

Roles of Work Environment and Basic Needs Satisfaction on Turnover Intention among Secondary Schools Teachers in Ebonyi State

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Abstract

This study examined the roles of work environment and basic needs satisfaction on turnover intentions among teachers. Participants were two hundred and ninety-eight (298) secondary school teachers drawn from schools in Ebonyi State. Participants were sampled using convenient sampling technique. They comprised of 26 males (8.7%) and 272 females (91.3%). The variables were measured using Work Environment Scale (WES-10), Basic Needs Satisfaction in General Scale (BNSG-S), and Turnover Intention Scale (TIS-6). A cross-sectional survey research design was adopted for the study. Hierarchical multiple regression statistic was employed for data analysis and the SPSS was used to test our hypotheses. The results of the study indicated that work environment ($\beta = -.47, p < .001$), autonomy ($\beta = -.49, p < .001$), competence ($\beta = -.10, p < .05$) and relatedness ($\beta = -.24, p < .001$) significantly and negatively predicted turnover intentions among teachers. The implications of the result projected the need to create awareness about the enhancement of the academic environment, as well as developing strategies to increase teacher's sense of autonomy, competence and relatedness.

Keywords: work environment, basic needs satisfaction, turnover intentions, secondary school teachers.

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Introduction

Earlier research has primarily focused on individual factors that influence teachers' turnover intention, identifying main antecedents, including poor intrinsic motivation, low self-efficacy, high workload, inadequate support, and low job satisfaction (Alexander et al., 2020; Cuervo & Vera-Toscano, 2025). However, research that investigated work environment and basic needs satisfaction on teacher's intention to leave is scarce. This position is important, as both contexts (e.g., work environment and basic needs satisfaction) can influence teachers' sense of value about their work and how satisfied they are (Akiba et al., 2023; Price & Weatherby, 2018), which are central to retention (Nguyen et al., 2020; Wang et al., 2015). When teachers perceive their profession as highly respected by providing them with strong environmental support they would want to remain (Mezza, 2022; Spruyt et al., 2021). Furthermore, existing research has predominantly focused on Western-European and Asian contexts (e.g., Cuervo & Vera-Toscano, 2025; Jiang et al., 2025). It is reported that cultural and institutional dynamics can influence teachers' status differently (Jiang et al., 2025; Krejsler, 2005). Hargreaves (2009) also agrees that the status of teaching differs from country to country and depends on societal values. This idea was supported by the recent Global Teacher Status Survey, which indicated that there is significant regional variations in societal perceptions of teachers (Arnold & Rahimi, 2025). Despite these agreements among scholars, similar attention has not been paid to other contexts such as African settings. As a result, a more comprehensive study that covers more cultures such as Africa is warranted to have a deeper theoretical and empirical understanding of the predictors of teachers' turnover intention. Meta-analysis by Li and Yao (2022) failed to include work environment and basic needs satisfaction as antecedents of turnover intentions creating a major lacuna in the literature. To address this gap, the current study attempts to examine whether work environment and basic needs satisfaction are significant predictors of teachers' turnover intentions. To the best of our knowledge, research that associated work environment and basic needs satisfaction among teachers in Nigeria is scarce.

According to reports, the majority of low productivity in the workplace may be ascribed to employees' plan to leave their positions (Aponsah-Tawiah et al., 2016; Reeves et al., 2017; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2017). There is a hidden risk of employee turnover intention in any business, regardless of the nature of the firm or the activities it engages in. When workers of an organization like the educational institution, are exposed to the possibility of considering quitting their positions. Such situation jeopardizes the chances of the organizations to attain its set goals. High rates of job turnover among teachers are important causes for worry, especially considering the high costs connected with the recruitment and training of new teachers (Alliance for Excellent Education, 2018; Florida Department of Education, 2018; United States Census Bureau, 2017). Therefore, an effective and clear way to improve teaching effectiveness in schools would be to increase the retention of experienced teachers by lowering the likelihood that they would leave their positions in the future as an antecedent of actual leaving their positions. Teachers play important roles in education by aiding the learning process and fostering discipline which in the end improves the quality of life, therefore benefiting both the individual and the society as a whole. These benefits are usually reduced through teachers' turnover since according to Kamau et al. (2021), teacher turnover compromises learning process by diverting resources from the classroom.

