



Occupational Stress and Classroom Performance of Teachers in Public Secondary Schools in Esan West Local Government Area of Edo State

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Abstract

This study investigated the relationship between occupational stress and classroom performance of teachers in public secondary schools in Esan West L.G. A of Edo State. Specifically, the study examined the level of classroom performance of teachers in public secondary schools in Esan West L.G. A of Edo State, examined the relationship between workload, administrative pressure and classroom performance of teachers in public secondary schools in Esan West L.G. A of Edo State. Correlational research design was employed in this researcher work. The study population consisted of 76 teachers from public secondary schools in a Esan West L.G.A of Edo State. Two adapted instruments titled: Occupational Stress Questionnaire (OSQ) and Teachers' Class Performance Questionnaire (TECLAPEQ) were used. The internal consistency of the instrument was assessed using the Cronbach Alpha coefficient. Descriptive statistics, specifically mean and standard deviation were used to answer Research Question 1, while Hypotheses 1 and 2 were tested using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient at the 0.05 level of significance. The results showed that there was a significant relationship between occupational stress and classroom performance of teachers in public secondary schools in Esan West L.G. A of Edo State. The study also found that the level of classroom performance of public secondary school teachers in Esan West L.G. A of Edo State was low. It was therefore recommended, among other things, that school principals should lessen administrative burdens on teachers by establishing a supportive management system that enables them to dedicate more time and attention to classroom teaching in the study area.

Keywords: Occupational Stress; Classroom Performance; Teachers.



Introduction

Teachers occupy a central role in the educational system as they are entrusted with the responsibility of imparting knowledge, practical skills, and moral values to students. Their influence shapes learners into productive and responsible citizens. Beyond classroom instruction, teachers also engage in administrative and supervisory responsibilities within the school environment. Classroom effectiveness which encompasses teaching-related responsibilities, includes lesson preparation, content delivery, assignment marking, and general classroom coordination (Osayamen, Imorua, and Osarenren-Osaghae, 2020). Essentially, a teacher's instructional efficiency is evaluated by how well these tasks are performed. Three major indicators of effective classroom delivery include how teachers pose and respond to questions (questioning techniques), how they handle classroom operations (classroom management), and the nature of their interaction with students (classroom engagement). Questioning strategies help assess student comprehension, while proper management ensures smooth lesson delivery. Interaction, on the other hand, creates a participatory environment where students are motivated to contribute meaningfully (Osayamen et al., 2020).

Several internal and external elements can influence a teacher's classroom performance. External factors, also referred to as extrinsic factors, may include the behavior of students, work environment, school policies, motivation levels, and stress (Yardibi, 2018; Ertürk & Aydın, 2017). Stress, which manifests as a physical or emotional strain, typically arises from challenging or overwhelming situations. It is a natural reaction of the human body to perceived threats or demands. Everly and Lating (2019) describe stress as a multifaceted experience that may be acute, chronic, emotional, cognitive, occupational, social, financial, or even triggered by environmental or chemical factors.

This research emphasizes occupational stress, which develops when the demands of a job surpass the employee's coping resources. It occurs when responsibilities are disproportionate to an individual's capability or the available support system, ultimately impairing health and professional performance (Fabian, 2022). In educational settings, when teachers face excessive workloads or unrealistic administrative demands, they may experience symptoms such as anxiety, reduced productivity, depression, sleep disturbances, low self-worth, and frequent mood changes. Work-related stressors in schools may stem from factors such as heavy workloads, administrative pressure, inadequate materials, poor leadership, vague job descriptions, and workplace conflict. The present study narrows its scope to explore the impact of two specific stressors: workload and administrative pressure. While "workload" involves managing extensive teaching responsibilities alone, "administrative pressure" refers to the urgency and volume of tasks assigned by school authorities within short timelines.

