MANAGEMENT OF SCHOOL HAZARDS AS CORRELATE TO TEACHERS' JOB PERFORMANCE IN PUBLIC SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN OWERRI EDUCATION ZONES OF IMO STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

In this study, the researcher investigated management of school hazards as correlate of teachers' job performance in public senior secondary schools in Owerri Education Zones of Imo State, Nigeria. In order to achieve the aims of the study, two research questions were asked and two hypotheses were formulated to guide the study. This study adopted the correlational design involving simple linear method. The population of the study was 3,438 teachers in all the 124 public senior secondary schools in Owerri Education Zones I & II of Imo State. The researcher drew a sample of 358 respondents from 15 selected secondary schools through Taro Yamane formula. Cluster random and proportionate sampling techniques were used to select the schools and respondents. Two rating scales served as the instruments used for the collection of data for this study which were prepared by the researcher and titled: Management of School Hazard Scale (MSHS) as well as Teachers' Job Performance Scale (TJPS). These instruments were subject to face validity by three research specialists. Reliability coefficients of 0.83 for MSHS and 0.86 for TJPS were obtained using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficients. Research questions were answered using Pearson "r" statistics while the hypotheses were tested using t-test of the significance of Pearson "r" statistics at a 0.05 significant level. The result found that management of psychosocial, and environmental hazards have low, positive and significant extent of relationship with teachers' job performance in public senior secondary schools in Owerri Education Zones of Imo State. Based on the findings of the study, it was recommended that principals should reduce arbitrary allocation of subject; classes and responsibilities as it affects quality of teaching delivered and work output. Also, all teachers should be given commensurable work schedule as this will go a long way to reduce stress on teaching staff and subsequently enhanced their performance

Keywords: School Hazards, Environmental Hazards Psychosocial Hazard, Teachers' Job Performance.

Introduction

Education is a very crucial form of development to both individuals and the society. No wonder, countries all over the world see education as a good instrument for national development because it is expected to produce the required quantity and quality of human resources for their economic growth. Education for sustainable development

across the world, Nigeria inclusive, is a sine qua non to build a better society for all. Building a better society for all may not be easily achieved especially when the pressing global contemporary issues including environmental hazards are at the pace. Nigeria being fully aware of the importance of education according to Federal Government of Nigeria (2013) sees it as an instrument per excellence in the development of the nation's economy. Similarly, Onuoha & Uyanga (2024) posits that education plays a very important role as an instrument for the realization of national development. Hence, education especially secondary education becomes paramount both to the government and the individuals. In Nigeria, there are three levels of education vis-à-vis the primary, secondary and tertiary. For the sake of this study, the secondary education becomes the focal point.

Secondary education is provided for learners after primary education and before tertiary education. It is that level of education that is aimed at developing a child towards to acquisition of literacy, numeracy, and communication skills. Adetona (2013) opines that a major factor that necessitates the acquisition of secondary education in Nigeria is that the education being provided at the primary level is proving to be insufficient for a child to acquire permanent literacy, communicative, and numeracy skills expected from him/her at the end of the training. The aim of secondary education according to FGN (2013) is to provide opportunity for qualitative education for primary school leavers, cater for the differences in talents of the learners, develop Nigeria cultural heritage, produce a generation of people who respect the dignity of labour, foster Nigerian unity and to inspire its students with the desire for achievement and self-improvement both at school and in later life. All these aims cannot be achieved if the teachers are neglected, thus it is right to say that the teachers are the pivot of the educational system.

A teacher is considered as the most crucial factor in implementing all instructional activities in the school settings. It is a fact that the academic qualifications, knowledge of the subject matter, competence and skills of teaching and the commitment of the teacher have significant impact on the teaching and learning process. Oku (2015) sees the teacher as a classroom manager who is expected to create a conducive environment for teaching/learning to be adjudged effective in the performance of his/her primary function. In the contemporary society, teachers occupy vital positions of honour and are regarded to be a major determinant of the societal values, Intellectuals and moral development. It is often said that the standard and quality of education of a given nation is dependent and determined by the standard of her teachers; it is on this note therefore that the Federal Government in 2013 deemed it necessary to review the National Policy on Education to include teachers' education (training) (FRN, 2013). This implies that teachers at every level of education must strive towards increased job performance since they are the building blocks of any society.

