

Religiosity and Work Attitude of Public Secondary School Teachers in Delta State, Nigeria

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This study on religiosity and work attitude of public secondary school teachers in Delta State, Nigeria, is necessitated by some attitudinal deficits of teachers in the workplace. The survey adopted the social bond theory to examine religiosity and work attitude of public secondary school teachers in Delta State, Nigeria. The multi-stage sampling techniques were employed, and data were collected from 214 respondents with the use of questionnaire and in-depth interview. The study found that public secondary school teachers in Delta State attend weekly religious programmes, and their religious routine contributes to lateness to work, although they are rarely absent from work due to religious doctrines which extols dedication to work. Absence from duty were primarily attributed to ill health. Moreover, schools do not grant approval to employees who request for absenteeism to attend religious programs. The study also found that teachers are aware of the existence of examination malpractice in schools, although, they are not pressured to engage in it, hence, religiosity play complementary roles in promoting punctuality and attendance to work, academic integrity, and obedience to authority. The paper recommends the need to link religious values with work attitudes that will improve service delivery in the secondary education sector.

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Background to the Study

Since prehistoric times, humans have interpreted life events from a supernatural perspective. The degree of this interpretation is dependent on the extent of attachment an individual hold to religious doctrines, this forms the bedrock of religiosity. Religion mystifies the relationship between man and inanimate objects (Ugwueje & Udeh, 2021). Humans submit themselves to mentally constructed spirit beings; giving them powers which they may not have, including the authority to dominate several facets of their lives. Therefore, man's means of realizing their potentials is to appease these mental creations through specified deeds which are rooted in everyday living, this the basis for religiosity. Religiosity is the extent to which a person adheres to religious beliefs as a basis for daily living, that is, irrespective of religious affinity (Shukor & Jamal, 2013). Religiosity focuses on the personal devotion to religion and a strong sense of commitment and belief. It describes conformity to a given set of lifestyle practices which are considered important to the actor (Schwartz & Huismans, 1995). Since Religion is central to everyday life, there is tendency that human attitudes may be formed by religiosity, transcending every facet of life, including the workplace.

Work is any organized activities that leads to the creation of goods and services needed by the society for development and improvement in the standards of living. Work offers meaning to living and provides opportunity to meet the needs of daily living, including food, clothing and shelter. The relationship between religion and work is based on the premise that religion is a motivator for hard work and better performance in organisations (Ramlee, Osman, Salahudin, Yeng, Ling & Safizal, 2016).

Nigeria is among Africa's most religious country with over 93% religiosity level (WIN-Gallup, 2012). Hence, the implications of religiosity on employees' attitude in the workplace cannot be ignored. Workplace attitude is a psychological concept that considers an employees' disposition to work. According to Chukwudifu (2022), "an employee's attitude is a reflection of how they feel on the inside". Attitude covers the opinions of employees about their workplace. "Unfavourable attitudes might be shown in ways, such as poor performance, absenteeism, and theft, as well as lack of punctuality and bad business ethics" (Chukwudifu, 2022). These factors have the tendencies to bring an organization, including the education sector to its knees.

There are several institutional challenges bedeviling the Nigeria secondary education system, these include, inadequate funding, insufficient professional teachers, dilapidated infrastructure, inadequate instructional facilities, institutional corruption, insecurity and inadequate data for planning (Ogunode, 2021). Teachers' attitudinal factors such as lateness to work (Mathew & Omotayo, 2021), corrupt practices, including extortion, imposition of unapproved levies on students, aiding and abetting examination malpractice and absenteeism are personal challenges militating against secondary school education in Nigeria (Whawo, 2015).

Statement of the Problem

Teachers play an important role in the educational system, because, the success of post-primary education is dependent on their competence and dedication. As key players in the

knowledge economy, they are expected to be disciplined at work, responsible, knowledgeable, possessing integrity and competence. These positive attitudes are expected to rub off positively on their institutions in particular and students' performance in general. However, the age-long traditional attitudes of teachers appear to be fading away in recent time with quest for financial extortions, lateness to work and disinterestedness towards the academic growth of their students occupying the front burner.

