

Psychological Capital and Job Involvement of Secondary School Teachers in North-West Senatorial District of Benue State, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

Job involvement has continued to receive great attention of management scholars and organisational practitioners globally. In a similar direction, this study examined psychological capital as a predictor of job involvement among secondary school teachers in North-West Senatorial District of Benue State, Nigeria. The study adopted cross-sectional survey design. Participants were 354 teachers comprising of 195(55.1%) males and 159(44.9%) females randomly sampled from 40 secondary schools. Teachers' Job Involvement Scale (TJIS) and Psychological Capital Questionnaire were used for data collection. Results of Multiple Linear Analysis revealed that psychological capital is an important factor in predicting job involvement of secondary school teachers. Particularly, resilience is the most important component of psychological capital with positive influence on job involvement and its two dimensions. Hope and optimism are also important psychological capital components but only predict emotional and not physical job involvement. Finally, self-efficacy seems to be less important component of psychological capital with no significant independent influence on both physical and emotional job involvement dimensions. It is concluded that psychological capital enhances job involvement. Therefore, curriculum developers in teachers' colleges should incorporate training courses targeted at developing psychological capital of teachers in order to enhance their job involvement during professional practice.

Keywords: Job involvement, psychological capital, hope, optimism, resilience, self-efficacy

INTRODUCTION

The concept of job involvement has continued to gain much popularity among management scholars and organisational practitioners globally. Job involvement is increasingly receiving research attention due to its connection with many positive organisational outcomes such as job satisfaction^[1], job commitment^[2], organisational citizenship behaviour (OCB)^[3], and superior in-role job performance^[4]. It creates job satisfaction and lead employees to fulfill personal life goals^[1] and increase mental health and quality of life generally^[5]. In the education sector too, job involvement has been linked with teachers' identification with teaching goals of the school and high productivity^[6]. In Nigeria however, many public school teachers engage in practices indicating lack of job involvement such as absenteeism from school and classes, late coming to school and classes^[7], inappropriate and non-keeping of records^[8], trading within and outside school, commercial driving, immoral relationship with female students, and drinking and smoking during office hours^[9-10]. This lack of job involvement by teachers has been linked with the lack of seriousness, indiscipline and poor academic performance of students in schools^[11],

which are worrisome to school administrators, government, parents/guardians and all other stakeholders in the education sector in Nigeria.

Researchers have examined job involvement from the perspective of individual differences which occurs when the possession of certain needs, values or personal characteristics predispose individuals to become more or less involved in their jobs. Accordingly, researchers have studied psychological capital and its four dimensions (hope, self-efficacy, resilience and optimism), and their relationship with job involvement^[12] including its related constructs such as employee engagement^[13-15], individual level job satisfaction^[16] and organisational commitment^[17]. Although there are numerous researches linking psychological capital and positive organisational behaviours, little is known about the relationship between psychological capital and job involvement of secondary school teachers in Benue State. This study is therefore designed to close this gap and provide knowledge that can benefit policy makers, school administrators, teachers, parents, researchers and students of psychology, management and other related fields in bringing about sustainable development in the Nigerian education sector.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Job Involvement

The concept of job involvement was first proposed by Lodahl and Kejner^[18] who defined job involvement as the degree to which employees identify with their jobs or the degree of importance that employees' jobs have to their self-worth. Kanungo^[19] defined job involvement as a cognitive belief state that reflects an individual's psychological identification and level of involvement in their job. This definition implies that a job-involved person sees his/her job as an important part of his/her self-concept and that jobs define one's self-concept in a major way. Because of this, people who are high in job involvement

genuinely care for and are concerned about their work. Recently, Yadav^[20] define job involvement as psychological identification with the job of an employee and how an employee associates a job as central to his life.

In its early conceptualization, job involvement was proposed as a uni-dimensional construct^[19]. Yoshimura^[21] however, presented a multidimensional model of job involvement in his conceptual model which stated that job involvement consists of three dimensions viz., emotional job involvement, cognitive job involvement and behavioural job involvement. Emotional job involvement indicates how strongly the worker is interested in his/her job or how much the worker likes his/her job. Cognitive job involvement indicates how strongly the worker wants to participate in his/her job related decision making or how important the job is in his/her whole life, and behavioural job involvement indicates how often the worker usually takes extra-role behaviour such as taking an evening class to enhance job related skills or thinking about the job after leaving the office^[21].