Numerous scholars have explored the correlation between stress factors and teacher performance. For instance, Awodiji et al. (2019) investigated how principals' interpersonal approaches affect teacher output in Patigi Local Government Area, Kwara State. Utilizing a correlational research design with 180 participants from 15 schools, the study deployed the Principals' Human Relation Strategies Questionnaire (PHRSAQ) and the Teachers' Classroom Performance Questionnaire (TCPQ). Both instruments were validated for reliability. The findings highlighted that ineffective communication and lack of support from principals contributed to reduced morale and heightened emotional stress among teachers. The study emphasized that unsupportive leadership undermines teacher performance in the classroom.



Similarly, Akpan (2018) examined how job security influences the effectiveness of academic staff in two tertiary institutions in Cross River State. With data from 500 lecturers, the study applied Chi-square and ANOVA to analyze questionnaire responses. Results indicated that lecturers with higher job security performed better in teaching and research. However, this study did not consider the unique stressors that affect secondary school teachers, such as large class populations, insufficient instructional materials, rigid curricula, and external policy constraints. Furthermore, while the statistical tools used offered valuable insights, they may not have adequately captured the interaction between multiple sources of stress—a limitation the current study intends to overcome.

In Kenya, King'oina, Kadenyi, and Ngaruiya (2015) assessed how teaching practices influence student outcomes in public primary schools within Marani Sub-County. Using an ex-post facto design and a sample of 100 randomly selected teachers from 64 schools, the study employed questionnaires and student exam results for data collection. Basic statistical methods like percentages, means, and correlations were used to analyze the data. The study concluded that better lesson planning improved student achievement. However, since the study focused on primary schools, its findings might not reflect the complexities of secondary education, where academic demands, class sizes, and examination pressures are significantly higher. Moreover, the Kenyan educational context differs from Nigeria's, particularly in terms of administrative structure and social challenges, thereby limiting the applicability of the results to Edo State.

Abay (2021) conducted a descriptive study to evaluate teacher effectiveness in Edo North Senatorial District. Using a sample of 230 out of 2,300 teachers selected through random ballot, the researcher developed the Teachers Effectiveness Assessment Test (TEAT), which was validated by experts at the University of Benin and tested with a smaller group in Edo South for reliability. Statistical methods such as mean, percentage, standard deviation, and t-tests were employed for analysis. Results revealed generally low teacher performance. However, the study did not delve into the underlying reasons for this outcome. It broadly defined "job effectiveness" without dissecting specific instructional responsibilities such as lesson delivery, student assessment, or class control. Additionally, the reliability check's limited sample size questions the generalizability of its findings. These gaps further justify the necessity of the current investigation.

In another study, Boniface, Omenyi, and Nwankwo (2020) explored the connection between work environment and teacher performance in Anambra State's public secondary schools. Using a correlational survey design with a robust sample of 1,279 teachers, the researchers administered three separate questionnaires covering school culture, teacher performance, and work attitude. All instruments had high reliability indices (.959, .957, and .701 respectively). Findings suggested that while teachers rated their school environment positively, there was no strong correlation between environment and classroom output. The study focused primarily on general school culture elements like leadership styles and organizational rules. It did not specifically address occupational stress, which often has a more immediate impact on teacher behavior and effectiveness. This omission reinforces the need for the present study, which concentrates on workload-induced stress.

In Ebonyi State, Larrye, Ogbaga, and Ibenwo (2022) assessed how motivational factors affect teacher performance in public secondary schools, especially within Abakaliki Local Government Area. Their approach involved a blend of surveys, interviews, and focus group discussions with 200 purposively and randomly selected participants, including school heads and administrators from nine schools. Using a test-retest method for instrument



validation, the researchers found that poor motivation—mainly concerning salaries and job security—negatively impacted teacher commitment and instructional delivery. Nevertheless, the study failed to address intrinsic stressors like emotional burnout, time pressure, or task overload. These internal factors, which directly influence daily classroom functions, are crucial to understanding performance dynamics. Furthermore, due to the geographical focus, the findings may not reflect the realities of teachers in Esan West LGA, Edo State, who face their own unique challenges.

