

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN WORK ENVIRONMENT AND JOB SATISFACTION AMONG SECONDARY SCHOOL COUNSELLORS IN ENUGU EDUCATION ZONE OF ENUGU STATE

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to determine the relationship between work environment and job satisfaction among Secondary School counsellors in Enugu Education Zone of Enugu State. The research design adopted for this study was correlational design. One research question and hypothesis guided the study. The population for the study consisted of all the 59 Secondary School counsellors currently serving in the 31 Secondary School Schools in Enugu Education Zone of Enugu Zone. A researcher designed questionnaire was used for data collection. The instrument was validated by three experts, one in measurement and evaluation and the two from guidance and counselling, all from the Faculty of Education Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. The reliability co-efficient of the instrument was 0.72 and 0.82 through Cronbach Alpha method. The data collected for the study were analysed using Pearson correlation analysis to answer the research question; simple linear regression analysis was used to test the hypothesis. The data analysed indicates that the relationship between work environment and job satisfaction among Secondary School counsellors is a very high positive relationship. There is a significant relationship between work environment and job satisfaction among secondary school counsellors. Based on the findings, it was recommended among others, that Government and school administrators should ensure the provision of conducive working environment to their Secondary School counsellors in terms of clear policies and procedures, security, freedom and good emotional climate.

Keywords: Relationship, Job Satisfaction, Work Environment, Secondary School, School Counsellors.

Introduction

In Nigeria, a developing country, counselling services is found in Secondary School setting. The Federal Government of Nigeria National Policy on Education FRN, (2004) made provisions for the training of counsellors in order to render counselling services specifically for the overall development of students. Hence, counselling has now become institutionalized, taking place in schools and non-school settings. Counselling is defined by Kani (2018) as a learning process which takes place in schools between a student or group of students beset by problems with which he or they cannot cope alone and a school counsellor whose training and experiences have qualified him to help students reach solutions to the various types of problems. Counselling is also viewed by Chigbu, Oguzie & Obi (2020) as a specialized helping process whereby information is disseminated to a group or to individual so as to effectively engage them in interactions that will lead to finding solution to problems as well as making decision for a better and more stable future.

Counselling is uniquely relevant as it is the driving or motivating force that helps students develop positive attitudes to appropriate national issues, work and learning. Counselling helps students to acquire the skills of collecting, collating and using appropriate information, it assists students in acquiring as early as possible the positive image of self through self-understanding, self-direction and skills in problem solves and decision making, among others. (Chigbu, Oguzie & Obi 2020). To achieve these potential outcomes, a trained school counsellor who is satisfied with his counselling job, is required to manage a secondary school guidance programme. A school counsellor in this study is a professionally trained person who uses his skills and strategies to help students in its working environment to resolve and ameliorate their problems in all spheres of life.

It is the school counsellor that develops a process and procedure for planning, implementing and evaluating school guidance and counseling programme. This programme is usually developed along with teaching and non teaching staff, students, parents, school committees, and community members. The school counsellor functions as coordinator and facilitator in bringing together people and resources in the school, the community, and the neighborhood for the fullest academic, career, personal and social development of students. Counsellors build self esteem of the client, reassures if the client is insecure, solicits the client's own feelings and ideas for solutions, shows empathy and care to the client, builds confidence, integrates student into a new environment and facilitates successful communication among school administrators, parents and students.

Guidance and counselling in Nigeria secondary schools is facing numerous challenges. The issues range from lack of appraisal tools for counselling; poor physical facilities for counselling, inadequate communication by counsellors with teachers, administrators, students and parents, high ratio of students to counsellors, and counsellors lack of power to influence change in the school; lack of sufficient funding for guidance activities; lack of time allotment for counselling; free choice versus national manpower need and what exact roles counsellors should play in schools as counsellors and reasons for their existing in the school settings; the challenges of sex inequality and occupational counselling in Nigeria; and more

recently poor Information Communication Technology (ICT), compliance of counsellors (Conchi, 2018). By implication, if secondary school counsellors are faced with these challenges, undoubtedly, they will fail in the discharge of their counselling responsibilities. Hence, a situation where the attitude displayed by school counsellors as a result of poor job satisfaction can be negative thus will hinder effective discharge of counselling practice.

