



SOCIAL FACTORS AND SUPPORTIVE CLASSROOM SETTING AS CORRELATES OF
WORK ATTITUDE: THE CASE OF SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS IN NIGERIA

IRULOH, Betty-Ruth Ngozi (PhD)¹

And

EKURU, Ruby N¹

¹Department of Educational Psychology,
Guidance & Counseling, University of Port Harcourt, Nigeria

ABSTRACT

This study was designed to investigate the relationship between emotion regulation, professional well being, supportive classroom environment and work attitude of secondary school teachers in Rivers state of Nigeria. Correlational design was adopted for the study. Four hypotheses guided the conduct of the study. A sample population of 300 teachers in 12 public senior secondary schools were chosen for the study through stratified random sampling method. Two researchers' instruments were used for data collection. They are: Emotion Regulation, Professional Well-Being and supportive classroom setting scale (EPSS) and Teachers Work Attitude Scale (TWAS). Z-test and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) were used for data analysis at 0.05 level of significance. Results showed that emotion regulation, professional well-being and supportive classroom setting independently and jointly have a significant positive relationship with work attitude. Based on the findings, conclusion was drawn and relevant recommendations made.

Keywords: Psychology, Education, Schools, Nigeria.

1. INTRODUCTION

It is very obvious that in most Nigerian schools majority of teachers do not feel fulfilled doing their work (Uwaiweiye & Onyewadume, 2007); a situation attributable to poor conditions of service, irregular payment of teachers salaries, lack of promotion, etc. on the other hand teachers' dissatisfaction could also arise due to factors inherent in the teachers. No wonder Nwagwu and Salai cited in Adeyemo (2001) explained that some individuals go into teaching profession as a tail-end option or any available alternative when all efforts and struggle to get into other so called choice/ideal jobs have failed. However, it is worthy to note that teachers occupy the most important position in the educational system of Nigeria. This is simply because no educational system can rise above the quality of its teachers as acknowledged by Nigerian's national policy on education. Hence, the need for the study on relationship between teachers' emotion regulation, professional well-being, supportive classroom setting and work attitude.

Work attitude expresses one's disposition to work. This means that whether encouraging or discouraging, work attitude has a major role to play in the learning process. For instance, if a teacher's attitude to work is encouraging, then there is hope for effective teaching/learning. Emotions have long been seen as strong feelings that come and go, more or less on their own accord (Solomon in Gross & John, 2003). Emotions can be cognitive (how we think) and affective (the way we feel). All emotions send into a state of arousal, whether positive or negative, and bring about corresponding actions.

Gross and John (2003) stated that it is an accurate perception that individuals exert significant control over their emotions using a large plan of actions to determine which feelings they would have and when they would have them. Example of such emotions are joy love, fear, sadness, amusement, anger, etc. this implies that emotions can be positive or negative and play a vital role in determining an individual's well-being, organizational enhancement as well as societal or national development. Professional well-being is perceived as an aspect of general well-being of an employee. Without a sense of well-being in oneself, it is impossible to nurture well-being in others. Teachers' professional well-being refers to the extent to which the attributes of the teachers facilitate the accomplishment of educational goals (Yildimin, 2004).

Students acquire knowledge by carefully noticing teachers' behaviour and interactions with both fellow teachers and students. The supportive classroom concentrates on teaching and promoting amenable lifestyle. It is a classroom environment that is work-oriented, but relaxed and pleasant. When students perform responsibly, it absolutely affects teaching; the students being more attentive and cooperative. This method therefore enable teachers to encourage students achieve learning through diligent participation and discipline system with the aim of getting desirable knowledge, good management of self and other rational conducts for social integration (Isangedighi, 2007). This means that the supportive classroom setting has to do with developing proactive ways to prevent problems from occurring in the first place while creating a positive learning environment. Salami (2007) studied a sample of 475 secondary school teachers randomly drawn from south western Nigeria. His study was aimed at investigating the relationship between emotional intelligence and self-efficacy of teachers and their work attitude. Result showed that emotional intelligence and self-efficacy have significant relationship with work attitude of teachers. Adedeji, Adelua and Oladejo (2011) in their study of distance learners' scholastic achievement through the analysis of attitudinal characteristics using 24.4% of the total population of distance learners in University of Ibadan, Nigeria during the 2009 contact session. Pearson product moment correlation and t-test were used for data analysis at 0.05 level of significance. It was found that attitude and scholastic achievement are positively and significantly correlated.

