

INNER LIFE AND ORGANIZATIONAL OUTCOMES IN HIGHER EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS IN RIVERS STATE: A STUDY IN WORKPLACE SPIRITUALITY

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ABSTRACT

The study examined employee's inner life and organizational outcomes in higher educational institutions in Rivers state, Nigeria, with productivity and innovation of academic staff as proxies of organizational outcomes in tertiary institutions. The structured questionnaire instrument was used to collect primary data for this study, and a cross-sectional design was chosen as the preferred method of investigation. The Cronbach alpha coefficient was used to examine the instruments' reliability, and the results showed high coefficient values for all associated instruments; also, principal component analysis were conducted to identify the items that make up each component and how strongly they relate to each component, in terms of content validity and factorial validity. The results of the analysis conducted revealed that inner life has a weak positive and significant relationship with research productivity of staffs in tertiary institutions in Rivers state. Also, a weak negative but significant relationship between inner life and innovation was revealed from the test of the analysis. Thus, the study deduced that as higher educational institutions in Rivers state give lecturers opportunity to express their inner, epitomized through respects for the spirituality and spiritual values of staff, productivity of lecturers is significantly increased. From the finding, the study recommends that Higher educational institutions in Rivers state should respect staffs' spiritual values at the workplace in order to motivate them to exert higher efforts towards research productivity for social and economic benefits; higher educational institutions should recognize that employees have inner life related to the soul, thus, should be conscientized and encouraged to continually participate in practices such as meditation, yoga, prayer and nature walk in order to tap into their inner powers for creativity and innovativeness.

Keywords: Spirituality, inner life, workplace spirituality, organizational outcomes, productivity, innovation

INTRODUCTION

Over some decades ago, discourse on spirituality at the workplace attracted little attention because of the religious as well as communal connotation often attached to the construct, however, at present, organizations have realized that to harness the potential of their employees they have to offer them meaning in what they do or who they are as organizational members. This profound transformation is backed by several studies which highlights the relationship between spirituality at workplace and organizational outcomes. Arguably, interest on spirituality at the workplace over the past twenty years have increased, as there is propound and phenomenal growth of scholarly publications, books, as well as conferences, proceedings and symposia organized around the world on the concept. Accordingly, Journal of Organizational Change Management, which is regarded as one of the earliest journal that began publication on the concept of workplace spirituality, between 1992 and 2014, has published 122 articles that have cited spirituality, including 36 articles with spirituality as their dedicated main focus (Neal & Biberman in Pradhan, Jena & Soto, 2017). Interestingly, at the time, there seem to be as many definitions of spirituality at workplace as there are researchers (Singhal & Chatterjee, cited in Pradhan, Jena & Soto, 2017). However, workplace spirituality is the search for meaning or higher purpose, social connectedness, inner life, and transcendence or a higher-level calling at work (Benefiel, Fry, & Geigle, 2014). Neck and Milliman (1994), defined spirit at work as a continuous striving force in order to have a comprehensive perception of reality and to experience the underlying oneness of life.

Karakas (2010), opines that workplace spirituality creates a positive impact on organizational outcomes, as it improves employee well-being and quality of life, provides employees a sense of purpose and meaning at work, as well as provides employees a sense of interconnectedness and community. More so, studies in the past have established that workplace spirituality have positive organizational outcomes, as it increases the productivity of the organization (Fry & Matherly, 2006), innovation and creativity of the employees, and employee performance (Giacalone & Jurkiewicz, 2003; Jurkiewicz & Giacalone, 2004). Fry (2003)

identified that workplace spirituality encourages employee to play extra role or pro-social behavior, develop unity within the organization, reduce absenteeism, reduce turnover (Milliman, Czaplewski & Ferguson, 2003; Gatling, Kim, & Milliman, 2016) and decrease employee deviant behavior (Ahmad & Omar, 2014). Although, workplace spirituality and its outcome had long been the concern for most organizations as well as sectors, Ecklund and Long (2011) on their in-depth face-to-face discussion with 275 social and natural scientists at 21 top research universities in the United States reveals that spirituality varies across occupational groups. However, one of the field of human endeavor in which workplace spirituality is consider of utmost importance, is in academic (educational) sector.

