The correspondents' hypothesis affirmed that there was a positive significant relationship between leadership style and teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Rivers State. The findings of this study is in agreement with the findings of Iwuoha and Ohia (2020) who found out that working relationship and leadership styles as variables of school climate have significant positive relationship with teachers' job satisfaction. In collaboration with the above findings, Ebose (2020) reiterated that the leadership style of a principal can influence the behaviour of teachers and students for effective teaching and learning in the school. This implies that principals are the most visible and directly accessible representatives of schools who highly influence the job performance

of teachers positively or negatively due to principals' leadership style. Thus, for principals to be effective, they need wide range of leadership styles according to the situation and context of their school. Furthermore, Akpomi and Ezekiel-Hart (2021) in support of the findings of the study affirmed that leadership style predicted teachers' job performance. Emu and Nwannunu (2019) found out that principal's leadership styles significantly influence teachers' job performance. Also, the findings of the study is in consonance with the findings of Thanh, Quang and Mai (2022) who revealed that leadership styles all have statistically significant positive correlations with teachers commitment. As such school's development strategy should be re-examined in terms of the relationship between leadership style and commitment of teachers.

The finding of the study as indicated in table two revealed that staff welfare to a high extent positively relates to teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Rivers State. The coefficient of determination (R^2) 0.71 indicates that 71% of the variance observed in teachers' job performance in secondary schools is attributed to staff welfare. The correspondents' hypothesis affirmed that staff welfare significantly relates to teachers' job performance in secondary. The finding of this study is in consonance with the findings of Oyetakin, Ajalode and Alen (2019) whose study ascertained that the provision of welfare package such as improvement in wages and salary, merit for good work done, improved health package, bonus significantly relate to teachers' job performance. Yesufu (2014) affirmed that welfare package such as; provision of well-ventilated offices, drinking water, end-of-year-parties, good rest room, first aid, infrastructural facilities among others significantly correlate with employees work rate and job performance.

This finding is in line with the findings of Ahmad and Salisu (2019) whose findings submitted that there is a significant relationship between teachers' salaries, promotion and job performance. Thus, teachers' salaries should be paid regularly and promotion should be given at the right time by the government to improve their productivity. This is also in agreement with the findings of Fadeyi and Gbadeyan (2015) who posited that there is a significant relationship between teacher's salary, promotion and fringe benefits. As such, necessary attention should be given to teachers' welfare which will bring about positive development in the educational system. Thus, teachers should be placed on meaningful salary scale and given opportunities to further receive training in their various disciplines for better performance to be achieved.

Conclusion

The findings of the study have shown that school climate such as leadership style and staff welfare significantly relate to teachers job performance. It can be concluded that school climate is an important input that enhance teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Rivers State. However, it is expected that principals should ensure that school climate promotes; team work, innovation, freedom or discretion to take risk, supervisory support, use of equitable reward, relationship among teachers and colleagues with that of the principal being open to all, goal clarity and goal alignment widely shared among teachers in order to improve their job performance.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions of the study, the following recommendations were made.

1. Principals should employ appropriate leadership styles in order to improve teachers' job performance in schools.
2. Administrators should ensure good welfare packages for teachers such as; granting leave as at when due, good appraisal, incentives, study grant and awards. This will not only boost their morale but increase their job performance.
3. Government through the ministry of education, should ensure prompt payment of salary and promotion of staff.
4. Government should ensure adequate funding of public secondary schools in Rivers State in order to meet with the competitive standard of private owned schools in the state.

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