Bui et al. (2021) analyzed the effect of job-related stress on employee productivity in workplaces participating in the WorkWell KS wellness initiative in the United States. Their study utilized the Perceived Stress Scale (PSS) and the Health and Work Questionnaire (HWQ) to collect data from four organizations. Pearson correlation and t-tests were applied to examine gender and racial differences. With a sample of 186 predominantly white, female, and college-educated participants, the research established a negative correlation between stress and productivity ($r = -0.35$, $p < 0.001$), and between stress and job satisfaction ($r = -0.61$, $p < 0.001$). Men reported better supervisor relationships than women. While these results affirm that stress undermines work performance, the context of the study limits its relevance to Nigerian public school teachers, particularly those in Edo State, who face different institutional, cultural, and economic challenges. This context-specific gap highlights the relevance and necessity of the current study.

In a related investigation, Baliyan, Pritika, and Mokoena (2018) examined the causes and effects of stress on the job performance of teachers in private secondary schools in Botswana. The primary objective of the study was to identify key stressors, assess their implications on teaching efficacy, and propose viable interventions. The researchers adopted a sequential methodology beginning with teacher interviews to inform the design of a structured questionnaire. Subsequently, 90 teachers were selected through stratified random sampling to complete the survey instrument. Descriptive statistics, including means and standard deviations, were used to interpret the data. The study identified excessive workload, ambiguous school policies, and challenges with student discipline as principal sources of stress. These stressors were linked to diminished morale, low job satisfaction, and workplace conflict. Nonetheless, the study's exclusive focus on private schools in Botswana—institutions typically characterized by better infrastructural resources and more lenient policy environments—limits the generalizability of its findings to public school settings in Nigeria. Additionally, contextual differences in educational systems and teacher expectations between Botswana and Nigeria necessitate a localized investigation, such as the current research.

Similarly, Suguna et al. (2021) conducted a study in Malaysian government hospitals to explore the nexus between occupational stress and employee performance. The study specifically targeted administrative staff and investigated how stressors such as heavy workloads, poor work-life balance, stringent deadlines, and social pressures affected their job output. Data were obtained through surveys administered to staff listed under Malaysia's Ministry of Health. Findings indicated that all identified stressors had a significant negative impact on employee performance. However, a methodological flaw emerged in the study's reference to "classroom performance" when describing administrative hospital workers, who are not engaged in teaching roles. This mislabeling introduces conceptual ambiguity, given that hospital environments differ markedly from educational settings in terms of stress dynamics. As such, the conclusions drawn from this study are of limited relevance to educators, particularly within the Nigerian school system and, more precisely, Esan West LGA.



In Nigeria, Abosede, Akinbiyi, and Babalola (2023) explored the impact of teacher workload on student academic achievement in Irepodun Local Government Area. Employing a correlational research design, they sampled 120 teachers across 12 schools (six public and six private) through random sampling. Data collection tools included structured questionnaires and a Biology Achievement Test administered to students. Statistical analyses using Pearson correlation and t-tests revealed that excessive teacher workload was inversely related to student performance. The study further highlighted disparities in workload between public and private school educators. Despite these insights, the research focused exclusively on workload as a stressor and did not investigate other critical dimensions such as classroom management issues, scarcity of instructional materials, administrative burdens, or emotional fatigue. Moreover, contextual differences between Irepodun and Esan West LGA limit the applicability of its findings, thus reinforcing the need for the present study.

In a parallel study, Okodeso (2023) assessed the impact of teachers' workload on students' academic performance in Social Studies within Delta State. The research involved 200 teachers drawn from 100 schools using a multi-stage sampling technique and adopted an ex-post facto design. The instrument utilized was the Teachers' Workload Questionnaire (TWQ), which achieved a reliability coefficient of 0.82. Employing Pearson correlation and t-tests, the study established that both instructional and administrative workloads had deleterious effects on student achievement. While the study offered valuable insights, its focus was confined to Social Studies educators, thereby limiting the transferability of its findings to other subject areas and regions. This gap underscores the need for the current research to adopt a broader and more inclusive scope.