The term "turnover" refers to the number of workers who leave a company and are subsequently replaced with new employees (Wei, 2015). The present study focused on turnover intention rather than on actual turnover, because intent to leave one's position has been reported to be a good and reliable indicator of actual turnover (e.g., Garner & Hunter, 2014). Some researchers proposed that turnover intention is the single strongest predictor of actual turnover

(e.g., Ki & Choi-Kwon, 2022). Turnover intention can be defined as the cognitive process of thinking, planning, and desiring to leave a job (Heritage, et al., 2016). It is an employee's purpose to leave their organization or their desire to do so (Wombacher & Felfe, 2017). Because of the myriad ways in which it might affect an organization's ability to carry out its tasks in an efficient manner, this idea has garnered the attention of both academics and working professionals (Long et al., 2012). Turnover, in general, has been largely examined as an outcome; nevertheless, for the company, what is crucial is not the end, but rather, what would bring people toward that conclusion (Paulsen, 2014).

It is possible that educators won't ever seriously consider quitting their jobs. Their decision to leave is influenced by a variety of circumstances, both personal and environmental (Bothma, 2011). Therefore, it is now the obligation of the organization to determine the elements that might lower the intents of employees to leave the firm. There are a variety of factors, such as stress (Chiu et al., 2005), politics (Abbas et al., 2014), bullying (Houshmand et al., 2012), dissatisfaction (Takase et al., 2005), and work-family conflict (Alsam et al., 2013), that have been shown to play a positive role in increasing employees' intentions to leave their jobs. On the other hand, there are other elements, such as organizational justice and citizenship behavior, that have a negative influence or that lower the intents of employees to leave their jobs. Two most significant aspect that may potentially influence in these respects is work environment and fundamental requirements fulfillment.

According to Ajala (2012), the workplace is an organized space that is offered by the firm in order to accomplish the purpose that the organization has set for itself. The configuration of a work space such that it is appropriate for the kind of activity or job that is going to be carried out can be referred to as an "organized area." It may be configured like an office, with cubicles, desks, seats, and cabinets; alternatively, it may consist only of a work table with a wall furnished with various hand tools, as is appropriate for a workshop. It is necessary to have the appropriate kind of working atmosphere in order to entice people to feel comfortable, since this would help them to perform efficiently. A significant number of academics have made attempts to conceptualize the working environment. It is possible that, in its most basic form, it may be described as the settings, situations, conditions, and circumstances in which people carry out their jobs. The term "work environment" refers to the interaction that exists between a worker and his surroundings. This relationship may be segmented into many aspects, such as the social, technical, and economic ways in which work is often perceived and planned.

Jain and Kaur (2014) reported that a person's working environment encompasses all the factors that might have an effect, both positive and negative, on their body and mind. When working conditions are pleasant, feelings of exhaustion, monotony, and boredom are reduced, while the capacity for productive labor is increased. The term "work environment" refers to a complete idea since it encompasses not only the physical but also the psychological and social components of employees' working circumstances. The psychological and overall well-being of workers may be improved or harmed, depending on the nature of their working environment. Supportive work environments enable workers to carry out their normal responsibilities in a more efficient manner (Leshabari et al., 2008). This allows workers to make the most of their knowledge, skills, and competencies, as well as the resources that are at their disposal, which ultimately results in higher-quality services being provided. Haynes (2008) found that anytime there is an upgrade made to the physical architecture of an office building, there is an increase in productivity via employee performances of around 5-10 percent. Once more, the studies of Sarode and Shirseth (2014) demonstrated that lighting, noise, color, and air quality all have an influence on the productivity of employees. There is a good chance that worries about getting hurt or having an accident will have some impact on a person's mental health. The working

environment is made up of a number of different components, all of which play an important role in determining employee performance (Lambert, 2001). These elements might either favorably or adversely contribute to the utmost performance that an employee is capable of reaching. In addition to lighting (both artificial and natural), noise, furniture, and spatial layouts in workplaces, these characteristics are also considered to be part of the physical office environment (Vischer, 2008). The temperature and the degree of comfort also have a significant impact on the employees' overall health.