Since the introduction of the construct in organisational literature, job involvement has been considered the key to activating employee motivation^[22] and a fundamental basis for establishing competitive advantage in business markets^[23]. From an individual perspective, it has also been considered a key to personal growth and satisfaction within the workplace, as well as to motivation and goal-directed behaviour^[24]. Thus, increasing job involvement could enhance organisational effectiveness and productivity by engaging employees more completely in their work and making work a more meaningful and fulfilling experience.

Psychological Capital

Since the emergence of Positive Organisational Scholarship, several positive psychological capacities have been examined both conceptually and empirically for inclusion in the Positive Organisational Behaviour (POB) framework. Some of the

concepts deemed to best fit the POB inclusion criteria are self-efficacy, hope, optimism, and resiliency, which Luthans et al.^[25] consider as components of a higher order core construct, known as psychological capital. They defined psychological capital as an individual's positive psychological state of development that is characterised by hope, self-efficacy, resilience, and optimism. Taken from their definition, psychological capital can be described as having confidence to take on and put in the effort necessary to succeed at challenging tasks; persevering toward goals and, when necessary, redirecting paths to goals; constructing a positive attribution to succeed now and in the future; and enduring or recovering from problems and adversity to succeed^[25].

Psychological capital is regarded as a psychological state rather than trait. This implies that the phenomenon is transient, suggesting that psychological capital can be developed in an individual at any time during the progression of their life^[26]. Thus, psychological capital adheres to the basic premise of positive psychology, which seeks to encourage and develop positive qualities within individuals^[27]. To consider how psychological capital is constructed, one must first understand each singular element more deeply in order to understand the common thread that leads to the higher construct. Therefore, the four facets (hope, self-efficacy, resilience and optimism) are briefly discussed below.

Hope: Broadly considered, hope is the idea that an individual can have an optimistic view of future outcomes^[28]. Snyder's concept of hope reflects the individual's capability to be clear about objectives, to develop the specific schemes for achieving those goals, and to be able to both originate and have the enthusiasm to sustain the effort toward those goals^[29]. Lewis^[26] defined hope as a positive emotional state that is based on an interactively derived sense of successful (a) agency (individual possessing the will to achieve a desired effect), (b)

pathways (planning to meet goals) and (c) goals. Therefore, hope can be regarded as being based on three major conceptual foundations, namely agency, pathways and goals^[30].

Self-Efficacy: Self-efficacy is characterised by extra effort and tenacious perseverance in accomplishing a given task. According to Wood and Wood^[31], self-efficacy can be regarded as a person's belief in his or her ability to perform competently in whatever is attempted. Self-efficacy is therefore, a state of self-belief where people believe in their own capabilities that by their own actions, they can produce a desired result^[26]. In an organisational context, self-efficacy refers to an employee's conviction or confidence about his or her abilities to mobilise the motivation, cognitive resources or courses of action needed to successfully execute a specific task within a given context^[32].

Resilience: Resilience is an adaptive system which enables an individual to rebound or "bounce back" quickly from a setback or failure. It is characterised by positive coping and adaptation in the face of significant risk or adversity^[33]. The distinctive characteristic of resilience from other capacities is that it requires reactive and proactive behaviour against negative events. Resilience in terms of reactivity accepts the idea that negative events and challenging tasks including positive ones have destructive effect on even the individuals with high optimism levels. Therefore, individuals need to bounce back after they go through challenging times.

Optimism: Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi^[27] define optimism as an attributional style in which an individual regards positive events as being caused by internal, permanent and pervasive factors whilst negative events are viewed as occurring due to external, temporary and situation-specific factors. Optimism is therefore, regarded as a state of explanation. An alternative

explanation of optimism comes from Carver and Scheier^[34] who considered it from an expectancy perspective as when individuals expect good things to happen to them, which has significant cognitive and behavioural implications.