Similarly, Tarimo, Bahati, and Ramadhani (2020) investigated the influence of class size and teacher workload on student academic outcomes in public secondary schools in Singida Urban, Tanzania. Using a correlational research design, the study collected and analyzed responses from 260 students and teachers through Pearson correlation and multiple regression analyses. Results indicated that smaller class sizes positively impacted student performance, whereas higher workloads compromised teacher effectiveness. While the study made a strong case for reducing workload and class sizes, it failed to consider other pertinent stress factors such as emotional strain, lack of teaching resources, or administrative pressures. Furthermore, the Tanzanian context diverges significantly from Nigeria's educational environment, particularly in Esan West LGA, limiting the cross-national applicability of its findings. Additionally, the study's reliance on quantitative methods may have restricted its ability to capture the nuanced, lived experiences of teachers dealing with occupational stress—an aspect this current study intends to address.

Mutua (2022) explored the role of principals' leadership practices in shaping teacher performance in secondary schools in Kathiani Sub-County, Kenya. Data were collected from 32 principals and 107 teachers through a combination of questionnaires and interviews. The study found that effective supervision, motivational strategies, professional development, and task delegation by school leaders contributed positively to teacher performance. However, the research did not account for stress-related variables or investigate the root causes of occupational stress among teachers. The Kenyan educational context also poses challenges to generalization, as systemic and cultural differences may influence the relevance of the findings to Nigerian schools, particularly in Esan West LGA. Moreover, the study's heavy dependence on quantitative data may have overlooked the qualitative dimensions of teacher stress that are central to this current inquiry.



In a study situated in the Misamis Oriental Division, Carmellta (2024) examined how school support services affect teacher performance. The investigation centered on the availability and impact of institutional support services—including access to teaching materials, peer collaboration, and professional development programs—on instructional quality, planning, classroom management, and assessment. Using stratified random sampling, 481 teachers from both primary and secondary schools were selected. The study reported a strong correlation between institutional support and effective teaching, while demographic factors such as age, education level, and work experience were also found to be significant. Despite its contributions, the study did not consider occupational stress as a variable affecting performance, nor did it utilize qualitative methods to understand the personal challenges teachers face. This absence of a stress-centered lens substantiates the rationale for the current research.

Adesegbe and Adewuyi (2024) assessed the effectiveness of school heads in managing teaching staff and its impact on job performance. The research adopted a descriptive design and involved 520 participants, with data collected via a self-designed questionnaire that demonstrated a reliability coefficient of 0.83. The findings revealed that leadership qualities, ethical standards, and managerial competencies of head teachers significantly influenced teacher performance. While the study effectively highlighted the importance of leadership in educational outcomes, it did not explore the mediating role of occupational stress or how administrative practices might mitigate stress-induced performance issues. Moreover, its sole reliance on quantitative data omits the affective and experiential dimensions of teaching, which this current research intends to foreground.

Bappah and Shehu (2022) conducted a study focusing on how school administrators influence teacher performance in senior secondary schools in Gombe State, Nigeria. Utilizing a descriptive survey design, the study engaged all 54 school administrators in the area. A validated questionnaire, scored on a 4-point Likert scale with a reliability index of 0.86, was used for data collection. The findings demonstrated that administrative strategies such as role assignment, lesson plan review, and the implementation of reward and punishment systems significantly affected teacher performance. Nevertheless, the study did not investigate how occupational stress—stemming from factors like workload, extended working hours, and poor work-life balance—affects teacher performance. The geographical focus on Gombe State also limits the applicability of its findings to Edo State, where stress-related factors might exert a greater influence.