A descriptive survey study by Gesinde and Adejumo (2013) on the current level of job satisfaction of 238 primary school teacher in 10 private and 10 public school in Otta, Ogun State, Nigeria found that a greater percentage of teacher (52.9%) was very satisfied with their job. Mehdipour and Balaramulu (2013) conducted a study on teachers' attitude towards their work and performance among 180 faculties of 13 universities in Hyderabad. It was found that generally, behaviour of teachers was positive and teachers' attitude to the work and performance was also positive.

A study conducted by Amalu and Uche (2014) in order to establish the influence of motivational stress on professional effectiveness in secondary school teachers of Cross River State, using 600 teacher from 230 public secondary schools found that there is a significant influence of motivational stress on classroom management, lesson presentation, use of instructional aids, evaluation of students and supervision of co-curricular activities. Nkweke and Dollah (2011) analyzed workload and teaching staff strength of 18 public senior secondary schools in Ogba/Egbema/Ndoni Local Government Area of River State, Nigeria.

The workload data analysis shows that all the schools exceeded the 15 week periods per teaching staff with 17% having 18-23, and 83 and 83% having 24-30 per teacher each week. Duck (2007) did a study to discover the reason behind the high dropout rate of beginning educators. His study revealed that teachers who left the teaching profession did so because they lack a practical understanding of what effective classroom management practices are or did not have a basis upon which to formulate a preference in teaching style. While classroom management differs from good teaching strategy, it is the walkway that good teaching must pass through to set up itself in a classroom (Palumbo & Sanacore, 2007).

1.1 HYPOTHESES

This study is driven by the following hypotheses:

H0₁: *There is no significant relationship between emotion regulation and work attitude of secondary school teachers.*

H0₂: *There is a no significant relationship between professional well-being and work attitude of secondary school teachers*

H0₃: *There is no significant relationship between supportive classroom setting and work attitude of secondary school teachers.*

H0₄: *There is no significant joint relationship between emotion regulation, professional well-being, supportive classroom setting and work attitude of secondary school teachers*

2. MATERIALS AND METHOD

Correlational design was used for the study to determine the relationship between emotion regulation, professional well-being, supportive classroom setting and work attitude among secondary school teachers. A sample of 300 teachers was studied from the twelve public secondary schools in Port Harcourt Local Government Area of River State, Nigeria. Stratified random sampling method was used to select the participants for the study. Two researcher developed questionnaires were used in this study, namely: Emotion Regulation, Professional Well-Being and Supportive Classroom Setting Scale (EPSS) and Teachers' Work Attitude Scale (TWAS). EPSS was a multivariate instrument with three (3) sections, each measuring a particular variable. Section A consisted of 22 items measuring emotion regulation, section B consisted of 18 items measuring professional well-being while section C consisted of 24 items measuring supportive classroom setting. TWAS was a univariate instrument with 16 items. All the items on both EPSS and TWAS were responded to on a four point Likert type scale of Strongly Agree (4), Agree (3), Disagree (2), and Strongly Disagree (1).

Face and content validity of the instruments were conducted to ensure that the items of EPSS and TWAS were clearly and specifically state, relevant to the study and enough to measure the variables investigated. The reliability of the instruments (EPSS and TWAS) was determined through test-retest method. The initial and retest scores were later correlated using Pearson product moment correlation. The following reliability coefficients were obtained: Emotion regulation = 0.78; professional well-being = 0.75; supportive classroom setting = 0.75; while that of TWAS was 0.81. The reliability coefficients obtained were high enough to justify their use for this present study. Z-test and analysis of variance (ANOVA) were used for data analysis at 0.05 level of significance.

3. RESULTS

Table 1 shows a correlation coefficient (r-value) of 0.047. The result is that there is positive relationship between emotion regulation and work attitude. More so, the table shows a calculated zr value of 17.273 and the critical zr value of 0.111 at 0.05 level of significance for a one failed test. Since the calculate zr-value of 17.273 was found to be greater than the critical zr-value of 0.111, hence, the null hypothesis was rejected, meaning that there is a significant relationship between emotion regulation and work attitude of secondary school teachers.

