Work Climate and Organisational Politics as Predictors of Organisational Commitment among Staff of Benue State University, Makurdi

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ABSTRACT
This study investigated work climate and organisational politics as predictors of organisational commitment among employees of Benue State University, Makurdi. Employing an ex-post facto research design, three hypotheses were formulated, and a sample of 187 participants completed the Organisational Climate Questionnaire (OCQ), Perceived Organisational Politics Scale (POPS), and Organisational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ). Data analysis involved regression and multiple regression techniques. Hypothesis one, positing that work climate significantly influences organisational commitment among Benue State University staff, was supported (R = .185, R² = .034, F(1,177) = 6.229, P < .05). Hypothesis two, which suggested that organisational politics significantly affects organisational commitment, was also supported (R = .629, R² = .396, F(1,181) = 117.960, P < .05). Additionally, Hypothesis three, indicating a joint influence of work climate and organisational politics on organisational commitment, was also supported (R = .632, R² = .400, F(2,173) = 56.950, P < .001). Recommendations derived from the findings include prioritising employees commitment to enhance productivity, mitigating favouritism within the organisation to facilitate effective task execution, and empowering managers to assess and improve work climate, thereby fostering a motivating environment conducive to ongoing performance enhancement.

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INTRODUCTION

Today’s modern workplace is a diverse ecosystem, comprising individuals with a multitude of unique characteristics (Singh, 2019; Onah et al., 2020). Existing literature has extensively explored the composition of the workforce as a critical determinant of employee commitment (Schilpzand et al., 2016). Organisational commitment, a multifaceted construct, encompasses three dimensions: affective, continuance, and normative commitment (Meyer & Allen, 1991). Affective commitment denotes an employee’s emotional bond, identification, and engagement with the organisation, while continuance commitment reflects an awareness of the costs associated with leaving the organisation (Onah et al., 2019).

Normative commitment, on the other hand, signifies a sense of obligation to maintain employment with the organisation (Valerie et al., 2019). The significance of organisational commitment lies in its profound impact on various favourable organisational outcomes, such as heightened job satisfaction and increased productivity (Craig et al., 2013). It serves as a gauge of employees’ alignment with organisational goals and can be a reliable predictor of their performance, absenteeism, and other behaviours. Normative commitment often emerges when employees perceive that the organisation has made significant investments in them, leading to a sense of obligation to reciprocate (Allen & Meyer, 2008). Continuance commitment, meanwhile, may be reinforced when employees perceive efforts by the organisation to safeguard job security, thereby heightening their awareness of the costs associated with leaving (Scandura & Pellegrini, 2010).

Furthermore, research indicates that mentoring programs can significantly impact commitment and performance. Mentors who foster positive relationships with mentees, offering respect, support, and opportunities for interaction, are likely to enhance commitment and performance (Mckevitt & Marshall, 2015). Objectives of mentoring programs often include succession planning, skills enhancement, and promoting workplace diversity (Bear & Hwang, 2017). Additionally, factors influencing employee performance, such as the work climate or working environment, are subjects of research interest. Work climate and its components play a pivotal role in predicting employee commitment within an organisation (Abubakr & Bader, 2013; Ogwuche et al., 2023).

