

School Safety Measures and Teachers' Quality of Work Life in Lagos State Model Colleges, Nigeria

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Abstract

The importance of a school environment that enhances the safety of all stakeholders has been widely promoted. However, the security and safety of Nigerian secondary schools have continued to call for attention. Consequently, this study examined the relationship between school safety measures and teachers' quality of work-life in Lagos State Model Colleges. The study was guided by one research question and two hypotheses. The research design was descriptive survey. The population of the study was 2082 while the sample size comprised 208 teachers, selected from seven out of the 15 Lagos State Model Colleges, using multi-stage sampling technique. A researcher-constructed and validated instrument entitled "School Safety Measures and Teachers' Quality of Work Life Questionnaire (SSMTKWLQ)" was used for data collection. The descriptive statistics such as mean was obtained and the ranking was done to answer research questions. Inferential statistics such as Pearson Product Moment Correlation statistical tool was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. Findings showed that the safety equipment/facilities were moderately adequate in Lagos State Model Colleges and that there was a significant relationship between adequacy of safety equipment/facilities and teachers' quality of work life, and that the level of teachers' safety awareness was significantly low and had significant relationship with their quality of work life. It was recommended among others that Government should ensure adequate provision of safety equipment/facilities such as safety camera, security personnel, and adequate monitoring of movement in and around the school environment. In addition, there should be inculcation of safety culture among staff and students in Model Colleges and finally, there should be constant safety training and awareness programmes for teachers and students.

Keywords: School; Safety; Teacher; Worklife; Quality.

Introduction

The school is an educational institution set up primarily for the purpose of teaching and learning. Specifically, in Nigeria, secondary education helps the individual learners in the acquisition of appropriate knowledge aimed at making them to become useful members of the society towards the development of the nation. For these to be attained, the school is made up of teaching and non-teaching staff who harness other resources to achieve the desired results. Therefore, efforts need to be put in place to create and maintain environment that is conducive for effective teaching and learning. There is then the need to continuously address matters that are capable of hindering the school from becoming a safe and secure place.

Glariana and Solar (2015) stated that the basis for all teaching- learning activities in school is for the place to be safe and secured. Persistence in schools and learning outcomes have direct relationship with the way and manner in which staff and students feel that the school is safe. It will be difficult for students to focus on learning when they feel that they could be attacked in schools, and that the school environment is characterised by threat of danger which can make teachers to concentrate more on ensuring safety in schools at the expense of effective teaching activities. Meanwhile, Ubom and Joshua (2004) observed that teachers are no doubt, the heart of any school system. They are looked forward to in the attainment of reasonable level of productivity, thus, their employers demand from them some level of faithfulness, support, and job engagement. In order to be productive, there is therefore, the need for them to be adequately motivated. One of the ways by which this could be achieved is by ensuring the safety of the school.

According to the Kenyan Ministry of Education (2008), school safety refers to actions taken by the students, teachers, and other school functionaries in order to reduce or guard against dangerous and hazardous situations that may result in misadventure, damage to, or loss of any part of the body. It is therefore, an important factor in the attainment of effective teaching and learning.

Although, safety of lives and properties in the school is no doubt everybody's responsibility, the school administrator needs to put in place structures that will generate the safety of students and staff. In recognition of this fact, the Lagos State Government inaugurated the State's Safety Commission on the 5th May, 2009, saddled with the responsibility of developing and regulating a coordinated safety system for an improved safety culture among others, in the State. This was consequent upon the incessant incidents and fatalities, especially among students, so as to drastically reduce the quantum loss of lives in schools due to unsafe environments.

As part of its preliminary efforts at enhancing safe schools across the State, the Commission in 2011, published the Lagos State School Safety General Rules which served as the foundation phase for safety management and wellness in schools. The School Safety General Rules aims at:

1. focusing on teachers' awareness of behaviours that help to reduce to the barest minimum, some deep-rooted threats in the school;
2. encouraging school authorities in the formulation of policies and programmes that promote students' well-being and freedom from danger;
3. providing teachers with safety principles related to physical activity, helping institutional administrators in the development of appropriate precautionary measures towards having danger free schools in Lagos State; and
4. enabling a participatory safety structure.

As observed by Bridges' diary (as cited in Cline, 2004), some of the measures that could be taken by the school administrators in reducing cruel behaviour in schools and increasing school well-being are: ensuring strict compliance with rules and regulations, making greater efforts at providing equipment and facilities that enhance security of lives and properties, collaborating and synergizing with the security outfits, as well as putting in place, policies that guide against brutality and barbarity in schools. The measures are instrumental to enhancing security and safety of the Public-School System.