Table 2 indicates a correlation coefficient (r-value) of 0.293 the result is that there is a positive relationship between professional well-being and work attitude. Furthermore, the table shows the zr-calculated to be 17.027 and the zr-critical of 0.111 at 0.05 level of significance for a one tailed test. Since the calculated zr-value of 17.027 was found to be greater than the zr-critical value of 0.111, hence, the null hypothesis was rejected, meaning that there is a significant relationship between professional well-being and work attitude of secondary school teachers.

Table 1: Relationship between Emotion Regulation and Wok Attitude Of Secondary School Teachers

Variables	N	r-val	X	Zr-cal	Zr-cri	Alpha level	Result
Emotion regulation (Xi)	300	0.05	59	17.27	0.111	0.05	Sig.
Work attitude (Y)			49				

Table 3 shows that there is a correlation coefficient (r-value) of 0.230. This implies that there is a positive relationship between supportive classroom setting and work attitude of secondary school teachers. More so, the calculated zr value of 17.091 was found to be greater than the critical zr value of 0.111 at 0.05 level of significance. Hence the null hypothesis was rejected, meaning that there is a significant relationship between supportive classroom setting and work attitude of secondary school teachers.

Table 2: Relationship between Professional Well-Being and Work Attitude of Secondary School Teachers

Variables	N	r-val	X	Zr-cal	Zr-cri	Alpha level
Professional well-being (x2)	300	0.29	55.69	17.027	0.111	0.05
Work Attitude (Y)			49.36			

Table 4 shows that the correlation between work attitude and emotion regulation is 0.047, work attitude and professional well-being is 0.293, work attitude and supportive classroom setting is 0.230, emotion regulation and professional well-being is 0.249, emotion regulation and supportive classroom setting is 0.129 and profession well being and supportive classroom setting is 0.602. While the multiple correlation (R) is 0.302, the proportion of variance in the work attitude that is accounted for by the collective variance of the independent variables or simply R² (coefficient of multiple determination) is 9.1%. The F obtained from the R or R² is 9.881. The numerator and denominator degrees of freedom are 3, 296 and 299 respectively. At 0.05 alpha level, critical F ratio is 2.65. Finally at this

level of significance, the calculated F (9.881) was found to be greater than the critical F ratio of 2.65. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected, implying that there is a significant joint relationship between emotion regulation, professional well-being, supportive classroom setting and work attitude of secondary school teachers.

Table 3: Relationship between Supportive Classroom Setting and Work Attitude of Secondary School Teachers

Variables	N	r-val	X	Zr-cal	Zr-cri	Alpha level	Result	Decision
supportive classroom setting (x3)	300	0.230	71.987	17.091	0.111	0.05	Sig.	Rejected
Work Attitude (Y)			49.360					

Table 4: Multiple Correlations of Emotion Regulation, Professional Well-Being, Supportive Classroom Setting and Work Attitude of Secondary School Teachers

Variables	pairs of variables	r	R	R ²	F	df	a	F. Crit
work attitude	r12	0.047	0.302	0.091	9.881	3	0.05	2.65
emotion regulation	r13	0.293						
professional well-being	r14	0.23						
supportive classroom	r23	0.249				296		
	r24	0.129						
	r34	0.602						

4. DISCUSSION

The result indicates that there is a negligible positive relationship between emotion regulation and work attitude. The positive relationship between emotion regulation and work attitude among secondary school teachers means that as scores on emotion regulation increase, there is a corresponding increase in work attitude scores and as the scores on emotion regulations decrease, there is also a corresponding decrease in work attitude scores. This implies that most teachers whose scores are high on emotion regulation earned high scores on work attitude while some whose scores are low on emotion regulation, earned low scores on work attitude. When z-test was applied, r-value of 0.047 was found to be statistically significant at 0.05 level of significance (Table 1). The result therefore provides preliminary support that there is a statistically significant positive relationship between emotion regulation and work attitude of the secondary school teachers.

