



ORGANIZATION BASED SELF-ESTEEM AND WORK MOTIVATION AS PREDICTORS OF ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT AMONG PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHERS IN AWKA SOUTH LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF ANAMBRA STATE

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ABSTRACT

The study investigated the influence of work motivation (WM) and organisation-based self-esteem (OBSE) in predicting organisational commitment (OC) among primary school teachers in Awka, Anambra State. A total of one hundred and nineteen (119) teachers (40 males, and 79 females, mean age = 31.47yrs, SD = .98) participated in study. Three instruments were used for data collection namely: Motivation at work scale, organization-based self-esteem scale, and organizational commitment scale. Hierarchical multiple regression analysis with stepwise modelling was employed to test the hypothesis. The results revealed that work motivation significantly and positively predicted organizational commitment. Furthermore, organisation-based self-esteem failed to significantly predict organisational commitment. The results of the study highlight the importance of work motivation and organisation-based self-esteem in enhancing teachers' commitment to their jobs/schools. Limitations of the study were also emphasised and future research directions suggested.

Keywords: Organization Based Self-Esteem, Work Motivation, Organizational Commitment, Primary School Teachers.

Introduction

Commitment is a topic of significant interest within many organizations, as it not only indicates the extent of an employee's investment in the organization but also represents the strength of the connection between the employee and the organization. This connection, in turn, reflects the degree to which the employee has internalized and adopted the organization's characteristics and viewpoints (Yukl, 2006).

Organizational commitment refers to the psychological attachment and loyalty that employees feel towards their organization. It encompasses an employee's willingness to align with the organization's goals, exert effort for the organization's benefit, and maintain membership within the organization (Solinger et al., 2023). Recent research has identified three key components of organizational commitment: *affective commitment* (emotional attachment to the organization), *continuance commitment* (perceived cost of leaving the organization), and *normative commitment* (sense of obligation to remain with the organization) (Meyer & Allen, 1991; Solinger et al., 2023). Miller (2003) defined organisational commitment as “a state in which an employee identifies with a particular organisation and its goals, and wishes to maintain membership in the organisation” (p. 73). Organizational commitment is, therefore, the extent to



which an employee is willing to remain a part of the organization due to their interest in and alignment with the organization's goals and values.

Organizational commitment among teachers in Awka, Anambra State, can be influenced by various factors such as job satisfaction, working conditions, leadership support, and opportunities for professional development. Studies have shown that when teachers in Awka feel supported and valued by their schools, they are more likely to exhibit strong organizational commitment, leading to improved teaching performance and student outcomes. However, challenges such as inadequate resources and limited career advancement opportunities can negatively impact this commitment, potentially leading to higher turnover rates and decreased educational quality in the region (Eze & Chukwuma, 2022).

Work motivation is a key factor that can influence teachers' commitment to their organization. The study of motivation focuses on understanding why individuals behave in certain ways, essentially asking, "Why do people do what they do?" A central challenge in motivation research is explaining the purposefulness of behavior. The word "motivation" comes from the Latin term "movere," meaning "to move," which is why experts in this field explore what drives individuals to act and why they behave in specific ways (Weiner, 1992). While motivation literally refers to the process of initiating movement, in practice, it is applied to the stimulation of a specific type of movement- behavior. The study of motivation, however, goes beyond merely triggering behavior; it also involves examining the conditions that sustain activity and regulate its patterns (Eccles & Wigfield, 2002).

Motivation can be described as a managerial process designed to encourage individuals to improve their performance for the organization's overall benefit by addressing their unmet needs (Obiekwe, 2016). Work motivation, which drives employees to achieve goals and perform tasks effectively, significantly influences their level of commitment to the organization. When employees are highly motivated, they tend to exhibit greater commitment, aligning more closely with the organization's goals and values. For instance, *intrinsic motivation*, where employees find personal satisfaction in their work, is often linked to higher levels of affective commitment, where employees feel emotionally attached to the organization (Meyer & Gagné, 2008). Similarly, *extrinsic motivation*, such as rewards and recognition, can enhance normative and continuance commitment, where employees feel obligated to stay or perceive significant costs associated with leaving the organization (Gagné et al., 2015).

