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THE INFLUENCE OF PERCEIVED INJUSTICE, REMUNERATION, AND STUDENTS' AGGRESSION AGAINST TEACHERS AS PREDICTORS OF SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS' WITHDRAWAL INTENTIONS

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Abstract
Teachers hold a pivotal role in societal development, acting as architects of knowledge and shaping the future through the education they provide. This study explored how perceived injustice, poor remuneration, and student's aggression towards teachers could predict teacher's intentions to withdraw from the profession. Three hundred science and technology teachers in Lagos State were used as a sample and were selected through multistage sampling technique. Structured questionnaire was used to collect data from the sample. Exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses were done to ascertain the quality of the data collected and compared with the proposed withdrawal intention model. The result of the study revealed that perceived injustice, remuneration, and student's aggression toward teachers are some of the major causes of secondary school's teacher's withdrawal intentions. The result adds to the robustness of the Job-Demand Resource theory and further implications for policymakers, schools, and education institutions.
Keywords: Perceived injustice, Remuneration, Students aggression, Withdrawal intentions.

Introduction

Teachers hold a pivotal role in societal development, acting as architects of knowledge and shaping the future through the education they provide. Their influence extends beyond classrooms, contributing immensely to community development and the cultivation of informed, engaged citizens (Marri, et al., 2014). Despite these critical roles, teachers face multifaceted challenges that is beyond mere information transmission. They must navigate diverse classrooms, cater to individual learners' needs, and adapt to an ever-changing educational landscape (van der Merwe & Pedro, 2022). Amidst these challenges, understanding the impact of perceived injustice, poor remuneration, and student aggression on teacher withdrawal intentions is crucial for the sustainability of education systems.

Perceived injustice among teachers, emanating from factors like inequitable resource distribution and inadequate recognition, can erode their sense of professional fulfilment and dedication (Timms & Brough, 2013). This subjective sense of unfair treatment may lead to heightened stress and frustration, impacting teachers' contemplation of withdrawal from the profession (Johnston, 2016). Similarly, inadequate remuneration can induce stress and financial strain, leading teachers to consider alternative career options (Schaack, et al., 2020). Financial concerns and the desire for stability can significantly influence teachers' job satisfaction and commitment to their roles (Schaack, et al., 2020).

Poor remuneration compounds the challenges teachers face, straining their finances and dampening morale. Despite their pivotal role, many teachers contend with salaries that undervalue their expertise and dedication (Wiggan, et al., 2021). This financial strain not only

affects teachers' sense of worth but also hampers their ability to meet basic needs and plan for the future (Arthur & Bradley, 2023). Consequently, teachers weigh the decision to remain in a profession lacking financial stability. This issue does not only affect individual teachers but also impacts broader education systems by contributing to attrition rates and hindering efforts to retain talent. Addressing poor remuneration is imperative for fostering sustainable education systems globally.

Student aggression towards teachers presents another significant challenge, creating a hostile work environment and affecting teachers' overall well-being (Moon & McCluskey, 2020). Verbal abuse, physical confrontation, and disrespect can contribute to feelings of frustration and helplessness among educators. These experiences may ultimately influence their decision to leave the teaching profession (Peist, et al., 2020). Providing a safe and productive learning environment is essential for academic achievement and social-emotional learning, yet aggressive behaviours hinder this process, affecting both students and teachers (Shean & Mander, 2020).

The complex dynamics of perceived injustice, remuneration, and student aggression underscore the need for comprehensive research on predictors of teacher withdrawal intentions. Understanding these interrelated factors can provide valuable insights into educators' decisions to stay or leave the profession. By addressing these challenges and developing targeted interventions, education systems can work towards retaining skilled and dedicated teachers, ensuring the continuity of educational progress and societal advancement.