A number of different scholars contributed to the development and expansion of the notion that humans have fundamental requirements over the course of the past century. For instance, some academics have hypothesized that human needs are hardwired into our brains (e.g., Deci & Ryan, 2000), but other researchers have hypothesized that human needs are acquired by experience over the course of one's lifetime (e.g., McClelland, 1965). In addition, different scholars have arrived at different conclusions on the characteristics of a need. Some researchers have hypothesized that human needs are of a psychological nature, whereas other researchers have hypothesized that human needs are of a physiological nature. On the other hand, there are theorists who believe that needs are a mix of both of these factors (e.g., Maslow, 1970). According to the self-determination theory, needs are intrinsic, psychological, and necessary for one's health and happiness (Deci & Ryan, 2000).

An alternative approach to defining needs is taken in self-determination theory. Specifically, this theory defines requirements as universal necessities, as the nutrients that are required for good human growth and integrity. According to this definition, something is a need only to the extent that its satisfaction promotes psychological health and its thwarting undermines psychological health. In other words, the satisfaction of a need promotes psychological health while the thwarting of a need undermines psychological health. According to this definition, the needs for competence, autonomy, and relatedness are considered to be important for all individuals. Because of this, the focus of self-determination theory research is not on the consequences of the intensity of these needs for different individuals, but rather on the consequences of the extent to which individuals are able to satisfy the needs within social environments.

The urge to be linked to, supported by, or cared for by other people is what we mean when we talk about relatedness (Baumeister & Leary, 1995; Ryan & Deci, 2002). According to the SDT, all three demands have to be satisfied for a person to experience psychological well-being (Deci & Ryan, 2000). In other words, if just one or two of the three demands are met, it will have a negative impact on psychological health (Deci & Ryan, 2000). The level of freedom and control that teachers have in their jobs and in the choices that they make is referred to as the teachers' autonomy (Chang & Anderson, 2015; Vangrieken et al., 2017). Autonomy also entails the teachers' flexibility to set the pace of their work and selecting how to fulfill their tasks. Teachers' autonomy means producing their own new resources and using them.

Veldman et al. (2016) discovered that teachers frequently suffer greater turnover intentions if they fail to encounter strong teacher student connections. However, as senior teachers achieved their ambitions in teacher student connections their desire to continue their positions improved (Veldman, et al., 2016). When experienced teachers have turnover intentions and then ultimately retire their employment, there is a general decline in students' achievement and low production throughout the school system. This results in a general drop in overall productivity (Heritage et al., 2017). According to the findings of research that was carried out by Ajayi and Olatunji (2019), the number of teachers in Nigeria who have the intention of leaving their jobs is growing.

The work environment is an important factor in determining the level of performance and productivity of employees in any firm (El-Zeiny, 2013). The contentment of workers may

be increased by providing a pleasant working environment. When people are working in environments that are conducive to both their physical and mental capabilities, we may say that there is a correct fit between the person and the job task. When this occurs, workers are put in a position that is ideal for learning, working, and accomplishing goals. Sazili et al. (2022) determine the effect of the work environment and job satisfaction on turnover intention. The research methodology is causal associative with a quantitative approach. Respondents in this study amounted to 98 employees. The method of data analysis in this study uses multiple regression. The research results showed that work environment has a positive influence on turnover intention, job satisfaction has a positive influence on turnover intention, and work environment and job satisfaction, together affect turnover intention by 2.7% and 97.3% are influenced by variables outside the study.

Theoretical Framing

This study is anchored on self-determination theory (Ryan & Deci, 2000), which posits three universal psychological needs and suggests that these must be satisfied for people to maintain optimal performance and well-being. These needs include: autonomy, competence, and relatedness. Autonomy refers to the need to feel that one's behavior and resulting outcomes are self-determined, or self-caused, as opposed to being influenced or controlled by outside forces. Competence refers to the need to feel effective and capable of performing tasks at varying levels of difficulty. Relatedness refers to the need to feel connected to, supported by, or cared for by other people. SDT stipulates all three needs must be fulfilled for psychological well-being to occur.