In Delta State, Whawo (2015) and Ogunyemi (2021) assert that secondary education system faces imminent threats. Attitudinal deficits and deviant behaviors such as absenteeism, late coming to work, wilful disobedience, fraud, taking organization properties without authorization are predominant challenges in the work space. Although Nigeria scores high in religiosity (WIN-Gallup, 2012). The tenets of religiosity which includes positive work ethics such as hard work, diligence and commitment are in sharp contrast to the prevailing poor attitude to work as observed among secondary school teachers, the disconnect between religiosity and attitude to work calls for concern. In the opinion of Marroquin (2018), teachers' negative attitude can impair students' motivation to learn, increase students' psychological disorders and stress level, instill fear, feelings of anxiety and general academic pressure. At the organizational level, negative attitude militates against organizational goals. Against this backdrop, the study will examine how religiosity affects workplace attitude of secondary school teachers in Delta State.

Objectives of the Study

The general objective of the study is to interrogate the extent religious practices of teachers affect their attitude to work. The specific objectives are to:

1. Find out how religiosity affect lateness to work among secondary school teachers in Delta State
2. Unearth how religiosity affects absenteeism among secondary school teachers in Delta State.
3. Find the influence of religiosity on aiding examination malpractice among secondary school teachers in Delta State.
4. Explain the effect of religiosity on willful disobedience among secondary school teachers in Delta State

Research Questions

1. How does religiosity affect lateness to work among secondary school teachers in Delta State?
2. In what ways does religiosity affect absenteeism among secondary school teachers in Delta State?
3. What influence does religiosity have on aiding examination malpractice among secondary school teachers in Delta State?
4. What effect does religiosity have on willful disobedience among secondary school teachers in Delta State?

Literature Review

This section conceptualizes relevant issues on the subject matter of the research.

Religion and Religiosity

Religion is as old as the society itself. People lay the foundation of their daily moral code based on religious teachings which specifies right from wrong, as well as acceptable attitudes expected from individuals in their private life, as well as in public domain. Bal & Kokalan (2021) note that all religious principles and teachings facilitates morality, personal satisfaction for individuals, hard work ethics and attitude, these attitudes are innate and exemplified into religiosity. Religiosity are the set of beliefs, practices and principles which people hold about the supernatural and how these beliefs influence their daily lives. Basirico, Cashion, Eshelman & Moore (2011:385) assert that religiosity is the intensity of religious feeling. It is the emotional attachment and interpretation given to religious doctrines and dogmas and the extent to which an individual connects to his beliefs. Religion is not instinctual. Like culture, religious views are taught, learned and transmitted among faithful. Religion is internalized in belief systems, and the extent to which individuals connects to these beliefs define their daily lives (Sherkat, 2015).

Societies with high religiosity regard personal, socio-economic and political conditions as supernatural acts which should not be subjected to scientific reasoning (Ugwueje & Udeh, 2021). Few researches document the extent which religiosity is engrained in employees' attitude to work especially in a highly religious country like Nigeria. Moreover, since Graafland (2017) affirm that religiosity does not really foster pro-social behaviour, but rather increase hypocrisy by enlarging the gap between attitude and behaviour, there is a need to test the perceived incongruence between religiosity and attitude to work in Nigeria education sector.

Workplace Attitude

Attitude reflects how people feel on the inside, a collection of sentiments about the workplace (Fidelis, 2022). Attitude is formed through direct experience or observation (Graafland, 2017; Kendra, 2023). Fidelis (2022:82) assert that attitude is the "predisposition to make particular sorts of judgment about other people, topics, and extents in certain circumstances". Attitude predicts behaviour. Positive work attitude may predict positive actions, whereas, negative attitudes such as tardiness, absenteeism and theft are features of dissatisfied employees in the education sector (Whawo, 2015; Mathew & Omotayo, 2021).

There are three components of attitude, they are:

1. Affective component involves the feelings derived from a person, object or experience.
2. Cognitive component includes thoughts and beliefs about a subject.
3. Behavioural component explains how attitudes influence behaviour.

As earlier noted, attitude is influenced by beliefs. "Beliefs arise through experience. Experience needs previous beliefs and reason to be assimilated, and reason requires experience to be formed, as beliefs need reason as well. Beliefs, reason and experience are

based upon each other” (Kendra, 2023). Attitudes have implications on employees' behaviour to work. Akanni, Omisile & Oduaran (2018) concludes that negative workplace attitude correlates to negative beliefs as well, leading to decreased employee morale, increase turnover and loss of legitimacy.

