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ORGANIZATIONAL CLIMATE AS A PREDICTOR OF LECTURERS' JOB COMMITMENT IN PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES IN DELTA STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

The study investigated organizational climate as a predictor of lecturers' job commitment in public universities in Delta State, Nigeria. The study was guided by two research questions and two null hypotheses which were tested at 0.05 level of significance. Correlation research design was adopted for the study. The population of the study comprised all the 2,585 lecturers in all the five public universities in Delta State, Nigeria. Pproportionate sampling technique was used to draw 766 lecturers for the study. A researcher developed instruments titled ''Organizational Climate Scale (OCS)'' and ''Lecturers Job Commitment Scale (LJCS)'' were used for data collection. The instruments were validated by three experts, two from the Department of Educational Management and Policy, and one from the Department of Educational Foundations, Nnamdi Azikiwe University. Cronbach alpha was used for a test of internal consistency of the instrument and it yielded overall reliability coefficients of 0.80, and 0.76 for the clusters A and B of OCS respectively with the overall reliability index being 0.78, while coefficient value of 0.82 was obtained for LJCS. The researcher together with five research assistants collected data for the study using the direct approach method and 98% return was recorded. Simple regression was used to answer the research questions and test hypotheses 1-2. The findings of the study revealed among others that open climate is a strong and significant predictor of lecturers' job commitment in universities in Delta State. Further results indicated that closed climate is moderate and significant predictor of lecturers' job commitment in universities in Delta State, Nigeria. Based on the findings, it was recommended among others that Association of Vice-Chancellors of Nigerian Universities should organize period training programmes for university management to enable them upgrade their skills and knowledge of some features of closed climate in such a way to improve the job commitment of lecturers.

Keywords: Open Climate, Closed Climate, Organization, Lecturers, Job Commitment

Introduction

Lecturers are considered as one of most vital assets which determine the effectiveness of universities. It is the lecturers that use all other resources to achieve set objectives of universities. Since lecturers are one of the central resources in universities, their job commitment is equally important. The lecturers could have potential of exhibiting high commitment to their job in universities with favourable organizational climate.

Organizational climate is the perceptions of members of staff about work environment that reflects the values, structure, ways of doing things, procedure of executing tasks and reoccurring patterns of behaviour in the establishment. Ezeobi and

Ikediugwu (2023) described organizational climate as core sets of norms, shared values and perceptions that influence the thoughts and actions of staff in the workplace. In the same vein, Okpeva (2023) defined organizational climate as the value, norms, culture and structure of the work environment perceived by the employees working there. Employees' perception of the work structure and culture can shape their work attitude, the ways they interact and communicate with others in the workplace. In university, organizational climate is what the lecturers and other staff feel, think and observe about how tasks are done in the workplace. Operationally, organizational climate is shared values, work procedures, structure and ways of interaction which describes perceived atmosphere that exist in the workplace.

Different forms of organizational climate exist in the workplace. Several scholars have identified the dimensions of organization climate as follows: open climate and closed climate, autonomous climate, controlled climate, familiar climate and paternal climate (Bentil, 2021; Odoh, 2021). The focus of this study is on open climate and closed climate.

Open climate is work atmosphere which is perceived to be characterized by the feeling of cooperation, effective communication, unity of purpose, friendship and supports. Also, Oviawe (2020) asserted that open climate is characterized by atmosphere of respect, love, trust, cordial relationship, mutual obligation and concern for others' welfare. Lecturers who feel valued and supported in universities with open climate could have the potential of effectively discharging their duties by showing substantial level of job commitment. Lecturers take part in making decisions on matters that affect their work routine in universities with open climate. In this kind of organizational climate, the management listens to the complaints of lecturers and show genuine care to their problems. In open climate, the management listens to lecturers, willing to take the suggestions and encourage their personal and professional development. Prastiawan, Gunawan, Putra, Dewantoro, Cholifah, Nuraini, Rini, Pradipta, Raharjo, Prestiadi and Surahman (2020) maintained that members of staff are often very happy to work together in organizations with open climate. The lecturers receive full support from top management of universities with open climate which are likely to make them more dedicated, loyal and devoted to discharging their job. In this kind of climate, the management of universities are approachable and willing to work together with lecturers which is rare in closed climate.

