

## HOUSING SCHEMES AND TEACHERS' ENGAGEMENT IN PRIVATE SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN PORT HARCOURT CITY LOCAL GOVERNEMENT AREA, RIVERS STATE

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### ABSTRACT

This study examined the relationship between housing scheme and teacher engagement in private secondary schools in Port Harcourt City Local Government Area, Rivers State. This study was structured as an empirical study and the social exchange was adopted as the underpinning theory in the investigation of the variables. The structured questionnaire was adopted as the data collection instrument for this research. The correlational design is adopted as the research design for the study. The adopted methodology for the study was the quantitative methodology. The questionnaire instrument was tested for validity (construct and face validity) and reliability (Cronbach alpha), while data analysis was therought the use of the Spearman Rank Order Correlation coefficient with the aid of the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences version, 27. The result showed a significant relationship between housing schemes and the measures of teacher engagement; hence, all null hypotheses for this study were therefore rejected. The findings for this study thus affirm to the substantiality of the role of housing schemes in the outcomes of teacher engagement, thus it was concluded that the strengthening and provision of housing scheme, contributes significantly to the outcomes of teacher's engagement. It was therefore recommended that effort is channelled toward the development and facilitation of housing programs and schemes in effectively addressing teacher concerns and wellbeing, for improved outcomes of engagement.

**Keywords:** Housing scheme, teacher's engagement, dedication, vigour, absorption

### INTRODUCTION

The success and effectiveness of organisations, reflects the extent of engagement and dedication of the employees to their roles and responsibilities. Within the Nigerian education system, private investors are increasingly taking centre stage, through their focus on bridging existing gaps in terms of infrastructure and the standard of education (Ayinde, 2014). Babatunde and Brimoh (2018) reported that the growth of private secondary schools in Nigeria, can best be described as sporadic and as such has raised concerns, given the commercial interests and tendencies for the exploitation of the system. In this regard, efforts have been made by the Rivers State Ministry of Education to not only enforce the registration of these private schools, but also their compliance to standards and operational thresholds within the sector (Ogunode, Azarema, & Ukozor, 2024).

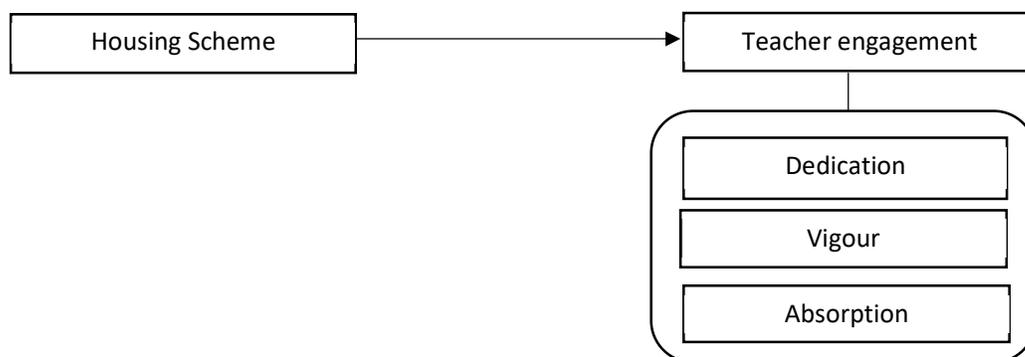
A school environment where teachers are provided with proper support, including a feeling of autonomy relatedness and competent physical resources, is more likely to have engaged

teachers (Anikpo, 2014; Gagné, 2003; Schaufeli, 2013). Studies have indicated that this feeling can foster individual intrinsic motivation as it makes them perceive their jobs as meaningful and aligned with their values (Anikpo, 2014). In fact, when personnel perceive their school as a supportive environment, they are more likely to feel control over their tasks and decisions, which can lead to job involvement and satisfaction (Humphrey et al., 2007). In quantitative data collected from 80 teachers at SDN, Nurna Dewi et al. (2021) showed that school environment and work engagement predict job satisfaction and improved levels of engagement.