Hence, work motivation among teachers in Awka, Anambra State, plays a critical role in their effectiveness and commitment to the educational system. Various factors contribute to their motivation, including job satisfaction, recognition, professional development opportunities, and the working environment. Teachers who feel motivated are more likely to engage fully in their roles, contributing positively to student outcomes and overall school performance. However, challenges such as inadequate resources, limited career advancement, and low salaries can diminish their motivation, leading to decreased job satisfaction and potentially higher turnover rates (Eze & Okonkwo, 2022).

Another important factor that may influence teachers' commitment to their organization is organization-based self-esteem. Organization-based self-esteem (OBSE) refers to the degree to which employees believe they are valuable and capable within their organizational context. It is a specific form of self-esteem that is shaped by experiences in the workplace and reflects an employee's self-perceived worth in their role and to the organization. High OBSE is associated with positive outcomes such as increased job satisfaction, higher motivation, and stronger organizational commitment, as employees who feel valued are more likely to be committed and



perform well (Pierce & Gardner, 2004). Conversely, low OBSE can lead to negative outcomes, including reduced motivation and higher turnover intentions, as employees may feel undervalued and disconnected from the organization (Bowling et al., 2010).

The relationship between OBSE and organizational commitment among teachers in Awka, Anambra State may be significant. Teachers with high OBSE, who perceive themselves as valuable and competent within their schools, are more likely to demonstrate strong organizational commitment. This is because they feel a sense of belonging and believe their contributions are recognized and appreciated, which fosters an emotional attachment to their school and a desire to remain part of it (Pierce & Gardner, 2004). In contrast, teachers with low OBSE may feel undervalued and disconnected, leading to lower levels of organizational commitment and potentially higher turnover intentions. Enhancing OBSE through supportive leadership, recognition, and opportunities for professional development is therefore crucial for fostering commitment among teachers in Awka (Eze & Okonkwo, 2022).

Previous research on the relationship between work motivation (Rahim & Jam'an, 2018; Siregar, 2022), OBSE (Bankole & Ajagu, 2014; Hembah, 2021), and organizational commitment has produced mixed results. As a result, it is crucial to examine the effects of work motivation and OBSE on employees' organizational commitment further. This study, therefore, aimed to assess how work motivation and OBSE predict the organizational commitment of teachers in Awka, Anambra State.

Theory and Hypotheses Development

Work Motivation and Organisational Commitment

Social Exchange Theory (SET) offers a robust framework for exploring the intricate relationship between work motivation and organizational commitment. At its core, SET posits that social behavior is the result of an exchange process where individuals engage in interactions that they perceive as mutually beneficial (Blau, 1964). This theory is particularly relevant in organizational settings, where the relationship between an employer and employee is built upon a series of exchanges, both tangible (such as salary, benefits, and promotions) and intangible (such as recognition, respect, and opportunities for personal growth).

Work motivation refers to the internal and external forces that drive an employee to engage in certain behaviors and pursue goals within the workplace. According to SET, when an organization provides resources and support that fulfill an employee's needs and aspirations, it creates a positive exchange relationship. For example, if an organization offers competitive salaries, recognition programs, and career development opportunities, employees are likely to feel that the organization is meeting their expectations and satisfying their needs. This perception strengthens the exchange relationship, as employees feel compelled to reciprocate the organization's efforts by increasing their commitment and performance.

Organizational commitment, the psychological attachment and loyalty an employee feels toward their organization, can be seen as a direct outcome of this reciprocal exchange. According to Meyer and Allen's (1991) three-component model of commitment- affective, continuance, and normative- each component can be influenced by the quality of the exchange relationship. Affective commitment arises when employees develop an emotional attachment due to their motivational needs being met through recognition and support, leading them to stay out of satisfaction (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005). Continuance commitment occurs when employees feel they have too much to lose if they leave, as they weigh the significant benefits received, such as job security and pensions. Normative commitment reflects a sense of obligation to remain, often



driven by the organization's investment in their development, fostering loyalty and a feeling of duty (Emerson, 1976).

SET underscores the reciprocal nature of the relationship between work motivation and organizational commitment. When employees perceive that their efforts are rewarded and recognized, they are likely to increase their level of commitment. This reciprocal relationship is not one-sided; as employees become more committed, they are more inclined to put forth additional effort, further enhancing their performance and contribution to the organization. This, in turn, motivates the organization to continue or even increase its support and rewards, creating a reinforcing cycle of exchange. Hence, it makes sense to say that work motivation will boost organizational commitment of teachers in Awka, Anambra State.