Theoretical Framework

The job demand resource (JD-R) theory posits that employee well-being is influenced by various workplace factors categorized as either job demands or job resources. Job demands, such as physical, social, or organizational aspects requiring sustained effort, and a lack of job resources can drain employees' energy, culminating in negative work outcomes and an increased intention to withdraw from the job (Bakker & de Vries, 2021). Conversely, ample job resources contribute to positive work outcomes through motivation and can mitigate the impact of job demands on work-related exhaustion (Kloutsiniotis & Mihail, 2020). Extensive research supports these processes, linking demanding jobs and limited job resources to work-related exhaustion (Han, et al., 2020), healthcare (Kaiser, et al., 2020), education (Han, et al., 2020), sport (Kaski & Kinnunen, 2021), customer service industry (Boukis, et al., 2020), manufacturing industry workers (Xu, et al., 2021). In this study, Job demands-resources (JD-R) theory explains how perceived injustice, remuneration, and students' aggression against teachers can influence secondary school teachers' withdrawal intentions. The theory suggests that job demands, such as perceived injustice and students' aggression, can lead to strain and burnout, which in turn may increase withdrawal intentions (Chin, et al., 2023). On the other hand, job resources, such as remuneration, can act as buffers against the negative effects of job demands, reducing intentions to withdraw and increasing engagement (Admiral, et al., 2023).

Conceptual Framework

Withdrawal intentions refer to the thoughts or inclinations an individual may have regarding leaving their current job or profession. These intentions can manifest as considerations of resigning, retiring, or pursuing alternative career paths (De Clercq, 2022). Withdrawal intentions often arise in response to various factors, such as job dissatisfaction, burnout, perceived lack of support or recognition, challenging work conditions, or personal circumstances (Madigan & Kim, 2021).

Teachers' withdrawal intentions encapsulate their contemplation or inclination towards departing from their roles within the education system. This phenomenon arises from a complex interplay of factors that impact their professional satisfaction and overall well-being (Madigan & Kim, 2021). For instance, dissatisfaction with workload, administrative support, or compensation often contributes to these intentions. In literature, other job opportunities, perceived status, and self-accountability (Raju Pamu, 2010), occupational commitment, workload, and working conditions (Ladebo, 2005), teachers' self-efficacy and work engagement (Høigaard, et al., 2011) influenced teachers' withdrawal intentions.

Perceived injustice and Teachers' Withdrawal Intentions

Perceived injustice refers to an individual's subjective interpretation of fairness, equity and impartiality in a particular situation. Injustice among teachers is the teacher's subjective sense of unfair treatment or inequity within the teaching profession. Perceived injustice within the teaching profession can act as a potent catalyst for teachers' withdrawal intentions, fostering a sense of disillusionment and disengagement with their profession (Xueyun, et al., 2024). When teachers perceive unfair treatment, whether in resource allocation, recognition, or opportunities for advancement, it undermines their sense of value and purpose in their roles (Mäkikangas, et al., 2023).

This perception of injustice can create a deep-seated sense of frustration and resentment, prompting teachers to contemplate leaving their positions in search of environments where their contributions are valued and respected (Albright, et al., 2023). Moreover, perceived injustice may erode trust in the educational institution and hinder teachers' sense of belonging and investment in their professional community. Ultimately, addressing perceived injustices is essential for creating a supportive and equitable work environment that nurtures teacher retention and fosters a culture of commitment and dedication among them (Lewicka, 2022). It has been established in the literature that perceived injustice is a prelude to intention to leave or withdrawal intentions (Reknes, et al., 2020; Sam, 2021; Wilson, 2010).

H1. Perceived injustice will significantly influence teachers' withdrawal intentions.

Remuneration and Teachers' Withdrawal Intentions

Teachers' remuneration refers to the compensation or payment that teachers receive for their work and services within the field of education. Remuneration can be in the form of financial and non-financial gratification (Mi, et al., 2024). The financial rewards are in the form of monetary rewards, such as salaries, wages, bonuses, and benefits, provided to them by education institutions or government entities in exchange for their teaching duties (Malek, et al., 2020) while the non-financial include non-monetary forms of compensation, pension contributions, or other perks (Malek, et al., 2020). Teachers' remuneration reflects the value attributed to their professional expertise, experience, and contributions to the education sector (Molla & Nolan, 2020). It serves as a means of recognizing and rewarding teachers for their vital role in shaping the future generation.

