

Organization Climate and Teachers' Career Commitments In Secondary Schools In Oyo State, Nigeria

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Abstract

This paper examines the relationship between organisational climate and teachers' career commitments in secondary schools. Organisational climate, characterized by the collective perceptions of policies, practices, and interpersonal dynamics within educational institutions, significantly influences teachers' professional experiences and engagement. This study aims to assess how organization climate impact teachers' career commitments. The objectives are to illuminate how a positive organizational climate can enhance teachers' emotional attachment to their schools, their perceived costs of leaving, and their sense of obligation to stay. Grounded in Social Exchange Theory, the findings indicate that a supportive and collaborative organisational climate is associated with higher levels of teacher commitment, increased job satisfaction, and improved retention rates. This concludes with practical implications for educational policy and school leadership, emphasizing the need to cultivate a positive climate as a strategy for enhancing teachers' professional commitment. Suggestions include targeted professional development programs, improved communication channels, and robust support systems to foster a conducive work environment. This exploration highlights the critical role of organiculture in shaping the educational landscape in secondary schools.

Keywords: Organisational climate, Teachers' career commitments, Public secondary schools.

Word Count: 180

Introduction

The quality and effectiveness of education systems across the globe are deeply influenced by the commitment levels of teachers, who play a pivotal role in shaping student outcomes and overall institutional success. In this regard, understanding the factors that impact teachers' career commitments is crucial, particularly in public secondary schools where resource constraints and organizational challenges are often pronounced. One significant factor that has garnered increasing scholarly attention is organizational climate; the shared perceptions of policies, practices, and procedures within a school environment which can profoundly affect teachers' motivation, job satisfaction, and long-term dedication to their profession. This Paper aims to explore how

organisational climate influences teachers' career commitments. By examining this relationship, this paper seeks to contribute to the broader discourse on educational management and teacher retention strategies, with implications for policy and practice worldwide.

Supporting Arguments

Teachers' Career Commitment as a Foundation of Educational Quality: Student achievement, school stability, and instructional quality are all directly impacted by teachers' career commitment. Reduced absenteeism, fewer plans to leave, and ongoing professional involvement are all linked to high levels of commitment. Because of the greater class numbers, scarce resources, and varied student requirements in public secondary schools, dedicated instructors are especially important.

Organisational Issues Affecting Teachers' Commitment in Public Secondary Schools: Public secondary schools frequently deal with issues like insufficient funding, excessive workloads, little opportunity for professional growth, and bureaucratic restrictions. Teachers' morale, work satisfaction, and long-term commitment to the profession may all suffer as a result of these difficulties. - Even highly motivated teachers may become burned out or think about quitting their jobs in the absence of supporting organisational settings.

Teachers' common opinions about leadership styles, communication styles, team dynamics, decision-making procedures, and institutional support are reflected in the organisational climate. Teachers who work in a happy environment are more likely to be trusted, collaborate, receive praise, and feel like they belong. On the other hand, a hostile environment marked by inadequate leadership, a lack of support, or ambiguous policies can undermine commitment and motivation.

Organisational Climate Affects Teachers' Job Satisfaction and Motivation Teachers' intrinsic and extrinsic motivation are increased by supportive leadership and equitable administrative procedures. Teachers' feeling of autonomy and professional worth are enhanced by open communication and collaborative decision-making. A major predictor of career commitment is job satisfaction, which is influenced by positive interpersonal ties in schools.

Organisational Climate and Long-Term Career Commitment: Teachers are more likely to stick with their teaching jobs if they believe their school has a friendly and equitable environment. Positive workplace cultures promote resilience, professional development, and unwavering commitment in the face of adversity. Knowing this connection makes it easier to understand why some educators continue to be dedicated despite challenging circumstances.

Implications for Educational Management, Policy, and Practice: Strengthening teacher commitment and retention can be achieved strategically by improving organisational climate. Insights from this relationship can be used by legislators and school administrators to create institutional policies and supporting leadership models. Improving organisational environment eventually leads to better learning outcomes and systemic efficacy.

Teachers' Career Commitments

Career which could be a profession, occupation, or vocation is what a person does for a living especially to have a quality standard of life. An individual's career usually comprises one or several jobs that an individual has held, worked and/or accomplished in a particular field for a long period of time. Many individuals choose and enter into a line of work, field or profession with the sole aim of building a career in such field. This is true for most teachers who choose the teaching

profession so as to build a career in the field and attain career success. However, commitment to their career plays a huge role in determining whether they will attain career success or not.