Psychological Capital and Job Involvement

Empirical literature directly linking psychological capital and job involvement is relatively scarce. Nevertheless, Nafei^[35] provided evidence that job satisfaction, organisational commitment, employee engagement and employee performance are related constructs. Therefore, these constructs too are considered in relation to psychological capital in this review. To this end, Yu et al.^[12] found positive effect of psychological capital on job involvement among employees in the health industry, indicating that psychological capital promotes their job involvement. Similarly, Setar et al.^[36] in their study showed that high levels of psychological capital correlated significantly with low levels of incivility and high job involvement among call center agents in Durban, KwaZulu-Natal. Ching-Sheue^[37] examined the relationship among emotional labor, job involvement, and psychological capital using hierarchical regression analysis and found that high psychological capital alleviated teachers' emotional burden. Moreover, "self-efficacy" and "optimism" mitigated the need for psychological satisfaction of work in preschool teachers. In addition, "optimism" exerted a mediating effect on the relationship between emotional labor and job involvement in preschool teachers.

Wardani and Anwar^[15] reported direct and indirect relationship between psychological capital and work engagement through quality of work life. Their finding implies that employees with psychological capital are more likely to exhibit work engagement especially if their quality of work life is also high. George et al.^[13] also reported significant positive influence of

psychological capital on work engagement among public sector employees in Nigeria.

Nguyen and Ngo^[17] revealed in their study that psychological capital is also related to job commitment positively meaning that the more employees have psychological capital, the more they are committed to their job. In a related manner, Paliga et al.^[16], in a sample of Polish employees, found that team members' psychological capital was positively linked to individual-level job satisfaction and two facets of job performance, i.e. creative performance and in-role performance. Given that job involvement and work engagement are considered to be related constructs^[35], it is safe to conclude that these studies are pointing to the positive relationship between psychological capital and job involvement.

Hypothesis

Psychological capital will significantly predict job involvement of secondary school teachers in North-West Senatorial District of Benue State, Nigeria.

METHOD

Participants: The participants were 354 teachers selected from 40 secondary schools in North-West Senatorial District of Benue State. They comprised 230(65%) selected from the public secondary schools and 124(35%) from private secondary schools. Their age range was between 22 – 62 years with mean age of 40.25 (SD=9.69). They were 195(55.1%) males and 169(44.9%) female who worked for at least 1 year and 33 years maximum.

Instruments: Questionnaire was used as the instrument for data collection. It comprised of two scales that measured the two major variables of the study – psychological capital and job involvement. *Job involvement* was measured with the Teachers' Job Involvement Scale (TJIS) which contained 29 items that measure two domains of teachers' job involvement: the physical and emotional involvement. The

TJIS was developed and validated by the researcher due to lack of indigenous scales for measuring job involvement especially with the population of secondary school teachers. Sample items include “I am determined to go extra miles for the sake of enhancing my teaching skills” and “Most of my interests are centered around my teaching job”. In a Principal Component Analysis using extraction method, two components were extracted with the first component loading 20 items and the other containing 9 items which represent the physical and emotional job involvement respectively. The two components explained 73.4% of the total variance observed in the scale. The scale exhibited high reliability with Cronbach’s alpha coefficient of .97 for the entire scale while physical involvement had $\alpha=.94$ and emotional involvement had $\alpha=.70$. The scale showed good discriminant construct validity of $r=-.64$, when correlated with the classical alienation scale by Shepard^[38]. The Psychological Capital Questionnaire (PCQ) by Luthans et al.^[25] was used to measure psychological capital in this study. It is a 24-item questionnaire that measures four components of the construct which are hope, self-efficacy/confidence, resilience and optimism. The authors of this scale demonstrated good validity and reliability of the instrument with Cronbach’s alpha reliability coefficient of .91 for the scale^[39]. In the present study, the Psychological Capital Questionnaire as a whole yielded a Cronbach’s alpha coefficient of .96 while the four dimensions of hope, self-efficacy, resilience, and optimism had Cronbach’s alphas $\alpha=.84$, $\alpha=.87$, $\alpha=.85$, and $\alpha=.85$ respectively.

