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School Organisational Silence, Teachers' Job Commitment and Productivity in Senior Secondary Schools Education District I of Lagos State, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to determine the relationship between school organisational silence and teachers' job commitment and productivity. Two hypotheses (tested at 0.05 level of significance) were formulated to guide the study. With the study's foundation anchored on correlational and descriptive research designs, its population comprised all teachers. The sample size was 300 teachers. Analysis was carried out using inferential statistics. The data of the study were obtained by questionnaire. Pearsons Product Moment Correlation Analysis was used to test the two hypotheses. Findings indicate that a positive and non-significant relationship existed between school organisational silence and teachers' job commitment in Lagos State Education District I ($r = -0.035$, $p > 0.05$) and the study also found that there was a negative and non-significant relationship between school organisational silence and teachers' productivity in Lagos State Education District I ($r = 0.770$, $p > 0.05$). It is concluded that organisational silence is present in Lagos State Education District I senior secondary schools, as evidenced in the study. The study therefore recommended that school leaders/managers should always engaging school teachers in communication and entering them into discussions and decisions in order to reduce silence in the organisation of the school, so as to enhance teachers' job commitment. School as organisation should pay attention to not only the professional knowledge of the applicants but also to their personal characteristics, hence this can boost the teachers' productivity.

1. Introduction

Schools as organisations need teachers and other staff in the school who express their thoughts and ideas for the benefit of school improvement and success and

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teachers in the school also select schools in which they can express themselves because both teachers and school leaders would be effective, efficient and record high performance in school organisations that devoid of silence in the operation of their duties. Therefore, teachers in schools usually contribute majorly to the success and failure of the school organisations.

Teachers as employees are usually full of ideas which form their opinions; these they possess in order to constructively improve their work and contribute to organisational engagements. “Sometimes these employees practice voice and express their ideas, information, and opinions; and other times they remain silent and withhold their ideas, information, and opinions. Apparently, expressing and withholding behaviours might appear to be polar opposites because silence implies not speaking while voice implies speaking up on important issues and problems in organisations” (Zehir & Erdogan, 2011).

Organisational silences as a construct is somewhat novel introduced by Pinder and Harlos (2001), Morrison and Milliken (2000), and Milliken, Morrison, and Hewlin (2003). For Morrison and Milliken (2000), “it is a collective phenomenon where employees withhold their opinions and concerns about potential organisational problems”. Concordantly, Pinder and Harlos (2001) described organisational silence as reprobating authentic opinion about behavioural, mental activities, cognitive, as well as emotional appraisals of organisational fortune of subordinates who appear to have the capability of transforming the organisation postures. It is worthy to note that organisational silence is a conscious resolution by which a given subordinate stick around his or her silence and not communicate any actionable opinion or work engagement deals or disprove to those in the helm of affairs in the organisation. Organisational silence always causes negative organisational atmosphere in evolving new ideas, exhibition of talents and opinion share, and this serves as a suggestive harm to the organisation.

Communication, particularly in the school system, is believed to be critical to an organisation's success. The choice to remain silent can harm school's communication and overall functioning (Bagheri, Zarei, & Aeen, 2012). As organisations, schools need to share knowledge and ideas on a daily basis, easily identifying positive and negative relationships between employees. In school organisations, the absence of cooperation makes it difficult to ensure the requisite knowledge sources and achieve organisational objectives (Köse & Köse, 2019). The ability to remain silent halts the explanation of errors and problems and distorts successful solutions. Organisational silence thus manifests itself as an inefficient mechanism that consumes energy and effort. Employee silence can be effective in some situations, as it can minimize the surplus of management knowledge, deescalate interpersonal tensions and preserve employee privacy (Dyne, Van Ang, & Botero, 2003).