Teachers' job performance refers to the result achieved in carrying out the tasks assigned to them, based on their skills, experience, sincerity, and the time available. Job performance is defined by Omoneye (2016) as the execution of a task in a situation that allows optimal outcome. It is also seen as the ability of teachers to achieve the organization's criteria. Teachers are regarded to achieve good performance when they meet up with the set goals and objectives of the school and as such, teachers' job

performance could have a great influence on the school's overall performance. Wakkala, Danjuma and Bashir (2022) noted that job performance is associated with quantity and quality of output, timeliness of output, presence on the job, efficiency and/or effectiveness of work completed. Thao and Hwang (2019) also expressed job performance as the successful completion of tasks by an individual(s), as set and measured by the system, to pre-defined acceptable standards while efficiently and effectively utilizing available resource within a changing environment. According to the National Safety Council in USA established that on an average workday, one million office workers will be absent from work due to job stress caused by school hazard.

School hazard can be defined as the uncertainty connected with every kind of school activity. In consonance with the above assertion, Choji (2017) noted that hazard is any issue that can affect the objectives of an organization. The term hazard connotes any substance that has a high tendency to harm or adversely affect the human population (Ogba, Igu, Nwinyinya & Umoke, 2023). Primarily, any phenomenon that may result to harm to the well-being of people, animals, damage to property and the environment could be termed as a hazard. Asogwa, Blavo and Asogwa (2022) assert that hazard is a serious disruption of the functioning of a society, causing widespread human material or environmental losses which exceed the ability of the affected society to cope using only its own resources. Hazards, both natural and man-made had been part and parcel of human experiences. It is the result of disruption and malfunction of elements in the process of man's interaction with physical and social environment. Technological progress and environmental complexities especially since the 21st century significantly increased the rate of hazards worldwide. The closing decade of the 20th century witnessed renewed and vigorous commitment on hazard management in various organization and schools are no exception.

School hazard management refers to those efforts, strategies and techniques employed within the school system to prevent, reduce, cushion or avoid the dangers of hazards in order to ensure that academic activities follow the planned schedules. In support, Boubala (2020) asserts that hazard management involves minimizing things that may negatively impact upon a school and identifying and harnessing those things that will help to achieve the goals and objectives of an organization. An effective hazard management structure allows organisation like secondary schools to understand the risks in any initiative and take informed decisions on whether and how the hazards should be managed. According to Arop, Owan and Ekpang (2019), there are several types of hazards that can be managed within the school system they include: biological hazard, chemical hazard, ergonomic hazard, physical hazard, psychosocial hazard and environmental hazard. Thus, drawing from the above assertion, the schools' hazards considered in this study are psychosocial hazard, physical hazard, environmental hazard and ergonomic hazard.

Psychosocial hazards are interactions between the teacher, his job content, work related organization and management. According to Nwosu (2022), psychosocial hazards include the social environmental and conditions which the school presents, while on the other hand, it includes the teacher's competencies, needs and experience. As such, the combination of these factors may be referred to as those interactions that have proven

negatively or hazardously and affecting the teacher's health both through his perceptions and experience. Psychosocial hazards, thus, go hand in hand with the teachers' experience in the school and the stress associated with it. Hence, Kennedy (2018) contends that work-related stress has also been looked at as the response of people who are loaded with long working hours, work pressures and other related demands which often are unmatched to their knowledge level, and their abilities, therefore, challenging their ability to meet up, cope and function efficiently, effectively and productively at the school. It is imperative to note that psychosocial risks are often witnessed in all workplace, and they are ubiquitous, and may not pose a problem as long as they are properly addressed and preventive action has been developed and implemented. However, they may pose a threat to the teacher's health mostly due to lack of recognition of the risk factors (and consequent inaction), mishandling of such risks, poor prevention mechanism and, to an extent, continuous exposure to such work related risks.

Environmental hazards could be referred to as the natural and artificial alteration and the daily outcomes of interaction between humans and their surrounding that pose dangerous health effects to humans, plants and animals. In the view of Cutter (2021), environmental hazards are events surfacing from interactions between natural, social and technological systems of the environment that are harmful to humans. Environment that is harmful to humans is worrisome due to the increase death tolls some years ago which recorded on a yearly an average estimate of 106,654 lives (Lenon, 2023). Some of the various forms of environmental hazards could exist around school environment mostly at the secondary school level. These forms of environmental hazards include: lead paints and pipes, radon gas, asbestos, exposure to noise, drinking contaminated water, soil pollution in playgrounds, poor indoor air quality and electromagnetic fields, among others (Paulson & Barnett, 2016). Some other nascent environmental hazards on school environment are heat extremes in previously cooler climates, overcrowding due to displaced populations or shifting geographic range of vector borne diseases and the use of pesticides (Sheffield & Landrigan, 2021). These environmental hazards can be very detrimental to both the staff and students and could have net effect on the academic activities in the schools.