Most times, employee begins by evaluating his or her current job until they finally take an action of either to quit or to stay. This stems from the fact that most individuals and in the specific case of teachers, perceive their job as one that is poorly paid as often said that the reward of the teacher is in heaven, a situation that often makes teachers to compare their job to other jobs. According to the model, any negative thoughts and maltreatment by the employer leads to job dissatisfaction and subsequent thoughts of quitting the job as in the specific case of the teaching profession.

Theoretical background and development of hypotheses

Work environment and turnover intention

Previous research reported that teachers are more likely to leave the teaching profession if they do not feel valued or appreciated in society (Akiba et al., 2023; Arnold & Rahimi, 2025). Teachers who feel that they are not valued oftentimes report poor job satisfaction, which is associated with low morale and high turnover intentions (Madigan & Kim, 2021). It has been observed that improved workplace conditions, and high professional ethics, significantly relates to low intention to quit (Jiang et al., 2025). Reverse is also the case that when teachers experience poor work environment may nurse the intention to leave their profession. The work environment is essential in causing an employee's turnover, where the work environment is positively relates to turnover intention (Wan et al, 2018). Work environment is reported to have a positive impact on an individual's intention to change jobs. Kurniawaty et al. (2019) found the work environment has a negative influence on employee turnover intention. Drawing on existing literature, we propose the hypothesis that:

Hypothesis 1: Work environment relates negatively to turnover intentions among secondary school teachers.

Basic needs satisfaction and turnover intention

A number of different scholars contributed to the development and expansion of the notion that humans have fundamental requirements over the course of the past century Novianti and Fuadiputra (2021) found that work autonomy significantly affected job satisfaction, work-life balance, and turnover intention. In another study conducted by (Marques, 2013) having a significant level of relatedness with colleagues and management of the organization, being able to ask colleagues for guidance or worker related advice, and experiencing a sense of comradeship, reduce turnover intention. When the need for autonomy, competence and relatedness are fulfilled they positively influence employee engagement because fulfilling those needs build energy and provide the path for employees to engage in work tasks (Deci & Ryan, 2011). It is also argued that employees whose basic psychological needs are fulfilled appear to be motivated and thus commit more resources to their job (Van den Broeck et al., 2016). Such workers have in-depth understanding of the aims of their job, are satisfied, learn better, are self-motivated to adequately deliver their job roles (Ryan & Deci, 2017). Individuals' needs satisfaction also evokes other positive work-related outcomes like well-being, commitment, and performance (Deci & Ryan, 2014; Van den Broeck et al., 2016). Employees who experience high autonomy reported low emotional exhaustion (Van Daalen et al., 2009). Results of meta-analytic study indicated that each of the three basic needs predicted low turnover intention (Van den Broeck et al., 2016). Based on the argument above, we hypothesize that:

Hypothesis 2a: Basic needs satisfaction (autonomy) relates negatively to turnover intentions of secondary school teachers, b) competence relates negatively to turnover intentions, and c) relatedness relates negatively to turnover intentions.