Procedure: For the purpose of data collection, permission was obtained from

the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, which is in charge of all academic institutions in the state including the secondary schools. In selecting the schools, the researcher first and foremost picked one-tenth (1/10) of the total number of schools in the study area. A sample of 40 schools was taken from the total of 396 secondary schools in Benue North-West Senatorial District. The 396 schools were first listed in alphabetical order. An interval was determined and an integer of 9 was also picked at random which was used in selecting every ninth school on the list. To sample the teachers, the researcher used simple random sampling technique in which lists of randomly generated numbers were gotten from the internet-based random number generator. The lists were generated according to the sample frame from each of the selected schools. The researcher recorded the total number of teachers from each of the sampled schools prior to data collection. This means that the total number of teachers from the 40 selected secondary schools was ascertained and their respective proportions in the sample size of 354 teachers also determined. The researcher collected data from teachers in each of the schools with the assistance of the school management.

Design/Data Analysis: The cross-sectional survey design was adopted. This involves the collection of data from a relatively large number of participants at one point in time to make inferences about a population of interest. Data were analysed using multiple linear regression analysis performed via the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 21.

RESULT

Table 1: Multiple linear regression analysis showing psychological capital as a predictor of job involvement among secondary school teachers in North-West Senatorial District of Benue State

DV	Predictors	R	R ²	df	F	P	β	t	p
Job involvement	Constant							1.800	.000
	Hope						.101	2.279	.023
	Self-efficacy	.583	.338	4,349	44.628	.000	-.022	-.493	.622
	Resilience						.540	12.311	.000
	Optimism						.122	2.738	.006
Physical job involvement	Constant							2.743	.006
	Hope						.015	.323	.747
	Self-efficacy	.496	.246	4,349	28.399	.000	-.038	-.807	.420
	Resilience						.484	10.344	.000
	Optimism						.067	1.406	.161
Emotional job involvement	Constant							.329	.743
	Hope						.153	3.301	.001
	Self-efficacy	.528	.279	4,349	33.692	.000	-.002	-.039	.969
	Resilience						.456	9.956	.000
	Optimism						.141	3.033	.003

The results show that psychological capital dimensions (viz: hope, self-efficacy, resilience and optimism) jointly predict overall job involvement significantly [$R=.583$, $R^2=.338$, $F(4,349)=44.628$, $p<.01$] accounting for 33.8% of the total variance observed in overall job involvement of the secondary school teachers in North-West Senatorial District of Benue State. Particularly, the results showed that psychological capital and its dimensions significantly predicted physical job involvement [$R=.496$, $R^2=.246$, $F(4,349)=28.399$, $p<.01$] and emotional job involvement [$R=.528$, $R^2=.279$, $F(4,349)=33.692$, $p<.01$] significantly, accounting for 24.6% and 27.9% of the total variance observed in physical and emotional job involvement respectively. This implies that psychological capital is an important variable in job involvement emotional job involvement. Our hypothesis is therefore confirmed.

On the specific dimensions of psychological capital, the results showed that resilience ($\beta=.540$, $t=12.311$, $p<.001$) made significant positive contribution of 54% to the total variance observed in overall job involvement, 48.4% to the variance in physical job involvement ($\beta=.484$, $t=10.344$, $p<.001$), and 45.6% to emotional job involvement ($\beta=.456$, $t=9.956$, $p<.001$) of secondary school teachers in North-West Senatorial District of Benue State.

Optimism made significant positive contribution of 12.2% to overall job involvement ($\beta=.122$, $t=2.738$, $p<.01$), 14.1% to emotional job involvement ($\beta=.141$, $t=3.033$, $p<.01$) but no significant independent contribution to physical job involvement ($\beta=.067$, $t=1.406$, $p>.05$) of secondary school teachers in North-West Senatorial District of Benue State. Hope made significant positive contribution of 10.1% to overall job involvement ($\beta=.101$, $t=2.279$, $p<.05$), 15.3% to emotional job involvement ($\beta=.153$, $t=3.301$, $p<.001$) but no significant contribution to physical job involvement ($\beta=.015$, $t=.323$, $p>.05$) of secondary school teachers in North-West Senatorial District of Benue State. Finally, self-efficacy did not make significant independent contribution to overall job involvement ($\beta=-.022$, $t=-.0493$, $p>.05$), physical job involvement ($\beta=-.038$, $t=-.807$, $p>.05$), and emotional job involvement ($\beta=-.002$, $t=-.039$, $p>.05$) of the secondary school teachers in North-West Senatorial District of Benue State.