Teachers' remuneration plays a pivotal role in shaping their withdrawal intentions from the profession. When teachers feel adequately compensated for their efforts, it does not only reflect recognition of their dedication but also contributes to their overall job satisfaction and well-being (Aljumah, 2023). On the contrary, insufficient remuneration can lead to financial strain, stress, and dissatisfaction among teachers, ultimately impacting their commitment to their roles.

Previous studies have examined various factors contributing to employee withdrawal intentions (Choy & Kamoche, 2021; Osuji et al., 2014). Some suggest that unfavourable

working conditions, inadequate staffing, and ineffective management also impact withdrawal intentions (Frye et al., 2020; Choi et al., 2011). In this study, contrary to previous studies, remuneration was investigated as an exceptional factor that positively influences teachers' withdrawal intentions. Thus, the hypothesis posited that:

H2. Remuneration will significantly influence teachers' withdrawal intentions.

Students' Aggression and Teachers' Withdrawal Intentions

Students' aggression against teachers is any form of hostile or harmful behaviour directed towards the teachers by the students. This aggression can manifest in various ways, including verbal abuse, threats, physical assault, defiance, disrespect, vandalism, or disruption of the learning environment (Griffin, et al., 2024). Student aggression against teachers can create a challenging and unsafe work environment for teachers, impacting their well-being, job satisfaction, and effectiveness in their roles (McMahon, et al., 2020). The stress, anxiety, and emotional toll of dealing with aggressive behaviour can lead teachers to question their safety, effectiveness, and overall sense of fulfilment in their roles (Ahmad, et al., 2022). Moreover, persistent exposure to such aggression may erode teachers' morale and motivation, ultimately contributing to their decision to leave the teaching profession.

Prior studies have considered the influence of students' aggression against teachers in many other regions and contexts (Moon & McCluskey, 2020; Mérida-López & Extremera, 2022). This study delved into how students' aggression against teachers could influence their withdrawal intentions. Therefore, it was hypothesized that:

H3. Students' aggression against teachers will significantly influence withdrawal intentions.

Methodology

Science and technology teachers in Lagos State were selected as the sample for this study due to their specialized expertise in their respective fields and their pivotal role in preparing students for the demands of the contemporary workforce, which increasingly prioritizes science and technology skills. These teachers were selected using a multistage sampling technique. In the first stage, two districts were selected from the six education districts. In the second stage, thirty schools were selected from the schools in the selected two districts. In the third stage, ten teachers were selected which culminated in three hundred science and technology teachers as the sample. A questionnaire was administered to the sample with adequate consent obtained. One hundred and seventy-five teachers correctly filled out their questionnaire which culminated in 97.2% return rate.

Instrumentation

The instrument used for data collection was a structured questionnaire that was based on the four research questions with a 5-point Likert scale. The withdrawal intention scale contained 3 items (e.g., I think about quitting the teaching profession) of occupational withdrawal intention scale that were adapted from Hackett, et al. (2001) with a reliability coefficient of 0.82 and the remuneration scale was measured with 4 items (e.g., Can you live comfortable on your salary?) scale that was adapted from Hu and Schaufeli (2010) with a reliability coefficient of 0.80. The scales were measured on a 5-point Likert scale of 1-(Strongly disagree) to 5-(Strongly agree), the perceived injustice scale was measured with a 12-item scale of injustice experience questionnaire (IEQ - e.g., Most people don't understand how severe my condition is). It was an adopted scale of Sullivan et al. (2008) with a reliability coefficient of 0.92. It was measured on a 5-point Likert scale of 1-(not at all) to 5-(all the time), and the students' aggression against teacher's scale contained 5 items (e.g., The students threatened to harm me) that were adopted

from Berg and Cornell (2016) with a reliability coefficient of 0.56. It was measured on a 4-point rating scale of 1-(Never) to 4-(Many times).