Closed climate is a workplace where administrators are too inflexible, uncooperative and regulatory in running affairs of an organization. The primary attributes of closed kind of organizational climate are offensive and unsupportive behaviour of the management of an organization. The members of staff on the other hand are in disunity, intolerant and disrespectful. Ajisafe and Togunloju (2023) asserted that closed climate is characterized by hindrance, high intensity, high productivity emphasis and low consideration of needs of staff. There are structures and bureaucratic procedures that are followed to perform tasks in universities with closed climate. As a result, some lecturers tend to be discouraged by using their initiatives in

discharging their duties. Ozgenel (2020) averred that in a closed climate, the members of staff are insincere and the spirit of unity in the organization is low. The managements of universities with closed climate clearly state job and performance expectations from members of staff. Closed climate is a type of work environment where information is hidden from members of staff. Olibie, Uzoechina and Eziuzor (2015) maintained that there is inadequate communication and poor recognition of outstanding members of staff in organizations with closed climate. Clearly defined methods of carrying out tasks are outlined in universities with closed climate.

Job commitment is willingness of members of staff to put considerable efforts in discharging duties in an organization. It is how members of staff feel attached and want to make the maximum contribution to attainment of the set goals of an organization. Onafowope, Egwunyenga and Oweikpodor (2023) defined job commitment as the willingness of members of an organization to put their efforts and time in performing their duties. Job commitment is associated with greater involvement and putting efforts towards carrying out work activities. According to Nuel-Okoli, Arinze and Nuel-Okoli (2023), job commitment has to do with the level of loyalty and identification employees have for the organization they are working for. It shows a strong desire to remain in an organization with readiness to perform assigned tasks. Operationally, job commitment is the devotion and enthusiasm that members of staff have towards discharging their responsibilities and executing tasks to achieve set goals and objectives of an organization.

Lecturers' job commitment is demonstrated through their enthusiasm, dedication and engagement in activities of teaching, research and provision of community services. Onukwu (2021) noted that job commitment of university lecturers can be measured in terms of willingness to accept responsibilities, effectiveness on the job, punctuality of lectures, submission of course outlines, willingness to supervise projects of students, attendance and contributions in committee meetings, promptness in preparing students examination results, willingness to carry out student's advisory and mentoring role, research publications and number of community development activities. Lecturers who are committed to their job show loyalty and exert discretionary efforts towards achieving the values and set goals of universities. In this study, lecturers' job commitment could be measured with their genuine involvement in activities of university, regularity to work, developing of course outlines, delivery of lectures, completion of course outlines, administering and marking of assignments and quizzes, supervision of projects, conducting of examinations, marking of scripts, grading and submission of students' results on time, engagement in research and publications.

One is worried about the level of job commitment of lecturers in public universities in Delta State. The poor work attitude of some lecturers in public universities in Delta State, Nigeria, tend to reveal that the level of their job commitment appear to be seriously below expectations. Onukwu (2021) noted that the willingness to accept responsibilities of teaching and submitting students‟ examination scores, course outlines as at when due is no longer

common. Furthermore, Onukwu noted that it seems not an offence for lecturers to miss their classes or come late to class and some even take months before feedbacks and corrections made on projects that are returned to supervisees.