In the teaching profession, career commitment is a teacher's attitude to work, the motivation to remain in the profession and be effective (Awoyemi, 2021). Dimensions of teachers' career commitment include career identity, career planning, and career resilience. Career identity is the emotional connection of the teacher with the teaching career he or she chooses. It is the degree to which teachers describe themselves by their work and school (Solari & Martín, 2022). Career planning consists of the process by which teachers determine the needs of career development and set their career goals. Career resilience measures the extent to which a teacher remains diligent or persist in achieving career goals despite drawbacks (Diab & Green, 2024)

Although poor career commitment have been observed among some teachers in public secondary schools in Southwest, Nigeria. There is scarcity of scholarly works to authenticate this observation. Previous studies have shown low to moderate job commitment and organisational commitment (Pratama *et al.*, 2022). However, career commitment among teachers in secondary schools in southwest Nigeria has not been given due consideration or attention (Gbenga, & Samuel, 2022).). It is on this note that this study attempts to examine the level of career commitment and the factors that may be affecting it among teachers in secondary schools in Southwest, Nigeria. Perhaps, salient predictors such as organisation climate and empowerment may be influencing teachers' career commitment.

Organisation Climate in Schools

The school is a formal organisation set up by the members of the society or community to fulfill desirable educational objectives. A school is a place where teaching and learning activities take place and also a system of formally coordinated activities of two or more persons intended to bring about the achievement of educational goals. A school means an organisation of students for instructional purposes on an elementary, middle or junior high school, secondary or high school, or other public school level authorized under rules of the State Board of Education. It is an institution where students learn to appreciate what society wants them to contribute to their advancement and development (Maki, 2023).

School climate is the internal quality that is unique and peculiar to the school as an organisation. School climate also referred to as organisational climate has been described as the way school members perceive and characterize their environment in an attitudinal and value based manner. School climate can be seen as the social and psychological environment or atmosphere that characterizes a particular school (Bradshaw *et al.*, 2021).

School climate are those enduring characteristics that describe a particular school, distinguish it from other schools and serve as a major force influencing the behavior of teachers and students. It is the atmospheric setting which covers members' internal relationship that influences the external relation and shapes the understanding of each other and subsequently determines the success or failure of the school (Lindahl, 2006). According to Nabella, Rivaldo, Kurniawan, Nurmayunita, Sari, Luran, and Wulandari, (2022), organisational climate is the behavioral pattern, structure, norms, values, and traditions of a secondary school that distinguish it from other organisations. School climate is a mixture of beliefs, values and behaviors of students, teaching staff, leaders and parents, level of independence, leadership styles and job satisfaction.

School organisational climate is the norm set by clusters of values of students, teachers, leaders (administrators) and society in which school is situated and also the characteristics and behavioral mode acquired by people in the process of their stay in school or organisation. It refers to description of the total written and unwritten, academic, social and administrative rules affecting and influencing teacher and student behavior (Ozdemir, & Cakalci, 2022). Organisation climate in schools refers to the quality and character of school life which is based on patterns of students, parents and school personnel's experience of school life and reflects norms, goals, values, interpersonal relationships, teaching and learning practices and organisational structures. School climate is the tone, atmosphere and heart and soul of the school, whose essence leads a teacher to love the school and to look forward to being there each school day (Manla, 2021).

The climate of a school organisation is the prevailing atmosphere or environment within the school, which is shaped by the collective perceptions, attitudes and behaviors of its members (Osman, 2012). It is the relatively enduring quality of the internal environment of a school organization that is experienced by its workers which also influences their behavior. Organisation climate therefore has the capacity to influence teachers' behavior including their commitment to their teaching career. Scholarly works carried out show that school climate significantly predicts teachers' job satisfaction, organisational commitment and productivity (Akinola & Oredein, 2021). However, there still remains a lacuna on effect of organisation climate on teachers' career commitment.

Various types of school organisation climates have been identified to include - open, autonomous, controlled, paternal, familiar and closed climates (Verma & Gupta, 2023). This study places attention on open, autonomous, and controlled climates since they have greater capacity to predict teachers' career commitment based on their definitions. An open climate describes the openness and authenticity of interaction that exists among principals, teachers and all sundry. In this climate, teachers work together easily and efficiently, promote a strong sense of team spirit and are not inundated with continuous tedium (Smith, & Scott, 1990). An autonomous climate allows teachers a certain amount of freedom to operate as the leader epitomizes the model of enthusiasm and zeal and there are no external threats or influences (Wynn, 2019). However, a controlled climate reflects a hardworking atmosphere with little attention to consideration and satisfaction of the teachers' personal and social needs (Allodi, 2010).

The effect of the above three dimensions of organisation climate on teachers has been through a contentious debate among researchers for some time. For instance, it is believed that teachers are more committed to their job when the school climate is open, autonomous and controlled. However, other studies show that open and controlled climates negatively predict teachers' morale and lecturers' job commitment. These mixed findings prompt this investigation into the complex interplay surrounding various dimensions of organisation climate and teachers' career commitment teachers to plan and execute their own teaching activities.

Impact of Organisational Climate on Teachers' Career Commitment

Organisational climate; the collective perceptions of norms, values, interpersonal relationships, leadership styles, and support structures within an institution has emerged as a crucial determinant of employee behavior and performance. In the context of education, particularly in public secondary schools, the organisational climate significantly shapes teachers' attitudes, job satisfaction, and ultimately, their career commitment. Career commitment refers to the extent of an individual's psychological attachment to their profession, their willingness to invest effort in career advancement, and their intention to remain in the profession long term.