Consequently, the current set up in most schools in Nigeria is such that academic staff performs strenuous tasks and work longer hours so as to increase their job performance. The strategies of managing the various school hazards appear not to be very clear to people because, despite the concerns on physical, psychosocial, environmental and ergonomics hazards, most teachers seem to be experiencing discomfort in their health and safety due to hazardous substances prevalent in the schools. Several studies have been carried out to ascertain whether school hazards affect the job performance of teachers in various levels (Mishra & Sarkar, 2021; Vita & Abraham, 2019; Ogba, Igu, Nwinyinya & Umoke, 2023; Kennedy, 2018 and Arop, Owan & Ekpang, 2019) but little or no study has been conducted in public senior secondary schools in Owerri Education Zones of Imo State. Hence, there is an urgent need to bridge this gap by investigating the management of school hazards as correlate of teachers' job performance in public senior secondary schools in Owerri Education Zones of Imo State, Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

Teachers in secondary schools are faced with the responsibility of enhancing teaching and learning. They are supposed to carry out their duties and responsibilities effectively in order to achieve those educationally stated goals. The effectiveness of teachers determines how well the student will perform academically and be productive to his society. Unfortunately, many teachers fail to carry out their primary responsibilities or duties in the school. Many of them are found displaying unfavourable behaviours such as absenteeism, poor note writing, late coming, and indecent dressing, being reluctant or lazy in carryout assigned duties (Adeyemi, 2021). These bad behaviours of teachers have contributed to the poor performance of students in both their internal and external examinations as well as the overall poor quality of students produced by secondary schools who in turn, transit to higher institutions.

A visit to some public secondary schools showed that there are lots of hazards such as heat, faulty electrical connections and appliances, overcrowded classrooms, stress, noise, poor ventilation in the staff rooms etc. which could to a greater extent deter effective work performance and even decline in students' achievement. Due to the outlined problems, one may begin to wonder what really the reason for teachers' poor job performance is. Could it be that they are faced or exposed to hazardous substances that could be hindering their job performance in schools? This research therefore is posed as a question: how does school hazard management relate to teachers' job performance in public senior secondary schools in Owerri Education Zones of Imo State? Providing answer to the above question becomes the thrust of this study.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of the study is to investigate management of school hazards as correlate of teachers' job performance in public senior secondary schools in Owerri Education Zones of Imo State. The specific objectives include to:

- 1. ascertain the relationship between management of psychosocial hazard and teachers' job performance in schools, and
- 2. identify the relationship between management of environmental hazard and teachers' job performance in schools

Research Questions

In line with the specific objectives, the following research questions were posed to guide the study;

- 1. What is the relationship between management of psychosocial hazard and teachers' job performance in schools?
- 2. What is the relationship between management of environmental hazard and teachers' job performance in schools?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance;

Ho₁: There is no significant relationship between management of psychosocial hazard and teachers' job performance in schools.

Ho₂: There is no significant relationship between management of environmental hazard and teachers' job performance in schools.

Methodology

This study adopted the correlational design involving simple linear method. The population of the study was 3,438 teachers in all the 124 public senior secondary schools in Owerri Education Zones I & II of Imo State. The researcher drew a sample of 358 respondents from 15 selected secondary schools through Taro Yamane formula. Cluster random and proportionate sampling techniques were used to select the schools and respondents. Two rating scales served as the instruments used for the collection of data for this study which were prepared by the researcher and titled: Management of School Hazard Scale (MSHS) as well as Teachers' Job Performance Scale (TJPS). These instruments were subject to face validity by three research specialists. Reliability coefficients of 0.83 for MSHS and 0.86 for TJPS were obtained using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficients. Research questions were answered using Pearson "r" statistics while the hypotheses were tested using t-test of the significance of Pearson "r" statistics at a 0.05 significant level.

Results

Research Question One: What is the relationship between management of psychosocial hazard and teachers' job performance in schools?