Observing organisational work climate is imperative for managers as it directly shapes the working environment (Diamantidis & Chatzoglou, 2019). A positive and supportive work climate is crucial for motivating employees, as it influences their sense of responsibility, commitment, engagement, satisfaction, and discipline, thereby enhancing productivity (Emma & Kim, 2015). A favorable work climate fosters long-term success by bolstering emotions and well-being. Recent research has yielded varied results concerning the relationship between work climate and organisational politics. While many studies affirm a link between work climate, organisational commitment, and politics (Li et al., 2018), some findings contradict this notion.
Delft (2010) identified innovation as the sole dimension of work climate significantly impacting employee performance. Employee perceptions of their organisational work environment, termed as work climate by Robbins and Coulter (Robbins & Coulter, 2016; Pant & Yadav, 2016; Permarupan et al., 2010), play a pivotal role in encouraging organisational adaptability and individual and team development. A positive work climate fosters employee comfort, safety, and motivation, thus influencing the overall work environment (Hicklenton et al., 2019). The working environment is a crucial factor in shaping work climate and employee commitment. It directly or indirectly influences individuals within the organisation (Subramani et al., 2016), encompassing physical and psychosocial aspects. While physical aspects have traditionally garnered more attention, recent research indicates the significance of psychosocial aspects, impacting the quality of work life (QWL) (Abubakr & Bader, 2013; Shanker et al., 2017). Understanding both aspects is essential for comprehensive insights into organisational climate and its effects on employee performance and behaviour.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Kusmaningtyas (2013) similarly discovered that work climate does not significantly impact employee performance. These studies suggest that internal environmental quality does not directly influence daily work performance; rather, personal behaviour and characteristics play a more significant role. Conversely, research by Jyoti (2013) demonstrates that a positive work climate enhances work-related performance. Moreover, Bamel, Rangnekar, Stokes, & Rastogi's (2013) study indicates that a conducive work climate can enhance management effectiveness, while Agarwal (2015) asserts that work climate mediates performance and employee commitment. Work climate, closely tied to the environment in which employees operate, significantly shapes their behaviour within the organisation, often reflected in its organisational culture and impacting task accomplishment.

Subramani, Akbar Jan, Moideen Batcha, & Vinodh (2016) highlight a correlation between organisational climate, employee commitment, and performance. Organisation climate encompasses various measurable behaviours within an organisation, based on collective employee perceptions, with work climate being a crucial factor in achieving organisational goals. A conducive work climate fosters well-executed tasks (Hafee, Yingjun, Hafeez, Mansoor, & Rehman, 2019), thereby enhancing employee commitment and productivity.

High productivity within an organisation reflects a conducive work environment and increased work satisfaction (Putra, 2018), ultimately leading to optimal employee performance. Additionally, the inclination towards organisational politics is argued to stem from inherent human tendencies, driven by power dynamics and the distribution of tasks and ranks (Vredenburgh & Shea Van-Fossen, 2010). Meriac & Villanova (2006) suggest that individuals engage in political behaviour to gain benefits, with some deriving pleasure from such tactics, especially when legitimate means yield insufficient results (Liu et al., in Vigoda-Gadot & Drory, 2006). Organisational politics, thus, can be viewed as a group phenomenon, extending beyond individual behaviour in a broader societal context.
Informal groups frequently emerge within the workplace, giving rise to various types of coalitions among individuals engaged in organisational politics (Seo, 2003). James (in Vigoda-Gadot & Drory, 2006) suggests that organisational cultural values can either foster or diminish group politics, shaping its trajectory. Research by Vredenburgh & Shea-VanFossen (2010) identifies organisational conditions that drive employees to engage in political behaviours, attributing the origins of these behaviours to individuals’ hereditary genetic structure and their interaction with organisational conditions (Vredenburgh & Shea-VanFossen, 2010; Ogwuche, Onah, & Relojo-Howell, 2020).

Drawing from Charles Darwin's theory of evolution, which emphasizes the competitive struggle for resources within a being's environment, Vredenburgh & Shea-VanFossen (2010) assert that key attributes and behaviours, including politicking, have evolved through natural selection processes. Therefore, from a biological evolutionary perspective, humans possess inherent tendencies to engage in political behaviour (Vredenburgh & Shea-VanFossen, 2010). James (in Vigoda-Gadot & Drory, 2006) suggests that the escalation of internal organisational politics may stem from external competitive pressures faced by organisations, driven by globalized economies and technological advancements. Tilly’s (in Vigoda-Gadot & Drory, 2006) research indicates that severe negative politics are prevalent in low-resource countries.