Snell, Bailey, Carona, and Mebane (2002) in a study on security and safety measures in American Public Schools, found out that the rate of keeping illicit drugs among students reduced to four percent in 2001 and the rate of physical attacks on members of staff also reduced to 16 percent in 2001. Similarly, from 1995 to 2001, the reported cases of unfair treatment and exploitative acts reduced from 10 percent to 6 percent.

A safe school provides opportunities for students to learn to the best of their abilities, for teachers to operate under the conditions that encourage transformation and novel ideas, and for increasing and strengthening the administrative abilities and potentials of institutional leaders. This is due to the fact that proficient, knowledgeable, and conscientious employees are desirous of providing services under that condition (Igwagu, 2016).

The changing educational climate in Nigeria has placed the obligations on the school to recognize the mechanisms and procedures as well as programmes which promote the well-being of the school children and the teachers. Institutional administrators also have the responsibility of providing teachers and students with the environment in which effective teaching and learning can occur. Achieving this at school level requires the development of a school safety plan which has to be strictly adhered to.

Corroborating the above assertion, Prinsloo (2005) argued that a safe school is indispensable in the achievement of functional educative process because, a secure and hitch-free school is one which is visibly as well as psychologically invulnerable, thereby allowing teachers, and other staff to render services unhindered and without any fear of attacks. It is however, logical to submit that the teachers' ability to cater for the well-beings of the learners will be dependent on the extent to which he himself is secured within the school.

This is because an insecure school without any doubt undermines the powers of the teachers as well as prevents them from performing their superintendence roles over the learners. Roberts (as cited in Kemp, Rathbun & Morgan, 2014) opined that every school safety programme should put the following measures into consideration:

1. Technology, which includes security cameras, and other technologically-aided devices which can be effectively utilized by strategically locating them, with competent personnel assigned to handle them. This is to give room for the optimal functioning of the devices.
2. Professionally trained security personnel who will ensure compliance with the laid down rules and regulations, as well as providing enlightenment and guidance for staff and students should be put in place. They equally serve as watchdogs for the school premises security as well as the stationed devices;
3. Training on school safety for staff and students. This can be done by providing capacity building programmes, in order to provide school safety tips;
4. Non-violence intervention which involves instituting measures that address hostile behaviours among teachers, students, and their parents; and
5. Parents' responsibilities which have to do with the involvement of parents by creating awareness in them about the school safety operative mechanisms. This can best be done during the meetings of the Parents' Forum.

Safe schools enable the students to make adequate use of the opportunities to learn to the best of their abilities. They also serve as a measure for assessing the level of security in the school, as well as empowering staff and students to manage unforeseen accidents, thereby, minimizing the rate of their exposure to danger (Kenyan Ministry of Education, 2008). The effectiveness of school safety policies and practices is therefore, determined by how functional they are in taking care of the needs of the learners, staff, the school infrastructure as well as other stakeholders in the school system. Therefore, school safety can be influenced by the school climate, methods put in place to prevent criminal behaviours and the provision of safety gadgets and equipment (Igwagu, 2016).

In a study carried out by Glariana and Solar (2015) on the extent of fulfillment of safety requirements by elementary schools in Philippines, it was reported that to a large extent schools did not comply with the safety and security requirements as provided for in the relevant educational facilities standards' manual. Similarly, Igwagu (2016) conducted a survey on school security, safety measures, and teachers' job motivation in government-owned secondary schools in Lagos State, Nigeria and established that significant relationship existed among the three variables.

As observed by Olaleye (2011), safety precautions in schools comprises a variety of activities ranging from the obedience to the rules and regulations, being conversant with labels and sign posts on chemicals and laboratory equipment, putting on appropriate safety wears and gadgets, provision of fire extinguishers in strategic places in the school, being conscious with road signs as well as the being generally careful in and outside the classroom.

Taking a cue from the above assertion, Lombard and Kole (2008), submitted that in order to have a safe school, there is the need for the application of electronic devices/technologies in the school security and safety system. Hence, technological equipment such as the Closed-Circuit Television (CCTV), videoing and video surveillance, intruder alarms, metal detectors, etc are expected to be provided in schools.

Safety measures in the school system are concerned with the prevention of accidents and protection of employees and any other persons affected by the services rendered by the school against hazards that may arise from their activities within the school. Armstrong (2010) observed that different factors such as poor leadership, poor education, and training facilities can cause industrial accidents, and that organizational health and safety programmes have the roles of identifying probable risk factors and making available adequate safety equipment.