Hypothesis 1: Work motivation significantly and positively predicts organizational commitment.
Organisation-Based Self-Esteem and Organisational Commitment

Social Identity Theory (SIT) offers a compelling framework for understanding the relationship between Organizational-Based Self-Esteem (OBSE) and organizational commitment. Developed by Tajfel and Turner (1979), SIT posits that individuals derive a significant portion of their identity and self-concept from their membership in social groups, including their work organizations. This sense of belonging and identification with a group influences their attitudes, behaviors, and levels of commitment to the group.

Organizational-Based Self-Esteem (OBSE) refers to the extent to which employees perceive themselves as valuable, competent, and important within the context of their organization (Pierce et al., 1989). According to SIT, when individuals identify strongly with their organization, their self-esteem becomes closely tied to their organizational membership. As a result, their self-worth and self-identity are influenced by the perceived status, achievements, and values of the organization. High OBSE means that employees feel that they are significant members of the organization, which enhances their social identity within that context.

Organizational commitment, which reflects the psychological attachment and loyalty employees feel toward their organization, can be deeply influenced by OBSE through the lens of SIT. SIT suggests that when employees have high OBSE, their identification with the organization is strengthened, leading to a higher level of organizational commitment. This commitment can be broken down into three components: affective, continuance, and normative commitment (Meyer & Allen, 1991). High OBSE fosters affective commitment through emotional attachment, as employees align their self-identity with the organization (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). It also contributes to continuance commitment, where employees fear losing self-esteem tied to their organizational membership (Ashforth & Mael, 1989). Additionally, high OBSE enhances normative commitment, as employees feel a moral obligation to remain with an organization that aligns with their values and self-worth (Ellemers et al., 1999).

Social Identity Theory (SIT) emphasizes the reciprocal relationship between OBSE and organizational commitment. When employees experience high OBSE, their identification with the organization is strengthened, leading to higher organizational commitment. In turn, this increased commitment further enhances their OBSE, creating a positive feedback loop. As employees become more committed, they are likely to invest more effort in their roles, which can lead to greater recognition and value within the organization, further boosting their OBSE. Conversely, low OBSE can weaken the employee's identification with the organization, leading to reduced commitment. If employees do not feel valued or competent within the organization, their self-esteem may suffer, leading them to disassociate from the organization. This dis-identification can

result in lower affective, continuance, and normative commitment, as the employees no longer see the organization as a crucial part of their identity. Therefore, it's rational to assert that high OBSE will result in high organizational commitment and vice versa. Thus:

Hypothesis 2: Organizational-Based Self-Esteem (OBSE) significantly and negatively predicts organizational commitment among school teachers.