Related studies (Cai, Cai & Ma, 2018; Garg, Dar & Mishra, 2017; Othman & Nasuridin, 2012) on teacher engagement, build on the perspective of motivation from a financial point of view. These identify the imperatives of compensation and financial incentives in ensuring functionality and dedication to roles and responsibilities in the organisation. However, as observed the use of financial incentives emphasizes the transactional relationship between the organisation and its staff, thus workers level of dedication or engagement to work, does not reflect an affectionate form or attachment to work, but rather a contractual obligation. Scholars demonstrated that when teachers work in a school that makes them feel they are in a positive school environment, they are more likely to be satisfied, engaged, motivated, have a high level of well-being, and have lower turnover intentions (Osterman, 2010; Neeraj, 2020). Drawing on the scarcity of research addressing housing schemes and teacher engagement, which occasioned the knowledge gap, this research departs from previous assertions and positions on teacher engagement as it examines the role of particular housing schemes in the outcome of teacher engagement. The research is justified on the basis of the extension of focus it provides on the usefulness and imperatives of housing schemes toward enriching the work experience and well-being of employees; and that way, employee dedication, vigour and absorption in their work. The purpose of this study is to discuss the relationship between housing schemes and teacher engagement in Port Harcourt City Local Government Area, Rivers State. The study objectives were to:

- i. Examine the relationship between housing scheme and dedication in private secondary schools in Port Harcourt City Local Government Area, Rivers State.
- ii. Examine the relationship between housing scheme and vigour in private secondary schools in Port Harcourt City Local Government Area, Rivers State.
- iii. Examine the relationship between housing scheme and absorption in private secondary schools in Port Harcourt City Local Government Area, Rivers State.

### Conceptual Framework



**Figure 1:** Conceptual framework for workplace social infrastructure and teacher engagement  
**Source:** Desk Research (2025), with measures of teacher engagement adopted from Bakker and Leiter (2010).

### Research Questions

The research questions for this study, are important in ensuring direction for the study. These are as follows:

- i. What is the relationship between housing scheme and dedication in private secondary schools in PHALGA, Rivers State?
- ii. What is the relationship between housing scheme and vigour in private secondary schools in PHALGA, Rivers State?
- iii. What is the relationship between housing scheme and absorption in private secondary schools in PHALGA, Rivers State?

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Social Exchange Theory

The theoretical framework or foundation for this paper is premised on the social exchange theory (SET). It is considered suitable in explaining the possible link between workplace social infrastructure and teacher engagement. SET explains responsibilities as being created through interactions and between parties who are in state of collective interdependence (Cropanzano et al., 2017; Chernyak-Hai & Rabenu, 2018). The basic principles of SET anchor on the reciprocity of treatment and that relationships develop overtime in line with expectation, trustworthy and mutual commitment as long as both parties accepted by some rules of exchange (Ahmad *et al*, 2023). The rules of exchange involve or emphasize mutuality so that the movements of one party would lead to reaction by the second party or group.

The SET is applicable and useful to this study as it explains the role of housing schemes in enhancing teacher engagement. Organizations through infrastructure such as housing schemes can enrich workers quality of work and life, and that way, lead to their engagement (Ahmad *et al*, 2023). This is as the SET demonstrates or expatiates on why employees become engaged or disengaged with their jobs and employers. When organization provides resources and a conducive work environment to their employees, they feel appreciative and tend to reciprocate with substantial level of engagement. According to Kahn's (1990) definition, employee feels thankful and tend to increase their dedication and vigour in their role performance as a result of the support they receive from their employers.

### Housing schemes

This dimension of workplace social infrastructure describes the accommodation amenities provided by the leadership or management of the organisation. Nzelibe (2011) described housing schemes as those facilities that are provided in line with the shelter and accommodation needs of the employee. Abu (2016) further noted that the provision of houses or accommodation for employees is important as it contributes to a conducive work environment and enriches the employees work experience and strengthens their sense of placement or belongingness with the organisation. Abu (2016) and Ayinde (2014) identify housing schemes as a form of social infrastructure, designed to help cushion or ease the financial burden of workers accommodation needs, through the facilitation of affordable living quarters or accommodation for the workers or staff of the organisation.

### Teacher engagement

Teacher engagement refers to the workers psychological, emotional and physical attachment to their work or organisation (Bolman & Deal, 2014). Engaged employees are crucial for the prosperity of any organisation. In 1985, Deci and Ryan conducted influential study on employee motivation (Berens, 2013). Deci and Ryan (1985) expanded upon the differentiation between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. The individual's desire for competence, autonomy,

and psychological relatedness motivates them to engage in activities that support their mental health and well-being. When these needs are fulfilled, it can result in improved performance and personal growth (Bolman & Deal, 2014). Vandenberg (2014) has demonstrated a direct correlation between employees' dedication and their capacity to fulfil their core psychological needs.

