

Human Resource Management Practices as Predictors of Teachers' Job Satisfaction in Senior Secondary Schools in Abia State

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ABSTRACT

The apparent negative attitude of secondary school teachers to their jobs necessitated this study on principals' human resource management practices as predictors of teachers' job satisfaction in public secondary schools in Abia State. The study adopted a correlational research design with one research question answered and one hypothesis tested at a 0.05 level of significance. The population of the study comprised 6,396 teachers in the 263 secondary schools in Abia State. The sample was 411 teachers drawn using a multi-stage sampling procedure. Instruments for data collection were titled Questionnaire on Human Resource Management Practices (QHRMP) and Job Satisfaction Scale (JSC). The instruments were validated by three experts from Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. The Cronbach Alpha method was used to determine the internal consistency of the items, yielding reliability coefficient indices of 0.68 and 0.74 respectively. Data were analyzed using Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) regression in Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The hypothesis was tested using t-test of significance and ANOVA for regression analysis at a probability of 0.05 level. Results showed that teachers' job satisfaction was significantly predicted by staff training practices. It is recommended that professional development opportunities and workshops should be provided to enhance teachers' skills and knowledge.

Keywords: Principals; human resource; management practices; teachers; job satisfaction.

INTRODUCTION

Education is widely recognized as a catalyst for national development and a tool for societal transformation. In Nigeria, it serves as an instrument for achieving national goals and objectives as articulated in the National Policy on Education (Federal Republic of Nigeria [FRN], 2020). Education contributes to social, economic, and technological development and is central to the advancement of individuals and society.

Secondary schools in Nigeria are post-primary institutions providing formal education to students between the ages of 11 and 18 years (Ogbonnaya, 2021). The FRN (2020) stated that secondary education aims to prepare students for useful living and higher education. Teachers play a critical role in ensuring that these objectives are achieved. According to Arop, Owan, and Madukwe (2021), teachers are responsible for delivering instruction, guiding students, managing classroom activities, and implementing educational policies effectively.

Teachers' job satisfaction, defined as the level of contentment teachers feel with their work conditions, is essential for effective performance (Lawler & Hall, 2022). It encompasses intrinsic and extrinsic factors, including recognition, workload, professional development, and work environment. Indicators of job satisfaction include punctuality, commitment, classroom efficiency, collaboration with colleagues, proper record-keeping,

and adherence to schemes of work (Obineli, 2021). Unfortunately, some teachers in Abia State display behaviors indicative of dissatisfaction, such as lateness, poor preparation, and absenteeism.

The principal, as the head of the school, plays a key role in fostering teacher satisfaction through effective human resource management (HRM). Fullan (2021) defined the principal as a leader responsible for creating a conducive learning environment, supporting staff, and ensuring the achievement of educational goals. Egboka, Ezeugbor, and Enueme (2022) noted that school principals are accountable for aligning school resources and staff to achieve policy objectives.

Effective HRM practices such as recruitment, training, appraisal, motivation, and staff welfare directly impact teachers' performance and satisfaction (Paauwe & Boselie, 2021; Omebe, 2022). Training, in particular, is vital for skill development and productivity. Recent studies highlight that continuous professional development, workshops, and on-the-job training enhance teachers' competencies and overall satisfaction (Tunde & Eze, 2023; Eresimadu, 2021).

Training practices involve identifying objectives, selecting participants, hiring qualified trainers, and providing resources to achieve learning goals (Taylor & Johnson, 2021). Forms of training include seminars, workshops, induction programs, refresher courses, conferences, job rotation, and self-development programs. These interventions improve teachers' effectiveness and satisfaction, which in turn enhance student learning outcomes (Eze, 2022).

Statement Of The Problem

Teachers are critical to achieving educational objectives in **Abia State** secondary schools. While the government recruits and pays teachers, dissatisfaction is evident through absenteeism, poor record-keeping, inconsistent lesson delivery, and low commitment. Such dissatisfaction may stem from inadequate human resource management practices by principals, particularly regarding training, motivation, and staff involvement. Improving HRM practices is therefore crucial for enhancing teachers' job satisfaction and productivity.