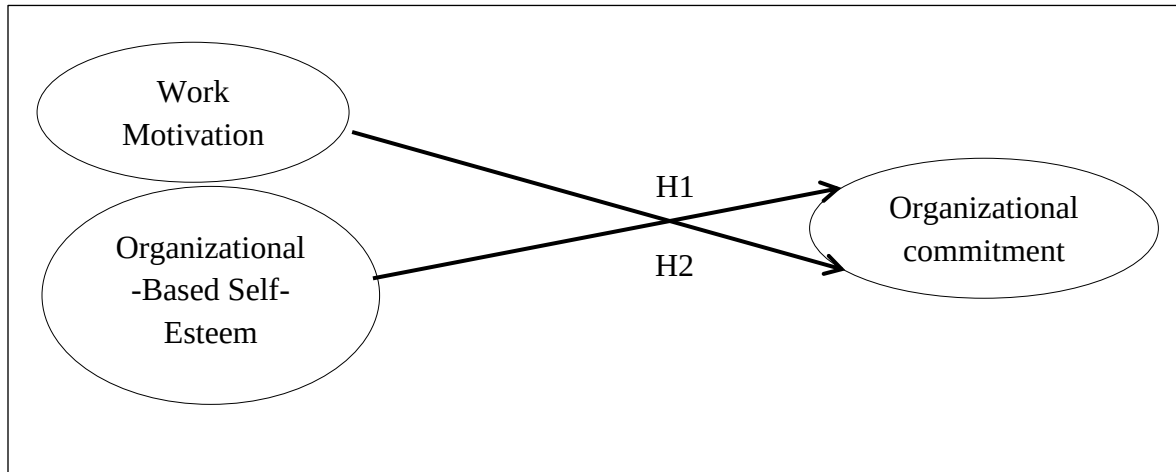


Figure 1: Research Model

Method

Participants and Procedure

A total of hundred and nineteen (119) primary and secondary school teachers participated in the study. The teachers were selected using convenient sampling technique from four randomly selected schools located in Awka, Anambra State. The respondents were teachers who voluntarily gave their consent to participate in the study. The demographic characteristics of the sampled participants revealed the following: Of the 119 participants, 40 (33.6%) were males while 79 (66.4%) were females. The participants' age ranged from 18 to 55 years with a mean age of 31.47 and SD of .98. Eighty (67.2%) of the respondents had 1-10 years of job tenure, 12 (10.1%) had 11-20 years of job tenure, 26 (21.8%) had 21-30 years of job tenure, while 1 (.89%) had 31 and above years of job tenure. Seventy-seven (64.7%) of the respondents had NCE/OND as their highest level of education, 8 (6.7%) had degree/HND, 27 (22.7%) had PGD/PGDE, and 7 (5.9%) had masters. The participants were instructed to fill out the questionnaires during school hours and return them directly to the researcher. The participants were also guaranteed anonymity and confidentiality regarding their responses. A total of 140 questionnaires were initially distributed, out of which 128 were returned, indicating a response rate of 91.4%. However, 9 returned questionnaires were discarded due to incomplete information, resulting in a total of 119 questionnaires utilized for data analysis.

Measures

Work Motivation: Work motivation was assessed with Motivation at Work Scale (MAWS), a 12-item measurement tool created by Gagné et al. (2010) designed to evaluate the reason(s) behind an employee's engagement in a particular job. The WAMS is comprised of four subscales with



three items per subscale (i.e., intrinsic motivation, identified regulation, introjected regulation and external regulation). Participants were asked to indicate on a Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (not at all) to 7 (exactly) the extent to which the items represent the reasons they are presently involved in their work. Sample item include: “Because I enjoy this work very much”. The Cronbach’s Alpha coefficients for each of the subscales include: .89 for intrinsic motivation, .83 for identified regulation, .75 for introjected regulation and .69 for external regulation (Gagné et al., 2010). A Cronbach alpha internal consistency of .97 was established for the composite scale of work motivation in this study.

Organization Based Self-Esteem Scale: Organizational-based self-esteem was measured with Organization Based Self-Esteem Scale developed by Pierce et al. (1989). It is a 10-item scale measuring the degree to which employees believe they are worthwhile and valuable to the organization. Responses on the scale were graded on a 5-point Likert-scale type (1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree) Sample item include: “I am trusted in the organization I work for”. The instrument's internal consistency (Cronbach’s Alpha), as indicated by Pierce et al. (1989) with seven different samples, was between .89 and .96 with an average value of .91. The revalidation reliability Alpha value obtained for the scale in this study is .96.

Organizational Commitment: Organizational Commitment was measured with Organizational Commitment Scale, an 18-item scale developed by Allen & Meyer (1996) which assesses the degree to which an employee identifies with and is involved in their organization. The scale is divided into three dimensions of affective commitment (6 items), continuance commitment (6 items) and normative commitment (6 items). Responses on the scale were rated on a Likert scale measure ranging from 1(strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). Sample item include: “I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career with this organization”. Four items on the scale are reverse scored. The coefficient alphas for the three subscales are .85, .79, and .73, for affective commitment, continuance commitment, and normative commitment respectively (Allen & Meyer, 1996). The revalidation reliability Alpha value obtained for the scale in this study is .83.

Design/Statistics

The data obtained from the respondents were analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) along with hierarchical multiple regression analyses. PPMC was utilized to determine the intercorrelations among the study variables, while multiple regression analysis was employed to assess the influence of each antecedent variable in predicting the organizational commitment of teachers. The data were collated and analyzed with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS).



Results

Table 1: Means, standard deviation and inter-correlations among the study variables

Variables	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1 Gender	1.66	.47	-						
2 Age	31.47	.98	.31**	-					
3 Job Tenure	1.56	.86	.26**	.78**	-				
4 Education	1.70	1.01	.32**	.71**	.78**	-			
5 WM	47.43	19.94	.32**	.40**	.31**	.33**	-		
6 OBSE	36.71	7.57	.16	.36**	.23*	.21*	.71**	-	
7 OC	53.45	10.24	.19*	.21*	.14	.12	.54**	.32**	-

Note: * $p < .05$ (two-tailed), ** $p < .01$ (two-tailed), $N = 119$; WM: Work Motivation, OBSE: Organisation Based Self-Esteem, OC: Organisational Commitment.