Secondary School Teachers

Nigeria education is based on the 6-3-3-4 system; divided into the primary school, junior and senior secondary school and tertiary level. Ownership of secondary schools in Nigeria falls under public and private management. The church missionary society (CMS) Lagos, with a sizeable population, debut as the first secondary school in Nigeria. Overtime, there has been an increase in secondary school enrolment in the country. In 2019. Sasu (2023) record that secondary school enrolment was pegged at 7.4 million with about 13,000 public schools spread across Nigeria.

Public schools in Nigeria are bedeviled by over-populations, shortage of classroom buildings and laboratories, examination malpractice, corruption and poor funding (Aduwa, 2021). In Delta State, low remuneration and unbalanced student-teacher ratios discourages positive attitude to work among secondary school teachers (George, 2023). Ochuko (2020) found that teachers in Delta North Senatorial District have negative work attitude. Whawo (2015) corroborate that negative work attitude of teachers demotivates students. While the above studies expose that, institutional factors are responsible for poor attitude to work, there is paucity of empirical evidences on the role of unconventional factors such as religiosity in shaping the workplace attitude of secondary school teachers.

Theoretical Framework

This paper will adopt the social bond theory developed by Travis Hirschi (1969). This theory explains that individuals break the rules when their bond with the society is broken. According to Hirschi (1969) social bonds are determined by:

- i. Attachment to one another
- ii. Commitment to social rules
- iii. Involvement of social behaviours
- iv. Adherence to value system (religiosity)

With respect to this study, the fourth item shows that teachers may develop negative attitude to the goals of their institutions when there is a failure in their religious involvement. Religion is an agent of social control. Delinquencies such as lateness to work, absenteeism and extortion contravenes religious doctrines (Hirschi & Stark, 1967). According to Akanni et al (2018), connections within religious beliefs and work have restrained individuals from engaging in negative workplace behaviour by encouraging models for positive attitude. Dogmas, such as hard work, honesty and integrity internalize shared moral values into individuals.

This theory is relevant to this survey because, the observable increase in the collapse of social values will affect the attitude of people in the workplace, leading to replacement of religiosity

with hypocrisy, with the later, influencing attitude to work and moderating how people act in the workplace. Positive attitude is strengthened if the ethics of religiosity has lasting effect on workers attitudes. However, where prevalent attitude to work appears somewhat negative, the level of low religiosity diminishes and confirms the assumptions that negative attitude to work demonstrates high level of hypocrisy rather than religiosity.

Research methodology

Research Design

The study adopted a mixed method research design. This includes the application of quantitative (questionnaire), as well as qualitative (In-depth interview).

Population of the Study

The population for the study includes all public secondary school teachers in Delta State. There are 479 public secondary schools and 1487 teachers in Delta State (Urien, 2024).

Sample Size

The target population for this study is 1487 teachers. However, the sample size for this study will be statistically generated, using Yamane (1967) statistical method of determining sample size; as thus:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where;

N = Sample

e = error of sample (it could be 0.10 down to 0.01, but in this work, 0.02 is used)

1 = unity or constant

$$n = \frac{1487}{1 + 1487 (0.02)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{1487}{1 + 1487 (0.004)}$$

$$n = \frac{1487}{1 + 5.948}$$

$$n = \frac{1487}{6.948}$$

$$n = 214.08$$

The sample size for the quantitative study is therefore 214.

Sampling Technique

The study adopted the multi-stage sampling techniques; for the quantitative study, this technique made use of cluster sampling, simple random sampling, and systematic sampling. Firstly, the secondary schools were clustered into three senatorial districts. Secondly, six schools were randomly chosen from each of the senatorial districts, while systematic sampling technique were used to select teachers from each of the selected schools. For the qualitative study, purposive sampling was used in getting responses from interviewees.

Instruments of Data Collection

The data for the study were obtained using the questionnaire and unstructured interviews. The questionnaire was divided into two sections. Section A involves the socio-demographic variables of the respondents, while section B comprises of close ended items relating to substantive issues. The open-ended structure of the questionnaire was done in an objective, rather than subjective form. Furthermore, a number of unstructured exploratory interviews were directed to respondents who were randomly selected from each public secondary school under study. The interactive nature of unstructured interview allowed for openness and easy flow of communication between the interviewer and interviewee with the aim of uncovering the role of religiosity on teachers' attitude to work.

Methods of Data Analysis

The quantitative data were processed and analysed using descriptive statistics such as simple frequency distribution tables and percentages. For the thematic analysis, transcripts collected from the field were edited and presented in line with the objectives of the study.