Globally, the advancement of societies as well as economies to a great extent depends on higher education institutions. Notably, research and innovation, as well as other most world's significant discoveries and technological advancement emanates from colleges and universities around the world. Higher education institution often referred to as tertiary education, is seen as academic assets that enhances individual's growth; promotes economic, technological as well as social changes, through exchange of knowledge, research and innovation as well as skills required to meet labour market demand. Although, higher education institutions (University of Bologna and University of Oxford) had for centuries existed; however, over the past decades, there is a dramatic change in the operations of tertiary institutions due to the increase rates of enrolment, arrays of courses provided as well as research dynamics and technology. These changes come with enormous responsibilities resting on the shoulders of its human resource (lecturers), as they must teach, learn, research as well as render community service to large number of people. These workloads executed by academic staff in universities most often become sources of negative outcomes, as they contend with stress related issues, burnout, longer working hours and other psychological issues that effects their performances as well as overall outcomes of academic institutions. These issues negatively affect all academic institutions most especially in developing countries including Nigeria.

Tertiary institutions in Nigeria (particularly universities in Rivers state) are reported to have shown poor performance outcomes in terms of research productivity. Reports from Times Higher Education (2023) on world university ranking reveals that three Nigerian universities (University of Ibadan, University of Lagos and Covenant University) out of over 160 universities, 128 polytechnics and 177 colleges of education operating in Nigeria, are on the top one thousand universities around the world. This, as compared to nine universities from South Africa and eleven universities in Egypt making the top one thousand ranking respectively. This is an indication that Nigerian universities produce only 44 percent of the scholarly output of South Africa and 32 percent of Egypt. However, Research productivity is crucial to scholars, researchers' and learned members especially in the universities and central to the teaching capability of faculty or staff. This is because the academic mandate of a lecturer is to teach, conduct research and participate in community service. More so, research in universities serves as a good platform for lecturers to become accomplished scholars and plays an eminent role in facilitating the prosperity of a nation and ultimately the well-being of the citizenry. In spite of these relevance, it is revealed (world university ranking, 2023) that Nigeria's universities, especially tertiary institutions in Rivers is lagging behind in performance outcomes in research productivity.

Similarly, research conducted in Nigerian higher institutions are mostly aimed at publishing for promotion as well as advancement in academic career of employees, with little or no efforts aimed at providing innovative solutions required in solving current and emerging development challenges of the country or in stimulating innovation and the evolution of a robust National system of innovation that will result in patents and new products and services. According to Suleiman (2019), the "publish or perish phenomenon" still reigns supreme in the Nigerian academia to the detriment of the innovative outcomes such as patents, policy impact and products and services. Studies indicate that Nigerian universities and research institutes develop commercializable inventions from time to time (Oyewale, in Oyewale, Adelowo & Ekperiware, 2018), in spite of these, patent granted seems to be very low. For instance, Nigeria, between 2010 and 2015 have applied for up to two hundred and fifty-two (252) patents, out of these, only ninety-two (92) were granted

by World Intellectual Property Organization (Oyewale, Adelowo & Ekperiware, 2018). This is a reflection of poor institutional outcomes in terms of innovation in higher institutions.

Although, the function of higher education institutions is centered on teaching, research and community service, however, research is not only required to inform meaningful teaching and learning, it is also the source of new knowledge for innovation which is the route through which universities all over the world distinguish themselves and are known to be relevant when innovations, patents and new knowledge from university research outcomes, lead to tangible improvements by impacting positively on the socio-economic and technological development of nations. Contrarily, low organizational outcomes in terms of productivity and innovation in tertiary institutions, leads to social-economic and technological underdevelopment of societies and nations. As opined by Goddard and Vallance (2013), most academics in tertiary institutions primarily pay attention to the external environment of the university, but merely with regard to funding and regulative provisions, while paying relatively little attention to the much broader societal environment in which universities actually evolve (Cai, 2014).