This study focused on investigating the relationship between job satisfaction and work environment. It is assured that work environment have an impact on the effectiveness and efficiency of secondary school counselling practice.

Furthermore, counselors working in a positive environment can help to boost the school counsellors' morale, increase the efficacy of positive achievement towards client's problems and also lead to positive job commitment and satisfaction. However, it is noted that the degree to which workers are satisfied with their jobs are subjected to factors such as job environment (Osibanjo, Abiodun & Adenigi, 2014).

Unarguably, employees do not display their behaviour and attitude in a vacuum but in a specific work environment. Kan (2018) defines work environment as the surrounding conditions in which a secondary school counsellor operates, which are composed of physical conditions such as office temperatures or equipment, such as personal computers, work processes or procedures, as well as the social interactions at the workplace including interactions with teachers, subordinate, community members and school managers. Therefore, employee's workplace environment can determine the efficacy, efficiency and quality of work productivity. Allan (2015) states that skills and motivation level influences an employee's error rate, output rate, level of innovations, collaborations with others, level of absenteeism and the length of service. Marpady & Singhe (2018) note that it is an accepted assumption that better workplace environment greatly influences employee's mental status, actions, abilities and performance as well as motivates and produces better results. He went further to claim that better outcomes and increased productivity are associated with better workplace environment. Work environment, therefore, in this context is an agglomeration of the structures, infrastructures, personnel and other resource required in the workplace for the effective and efficient performance of assigned duties and responsibilities. It is to a large extent the work environment that determines influences, enhances, makes or mars the attainment of objectives of counselling practices in Secondary Schools.

It is paramount, therefore, to understand the importance of positive workplace environment in increasing the employee's performance which will in turn lead to high productivity. Based on the above assertion, it becomes fundamental and important for Government to attract, retain and motivate school counsellors through good and conducive environment for high productivity and performance. The education authorities and instructors usually prefer high salaries and compensation benefits as a better strategy to attract and retain counsellors. However, highly innovative working environment with well-equipped office, good supervisory relationship and highly ranked job profile may have strong influence on the authorities' ability to attract and retain qualified counsellors. It is against this background that this study attempted to investigate the relationship between work environment and job satisfaction among Secondary school counsellors. Work environment can either make or mar the performance of job in every organization. Pitaloka & Sofia(2014) confirm that good work

environmental condition helps employees accomplish their work and organizational goals, making the workplace more enjoyable, thus increasing job satisfaction.

Nigeria education sector finds it very difficult to satisfy their employees through motivations via caring for their welfare, creating conducive environment for effective and efficient discharge of duties among others. It is important to note that a satisfied school counsellor is a happy school counsellor who is always successful in his aims and objectives toward contributing to the educational success and achievement. Job satisfaction in the context of this study, therefore, simply refers to the feeling of fulfillment which is experienced by the counsellors resulting from availability of conducive working environment and the accomplishment of set objectives.

Statement of Problem

Generally, it is expected that secondary school counsellors are more likely to have high level of job satisfaction and also appreciate their work environment. If conducive environment and high job satisfaction is accomplished, it will certainly reflect in the mental ability of the clients as they will vent to mentally sound client with positive feedback both in personal, social, and educational success achievement. All these are portraying the need to understand the secondary school counsellor's work environment and job satisfaction in the study area. Secondary school counsellors are not satisfied and committed to their school counselling practice in the study area. Apart from appointing school counsellors to different schools in the study area, nothing spectacular seems to be provided by the government and its agents in making the school counsellor get satisfied in their counselling practices via creating conducive and innovative counselling environment. This is very obvious in the mobility of the school counsellors to create an avenue for implementing, evaluating and appraising school guidance and counselling program in attending to students, parents school administrators, school boards and those that immensely need counselling intervention. All these are rarely possible to achieve as a result of poor funding to secondary school system in order to run the activities of school guidance program.

