



RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN STRESS FACTORS AND JOB PERFORMANCE OF TEACHERS IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN ZONE 'B' EDUCATION AREA OF BENUE STATE, NIGERIA

Emmanuel Terhemba Ikyase

Department of Educational Foundations,
Reverend Father Moses Orshio Adasu University, Makurdi,
eikyase@gmail.com

Peter Terfa Ortese

Department of Educational Foundations,
Reverend Father Moses Orshio Adasu University, Makurdi,
peterterfa@gmail.com

Abstract

This study investigated the relationship between stress factors and job performance of Basic Science teachers in Zone 'B' Education Area of Benue State, Nigeria. The study adopted the correlational research design. Two research questions were raised and answered and two hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance. The population of the study was 7 LGAs, 89 public secondary schools and 900 Basic Science teachers. The sample size was 7 LGAs, 28 public secondary schools and 269 Basic Science teachers. Multi-stage sampling procedure involving purposive sampling, stratified random sampling, use of standardised table and simple random sampling techniques were adopted at various stages of sampling process. The face and content validity of the instruments was done by three experts in the Faculty of Education, Benue State University, Makurdi. To determine the reliability of the two instruments, the researcher administered the instruments to 30 respondents in schools in Makurdi which were not part of the sample but possessed similar characteristics to the respondents. The reliability test produced 0.98 overall estimate for TSFQ while the subscales were 0.94 for home environment stress factors and 0.94 for work environment stress factors.. Overall TJPQ reliability coefficient was 0.99. Pearson- Product Moment Correlation Coefficient was used to answer the research questions and test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance which was done through Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software version 20. The PPMC analysis revealed a statistical significant negative relationship between home environment stress factors, work environment stress factors and job performance of Basic Science teachers in Zone 'B' Education Area of Benue State, Nigeria. Sequel to the findings of the work, it was recommended among others that critical education stakeholders such as Educational authorities, school administrators, should implement support programmes such as counselling services, employment of educational psychologists to help in organising stress management workshops for teachers, provide access to mental, emotional and physiological health resources. Parents, students and staff were charged to review their actions and inactions which have the potential of compounding the stress experienced by teachers.

Key words: stress factors, Job Performance, Basic Science Teachers, Education

Introduction

Job performance of teachers seems to be on a steady decline in recent time globally especially in developing countries. The phenomena of industrial disharmony occasioned by incessant strikes, loss of interest, absenteeism, truancy disagreements, negligence of duty, late coming to school health issues, lack of supervision, failure to attend classes in time, failure to give take home assignment and continuous assessment tests regularly, aiding examination mal-practice ,and brain drain among other factors among teachers in countries like Liberia, Botswana, Sudan ,South Sudan, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Turkey, Poland, South Korea, Ireland and Ukraine among other countries of the world are strong indicators of declining job performance of teachers (Myeya & Rupia, 2022; Akinyele & Olokundun,2020). The declining job performance of teachers in a good number of African countries is quite alarming and worrisome.

In Nigeria, Benue State and specifically Zone 'B' education area of Benue State, the declining job performance of teachers persist as the researcher observed that a good number of public school teachers fail to attend classes as at when due and do not give take home assignments and continuous assessment tests to students regularly. Other teachers have indulged themselves in late coming to school, poor supervision of students, arguments and irrelevant discussion with colleagues during class hours and truancy. It has been observed in some instances that teachers were aiding examination mal-practice among other inappropriate attitudes. The quality of secondary school graduates in zone 'B' Education Area of Benue State is also poor as most of them could not read or write very well. A reasonable number of them are unable to speak good standard English Language. A worrisome number of the secondary school graduates and even those still in school are observed to have engaged themselves in social vices and immoral acts such as indecent dressing, premarital sex and teenage pregnancy. The Benue state Ministry of Education in a public address on the 14th day of August, 2023, reported that 60% of the students in the state who sat for external examinations such as West African States certificate examination (WASCE), National Examination Council (NECO), Unified Tertiary Matriculation