However, several studies have been conducted in examining organizational outcomes in Nigerian higher institutions, for instance, Ezinine and Ughamadu (2021) found that controlled organizational climate is a significant predictor of lecturers' job outcomes in colleges of education in South East States. Davies and Nwafor (2021) in their study found that provision of study leaves, attending both local and international conference, organizing of internal conference and seminar for staff academic updates, organization of workshop and symposia were able to develop academic staff effectively in Rivers state university. Nkpurukwe, Azuma, Giwa & Wali (2022) reveals that staff performance (productivity) outcomes in Nigerian tertiary institutions is determined through investment in knowledge-based infrastructures. Although, these works all lay emphasis on academic staff, as predictors of tertiary institutions performance outcomes in Nigeria, however, beyond knowledge, skills, workshops, conferences, seminars and so on, performance outcomes could probably require inner force that pushes employees to persevere with

challenges that are inherent in creative work, associated with knowledge workers. Against background, this study examined opportunity for inner life which is a component of spirituality at work and its influence on organizational outcomes in higher institutions in Rivers State, Nigeria.

Conceptual Framework



Fig. 1: Relationship between Inner life and Organizational outcome

Source: Desk Research (2023).

Thus, this study examined the following research questions:

1. What is the relationship between employees' inner life and organizational productivity in Higher Educational Institutions in Rivers state, Nigeria.
2. What is the relationship between employees' inner life and innovation in Higher Educational Institutions in Rivers state.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Foundation

Workplace Spirituality

Workplace spirituality is among organizational behavior variables that have attracted many perspectives and definitions. The term workplace spirituality is conceptualized interchangeably with different constructs

- individual spirituality, organizational spirituality, spiritual climate, workplace spirituality person-organization fit, and 'spirit at work. Ashmos and Duchon (2000) view workplace spirituality as the acknowledgement that employees have an inner life that enriches and is enriched by meaningful work in the context of community. Emphasis on spirituality at the workplace lies in the fact that satisfaction in one's inner life eventually leads to or reflects one's outward operations, thus, if employees' inner lives are fulfilled, eventually they will be more productive and have a more meaningful outward life. Notably, pioneering empirical work in measuring workplace spirituality in the context of was carried out by Ashmos and Duchon (2000). They see spirituality at work in this definition as having three components: the inner life, meaningful work, and sense of connection and community.

Conceptual Review

Inner life

Inner life is based on the notion that an individual has several selves - physical, mental, emotional and spiritual, which originates themselves from the four aspects of human personality (body, mind, heart and soul). Inner life is rooted from the Hebrew perspective that humans, have two lives: inner lives and outer lives. Outer life is often defined by success, money and material comforts, while inner life refers to satisfaction with the life one is leading and a feeling of spiritual bliss. Inner life can be characterized as the inclination that people have about their identity, that is, what they are doing, and what commitments they make (Vaill, 1998). It is seen as inner consciousness where people express themselves as they labor with a sense of agreement, interconnectedness, and unanimity. The notion behind the construct (inner life), is based on the belief that workers come to the workplace with their complete selves ((Duchon & Plowman, in Prabhu et. al., 2017). In other words, it is based on the assumption that employees report to work as 'whole persons' and expect opportunities for expression of their whole self at work. Ashmos and Duchon (1990) views inner life as the recognition of the existence of one's soul power and using it in living a satisfying life. According to Moberg in Hisam and Sanyal (2021) view inner life or spiritual wellbeing as a

sense of going beyond or transcending one's life circumstances, and includes other dimensions such as the purpose and meaning of life and sense of connectedness with oneself.

