


Physical Work Environment as a Correlate of Teachers' Productivity in Public Secondary Schools in Ondo North Senatorial District, Nigeria

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Abstract

Background of Study: The decline in teachers' productivity has become a growing concern among educational stakeholders. One possible contributing factor is the physical work environment where teaching and learning occur. This study investigates the relationship between the physical work environment and teachers' productivity in public secondary schools in Ondo North Senatorial District, Ondo State, Nigeria.

Aims and Scope of Paper: The aim of this study is to examine how the physical work environment influences teachers' productivity in public secondary schools in Ondo North Senatorial District. The paper focuses on assessing the quality of the work environment and the level of teachers' productivity, as well as determining if there is a significant relationship between these two factors.

Methods: A descriptive survey research design was employed for this study. The sample consisted of 30 principals and 600 teachers selected from 30 public secondary schools using multi-stage sampling techniques. Data were collected through the use of two questionnaires: the Physical Work Environment Questionnaire (PWEQ) and the Teachers' Productivity Questionnaire (TPQ). Research questions were analyzed using mean scores and frequency counts, while the hypothesis was tested using Pearson Product-Moment Correlation at a 0.05 significance level.

Results: The findings revealed a low level of physical work environment quality in the schools studied, coupled with a moderate level of teachers' productivity. Additionally, a significant relationship was found between the physical work environment and teachers' productivity.

Conclusion: The study concluded that the physical work environment plays a crucial role in influencing teachers' productivity in public secondary schools in Ondo North Senatorial District. It recommends that educational stakeholders create a conducive and comfortable work environment to enhance teachers' performance and productivity.

A. Introduction

The importance of education in the development of human capital cannot be overstated. Secondary school education shapes the future of students, as they provide the basis for higher education and career development. Achievement of higher education depends on the quality and efficiency of teachers, who translate educational policies into classroom practices, are responsible for curriculum implementation, development of teaching and learning activities, and school effectiveness. Teachers, as the main agents of educational delivery, play a crucial role in determining the success or failure of students' academic

endeavours, which is a measure of teachers' productivity. Teachers' productivity is the effective and efficient utilisation of knowledge, skills, and instructional time to improve students' learning outcomes and achieve school effectiveness. Teachers' productivity is the output of quality teaching, effective classroom management, and enhancement of students' learning (Okendu, 2012). Gistituani (2020) described teachers' productivity as the accomplishment of planning, implementation, professional development, and evaluation of learning processes within a specified period of time. This indicated that teachers' productivity determines how educational inputs such as facilities, resources, instructional time, among other are effectively transformed into achieving school effectiveness.

However, it is observed that teachers' productivity is not at its optimal in some secondary schools in Ondo State. Observations have equally shown that some teachers are frequently absent from school and classes, poor monitoring of students' progress, and unwillingness to adopt innovations and maintain discipline. It seems that some teachers are showing negative feelings about the teaching profession; they put in minimal effort in lesson preparation and less instructional effort. These inadequacies may be influenced by the nature and quality of the physical work environment under which teachers operate. To buttress this assertion, Obi and Akubo (2021) and Alonge et al (2020) postulated that the state of the environment where work is carried out determines its productivity. It could be deduced that the physical work environment influences the extent to which teachers are inspired to utilise their professional knowledge and prepare lesson notes, deliver instruction, manage classrooms, improve students' learning outcomes and achieve educational goals.

Physical work environment refers to the conditions under which employees perform their assigned responsibilities. These are the existing and real facilities available in the school that are used for teaching and learning activities; support employees' well-being, influence employees' safety and comfort, these include staff offices, laboratories, libraries, furniture, lighting, ventilation, sanitation facilities, and electricity supply. They are school-based factors that influence teachers' instructional delivery, lesson planning, classroom management, instructional time, and students' academic achievement. Physical work environment entails provision of adequate facilities, instructional resources and favourable working conditions to enhance teachers' efficient performance and achievement of educational goals (Ayeni & Akinola, 2020). Similarly, Okendu (2012) viewed the work environment as physical infrastructure, instructional materials, and organisational conditions for achieving teachers' performance and productivity. This implies that physical work environments are facilities that support teachers to plan lessons and deliver instruction effectively, manage classrooms efficiently, and assess students' learning promptly.