Examination (UTME), Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE) , Mock senior secondary school examination and National Business and Technical Examination Board (NABTEB) performed far below average, signaling mass failure of the students. All of these sad developments are pointers of poor job performance of teachers in the study area. The declining job performance of teachers may be related to many factors. Fisayo (2021) related it to poor teaching and learning facilities. On the other hand, Bello and Adebayo (2018), attributed it to lack of qualified teachers as well as poor remuneration. Other reasons advanced for poor job performance of teachers are lack of motivation, poor supervision and poor management skills (Amadi, 2020). This work will however seek to unravel the relationship between stress factors which are classified into personal stress factors, home environment stress factors, work environment stress factors and general insecurity and job performance of Basic Science teachers in Zone 'B' Education Area of Benue State, Nigeria.

Job performance of Basic Science teachers is defined as the roles Basic Science teachers do in the school. It is also referred to as the efforts put in by teachers. Job performance of Basic Science teachers is further viewed as those actions or behaviours under the control of the individual teacher that contribute to the school 's goals and that can be measured according to the individual Basic Science teacher's level of proficiency (Siegrist,2017). Basic Science Teachers job performance is the result of work in quality and quantity achieved by a teacher in carrying out his duties in accordance with the responsibilities assigned to him(Ogden,2017). By this, a Basic Science teacher's job performance May be measured based on the quality of academic performance of his students in internal and external examinations.

It is globally believed that teaching can be a highly stressful profession (Adebayo, 2017). For stress to be adequately tackled in the teaching profession, we have to first of all acknowledge its existence in the teaching profession. Stress is the impact on the individual teacher as a result of events or phenomena which are adjudged to be threats which exceed the available resources for coping with them. There are many factors of stress

(stressors) which are defined as events that an individual perceives as potential threat. These stressors coupled with fit or lack of it gives rise to varying degrees of performance by teachers. Chronic stress among teachers could be as a result of a number of factors such as personal stress factors which include among others, ill health, personality, socio-economic status, lack of self-confidence, gender, lack of pedagogical knowledge, interest, transferable skills, career motives, career orientation while environmental stress related factors are subdivided into those coming from the home environment such as family socio-economic status, marital status, quarrel among family members, lack of happiness in the family, insecurity as well as bereavement and the work environment which includes difficulty of the content, students' disrespect, students' involvement in social vices, parents undue pressure, work overload, inadequate professional development, lack of teaching materials, lack of physical facilities, inadequate class time, limited physical space, lack of motivation/incentives, delayed/nonpayment of salaries, constant disagreements with management staff, lack of recognition and sense of belonging, lack of fairness and justice, Covid-19 pandemic and insecurity. Lack of fit between demand placed on the individual Basic Science teacher by these stressors (stress factors) and their abilities to meet those demands essentially could lead to stress which may be negatively related to their overall performance in the teaching of Basic Science at the upper Basic School Level. Stress can be defined as a state of worry or mental tension caused by a difficult situation. Stress is a natural human response that prompts us to address challenges and threats in our lives. Everyone experiences stress to some degree. The way we respond to stress, however, makes a big difference to our overall well-being makes it hard for us to relax and can come with a range of emotions, including anxiety and irritability. When stressed, we may find it difficult to concentrate. We may experience headaches or other body pains, an upset stomach or trouble sleeping. We may find we lose our appetite or eat more than usual. Chronic stress can worsen pre-existing health problems and may increase our use of alcohol, tobacco and other substances. Stressful situations can also cause or exacerbate mental health

conditions, most commonly anxiety and depression, which require access to health care. When we suffer from a mental health condition, it may be because our symptoms of stress have become persistent and have started affecting our daily functioning, including at work or School (WHO,2023). Stress factors, also known as stressors, are situations or events that trigger a stress response in the body and mind. These can be positive or negative and can vary greatly from person to person. Some common stressors include financial issues, work-related problems, relationship conflicts, major life changes, and even daily hassles. This study has however categorised stress factors into personal stress factors, home environment stress factors, work environment stress factors and general insecurity.

