

## **Workplace Relationship as Correlates of Teachers' Job Satisfaction and Performance in Public Secondary Schools in Ondo State, Nigeria**

**OSIFILA, Gboyega Israel Ph. D**

Department of Educational Management

Adekunle Ajasin University, Akungba-Akoko, Ondo State, Nigeria

[gboyega.osifila@aaua.edu.ng](mailto:gboyega.osifila@aaua.edu.ng), [osifilagboye2002@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:osifilagboye2002@yahoo.co.uk) 08055484919

### **Abstract**

*This study investigated workplace relationship as correlates of teachers' satisfaction and performance in public secondary schools in Okitipupa Local Government Area of Ondo State, Nigeria. A descriptive survey of research design was adopted. The population of the study comprised 505 teachers in the 22 public secondary schools. The sample of the study consisted of 154 respondents comprising 140 teachers and 14 principals. Purposive and a simple random sampling techniques were used to select participants. Questionnaire instruments titled: "Workplace Relationship Questionnaire (WRQ)" and Job Satisfaction and Performance Questionnaire (JSPQ) were used for data collection. The instruments were subjected to validity and reliability test. Data collected were analysed using mean for the research questions and Multiple Regression for the research hypotheses. The result showed that the quality of workplace relationship in public secondary schools was low with the grand mean of 2.37. Also, the level of job satisfaction in public secondary schools was moderate with the grand mean of 2.62. Furthermore, involvement in decision making was the highest contributor to staff job satisfaction (37.9%,  $p < 0.05$ ), while supervision was the highest contributor to staff job performance with 47.10%. Based on the findings, it is concluded that workplace relationship has very significant influence on teachers' job satisfaction and performance. It was recommended that principals should improve in their relationship with teachers by carrying out instructional supervision in a friendly manner.*

**Keywords:** Workplace relationship, satisfaction, job performance, decision making, communication.

### **Introduction**

Education could be described as an instrument of change and advancement in all ramifications. The roles of education in engendering progress and mind emancipation cannot be overemphasized. Education could be formal, informal and non-formal in its process. Formal education takes place within the four walls of a classroom and could be broadly classified into primary, secondary and tertiary levels. While education at the primary and tertiary levels are important, education at the secondary level is much more important because of its roles in linking the other two levels of education. It is also the level of education that prepares its adherents for higher education and useful living within the society (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2014).

To achieve its goals, secondary education teachers who are curriculum implementers have great roles to play. Therefore, the rate at which the teachers perform their job, the level of commitment, attitude to work and job satisfaction, among others, could determine the extent of success or otherwise of the school system. The performance of the teachers plays an important role in achieving the goals of the school. It is possible for teachers to fulfill their professional responsibilities with the satisfaction they get from their professions. Bektas (2003) posits that the increase in the efficiency of education depends highly on the satisfaction of the teachers in their

profession. If the level of job satisfaction of teachers is low, it could prevent the quality of service and if their job satisfaction is high, it contributes to bringing up their students not only academically but also socially and personally.

It has been observed that the level of teachers' job performance seems to be low. This is evident in the attitude of some teachers to work which shows in the rate at which they go to school late, some skip classes, some teachers spend less time with the students in the classrooms as opposed to what obtains in the school timetable. Some teachers do not give the profession the adequate attention it deserves. There are instances where teachers abandon their duty post and they engage in other activities that could fetch them additional income. Many a times, there are complaints by students, principals and even parents on the perceived nonchalant attitude being displayed by some teachers. Assignments given to students many a times are not checked let alone corrected by the teachers (Oguejiofor, 2023). Observations have equally shown that some teachers do not give feedback to principals on students' issues that might need to be discussed with parents. All these are indicators of the perceived low level of teachers' job performance in secondary schools in Ondo State.

On the aspect of job satisfaction, it is perceived that most teachers are not satisfied with their job as they show lackadaisical attitude to work, exude low level of commitment to duties and some always complain of poor salary, poor work environment, working conditions and environment. These observed problems could be associated with the apparent unsatisfactory working relationships in the school system. Teachers, who are major stakeholders in the implementation of school programmes seem to be dissatisfied with their job. The unsatisfied teacher may show lack of commitment to duties by going to school late, not attending to the students appropriately, spending less time with the students in class, showing less enthusiasm towards duties allotted to them. These observed problems could be directly or indirectly linked to the existing workplace relationship in the school, either among teachers or with the school authority (Ayegbusi and Ogunlade, 2020).

