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**Effects of Age and Work Experience on Job Satisfaction of Primary School Teachers: Implications for Career Counseling**

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## **Effects of Age and Work Experience on Job Satisfaction of Primary School Teachers: Implications for Career Counseling**

### **Abstract**

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This descriptive survey investigated the influence of age and working experience on job satisfaction of primary school teachers. The participants (n=238) were primary school teachers randomly selected from public and private schools in Ota, Ogun State, Nigeria. An adapted version of Bellingham (2004) job satisfaction survey with reliability index of .96 was employed to generate data from the participants. Pearson Moment Correlation Coefficient and t-test statistics were used to analyse the three hypotheses set to channel the study. The results obtained indicated that there were significant positive relationship between age and work experience and job satisfaction ( $r = .312; .229$ ) and that significant difference existed between teachers with less and above five years of working experience ( $t = -2.68, P < 0.05$ ). The implications of these findings on career counselling were discussed.

**Key Words:** Age, Work Experience, Job satisfaction, Primary school teachers, Career counseling

#### **Introduction**

A happy employee is widely acknowledged worldwide to be more productive than an unhappy one. An employee who is happy tends to be satisfied with virtually everything that is associated with the job. Charlie (2010) asserts that success of any organization depends on the performance of its employee and employees can give their best if only they are satisfied with their job. Job satisfaction as a terminology has its origin from Hoppack according to Khan (2006) in Rajat (2009). It has been described in diverse manner by numerous scholars and writers. For instance, Spector (1997) perceives

it to be people's attitude towards their job and organization and the extent to which they like or dislike the job while Rajat (2009) argues that job satisfaction describes how contented an individual is with his job. Charlie (2010) similarly submits that job satisfaction is proportional to the feelings of happiness and contentment in the minds of employees about their job. Job satisfaction is subjective as far as individual is concerned (Komolafe, 2010) as well as situational (Healthfied, 2010). It is therefore not surprising when Healthfied (2010) points out that job satisfaction can also be downer in a situation whereby mediocre

employees stay in an organization because they are satisfied with an employer's environment.

The benefits accruable from employees that are genuinely satisfied with their jobs are copious. It has been pointed out by Mosadeghrad, Ferlie, & Rosenberg (2008) that job satisfaction and commitment are critical to retaining and attracting well qualified personnel. Murrells, Robinson & Griffiths (2008) observe that in the field of nursing job satisfaction can also impact on patient safety, productivity, and performance, quality of care retention and turnover, commitment to the organization and profession.

The fact that employees from diverse professions are satisfied or dissatisfied with their job has theoretical and empirical support from review of literature. There are quite a number of theories that attempt to explain factors associated with job satisfaction or dissatisfaction. For instance, the 'Affect Theory' of Locker (1976) posits that workers who are committed to their profession are more affected (positively or negatively) than their counterpart who have a casual approach towards the job. On the other hand, Judge's (1998) 'Dispositional Theory' argues that people have inborn disposition that tend to make them have tendencies toward a certain level of satisfaction in respective of one's job (Judge, Locke, Durham, 1997). Herzberg (1964) 'Two-Factor Theory' also known as Motivator Hygiene Theory identifies motivation and hygiene factors contribution to job satisfaction. The theory posits that satisfaction and dissatisfaction are driven first by motivator factors (such as achievement and promotion) and then by hygiene factors (such as policies

and pay of the establishment).

The Conference Board in the United States of America, as reported by Healthfied (2010), recently released the outcome of 2009 job satisfaction level of 5000 United States households of all ages and income brackets. The findings from the survey among others indicate that:

- 45% of Americans are satisfied with their jobs as against 49% in 2008 and 61.1% in 1987 when the survey was first conducted;
- roughly 64% of workers under 25 say they are unhappy in their job;
- the most satisfied are those age 25-34;
- 43% of workers feel secured in their job as against 47% in 2008;
- 56% say they like their co-workers as against 57% in 2008 and 68% in 1987;
- 51% say they are satisfied with their boss as against 55% in 2008 and 60% in two decades.

In Iran, Mosadeghrad, Ferlie, & Rosenberg (2008) descriptive, correlational and cross-sectional study of 629 hospital employees indicated that the job satisfaction level of the participant can be seen to be medium scales mainly because of salaries and benefits, working conditions, recognition, and job security. It was also confirmed that a positive relationship exist between job satisfaction and organizational commitment.

In Nigeria, the job satisfaction level of educators/lecturers in Colleges of Education had been determined in a study conducted by Akpofure, Ikhifa, Imide, Israel, & Okoko

(2006) among 230 randomly selected Colleges of Education educators in Southern Nigeria. The outcome of the investigation showed that educators were most satisfied with their workload followed by co-workers, supervision, and promotion. Further analysis indicated that educators experienced a high degree of dissatisfaction with their present pay. Correlational analysis further showed that there was a significant negative correlation between age, educational level, and academic rank and various facets that determine job satisfaction.