Additionally, according to Buchanan (2008), organisational structural relationships can also contribute to political dynamics, particularly when groups of employees have divergent performance indicators and tasks. However, Beugré & Liverpool (in Vigoda-Gadot & Drory, 2006) affirm that individuals engaging in political behaviour often exhibit disrespect towards others and seek to circumvent formal procedures, especially when these procedures are ambiguous. Research has identified various areas where employees engage in political behaviour, including pressures for economic considerations, conflicts within management-subordinate relationships, power struggles between organized groups like unions and employers, disputes over interpretation of agreements, uncertainty regarding promotion standards and strategies, challenges in linking rewards with productivity, and issues with policies and procedures (Gotsis & Kortezi, 2010; Latif et al., 2011; Chinelo et al., 2018).

**Statement of the Problem**

Organisations rely on efficient and dedicated staff for optimal performance. Challenges such as lack of organisational commitment, decreased accuracy in fulfilling responsibilities, and insufficient cooperation and engagement pose significant concerns for executive systems, creating a disconnect between human resources and organisational objectives. Despite being a focal point of research for over three decades, the interplay of perceptions of political behaviour, work climate, and employee commitment has been explored across various disciplines including sociology, political science, psychology, human resources, and management. Employers often find themselves perplexed when highly-rated employees fail to meet expectations or choose to leave the organisation.
Despite proactive efforts to implement fair compensation policies and human resource practices aimed at motivating and retaining employees, management struggles to comprehend why some individuals lack commitment to the organisation. The repercussions of employee disengagement and lack of commitment can be significant, leading to underperformance and unrealized potential, resulting in potential costs for the organisation. Against this backdrop, this study aims to investigate the influence of work climate and organisational politics on organisational commitment among staff at Benue State University, Makurdi.

**Research Questions**
1. To what extent work climate predict organisational commitment among Benue State University, Makurdi?
2. To what extent will organisational politics predict organisational commitment among Benue State University, Makurdi?
3. To what extent will work climate and organisational politics jointly predict organisational commitment among Benue State University, Makurdi?

**Hypotheses**
1. Work climate will significantly predict organisational commitment among staff of Benue State University, Makurdi.
2. Organisational politics will significantly predict organisational commitment among staff of Benue State University, Makurdi. Work climate and organisational politics will jointly predict organisational commitment among staff of Benue State University, Makurdi.

**METHODOLOGY**

**Design**
The study utilised an ex post facto research design, a method wherein existing groups with certain qualities are compared based on a dependent variable. Also referred to as “after the fact” research, this design is considered quasi-experimental as subjects are not randomly assigned but grouped based on specific characteristics or traits.

**Settings**
The research is conducted within the premises of Benue State University, Makurdi, situated near the Southern bridgehead of the Benue River on sandy alluvial formation. Covering an area of 6 square kilometers, the university is positioned between Gboko Road and River Benue, approximately 1.5 kilometers wide and 4 kilometers long. It is bordered to the West by the Benue Links Headquarters and to the East by Tilley-Gyado House.

**Participants**
The participants for this study were staff of Benue State University. The total population of 187 staff of Benue State University is using Taro Yahama formula for sample size determination, a total of 187 comprising 120 (64%) male, 67(36%) female, 131 (70%) married, 56(38%) single, 125(62%) were Tiv, 37(18%)
were Idoma, and 25(15%) were Igede; 110(59%) were Christians, 17(8.5%) were Islam and 60(30%) were Traditionist; 130(62%) were Married, 50(25%) were Single and 7(3%) were Divorced were all sampled to participate in the study. Their ages ranged between 25-50 years.

Sample Size Estimation
The sample size was determined using Taro Yahamen’s formula for sample size determination thus:

\[
n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}
\]

Where:
N= population
e= constant (0.05)
n = sample size

The sample size therefore;

\[
n = \frac{350}{1 + 350 (0.05)^2} = 350
\]

\[
\frac{1}{1 + 350 (0.05)^2}
\]

\[
\frac{350}{1 + 350 (0.0025)} = 350
\]

\[
\frac{1}{1 + 0.875}
\]

\[
\frac{350}{1.875} = 186.6667
\]

= 187 (approximately)

Sampling
In this study adopted a probability sampling technique. Probability sampling involves random selection, allowing the researcher to make strong statistical inferences about the whole group. The techniques enables researcher to set up some process or procedure that ensures, with confidence, that the different units in their sample population have equal probabilities of being chosen.