Recent observations from stakeholders, including parents, have pointed to declining student performance in major national examinations such as WAEC and NECO. Akande (2020) noted a significant downturn in English Language results over recent years, while the 2023 WAEC Chief Examiners' Report highlighted underperformance in Mathematics. These trends suggest potential lapses in instructional effectiveness within public secondary schools. One contributing factor is the prolonged hiring freeze by the Edo State government, which has not recruited new teachers for over 15 years. This policy vacuum has exacerbated the workload and administrative responsibilities of the existing teaching staff, potentially undermining their classroom performance. The growing burden placed on teachers raises critical concerns regarding the impact of occupational stress on their instructional efficiency and, by extension, student academic outcomes. Hence, this study seeks to address the central research question: What is the relationship between occupational stress and classroom performance of teachers in public secondary schools in Esan West Local Government Area of Edo State?



Research Questions

1. What is the level of classroom performance of teachers in public secondary schools in Esan West L. G. A of Edo State?
2. What is the relationship between workload and classroom performance of teachers in public secondary schools in Esan West L. G. A of Edo State?
3. What is the relationship between administrative pressure and classroom performance of teachers in public secondary schools in Esan West L. G. A of Edo State?

Hypotheses

1. There is no significant relationship between workload and classroom performance of teachers in public secondary schools in Esan West L. G. A of Edo State.
2. There is no significant relationship between administrative pressure and classroom performance of teachers in public secondary schools in Esan West L. G. A of Edo State.

Methods

This research used a correlational study approach to look at the connection between work-related stress (the main factor being studied) and how well teachers perform in their classrooms (the outcome being measured). The research included all 76 teachers working in government secondary schools in Esan West Local Government Area of Edo State, since there were not many teachers in this area. Because of this small number, all teachers in the region took part in the study.

Information was gathered using two modified questionnaires: the Work Stress Questionnaire (WSQ) and the Teachers' Classroom Work Quality Questionnaire (TCWQQ). These tools were built on ideas developed by Kyriacou & Sutcliffe (1978) and the Annual Performance Review Report for Staff from Ekiti State University. The WSQ contained 10 questions, organized into five groups that looked at different types of work stress that teachers experience. The TCWQQ had 9 questions, split into three sections, with each section looking at an important part of classroom work quality.

Each question in the TCWQQ was rated using a 4-point system: Very High (4), High (3), Low (2), and Very Low (1). The trustworthiness of these tools was checked using the Cronbach alpha method. The trustworthiness scores for the different stress areas were: 0.73 for work burden, 0.78 for management pressure, 0.75 for class control, 0.74 for class questioning skills, 0.78 for student interaction in class, and 0.73 for the whole tool.

The main researcher and two trained helpers gave out the questionnaires to the teachers. Research Question 1 was answered using the average and standard difference. A reference score of 2.50 was used to judge the level of classroom work quality. This was calculated by adding up the values of the four ratings (Very High = 4, High = 3, Low = 2, Very Low = 1), giving a total of 10, and dividing by the number of rating choices (4). A score of 2.50 or higher showed good classroom work quality, while a score of 2.49 or below showed poor classroom work quality. Hypotheses 1 and 2 were tested using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation method at a 0.05 significance level.

Results

Research Question 1: What is the level of classroom performance of teachers in public secondary schools in Esan West L. G. A of Edo State?

The results of the analysis are presented in table 1 below.

Table 1: Level of Classroom Performance of Teachers in Public Secondary Schools in Esan West L. G. A of Edo State

S/n	Items		N=76	
			SD	Remarks
Class Management				
1.	Ability to keep his students attentive all through his lesson	3.24	1.15	High
2.	Managing the classroom space for delivery of instruction	2.09	0.71	Low
3.	Managing the marker board for presentation of lessons in class	1.59	1.00	Low
Over all mean = 2.31				
Class Questioning Behavior				
4.	Responding to students questions promptly	1.55	0.89	Low
5.	Encouraging students to ask questions during a lesson	2.00	0.67	Low
6.	Rewarding learners who answer questions correctly in class	1.50	0.80	Low
Over all mean = 1.68				
Classroom interaction with learners				
7.	Ensuring students participate in the lesson of the day	1.54	0.87	Low
8.	Maintaining eye contact with each student during instruction	3.47	0.85	High
9.	Calling students by name to evaluate them based on the lesson taught	3.19	1.09	High
Over all mean = 2.73				
Grand mean on classroom performance of teachers = 2.24				

Criterion Mean = 2.50; Values < 2.50 = Low Performance.