In another study by Alao (1997) which aimed at ascertaining the status and job satisfaction level of 34 cataloguer in Nigeria as well as determine whether or not age, sex, marital status, length of service were accountable for differences in job satisfaction, it was found that cataloguers' had an overall job satisfaction score of 58.2%. This is in addition to the fact that none of the variables was significantly correlated with cataloguers overall job satisfaction and the fact that the variables were variously and significantly correlated with some aspect of the cataloguers' level of job satisfaction with that of other groups of librarian. The study conducted by Uwaimeiyi & Onyewadume (2001) among 480 technical teachers randomly selected from 18 southern states of Nigeria showed that out of the 22 items related to job satisfaction the participants disagree with all except three. This clearly showed that the participants were dissatisfied with their job

It is clearly evident from these researches and other not mentioned in this paper that workers generally or specifically had been found to either be satisfied with their job as a whole or

aspects of the job or dissatisfied with the entire job or part of the job. This generates the need to understand the reasons behind dissatisfaction with the whole or part of the job. Komolafe (2010) opines that job dissatisfaction is not caused by a small pay check but rather an over-burning work, high turnover and poorly structured job. Salesboom (2009) on the other hand concurs that employees are dissatisfied with their job because they feel that their concerns, problems, and concerns or complaints are ignored by management. It might also be due to the fact that they feel that they are stuck in position with no potential for advancement. Americans who are dissatisfied or unhappy with their job in the Conference Board survey complained that incomes have not kept up with inflation and that the soaring cost of health insurance has eaten into workers take home pay (Healthfield, 2010).

The consequences of job dissatisfaction are not palatable. Economists, according to Healthfield (2010) propose that if the downward trend of job satisfaction in America is not reversed it could stifle innovation and hurt competitiveness and productivity. It could also make unhappy older workers less incline to spare time to share knowledge and skills with younger workers. Consequently, strenuous efforts must be made to identify job satisfaction or dissatisfaction level of all professions and factors influencing or and associated with it through diverse researches and also reverse the untoward trend noticeable.

### **Statement of the Problem**

There are quite a number of studies on job satisfaction of a number of employees as reflected in the review of literature. Specifically,

studies exist on job satisfaction of teachers/lecturers such as studies by Uwaiemeiye & Onyewadume (2001) and Akpofure, Ikhifa, Imide, Israel, & Okokyo (2006), Adetayo (2008). However, it must be noted that there are different categories of teachers for different categories of pupils/students. While we have studies on teaching profession generally and studies on job satisfaction level of lecturers in higher institutions and teachers in post primary schools insufficient studies permeate primary school teachers' job satisfaction in Nigeria. Ironically, primary school teachers are trained to lay the foundation of education on which other teachers build on in secondary schools and higher institutions. It, therefore, implies that job satisfaction of teaching profession suppose to start with teachers in primary schools. When teachers at this level of education are unhappy with their job it poses great danger for future development of education in the nation. As rightly pointed by Uwaiemeiye & Onyewadume (2001), education is an instrument of development and teachers are a pivot to the education process. The importance of primary school teachers to the development of education as a programme of the nation and pupils as leaders of tomorrow makes studies on their job satisfaction germane. Hence, the more we have adequate information on their job satisfaction level the more employers are equipped to identify and meet their psycho-socio-economic needs.

### **Purpose of the Study**

This study aims at providing empirical information on job satisfaction of primary school teachers in Nigeria with particular focus on those residents in Ota, Ogun State, Nigeria

by comparing the influence of age and length of service on their job satisfaction level. It is anticipated that the outcome of this research will give room for a better understanding of factors contributing to primary school teachers' satisfaction or dissatisfaction in Nigeria and equally enables policy makers design enhancement workshop for teachers.

### **Research Hypotheses**

- 1) There is no significance relationship between age and the job satisfaction level of primary school teachers.
- 2) There is no significance relationship between years of working experience and the job satisfaction level of primary school teachers.
- 3) There is no significance difference between the job satisfaction level of primary school teachers with less and above five years of working experience.

### **Methodology**

**Research Design** The study was conducted as a descriptive survey design which incorporated aspect of correlational research.

### **Participants**

The population of this study consists of all primary school teachers in private and public schools in Ota. The sample, however, consists of two hundred and thirty-eight teachers randomly selected from twenty primary schools (10 public and 10 private schools) in Ota, Ogun State. The demographic information of the participants showed that 95 (39.9%) were males and 143 (60.1%) were females. 123 (51.7%) were single while 115 (48.3%) were married. 89

(37.4) were degree holders and 146 (61.3%) had Nigerian certificate in Education.