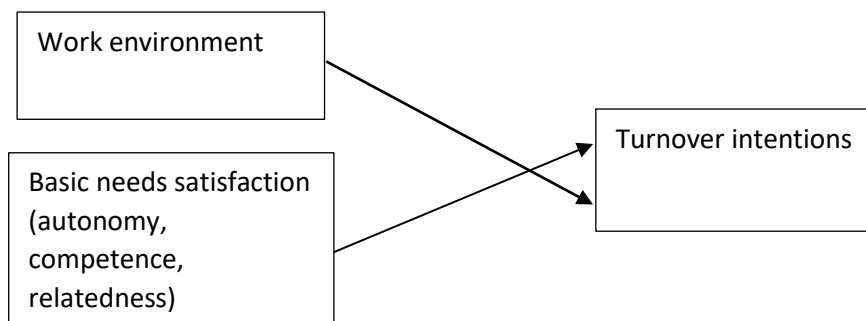


Figure 1. Conceptual model

Method

Participants

A total of two hundred and ninety-eight (298) secondary school teachers participated in the present study. They were drawn from five secondary schools all in Ebonyi State. Of the total sampling, 8.7% ($n = 26$) were males and 91.3% ($n = 272$) were females. The participants were selected using convenient sampling method. The average respondent age of the sample was 30.87 ($SD = 3.45$, ranging from 24 to 42 years). Participation was voluntary. For marital status, 22.5% ($N = 67$) of the participants were single, 73.5% ($N = 219$) were married, while 4.0% ($n = 12$) were widowed. For the highest educational qualification of the participants, 78.9% ($n = 235$) had their HND/BSc degree, 19.1% ($N = 57$) had their Masters, while 2.0% ($N = 6$) had their Ph.D. 88.3% ($n = 263$) of the participants were Igbos, 2.3% ($n = 7$) were Hausa, 4.0% ($n = 12$) were Yoruba, while other ethnic groups were represented with 5.4% ($n = 16$).

Then for the number of years spent working, 8.7% (n = 26) represented 6-12 months, 55.0% (n = 164) represented 1-5 years, 32.2% (n = 96) represented 6-10 years, 3.4% (n = 10) represented 11-15 years, while 0.7% (n = 2) represented 16-20 years.

Instruments

Three measures were used in the study: Turnover Intention Scale (TIS-6), Work Environment Scale (WES-10) and Basic Needs Satisfaction in General Scale (BNSG-S). A demographic data questionnaire was used to obtain information about the participants' gender, age, religion, ethnicity, marital status, highest educational qualification, number of years spent working, and so on.

Turnover Intention - Turnover intention was measured with a 6-item turnover intention scale (TIS-6) (Bothma & Roodt, 2013). The TIS-6 was adapted from the 15-item scale initially developed by Roodt (2004). Example of an item in the TIS-6 is: '*How often do you dream about getting another job that will better suit your personal needs?*' The response scale was scored on a five-item Likert scale, varying between poles of intensity with 1 (never) to 5 (always). In analyzing the results of the data, higher scores indicate increased chances of turnover intention. A Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient of 0.80 has been reported for the TIS-6 (Bothma & Roodt, 2013). Cronbach's alpha of .92 was reported by Chigbundu and Muda (2022) among Nigerian bankers.

Work Environment - We measured work environment with the work environment scale -10 (WES-10; Friis 1981, adapted from Rossberg et al., 2004) that assesses how participants feel about their work environment. Example of items on the WES-10 is: '*Do you feel that you get the support you need, when you are faced with difficult treatment problems?*' The items are scored on a Likert scale response format ranging from 1 = (not at all) to 5 = (to a very large extent). Higher scores on the scale indicate a better work environment. Rossberg et al. (2004) reported a Cronbach's alpha of .85 for the scale. Oriaku (2022) reported an internal reliability of .95 among employees working at Dangote Cement Company in Nigeria.

Basic Needs Satisfaction - The Basic Needs Satisfaction was assessed with the Basic Needs Satisfaction in General Scale (BNSG-S). It is a 21-item measure that was created to assess the satisfaction of basic psychological needs in general (Deci & Ryan, 2000). It consists of three subscales which include: Autonomy (items 1, 4, 8, 11, 14, 17 and 20; example – "I feel like I am free to decide for myself how to live my life"), Competence (items 3, 5, 10, 13, 15 and 19; example – "Often, I do not feel very competent") and Relatedness (items 2, 6, 7, 9, 12, 16, 18 and 21; example – "I really like the people I interact with"). Participants are instructed to indicate how true they felt each statement was of their life and respond on a scale of 1 (Not at all true) to 7 (Very true). Nine (3, 4, 7, 11, 15, 16, 18, 19 and 20) of the 21 items are negatively worded and were reversed scored prior to analyses. Higher scores are indicative of a higher level of satisfaction of needs while a lower score indicates a lower level of satisfaction of needs. Johnston and Finney (2010) reported an acceptable internal consistency of .68, .62, and .82 for the autonomy, competence and relatedness subscales, respectively. In a Nigerian sample, Ndibuagu et al. (2021) reported a Cronbach's alpha of .68, .71 and .73 for the autonomy, competence and relatedness subscales, respectively. Higher scores indicate good basic needs satisfaction.