Expected Benefits of this Research

- i. This study will provide ways that workplace attitude of secondary school teachers can be predicted and promoted for efficiency in service delivery.
- ii. A study on religiosity and workplace attitude will provide a stronger basis to understand if truly Nigeria is a religious country as popularly acclaimed and it will further expose the relationship between religiosity and teachers' attitude to work.
- iii. The information from the study will assist Federal Government of Nigeria as well as State Ministries of education on how to motivate positive workplace attitude among secondary school teachers.

Results

Table 1: Socio-demographic Characteristics of Respondents (N = 214)

Socio-demographic Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Grand Mean
Age			38.5
20–29 years	42	19.7	
30–39 years	83	38.8	
40–49 years	59	27.6	
50 years and above	30	13.9	
Gender			1.55
Male	95	44.6	
Female	119	55.4	
Marital Status			2.23
Single	29	13.7	
Married	147	68.7	
Divorced	9	4.1	
Widowed	29	13.5	
Years of Teaching Experience			10.9
Less than 5 years	39	18.0	
5–10 years	63	29.2	
11–15 years	51	23.7	
More than 15 years	62	29.1	
Religion			1.41
Christianity	170	79.5	
Islam	2	0.9	
Traditional religion	36	16.6	
Other	6	2.9	

Source: Field survey, 2025

The findings in Table 1 provide an overview of the socio-demographic characteristics of the 214 secondary school teachers in Delta State, Nigeria. The age distribution shows that the majority (38.8%, $n = 83$) fall within the 30–39 years age range, followed by those in the 40–49 years range (27.6%, $n = 59$). Teachers aged 20–29 years make up 19.7% ($n = 42$), while those aged 50 and above account for 13.9% ($n = 30$). The grand mean age is 38.5 years. In terms of gender, females are the majority (55.4%, $n = 119$), while males make up 44.6% ($n = 95$). The grand mean gender score is 1.55, indicating a slight female dominance.

For marital status, most teachers are married (68.7%, $n = 147$), followed by singles (13.7%, $n = 29$), widowed (13.5%, $n = 29$), and divorced (4.1%, $n = 9$). The grand mean score for marital status is 2.23. Regarding teaching experience, 29.2% ($n = 63$) have 5–10 years of experience, 29.1% ($n = 62$) have more than 15 years, 23.7% ($n = 51$) have 11–15 years, and 18.0% ($n = 39$) have less than 5 years. The grand mean is 10.9 years. Finally, religious affiliation shows a dominance of Christianity (79.5%, $n = 170$), followed by those practicing traditional religion (16.6%, $n = 36$). Islam accounts for 0.9% ($n = 2$), and other religions for 2.9% ($n = 6$). The grand mean religious score is 1.41.

Research Question 1: How does Religiosity affect Lateness to Work among Secondary School Teachers in Delta State?

Table 2: Religiosity and Lateness to Work among Teachers (N = 214)

Religiosity and Lateness to Work	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Grand Mean
Frequency of Attending Religious Services			2.51
Daily	38	17.8	
Weekly	99	46.3	
Monthly	42	19.6	
Rarely	35	16.4	
Early Morning Religious Activities			1.63
Yes	129	60.3	
No	85	39.7	
Frequency of Lateness to Work			3.21
Always	9	4.2	
Often	30	14.0	
Sometimes	83	38.8	
Rarely	59	27.6	
Never	33	15.4	
Religious Commitments and Lateness			1.81
Yes	62	29.0	
No	152	71.0	

Source: Field survey, 2025

The findings in Table 2 provide insight into the influence of religiosity on lateness to work among secondary school teachers in Delta State, Nigeria. The frequency of attending religious services shows that the majority of teachers (46.3%, n=99) attend weekly, while 17.8% (n=38) attend daily, 19.6% (n=42) attend monthly, and 16.4% (n=35) rarely attend. The grand mean for this variable is 2.51, indicating that most teachers are moderately religiously active.

One teacher stated that:

"My religious obligations make me wake up early for morning prayers, which helps me to start my day on a positive note." (Male, 38 years old, 6 years in service)

With respect to early morning religious activities, 60.3% (n=129) of teachers participate in such routines, while 39.7% (n=85) do not. The grand mean is 1.63, showing a fairly high engagement with morning spiritual practices. A female teacher asserted:

"I engage in morning prayers and Bible study, which helps me to start my day on a positive note." (Female, 45 years old, 12 years in service)

The data on lateness indicates that 38.8% (n=83) of teachers are sometimes late, 27.6% (n=59) are rarely late, and 15.4% (n=33) are never late. However, a smaller number reported being late often (14.0%, n=30) or always (4.2%, n=9). The grand mean of 3.21 suggests a moderate tendency toward lateness among some teachers.