DISCUSSION

This study investigated psychological capital as a predictor of job involvement among secondary school teachers in North-West Senatorial District of Benue State, Nigeria. Findings from this study have shown that psychological capital and its four dimensions of hope, self-efficacy, resilience

and optimism jointly predict overall job involvement significantly. This means that psychological capital as a whole determines the level of job involvement of secondary school teachers. Those teachers with the different psychological capital resources of hope, self-efficacy, resilience and optimism will be more inclined to be involved in their teaching job more than those who lack these resources.

Resilience appeared as the most significant component on both physical and emotional job involvement. This means that secondary school teachers who are resilient have higher tendency to be involved in their teaching job while those who are less resilient have lower tendency towards job involvement. This part of the findings points to the fact that secondary school teachers who are able to easily bounce back from setbacks such as queries, belligerent confrontation from bosses, coworkers and similar other events, will be better disposed to being fully involved in their teaching job while those who lack the capacity to let go and quickly bounce back after such disparaging events would be less involved in their job.

Optimism and hope had a similar positive influence on emotional job involvement but not on physical job involvement. This implies that teachers who have tendency to always look at the brighter side of everything about their work and always expect the best are more disposed to being job-involved than teachers who expect nothing good to come out of their teaching job. Also, teachers who have hope in their job will most likely be involved in their teaching job, although the involvement appears to be mostly emotional but not physical. Self-efficacy is however found to be less important component of psychological capital with no independent effect on both physical and emotional job involvement dimensions, though it may contribute to the overall influence of psychological capital as a core construct on job involvement. This implies that teachers with self-efficacy may still have to depend

on other psychological resources like being resilient to negative events in the workplace, setting goals and making deliberate efforts towards achieving them and also sustaining such efforts which define hope, and of course, should be able to always focus on brighter side of events and envisage positive future.

The findings of this study are corroborated by several previous findings including those of Yu et al.^[12] and Setar et al.^[36] who in their separate studies provided empirical evidence on the positive relationship between psychological capital and job involvement. Similar other findings include those of Wardani and Anwar^[15], George et al.^[13], Nguyen and Ngo^[17], and, Paliga et al.^[16] who in their different researches demonstrate the importance of psychological capital in job involvement.

Implications of the Findings

The findings of this study have implications for both theory and practice. The study has contributed in providing direction to organisational research literature on the role of psychological capital in job involvement particularly among secondary school teachers in Nigeria. Thus, it has provided valuable knowledge that can be leveraged upon to enhance job involvement of teachers. Furthermore, the findings imply that psychological capital is an important factor in the management of performance of teachers. In attempt to enhance job involvement and professional practice of secondary school teachers, school administrators, both private and public, need to understand that psychological capital is one of the important factors in the process of recruitment and training of teachers.

Limitations of the Study

One of the limitations of this study is that the researcher relied solely on survey data which is quantitative and does not explore in-depth knowledge about a phenomenon. Secondly, the research was designed to cover the entire Benue State but in the actual study, only teachers in one out of the

three senatorial zones in the state were sampled. Also, the researcher failed to compare public and private schools on job involvement but rather focused solely on the role of psychological capital. Given the differences in style of administration and leadership, the results may not be the same for these two categories of schools.

Suggestions for Further Studies

Future studies should adopt mixed method of data collect involving both surveys and interviews to gather data that will be richer in information about the variables under study. Future research should also consider a comparative analysis of job involvement between public and private secondary schools to understand the role of personality on job involvement between the two categories of school.

CONCLUSION

This study examined psychological capital as a predictor of job involvement among secondary school teachers in North-West Senatorial District of Benue State. Based on the findings from the study, the researchers concluded that psychological capital is an important individual capacity for enhancing job involvement. Secondary school teachers in Nigeria need psychological capital for them to be fully involved in their teaching job and abstain from unprofessional work behaviours that are inimical to progress and development in the country's education sector.

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