The results in Table 1 show that the mean ratings for six out of nine items (Items 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7) fall below the benchmark of 2.50, indicating low performance in aspects such as classroom space management, responsiveness to student questions, and stimulating learner participation. On the other hand, Items 1, 8, and 9 showed high performance with mean scores above 3.00, reflecting strengths in keeping students attentive, maintaining eye contact, and personalized evaluation. Despite these high points, the computed grand mean for classroom performance stands at 2.24, which is below the acceptable threshold. This suggests that the general level of classroom performance among public secondary school teachers in Esan West L.G.A. is relatively low. In summary, while some areas of strength were observed, overall teacher performance in the classroom did not meet the expected standard.

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant relationship between workload and classroom performance of teachers in public secondary schools in Esan West L. G. A of Edo State.

The results of the analysis are presented in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Relationship Between Workload and Teachers' Classroom Performance in Public Secondary Schools in Esan West L. G. A of Edo State

Variables	N	$\bar{X}$	S.D	Pearson r-coefficient	p-value	Remarks
Workload	76	3.39	.792	0.418*	0.003	Null hypothesis rejected (p<0.05)
Teachers' classroom performance		2.24	.876			
Significant at p < 0.05						

The results in Table 2 reveal a Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.418, indicating a moderate positive relationship between teachers' workload and their classroom performance. The p-value of 0.003 is below the significance level of 0.05, confirming that the relationship is statistically significant. Consequently, the null hypothesis is rejected. These findings suggest that as teachers' workload increases, there is a moderate corresponding increase in their classroom performance. This could imply that a reasonable workload may stimulate productivity, potentially enhancing the effectiveness of teaching activities in the classroom.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant relationship between administrative pressure and classroom performance of teachers in public secondary schools in Esan West L. G. A of Edo State.

The results are presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Relationship Between Administrative Pressure and Teachers' Classroom Performance in Public Secondary Schools in Esan West L.G.A of Edo State

Performance in Public Secondary Schools in Esan West Local Government Area						
Variables	N	$\bar{X}$	S.D	Pearson r-coefficient	p-value	Remarks
Administrative Pressure	76	3.39	.804	0.342*	0.002	Null hypothesis rejected (p<0.05)
Teachers' classroom performance		2.13	.876			
Significant at p < 0.05						

As presented in Table 3, the Pearson correlation coefficient ($r = 0.342$) reveals a weak positive relationship between administrative pressure and classroom performance. Although this relationship is not particularly strong, the associated p-value of 0.002 is statistically significant, being below the 0.05 threshold. Thus, the null hypothesis is rejected. These findings imply that administrative pressure significantly affects teachers' classroom performance in public secondary schools within the study area. The weak correlation suggests that while the influence of administrative tasks may not drastically affect teaching effectiveness, it is still a noteworthy factor that can shape classroom dynamics and performance outcomes.

Discussions

The findings of this study revealed that the overall classroom performance of teachers in public secondary schools in Esan West Local Government Area of Edo State is relatively low. This low level of performance could be attributed to various occupational challenges

faced by teachers, such as overcrowded classrooms, limited teaching materials, and inadequate instructional resources. These factors hinder effective lesson delivery and classroom engagement. Additionally, excessive responsibilities—including large student numbers, administrative duties, and extracurricular obligations—contribute to occupational stress, thereby negatively affecting teachers' focus and instructional efficiency.