Geraci and Sessano (2008) had characterized a safe society as one where hazardous situations and specific risks are managed with a view to increasing the quality of life of people. Therefore, a safe school provides opportunities for learners, teachers, and administrators to operate in a conducive and congenial school environment that promote teachers' high level of motivation and job performance.

Quality of work life is an important aspect of enhancing favoured working environment which has to do with the level of happiness or dissatisfaction of an employee in the organization he/she works in. Rose, Beh, Uli, and Idris (as cited in Mohammad, 2012) described quality of work life as a philosophy that makes an individual employee to be responsible and give their best in the realization of growth and development of the organisation. According to Selvaraj (2014), quality of work life has to do with how employees feel with regards to the general conditions at the work place including the monetary and non-monetary rewards as well as the effects this has in his life.

According to a study conducted by the National Crime Prevention Council (2014) on school safety and discipline, it was discovered that in 2013/2014 school year, higher percentages of public primary and public middle schools and combined elementary secondary schools took security measures such as controlled access to school building, staff wearing identity cards, students wearing uniforms, enforcements of strict dress code, use of random metal detector checking, use of security camera and, the use of random dog sniffs.

There are various legislations on health and safety of employees in Nigeria which include the Factories Act of 1990, Workmen Compensation Act Cap 470, and Safety, Health and Welfare Bill of 2012. As observed by Fajana (2011), employers are particularly required to provide and maintain safe place and system of work; ensure safety in the use, handling, storage, and transport of article substance; provide sufficient instructions, training, etc. for all employees as well as providing a safe and healthy environment. He however, remarked that the legal provisions in Nigeria are at present not adequate for an effective and efficient programme of safety and health at work.

It is therefore, expected that organizations should produce a written statement of safety policy for their employees, and employers may be required to establish a safety committee. The appropriate government agencies are to monitor organization's compliance with the safety guidelines by carrying out inspection at all times, gathering evidence by way of statement, examining records registers, and issuing enforcement notices of various kinds. For instance, improvement notice, prohibition notice and prosecuting offenders as the last report of any school system.

From the foregoing, it is evident that organizational safety measure is an important factor in determining the extent of satisfaction derived by employees in their jobs. It will not only go a long way in enhancing the organizational productivity but also very instrumental in promoting sense of belonging and attachment to work, thus, promoting the realization of pre-determined organizational purpose.

Statement of the Problem

The establishment of Model Colleges by the Lagos State government was basically for the provision of qualitative secondary education for students in a serene and conducive environment with boarding facilities for students and accommodation for staff members, so as to facilitate effective teaching and learning. However, there have been reported cases of kidnapping of students and staff in secondary schools across the country, thereby, serving as threats to the safety in these schools.

For instance, in the year 2014, over 200 female students of the Government Secondary School, Chibok, Borno state were abducted from their school and only 106 of the abducted students have so far been released. Specifically, in Lagos State, in October, 2016, four students, two staff and one Vice Principal of the Lagos State Model College, Igbonla near Epe, were kidnaped from the School premises. They were released after days in captivity with payment of ransom to the Kidnappers. Also, in May 2017, there was a repeat of the incidence at the same school, and that time around, six

students were abducted. This led to the closing down of academic activities in the school because of fear of further abduction.

In the same vein, it was also reported that in June 2017, Kidnappers who claimed responsibility for the kidnapping cases at the Lagos State Model College, Igbonla, sent a letter to the management of the Lagos State Model College, Kankon, near Badagry of their plans to kidnap six students and the principals of both the Junior and Senior secondary schools. These situations constituted serious security challenges in almost all the State's Model Colleges, and became worrisome in view of its potential threats to the realization of the vision of the founding fathers of the Model Colleges. It is against this background that the study examined the safety measures in relation teachers' quality of work life in the Lagos State Model colleges.

Objectives of the Study

The study sought to:

1. assess the adequacy of safety equipment/facilities Lagos Sate Model Colleges;
2. investigate the relationship between the adequacy of safety equipment/facilities and teachers' quality of work life in Lagos Sate Model Colleges; and
3. examine the relationship between teachers' level of safety awareness and their quality of work life in Lagos Sate Model Colleges.

Research Question

The study provided answer to this research question:

How adequate are the safety equipment/facilities in Lagos Sate Model Colleges?

Research Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were tested in the study:

- H₀₁: The adequacy of safety equipment/facilities has no significant relationship with teachers' quality of work life in Lagos State Model Colleges.
- H₀₂: There is no significant relationship between teachers' level of safety awareness and their quality of work life in Lagos State Model colleges.