The concept of workplace relationship was first examined in-depth by Sias and Cahill in their study in 1998 (Çalışkan, 2011). O'shea (2021) expressed that workplace relationships exhibited itself as mutual trust, fancy, commitment, shared interests and values by identifying it as non-private, voluntary workplace relationships. Günlü, Dönmez, Miral and Ömüriş (2010) stated that the relationships and friendships with peer employees in the workplace can create an emotional support mechanism for employees and that they replaced traditional supervision and mentorship roles.

Indeed, there are several researchers who underlined the necessity of examining the antecedents that enabled the development of workplace friendships and these close relationships due to such reasons as being internal rewards for employees, reducing and balancing the stress related to work, increasing job satisfaction and job performance. Sias (2005) indicated that supervisor-subordinate relationship quality was positively related to the amount and quality of information employees received from their immediate supervisor. Tijani (2020) research on teachers' involvement in decision making and job performance in secondary schools in Kwara State, Nigeria found that the level of teachers' involvement in decision making process was high in secondary schools in Kwara State. Tuba and Erkan (2020) who reported that internal job satisfaction perception levels of teachers were high. In addition, Yakubu and Afolabi (2020) conducted a study on co-curricular activities and job satisfaction in USA and established that teachers who are involved in co-curricular activities with students have increased job satisfaction. Akporehe and Asiyai (2023) who employed correlational survey research design to examine principals' managerial skills and teachers' job performance in secondary schools in Owa

Communities in Delta State, Nigeria found that the level of teachers' job performance was moderate. Also in their study, Susilawati and Noorhapizah (2022) analyzed the relationship between interpersonal communication with teacher performance; interpersonal communication with teacher discipline; and interpersonal communication with teacher performance through teacher discipline and reported that teacher performance is in the medium classification implying that it is moderate. However, Obadimeji and Oredein (2022) findings showed that the level of teachers' job performance in Oyo State public primary schools at all times is high.

Tuba and Erkan (2020) further revealed that there were moderate level and positive relationships between the teachers' job satisfaction and workplace friendship perceptions. Also, Abun and Basilio (2023) found that workplace relationships and job satisfaction were significantly correlated. Majini (2023) equally reported a strong positive correlation between positive co-worker relationships and job satisfaction; employees who reported having supportive and friendly relationships with their co-workers had higher levels of job satisfaction. The assertion of Oduwaiye (2014) that participatory decision making have the special task of enhancing the morale of their staff toward a high task effort, so that while they help the teachers to achieve higher job satisfaction, they also lead them towards achievement of school goals becomes expedient in this finding.

In the same vein, Ayegbusi and Ogunlade (2020) revealed that there was a significant relationship between teachers' decisional participation and their job satisfaction. It was also revealed that teachers' job satisfaction was significantly related to the level of teachers' decisional participation in school financial matter, conflict resolution, examination matters, staff welfare, disciplinary matters, school academic work and co – curricular activities.

Sapian, et al (2019) examined the relationship of principal's communication style and school climate in primary schools in the District of Lipis, Pahang, Malaysia and reported that there was a moderate and positive relationship ( $r = 0.451$ ,  $p=0.000$ ) between principal's communication style and school climate. Hossein and Roqaieh (2019) carried out a study on whether communication skills and managers' thinking style have a significant impact on teachers' job performance toward organizational goals and reported that there is a positive and significant relationship between communication skills and teachers' job performance.

Furthermore, Mohamed, et al (2024) indicated that positive employer-employee relationships significantly enhance job satisfaction and employee performance. Khawaja (2020) found that relationships between employees can boost productivity if beneficial and decrease it if toxic. Strong relationships at an inter-organizational level can yield positive benefits for all parties. Organizations and management that show employees they are cared for will find those individuals more committed. Relatedly, Tijani (2020) found that there was a significant relationship between teachers' involvement in academic planning and job performance in secondary schools in Kwara State. Ajetunmobi, et al (2020) conducted a correlational survey study that examined professional development, participatory management, and teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Ogun State, Nigeria reported that teachers' job performance was significantly and positively related to participatory management.