Numerous studies have underscored the positive correlation between a supportive organisational climate and heightened career commitment among teachers. For instance, schools characterized by transparent communication, participatory decision-making, recognition of efforts, and collegial relationships tend to experience lower turnover rates and higher levels of teacher engagement (Pañares, 2025). Conversely, a toxic or rigid climate marked by authoritarian leadership, lack of autonomy, or inadequate professional support often correlates with job dissatisfaction, burnout, and attrition (Zhenget *al.*, 2025).

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical foundation for this relationship can be anchored in **Social Exchange Theory** (Davis-Srameket *al.*, 2022), which posits that individuals' commitment to an organization is strengthened when they perceive reciprocal support and value. When teachers feel respected, supported, and empowered, they are more likely to exhibit affective commitment not only to their institutions but also to the teaching profession itself.

The impact of organisational climate is not uniformly experienced across contexts. In regions like South West Nigeria, systemic challenges such as underfunding, large class sizes, inadequate infrastructure, and socio-political instability may mediate or even mitigate the effects of internal school climate. Teachers may remain committed out of necessity or due to lack of alternative employment, which introduces the distinction between **affective commitment** (driven by passion and identification with the profession) and **continuance commitment** (driven by external pressures or lack of options). This complicates the assumption that improved organisational climate alone can sustain long-term teacher commitment.

Furthermore, gender, teaching experience, and subject specialization may influence how teachers perceive organisational climate and how it affects their career trajectories (Mathouet *al.*, 2023). For example, female teachers may prioritize different aspects of climate (e.g., work-life balance or interpersonal support) compared to their male counterparts. Additionally, novice teachers often require more structured support and mentorship than experienced educators, which calls for a differentiated approach in climate enhancement strategies.

Empirical findings in the Nigerian context suggest a mixed picture. While some studies affirm that a positive climate leads to greater career commitment (Hirschi, & Spurk, 2021), others highlight systemic barriers that limit the translation of climate improvements into sustained professional engagement (Martinsonet *al.*, 2023). This raises critical questions about the extent to which micro-level organisational reforms can compensate for macro-level inadequacies in the education sector.

In sum, while the organisational climate undeniably plays a central role in shaping teachers' career commitment, its impact is neither linear nor universal. Any effort to improve teacher retention and professional dedication must therefore adopt a holistic approach, one that addresses both the internal dynamics of school culture and the broader structural conditions of the education system.

Conclusion

The exploration of organisational climate and its influence on teachers' career commitments reveals significant insights into the dynamics of educational environments. A positive organisational climate characterized by effective communication, strong leadership, collaborative support, and a nurturing work environment serves as a crucial determinant in enhancing teachers' emotional attachment to their institutions, their sense of obligation to remain, and their perceived costs of leaving.

This Paper concludes that fostering a supportive climate not only contributes to increased job satisfaction and retention rates among teachers but also ultimately leads to improved educational outcomes for students. Also, there is the need for school leaders and policymakers to prioritize the development of a positive organisational climate.

By implementing strategies such as professional development, open communication channels, and community-building initiatives, educational institutions can create environments where teachers feel valued and committed. This commitment is essential for sustaining a dedicated teaching workforce capable of meeting the challenges of modern education.

Way Forward

To enhance organisational climate and strengthen teachers' career commitments in secondary schools, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. **Promote Positive Leadership Practices:** Implement leadership development programs that focus on transformational and supportive leadership styles. Training should emphasize effective communication, empathy, and collaboration with staff.
2. **Establish Clear Communication Channels:** There should be regular meetings and feedback. Facilitate regular staff meetings to discuss school policies, gather feedback, and address concerns. Encouraging open dialogue will foster trust and transparency.
3. **Implement Professional Development Programs:** Offer continuous professional development opportunities tailored to teachers' needs, focusing on both pedagogical skills and interpersonal competencies.
4. **Foster a Collaborative Work Environment:** Organize workshops and activities that promote collaboration and teamwork among teachers. This can enhance relationships and create a sense of community.
5. **Enhance Support Systems:** Establish mentorship initiatives pairing experienced teachers with newcomers to provide guidance, support, and encouragement, helping to ease the transition into the school environment.
6. **Encourage Teacher Involvement in Decision-Making:** Involve teachers in decision-making processes regarding school policies and practices. This inclusion can increase their sense of ownership and commitment to the institution.
7. **Develop Recognition and Reward Systems:** Create recognition programs to celebrate teachers' achievements and contributions to the school. This can boost morale and reinforce commitment.
8. **Strengthen Community Engagement:** Encourage parents and community members to participate in school activities. Building strong ties with the community can provide additional support for teachers.

9. Conduct Regular Climate Assessments Surveys and Evaluations: Implement regular assessments of the organisational climate through surveys and focus groups to identify areas for improvement and track progress over time.
10. Address Work-Life Balance: Supportive Policy Develop policies that promote work-life balance, such as flexible scheduling and mental health resources, to help teachers manage their professional and personal responsibilities effectively.

By implementing these recommendations, secondary schools can create a more positive organisational climate, thereby enhancing teachers' career commitments and improving overall educational outcomes.

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