It is well known fact that effective counseling services demand adequate funding to purchase and deal with items such as journals, publications, play gadgets and other counselling resources among others. It is also pertinent to understand that funding is also needed by the counsellors to expose students to academic orientation, excursions, career day/week activities, yet government and its agencies give deaf ear to the needs and progress of school counselling practice, thus, counsellors producing students with poor personality development and low self esteem who are not academically and mentally balanced to tackle their educational, personal, psychosocial and daily problems of life. Adversely, this group of students will eventually at the long run give vent to poor educational and economic development, which will grossly affect sustainable national development. It is based on this background and state of art that the researchers is investigating the relationship between work environment and job satisfaction among secondary school counsellors of Enugu education State, Enugu state.

Purpose of the study is to investigate

- (1) The relationship between work environment and job satisfaction of secondary school counsellors in Enugu Education Zone of Enugu State.

Research Question

The following research question guided the study

- (1) What is the relationship between work environment and job satisfaction among secondary school counsellors.

Hypothesis

The following null hypothesis guided the study and was tested at 0.05 level of significance.

- (1) There is no significant relationship between work environment and job satisfaction among secondary school counsellors.

METHODOLOGY

The research design adopted for this study was correlational design. A correlational study offers an opportunity to predict results and explain the relationship among variables (Ary, Jacobs, Sorensen, & Walter, 2014). In a correlational research, no attempt is made to control or manipulate the variables as in experimental design; however, the correlation statistics is used to describe and measure the degree of relationship between two or more variables or sets of scores. Therefore, the study considered to use the correlational study as an appropriate research design for the fact that it is not possible to select, control and manipulate the independent variable for the study (Work environment).

The study was conducted in the 31 secondary schools in Enugu education zone of Enugu State, Nigeria. The population for the study consisted of all the 59 schools counsellors currently serving in the 31 secondary schools in Enugu education zone of Enugu State. The population was small and manageable so no sampling was done. The researcher developed a self structured instrument called secondary school counsellor's work environment questionnaire (SSCWEQ) and Secondary School Counsellor's job satisfaction questionnaire (SSCJSQ) with a four point response format.

The instrument has 20 items and was face validated by three experts one in measurement and evaluation, and the remaining two from Guidance and Counselling all from the Faculty of Education, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. The internal consistency of SSCWEQ and SSCJSQ were ascertained using Cronbach Alpha method. A similar population of 15 school counsellors from Udi Education Zone of Enugu State was used during the pilot study. The data collected from the pilot study was analysed using statistical package for social science (SPSS). The results of the analysis yielded reliability coefficients of 0.72 for SSCWEQ and 0.82 for SSCJSQ and an overall reliability coefficient of 0.80. To collect data for the study, the researcher employed the assistance of the zonal coordinator of guidance service in Enugu Educational Zone whom they trained in a one day consultative meeting. 59 copies of the questionnaire distributed to the respondents but the researchers and their research assistants were able to retrieve 51 copies signifying 86.44% return of duly filled copies of the administered instrument.

To answer the research question, data collected were answered using Pearson's Correlation Analysis at the significance level of 0.05. The decision guide was the significance level of 0.05. Therefore, the relationship of counsellors' work environment on counsellors' job satisfaction were considered to exist if the level of significance is below 0.05 ($P < 0.05$). However, where the significance level is above 0.05 ($P > 0.05$), then the relationship of counsellor's work

environment on counsellors job satisfaction would be considered not to exist. To test the hypothesis, the data collected were subjected to simple linear regression model to regress counsellors' responses, on counsellors work environment (Independent Variables) against their response on job satisfaction (Dependent Variables). The researchers also used the following guideline to determine the relationship existing between the variables in the research question: 0.00 – 0.19 (very low relationship), 0.02 – 0.39 (low relationship), 0.04 – 0.59 (moderate relationship), 0.06 – 0.79 (high relationship) and 0.08 and above (very high relationship). Also, the researchers would reject the null hypothesis if the exact probability value (P-value) is less than the prior probability value (i.e 0.05 level of significance), otherwise the null hypothesis would be accepted.