The home environment is unarguably considered to have some form of relationship with the individual and the teacher is not an exception. People who enjoy good social life and physical amenities at home may be more motivated, encouraged and happy to engage in social duties of interest (such as teaching, farming etc.). Ogden (2017) states that a person who is facing marital problems, e.g., divorce or separation, poverty, quarrels, bereavement, lack of happiness, poor physical amenities like clean water or electricity, poor health of family members among other factors at home may be seriously stressed as a result could be inefficient in his duties at work place. The teacher who faces such stressful situation in the home environment may also have some tangible clog in the performance of his job in the school. It is of outmost importance to have a reliable empirical evidence to ascertain the kind of relationship that exists between the home environment stress factors and job performance of Basic Science teachers.

Work environment refers to the physical, social, and psychological aspects of where workers perform their jobs. It includes the physical space, like an office, school or a factory as well as the organisation culture, employee interactions, and the overall atmosphere. A healthy work environment can significantly impact employee job performance, satisfaction and well-being. Many researchers have made some vital submissions regarding the relationship between work environment and job performance of teachers. For instance, Ezechukwu (2020)

submits that a quiet, cool, clean and beautiful work environment makes the teacher happy and enhances his productivity. On the other hand, Adebayo (2018) observes that in-service training improves teacher's skills and boost their motivation. This in turn, enhances their performance. It is on the wealth of these claims amidst declining job performance of teachers that the researcher seeks to obtain an empirical data to establish whether work environment stress factors such as difficulty of content, work overload, inadequate professional development, lack of teaching/learning materials, lack of good physical facilities, inadequate class time, limited space, lack of motivation/incentives, delayed/non-payment of salary, constant disagreement with management staff, lack of recognition and sense of belonging, lack of fairness and justice among others have any form of significant relationship with job performance of Basic Science Teachers in Zone 'B' Education Area of Benue State.

Statement of the Problem

The menace of declining job performance of Basic Science teachers in recent times in the study area persists. This has called for a serious concern. It has been observed over time that a good number of Basic Science teachers in public schools fail to attend classes as at when due and do not give take home assignments and continuous assessment tests to students regularly. Some of the Basic Science teachers have indulged themselves in late coming to school, poor supervision of students, arguments and irrelevant discussions with colleagues during class hours and truancy among other inappropriate attitudes. Teachers are expected to serve as role models and uphold high moral standard in the society. However it has been observed over time that a good number of Basic Science teachers are battling with varying degrees of stress factors; at personal level such as sickness, isolation, lack of self-respect, hostility among others; in the home such as poor marital relationship, allegations of infidelity, inability to meet family needs among others; in the work environment such as difficulty of course materials, work overload, inadequate teaching materials, delayed payment of salaries among many others and general insecurity occasioned by physical attacks on teachers, verbal abuse,

kidnapping and burning of instructional materials among others. The quality of secondary school graduates in the study area is also poor as most of them could not read or write very well. A reasonable number of them are unable to speak good standard English Language. A worrisome number of the secondary school graduates and even those still in school are observed to have engaged themselves in social vices and immoral acts such as indecent dressing, premarital sex and teenage pregnancy. The Benue state Ministry of Education in a public address on the 14th day of August, 2023, reported that 60% of the students in the state who sat for external examinations such as West African States Certificate Examination (WASCE), National Examination Council (NECO), Unified Tertiary Matriculation Examination (UTME), Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE) and National Business and Technical Examination Board (NABTEB) performed far below average, signaling mass failure of the students. There has been reported cases of massive examination malpractice especially in 2022 and 2023 academic sessions (Benue State Ministry of Education, 2023). All of these sad developments are pointers of poor job performance of teachers in the study area. Persistent experience of stress factors may have some form of relationship with the poor job performance of Basic Science teachers in the upper Basic schools in the study Area. This research is therefore, curious to find out the relationship between stress factors and job performance of Basic Science teachers in the upper Basic Schools in Zone 'B' Education Area of Benue State, Nigeria.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between stress factors and job performance of Basic Science teachers in Public Schools in Zone 'B' Education Area of Benue State, Nigeria. Specifically, the research was intended to:

1. ascertain the relationship between the home environment stress factors and job performance of Basic Science teachers in the upper basic schools.
2. establish the relationship between work environment stress factors and performance of Basic Science teachers in the upper basic

schools.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study

H01; What is the relationship between home environment stress factors and job performance of Basic Science teachers?