Instruments
The Organisational Climate Questionnaire (OCQ) Scale, developed by Furnham (1997), is designed to assess organisational climate. This 13-item questionnaire employs a five-point Likert scale, ranging from “strongly agree” to “strongly disagree.” Extensive pilot testing underpins its development, resulting in a validated instrument with a Cronbach’s alpha of 0.89 (Furnham & Goodstein, 1997). Test-retest reliability coefficients have been reported at 0.88 and 0.90, respectively.
The Perceived Organisational Politics (POPS) Scale, created by Kacmar (1997), evaluates general political behaviour within organisations. Featuring 15 items rated on a five-point scale from “strongly agree” to “strongly disagree,” this questionnaire has demonstrated strong internal consistency, with alpha coefficients ranging from 0.79 to 0.93 in similar adaptations (Cropanzano et al., 1997). Sample items include statements like “you can usually get what you want around here if you know the right person to ask” and “I have seen policy changes here that only serve the purposes of a few individuals, not the work unit or organisation as a whole.”

The Organisational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ) Scale, developed by Mowday (1979), aims to measure organisational commitment. Comprising 24 items rated on a five-point Likert scale, this questionnaire has been validated with a Cronbach's alpha of 0.83. In the current study, the questionnaire's validity was reported at 0.8. Test-retest reliabilities have been reported at 0.82 and 0.84, respectively.

**Procedure**

The researcher used questionnaire for data collection. The questionnaire which consist of section a, b, c and d aimed at finding out the influence of work climate and organisational politics on organisational commitment of staff of Benue State University was administered individually to participants. Individual participant’s consent was sought; therefore participation was out of free will. Verbal instructions were given on how to respond to the items in the questionnaire ranging from section A to D. Data was statistically analyzed after being collected from the field using linear and multiple regression analysis as the main statistical tool with the aid of SPSS to explain the relationship between variables.

**RESEARCH RESULT**

**Hypothesis one** states that work climate will significantly predict organisational commitment among staff of Benue State University, Makurdi. This hypothesis was tested using simple linear regression and the result is presented in table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>R²</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>β</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>t</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>.185</td>
<td>.034</td>
<td>1,177</td>
<td>6.229</td>
<td>2.711</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work climate</td>
<td>.185</td>
<td>.034</td>
<td>1,177</td>
<td>6.229</td>
<td>2.496</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>.000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>.013</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The result in Table 1 indicated that work climate significantly predicted organisational commitment of Benue State University staff, $[R = .185, R^2 = .034, F(1,177) = 6.229, P < .05]$. The result further revealed that work climate accounted
for 3.4% of the variance in the organisational commitment of Benue State University staff. Based on these findings, hypothesis one was accepted.

**Hypothesis two** organisational politics will significantly predict organisational commitment among staff of Benue State University, Makurdi. This hypothesis was tested using simple linear regression and the result is presented in table 2

Table 2. Simple Linear Regression Showing Organisational Politics as Predictors of Organisational Commitment Among Staff of Benue State University, Makurdi

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>R²</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>β</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>t</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>.629</td>
<td>.396</td>
<td>1,181</td>
<td>117,960</td>
<td>9.696</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisational Politics</td>
<td>.629</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>10.861</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The result in Table 2 indicated that organisational politics significantly predicted organisational commitment of Benue State University staff, \([R =.629, R^2 = .396, F(1,181) = 117,960, P <.05]\). The result indicated that, organisational politics accounted for 39.6% of the variance in the organisational commitment of Benue State University staff. Based on this finding, hypothesis two was accepted.