The demographic composition of the study participants in Table 1 revealed that the average age of the participants was 31.47 ($SD = .98$). Majority of the participants had NCE as their highest level of education followed by PGD/PGDE. Over 60% of the respondents had job tenure of between 1-10 years. The result of the correlational analysis in Table 1 revealed that among the demographic variables (age, gender, job tenure, and education) only age and gender significantly (positively) correlated with organizational commitment. Furthermore, work motivation ($r = .54$, $p < .01$) had significant positive correlation with organizational commitment. In addition, organization-based self-esteem ($r = .32$, $p < .01$) significantly and positively correlated with organizational commitment.

Table 2: Hierarchical Multiple Regression for the prediction of Organizational Commitment (OC) by Work Motivation (WM), and Organization Based Self-Esteem (OBSE)

Variables	Beta (β)	<i>t</i>	R^2	$R^2\Delta$	$F\Delta$
Step 1					
Gender	.150	1.557			
Age	.235	1.548	.065	.065	1.973
Job Tenure	-.018	-.018			
Education	-.086	-.086			
Step 2					
WM	.537	6.076***	.065	.230	36.916
Step 3					
OBSE	-.142	-1.240	.305	.010	1.538

Note: * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$; WM: Work Motivation, OBSE: Organisation Based Self-Esteem

Table 2 above shows the hierarchical multiply regression for the prediction of organizational commitment by work motivation and organization-based self-esteem. The demographic variables (gender, age, job tenure and education) entered in first step of the regression model as covariates collectively accounted for 6.5% [$R^2\Delta = .065$; $F\Delta (4, 114) = 1.973$, $p = ns.$] variation in organizational commitment. However, none of the demographic variable significantly predicted organizational commitment.



Work motivation entered in step 2 of the equation significantly and positively predicted organizational commitment ($\beta = .54, p < .001$). The variance in organizational commitment explained on account of work motivation was 23.0% [$R^2\Delta = .230$; $F\Delta (1, 113) = 36.916, p < .001$].

The addition of organization-based self-esteem in the third and final step of the equation failed to significantly organizational commitment. ($\beta = -.14, p = ns.$). Accordingly, work motivation ($t = 6.076$) made the biggest positive contribution in predicting organizational commitment followed by organization-based self-esteem (-1.240).

Discussion

The present study examined the influence of work motivation (WM) and organizational based self-esteem (OBSE) in predicting organizational commitment (OC) among primary school teachers in Awka South Local Government Area of Anambra State.

The first finding of the study showed that WM significantly and positively predicted OC. This indicates that an increase in teachers' WM will result in proportionate increase in their OC and vice versa. Hence, this outcome is in congruence with the first hypothesis which state that WM will be a significant predictor of OC among school teachers in Awka, Anambra State. Consequently, the first hypothesis is confirmed. The significant prediction of OC by WM among teachers in Awka, Anambra State, can be attributed to the fact that motivated teachers are more likely to feel valued, satisfied, and aligned with their school's goals. When teachers are motivated-whether through intrinsic factors like personal growth and fulfillment or extrinsic factors like recognition and rewards- they develop a stronger attachment to their school. This attachment enhances their emotional connection (affective commitment), increases their desire to stay due to perceived benefits (continuance commitment), and strengthens their sense of obligation to the school (normative commitment). Therefore, higher levels of WM directly contribute to higher OC among these teachers. This finding aligns with previous research outcomes ((Begashaw, 2021; Bytyqi, 2020; Chen, 2023; Fauziyah et al., 2023; Pongpeng, & Pongpeng, 2022; Siregar, 2022) which reported significant association between WM and OC.