Data Analysis

Descriptive data analysis, exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis were conducted to ascertain the quality of the data collected in respect to the proposed model. The descriptive and exploratory factor analysis was analysed using SPSS v.25 and confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was conducted using AMOS SPSS v.23.

Results

Exploratory Factor Analysis

The factor analysis revealed that certain items within the constructs were removed from the research instruments as they failed to meet the threshold of 0.50 (Byrne, 2016). The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy was 0.68, indicating sufficient sampling adequacy, while communalities exceeded 0.628. Additionally, an approximate chi-square value of 2920.08 was obtained at $p < 0.000$, with components extraction explaining 70.6% of the total variance. The reliability and validity of the latent variable were demonstrated in Table 1, with composite reliabilities (CR) of the latent variables surpassing the cut-off of 0.7 (Gefen et al., 2000). Furthermore, the Cronbach alpha coefficients of the variables exceeded 0.7, indicating acceptable internal consistency (Namdeo & Rout, 2016). Discriminant validity, calculated as the square root of the average variance accounted for by the underlying latent variable, showed that the constructs correlated more strongly with their items than with other variables, as indicated by surpassing the off-diagonal elements in their respective rows and columns (Lowry & Gaskin, 2014) as shown in table 1. At the rotated components, items 1,3 & 5 were deleted from the student's aggression against teacher's scale, and items 5 & 8 were deleted from perceived injustice due to low factor loadings.

Table 1.

Descriptive, validities and reliabilities of the Constructs

SN	Constructs	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4
1	Student's aggression against teachers	3.314	0.328	***0.777***			
2	Withdrawal Intentions	3.745	0.858	-.024*	***0.849***		
3	Perceived injustice	3.736	0.597	.008	-.018	***0.849***	
4	Remuneration	3.919	0.785	-.020	.077	.035*	***0.877***
	Composite Reliability (CR)			0.753	0.886	0.963	0.931
	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)			0.604	0.722	0.721	0.770
	Cronbach's alpha (α)			0.81	0.82	0.67	0-75

Note: *$p < 0.05$. The bold and italicized numbers are the discriminant validity of the constructs

Confirmatory Factor Analysis

The parameters considered in measuring the structural equation model include Chi-square to degrees of freedom ratio ($\chi 2/df$), normed-fit-index (NFI), Tucker-Lewis index (TLI), goodness-of-fit index (GFI), comparative-fit-index (CFI), and the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA). The study's findings, presented in Table 2 and Figure 1, demonstrated a good fit of the constructs, as indicated by various fit indices: $\chi 2(300) = 1133.18$ and $\chi 2/df = 7.61$, with a significance level of $p < 0.000$. Furthermore, the NFI = 0.90, TLI = 0.92, CFI =

0.93, RFI = 0.91, IFI = 0.94, GFI = 0.91, RMR = 0.08, AGFI = 0.92, PGFI = 0.91, RMSEA = 0.05, and PCLOSE = 0.00 (Byrne, 2016).

The regression weight on the influence of perceived injustice, remuneration, and student's aggression against teachers as predictors of secondary school teachers' withdrawal intentions. validates the acceptance of the stated alternate hypotheses (Hair et al., 2018). Table 2 demonstrates that the critical ratio recommended for testing SEM constructs, to ascertain a 99 percent level of significance, C.R. values beyond ±2.58 were observed, while C.R. values greater than or equal to 1.96 but less than 2.58 indicated a 95 percent level of significance (Byrne, 2016).