The work atmosphere of some public universities in Delta State, Nigeria seems hostile, unsupportive, disrespectful and with mistrust which tend to demoralize lecturers towards carrying out their job. Anho (2020) noted that the work atmosphere of public universities in Delta State, Nigeria tend to be characterized with inadequate essential support services and depressing social environment which has contributed to anger, stress, dissatisfaction and frustration of lecturers. Further observation of Anho (2020) indicated that lecturers especially those in state and federal universities in Delta State find themselves in an unconducive physical work environment that adversely affects their morale to carry out their official duties. Ofili and Obiunu (2023) posited that lecturers in public universities in Delta State constantly struggle with their workload, job autonomy and to maintain cordial relationship with the management and their colleagues who usually form cliques. It is against this background that this study investigated organizational climate as a predictor of lecturers' job commitment in public universities in Delta State, Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

The level of job commitment of lecturers in public universities in Delta State is an issue of serious concern. The level of job commitment of some lecturers in public universities in Delta State tend to function below expectations as might be evident in their unwillingness to effectively perform the responsibilities of teaching and failure to complete their course outlines. One is worried over lateness of some lecturers to classes as there are cases where students are often seen seated in lecture halls waiting to receive their lectures for long hours after the scheduled time. The delay of students to complete their projects and thesis at the stipulated time could probably be attributed to the fact that it takes some lecturers months to make corrections and return them to their supervisees.

It is worrisome that the atmosphere of some public universities in Delta State appears to be characterized by strict compliance specific methods of executing tasks, unapproachable management, division and cliques among lecturers. The management of public universities in the state appears to be strict and rigid in behaviour and thereby seem to discourage lecturers from applying new ideas in doing things. One is suspecting that the nature of organizational climate in public universities in Delta State could possibly be responsible for the seemly poor commitment of lecturers. Could it be that the existing organizational climate is a predictor of lecturers' job commitment in public universities in Delta State, Nigeria?

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to investigate organizational climate as a predictor of lecturers' job commitment in public universities in Delta State, Nigeria. Specifically, the study sought to find out:

1. Open climate as a predictor of lecturers' job commitment in public universities in Delta State, Nigeria.

2. Closed climate as a predictor of lecturers' job commitment in public universities in Delta State, Nigeria.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What is the predictive value of open climate on lecturers' job commitment in public universities in Delta State, Nigeria?
2. What is the predictive value of closed climate on lecturers' job commitment in public universities in Delta State, Nigeria?

Research Hypotheses

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

1. Open climate is not a significant predictor of lecturers' job commitment in public universities in Delta State, Nigeria.
2. Closed climate is not a significant predictor of lecturers' job commitment in public universities in Delta State, Nigeria.

Research Method

Correlational research design was adopted for this study. According to Wubante (2020), correlational research design is a type of design which allow a measures and understanding of the degree of statistical relationship between two or more variables. This design is appropriate for this study because it centred on organizational climate as a predictor of lecturers' job commitment in public universities in Delta State, Nigeria. The study was conducted in Delta State which is bounded in the north by Edo State, south by Bayelsa State, east by Anambra and Rivers States and west by Atlantic Ocean. The capital of the State is Asaba and Warri is the biggest commercial city in the state. The people of the State are hospitable, enlightened, resourceful and hardworking. The choice of Delta State for the study was informed by the observed existence of unconducive work atmosphere and undesirable attitude of some lecturers in some of the universities.

The population of the study comprised all the 2,585 lecturers in all the five public universities in Delta State. The sample for the study comprised 766 lecturers drawn using proportionate stratified sampling technique. Two set of instruments developed by the researcher and titled ''Organizational Climate Scale (OCS)'', and ''Lecturers Job Commitment Scale (LJCS)'' were used for data collection. The instruments were developed by the researcher based on insight gained from literature and consultation with experts. The first instrument titled OCS had two clusters namely A and B based on two forms of organizational climate investigated in this study. Cluster A contained 13 items on open climate and Cluster B had 15 items on closed climate. OCS therefore contains 26 items structured on a four-point rating of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD) weighted 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively. The second instrument titled LJCS was designed to elicit information on job commitment of lecturers. LJCS contains 25 items structured on a four-point rating of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD) weighted 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively.