The second hypothesis which states that organization-based self-esteem (OBSE) will significantly predict organizational commitment (OC) was not confirmed; that is, OBSE failed to significantly predict OC. This outcome is consistent with findings of extant studies (Bankole & Ajagu, 2014; Hembah, 2021; Sam, Bellani, & Wahyuni, 2021) linking OBSE to OC. The non-significant prediction of OC by OBSE among teachers in Awka, Anambra State, may be due to several factors. First, while OBSE reflects how valued and competent teachers feel within their school, it might not directly translate into their commitment if other factors, such as work environment, job satisfaction, or external opportunities, play a more substantial role in influencing their loyalty to the organization. Additionally, if teachers in this context experience challenges like inadequate resources, poor working conditions, or lack of support, their positive self-perception (OBSE) might not be enough to foster strong organizational commitment. The complexities of the teaching profession in this region (Awka, Anambra State) might mean that OBSE alone is insufficient to drive commitment, as other external and contextual factors could have a more significant impact.



Implications of the Study

Several implications and deductions can be made from the findings of this study which would be of tremendous benefits to future researchers, teachers, school managements and the government at large.

The first discovery of this study indicated that WM is a significant positive predictor of OC among primary school teachers in Awka, Anambra State. This finding has several implications: First, motivated teachers who are committed to their schools are likely to perform better in their roles. Their increased dedication can lead to more effective teaching, improved student outcomes, and a more positive school environment. Schools can benefit from investing in strategies that boost teacher motivation, knowing that this will likely enhance overall performance. Secondly, when motivation drives commitment, teachers are less likely to leave their jobs. This means that schools in Awka, Anambra State, can expect lower turnover rates, which can reduce the costs and disruptions associated with recruiting and training new staff. Thirdly, given the positive relationship between motivation and commitment, school administrators and policymakers can strategically allocate resources to initiatives that enhance teacher motivation. This could include professional development opportunities, recognition programs, or improvements in working conditions. Such investments are likely to yield significant returns in the form of increased organizational commitment.

The second finding of this study revealed that OBSE failed to significantly predict OC among teachers in Awka, Anambra State. This outcome implies that teachers' perceptions of their value and competence within the organization do not strongly influence their commitment to the organization. This could suggest that other factors, such as job satisfaction, work environment, leadership style, or external socio-economic conditions, might play a more significant role in determining their organizational commitment. Hence, school authorities are encouraged to provide resources that address teachers' broader needs, such as mental health support, work-life balance initiatives, and career progression opportunities. Also, the government should consider policies that improve the overall working conditions for teachers, such as better salaries, benefits, and job security. These factors may have a more direct impact on organizational commitment than OBSE alone.

Limitations of the Study and Recommendations for Future Studies

The study is not without its limitations. Firstly, the study was conducted among a specific group of teachers in Awka, Anambra State, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other regions or professions. The relatively small sample size might not fully capture the diversity of experiences and perspectives among teachers in different contexts. Future research should include a larger and more diverse sample of teachers across different regions and educational settings to enhance the generalizability of the findings.

Secondly, the study employed a cross-sectional design, which captures data at a single point in time. This limits the ability to infer causality or understand how WM, OBSE and OC may evolve over time. Hence, future studies should consider using longitudinal designs. This approach will allow researchers to track changes and trends, providing insights into how these variables interact in the long term.

Thirdly, the study relied on self-reported data, which is subject to biases such as social desirability or inaccurate recall. Teachers may have provided responses they believed to be expected rather than their true feelings or experiences. Thus, future research could incorporate



more objective measures, such as performance evaluations, attendance records, or observational data.

Fourthly, the study may not have fully accounted for external factors such as socio-economic conditions, school policies, or cultural influences that could impact WM, OBSE and OC among teachers. Hence, future studies may consider exploring these factors.

Finally, while the study focused on WM and OBSE, it did not explore other potentially influential factors such as job satisfaction, leadership styles, or organizational culture, which could also play significant roles in shaping organizational commitment. Thus, future researchers should expand the scope of variables.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this study explored the relationship between work motivation (WM), organization-based self-esteem (OBSE), and organizational commitment (OC) among teachers in Awka, Anambra State. The findings revealed that WM significantly predicts OC, highlighting the importance of aligning motivational strategies with organizational goals to enhance teacher commitment. However, the non-significant impact of OBSE on OC suggests that other factors may play a more influential role in fostering loyalty among teachers. Despite its limitations, including sample size and the use of self-reported data, the study provides valuable insights into the dynamics between motivation and commitment in the educational context. Future research should expand on these findings by addressing the identified limitations and exploring additional factors that may influence OC. Ultimately, understanding and enhancing teacher motivation is crucial for improving commitment and, consequently, educational outcomes in schools.

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