Methodology

The descriptive survey research design was used in the study. This is because the design involves eliciting responses on the opinions of the participants. The population of the study was 2082 while the sample comprised 208 teachers selected from seven Model Colleges out of the 15 Lagos State Model Colleges, using multi-stage sampling technique. At first, the Model Colleges were arranged according to the District they are located. Thereafter, stratified and random sampling techniques were used to select the Colleges. The stratification was by school location (Rural/ Urban). Ten five percent (10%) of teachers in each of the sampled colleges were selected using random sampling technique.

A researcher-constructed instrument, entitled "School Safety Measures and Teachers' Quality of Work Life Questionnaire (SSMTKWLO)" was used for data collection. The instrument had two sections, namely, A and B. Section A contained the bio-data of the participants, while, section B is made up of four sub scales. The first sub-scale comprised 15 items that sought information on the adequacy of safety equipment and facilities, the second sub-scale contained eight items on safety awareness for teachers, while the third sub-scale consisted of 12 items that measured teachers' quality of work life. The questionnaire was validated by two lecturers in Faculty of Education, University of Lagos, and the reliability of the questionnaire was estimated in a pilot testing using test-retest method. The reliability co-efficient of 0.92 was obtained. Arising from the high co-efficient level, the questionnaire was considered reliable for use in the study. Descriptive statistics such as mean was obtained to the answer research questions while the interpretation of the mean obtained was based on the ranking by George and Mallery (2003). Inferential statistics such as Pearson Product Moment Correlation statistical tool was also used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

Mean	Interpretation
3.26-4.00	Very Highly Adequate
2.51-3.25	Highly Adequate
1.76-2.50	Moderately Adequate
1.00-1.75	Adequate

Results

Research Question

How adequate are the safety equipment/facilities in Lagos State Model Colleges?

Descriptive statistics of Mean and Standard Deviation was used in answering the question, and the result is presented in table 1.

Table 1

Adequacy of Safety Facilities/Equipment in Lagos State Model Colleges

S/N	Safety Facilities/Equipment	Mean	Ranking	Remarks
1.	Fire extinguisher	2.83	2	Highly Adequate
2.	Perimeter fencing with gates	2.28	8	Moderately Adequate
3.	First aid facilities	2.59	4	Highly Adequate
4.	Sanitary facilities	2.37	5	Moderately Adequate
5.	Wearing of identity cards by staff and students	2.15	12	Moderately Adequate
6.	Keeping of visitors' records	2.95	1	Highly Adequate
7.	School safety committee	2.08		Moderately Adequate
8.	Security personnel	2.20	10	Moderately Adequate
9.	Fire alarm system	2.16	11	Moderately Adequate
10.	Display of fire instruction in all buildings	2.67	3	Highly Adequate
11.	Functional security camera/ closed circuit television	2.02	13	Moderately Adequate
12.	Safety club	2.36	6	Moderately Adequate
13.	Central security alarm	2.24	9	Moderately Adequate
	Average	2.38		Moderately Adequate

Table 1 shows means ranking responses of the adequacy of safety facilities/ equipment in Lagos State Model Colleges. It was observed that among the safety facilities/equipment only the following four (4) items: Keeping of teachers' records, Fire extinguisher, display of fire instruction in all buildings and First aid facilities with means of 2.95, 2.83, 2.67 and 2.59 were highly adequate. Meanwhile, the other 9 items out of the 13 listed facilities/ equipment yielding low mean scores of 2.28, 2.37, 2.15, 2.08, 2.20, 2.16, 2.02, 2.36, and 2.24 were moderately adequate. Overall, the safety facilities/ equipment was moderately adequate in Lagos State Model Colleges with overall mean of 2.38. The interpretation of the mean obtained was based on the ranking by George and Mallery (2003)

Test of Hypotheses

H01: Adequacy of safety equipment/ facilities has no significant relationship with teachers' quality of work life.

Pearson Product Moment correlation statistics was used to test the hypothesis, the result is presented in table 2.

Table 2**Adequacy of Safety Equipment/ Facilities and Teachers' Quality of Work Life**

Variable	Mean	SD	N	df	r	P	Remarks
Adequacy of Safety Equipment/Facilities	39.08	8.33	208	206	0.68	0.021	Reject H01
Quality of Work life	21.32	5.19					

Significant at $p < 0.05$

Table 2 shows that the P value of 0.021 is less than the 0.05 level of significance, which led to the rejection of the null hypothesis. The relationship is positive and moderately high (68%). This depicts that a significant relationship existed between the adequacy of safety equipment/ facilities and teachers' quality of work life in Lagos State Model Colleges and the relationship is

H02: There is no significant relationship between teachers' level of safety awareness and their quality of work life in Lagos State Model colleges.