### **Research Objectives**

The main objective of the study is to examine workplace relationship as correlates of teachers' satisfaction and job performance. Specifically, the study seeks to:

1. examine the degree of quality of workplace relationship (in terms of supervision, communication and involvement in decision making) in public secondary schools in Okitipupa Local Government Area of Ondo State, Nigeria;

2. determine the level of job satisfaction (in terms of teachers' attitude to work, commitment to duties and rate of complaint) in public secondary schools in Okitipupa Local Government Area of Ondo State, Nigeria; and
3. investigate the level of job performance (punctuality, regularity, attention to duties and feedback) in public secondary schools.

### **Research Questions**

The following questions were raised to guide this study:

1. What is the quality of workplace relationship (in terms of supervision, communication and involvement in decision making) in public secondary schools in Okitipupa Local Government Area of Ondo State, Nigeria?
2. What is the level of job satisfaction (in terms of teachers' attitude to work, commitment to duties and rate of complaint) in public secondary schools in Okitipupa Local Government Area of Ondo State, Nigeria?
3. What is the level of job performance (in terms of punctuality, regularity, attention to duties and feedback) in public secondary schools in Okitipupa Local Government Area of Ondo State, Nigeria?

### **Hypotheses**

1. There is no significant contribution of workplace relationships on teachers' job satisfaction.
2. There is no significant contribution of workplace relationships on teachers' job performance.

### **Methodology**

The research design for this study was a descriptive research of the survey type. The study is delimited to Okitipupa Local Government Area of Ondo State. The population of this study comprised all 22 principals and 505 teachers in the 22 public secondary schools in Okitipupa Local Government Area of Ondo State, Nigeria (Source: Ministry of Education, Ondo State, 2025). The sample of the study comprised 154 respondents comprising 140 teachers and 14 principals. Random sampling technique was used to select 14 public secondary schools out of the existing 22 in Okitipupa Local Government Area of Ondo State. From the schools selected, 10 teachers each were randomly selected to give a total of 140 teachers. Also, the principals of the 14 sampled schools were purposefully included as participants for the study. Three research objectives and questions each, and two hypotheses guided the study.

Two researcher-made questionnaire titled "Workplace Relationship Questionnaire (WRQ)" and 'Job Satisfaction and Performance Questionnaire (JSPQ)'. Were designed to collect data from the participants. Workplace Relationship Questionnaire (WRQ) designed to obtain information from teachers on workplace relationship variables with such as principals' supervision, collegiality with colleagues, communication and involvement in decision-making. Job Satisfaction and Performance Questionnaire (JSPQ) on the other hand was designed to elicit response from principals on teachers' attitude to work, commitment to duties, rate of complaint and job performance. The questionnaires adopted appropriate Likert four scale of measurements such as strongly agree, agree, disagree and strongly disagree; excellent, very good, good and fair, often, sometimes, rarely and never with rating scales of 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively.

Face and content validity of the instruments were ensured with scrutiny by experts' critiques and suggestions which helped in streamlining the items formulated to measure the variables contained in the research questions and hypotheses. Their comments and suggestions were included in the final draft of the instruments. The test-retest method of estimating reliability was used to ascertain the reliability of the instruments. The reliability co-efficient obtained for WRQ was 0.84 while that of JSPQ was 0.89. This indicated that the questionnaires were



suitable and reliable for data collection. All the research questions were answered using descriptive statistics of mean and Standard Deviation while the hypotheses were tested using Multiple Regression analysis.

## Results

**Research Question One:** What is the quality of workplace relationship (supervision, collegiality, communication and involvement in decision making) in public secondary schools?

**Table 1**

*Summary of the Quality of Workplace Relationship*

S/N	Items	N	Mean	SD
1	Supervision	140	2.64	0.55
2	Communication	140	2.23	0.63
3	Involvement in Decision Making	140	2.35	0.62
<b>Grand Mean/Standard Deviation</b>			<b>2.41</b>	<b>0.60</b>

Table 1 presented the summary of analysis of the quality of workplace relationship. As shown on the table, supervision has higher mean of 2.64, followed by involvement in decision making (2.35) and communication (2.23) respectively. The grand mean of 2.41 showed that the quality of workplace relationship in public secondary schools in Okitipupa Local Government Area of Ondo State was low..