Procedure

The researchers introduced themselves to the participants in their different places of work to seek for their permission to fill the questionnaires. They had three research assistants they briefed on the modalities of administering the questionnaire. Participants who gave their consent were given the questionnaires to fill and return to the researcher the same day if possible, and at most, the next day. The researchers explained the nature of the study to the

participants and what they were required to do. Participants were informed that they were free to withdraw at any stage of the study, without any prejudice, and that their personal information would remain confidential. They were also encouraged to answer the questions as honestly as possible. The researcher also encouraged participants to respond to all the items in order to obtain complete data. In total, three hundred and ten (310) copies of questionnaire containing the three instruments were distributed to the teachers and two hundred and ninety-eight (298) were properly completed and returned to the researcher. For the other twelve, eight were not returned while the other four were not properly filled out. Data collection took about two weeks and three days.

Data Analysis

A cross-sectional design was adopted. Pearson's correlation (r) analysis was conducted among the study variables, while Hierarchical multiple regression for SPSS 26.0 was used to test our hypotheses.

Results

The correlations among the study variables are presented in Table 1. The results of hierarchical multiple regression used to test the hypotheses appear in Table 2.

Table 1. Correlations between demographic variables, work environment, basic needs satisfaction and turnover intention

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1 Gender	-								
2 Age	-.23	-							
3 Marital status	-.24**	.13*	-						
4 Years working	-.16**	.14*	.88**	-					
5 Work environment	.27**	.04	-.09	-.03	-				
6 Autonomy	.22**	-.01	-.12*	-.09	.55**	-			
7 Competence	-.13*	.09	.49**	.58**	.04	-.05	-		
8 Relatedness	.33**	.03	-.15**	.12*	.37**	.22**	-.16**	-	
9 Turnover intention	.31**	.07	-.24**	-.25**	-.52**	-.64**	-.23**	-.45**	-

Note. $N = 298$, * = $p < .05$ (two-tailed), ** = $p < .01$ (two-tailed). Gender was coded 1 = male, 2 = female; level of study was coded 1 = 100, 2 = 200, 3 = 300, 4 = 400, and 5 = 500; Age was coded using number of years; Marital status was coded as 1 = single, 2 = married, 3 = widowed; Years working was coded as 1 = 6-12 months, 2 = 1-5 years, 3 = 6-10 years, 4 = 11-15 years, 5 = 16 – 20 years, 6 = 20 years and above

The results of the correlations in Table 1 indicated that males had a better work environment ($r = .27$, $p < .01$), higher autonomy ($r = .22$, $p < .01$), higher relatedness ($r = .33$, $p < .01$) and lower turnover intentions ($r = .31$, $p < .01$) while females had higher competence ($r = -.13$, $p < .05$). Single teachers reported higher levels of autonomy ($r = -.12$, $p < .05$), relatedness ($r = -.15$, $p < .01$) and turnover intention ($r = -.24$, $p < .01$) and lower levels of competence ($r = .49$, $p < .01$). Higher number of years working was associated with higher levels of competence ($r = .58$, $p < .01$) and relatedness ($r = .12$, $p < .05$) and lower levels of turnover intention ($r = -.25$, $p < .01$). A better work environment was associated with higher autonomy ($r = .55$, $p < .01$) and relatedness ($r = .37$, $p < .01$) and lower turnover intention ($r = -.52$, $p < .01$). Higher autonomy was associated with higher relatedness ($r = .22$, $p < .01$) and lower turnover intention ($r = -.23$, $p < .01$). Higher relatedness was associated with lower turnover intention ($r = -.45$, $p < .01$).

Table 2. Hierarchical Multiple Regression for Predictors of Turnover Intention

Variable	Step 1			Step 2			Step 3		
	B	β	t	B	β	t	B	β	t
<i>Controls</i>									
Gender	.28	.27	5.00***	.15	.15	2.92**	.06	.06	1.31
Age	2.92	.11	1.94*	2.31	.08	1.75*	2.37	.09	1.19*
Years working	-.51	-.22	-3.98***	-.52	-.22	-4.62***	-.28	-.12	-2.49*
<i>Predictors</i>									
Work environment				-1.48	-.47	-9.51***	-.42	-.13	-2.68**
Autonomy							-1.52	-.49	-10.52***
Competence							-.28	-.10	-2.031*
Relatedness							-.70	-.24	-5.42***
Adjusted R^2		.136			.337			.554	
ΔR^2		.145			.202			.219	
ΔF		16.562***			90.371***			48.614***	

Note: * = $p < .05$, ** = $p < .01$, *** = $p < .001$.