Purpose Of The Study

The main purpose of this study is to determine principals' human resource management practices as predictors of teachers' job satisfaction in public senior secondary schools in Abia State. Specifically, the study seeks to:

1. Determine the extent to which staff training practice predicts teachers' job satisfaction in public senior secondary schools in Abia State.
2. Examine the extent to which remuneration practice predicts teachers' job satisfaction in public senior secondary schools in Abia State.
3. Find out the extent to which promotion practice predicts teachers' job satisfaction in public senior secondary schools in Abia State.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided this study:

1. To what extent does staff training practice predict teachers' job satisfaction in public senior secondary schools in Abia State?
2. To what extent does remuneration practice predict teachers' job satisfaction in public senior secondary schools in Abia State?
3. To what extent does promotion practice predict teachers' job satisfaction in public senior secondary schools in Abia State?

Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 alpha level:

1. H_{01} : Staff training practice does not significantly predict teachers' job satisfaction in public senior secondary schools in Abia State.
2. H_{02} : Remuneration practice does not significantly predict teachers' job satisfaction in public senior secondary schools in Abia State.
3. H_{03} : Promotion practice does not significantly predict teachers' job satisfaction in public senior secondary schools in Abia State.

METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a correlational survey research design to investigate the extent to which principals' human resource management practices predict teachers' job satisfaction in public senior secondary schools in Abia State. The correlational design was deemed appropriate because it allows for the examination of the relationship between independent variables namely staff training, remuneration, and promotion and the dependent variable, teachers' job satisfaction, without manipulating them. This design further enables the researcher to determine the predictive influence of human resource management practices on teachers' job satisfaction.

The population of the study comprised all teachers and principals in public senior secondary schools in Abia State. According to the Abia State Ministry of Education (2024), there are 275 public senior secondary schools with a total of 6,950 teachers. Therefore, the population included both principals ($n = 275$) and teachers ($n = 6,950$), all of whom are directly influenced by principals' human resource management practices and whose job satisfaction is critical for effective service delivery in schools.

To select participants for the study, a multi-stage sampling technique was employed. In the first stage, all 275 public senior secondary schools in Abia State were listed. In the second stage, a census approach was used to include all principals in the study, giving a total of 275 principals. In the third stage, a proportionate stratified random sampling technique was used to select 450 teachers from the schools, representing approximately 6.5% of the total teacher population. This ensured that schools of different sizes and locations, including both urban and rural areas, were adequately represented. This approach ensured a sample that accurately reflected the composition of the public senior secondary school system in Abia State.

Data were collected using two instruments developed by the researcher. The first, the Human Resource Management Practices Questionnaire (HRMPQ), was designed to measure teachers' perceptions of principals' human resource management practices, focusing specifically on staff training, remuneration, and promotion. The HRMPQ contains fifteen items rated on a four-point Likert scale, ranging from Very High Extent (4) to Very Low Extent (1). The second instrument, the Teachers' Job Satisfaction Questionnaire (TJSQ), was designed to measure teachers' level of satisfaction with their job. It also contains fifteen items rated on a four-point Likert scale ranging from Strongly Agree (4) to Strongly Disagree (1). Both instruments were subjected to content validation by three experts in Educational Management and Measurement & Evaluation from Abia State University, Uturu, who ensured that the items were clear, relevant, and appropriate for the study.

To ensure reliability, a pilot study was conducted among 30 teachers and 5 principals from public senior secondary schools in neighboring Imo State. Using Cronbach's Alpha, the reliability coefficient for the HRMPQ was found to be 0.82, while the TJSQ yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.79. Subscales for staff training, remuneration, and promotion produced reliability indices of 0.81, 0.77, and 0.80 respectively. These results indicated that the instruments were reliable and suitable for the main study.

The questionnaires were administered personally by the researcher with the assistance of three trained research assistants. A total of 450 questionnaires were distributed to the selected teachers and principals. Out of these, 440 were correctly filled and retrieved, representing a response rate of 97.8%, which is considered highly adequate for statistical analysis.

Data collected were analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 28. Descriptive statistics, including mean, standard deviation, and percentages, were used to summarize the demographic characteristics of respondents. To address the research questions and test the hypotheses, simple and multiple regression analyses were conducted to determine the extent to which principals' human resource management

practices predict teachers' job satisfaction. The significance of the regression coefficients was tested using t-tests, and all analyses were conducted at the 0.05 level of significance. This approach allowed the researcher to determine both the strength and direction of the relationships between the independent and dependent variables, providing clear insights into the predictive influence of principals' human resource management practices on teachers' job satisfaction in public senior secondary schools in Abia State.