### **Employee dedication**

The employee working for the organization and accepting challenges at work is marked as a dedicated employee. An employee having pride, inspiration and enthusiasm have the quality of dedication. Dedication is the commitment piece of teacher engagement (Bolman & Deal, 2014). Where employee want to do more because they are inspired about the organization, its mission, and their ability to contribute to the team and goal. It is the opposite of the cynicism that comes from burnout, which sees any self-initiative as futile and naive. Burnout can't coexist with the passion and loyalty of dedication. Being effective is vital to self-worth, as a dedicated employee feel valued, because they have opportunities to contribute and make a difference. They feel a sense of significance, and derive meaning from what they do, and that intrinsic reward makes them want to do more (Mishra, Boynton, & Mishra, 2014). This counters lack of efficacy. Employees who are committed to what they're doing will keep at it, even if it's challenging. They have internalized the importance of the product or service and find satisfaction in handling difficult assignments (Bolman & Deal, 2014).

### **Employee vigour**

When an employee has high level of energy and mental peace, the employee possesses vigour to perform. An employee with vigour attribute is an engaged and proactive person with the willingness and physical energy to go the extra mile. The key element here is vitality or energy available to the self (Ryan, 2021). An employee with vigour has interest and feels the well-being that triggers positive affect, a magnetic force that can propel them and others beyond obstacles. They are always willing to draw on that energy to go beyond the normal level of effort. It is the opposite of burnout as energy and vitality can't be burned out because there are energetic resources to replace those that are used. Retaining physical through strategies that help brains and bodies recharge on a regular basis, is an automatic hedge against fatigue and resource overload (Ryan, 2021).

### **Employee Absorption**

Employee absorption is the third construct of teacher engagement that entails the pleasant state of being immersed in one's works, experiencing time passing by quickly and being unable to detach from one's job (Truss, Alfes, Delbridge, Shantz & Soane 2013; Bakker & Leiter (2010). Bakker and Leiter (2010) stated that absorption may appear to be an outcome of vigour and dedication. This implies that an employee who is absorbed in his or her job is characterized by being fully concentrated in his or her job, does not feel time passing by while performing the job, and has difficulty detaching or removing his or herself from work (Rayton & Yalabik, 2014; Schaufeli & Bakker, 2010) and characterized by mentally being at work. Employees that experience absorption engagement gets themselves engrossed in their work and find it difficult to detach themselves from the job (Rayton & Yalabik, 2014).

### **Housing scheme and teacher engagement**

Programs and schemes such as the housing scheme, not only address the accommodation needs of the employees, but they also advance the reputation of the organisation, presenting it in good light. Both factors or concerns are key to enhancing the employee's perception and disposition toward the organisation (Abu, 2016). Nzelibe (2011) affirmed that employee perceptions of sincerity are crucial in enriching the relationship between the organisation and its workers.

Moreso, it creates a sense of responsibility in the employee, given the benefits and advantages acquired or experienced in their organisation. As a form of workplace social infrastructure, housing schemes are however structured in line with affordability, often at a subsidised rate. While studies have emphasized a broad approach to non-monetary incentives and their impact on teacher engagement, there is however a scarcity of studies that have addressed the relationship between housing schemes and teacher engagement.

**METHODOLOGY**

For this research, the correlational design is adopted. This choice aligns with the research goal of this study, which borders on addressing the relationship between workplace social infrastructure and teacher engagement. The concern of this research bothers with teachers in all registered and Government approved private secondary schools in Port Harcourt City Local Government Area, Rivers State. The population of this study comprised of 721 full-time teachers of 69 registered private secondary schools in Port Harcourt City Local Government Area, Rivers State sourced from the online directory of the Rivers State Ministry of Education (RIVEMIS, 2025). The Krejcie and Morgan 1970 Sample size determination table was therefore adopted in determining an appropriate size for the study. Based on the distributions for population and sample on the table, the sample size adopted for the population of 721 teachers from the 69 private secondary schools is 254 teachers. This study utilised primary data for its investigation sourced from the identified participants for the study. The instrument for data collection for this research is the structured questionnaire. This builds on predefined questions, addressing the constructs of interest. It is considered suitable for this study as it offers a cost-effective solution toward generating data from multiple sources and across different locations (Kothari, 2014). The questionnaire instrument was tested for validity (construct and face validity) and reliability (Cronbach alpha), while data analysis was therought the use of the Spearman Rank Order Correlation coefficient with the aid of the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences version, 27.

**DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS**

**Bivariate Analysis**

Table 1: Housing scheme and teacher engagement

			Housing Scheme	Dedication	Vigour	Absorption
Spearman's rho	Housing Scheme	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.807**	.889**	.808**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000	.000	.000
		N	233	233	233	233
	Dedication	Correlation Coefficient	.807**	1.000	.823**	.805**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.	.000	.000
		N	233	233	233	233
	Vigour	Correlation Coefficient	.889**	.823**	1.000	.800**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.	.000
		N	233	233	233	233
	Absorption	Correlation Coefficient	.808**	.805**	.800**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.
		N	233	233	233	233

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

Source: Research Survey, 2025

The test on the impact of housing scheme on teacher engagement is shown to be significant and also positive. Housing scheme is revealed by the test to significantly and influence

employee dedication at a very high level ( $Rho = 0.807$  and  $P = 0.000$ ), vigour at a very high extent ( $Rho = 0.889$  and  $P = 0.000$ ) and absorption also at a very high extent ( $Rho = 0.808$  and  $P = 0.000$ ). The result suggests that housing scheme contributes to the employees' positive perceptions and dispositions toward their roles and responsibilities. This indicates that related changes or improvements to housing schemes play crucial roles in the extent to which employees' express dedication, vigour and absorption. Thus, following the outcome of the analysis, all three related null hypothetical statements are therefore rejected as the findings show as follows:

- i. There is a significant relationship between housing scheme and dedication in private secondary schools in Port Harcourt City Local Government Area, Rivers State.
- ii. There is a significant relationship between housing scheme and vigour in private secondary schools in Port Harcourt City Local Government Area, Rivers State.
- iii. There is a significant relationship between housing scheme and absorption in private secondary schools in Port Harcourt City Local Government Area, Rivers State.

### **Discussion of Findings**

The noted relationship between housing schemes and teacher engagement, offers support for the position of previous scholars (Abu, 2016; Ayinde, 2014) on the imperatives of social interventions and support for the wellbeing and welfare of workers, particularly those within the education system. This aligns with the recognition of the decline in living standards due to the high cost of commodities and the inconsistencies in policy and welfare programs that trail the sector. Such interventions in the form of social infrastructure, particularly with regard to housing schemes, ameliorate the financial challenges of the work and also enhance the conduciveness of their work environment (Ekere & Onuoha, 2021; Okolocha, 2021). Magaji et al (2018) noted that effective housing schemes address not only the accommodation of workers, but also the challenges with the distance or cost of transportation to work as well.

The findings of the study, thus identifies housing schemes as leverage, that can be utilised as a motivating factor, in enhancing workers perceptions of the organisation and that way, deepening their level of engagement. The significance of housing schemes to the behaviour and disposition of the workers as presented in this research, reinforces earlier observations (Abu, 2016; Mwaniki et al, 2020; Okeoghene & Chima, 2021) of the impact of such on the commitment levels and extent of altruism or citizenship behaviour expressed by the workers. This study, based on its evidence, validates the view and assertions of previous studies, demonstrating the substantiality of the effect of housing schemes on workers level of dedication, vigour and absorption toward their roles and responsibilities in the organisation. This also agrees with Muruu et al (2016) view that the investment into social infrastructure such as housing scheme, also contributes positively to the image and reputation of the organisation, further increasing workers identification and engagement with the organisation.

### **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION**

Following the findings, it is therefore concluded that the administration or management of the private secondary schools, be intentional and deliberate in addressing the housing or accommodation needs and concerns of the employees; creating the necessary settings and framework, conducive to supporting and empowering staff in their roles and responsibilities. This is essential in enriching the experience and functionality of the worker, and would contribute substantially to bolstering their levels of dedication, vigour and absorption in their work in the private secondary schools. Following the outcome of the study, it is therefore

recommended that housing schemes should be structured to ensure affordability and should address the actual concerns of distance and accommodation for all staff or workers in the private secondary schools in Rivers State. The management or administrators of the private secondary schools, should therefore focus on creating housing programs driven by systems that are transparent and which anchor on fair procedures and accessibility to all workers or staff of the private secondary schools in Rivers State

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