This result aligns with the study by Awodiji et al. (2019), which identified that poor human relations and lack of administrative support from school principals significantly reduced teachers' performance in Kwara State. Similarly, Abay (2021) confirmed that teachers in Edo State generally showed low job performance. This trend is further supported by Larrye, Ogbaga, and Ibenwo (2022), who reported diminished teacher effectiveness in Ebonyi State, particularly in environments lacking motivation and incentives. Contrarily, Akpan (2018) found that university lecturers in Cross River State demonstrated high performance, suggesting that performance levels may vary based on institutional support and teaching contexts. Further contrast is seen in the study by King'oina, Kadenyi, and Ngaruiya (2015) in Kenya, where structured lesson planning was positively associated with student achievement. Also, Boniface, Omenyi, and Nwankwo (2020) reported strong classroom performance and positive work attitudes among teachers in Anambra State, indicating that regional differences and administrative factors could influence teacher effectiveness.

Additionally, this study demonstrated a statistically significant relationship between workload and classroom performance. A plausible explanation for this could be the shortage of teaching staff in the area, leading to an increased burden on the available teachers. The lack of adequate professional support and collaboration further compounds this challenge. These findings are in agreement with Bui et al. (2021), who established that workplace stress undermines employee productivity and job satisfaction. Similarly, Baliyan, Pritika, and Mokoena (2018) noted that excessive workloads and unclear institutional policies were major contributors to teacher stress and low morale in Botswana. Suguna et al. (2021) also reported that occupational stress hampers job performance, while Abosede, Akinbiyi, and Babalola (2023) confirmed that overburdened teachers negatively impact student academic achievement. Furthermore, Okodeso (2023) and Tarimo et al. (2020) highlighted that excessive teaching responsibilities contribute to poor instructional delivery and reduced student outcomes.

The study also uncovered a significant relationship between administrative pressure and classroom performance. Ineffective supervision, poor leadership practices, and the exclusion of teachers from decision-making processes may explain this connection. Teachers are often required to take on additional administrative tasks—such as managing morning assemblies, monitoring attendance, and coordinating school events—without sufficient guidance. The absence of structured support from school heads can overwhelm teachers and diminish their instructional output. This observation supports the findings of Mutua (2022), who emphasized the impact of school leadership, supervision, and motivational strategies on teacher performance in Kenya. Similarly, Carmellita (2024) identified that institutional support, teacher demographics, and professional experience influenced job performance in Misamis Oriental. This position is further corroborated by Adesegbe and Adewuyi (2024), who concluded that effective leadership and professionalism among school heads improved teacher effectiveness. Bappah and Shehu (2022) also demonstrated that well-allocated responsibilities and adequate administrative planning enhance teacher performance in Gombe State.



Conclusion

Occupational stress remains a critical factor influencing teaching effectiveness in Nigerian secondary schools. The study found that teachers in Esan West Local Government Area generally performed below expectations in classroom activities. Furthermore, both workload and administrative pressure were found to have significant, albeit varying, effects on teachers' classroom performance. This underscores the need for institutional reforms aimed at reducing stressors and improving teaching conditions to enhance educational outcomes in the region.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made:

1. The Edo State Government should implement regular and targeted training programs, including professional development workshops, to improve instructional skills and enhance classroom performance among teachers in public secondary schools within Esan West L.G.A.
2. To reduce the burden of excessive workload, government authorities should employ more qualified teachers and ensure an equitable distribution of teaching assignments. This would not only enhance instructional delivery but also promote teacher well-being and job satisfaction.
3. School administrators and principals should adopt more supportive leadership practices by minimizing unnecessary administrative tasks for teachers. Establishing a cooperative and participatory management system will enable teachers to focus more on classroom engagement and pedagogical responsibilities.
4. While this study has made a valuable contribution to the understanding of occupational stress and classroom performance in Esan West L.G.A, its findings are geographically limited. To enhance generalizability, future researchers are encouraged to replicate this study across other local government areas and senatorial districts in Edo State.



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