Physical work environment can be categorised into instructional facilities, administrative & staff facilities, furniture & equipment, environmental & structural conditions, utilities & support facilities, and safety & health facilities. Therefore, instructional facilities, utilities/support facilities, and furniture & equipment are adopted as the physical work environment in this study. Instructional facilities are teaching/learning materials, equipment and other resources such as textbooks, maps, charts, laboratory equipment, computers, and other ICT resources used by teachers for lesson planning, instructional delivery, assessment and feedback, among others. When these facilities are adequately provided, teachers are able to organise subject matter successively, use interactive and participatory learning, practicalize scientific concepts and principles, engage in e-learning and computer-assisted instruction, facilitate students' understanding, and thereby increase productivity. Conversely, its inadequacy could hinder teachers' ability to cover the syllabus within the stipulated time, explain practical concepts clearly, conduct practical lessons, and adopt innovative teaching methods. A well-designed physical work environment promotes employees' comfort, efficiency, and job performance (Dul & Ceylan, 2014). Conversely, a poorly designed physical environment could lead to discomfort, fatigue, and decreased productivity.

Utilities or support facilities are amenities that provide an enabling environment for teachers to carry out their duties comfortably. These facilities create the conditions that lead to teachers' comfort, safety, and hygiene, which enable teachers' focus on delivering effective instructional tasks rather than stressing with environmental challenges. Staff offices provide space for lesson preparation, keeping teaching records and materials, while internet connectivity enables access to current instructional research

materials and resources. Conversely, its inadequacy may lead to fatigue, low morale, absenteeism, demoralise teachers' enthusiasm and invariably decrease productivity. Furniture and equipment are movable items provided in schools for teaching, learning, and administrative activities, such as teachers' tables and chairs, students' desks, shelves, filing cabinets, laboratory stools, office desks, computers, printers, and photocopiers. These facilities enable teachers to work without stress, provide comfort during working hours, and promote health and safety. However, inadequate or poor condition of these facilities may contribute to physical discomfort, inefficiency, job dissatisfaction, and low turnout. Hence, there is a need to examine the relationship between the physical work environment and teachers' productivity in public secondary schools in Ondo State.

The physical work environment can be described as the conditions that influence employees' performance in the workplace. These conditions are factors impacting the overall well-being of how individual employees function, feel, and interact while performing assigned tasks. The physical work environment includes office layout, ventilation, lighting, noise level, safety measures, availability of instructional materials, laboratories, libraries, and other infrastructural facilities. Thus, creating and sustaining a conducive physical work environment vital for improving teachers' productivity. Instructional materials, safe and healthy materials in the work environment, facilitate higher productivity (Ikechukwu et al., 2019). Adequate lighting, well-ventilated offices and spacious classrooms in the work environment boost teacher morale and improve their productivity (Ossai & Okokoroyo, 2024). Convenient and well-designed offices inspire workers to improve their performance at work (Massoudi & Hamdi, 2017). This indicated that physical aspects of the work environment, such as classroom space and the availability of teaching facilities, enhance teachers' ability to plan lessons, manage classrooms, and deliver quality instruction, thereby influencing productivity.

Teachers' productivity refers to the extent to which teachers effectively utilise their professional skills and efficiently use instructional time and resources to improve students' learning and achieve educational outcomes. Teachers' productivity is the output of classroom management, punctuality, commitment and responsibilities measurable through students' achievement (Olayemi, 2019). Teachers' productivity is the efficient performance of statutory duties towards achieving educational goals (Ofojebi & Ezugoh, 2010). This implies that teachers' productivity is the effectiveness with which teachers utilise educational inputs to impart teaching and improve student learning.

Sam-Kalagbor (2021) and Akomolafe and Adesua (2016) have shown that physical facilities such as classrooms, furniture, and laboratories significantly predicted students' academic achievement. Obi and Akudo (2021) examined the extent to which the work environment predicted teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State. Findings indicated that the work environment predicted teachers' job performance. Akinwale et al. (2025) examined the availability of physical facilities and teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Osun State, Nigeria. Findings showed that teachers' job performance was moderate. Abdullahi et al. (2019) investigated the assessment of the utilisation and maintenance of physical facilities and teachers' job performance in secondary schools in FCT, Abuja, Nigeria. Findings showed that the level of teachers' job performance was low. Aladetan (2023) examined the work environment and teachers' job performance in public primary schools in Ondo State, Nigeria. The findings revealed that physical facilities such as conducive office space, potable water and constant electricity were moderate. It also revealed that the work environment enhanced teachers' job performance. Abarquez and Dioso (2025) examined the levels of the working environment and teachers' performance in a public elementary school in Marilog District, Davao City Division, Philippines. Findings showed a high level of work environment in terms of facilities and equipment, physical learning environment, and administrators' support. It also showed a high level of teachers' performance.