Notably, individuals when coming to the workplace, do not come alone with their physical body as well as their mind, and heart but they also report at the workplace with their values, beliefs, opinions on good and bad, right and wrong, their desires as well as life expectations. However, there may be barriers to express most aspects of one's self in a workplace within the organizational red tape, especially spiritual self. This concept of inner life, is often taught by all religions and emphasizes on love, compassion, dedication and care. It encourages imagination and reflection which feeds and stimulates the creative spirit and a sense of inner well-being. However, Duchon & Plowman (2005) view individual identity and social identity, as the constructs that are often related to the presence of inner life. An individual's identity is part of an individual's self-concept or an inner view of themselves. The expression of the inner life is part of social identity.

The self-concept theory put forward by Shamir (1991) gives a useful framework for explaining the "inner life" through the view that the similarities between the inner self-concept and one's work bring greater motivation. The self-concept approach is based on the assumptions that, human beings are not only goal-oriented but also express feelings and self-concepts; that people are motivated by internal impulses to realize self-esteem and self-value. Also, the concept states that people are motivated to achieve and improve self-consistency; and that the self-concept is conceived in part of the identity that motivates according to the quality of its existence (the higher the quality of existence of an identity, for example, a spiritual identity, the more motivating it is, especially when the work situation is seen as an opportunity to perform about its identity). More so, behavior-based self-concepts do not always relate to clear expectations or specific, immediate goals. According to self-concept theory, work will motivate if there is a high degree of similarity between the work, its context, and the individual's self-concept. An individual who has a self-concept covering a spiritual dimension will be motivated if the context of his work allows him to express his spiritual identity. Furthermore, the notion of 'inner life' attains its fulfilment when there exists congruence between

one's individual identity and the social identity that one derives out of one's membership of a work community.

Membership of a group contribute to one's self-concept (Duchon & Plowman, 2005). In other words, not only do organization contributes to one's individual identity, but the sub-unit where one works which could be a greater force than the organization in this process. Thus, 'inner life' is the result of presence of an atmosphere at workplace, which facilitates the manifestation of one's self-concept that includes the contribution to one's self-concept, and the social identity that one receives at the workplace (Duchon & Plowman, 2005). If individuals think of themselves as spiritual persons who have an inner life at work, and they have a work unit that concentrates on the cultivation of character, then the identity of the work unit will provide an opportunity to express inner life. Opportunities for inner life, includes descriptors concerning the way the organization respects the spirituality and spiritual values of the individual (Ashmos & Duchon, 2000). High levels of perceived organizational support demands the recognition of an employee's inner life by organizations. Eisenberger, Fasolo, and Davis-LaMastro (1990), defined perceived organizational support as an employees' perception that the organization values and cares for them. Notably, caring for the whole person starts with organizations recognizing "that employees have an inner life related to the soul and accessed through practices such as meditation, self-reflection and prayer" (Bell & Taylor in Moore & Casper, 2006).

Organizational Outcomes

An outcome is simply referred to as the result or the consequence of a certain activity or behavior. In other words, it is the end result of a certain operation or action. Organizational outcome is the end result of a firm or an organization's effort or operations such as profitability, productivity, product quality, sales growth and so on. Extending, studies in strategic human resources management views organizational outcomes as multidimensional construct. Dyer and Reeves's (1995) in their work on strategic human resource

management categorize organizational outcomes into three primary groups. These include: human resources outcomes, operational outcomes, and financial outcomes.

Human resources outcomes refer to those most directly related to human resources management in an organization, such as employee skills and abilities, employee attitudes and behaviors, and turnovers. Operational outcomes are those related to the goals of an organizational operation, including productivity, product quality, quality of service, and innovation. Financial outcomes reflect the fulfillment of the economic goals of organizations. Typical financial outcomes include sales growth, return on invested capital, and return on assets. Based on previous research, this study theorized organizational outcomes as a whole construct measured in terms of productivity and innovation.

Productivity

Productivity is the relationship between output of goods and services of workers in organization and input of resources, human and non- human used in the production process. Hellriegel et al., cited in Anya, Umoh, and Worlu, (2017) view productivity as efficiency in the employment of factors of production such as land, labor and capital to produce higher output. It can also be seen as the amount of time that a group of employees spends on certain activities such as production, or idle time spent waiting for materials or replacing equipment. Anosa (2021) opined that Productivity can be seen as the measure of the relationship between the quantity and quality of goods and services produced and the quantity of resources needed to produce them (that is, factors inputs as labour, capital and technology). This views quantity and quality as measures of organizational productivity.