1. What is the relationship between work environment stress factors and job performance of Basic Science teachers?

Research Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance:

1. Home environment stress factors have no significant relationship with job performance of Basic Science teachers in the upper basic schools.
2. Work environment stress factors have no significant relationship with job performance of Basic Science teachers in the upper basic schools.

Methodology

This work adopted the correlational research design to determine the relationship between stress factors and job performance of Basic Science teachers in the Upper Basic schools. This type of design usually involves a statistical measure of the degree of relationship called correlation coefficient, measured in a statement about the degree of association between the variables of interest (Emaikwu, 2015). This particular design is considered most appropriate for this work due to the nature of this work and the procedure as well as method of data collection and analysis. The population of the research constituted the 7 Local Government Areas, the existing 89 public secondary schools and 900 Basic Science Teachers teaching in the existing public schools in Zone 'B' Education Area of Benue State, Nigeria (Teaching Service Boards Makurdi, 2024). The sample size was all the 7 Local Government Areas, 28 public schools and 269 Basic Science Teachers. Multi-stage sampling procedure was employed in the sampling process (Purposive, Krejcie and Morgan Standardised Table, proportionate stratified random sampling and simple random sampling techniques). Two instruments tilted

.Teachers Stress Factors Questionnaire (TSFQ) and Teachers Job Performance Questionnaire were employed to solicit for statistical data. The instruments were designed on a four point Scale with a response pattern of Strongly agree (SA)-4, Agree (A)-3, Disagree (DA)-2 and Strongly Disagree (SD)-1. To determine the reliability of the two instruments, the researcher administered the instruments to 30 respondents in schools in Makurdi Local Government which were not part of the sampled population but possessed similar characteristics to the respondents. The questionnaires were administered at two separate intervals to ensure the test - retest process was observed. The completed and retrieved questionnaires were analysed for reliability using Cronbach's Alpha coefficient, with a test - retest method adopted. The overall reliability estimates for TSFQ was 0.98 while the sub-scale were 0.94 for home environment stress factors and 0.94 for work environment stress factors. TJPQ overall estimate was 0.99 according to the Cronbach's Alpha results. Thus, these high values were considered very sufficient to deem the instruments reliable for the study. The researcher employed the services of seven research assistants who were adequately briefed to understand the process and all technical terms as well as issues with the study. The research assistants were then, discharged to the various selected schools across the seven Local Government Areas to distribute and retrieve completed copies of the questionnaires. Each sampled local government was visited by one research assistant. 269 copies each of the two questionnaires were distributed to 269 Basic Science Teachers in public schools in the study area. The data generated from completed copies of the questionnaires was collated for statistical analysis. The Pearson Product - Movement Correlation Coefficient was used to answer the research questions and test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

Results

A total of 269 copies of questionnaire were administered to respondents, out of which 261 representing 97.03% were retrieved while 8 copies of the questionnaire representing 2.97% were lost or wrongly ticked. The analysis of the data collected was done using Pearson Product

Moment Correlation Coefficient and was ran (SPSS) version 20 as presented below:
through statistical Package for Social Sciences

Research Question 1: What is the relationship between home environment stress factors and job performance of Basic Science teachers?