**Hypothesis three** stated that work climate and organisational politics will jointly predict organisational commitment among staff of Benue State University, Makurdi. This hypothesis was tested using simple linear regression and the result is presented in table 3

Table 3. Multiple Regression Showing the Joint Influence of Work Climate and Organisational Politics as Predictors of Organisational Commitment Among Staff of Benue State University, Makurdi

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>R²</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>β</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>t</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>.632</td>
<td>.400</td>
<td>2,173</td>
<td>56,950</td>
<td>7,084</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work climate</td>
<td>.018</td>
<td>.295</td>
<td></td>
<td>.768</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisational commitment</td>
<td>.627</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.182</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The result in Table 3 showed that work climate and organisational commitment significantly and jointly predicts organisational commitment of Benue State University staff, \([R =.632, R^2 = .400, F(2,173) = 56,950, P <.001]\). Further observation indicated that work climate and organisational commitment jointly accounted for 40.0% of the variance in the organisational commitment of Benue State University staff. With this result, hypothesis three was accepted.
DISCUSSION

Hypothesis one suggests that work climate significantly explains 3.4% of the variance in organisational commitment among Benue State University staff. This finding aligns with Li, Yee Poh, and Mahadevan's (2018) study, which establishes a connection between work climate and organisational commitment and performance. Additionally, Mckevitt & Marshall (2015) found that mentees display higher commitment when their mentors express liking and respect, fostering interaction opportunities. However, Delft (2010) suggests a nuanced perspective, indicating that only certain dimensions of work climate, particularly innovation, significantly influence employee performance.

Hypothesis two indicates that organisational politics significantly impact organisational commitment among Benue State University staff. This finding resonates with Chinelo, Andrew, Mogaji, and James's (2018) study, which underscores the relationship between organisational politics and commitment, particularly among support staff. James (2006) suggests that internal organisational politics may intensify due to external competitive pressures driven by globalized economies and technological shifts. Moreover, Buchanan (2008) highlights how structural relationships within organisations can engender political dynamics, potentially enhancing organisational commitment and performance across various levels.

Hypothesis three posits that both work climate and organisational politics collectively influence organisational commitment among Benue State University staff. The findings reveal that these variables jointly account for 40.0% of the observed variance, with R = .632 and R² = .400. This outcome mirrors Donald, Bertha, and Lucia's (2016) study, indicating a significant and positive relationship between employees' perceived organisational politics and dimensions of organisational commitment, including affective and continuance commitment.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In the study, work climate and organisational politics was investigated against organisational commitment among staff of Benue State University Makurdi. This was done through investigation of the personal characteristics (data) of work climate, organisational politics on organisational commitment. The statistical analysis reveals that; work climate and organisational politics has significant influence on organisational commitment of Benue State University staff.

Recommendations
Based on the research findings, the following recommendations are proposed:

- Prioritise staff commitment: Organisations should focus on enhancing staff commitment to improve productivity. Human Resource Management (HRM) officials can achieve this by implementing measures to reduce favouritism and fostering an environment where all staff can effectively carry out their tasks.
- Assess and improve work climate: Managers should regularly evaluate the work climate and leverage their experiences to implement
management practices that motivate employees and foster continuous improvement.

- Manage organisational politics: Acknowledge the presence of organisational politics and proactively manage them to strengthen employee commitment, work engagement, and extra-role performance while reducing turnover intentions.
- Mitigate favouritism: Organisations should actively work to reduce favouritism to enable employees to fulfil their duties effectively. Providing training and retraining opportunities for employees can help them manage their work effectively and reduce stress in their workstations. Additionally, Nigerian organisations should address the underlying issues contributing to frequent employee turnover.

ADVANCED RESEARCH

In writing this article the researcher realizes that there are still many shortcomings in terms of language, writing, and form of presentation considering the limited knowledge and abilities of the researchers themselves. Therefore, for the perfection of the article, the researcher expects constructive criticism and suggestions from various parties.
REFERENCES


Ogwuche, Suleiman, Onah