Zeb-Obipi (2015) measured productivity in terms of resource utilization and product with six indicators – time minimization, cost minimization, waste minimization, product line, output level and product quality. As opined by Zeb-Obipi (2015), firm's productivity is connected to quality (conforming to specification, avoiding defects, satisfying customers) because measures of productivity assume that outputs meet quality standards. Nonetheless, organizations differ in the output level of the products (services) offered, however,

in spite of their differences, the quantity (output level) of the offerings will indicate the level of their productivity either as being low or high. Thus, output level becomes an indicator of firms' productivity.

Innovation

Innovation is seen as a significant factor influencing organizational performance as well as firms' competitive position and stimulates nations' overall economic development. Innovation is widely regarded as a critical source of competitive advantage in an increasingly changing environment (Dess & Picken, 2000). Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (2019) view innovation as the implementation of a new or significantly improved product (good or service), or process, a new marketing method, or a new organizational method in business practices, workplace organization or external relations. Although, this view on innovation is widely used, however, it lacks what is "significant improvement". For Francis (2014), innovation is the full exploitation of the latent value of ideas (new to the unit of adoption) that strengthen an organization's competitive position and/or benefit other stakeholders. Innovation is a response to changes in the environment, and serves as a basis to enhance an organization's competitiveness.

Scholars argue that innovation is paramount in a modern environment characterized by hyper-competition (D'Aveni, 1994). Although, several organizations actively get involved in innovation, however, Etzkowitz (2013) opined that among the various contributors to innovation, universities play a crucial role in innovation systems. Due to the important role of universities or higher education in the innovation system, there is an urgent need to bring issues related to innovations in higher education to the centre of innovation studies. Studies on innovations in higher education can evolve into a more coherent research field by integrating both innovation studies and higher education research on innovation-related issues.

Empirical Review

Nexus between opportunity for inner life and organizational outcomes

Inner satisfaction and a feeling of wellbeing goes a long way in improving productivity, performance and morale and thus affects organizational commitment in those organizations who focus on improving these factors amongst employees (Hisam, 2021). Biswakarma (2018), in a study on the impact of workplace spiritual on employees' productivity in Napalese hospitality organizations, found a significant positive but weak relationship between opportunity for inner life and employees' productivity.

Innovation requires an inner force that pushes employees to persevere with challenges that are inherent during creative work (Shalley & Gilson 2004). High levels of perceived organizational support demands the recognition of an employee's inner life by organizations (Ashmos & Duchon, 2000). Although, these studies were done elsewhere, however, there is no similar study carried out in Rivers state in ascertaining the validity of the findings above. Thus, this study hypothesized that:

Ho1: There is no statistically significant effect between opportunity for inner life and organizational productivity in Higher Educational Institutions in Rivers state, Nigeria.

Ho2 There is no significant relationship between employees' inner life and innovation in Higher Educational Institutions in Rivers state.

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted quasi-experimental design as well as cross-sectional survey. Cross-sectional survey aids the elicitation of primary data on particular problems and gives the researcher first-hand information on the subject studied. The target population of the study involves 3411 staff of higher institutions in Rivers state, Nigeria, including: University of Port Harcourt, Rivers State University, Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, Madonna University, National Open University of Nigeria, Elechi Amadi Polytechnic, Ken Saro

Wiwa Polytechnic, Federal Polytechnic of Oil and Gas, Easter Polytechnic and Federal College of Education (Igwenago, 2020). While Taro Yamane formula was used to determined 358 subjects.

In selecting the respondents convenient and snowball sampling procedures were adopted. Questionnaire structures in Likert's five-point scale was used for data collection. Principal Component Analysis was conducted to determine the degree to which all the constructs (items) contribute in measuring each of the component as the underlying factor. For test of reliability of the scale, Cronbach's alpha coefficients Data were analyze using descriptive and inferential statistics. Specifically, Pearson Product Moment Correlation was use for the bivariate analysis while Multiple Regression was used for the multivariate analysis.

DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Univariate Analysis

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics on Inner Life

		Statistics			
		IL1	IL2	IL3	IL4
N	Valid	323	323	323	323
	Missing	0	0	0	0
Mean		3.37	3.64	4.15	4.03
Std. Deviation		1.214	.988	1.174	.790
Sum		1087	1177	1339	1301

Source: SPSS Data result, 2023

Table 1 describes the distribution for the data on inner life. The distributions for the variables are revealed to be moderate and significant, given the central tendencies for the indicators – Thus, IL1: *Lecturers' spiritual values influence the choice they make*, has a moderate and significant mean (mean = 3.37, SD=1.214) suggesting that respondents agree to the statement; IL2: *Prayer is an important part of lecturers' life*, has a high but yet significant mean (mean = 3.64, SD=0.988) affirming that majority of the respondents consider the statement as being a true position of their views; IL3: *I pay total attention to my task*, has a high and significant mean (mean = 4.15, SD=1.174) which indicates that most of the respondents consider the statement to be correct; Lastly, IL4: *My institution respects lecturers values at the workplace*, is equally

associated with a high and significant mean (mean = 4.03, SD= .790) indicating that implying that majority of the respondents believe the statement aligns with their own views.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics on Productivity

	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5
N	Valid 323	323	323	323	323
	Missing 0	0	0	0	0
Mean	2.99	3.96	2.17	2.76	4.14
Std. Deviation	1.256	.990	1.178	1.146	.728
Sum	967	1280	700	891	1337

Source: SPSS Data result, 2023

Tables 2 describes the distribution for the data on productivity. This is the first measure of organizational outcomes. The distributions for the variables are revealed to be moderate and significant, given the central tendencies for the indicators – P1: *My institution adjusts lecturing loads for research work*, has a moderate and significant mean (mean = 2.99, SD=1.1256) suggesting that respondents agree to the statement; P2: *Professional recognition motivates lecturers to carry out research work*, has a substantial mean (mean = 3.96, SD=.990) affirming that majority of the respondents consider the statement as being a true position of their views; P3: *Research funds are available for lecturers*, has a low but significant mean (mean = 2.17, SD=1.178) which indicates that few of the respondents consider the statement to be factual; P4: *Workshops to developed research skills are held regularly*, has a significant mean (mean = 2.76, SD =1.146) affirming that few of the respondents consider the statement as being a true position of their views.

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics on Innovation

	INNOV1	INNOV2	INNOV3	INNOV4
N	Valid 323	323	323	323
	Missing 0	0	0	0
Mean	3.70	3.16	3.35	3.73
Std. Deviation	1.253	1.160	1.304	.990
Sum	1196	1021	1082	1205

Source: SPSS Data result, 2023

Tables 3, illustrate the distribution for innovation. This is the second measure for organizational outcomes. The result from the analysis on the indicators presents them as having high but yet significant mean values. INO1: *My institution encourages staff to adopt new ideas*, has a significant mean (mean = 3.70, SD=1.253) indicating that in generality, respondents agree to the statement as being correct; INO2: *My institution always initiate new working method, techniques as well as tools*, has a significant mean (mean =3.16, SD=1.160) suggesting that majority of the respondents affirm the statement as being true; INO3: *My institution converts new ideas into practical solution*, has a substantial and significant mean (mean = 3.35, SD=1.1304) implying that majority of the respondents agree to the position of the statement; INO4: *My institution search for supporters and collaborators to realize new ideas*; has a substantial and evident mean (mean = 3.73, SD=.990) suggesting that majority of the respondents are in agreement with the statement.

Bivariate Analysis

Hypothesis One

Ho₁: There is no significant relationship between employee's inner life and productivity of higher educational institutions in Rivers State, Nigeria.