Commitment is a psychological attachment to an organisation including school in which people give their diligence and loyalty to its core values and ultimate goals. Teacher commitment is the emotional attachment teachers demonstrate toward their work. Effective teaching cannot be achieved without teacher commitment; in

fact, teacher commitment is one of the most critical factors in effective and efficiency teaching. Teacher commitment is an internal force that derives teachers to invest more time and energy in participating in every activities of the school. This willingness of promoting the school creates emotional link between teachers and the school which ultimately inspires teachers to seek ways to enhance teaching profession and establish an effective learning environment in order for students to achieve excellence in their academic performance. Commitment to teaching is a crucial factor to contribute to the achievement of students.

Teachers' productivity has aroused the interest of education stakeholders at all levels of education globally. This is because teachers' productivity constitutes the fulcrum through which investment in education is transformed into reality. Studies such as Emunemu and Isuku (2012); Schleicher (2012); and OECD Document (2012) attested to the significance and the cardinal role of teachers' productivity in educational growth and development. Emunemu and Isuku (2012) stated further that the importance attached to teachers' productivity has informed the need for adequate training and empowerment of teachers with up-to-date knowledge, skills, and methodologies in order to cope with the dynamics of the 21st century education market with the hope to raising their productivity.

Statement of the Problem

Teachers in school organisations are the main substance of school success and productivity through commitment, teachers in schools possess information, knowledge, experience and ideas about their schools. In their engagements in academic activities they face various challenges, it is expected that the challenges should be reported or share with others in order to find solution(s) to it, but more often than not, they sometimes prefer to remain silent. In this act of remaining silent breed jaundiced consequences for both teachers and the school organisation. By remaining silent, school organisation will not benefit from the reservoir of knowledge from the teachers, problems within the school organisation will not be identified, the process of feedback will be truncated, information will not be directly obtained and solutions to challenges will remain insufficient.

In situation like this where silence permeate the school climate, transforming changes through organisational commitment and productivity will remain mirage. Organisational silence in school organisation will not only fracture their commitment and productivity, but also lead to organisational rumours which can harm the overall functioning of the school.

Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were tested in this study:

Ho1: There is no significant relationship between school organisational silence and teachers' job commitment.

Ho2: There is no significant relationship between school organisational silence and teachers' productivity.

Literature Review

“Silence is as omission of vocal or written expression of cognitive or emotional evaluation that can change or improve organisational conditions” (Morrison & Milliken, 2000; Pinder & Harlos, 2001). Scholars from different background see silence from distinctive lens. Morrison and Milliken (2000) described silence as a “collective phenomenon at the organisational level, while other researchers such as Zhou & George (2001) approach it as an individual phenomenon (Bowen & Blackmon, 2003). Silence is viewed by many researchers as the absence of speech (Dyne Van, Ang & Botero, 2003). Silence is most often accompanied with a group dynamic” (Zerubavel, 2006). When a given employee remain silent in an organisation, this will lead to limitation of opinion and knowledge sharing, aggregated brainstorming, dissecting of problem, and workable solutions to workplace-related matters, while on the other side of the coin also catalyse into emerging problems. The stoppage of this is necessary so as not to result to endemic problem that can eventually hamper the success of the organisation (Ellis & Dyne, 2009). It is interesting to note that organisational silence is not the opposite of airing ones view, just that it cannot also be tantamount to inability to express individual view within an organisation (Gambarotto & Cammozzo, 2010). It can communicate favour or disfavour where majority views are glorified and minority positions are weakened thereby exerting pressure for both individuals within the organisation and organisations itself (Bagheri, Zarei & Aeen, 2012).

In that wise, it describes as a situation when subordinates decide to remain silent when they are full of ideas, get a clue about the cause of a given problem in the organisation and even when he or she possesses the solution(s) to the organisation problem.