Studies have indicated that employees could be influenced by the conditions of the physical work environment. Observations have equally shown that some teachers could not cover the syllabus within the stipulated time, could not conduct practical lessons, and were unable to adopt innovative teaching methods. The inability may be a result of inadequacy of appropriate textbooks, ICT resources and laboratory equipment, which could facilitate effective instructional activities and performance. It is perceived that

some teachers are frequently absent from schools and classes, which could be a result of inadequate water supply and sanitation that could support hygiene and conveniences. Physical discomfort, inefficiency and stress could be a result of broken or inconducive office tables and chairs, inadequate laboratory stools and office desks which could provide comfort during working hours. In view of these inadequacies, the study seeks to investigate the relationship between physical work environment and teachers' productivity in public secondary schools in Ondo North Senatorial District, Nigeria.

The following research questions were raised to guide the study: What is the level of physical work environment in public secondary schools in Ondo North Senatorial District, Nigeria? What is the level of teachers' productivity in public secondary schools in Ondo North Senatorial District, Nigeria?

A research hypothesis was formulated to test the study. There is no significant relationship between the physical work environment and teachers' productivity in public secondary schools in Ondo North Senatorial District, Nigeria.

B. Research Methods

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. A multi-stage sampling technique was used to randomly select three Local Government Areas (LGAs) out of the existing six LGAs in Ondo North Senatorial District. Ten secondary schools were randomly selected from each of the three LGAs sampled for the study. Respondents comprised 600 teachers and 30 principals selected from 30 sampled secondary schools. Twenty teachers were randomly selected from each of the 30 sampled secondary schools. Two research questions were raised, and one hypothesis was tested to guide the study. Data were collected using self-structured questionnaires titled "Physical Work Environment Questionnaire (PWEQ)" and "Teachers' Productivity Questionnaire (TPQ)". The research instruments were subjected to face and content validity. The research instruments had a reliability coefficient of 0.81 and 0.79 for the TPQ completed by principals and the WEQ completed by teachers, respectively. A total of 600 copies of the teachers' questionnaire and 30 copies of the principals' questionnaire were distributed and administered to the respondents in the three LGAs sampled in Ondo North Senatorial District. Five hundred and eighty-four copies of the teachers' questionnaire, representing 97.3% and 30 copies of the principals' questionnaire, representing 100%, were properly filled and retrieved. Additionally, a mean score below 2.50 was considered low level, between 2.50 and 3.00 was considered moderate level, and above 3.00 was considered high level. The research questions were answered using frequency counts and percentages. The Hypothesis was tested using the Pearson Product-Moment Correlation (PPMC) statistic at a 0.05 level of significance.

C. Results and Discussion

Research Question One: What is the level of physical work environment in public secondary schools in Ondo North Senatorial District, Nigeria?

Table 1. Level of Physical Work Environment

S/N	Items		VHL	HL	ML	LL	\bar{X}
1.	Office space is conducive to working.	F	8	186	326	64	2.23
		%	1	32	56	11	
2.	Teachers have access to appropriate textbooks for instruction.	F	7	213	313	51	2.30
		%	1	37	53	9	
3.	There is a stable power supply.	F	2	194	325	63	2.23
		%		33	56	11	
4.	Sanitation facilities are provided.	F	7	186	339	52	2.25
		%	1	32	58	9	
5.	Laboratory facilities meet curriculum specification.	F	7	177	334	66	2.21
		%	1	31	57	11	
6.	Internet facilities are adequately available	F	7	211	325	41	2.31
		%	1	36	56	7	
Grand Mean							2.26

The results presented in Table 1 showed that only 37% respondents agreed at a high level that teachers have access to appropriate textbooks for instruction, while 58% agree at a moderate level that sanitation facilities are provided healthily. However, the grand mean of 2.26 indicated that the level of physical work environment in public secondary schools in Ondo North Senatorial District was low.

Research Question Two: What is the level of teachers' productivity in public secondary schools in Ondo North Senatorial District, Nigeria?

Table 2. Level of Teachers' Productivity

S/N	Items		SA	A	D	SD	\bar{X}
1.	Teachers utilise their lesson period effectively.	F	6	12	5	7	2.56
		%	20	40	17	23	
2.	Teachers simplify lessons so that learners understand	F	4	15	8	3	2.66
		%	13	50	27	10	
3.	Teachers adopt innovation.	F	3	10	12	5	2.36
		%	10	33	40	17	
4.	Teachers control their class for efficient service delivery	F	4	20	1	5	2.76
		%	13	67	3	17	
5.	Teacher creates friendly learning environment with their students	F	6	10	8	6	2.53
		%	20	33	27	20	
6.	Teachers engage students' participation in classroom activities	F	2	19	5	4	2.63
		%	7	63	17	13	
Grand Mean							2.58

The results presented in Table 2 on the level of teachers' productivity showed that 67% of the respondents agreed that some teachers could not maintain discipline in the classroom, while 23% of the respondents disagreed that some teachers could not utilise their lesson period effectively. However, the grand mean of 2.58 indicated that the level of teachers' productivity in public secondary schools in Ondo North Senatorial District was moderate.