Table 1: Summaries of Pearson "r" statistics used to explain the extent of relationship between management of psychosocial hazard (X) and teachers' job performance (Y) in schools

V	n	Σ	r	MR	DR	Remarks
X	358	5485				Low
			0.38	Low	Positive	Positive
Y	358	8786				Relationship

Size (n), Summation (Σ), Coefficient (r), Magnitude of Relationship (MR), Direction of Relationship (DR) and Remarks

Data on Table 1 shows the summaries of Pearson "r" statistics used to describe the relationship between management of psychosocial hazard and teachers' job performance in schools. The result shows that an index of 0.38 was realized for the extent of relationship between the two variables (management of psychosocial hazard and teachers' job performance). This positive nature indicates that an increase in one variable

is likely to lead to the same measure of increase in another variable and a decrease in one variable could also lead to the same measure of decrease in another variable, implying that a decrease in the management of psychosocial hazard led to a decrease in teachers' job performance. Therefore, the answer to the research question is that there is a low but positive relationship between management of psychosocial hazard and teachers' job performance in public senior secondary schools in Owerri Education Zones of Imo State.

Hypothesis One

Ho₁: There is no significant relationship between management of psychological hazard and teachers' job performance in schools.

Table 2: Summaries of t-test of significance of Pearson "r" statistics used to test the extent of relationship between management of psychological hazard and teachers' job performance in schools

V	n	Σ	r	α	df	t _{cal}	t_{tab}	Decision
X	358	5485						
			0.38	0.05	356	7.656	1.96	Reject Ho1
Y	358	8786						

Sample Size (n), Summation (Σ), Coefficient of Relationship (r), Alpha Level (α), Degree of Freedom (df) and t-test of Significance of Pearson "r" between two Variables

Data on Table 2 show the result for the test of the significance of the relationship between management of psychological hazard and teachers' job performance in schools. The result gave the degree of freedom as 356 and the t-calculated value as 7.656 and the t-tabulated value as 1.96. As the t-calculated value is greater than the t-tabulated value, the researcher rejected the null hypothesis; therefore, infer that there is a significant relationship between management of psychological hazard and teachers' job performance in public senior secondary schools in Owerri Education Zones of Imo State.

Research Question Two: What is the relationship between management of environmental hazard and teachers' job performance in schools?

Table 3: Summaries of Pearson "r" statistics used to explain the extent of relationship between management of environmental hazard (X) and teachers' job performance (Y) in schools

V	n	Σ	r	MR	DR	Remarks
X	358	6609				Low
			0.22	Low	Positive	Positive
Y	358	8786				Relationship

Size (n), Summation (Σ), Coefficient (r), Magnitude of Relationship (MR), Direction of Relationship (DR) and Remarks

Data on Table 3 shows the summaries of Pearson "r" statistics used to describe the relationship between management of environmental hazard and teachers' job performance in schools. The result shows that an index of 0.22 was realized for the relationship between the two variables (management of environmental hazard and teachers' job performance). This positive nature indicates that an increase in one variable is likely to lead to some measure of increase in another variable and a decrease in one variable could also lead to some measure of decrease in another variable, implying that a decrease in the management of psychosocial hazard led to a decrease in teachers' job performance. Therefore, the answer to the research question is that there is a low but positive relationship between management of environmental hazard and teachers' job performance in public senior secondary schools in Owerri Education Zones of Imo State.

Hypothesis Two

Ho₃: There is no significant relationship between management of environmental hazard and teachers' job performance in schools.

Table 4: Summaries of t-test of significance of Pearson "r" statistics used to test the relationship between management of environmental hazard and teachers' job performance in schools

V	n	Σ	r	α	df	t _{cal}	t _{tab}	Decision
X	358	6609						
			0.22	0.05	356	4.259	1.96	Reject Ho3
Y	358	8786						-

Sample Size (n), Summation (Σ), Coefficient of Relationship (r), Alpha Level (α), Degree of Freedom (df) and t-test of Significance of Pearson "r" between two Variables

Data on Table 4 showed the result for the test of the significance of the relationship between management of environmental hazard and teachers' job performance in schools. The result gave the degree of freedom as 356 and the t-calculated value as 4.259 and the t-tabulated value as 1.96. As the t-calculated value is greater than the t-tabulated value, the researcher rejected the null hypothesis; therefore, infer that there is a significant relationship between management of environmental hazard and teachers' job performance in public senior secondary schools in Owerri Education Zones of Imo State.