**Research Question Two:** What is the level of teachers' job satisfaction (in terms of attitude to work, commitment to duties and rate of complaint) in public secondary schools in Okitipupa Local Government Area?

**Table 2**

*Summary of the Level of Job Satisfaction among Teachers*

S/N	Items	N	Mean	SD
1	Attitude to Work	14	3.46	0.54
2	Commitment to Duties	14	2.26	0.56
3	Rate of Complaints	14	2.13	0.82
<b>Grand Mean/Standard Deviation</b>			<b>2.62</b>	<b>0.64</b>

Table 2 presented the summary of analysis of the level of job satisfaction. As shown on the table, attitude to work has the higher mean of 3.46, while commitment to duties and rate of complaints has 2.26 and 2.13 respectively. The grand mean of 2.62 showed that the level of job satisfaction in public secondary schools in Okitipupa Local Government Area of Ondo State was moderate. The table also showed that the level of teachers' attitude to work was high while the level of teachers' commitment to duties and rate of complaint were rated low by the principal.

**Research Question Three:** What is the level of teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Okitipupa Local Government Area?

The analysis presented in the Table 3 showed that principal rated the level of teachers' job performance as moderate. The grand mean of 2.94 obtained implied that the teachers' job performance was moderate.

**Hypothesis One:** There is no significant contribution of workplace relationship on staff job satisfaction.

**Table 3**

*Level of Teachers' Job Performance*

S/N	ITEMS	SA		A		D		SD		$\bar{x}$
		F.	%	F.	%	F.	%	F	%	
1	Get to the school before 8:00 am everyday	03		11		—	—	—	3.21	3.21
		21.4		78.6						
2	Go to class immediately it is their time to teach	01	7.1	13		—	—	—	—	3.07
				92.9						
3	Come to school regularly	01	7.1	13		—	—	—	—	3.07
				92.9						
4	Skip classes to attend to other duties	02		—	—	01	7.1	11		1.50
		14.3						78.6		
5	Have adequate knowledge of subject matter	03		11		—	—	—	—	3.21
		21.4		78.6						
6	Teach expeditiously in the classroom	03		11		—	—	—	—	3.21
		21.4		78.6						
7	Utilize teaching aids to help students learn better	01	7.1	11		02		—	—	2.93
				78.6		14.3				
8	Give assignment to students regularly	01	7.1	11		02		—	—	2.93
				78.6		14.3				
9	Promptly mark students' assignment	01	7.1	13		—	—	—	—	3.07
				92.9						
10	Give feedback to principal on students' problems	03		11		—	—	—	—	3.21
		21.4		78.6						
<b>Grand Mean</b>										<b>2.94</b>

As presented on table 3, some of the items used in measuring teachers' job performance as rated by the principal showed that teachers punctuality in school is moderate with a mean of 3.21 as well as providing feedback to the principal on students' problems. The grand mean of 2.94 obtained implied that the teachers' job performance was moderate as rated by the principals.

**Table 4**

*Relationship between Workplace Relationship and Staff Job Satisfaction*

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	R	R <sup>2</sup>	F
	B	Std. Error	Beta					
Constant	44.521	18.248		2.440	.035			
Supervision	.406	.705	.168	.576	.578			
Communication	1.695	1.509	.348	1.124	.007	0.618	.382	4.707
Involvement in Decision Making	.854	.702	.379	1.216	.002			

**Dependent Variable: Staff Job Satisfaction**

The result of the regression model shown in Table 4 reveals that the coefficient of joint

correlation R between workplace relationship and staff job satisfaction is 0.618, while the coefficient of determination  $R^2$  is 0.382. This infers that 38.2% of the occurrence of staff job satisfaction is attributed to workplace relationship. The individual contribution of each of the components of workplace relationship to the prediction of staff job satisfaction is also shown in the Table. Involvement in decision making was the highest contributor to staff job satisfaction (37.9%,  $p < 0.05$ ). This was followed by communication (34.8%,  $p < 0.05$ ). Supervision was not a significant contributor to teachers' job satisfaction (16.8%,  $p > 0.05$ ). The F value is 4.707 and p value of 0.049 implied that the contribution of workplace relationship and staff job satisfaction was statistically significant. Therefore, it was concluded that there was significant contribution of workplace relationship to staff job satisfaction in public secondary schools.