Pearson Product Moment correlation statistics was used to test the hypothesis, the result is presented in table 3.

Table 3**Teachers' Level of Safety Awareness and Quality of Work Life**

Variable	Mean	SD	N	df	r	P	Remarks
Teachers' Safety Awareness Level	47.95	7.08	208	206	0.92	0.001	Reject H01
Quality of Work life	21.32	5.19					

Significant at $p < 0.05$

Table 3 shows that the P value of 0.001 is less than the 0.05 level of significance, which led to the rejection of the null hypothesis. The relationship is positive and very high (92%). This shows that a significant relationship existed between teachers' level of safety awareness and quality of work life in Lagos State Model Colleges.

Discussion

The first result showed that the safety equipment/facilities were moderately adequate in Lagos State Model Colleges. From the data collected, it was evident that in most of the Colleges sampled, the following safety equipment/facilities were highly available: fire extinguishers, perimeter fencing with gates, first aid facilities, and sanitary facilities, wearing of identity cards by teachers and students and visitors' records. However, in most of the colleges, the following safety measures were moderately adequate: safety committee, adequate security personnel, fire alarm system, fire instruction clearly displayed in all buildings, security camera/closed circuit Television (CCTV), safety club, central security alarm. On a general note therefore, it was found that the safety equipment/ facilities were

Moderately adequate in the Lagos State Model Colleges. This finding is in line with the earlier one by Hamilton-Ekeke (2017) who found that the staff and students in the sampled schools in Bayelsa state, Nigeria were prone to risk due to the absence of safety measures in schools.

The second result showed that there was a significant relationship between the adequacy of safety equipment/ facilities and teachers' quality of work life in Lagos State Model Colleges. This means that the how much safety facilities/equipment provided is a determinant of teachers' minds set of utilizing their full potentials in the performance of their responsibilities within the school. The result of this finding confirms the finding of Igwagu (2016) which showed a significant, positive and strong relationship between provision of security/safety facilities and teachers' job motivation.

The last result indicated that teachers' level of safety awareness had significant relationship with their quality of work life. Specifically, data obtained showed that there was moderate level of safety awareness on the part of the teachers and this no doubt affected the quality of their work life. Adequate safety awareness programme were not provided for teachers, as they were rarely sent on fire safety training, first aid training, safety awareness programmes, hazard management training etc. Infact, many of them were not conversant with the school safety regulations as well as safety signs. These resulted in the level of awareness of teachers falling between moderate and low, and no doubt had implications on the quality of teachers' job performance and the feeling of satisfaction that the work place fulfills their safety needs. This finding further confirms the Lagos State Government's (2011) provision in the school safety regulations that the safety policies in school is aimed at preventing injuries, minimize accidents and discourage negligence. Therefore, staff knowledge of safety policies is to help them in understanding the essential components of ensuring safe school, so that they can exhibit safe behavior. It therefore, focuses on teachers' awareness of how to maintain behavior that promotes safety, in order to minimize inherent safety challenges in the school.

Conclusions

The findings of this study have shown the significant contributions of school safety measures on teachers' quality of work life in Lagos State Model colleges. Specifically, the study showed that the provision of safety equipment/facilities were moderately adequate in the model colleges. Similarly, teachers were found to develop indifferent attitudes towards safety measures, and this had no effect on their quality of work life. The level of teachers' safety awareness was relatively low which thereby having implications on their work life quality.

Recommendations

Arising from the results emanating from the study, the following recommendations are made: Government should ensure that adequate provision is made for safety equipment/facilities such as security personnel stationed in the schools, metal detectors, tall perimeter fencing with gates, central security alarm, etc in all model colleges, this is necessary because of the nature of the colleges most of which are residential for both students and staff.

There should be establishment of safety committee in all the colleges which will help in the development of positive safety habits and behaviour in staff. This will go a long way in inculcating the right and appropriate values that promote school safety in teachers. In doing this, as a matter of policy, all staff and students should be mandated to wear identity cards within the school premises.

Regular capacity building programme should be organized for teachers on the use of safety equipment, safety education, creation of adequate awareness about safety issues in schools and information on school safety policy, regulations and hazard management. This is very instrumental in raising their consciousness on the need to alert relevant authorities when safety and security challenges are noticed in schools, as well as being safety conscious at all times.

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