The results of the hierarchical multiple regression in Table 2 in which turnover intention was the criterion variable indicated that the demographic variables entered as controls (i.e., gender, age and number of years working), in Step 1 of the equation, collectively accounted for 14.5% variance in turnover intention. Gender ($\beta = .27$, $p < .001$) and age ($\beta = .11$, $p < .05$) made a positive and significant contribution while number of years working ($\beta = -.22$, $p < .001$) made a negative and significant contribution to the prediction of turnover intention. This indicates that female teachers, older teachers and teachers with lesser number of years working have higher turnover intention.

When work environment was entered in Step 2 of the equation as a predictor, it accounted for 20.2% variance in turnover intention above that of the control variables. Work environment was a significant and negative predictor of turnover intention ($\beta = -.47$, $p < .001$), thus H_1 was confirmed. The unstandardized regression coefficient (B) showed that for every one-unit increase in work environment, turnover intention decreases by -1.48 units.

When basic needs satisfaction was entered in Step 3 of the equation as a predictor, it accounted for 21.9% variance in turnover intention. Autonomy was a significant and negative predictor of turnover intention ($\beta = -.49$, $p < .001$), thus H_{2a} was confirmed. The unstandardized regression coefficient (B) showed that for every one-unit increase in autonomy, turnover intention decreases by -1.52 units. Competence was a significant and negative predictor of turnover intention ($\beta = -.10$, $p < .05$), thus H_{2b} was confirmed. The unstandardized regression coefficient (B) showed that for every one-unit increase in competence, turnover intention decreases by -.28 units. Relatedness was a significant and negative predictor of turnover intention ($\beta = -.24$, $p < .001$), thus H_{2c} was confirmed. The unstandardized regression coefficient (B) showed that for every one-unit increase in relatedness, turnover intention decreases by -.70 units.

Discussion

This study examined the relationship between work environment, basic needs satisfaction and turnover intentions among secondary school teachers. The result showed that work environment was significantly and negatively associated with turnover intention. Thus, the first hypothesis which stated that work environment will be significantly and negatively associated with turnover intention was confirmed. This suggests that, losing faith in the employers in making the work environment conducive can make people to be helpless, unproductive and emotionally unstable to continue working in an organization. The self-determination hypothesis as stated earlier proposes that humans have three universal psychological needs, and it indicates that in order for people to sustain optimal levels of performance and well-being, these needs must be continuously satisfied. These requirements are things like autonomy, capability, and relatedness (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Nurturing feelings of competence, autonomy, and relatedness may not only help in engaging and retaining employees but also contribute to developing sustainable motivation among them. This finding is consistent with some works earlier reviewed Sazili et al. (2022) which reported a negative correlation between work environment and turnover intention among employees. The finding is also in agreement with a study that concluded employee-employer relationship, workers' leadership, staffing and resource adequacy is correlated with intention to leave (Heinen et al., 2013). Managers' leadership styles safeguard quality practice environments and, for that matter, have a greater rate of retaining staff. The findings thus support the assertion that manager ability, leadership, and support impact workers' intention to stay (Van Bogaert et al., 2017). Consistent

The result further showed that basic needs satisfaction (autonomy, competence and relatedness) was also negatively and significantly associated with turnover intentions among secondary school teachers. Thus, hypothesis 2a, 2b and 2c which stated that autonomy, competence and relatedness will be significantly and negatively associated with turnover intentions were confirmed. This indicates that the more the needs for autonomy, relatedness and competence are attended to within organizations, they feel satisfied with regards to basic psychological needs satisfaction and would want to remain in the organization and contribute less to the growth of the organization. This findings of the present study agrees with past findings (Rathi & Lee, 2017; Wang et al., 2020) that the satisfaction of basic needs is associated with reduced turnover intention.