Table 1: Pearson's Correlation Between Home Environment Stress Factors and Job Performance of Basic Science Teachers

Correlation		Home Stress factors	Job Performance
home environment stress factors	Pearson Correlation	1	-.160**
	N	261	261
Job performance	Pearson Correlation	-.160**	1
	N	261	261

Table 1 contains Pearson Product Moment Correlation between home environment and job performance of Basic Science teachers in the upper basic schools. The result showed correlation coefficient of $r = -.160$ which falls

within $-.10$ and $-.49$. This implies that home environment stress factors have a weak negative relationship with job performance of Basic Science teachers in zone 'B' Education Area of Benue State.

Research Question 2: What is the relationship between work environment stress factors and job performance of Basic Science teachers?

Table 2: Pearson's Correlation Between Work Environment Stress Factors and Job Performance of Basic Science Teachers

Correlation		Work Environment stress factors	Job performance
Work Environment stress factors	Pearson Correlation	1	-.167**
	N	261	261
Job performance	Pearson Correlation	-.167**	1
	N	261	261

Table 2 shows Pearson Product Moment Correlation between work environment stress factors and job performance of Basic Science teachers. The result showed correlation

coefficient of $r = -.167$ which falls within $-.10$ and $-.49$. This indicates a weak negative correlation between work environment stress factors and job performance of Basic Science teachers.

Hypothesis 1: Home environment stress factors have no significant relationship with job performance of Basic Science teachers in the Upper Basic Schools.

Table 3 : Pearson's Correlation Between Home Environment Stress Factors and Job Performance of Basic Science Teachers

Correlation		Home Environment	
		Stress factors	Job Performance
home stress factors	Pearson Correlation	1	-.160**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.010
	N	261	261
Job performance	Pearson Correlation	-.160**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.010	
	N	261	261

Table 3 shows Pearson product moment correlation between home environment stress factors and job performance of Basic Science teachers in Upper Basic Schools. The result shows $r = -.160$, $p = .010$. Since $r = -.160$, $p < 0.05$, the null hypothesis which states that home environment stress factors have no significant relationship with job performance of Basic Science teachers in the Upper Basic Schools is rejected in favour of the

alternative hypothesis. This means home environment stress factors have a statistically significant negative relationship with job performance of Basic Science teachers in the Upper Basic Schools. The result implies that Basic Science teachers who experience home environment stress factors consistently are likely going to record poor job performance in school.

Hypothesis 2: Work environment stress factors have no significant relationship with job performance of Basic Science teachers in the Upper Basic Schools.

Table 4: Pearson's Correlation Between Work Environment Stress Factors and Job Performance of Basic Science Teachers

Correlation		Work Environment	
		stress factors	Job performance
Work Environment stress factors	Pearson Correlation	1	-.167**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.007
	N	261	261
Job performance	Pearson Correlation	-.167**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.007	
	N	261	261

Table 4 shows Pearson product moment correlation between work environment stress factors and job performance of Basic Science teachers in Upper Basic schools. The result reveals $r = -.167$, $p = .007$. This indicates that $r = -.167$, $p < 0.05$. Hence the null hypothesis which states that work environment stress factors have no significant relationship with job performance of Basic Science teachers in the Upper Basic Schools is rejected in favour of the alternative hypothesis. This implies that there is a statistically

significant negative relationship between work environment stress factors and job performance of Basic Science teachers in the Upper Basic Schools. This shows that Basic Science teachers who experienced high levels of work environment stress factors demonstrated poor job performance.

Discussion of Findings

Hypothesis one showed that home environment stress factors have statistically significant