The instruments were subjected to face validation by three experts, two in the Department of Educational Management and Policy, and one in Measurement and

Evaluation in the Department of Educational Foundations, all in the Faculty of Education, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. Based on the suggestions, the items and leading statement of the instruments were properly reframed. Thus, their suggestions were used to produce the final version of the instrument. The internal consistencies of the instruments were determined by single administration of 30 copies of the instruments to lecturers in public universities in Edo State, which were outside the area of study. The co-efficient values obtained for Clusters A and B of OCS were 0.80 and 0.76 respectively with the overall reliability index being 0.78, while coefficient value of 0.82 was obtained for LJCS. Thus, the researcher considered the instrument to be reliable for the study.

Coefficient	Predictive Value
.00- .10	Negligible
.11- .30	Very Low
.31- .50	Low
.51- .69	Moderate
.70- .90	Strong
.91- .99	Very Strong
1	Perfect

In taking decisions on the null hypotheses, if the exact p-value is equal to or greater than significant value of 0.05, the null hypothesis was accepted but if exact p-value is less than significant value of 0.05, the null hypotheses was rejected.

Data were collected by the researcher and four research assistants who are lecturers in public universities in Delta State using direct delivery method. A total of 766 copies of the instruments were distributed and 754 copies of questionnaires were properly filled and successfully retrieved, indicating 98 percent return rate. At the end of the exercise, duly completed and retrieved copies of the instruments were used for data analysis. Data collected were analyzed using simple linear regression to answer the research questions 1 and 2. For the research questions, the coefficient r and the size of the relationship was interpreted using the correlation coefficient recommended by Cohen, Manion and Morrison cited in Wubante (2020) as follows:

Presentation of Results

Research Question 1: What is the predictive value of open climate on lecturers' job commitment in public universities in Delta State, Nigeria?

Table 1: Simple Regression Analysis on Open Climate as a Predictor of Lecturers' Job Commitment

Model	N	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Remarks
Open Climate	754	.807	.650	.650	.33403	Strong

As shown in Table 1, correlation coefficient between open climate and lecturers' job commitment is 0.807 with a coefficient of determination of 0.650 This shows that 65.0 % variation in lecturers' job commitment can be attributed to open climate. The

regression Coefficient r of 0.807 indicated that open climate is a strong predictor of lecturers' job commitment in public universities in Delta State, Nigeria.

Hypothesis One: Open climate will not be a significant predictor of lecturers' job commitment in public universities in Delta State, Nigeria.

Table 2: Simple Regression Analysis on Open Climate as a Significant Predictor of Lecturers' Job Commitment

Predictor	N	R	R^2	*F*	*P-value*	Remark
Open Climate	754	.807	.650	.1399.340	.000	*S

*Significant

Table 2 indicated that the simple regression coefficient (R) is 0.807, while the R^2 is 0.650 showing that open climate makes 65.5% contribution to the variance in lecturers' job commitment. The *F* (1/754) =1399.340 and the *p*-value of .000 is less than .05. Therefore, since the *p*-value is less than the stipulated .05 level of significance, the null hypothesis was rejected. Therefore, open climate is a significant predictor of lecturers' job commitment in public universities in Delta State, Nigeria.

Research Question 2: What is the predictive value of closed climate on lecturers' job commitment in public universities in Delta State, Nigeria?

Table 3: Simple Regression Analysis on Closed Climate as a Predictor of Lecturers' Job Commitment

Model	N	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Remarks
Closed Climate	754	.664	.440	.440	.42265	Moderate

Table 3 revealed that correlation coefficient between closed climate and lecturers' job commitment is 0.664 with a coefficient of determination of 0.440. This shows that closed climate can explain 44.0% changes in lecturers' job commitment. The regression Coefficient r of 664 indicated that closed climate is a moderate predictor of lecturers' job commitment in public universities in Delta State, Nigeria.

Hypothesis Two: Closed climate will not be a significant predictor of lecturers' job commitment in public universities in Delta State, Nigeria.