The more employees' basic psychological needs are satisfied, the lower their level of turnover intention (Novianti & Fuadiputra, 2021). When exposed to more challenging tasks, and with the necessary support from management and colleagues, employees would also improve their perceived levels of competence becoming more committed towards the work they do and increasing their levels of performance within the organization. Having a significant level of relatedness with colleagues and management of the organization, being able to ask colleagues for guidance or work-related advice, and experiencing a sense of comradeship, is likely to also reduce turnover intention (Marques, 2013). Feeling competent in their abilities to execute work duties and receiving the necessary praise for a job well-done, they are also likely to experience lower levels of turnover intention.

Implications of the Study

The result of the study indicated that work environment and basic needs satisfaction (autonomy, competence and relatedness) were significantly and negatively related to turnover intentions among secondary school teachers, indicating that a more conducive teaching environment and the satisfaction of teachers' basic needs would reduce the intention to leave their jobs. Work environment in the present study can be interpreted in the form of availability

of supporting facilities, physical environment, management practices, and the application occupational health and safety concepts, which can lead to low employee turnover intention. Employees can mobilize all their abilities and creativity if supported by a good work environment. However, if the work environment created is not able to make employees feel comfortable to work, they will not feel at home in the organization and will end up in turnover intention. The results of this study are also relevant to the notion put forward by Shah et al. (2012) that one of the factors causing high turnover in a company is a work environment that consists of communication in the workplace, political environment, coworkers and attitudes of superiors that make employees feel dissatisfied at work.

Teaching in recent times is extremely specialized, and therefore, highly experienced teachers are needed in the educational settings. Educational managers should provide insightful leadership that can be useful in creating and maintaining a work environment that supports the teaching workforce. This may include focusing attention on stress reduction strategies; thus, improving the availability of both human and material resources in the academic settings, advocating for a healthy teacher-administrative relation, and also improving teachers' participation in school affairs.

From the above discussion, it suggests that in discussing policy strategies on teaching workforce retention and work environment impact the turnover intention in many settings at most times. Educational administrators should, therefore, expand the discussion beyond financial incentives as a way of tackling the increased turnover of teachers (Maslach & Leiter, 2008). The resultant effect will be improving teaching outcomes through the retention of skilled and experienced teachers, which ultimately will help improve the provision of students' academic achievement.

Furthermore, the findings of the current study on basic needs satisfaction and turnover intention may have certain implications that may be helpful for school management. The academic sector is growing at a phenomenal pace. Nonetheless, the academic sector is experiencing exceptionally high employee turnover. Most of the schools in Nigeria, are finding it increasingly difficult to attract and retain talented teachers, who frequently change their jobs due to availability of a variety of job opportunities. This study highlights that one of the ways to retain teachers is to provide them enough opportunities at work to satisfy the basic psychological needs for competence, autonomy, and relatedness.

Limitations and suggestions for future studies

The first limitation of the study is the sample size used. A total number of two hundred and ninety-eight (298) teachers participated in the study. This number is not a fair representation of teachers in Ebonyi State. Future research is urged to use a significant larger sample to enhance the extent to which the findings can be generalized. Second was the issue associated with self-report that usually give rise to common method variance (CMV; Podsakoff et al., 2003). Future studies should endeavour to collect data from multiple sources including colleagues, supervisors, or spouses. Such approach would cushion the impact of superfluous data collected from single source. Third, the cross-sectional nature of the data does not establish causality. We suggest that future studies should employ the longitudinal design to be able to establish cause-effect relationship of the study variables.

Conclusion

The present study seeks to explore the role of work environment and basic needs satisfaction on turnover intentions among secondary school teachers. The study aims to add to the existing literature. The following theories were reviewed in this work to explain the study variables: sequential turnover model, theory of planned behaviour, equity theory of motivation, Herzberg two factor theory and self-determination theory. Results showed that work

environment and basic needs satisfaction (autonomy, competence and relatedness) were significantly and negatively related to turnover intentions among secondary school teachers. The findings of the study demonstrate that in order to increase teachers' intention to stay, school management and the educational institution at large should focus on creating a work environment that helps teachers to feel capable of achieving desired outcomes, feel sufficiently and optimally challenged, feel volitional and like the originator of their actions, and develop close and satisfying relationships with colleagues.

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