Likewise, educational institutions are not far away from these problems. Alqarni (2015) clarified that educational institutions confront many of the same problems that are associated with subordinates’ behaviours as pertain to organisational productivity. Organisational silence in the school system breeds the refusal of a given teacher to participate when decisions are made, half minded in enterprise and creative exercise in the organisation, unwillingness to air his or her opinions, silent about illegality deals in the organisation and squarely subservient to the organisation hierarchy, these pose that the mighty is always right. Researchers like Çakıcı, (2007), and Bayram, (2010) opined that organisational silence remains a prevailing behaviour as far as the school system is concerned and the teachers are at the centre of the discourse. Furthermore, organisational productivity decreases when enveloped by footing organisational silence. Perlow and Williams (2003) submitted that silence can forcibly trigger mental consequence on the subordinates, creating emotional state of dehumanised, destructive antagonism, grudge and other demeanours, and if not voiced out it may permeate social engagements, cut off ingenuity, and stagnate subordinates’ productivity. In the same vein, Morrison and Milliken (2000) “came out with a model of the effects of organisational silence, which includes a lack of variation in informational input, lack of analysis of opinions and alternatives, lack of internal negative feedback, employees’ perceived feelings of not being valued and

employees' cognitive dissonance". The issue of organisational silence becomes increasingly important for school organisations in particular, as solution to organisational silence will bring about conducive and robust teaching and learning which strengthen productive expression, right to express ones feeling, unhindered circulation of information, and flourishing team work.

Teachers' Job Commitment

Job commitment of employee in all organisations has been found as one of the fundamental factors that influence organisational success and survival. As a result of this, various scholars have worked on the notion of job commitment and how various organisations can channel their energies, policies, human and resources towards increasing the job commitment of their employees for the betterment of the organisation. However, in an organisation like school, the preconceived goals and objectives of the school system as regards to students' academic and school improvement may not be achieved without committed teachers who are the possessors of knowledge and serve as facilitators of academic engagements. Teaching as a noble and nation building profession needs personnels who will go extra miles beyond public servant expectances so as to add value to the school and improve students' academic achievement. It is not gainsaying that, the many roles of teachers as communicators, locus parentis, mentors and host of others cannot produce a desired result without passionate and committed teachers who can sacrifice and have commitment toward the students, school organisations as well as the teaching profession. This was validated by the submissions of Alsiewi and Agil (2014) who submitted that educators who are committed to their job with ease in discharging of their daily academic activities in the schools and such teachers can get involved wholeheartedly without strict supervision. Crosswell (2006) is of the opinion that teachers' commitment is one of the major professional characteristics that influence an educators' success. Qamar (2012), Tsai, Chang and Tsai (2010) in their studies investigated that organisational commitment significantly affects an employee's organisational citizenship behaviour. It means that if the member of an organisation is committed and loyal to his organisation then he will wish to do more and better work than that which is specified in job descriptions (Qamar, 2012). Albdour and Altarawneh (2014) viewed organisational commitment is an integral part of subordinate's physical and mental state. According to them, subordinates that are highly committed to the organisation engagements more often than not display commendatory within and outside the organisation, of which the organisation will be at the advantage of this gesture. Students' performance and wellbeing in schools, schools' growth and success as well as educational development of a nation cannot be achieved without committed teachers. This is because committed teachers see school's or students' problems as theirs and are always ready and willing to do everything possible to solve such problems.

Some of the factors that may determine the level of teachers' job commitment in schools include job security, relationship between teachers and students, the quality of the work done by teachers, the work environment, availability of

resources in schools, prompt payment of salary and other allowances, adequate incentives among others (Ernest & Felix (2013).

Teachers' organisational commitment is also described as teachers' readiness in thoroughly engaging in every academic activity of the school, carrying the school organisation and students along in the process of achieving excellence, thus, teachers' commitment shows diligence, loyalty and ultimately increases in the organisational productivity. It is physical and emotional state of the subordinates which can be determined by subordinate's disposition, attitudes, feeling of trust which can be low or high. A subordinate who is strongly committed to the course of his or her organisation, in which he or she is works, will be identified by goals and objectives of the organisation as well as determination to be part and parcel of the organisation (Meyer, Stanley, Herscovitch & Topolnytsky, 2002). "Organisational commitment is an attachment or bound, that is a personal voluntary decision based on calculated rationality, affective tendency and moral judgment, which leads to a higher or lower degree of identification with, and involvement in, a particular organisation, and is observable in the free effort extended in accomplishing organisation goals" (Drent, 2009).