Presentation of Results

Research Question 1: To what extent does staff training practice predict teachers' job satisfaction in public senior secondary schools in Abia State?

A simple linear regression analysis was conducted to examine the extent to which staff training practices predict teachers' job satisfaction in public senior secondary schools in Abia State. The results are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Regression Summary showing how Staff Training Practice predicts Teachers' Job Satisfaction in Public Senior Secondary Schools in Abia State

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0.917	0.841	0.840	1.845

Predictors: Staff Training Practice; Dependent Variable: Teachers' Job Satisfaction

The coefficient of determination (Adjusted $R^2 = 0.840$) indicates that 84% of the variance in teachers' job satisfaction can be attributed to staff training practices. This demonstrates a strong positive relationship between staff training and teachers' job satisfaction.

ANOVA and Regression Coefficient

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	7165.471	1	7165.471	2104.499	0.000
Residual	1358.529	410	3.405		
Total	8524.000	411			
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients (B)	Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients (Beta)	t	Sig.
1	1.374	0.030	0.917	45.875	0.000

The standardized Beta coefficient (0.917) and t-value (45.875) are significant at the 0.000 level, which is less than the alpha level of 0.05. Therefore, the null hypothesis (H_{01} : Staff training practice does not significantly predict teachers' job satisfaction) is rejected.

The findings indicate that staff training practices significantly predict teachers' job satisfaction in public senior secondary schools in Abia State. This means that when principals organize regular and relevant training for teachers, it enhances their skills, confidence, and satisfaction on the job. Teachers feel valued and competent, which positively impacts their work engagement and overall job satisfaction. This aligns with Ewen in Obineli (2013), who emphasized that teacher satisfaction is linked to the quality and quantity of professional development received.

Research Question 2: To what extent does remuneration practice predict teachers' job satisfaction in public senior secondary schools in Abia State?

To determine the effect of remuneration practices on teachers' job satisfaction, a regression analysis was performed. The results are presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Regression Summary showing how Remuneration Practice predicts Teachers' Job Satisfaction in Public Senior Secondary Schools in Abia State

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0.842	0.709	0.707	2.016

Predictors: Remuneration Practice; Dependent Variable: Teachers' Job Satisfaction

The adjusted R^2 of 0.707 shows that 71% of the variance in teachers' job satisfaction can be explained by remuneration practices, indicating a strong positive relationship between fair compensation and job satisfaction.

ANOVA and Regression Coefficient

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	6057.324	1	6057.324	1234.480	0.000
Residual	2466.876	410	6.016		
Total	8524.000	411			

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients (B)	Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients (Beta)	t	Sig.
1	1.142	0.032	0.842	35.133	0.000

The Beta coefficient (0.842) is statistically significant at $0.000 < 0.05$. Hence, the null hypothesis (H_{02} : **Remuneration practice does not significantly predict teachers' job satisfaction**) is rejected.

The result indicates that remuneration significantly influences teachers' job satisfaction. Teachers who receive adequate and timely salaries, allowances, and incentives are more motivated, committed, and productive. Remuneration satisfies basic and professional needs, reducing dissatisfaction and enhancing work performance. This is consistent with Bello & Adebajo (2024), who stated that a fair reward system is crucial for employee performance in educational settings.

Research Question 3: To what extent does promotion practice predict teachers' job satisfaction in public senior secondary schools in Abia State?

Regression analysis was conducted to examine the effect of promotion on teachers' job satisfaction. The results are presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Regression Summary showing how Promotion Practice predicts Teachers' Job Satisfaction in Public Senior Secondary Schools in Abia State

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0.801	0.642	0.639	2.134

Predictors: Promotion Practice; Dependent Variable: Teachers' Job Satisfaction

The adjusted R^2 of 0.639 indicates that **64% of the variance in teachers' job satisfaction can be explained by promotion practices**, suggesting a moderately strong positive relationship.