Table 4: Analysis of the effect of opportunity for inner life on productivity

Correlations		Inner Life	Productivity
Inner Life	Pearson Correlation	1	.357**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	323	323
Productivity	Pearson Correlation	.357**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	323	323

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: SPSS Data result, 2023

Table 4 reveals that the Pearson Product Moment Correlation is 0.357 which reflect a weak positive relationship between inner life and productivity. The Correlation test is highly significance at ($p < 0.005$). Positive relationship means that as inner life increases productivity also increases. Following this finding,

the study concludes that there is a relationship between opportunity for inner life and productivity. Thus, null hypothesis was rejected.

Table 5: Analysis of the effect of opportunity for inner life on innovation
Correlations

		Inner Life	Innovation
Inner Life	Pearson Correlation	1	-.119*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.032
	N	323	323
Innovation	Pearson Correlation	-.119*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.032	
	N	323	323

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 5 reveals that the Pearson Product Moment Correlation is -.119 which reflect a weak negative relationship between inner life and innovation. The Correlation test is significance at ($p < 0.005$). Negative relationship means that as opportunity for inner life increases, innovation decreases. Following this finding, the study concludes that there is a significant relationship between opportunity for inner life and innovation. Therefore, null hypothesis was rejected.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The first specific objective was to examine the relationship between opportunity for inner life and organizational outcomes. This objective was expressed under Ho:1. and was stated that there is no significant relationship between inner life and productivity. This hypothesis logic was not supported, as the result indicates that that there is a positive and significant relationship between inner life and productivity in higher educational institutions in Rivers State, Nigeria. In other words, increase in opportunity for inner life is associated with increase in productivity. This results agrees with the findings of Mahmood, Khan and Ellahi (2019) who found that inner life have a significant relationship with organizational productivity. Accordingly, when an individual's inner life is satisfactory for him/her that individual is highly motivated towards the goals of the organization, thus, resulting to increase the performance and productivity of organization. This is because employees who are emotionally sound display high level of commitment to

their task which then leads to high rate of productivity. Buttressing, Amabile and Kramer (2007) relates productive performance of the employees in an organization quality inner life – which highlights the intrinsic happiness of the employee with the progress in the performance of an organization. Inner life is mostly characterized as the inclination that employees have about their identity, that is, what they are doing and commitments they make, thus, when employees have the opportunity to express their inward life, high rate of productivity is bound to occur.

The next objective was to examine the relationship between inner life and organizational outcomes stated in hypothesis Ho2. The result of this study did not support the hypothesis. The result shows that there is a negative but significant relationship between inner life and innovation in higher educational institution in Rivers State, Nigeria. This means that increase in inner life results in decrease in innovation. Contrarily, workplace spirituality assist achieving sense of purpose, encourage creativity, and in turn leads to motivate innovative work behavior (Pawar, 2009; Afsar & Rehman 2015). Observably, finding the opportunity to express inner life can lead to innovation, thus, in order to be innovative at the workplace, employee need to have freedom, autonomy and opportunity to express themselves. Buttressing, Segai (2001) revealed that within the workplace, certain factors can generate innovative ideas among whom are freedom to express oneself. However, when ample opportunity to express one's inner life is lacking or is not in existence at the workplace, the creativity of human spirit becomes dormant and repressive.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

On the basis of the empirical evidence, this study observed that employees' inner life significantly contributes towards organizational productivity and innovation in higher educational institutions in Rivers State. Specifically, from the results of the study, it was deduced that: As higher educational institutions in Rivers state give lecturers opportunity to express their inner, epitomized through respects for the spirituality and spiritual values of staff, productivity of lecturers is significantly increased. From the conclusion, the study recommends that:

- i. Higher educational institutions in Rivers state should respect staffs' spiritual values at the workplace in order to motivate them to exert higher efforts towards research productivity for social and economic benefits.
- ii. Higher educational institutions in Rivers state should recognize that employees have inner life related to the soul, thus, should be conscientize and encourage to continually partake in practices such as meditation, yoga, prayer and nature walk in order to tap into employees' inner powers for creativity and innovation.

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