The types of organisational commitment identified by Meyer and Allen (1997) include affective, continuance, and normative. Affective commitment exists in a situation where organisation employees completely hold in high esteem the objectives, core goals and values that are cherished in the organisation. It means that the employees are emotionally attached to the organisation and believe that they are individually accountable to organisation's degree of achievement. Teachers in schools who are affectively committed to their schools may show their commitment because of extrinsic factors such as good working relationship, good working environment, fairness in work place, organisational policies and administration, supervision and the rest. Moreover, continuance commitment exists in a situation where organisation employees believe in transactional relationship with the organisation. It is a cost and benefit commitment, in the sense that what an employee receives for his or her energy exertion on job determines his or her commitment, and leaves the organisation if the cost is high. Teachers with continuance commitment may consider benefits such as salary, allowances, gratuity and other benefits or the fear getting another job if they leave teaching job. The socially costs may be in form of social relationship with other colleagues, recognition or prestige associated with the work. Lastly, normative commitment occurs when an employee is obligated to do his or her jobs and still stays committed to the organisation through thick and thin periods as a result of debt of gratitude and passion for the organisation. For example, a teacher may demonstrate normative commitment if the school where he/she works has invested resources in training and development, the employee will hold the organisation the debt of gratitude to use all his or her efforts to pay back to the organisation through diligence and commitment to the job, the employee can therefore remain in the organisation for a required number of years. Zangaro (2001) "suggested that an additional type, alienative commitment, may also exist. He wrote that this occurs when individuals feel they have little or no control or impact, and would

like to leave their jobs. These employees usually demonstrate low levels of performance”.

Alsiewi and Agil (2014) defined teachers’ job commitment as a situation which ensues the willingness of teachers in committing his or her individual endowments to teaching and learning engagements and also stay in the Socratic vocation. They added that teachers’ job commitment is a stout feeling of trust in the worth or ability of teacher to imbibe the core goals and values of the school, inclined to contribute his or her significant productive time and energy for the school and desiderate in preserving his or her inclusiveness as a member of the school. Only not that, school teachers that are really committed to their job with ease in whatever is being executed for the schools and such teachers can get involved in school activities wholeheartedly without compromising standard. Also, committed teachers see school’s or students’ problem as theirs. They have high level of motivation to do everything within their power or even above what they normally expected to do in order to move the school forward and raising the students’ academic performance. Without high level of teachers’ commitment therefore there would be high teachers’ turnout, absenteeism and the achievement of education goals in any school will be impossible.

Teachers’ Productivity

“Teachers’ productivity is a measure of the efficiency with which the overall process of teaching and learning utilise its labour force” (Odunuga & Ajila, 2000) and the most powerful predictors of student success (Kaplan & Owings, 2004). The relevance of teachers’ productivity to educational growth and development cannot be overemphasized, and it is perhaps the reason it has become an integral component of educational reform programmes of nations across the globe. For instance, in Europe, Asia, Latin America and even in Africa, educational reforms embarked upon incorporated, to a large extent, how to improve teachers’ quality and performance through professional development programmes (Schleicher 2012; OECD Document, 2012; Briseid & Caillods, 2004).

Akiri and Ugborugbo (2008) defined teachers’ productivity as “what teachers control and actually do in the classroom such as teaching effectiveness and classroom performance”. Sofoluwe (2000) posited that a teacher is productive when he or she endeavours to transform the content of curriculum into learnable content for the purpose of producing worthwhile learners who will be productive to self, immediate community and the nation at large. This implies that teachers’ productivity is the ability of a school teacher to be a mastery of the curriculum content, mentally processing it and capable of being taught with pedagogical abilities, so that the learners can develop skills, attitudes after acquiring knowledge that is benefit to the society. These explanations reflect the wholesome alertness and the mastery of the specific domain of a teacher to contribute effectively in the development of a student for onward building of his environment.