Table 4: Simple Regression Analysis on Closed Climate as a Significant Predictor of Lecturers' Job Commitment

Predictor	N	R	R^2	*F*	*P-value*	Remark
Closed Climate	754	.664	.440	591.765	.000	*S

*Significant

Result in Table 4 revealed that the simple regression coefficient (R) is 0.664, while the R^2 is 0.440 showing that 44.0% variance in lecturers' job commitment could be explained by closed climate. The *F* (1/754) =591.765 and the *p*-value of .000 is less than .05. Therefore, since the *p*-value is less than the stipulated .05 level of significance, the

null hypothesis was rejected. Therefore, closed climate is a significant predictor of lecturers' job commitment in public universities in Delta State, Nigeria.

Discussion of the Findings

The finding of the study revealed that open climate is a strong predictor of lecturers' job commitment in public universities in Delta State, Nigeria. This agreed with the finding of Ohiani, Adeosun, Adegbite and Adejare (2022) which showed that open climate was a strong predictor of employees' job commitment. The agreement with the finding could be associated with the fact that open climate in every organization creates healthy atmosphere that can motivate members of staff to go the extra mile in performing their duties for attainment of set goals. This disagreed with the finding of Odoh (2021) which showed that there was moderate positive relationship between open school climate and teachers' job commitment. The disagreement with the finding could be explained by difference in educational level and participants of the study who have varying work experience and conditions. The possible reason for this finding could be connected to the fact that open climate is supportive and friendly which creates a sense attachment and devotion that are strongly associated with job commitment of lecturers. This finding showed that university environment characterized by congenial atmosphere, genuine care towards lecturers and their involvement in decision making can give motivate them to be committed to their job. Management of universities with open climate is open discussion and social dialogue with lecturers which motivate put in their best in achieving set goals through high job commitment. It was also found that open climate is a significant predictor of lecturers' job commitment in public universities in Delta State, Nigeria. This affirmed the finding of Ohiani, Adeosun, Adegbite and Adejare (2022) which showed that open climate was a significant predictor of employees' job commitment. The agreement between the two studies is that open climate is warm and favourable work atmosphere. The relaxed work environment associated with open climate might contribute the significant predictor of lecturers' job commitment in public universities in Delta State, Nigeria.

The result of the study revealed that closed climate is a moderate predictor of lecturers' job commitment in public universities in Delta State, Nigeria. This is in disagreement with the finding of Pourkiani, Farokhian and Gheisari (2014) which showed that closed climate is a strong predictor of job commitment of employees. The disagreed with the finding could be attributed to difference in time span, organizations and geographical location. The management of university with closed lays much emphasis on getting work done with little concern about the welfare of the lecturers which could explain the moderate predictor of their job commitment. Lecturers could be reluctant to participate in university affairs and make useful suggestions in universities with closed climate. The denial of privilege to contribute ideas through participation in decision making and untimely dissemination of information associated with closed climate could be responsible for the moderate predictor of lecturers' job commitment in public universities in Delta State, Nigeria. Further result showed that closed climate is a

significant predictor of lecturers' job commitment in public universities in Delta State, Nigeria. This agreed with the finding of Pourkiani, Farokhian and Gheisari (2014) which showed that closed climate is a significant predictor of job commitment of employees. The directive roles played by management of universities with closed climate to get things well done might be connected to the significant prediction of lecturers' job commitment in public universities in Delta State, Nigeria.

Conclusion

Based on the findings, it was concluded that organizational climate is positive and significant predictor of lecturers' job commitment in public universities in Delta State, Nigeria. The nature of organizational climate in universities can strengthen or reduce their loyalty and dedication of lecturers which ultimately affect their job commitment in Delta State, Nigeria. Lecturers are motivated to exhibit strong positive attitude by being dedicated and committed to their duties in universities with open climate in Delta State, Nigeria. The work commitment of lecturers can be below expected standard in universities with closed climate.

Recommendations

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

1. University management should develop and enforce an open door policy to improve open climate for strong commitment of lecturers.
2. Association of Vice-Chancellors of Nigerian Universities should organize period training programmes for university management to enable them upgrade their skills and knowledge of some features of closed climate in such a way to improve the job commitment of lecturers.

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