negative relationship with job performance of Basic Science teachers. This implies that when Basic Science teachers face increased home stress factors such as poor marital relationships, infidelity, inability to meet basic family needs, inadequate amenities, death of spouse, quarrels among family members, being busy with other activities at home among others which exceed their coping resources, they are rendered weak, ineffective and unproductive due to physical, emotional and psychological consequences. It was established that chronic stress could have some physiological consequences such as stomach pain and high blood pressure and psychological effects such as procrastination among others on the individual Basic Science teacher. This inadvertently reduces teachers job performance in the school. This is in line with the Effort Reward Imbalance theory. As family members interact with one another, there is an expectation of mutual respect, love, care, appreciation, affection, trust, support and many more. Teachers from families where there is no reciprocity of these stabilizing factors experience untold stress which has a negative relationship with their job performance. This finding agreed with Adebayo (2018) who found that the role of the family in creating a good family environment has an important influence in supporting the job performance of a teacher, and also that the competence possessed by the teacher will further assist the teacher in carrying out his duties. This highlights the importance of a supportive home environment in enabling teachers to perform their jobs effectively. A good family environment can provide teachers with the necessary emotional and psychological support to manage stress and maintain their well-being, which in turn can positively impact their job performance.

Hypothesis two established that work environment stress factors have a statistically significant negative relationship with job performance of Basic Science teachers. This means Basic Science teachers who suffer increased work environment stress factors such as difficulty of course materials, work overload, inadequate professional development, inadequate teaching materials, delayed payment of salaries, lack of motivation, students' disobedience, COVID-19 pandemic, among others may respond with aggression and become physically

exhausted. This may make teachers unable to carry out their duties effectively, resulting to poor job performance. Teachers under workplace stress may experience burnout, leading to lower motivation, reduced productivity, and higher turnover rates. This highlights the need for improved working conditions, support systems, and professional development opportunities. Both the Transactional Theory of Stress and Coping and Effort Reward Theory recognise when teachers suffer increased stress, the body react in a bid to deal with the stressful situations. This effort led to varying degrees of psychological, physiological and emotional disturbances which may put the teacher in a position that his job performance is hampered. The finding agrees with Myeya and Rupia (2022) who also found that working conditions, which include remuneration, school physical facilities, and workload, have a significant contribution to teachers' job performance. However, it disagrees with Oluwatoyin, Deborah, and Toafeek (2024) who held a contrary view, stating that there is no significant difference between primary school teachers' job satisfaction based on their monthly salary. Additionally, they found that primary school teachers' level of education has a significant influence on their monthly salary. This suggests that while working conditions are important, other factors such as educational level can also play a significant role in determining job performance.

Conclusion

The findings of this study were able to establish a significant negative relationship between the various stress factors and job performance of Basic Science teachers in the Upper Basic Schools in Zone 'B' Education Area of Benue State, Nigeria. Home environment stress factors and work environment stress factors were all identified as detrimental to teachers' job performance and effectiveness in the classroom. These results highlight the critical need for targeted interventions to mitigate stress and enhance job Performance. It is therefore expected that the Ministry of Education, private school owners, school administrators, parents, guardians and students will acknowledge the diverse sources of stress faced by the teacher and review their actions that may compound the situation. These stakeholders should be adequately informed by the findings of this work that they are

supposed to be a support system instead of an obstacle to teachers' job efficiency. When recommendations of this work are painstakingly implemented, the persistent stress faced by teachers in the zone will be minimised leading to enhanced job performance.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Ministry of Education, School Management, and parents' teachers' association (PTA) should evolve family support programmes for teachers such as marriage counseling to help address marital conflicts, collaborate to give scholarships to teachers' children and provide financial and food bonuses during festive seasons. The Management of schools and colleagues should pay condolence visits to bereaved teachers to alleviate the anxiety caused by loss of loved ones. Government, school owners and School Managements should also provide state of the art teaching staff quarters with associated amenities to address the lack of conducive homes for teachers.
2. Ministry of Education, School Owners/ Management and the parents teachers' association (PTA) should ensure that teaching resources are made available for teachers in school. There should be prompt payment of remuneration and incentives and in - service training for teachers. School Managements should organise regular feedback sessions where teachers may voice out concerns about their work conditions which may help management in evolving appropriate strategies to mitigate work associated stress. Teachers should not be given too much work load and they should be fully involved in decision making regarding their work schedule. The services of educational Psychologists and counsellors should be employed to assist school teachers in identifying work environment stress factors and educate them to adopt appropriate stress coping strategies to address the stress.

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