It is worthy to note that teachers' productivity is the effective and efficient utilisation of teachers in the process of teaching and learning in schools. Teachers' productivity is a process of measuring the connection between what teachers can achieve in terms of students' academic performance and the amount of provisions provided for them in the process of production, that is teaching and learning. "What teachers can produce" remains the output, which is the final exit of the production process. Outputs in the school system are the graduates produced which have possessed knowledge, different skills, and attitudes for the advancement of the society. The "provisions provided for them" includes human and material resources used up in the process of teaching and learning, that is production.

Therefore, teachers' productivity is, considered as integrating notions like teachers' effectiveness, teachers' performance, teachers' efficiency, and host of others.

The study is anchored on the theory of spiral of silence developed by German political scientist Elisabeth Noelle-Neumann in 1974. Spiral of silence refers to a situation where people prefer to remain silent when they feel that their opinions or views are not in tandem with the majority opinion on a particular matter. It is a theory on the glorification of majority opinions and weakening of the minority views. According to the spiral of silence theory, most people have instinct fear for social disengagement which usually prompts their silence, because of fear of disapproval of their thoughts. People remain silent through mostly because of unconsciously behaviour such as criticizing someone, going against someone, exhibiting threat to someone, disparaging someone, and host of other misdemeanours. In order to avoid being insulated, people prefer to hold back from openly stating their opinions on contentious issues when they perceive that doing so would bring about different signs of disapproval. Precisely, in a school arrangement, teacher(s) air their views when they know that their submission is endorsed by other teachers, and they remain silent if their opinion is disapproved by others.

2. Methodology

The research designs employed for this study were correlational and descriptive. Reason being that the study examined the relationship between school organisational silence, teachers' job commitment and productivity in senior secondary schools in Education District I of Lagos State. And, the study also described the prevailing situation regarding the school organisational silence, teachers' job commitment and productivity in senior secondary schools in Education District I of Lagos State.

The population of this study comprised 3,264 teachers of the 63 public senior secondary schools in Lagos Education District I which include Agege, Alimosho, and Ifako-Ijaye.

The sample consisted of 30% of the study population to form the sample of this study which was randomly selected from the population. Therefore, the sample consisted of 300 teachers from 20 public senior secondary schools in Education District I of Lagos State.

To select the sample, ten schools from each Local Government under the Education District were selected through disproportionate stratified sampling technique and, in each selected school, a sample of 10 teachers were randomly selected from each of the sampled schools. Summing it up, the sample of this study was 300 senior secondary teachers in Education District I of Lagos State, Nigeria.

To collect data for this study, a self-developed questionnaire was developed and used. The questionnaire titled “Organisational Silence, Teachers’ Job Commitment and Productivity Questionnaire’ (OSTJCPQ)” was designed by the researcher. The questionnaire was divided into two sections: Section A consists of items on teachers’ personal information while Section B consists of twelve items which measured the organisational silence, teachers’ job commitment and productivity. The questionnaire was used to elicit information from the teachers. A Four-point Likert-scale response mode type was used. The following corresponding scores were adopted as rating scale for the responses: Strongly Agree (SA) – 4; Agree (A) – 3; Disagree (D) – 2 and Strongly Disagree (SD) - 1.

In ensuring the face and construct validity of the questionnaire, the OSTJCPQ was subjected to reliability test using test-retest reliability method. The questionnaire was administered on 36 teachers in other schools who were part of the population of the study but not part of the sample. Test-retest reliability method was used to determine the reliability of the Organisational Silence, Teachers’ Job Commitment and Productivity Questionnaire. The coefficient obtained was 0.830. Thus, the questionnaire was found to be significantly reliable.

Data collected were analysed using inferential statistics of Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient to test the hypotheses since it is stated to predict the relationship between the variables. The hypothesis formulated was tested at 0.05 level of significance through the use of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) 20.0 version.

3. Results and Discussion

Hypothesis One

There is no significant relationship between school organisational silence and teachers’ commitment in public secondary schools in Lagos State.