Research Question one: what is the relationship between work environment and job satisfaction among secondary school counsellors?

Table 1: Pearson Correlation showing the relationship between work environment and job satisfaction of secondary school counsellors

		Work Environment	Job Satisfaction	Decision
Work Environment	Pearson Correlation	1	.800	
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	
	N 51	51	Very high	Positive Relationship
Job Satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	.800	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		
	N	51	51	

Table 1 ascertained the relationship between work environment and job satisfaction among secondary school counsellors. The table shows that the value of the correlation coefficient (r) is .824. This indicates that the relationship between work environment and job satisfaction among secondary school counsellors is a very high positive relationship.

Hypothesis one: There is no significant relationship between work environment and job satisfaction among secondary school counsellors.

Table 2: Summary of regression analysis for the relationship between work environment and job satisfaction among secondary school counsellors.

Variables	N	F	R ²	β	Sig.	Decision
Work Environment	51	1.502	.679	.824	.000	Rejected
Job Satisfaction						

a. Dependent Variable: job satisfaction; b. Predictors: (Constant), work environment; df: 1.502; p<.05

Table 2 shows that the probability associated with the calculated value R^2 (.679) for the relationship between work environment and job satisfaction among secondary school counsellors is 0.000. Since the probability value of 0.000 is less than the 0.05 level of significance ($p < .05$), the null hypothesis, therefore, was rejected, implying that there is no significant relationship between work environment and job satisfaction among secondary school counsellors. The R^2 value of .679 shows that work environment accounts for 67%. The Beta (B) weighting of .679 indicates that for every standard deviation unit change in work environment, job satisfaction will rise by .824 (82%) among the secondary school counsellors.

Discussion of the Findings

The finding of the study on the work environment as correlate of job satisfaction among secondary school counsellors in Enugu education zone revealed at table one shows that the analysis value of the correlation coefficient (r) is 0.824, indications, that the relationship between work environment and job satisfaction of secondary school counsellors is a very high positive relationship. Similarly, this result was further strengthen at the regression analysis for the relationship between work environment and job satisfaction among secondary school counsellors as shown in table II which reveal that there is significant relationship between work environment and job satisfaction of secondary school counsellors. ($R^2 = .679$ and $B = .824$). By implication, the secondary school counsellors have agreed that working environment plays a vital role in attaining their job satisfaction. The result of the study supports the findings of Rituparna and Anjali (2011) that have shown that job satisfaction is significantly correlated with different domain

Recommendations

The following recommendations are proffered by the study.

1. Government and school administrators should ensure the provision of conducive working environment to their secondary school counsellors in terms of clear policies and procedures, security, freedom and good emotional climate.
2. Education stakeholders should provide better office building and sufficient counselling resources as it will in turn contribute towards achieving higher level of secondary school counsellors Job satisfaction.
3. Government or its agencies managing post primary schools should periodically organize in-service education programmes such as conference, workshop, seminars etc for counsellors to up-date their knowledge and enhance their proficiency on the job.

Conclusion

This study has from the onset established the imperative of counselling services in Secondary Schools bringing to the fore the need to train counsellors in order to ensure effective development of students. By this token counselling services and guidance counsellors are sine qua non in educational and national development.

The study went further to explore a number of challenges confronting effective counselling practice in Nigeria and Enugu education zone in particular. To this extent it was affirmed that there exists high level of positive relationship work environment and job satisfaction among secondary school counsellors in Enugu Education Zone.

In the light of the above, it is exigent that government and relevant agencies synergize to optimize the work environment by putting in place innovative equipment and resources to enhance counselling services, ensure high productivity and guarantee job satisfaction among counsellors in Secondary School in Enugu Education Zone.

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