A respondent admitted:

"Sometimes my religious commitments make me late for work, especially during Ramadan when I have to wake up early for Sahur." (Male, 57 years old, 18 years in service)

Lastly, 29.0% (n=62) of the teachers reported that their religious commitments do contribute to their lateness, whereas 71.0% (n=152) said they do not. The grand mean of 1.81 indicates that, overall, religious obligations are not a dominant factor in lateness for most teachers.

As one teacher emphasized:

"My religiosity does not contribute to my lateness; I prioritize my tasks and make sure I have enough time for my work responsibilities." (Female, 55 years old, 15 years in service)

Research Question 2: In what ways does Religiosity affect Absenteeism among Secondary School Teachers in Delta State?

Table 3: Religiosity and Absenteeism among Teachers (N = 214)

Religiosity and Absenteeism	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Grand Mean
Frequency of Absenteeism			3.42
Always	6	2.8	
Often	21	9.8	
Sometimes	62	29.0	
Rarely	83	38.8	
Never	42	19.6	
Reason for Absenteeism			2.19
Illness	83	38.8	
Personal issues	59	27.6	
Religious activities	31	14.5	
Others	41	19.2	
Religious Commitments and Absenteeism			1.83
Yes	52	24.3	
No	162	75.7	
Absenteeism for Religious Events			1.92
Yes	37	17.3	
No	177	82.7	
Accommodation of Religious Absences			1.59
Yes	99	46.3	
No	115	53.7	

Source: Field survey, 2025

The findings in Table 3 provide insight into the effect of religiosity on absenteeism among secondary school teachers in Delta State, Nigeria. Among the 214 respondents, 29.0% (n=62) are sometimes absent, 38.8% (n=83) are rarely absent, and 19.6% (n=42) are never absent from work. This indicates that while some degree of absenteeism exists, a large portion of teachers maintain consistent attendance. The grand mean of absenteeism frequency is 3.42, suggesting a moderate level of absenteeism.

A participant reflected this sentiment:

"I believe my religious beliefs have a positive impact on my attendance at work. My faith teaches me the importance of responsibility and accountability, which motivates me to attend work regularly and be punctual." (Female, 45 years old, 12 years in service)

When exploring reasons for absenteeism, the majority, 38.8% (n=83), attributed it to illness. Personal issues were reported by 27.6% (n=59), and 14.5% (n=31) cited religious activities. The grand mean of 2.19 further affirms that illness is the leading cause of absence. As another teacher noted:

"I have missed school due to religious obligations. I am a member of a religious group that requires me to attend a weekly meeting, which sometimes conflicts with my work schedule." (Female, 38 years old, 12 years in service)

On the influence of religious commitment on absenteeism, 24.3% (n=52) acknowledged religious commitments as a factor, while 75.7% (n=162) did not. The grand mean of 1.83 suggests that religious factors do influence absenteeism for some, though not the majority. One respondent shared:

"My religious beliefs have taught me the importance of self-discipline and time management. I believe that attending work regularly and being punctual is a way of showing respect for my colleagues and students, and for the profession as a whole." (Female, 45 years old, 8 years in service)

Additionally, 17.3% (n=37) reported being absent specifically to attend religious events, while 82.7% (n=177) had not. The grand mean here is 1.92, again indicating that only a minority are affected by religious events in this regard. A teacher remarked:

"I feel that taking time off from work for religious observances or events should be done in a way that does not disrupt the work schedule or impact my responsibilities." (Male, 38 years old, 6 years in service)

Finally, regarding institutional accommodation, 46.3% (n=99) believe that their schools accommodate religious absences, while 53.7% (n=115) feel they do not. The grand mean of 1.59 suggests that such accommodations are not widespread.

Research Question 3: What Influence does Religiosity have on Aiding Examination Malpractice among Secondary School Teachers in Delta State?