**Hypothesis Two:** There is no significant contribution of workplace relationship on teachers' job performance in public secondary schools.

To test the hypothesis, data collected on level of workplace relationship and staff job performance were subjected to regression at 0.05 level of significance. The result is presented in Table

**Table 5**

*Relationship between Workplace Relationship and Staff Job Performance*

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	R	$R^2$	F
	B	Std. Error	Beta					
Constant	60.284	22.058		2.733	.021			
Supervision	2.208	1.852	.471	1.244	.012			
Communication	.046	.824	.145	.122	.288	0.732	.536	7.763
Involvement in Decision Making	1.152	.849	.420	1.357	.005			

### **Dependent Variable: Staff Job Performance**

The result of the regression model shown in Table 5 shows that the variables of joint correlation R between workplace relationship and staff job performance is 0.732, while the coefficient of determination  $R^2$  is 0.536. This infers that 53.6% of the occurrence of staff job performance is attributed to workplace relationship. The individual contribution of each of the components of workplace relationship to the prediction of staff job performance is also shown in the Table. Supervision was the highest contributor to staff job performance with 47.10% contribution followed by involvement in decision making (42.0% contribution); while communication was not a contributor to staff job performance. The F value is 7.763 and p value of 0.004 implied that the contribution of workplace relationship and staff job satisfaction was statistically significant. Hence, it was concluded that there was significant contribution of workplace relationship on staff job performance in public secondary schools.

### **Discussion**

Findings on research question one revealed that the quality of workplace relationship in public secondary schools in Okitipupa Local Government Area of Ondo State was low. Considering the variables of workplace relationship examined, the level of supervision was moderate while the level of communication and involvement in decision making was low.

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The result is in tandem with Duze (2011) who reported that students and teachers, indicated a low level of participation in administrative creative decisions which influenced their attitude to school work and school internal discipline. However, it contradicts the outcome of Tijani (2020) research on teachers' involvement in decision making and job performance in secondary schools in Kwara State, Nigeria who found that the level of teachers' involvement in decision making process was high

Result showed that the level of teachers' job satisfaction in public secondary schools in Okitipupa Local Government Area of Ondo State was moderate. It is revealed that while the level of teachers' attitude to work was high, the level of teachers' commitment to duties and rate of complaint was rated low by the principals. The finding negates the finding of Tuba and Erkan (2020) who reported that internal job satisfaction perception levels of teachers were high.

The level of teachers' job performance was found to be moderate. This finding corroborated Akporehe and Asiyai (2023) who employed correlational survey research design to examine principals' managerial skills and teachers' job performance in secondary schools in Owa communities in Delta State, Nigeria and found that the level of teachers' job performance was moderate. However, Obadimeji and Oredein (2022) findings showed that the level of teachers' job performance in Oyo State public schools at all times is high.

There was significant contribution of workplace relationship to staff job satisfaction and performance in public secondary schools. The result is in line with the result of Tuba and Erkan (2020) who revealed that there were moderate level and positive relationships between the teachers' job satisfaction and workplace friendship perceptions. Also, Abun and Basilio (2023) found that workplace relationships and job satisfaction were significantly correlated. Majini (2023) equally reported a strong positive correlation between positive co-worker relationships and job satisfaction; employees who reported having supportive and friendly relationships with their co-workers had higher levels of job satisfaction.

Oguejiofor (2023) who reported that there is a very high and positive predictive power of principals' administrative communication network on teachers' job performance. Ajetunmobi, et al (2020) reported that teachers' job performance was significantly and positively related to participatory management. Although, communication did not contribute significantly to teachers' job performance. Khawaja (2020) found that relationships between employees can boost productivity if beneficial and decrease it if toxic.

### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

It is concluded that the quality of workplace relationship is a determinant of teachers' job satisfaction and performance in public secondary schools. Specifically, communication and decision making influenced job satisfaction while supervision and involvement in decision making enhanced teachers' job performance.

It is recommended, therefore, that:

1. Principals should improve on their quality of workplace relationship with teachers by carrying out instructional supervision in a friendly manner.
2. Principals are encouraged to constantly engage teachers in curriculum and co-curriculum matters.
3. To enhance the performance of teachers, principals should intensify efforts in the involvement of teachers in decision making.
4. Principals should communicate very well with teachers through prompt sharing of information and feedback.



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