### **Instrument**

The instrument employed to gather data was adapted version of Job Satisfaction Survey by Bellingham (2004). It is a two sections inventory with the section A requesting the respondents to provide demographic information on their gender, age, marital status, religion, educational qualification, years of working experience, position at workplace, profession, and name address of workplace. The second section consists of 30 positively worded items that deals with intrinsic and extrinsic aspects of job satisfaction. A 4 point Likert type scale of 4= very much like me; 3 = like me; 2 = somewhat like me; 1 = unlike me. A typical item on the scale reads "I feel positive and up most of the time I am working." The minimum score obtainable by a respondent is 30 while the maximum is 120. The higher the score the more satisfied the respondent. The reliability co-efficient of the instrument was .96 using Spearman Brown formula. The questionnaire was administered to the participants in their various schools by the researchers with the assistance of three research assistance. The return rate was about 95% for it was collected on the day of administration.

### **Data Analysis**

Data generated from the instrument were analysed using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS 11 for Window, 'V' 11(SPSS, Inc). The relationship between independent variables (age and working experience) and independent variable (job satisfaction) was analyzed using Pearson Moment Correlation

Co-efficient while t-test statistic was employed to test differences between groups.

### **Results**

#### **Discussion**

The study set out to determine the comparative effects of age, years of working experience on job satisfaction of primary school teachers in Ota, Ogun state, Nigeria. The analysis of the data revealed that age and work experience had low but significant positive relationship with job satisfaction. This implies that the two variables are important in the determination of job satisfaction of primary school teachers. This finding is consistent with the findings of other studies that have concluded that age and working experience among other variables are correlated with workers' job satisfaction (Bodur, (2002). What has been found to be of no significance relationship to teachers' job satisfaction is leadership behaviour of principals (Khanna, 2010). This study therefore affirms Mosadeghr, Ferlie., & Rosenberg (2008) who had earlier in their study reported that variables such as employees' age, gender, marital status, work experience years, organizational position, educational level, type of employment and salary received have significant effects on job satisfaction.

The result of hypothesis three which indicated that the participants are satisfied with their job (as evident in the mean scores of 93.91 and 99.40) but with a significant difference between the job satisfaction of primary teachers with less and above five years of working experience did not come as a surprise. This is because it corroborates studies like that of

Adetayo (2008) which discovered that majority of teachers are satisfied with their job and teachers differed significantly on a number of variables. Adetayo (2008) and Clark, Oswald, & Warr (1996) reported that the youngest and oldest workers have greater job satisfaction. In the contrary, Perie, Baker, & Whitener (1997) reported that in the United States of America younger and less experience teachers have higher levels of satisfaction than older and more experienced teachers in public schools, whereas the relationship is bipolar in the private schools because the very youngest and very oldest teachers had the highest level of satisfaction just like the least and most experienced teachers. When teachers are satisfied with their job the following conditions, from diverse studies, according to Assist beginning Teachers (2010) are in existence- the administration is supportive and encouraging; principals frequently discuss instructional practices with teachers; there is a great deal of cooperative effort among staff; and teachers participate in making important school decisions. Others are the fact that staff members are recognized for a well job done; necessary material are available; the level of misbehaviour in their school does not interfere with teaching; student apathy is not a problem; and parents support teachers' work. It could therefore be assumed that most of these conditions are resident in the schools of the participants of this study since they are satisfied with their work.

**Implications for Career Counseling**

The findings of this study have a number of implications for career counselling. Career counselling is an aspect of counselling that deals with entry into a vocation, maintenance of

the vocation and making progress in the vocation. The finding of the study which established the fact that primary school teachers, irrespective numbers of length of service, are satisfied with their job implies that career counsellor has a platform by which they can encourage and motivate clients who are just entry into teaching profession. Similarly, it is practicable for career counsellor to inform proprietors of school that their employees' satisfaction depends on a number of intrinsic and extrinsic conditions which they can give room to in their institutions.

**Table 1: Correlation between Age and Job Satisfaction of Primary School Teachers**

Variab	N	r-cal	DF	R-tab	P	Rmk
Age	238	.312	236	2.05	.000	S

Correlation significant @ 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The Pearson Moment correlation co-efficient analysis from Table 1 indicated  $r = .312 @ .000$  level of significant level. This means that there exist low but significant positive relationship between teachers' age and job satisfaction level. Correlation significant @ 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The Pearson Moment correlation co-efficient analysis from Table 11 indicated  $r = .229 @ .000$  level of significant level. This means that there exist low but significant positive relationship between teachers' age and job satisfaction level.

The result in Table I11 shows that the calculated t-value of -2.68 is greater than t-observed of -1.96 at .05 level of significance. Hence, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significance difference between the job satisfaction level of primary school teachers

with less and above five years of working experience is rejected.

**11: Correlation between Working Experience and Job Satisfaction of Primary School Teachers**

Variable	N	r-cal	DF	R-tab	P	Rmk
Work Exp	238	.229	236	2.05	.000	S

**Table 111: Mean, Standard Deviation, and T-Value of Primary School Teachers with Less and Above Five Years Working Experience**

Variable	N	X	SD	Df	t-cal	t-obs	P
Less 5yr	138	93.91	15.54	236	-2.68	1.96	.002
Abv 5yr	100	99.40	15.72				

Significant @ .05 alpha level

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