Table 4: Influence of Religiosity on Aiding Examination Malpractice (N = 214)

Religiosity and Examination Malpractice	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Grand Mean
Awareness of Examination Malpractice			1.81
Yes	124	58.0	
No	90	42.0	
Involvement in Aiding Examination Malpractice			1.92
Yes	31	14.5	
No	183	85.5	
Religious Teachers and Examination Malpractice			2.51
Strongly agree	50	23.4	
Agree	83	38.8	
Neutral	42	19.6	
Disagree	21	9.8	
Strongly disagree	18	8.4	
Pressure to Aid Examination Malpractice			1.85
Yes	62	29.0	
No	152	71.0	

Source: Field survey, 2025

The findings in Table 4 reveal that 58.0% (n=124) of the respondents are aware of examination malpractice in their school environment, whereas 42.0% (n=90) are not. With a grand mean of 1.81, this suggests that awareness is relatively high. A teacher averred:

"I believe that religious beliefs can play a significant role in shaping teachers' morality. I also think that the pressure to succeed and the desire for personal gain can sometimes lead teachers to compromise their religious principles." (Female, 45 years old, 12 years in service)

On direct involvement, 14.5% (n=31) admitted participating in aiding malpractice, while 85.5% (n=183) denied involvement. The grand mean of 1.92 suggests low direct involvement. A respondent explained:

"I have encountered situations where teachers have used their religious beliefs to justify their refusal to participate in examination malpractice, so I think religion plays a major role in discouraging examination malpractice." (Female, 45 years old, 8 years in service)

The perception of religious teachers and their stance on malpractice shows that 23.4% (n=50) strongly agree and 38.8% (n=83) agree that religious subject teachers are less likely to aid malpractice. The grand mean of 2.51 reflects a generally positive perception. As one teacher expressed:

"In my experience, members of staff who teach religious subjects like CRS tend to avoid examination malpractice more than others because the society and even the students look up to them as agents of morality." (Male, 52 years old, 20 years in service)

On the matter of external pressure, 29.0% (n=62) of teachers experienced pressure from students or parents to assist in malpractice, while 71.0% (n=152) did not. This supports the view that although the pressure exists, most teachers are not susceptible. A teacher offered this insight:

"I think some teachers may compromise their religious principles when it comes to dealing with malpractice in examinations. This can be due to a variety of factors, including fear of repercussions, desire for popularity, or lack of confidence in their own abilities." (Male, 57 years old, 18 years in service).

Research Question 4: What Effect does Religiosity have on Wilful Disobedience among Secondary School teachers in Delta State?

Table 5: Effect of Religiosity on Willful Disobedience among Teachers (N = 214)

Religiosity and Wilful Disobedience	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Grand Mean
Wilful Disobedience for Religious Reasons			1.85
Yes	37	17.3	
No	177	82.7	
Accommodating Religious Beliefs in Rule Enforcement			2.51
Strongly agree	50	23.4	
Agree	91	42.5	
Neutral	45	21.0	
Disagree	17	7.9	
Strongly disagree	11	5.2	
Conflict between School Rules and Religious Beliefs			1.92
Yes	31	14.5	
No	183	85.5	

Source: Field survey, 2025

Table 5 highlights that 17.3% (n=37) of teachers reported engaging in willful disobedience due to religious reasons, while 82.7% (n=177) did not. The grand mean of 1.85 suggests that religiously motivated disobedience is not prevalent. One teacher commented:

"To me, willful disobedience means intentionally disregarding or violating school rules or policies, despite knowing the consequences." (Female, 55 years old, 15 years in service)

Regarding the accommodation of religious beliefs in enforcing rules, 23.4% (n=50) strongly agree and 42.5% (n=91) agree that such accommodations should be made. The grand mean of 2.51 supports the perspective that institutions should consider religious views when managing discipline. A participant stated:

"I think that schools should accommodate teachers' religious beliefs when enforcing rules, as long as those beliefs do not conflict with the school's mission or values." (Male, 52 years old, 20 years in service).

When asked about experiencing conflicts between school rules and religious beliefs, 14.5% (n=31) reported such experiences, while 85.5% (n=183) had not. The grand mean of 1.92 indicates general alignment between school policies and religious principles. A teacher summed this up as:

"Most, if not all the rules at work are usually in agreement with religious expectations. Rules like respect for authority, diligence at work, good relationship with colleagues and so on." (Female, 45 years old, 8 years in service).