Table 2.
Regression Weight, Path Analysis and Hypotheses Testing

Hyp	Model Path	Est	S.E.	C.R.	P	Decision
1	WI <--- PI	-0.414	0.159	-2.612	0.00	Accept
2	WI <--- REM	0.151	0.068	2.207	0.027	Accept
3	WI <--- SAAT	0.038	0.011	3.591	0.000	Accept

Note. WI – Withdrawal Intentions, SAAT - Student's aggression against teachers, PI - Perceived Injustice, REM - Remuneration

The result of the findings in Table 2 and Figure 1 indicates that hypotheses 1 – 3 are accepted, which is an indication that student's aggression against teachers, perceived injustice and poor remuneration and other fringe benefits are some of the major causes of secondary school teacher's withdrawal intentions. Although, there is a positive relationship between student's aggression against teachers, remuneration, and teacher's withdrawal intentions but a negative relationship between perceived injustice and teacher's withdrawal intentions.

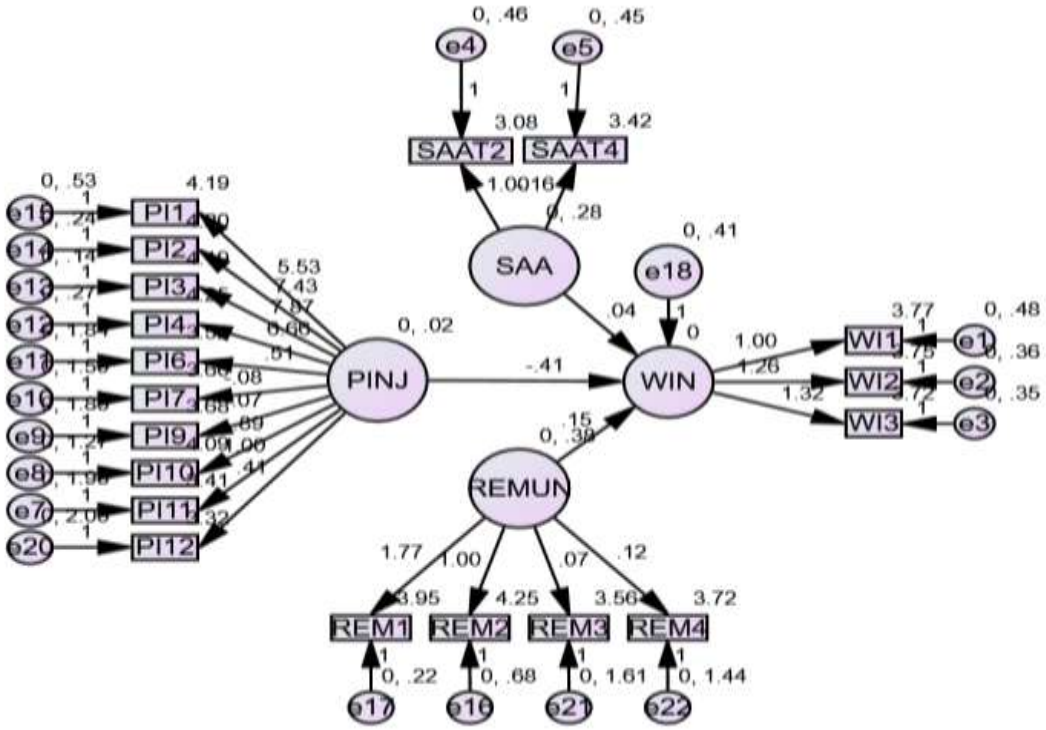


Figure 1: Estimated Teacher's Withdrawal Intention Model

Discussion of the findings

The major objective of the research study was to explore how perceived injustice, remuneration, and student's aggression against teachers predict secondary school teacher's withdrawal intentions. The findings revealed a compelling outcome indicating why education experts often choose to relocate abroad in search of greener pastures and a more conducive teaching and learning environment.