Discussion of Findings

The study indicated that there is a low but positive relationship between management of psychosocial hazard and teachers' job performance in public senior secondary schools in Owerri Education Zones of Imo State. This implies that management of psychosocial hazard is poor as teachers' workloads are very burdensome, teachers are not given the opportunity to get involved in the decision-making process and there is no stress management policy that help reduce stress experienced by teachers while discharging thereby resulting to poor teachers' job performance. This is to say that a decrease in management of psychosocial hazard would lead to decline in teachers' job performance which recorded a low coefficient value of 0.38. The low relationship indicated that the poor job performance exhibited by teachers are as a result of inadequate,

inconsiderate or unsupportive supervision; poor relationships with co-workers; bullying, harassment and violence (including sexual harassment); isolated or solitary work; no agreed procedures for dealing with problems or complaints are indices of psychosocial hazards in schools. The result further established that there is a significant extent of relationship between management of psychological hazard and teachers' job performance in public senior secondary schools. In line with this finding, Arop, Owan and Ekpang (2019) revealed that, school hazards management has a significant relationship to teachers' job effectiveness in secondary schools. Similarly, Kennedy (2018) found that there was prevalence of psychosocial hazards of 62.2% among workers at the University of Port Harcourt. Work place bullying was the most common and was represented by verbal abuse as the most prevalent (43.9%). Workplace abuse was the second group of psychosocial hazards with highest occurrence, of which being screamed or yelled at was (39.4%). Work-related stress was the most prevalent single hazards found in the study with a prevalence of 62.7%. For Work place related fatigue, environmental stress was most prevalent psychosocial hazard with 52.3%. Work load had 98.2% and it was the most prevalent risk factor which the respondent perceived, and was followed by homework interface with 82.0%. The result therefore strengthened the fact that teachers' absenteeism, poor note writing, late coming, and indecent dressing, being reluctant or lazy in carryout assigned duties are connected to mismanagement of psychosocial hazard in public senior secondary schools in Owerri Education Zones of Imo State.

The result of this study showed that there is a low but positive relationship between management of environmental hazard and teachers' job performance in public senior secondary schools in Owerri Education Zones of Imo State. The low relationship is an indication that a decrease in the management of psychosocial hazard leads to a decrease in teachers' job performance. This implies that mismanagement of environmental hazard is evident in public senior secondary schools owing to the presence of open site dumps, unkempt waste disposal facilities, electric generating plants, open drainages, location and conditions of sanitary facility, open drainages among others. When such environmental hazards are not controlled and managed, it affects instructional delivery causing teachers to work under the most uncomfortable and unhealthy conditions. The implication is that when instructions are ongoing under the dilapidated buildings with broken walls, floors, windows which are as a result of environmental hazards, the students may not be able to benefit properly from the result-oriented contents. On the other hand, teachers in making efforts to deliver instructions effectively are likely to encounter difficulty in employing innovative teaching and learning strategies using the resources available and evaluation process. The result further established that there is a significant extent of relationship between management of environmental hazard and teachers' job performance in schools. In agreement with the findings, Ogba, Igu, Nwinyinya and Umoke (2023) found that natural and man-made environmental hazards negatively impact on instructional delivery in public schools. The findings therefore strengthened the fact that environmental hazards are detrimental to one's health and negate the performance of individuals. The lack of control or management of environmental hazards where the schools are situated could cause several damages and even affect the effective delivery of instructions as both the teachers and their students

might find it difficult to operate thereby resulting to the poor performance experienced by the teachers in public senior secondary schools in Owerri Education Zones, Imo State.

Recommendations

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

- 1. Principals should reduce arbitrary allocation of subject; classes and responsibilities as it affects quality of teaching delivered and work output. Also, all teachers should be given commensurable work schedule as this will go a long way to reduce stress on teaching staff and subsequently enhanced their performance.
- 2. Ministries of Education in collaboration with private organizations/NGOs should organize workshops and seminars for both principals and teachers on environment related issues in order to help control and management environmental hazards.

Conclusion

This study has underscored the critical role of effective hazard management in influencing teachers' job performance in public senior secondary schools. The findings revealed a significant correlation between the implementation of robust hazard management strategies and enhanced teacher job performance. By addressing potential hazards such as structural defects, electrical faults, inadequate sanitation, and security threats, schools can create a safer and more conducive learning environment for both teachers and students. This, in turn, reduces occupational stress, improves teacher morale, and enhances their overall job satisfaction.

Therefore, it is imperative for school administrators to prioritize hazard management initiatives. By investing in regular safety inspections, maintenance programs, and emergency preparedness plans, schools can mitigate risks, minimize disruptions, and optimize teacher performance. Ultimately, this will lead to improved student learning outcomes and a more effective educational system.

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