Discussions

The study's findings highlight the significant role of religiosity in the lives of secondary school teachers in Delta State, Nigeria. A considerable proportion of teachers (46.3%, n=99) regularly attend weekly religious services, and 60.3% (n=129) participate in early morning religious activities, indicating that religiosity is deeply ingrained in their daily lives. Religiosity appears to positively influence punctuality. This aligns with earlier studies linking religiosity to enhanced work ethics (Magada, 2009; Hazeltine, 1999). However, religiosity alone does not wholly determine punctuality. While 29.0% (n=62) reported religious commitments as contributing to lateness, the majority (71.0%, n=152) did not.

The study also reveals that religiosity impacts absenteeism among teachers. While 29.0% (n=62) of teachers are sometimes absent from work for religious reasons, 38.8% (n=83) rarely miss work, and 19.6% (n=42) never do. With a grand mean frequency of absenteeism at 3.42, religiosity emerges as a motivating factor for regular attendance. This finding is consistent with studies conducted by Nombo, Nyangarika & Mwesiga (2020) which correlate religiosity with strong work ethics. However, 14.5% (n=31) of teachers attributed their absenteeism to religious obligations, evidently, religiosity can motivate attitude towards punctuality to work and can also negate punctuality to work.

Religiosity also influences teachers' stance on examination malpractice. About 58.0% (n=124) of teachers are aware of the occurrence of examination malpractice in school system, while 42.0% (n=90) are not, emphasizing the need for stricter vigilance. Religiosity appears to deter involvement. However, religiosity is not an absolute safeguard, as respondents noted instances where teachers compromised their principles under pressure. It must be noted that qualitative responses suggest that teachers who teach religious based subjects tend to avoid malpractice, reflecting the complex relationship between their job and morality.

The study further explores the relationship between religiosity and willful disobedience. While 17.3% (n=37) reported engaging in disobedience for religious reasons, 82.7% (n=177) did not. This shows that, religious beliefs can significantly shape a teacher's moral compass. Gershoff, Miller & Holden (1999) affirmed, teacher's morality have impact on children's development. However, this influence is not universal, as the study also found that some teachers may feel their religious beliefs supersede school policies, while others adhere strictly to rules as a religious obligation. The findings suggest that schools should respect and accommodate teachers' religious beliefs, provided they align with institutional values. Overall, the results highlight the complex ways that religiosity affects teachers' conduct, such

as deliberate disobedience, exam fraud, tardiness, and absenteeism. Religion is not a cure-all, but it can serve as a catalyst to improving teachers' attitude, commitment and productivity in the workplace. To better understand the complex relationships between morality, conduct, and religiosity, more research is necessary.

Conclusion

The objectives of this study were to find out how religiosity affect lateness to work, uncover how religiosity affects absenteeism, investigate the influence of religiosity on aiding examination malpractice, and explain the effect of religiosity on willful disobedience among secondary school teachers in Delta State. This study reveals the complex relationship between religiosity and the work attitudes of secondary school teachers in Delta State, Nigeria. The findings indicate that religiosity significantly influences teachers' punctuality, absenteeism, moral integrity, and adherence to school rules. Regular religious practices, such as attending services and engaging in morning devotions, appear to positively impact teachers' discipline, punctuality, and commitment to their professional responsibilities.

Although this study suggest that religiosity may reduce the likelihood of examination malpractice and willful disobedience, its impact is not absolute, because, some teachers may experience conflicts between their religious obligations and professional expectations. Hence, it is important to create a supportive school environment that respects religious diversity while promoting ethical behaviours, discipline, and inclusivity among teachers. School administrators and policymakers must strike a balance between religion and attitude to work in order to foster a positive and productive work environment.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the researchers recommends that schools should;

1. Promote a Culture of Punctuality to Work and encourage teachers to adopt effective time management practices that accommodate both religious obligations and work responsibilities. Teachers should be supported in balancing their religious practices and work duties, ensuring that they remain punctual and productive.
2. Create flexible work schedules for religious observances and consider implementing policies that provide leave for teachers who need time off for religious observances, ensuring that such leave does not negatively affect the school's operation.
3. Provide an environment that fosters ethical conduct; emphasizing the importance of integrity in all professional activities, including during examinations. Teachers should be encouraged to imbibe religious teachings such as honesty and integrity as a means of eliminating examination malpractice.
4. Offer counseling services or platforms where teachers can express their concerns about conflicts between their religious commitments and professional responsibilities, and teachers should be encouraged to seek guidance on how to manage such conflicts constructively.

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