The findings of this study are in same opinion with that of Salami (2007) who studied a sample of secondary school teachers. In his study on emotional intelligence and self-efficacy relationship to work attitude, he found that teachers whose emotional intelligence and self-efficacy are high develop more trait of sincerity at their jobs and also focused purpose (commitment) in their career. The correlation coefficient obtained was 0.25. That is to say that emotional intelligence was found to be significantly related to commitment to work although it is a weak positive relationship. However, Adedeji Adelua and Oladejo

(2011) also found out that attitude is positively and more significantly related to scholastic achievement. When they studied samples of distance learners, they obtained a correlation coefficient that was high which indicates strong positive relationship.

The result shows that professional wellbeing has a weak positive relationship with work attitude of secondary school teachers. The positive relationship means that scores on professional wellbeing generates a corresponding increase in work attitude and also a decrease in professional wellbeing scores generates decrease in work attitude scores. When Z-test was applied, r- value was found to be statistically significant at 0.05 level of significance (table 2). The result of the statistical analysis shows that there is a significant relationship between professional wellbeing and work attitude of the secondary teachers.

Mehlipour and Balaramulu (2013) in their study of teachers' attitude towards their work and performance found that behaviour of teachers were positive, teacher's attitude to their work and performance were also positive and also that teachers were satisfied with the behaviour of their students. This result is true as relevant qualities of teachers were discovered to be punctuality, honesty hardwork, friendliness, confidentiality and competence. Also, Gesinde and Adejumo (2012) studied status of teachers' job satisfaction in primary schools and found that greater percentage of teachers was very satisfied with their job.

Supportive classroom setting was found to have a weak positive relationship with work attitude. On the application of Z- test, r- value of 0.230 was obtained (Table 3) and deemed statically significant at 0.05 level of probability. The positive relationship between supportive classroom setting and work attitude implies that as scores on supportive classroom setting scores increase, scores on work attitude also increase. This means that teachers whose scores are high on supportive classroom setting also earn high scores on work attitude and vice versa.

Nkweke & Dollah (2011) who investigated teachers' workload and teaching staff strength in school found that teachers' workload is more than the teaching staff strength which leads to insufficient execution of job. Also, findings of this study are in agreement with that of Amalu & Uche (2014) who in their study of stress emerging from motivation & professional potential for achieving results among secondary school teachers found that there is a significant influence of motivational stress on classroom management, lesson presentation, evaluation of students, use of instructional aids and, supervision of co-curricular activities.

The computation of multiple correlations is very complex; hence, it was done by the computer with the help of statistical package for the social science (SPSS). The result of the statistical analysis is that there is a weak linear relationship between emotion regulation, professional wellbeing, supportive classroom setting and work attitude of these secondary teachers. Table 4 shows correlation coefficient of 0.302 which indicates that there is an association. The coefficient determinant of 0.091 showed the proportion of variance in work attitude of teachers that is explained by emotion regulation, professional wellbeing and supportive classroom setting. Furthermore, the table indicates F – ratio of $F(3, 296, 299) = 9.881$ and at 0.05 level of significance, there is a statistically significant relationship between the dependent variable and the three independent variables. The results of the study are consistent with findings of Ogunrin (2011) which found that, most teachers perceived capacity development effort of Nigerian government in positive dimension.

5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The core goal of this study was to determining the relationship between some variables such as emotion regulation, professional wellbeing, supportive classroom setting and work attitude among secondary school teachers in River State. The study showed that

there is a significant positive relationship between the variable and work attitude among secondary school teachers in Rivers State. We therefore recommend that:

- Recruitment of teachers in Nigeria should be based on programme of study, talent and emotional intelligence. Qualified and knowledgeable teachers are likely to be more interested in teaching than those who are not.
- Government should design special programmes such as workshops, symposia, seminars etc for teachers and encourage them to attend as this will further sensitize them on the need for them to be more committed emotionally and professionally to their job.
- Guidance counselors should be posted to all secondary schools in Nigeria according to the national policy on education, federal republic of Nigeria.
- School authorities should create a conducive environment especially a supportive classroom environment to enable teachers perform well cognitively, affectively and physiologically, especially in procession information.
- School authorities should emphasize, supervise and ensure teachers develop ability to manage their emotions appropriately

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