Table 1. Correlation showing relationship between school organisational silence and teachers' commitment in senior secondary schools Education District I of Lagos State

Variables	N	Mean	SD	R	Sig	Remark
School organisational silence	274	16.7226	5.71128			
Teachers' commitment	274	15.7920	3.36604	-0.035	0.560	Not Significant

Table 1 shows that there is a negative negligible and non-significant relationship between school organisational silence and teachers' commitment in public secondary schools in Lagos State ($r = -0.035$, $p > 0.05$). This implies that school organisational silence has little or nothing to do with teachers' commitment in public secondary schools. School organisational silence does not affect teachers' commitment in public secondary schools. Hence, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between school organisational silence and teachers' commitment in public secondary schools in Lagos State is not rejected.

Hypothesis Two

There is no significant relationship between school organisational silence and teachers' productivity in public secondary schools in Lagos State.

Table 2. Correlation showing relationship between school organisational silence and teachers' productivity in senior secondary schools Education District I of Lagos State

Variables	N	Mean	SD	R	Sig	Remark
School organisational silence	274	16.7226	5.71128			
Teachers' productivity	274	13.7007	4.29731	0.770	0.001	Significant

Table 2 shows that there is a significant relationship between school organisational silence and teachers' productivity in public secondary schools in Lagos State ($r = 0.770$, $p < 0.05$). This implies that school organisational silence has influence on teachers' productivity in public secondary schools. School organisational silence has effect on teachers' productivity in public secondary schools. Hence, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between school organisational silence and teachers' productivity in public secondary schools in Lagos State is rejected.

Discussion of Findings

Organisational silence was found to have a positive and non-significant relationship on teachers' job commitment. Therefore, this finding is contrary to Qazelvand and Shahtalebi (2016) which found that there are negative relationships between organisational commitment and organisational silence in their study on teachers in Iran. In other words, when employee's silence increases, it causes a decrease in organisational commitment of the employees. Fard and Karimi (2015) found that there is negative relationship between organisational commitment and organisational silence in their study on university employees in Iran. Laeeque and Bakhtawari (2014) found that there is negative relationship between organisational commitment and organisational silence in their study on higher education institution employees in Pakistan. Panahi, Veiseh, Divkhar, and Kamari (2012) found that is negative relationship between organisational commitment and organisational silence in their study on university employees in Azerbaijan.

Therefore, it can be said that if employees are reluctant to make comments and input their ideas about the issues and problems of their organisation and they are afraid to express their feelings on their job engagement, their organisational commitment is reduced.

Also, organisational silence was found to have a negative and significant relationship on teachers' productivity. Therefore, this finding is in tandem with Briensfield (2009) who expressed that organisational silence affect employee's productivity negatively. In the research of Şehitoğlu and Zehir (2010), they concluded that there is an inverse relationship between organisational silence and employee's performance and a direct relationship between silence for organisational benefits and employee's performance.

In the research of Tayfun and Çatır (2013), they found a significant relationship between employee's productivity and organisational silence negatively.

That there is an inverse relationship between organisational silence and productivity at the level less than 0.01. Results of this hypothesis are in agreement with results of researches of Bozorgniya, Hosseini and Enayati (2014); Doostar *et al.*, (2015). So, the more the organisational silence, the less the employees' productivity.

4. Conclusion

The focus of this study is on school organisational silence and teachers' job commitment and productivity. It can be observed that silence in school organisation is extremely dangerous to teachers' job commitment and productivity and also to the sustainability of the schools aims and objectives. The conclusion can be reached from the results and findings that organisational silence is present in Lagos State Education District I senior secondary schools as evidenced in the

study no matter how minimal. And that, organisational silence seems to be very prevalent aspect of organisations including school. In the final analysis, organisational silence in any school setting, undermine teachers' job commitment which ultimately leading to deterioration in teachers' productivity, that is, the productivity of the school will be decreased in terms of students' academic performance.

Recommendations

1. School managers should always be engaging school teachers in communication and entering them into discussions and decisions in order to reduce silence in the organisation of the school, so as to enhance teachers' job commitment.
2. School as organisation should pay attention to not only the professional knowledge of the applicants but also to their personal characteristics, hence this can boost the teachers' productivity.

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