Perceived injustice has a negative but significant influence on secondary school teacher's withdrawal intentions. Therefore, H1 was accepted. The result gained support from Reknes, et al. (2021) who found injustice perception and an antecedent to intention to leave among Norwegian transport organization. Likewise, Khattak, et al. (2021) found perceived injustice influences employee behaviour. This is an indication that when teachers perceive unfair treatment, such as inequitable resource distribution or inadequate recognition for their efforts, it undermines their morale and dedication to their roles. This sense of injustice can lead to heightened levels of stress, frustration, and disillusionment, making the prospect of leaving the profession more appealing as educators seek environments where they feel valued and respected.

Remuneration has a positive and significant influence on secondary school teacher's withdrawal intentions. Therefore, H2 was accepted. In literature, remuneration was agreed to aggravate worker's withdrawal intentions (Choy & Kamoche, 2020; Jolly, et al., 2021). The outcome of the study reveals that when teachers feel adequately compensated for their efforts, it enhances their sense of value and recognition within the profession. On the contrary, inadequate remuneration can lead to financial strain, stress, and dissatisfaction among educators, making the prospect of seeking alternative employment more appealing. Teachers may consider leaving their positions in search of better compensation packages and improved financial stability elsewhere.

Students' aggression against teachers has a positive and significant influence on secondary school teachers' withdrawal intentions. Therefore, H3 was accepted. The result of the study is supported by the findings of Mérida-López & Extremera (2022) who found that students aggression influence teachers to build up intentions to withdraw or change their job. Likewise, Węziak-Białowolska, et al. (2020) & Reknes, et al. (2021) found workplace harassment as one of the major predictors of withdrawal intentions among workers in the garment industry. The outcome is an indication that when teachers face verbal abuse, physical confrontation, or disrespect from students, it creates a hostile work environment that can lead to increased stress, anxiety, and feelings of helplessness. Persistent exposure to such aggression can erode teachers' sense of efficacy and undermine their commitment to their roles. Moreover, experiencing aggression from students may lead teachers to question their safety and security within the school environment, further fuelling their desire to leave.

Implications

In theoretical terms, the study affirms the relevance and applicability of the JD-R model to teacher retention study. Identifying the constructs that influence teacher's withdrawal intentions reinforces the core tenets of the theory - that job demands and resources influence employee well-being. Awareness of the factors influencing withdrawal intentions can empower teachers to address sources of dissatisfaction and seek support when needed. Teachers can also utilize the findings to inform career decisions and seek environments that offer better support and professional fulfilment. Teacher education programmes can integrate training on coping mechanisms for handling perceived injustice and student aggression to better prepare teachers for the challenges they may face. Policymakers can use the findings to inform the development

of policies aimed at improving teacher retention rates, such as implementing fair compensation structures and addressing issues of student aggression towards teachers. Schools and educational institutions can utilize the study findings to identify areas for improvement in working conditions and implement strategies to mitigate factors contributing to teacher withdrawal intentions. Recognizing the importance of respectful communication and collaboration between parents, students, and teachers can contribute to a positive school environment conducive to teacher satisfaction and retention.

Conclusion

This study appraises the influence of perceived injustice, remuneration and student's aggression against teacher's withdrawal intention. Our findings elucidate that creating supportive work environments, fair compensation structures, and effective strategies for managing student behaviour are crucial elements in promoting teacher well-being and retention. As a result of the complex nature of the Nigerian educational system, addressing the factors considered influencing teacher's withdrawal intentions is paramount for fostering a sustainable and thriving teaching workforce, ultimately enhancing the quality of education for students and the broader community.

Limitations

Despite the delectable outcome of the study, there exist some limitations of the study. The result of the study cannot be generalized due to the specific context in which the research was conducted. These factors include differences in education systems, cultural norms and socioeconomic conditions which influences teacher's withdrawal intentions. The study also focused on perceived injustice, remuneration, and student's aggression but did not consider many other factors like school climate, organization culture, and teacher's personality that may influence teacher's withdrawal intentions. Likewise, the sample may not fully represent the diversity of secondary school teachers as their responses may be skewed towards certain demographics.

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