ANOVA and Regression Coefficient

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	5469.123	1	5469.123	995.874	0.000
Residual	3054.877	410	7.451		

Total	8524.000	411			
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients (B)	Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients (Beta)	t	Sig.
1	1.017	0.034	0.801	31.205	0.000

The Beta coefficient (0.801) is significant at $0.000 < 0.05$. Thus, the null hypothesis (**H₀₃: Promotion practice does not significantly predict teachers' job satisfaction**) is **rejected**.

Promotion practices significantly predict teachers' job satisfaction. Teachers who receive fair, timely, and merit-based promotions feel recognized and motivated, which enhances their performance and commitment to teaching. This aligns with Beenbulem (2024), who emphasized that clear promotion policies foster productivity and satisfaction among school staff.

Summary of Findings

1. **Staff training practices** significantly predict teachers' job satisfaction (84% variance explained).
2. **Remuneration practices** significantly predict teachers' job satisfaction (71% variance explained).
3. **Promotion practices** significantly predict teachers' job satisfaction (64% variance explained).

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The findings of this study examined the extent to which principals' human resource management practices staff training, remuneration, and promotion predict teachers' job satisfaction in public senior secondary schools in Abia State. Each research question was addressed, and the results reveal important insights into the role of human resource management in enhancing teachers' satisfaction and performance.

Staff Training Practices and Teachers' Job Satisfaction

The study found that staff training practices significantly predict teachers' job satisfaction, with 84% of the variance in job satisfaction explained by training. This finding indicates that teachers who receive consistent and effective training feel more competent, confident, and motivated in their professional roles. This is consistent with the study by Anho (2022), who found that principals' use of professional development programs directly improves teachers' work satisfaction and overall performance. Similarly, Ewen in Obineli (2013) emphasized that teacher satisfaction is closely linked to the quality and availability of training opportunities.

In practical terms, the findings suggest that training equips teachers with up-to-date pedagogical skills and instructional strategies, which reduce professional stress and enhance confidence in delivering lessons. This aligns with Ajimode in Arogundade (2019), who noted that investment in staff development positively influences teachers' perception of recognition, motivation, and satisfaction. Therefore, principals' commitment to organizing relevant workshops, seminars, and in-service training programs is crucial in fostering a productive and satisfied teaching workforce in Abia State.

Remuneration Practices and Teachers' Job Satisfaction

The study also revealed that remuneration practices significantly predict teachers' job satisfaction, accounting for 71% of the variance. This demonstrates that fair and timely compensation, including salaries, allowances, and incentives, plays a central role in motivating teachers and ensuring their satisfaction. The result corroborates findings by Bello and Adebajo (2024), who reported that a well-structured reward system enhances employee performance and job satisfaction in educational settings.

Additionally, Ibiene (2023) emphasized that wage adequacy and regular payment reduce occupational stress and promote positive attitudes among teachers. Teachers who perceive that their financial needs are adequately met tend to exhibit higher commitment, reduced absenteeism, and greater engagement in instructional activities. In

the context of Abia State, principals and education authorities must prioritize structured remuneration policies and ensure timely payments to strengthen teachers' morale and work output.

Promotion Practices and Teachers' Job Satisfaction

The third major finding indicated that promotion practices significantly predict teachers' job satisfaction, explaining 64% of the variance. Teachers who are promoted based on merit, experience, and performance feel recognized and valued, which enhances their motivation and overall satisfaction. This aligns with Beenbulem (2024), who highlighted that clear promotion policies and career progression opportunities positively influence employee engagement and productivity.

Furthermore, Adejumobi and Ojikutu (2023) observed that teachers' perception of equitable promotion practices reduces feelings of injustice and fosters organizational loyalty. In the Abia State context, a transparent and merit-based promotion system ensures that teachers are rewarded for their contributions, thereby motivating them to maintain high professional standards. Failure to implement such practices could result in dissatisfaction, low morale, and high turnover among teachers.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are made:

Principals should organize regular in-service training, workshops, and seminars to enhance teachers' pedagogical skills and competencies.

The Abia State Ministry of Education should ensure timely and fair payment of salaries, allowances, and incentives to teachers to boost morale and motivation.

Principals should advocate for performance-based rewards and recognition schemes to acknowledge teachers' achievements and encourage higher productivity.

Principals and the state education board should implement transparent and merit-based promotion policies to ensure fairness and motivate teachers.

Abia State education policymakers should integrate HR management strategies into school administration frameworks to create a supportive and productive work environment.

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