Testing of Research Hypothesis

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between the physical work environment and teachers' productivity.

Table 3. Relationship between Physical Work Environment and Teachers' Productivity

Variables	N	Df	r- cal	p-value	Decision
Work Environment	583				
Teachers' Productivity	30	611	0.815	0.044	Rejected
p=<0.05					

Analysis in Table 3 showed that r-cal is 0.815 and the p-value is 0.044. Since the p-value is less than the table value at p=0.05 significance value, the tested null hypothesis is therefore rejected, and it is concluded that a significant relationship exists between physical work environment and teachers' productivity in public secondary schools in Ondo State.

The results showed the level of physical work environment in public secondary schools in Ondo North Senatorial District, Nigeria. The result did not agree with the finding of Aladetan (2023), who found that the level of the working environment was moderate. Also, the result did not agree with Abarquez and Dioso (2025), whose their finding revealed a high level of work environment. The difference in the results could be a result of the location of the study and the factors examined in each of the studies. Findings on research question two on the level of teachers' productivity in Ondo North Senatorial District, Nigeria were moderate. The findings of this study did not agree with Aladetan (2023) and Abarquez and Dioso (2025), who found that teachers' productivity was high. However, Abdullahi et al. (2019) found a low level of teachers' job performance. The reasons for the moderate level could be a result of the low level of physical work environment, which may hinder teacher effectiveness and commitment to work. This assertion could be buttressed by Ossai and Okokoyo (2024), who stated that an ill-equipped school environment, dilapidated classrooms and lack of basic materials, infrastructure and equipment could lead to dissatisfaction among teachers, thereby reducing teacher performance and productivity. Another finding revealed that there was a significant relationship between District, Nigeria. The finding agrees with Alonge (2020) and Obi and Akudo (2021), who found that there was a significant relationship between working

conditions and teachers' productivity. Also, Naharuddin and Sadegi (2013) found that the workplace environment is vital to employees' performance and the enhancement of productivity in Malaysia. However, the finding did not agree with Ibi et al (2020), who studied and revealed no significant relationship between working environment and teachers' productivity in public senior secondary schools in Maiduguri Metropolis.

D. Conclusion

The study established two major findings. First, the level of physical work environment in public secondary schools in Ondo North Senatorial District was generally low, as reflected in the inadequate provision of instructional materials, unstable utilities, and insufficient furniture and facilities. Second, teachers' productivity was found to be at a moderate level, indicating that while teachers are performing their duties to some extent, their effectiveness is not optimal. Most importantly, the study revealed a statistically significant positive relationship between the physical work environment and teachers' productivity. This implies that improvements in the physical work environment are strongly associated with corresponding increases in teachers' productivity. The contribution of this research lies in providing empirical evidence that reinforces the critical role of the physical work environment as a determinant of teachers' productivity within the Nigerian secondary school context. By quantifying both the level of environmental adequacy and its relationship with productivity, the study extends existing literature and offers context-specific insights for the Ondo North Senatorial District. It also contributes methodologically through the use of validated instruments (PWEQ and TPQ) and statistical analysis to establish this relationship. Practically, the study provides a basis for policymakers, educational administrators, and stakeholders to prioritise investment in school infrastructure and facilities as a strategic approach to enhancing teacher effectiveness and overall educational outcomes.

E. Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions drawn from the study, it was recommended that: Government and stakeholders should ensure that schools are well equipped with laboratory equipment, office chairs and solar power energy to strengthen teachers' performance and improve students' academic achievement. Non-governmental agencies and philanthropists should support the provision of learning materials, laboratory facilities, sufficient sanitation, and convenient office furniture to enable teachers to work in a conducive and stress-free environment. Principals should prioritise improving the quality of utilities, equipment, and instructional facilities to achieve optimal teacher effectiveness.

F. Author Contribution Statement

This research is the result of a dedicated effort by the author, Deborah Olukemi ANJORIN, who was responsible for formulating the research background, identifying the key challenges related to the physical work environment, and examining its impact on teachers' productivity in Ondo North Senatorial District. She also designed the research methodology and developed the data collection instruments, ensuring a comprehensive approach to assess the relationship between the physical environment and teacher productivity. Throughout the study, ANJORIN conducted data analysis, interpreted the findings, and drew conclusions based on the results. She was solely responsible for the writing, editing, and finalization of the manuscript, ensuring a thorough and systematic presentation of the study. Her expertise in educational management played a crucial role in the development and execution of this research, resulting in valuable insights into the physical work environment's influence on teachers' productivity.

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