

**OCCUPATIONAL STRESS AND TEACHERS' CLASSROOM PERFORMANCE IN  
PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN EDO NORTH SENATORIAL DISTRICT**

**By**

**Dr.(Mrs.) Okosun Mercy**

**Department Of Educational Foundations And Management, Faculty Of Education,**

**Ambrose Alli University, P.M.B 14, Ekpoma, Edo State, Nigeria**

**Email: okounm96@gmail.com**

**Phone number: 09061822123**

**&**

**Dr. Imoroa, Oladele Victor**

**Department Of Educational Foundations And Management, Faculty Of Education,**

**Ambrose Alli University, P.M.B 14, Ekpoma, Edo State, Nigeria.**

**Email: imoroaoladelevictor2017@gmail.com**

**Phone number: 08155460740, 08131982264**

**ABSTRACT**

This study focused on occupational stress and how it affects teachers' classroom performance in public secondary schools in Edo North Senatorial District. The main aim of this study was to examine the relationship between excess workload, administrative pressure and teachers' classroom performance in the area. The study used a correlational research design, the population consisted of 327 teachers and 43 principals from public secondary schools in the district. Two adapted instruments were used for data collection titled: Occupational Stress Questionnaire (OSQ) and Teachers' Classroom Performance Questionnaire (TECLAPQ). The reliability of the

instruments was confirmed using the Cronbach Alpha Method with reliability value of 0.72 and 0.73, four research questions were raised and two hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance. Research question 1 and 2 were answered using mean and standard deviation (SD), while hypotheses 1 and 2 were tested with the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient. The results showed that teachers in the study area experienced relatively high level of occupational stress while their classroom performance was generally low. The study also found a significant relationship between teachers' workload, administrative pressure and their classroom performance. Based on these findings, it was

recommended among others that Government should employ more teachers and redistribute tasks in order to reduce workload and pressure on individual teachers this would help improve their effectiveness and overall productivity.

**Keywords:** Occupational Stress, Classroom Performance, Teachers and Edo North Senatorial District.

### Introduction

Teachers are professionals who play a very important role in the delivery of education, society places great trust in their ability to pass on useful knowledge, skills and values to learners helping them grow into responsible individuals who can contribute positively to the development of the society. Teachers guide students through their learning process by carrying out different tasks and responsibilities within the classroom and the school as a whole. The classroom in a formal school setting is a place where learners in search of knowledge interact with teachers who are knowledgeable and able to transfer this knowledge however, the extent to which students truly understand and acquire knowledge in the classroom depends largely on how well the teacher performs different teaching and learning activities which is known as teachers' classroom performance (Inetianbor, 2024).

Teachers' classroom performance refers to how effectively teachers carry out their professional duties such as lesson planning, lesson delivery, assessing and monitoring student's progress through tests and assignments and managing the classroom generally. It is usually measured in three main aspects: questioning techniques, classroom management and classroom interaction. Questioning techniques involve the methods teachers use to check students' understanding before, during and after lessons. Classroom management is the teachers' ability to organize and make use of available resources, control time, reduce distractions and ensure smooth learning. Classroom interaction focuses on how teachers and students communicate and how teachers encourage active student participation in lessons. This two-way communication process helps to increase students' interest and involvement in learning (Osabuohien-Osarumwense, 2024).

Over time, many factors have been found to affect teachers' classroom performance such as teachers' attitude, subject mastery, teaching methods, management style, motivation, community relations, students' behaviour, conditions of service, administrative issues and particularly, occupational stress.

Occupational stress which is the main focus of this study happens when there is a mismatch between a person's abilities and the demands of the job. It is the inability to cope with work pressure which in turn affects performance, health and the quality of work. Stress occurs when job demands are greater than an individual's ability to meet them, resulting in emotional, psychological and physical strain. When employers expect too much from staff without considering their abilities or the work environment, it creates an imbalance that often leads to occupational stress. Some common symptoms of this type of stress include reduced performance, depression, anxiety, sleep problems, low self-esteem, irritability, defensiveness, anger and mood swings (Fabian, 2022). There are many possible sources of occupational stress among such as heavy workload, administrative pressure, lack of resources, poor interpersonal relationships, unclear job roles, role conflicts and career development issues. However, this study focuses on two main sources (excess workload and administrative pressure. Excess workload occurs when teachers are given more work than they can reasonably handle alone while administrative pressure refers to situations where teachers are expected to complete specific tasks or meet deadline under strict

conditions. Teachers who view these stressors as overwhelming may find it difficult to manage their classrooms effectively, engage students through questions or encourage positive interaction. On the other hand, teachers who see these challenges as opportunities to improve may show more resilience, creativity and effectiveness in their teaching. This shows that how teachers perceive stress plays a big role in determining the relationship between occupational stress and their classroom performance.

Studies on teachers' performance have highlighted different variables that influence how effectively teachers carry out their duties. Ogbeide and Enabunene (2023) examined the level of stress management skills and teachers' performance in public secondary schools in Benin metropolis. The study adopted the cross-sectional survey design using a sample of 171 teachers and school administrators randomly drawn from six secondary schools in Benin City, Edo State Nigeria. The results showed that public secondary school teachers had a high level of stress and there are no proper stress management techniques for them in Benin metropolis. Renemlila et al (2023) examined occupational stress experienced by secondary-by-secondary school teachers in

India North-Eastern States. sample of 367 was selected via dividing the entire state of Nagaland in four clusters, north, east west and south and one district from each cluster was chosen using simple random sampling. Data was collected using a standardized questionnaire, the occupational stress index. An independent sample t-test was used to analyze that data that was gathered. The findings of the study revealed more than half of the participants were experiencing occupational stress. Amiso (2019) investigated job stress management among secondary school principals in Rivers State. The study's population comprised principals, vice principals and head of departments of 286 public secondary schools in Rivers State. Simple random sampling technique was used to select the respondents for this study and eighty-six (86) respondents making thirty percent (30%) of the target population formed the sample for the study. The instrument was subjected to analysis by specialists in the area of educational management. The test re-test technique of assessing reliability was used. Responses from the first test correlated with those from the second test using Pearson Product Moment Coefficient and a value of .832 was obtained. Descriptive statistics was used for data analysis in this study. The data was

presented by the use of frequency tables, percentages and regression to establish the relationship between the variables. The results of the study were discussed in relation to the study objectives with an aim of answering the research questions. The study found that significant positive and negative relationship exists in job stress management among principals in Rivers State. Wang (2012) examined the performance of university teachers and identified four important variables: organizational commitment, job stress, mental health and achievement motivation. He proposed that these variables significantly determine teachers' performance and developed a conceptual model to explain their influence, using survey and interviews with lecturers in Xi'an, and analyzing the data through structural equation modeling (SEM), the study found that the overall level of teachers' performance was relatively poor. In contrast, Indhumathi (2011) investigated the role of job satisfaction, occupational commitment and organizational commitment on the performance of secondary school teachers. A sample of 444 teachers were randomly selected and the findings revealed that teachers demonstrated a high level of job performance. This was largely attributed to their strong sense of commitment to their

duties and responsibilities in schools which motivated them to be effective in their roles. Further evidence on teachers' performance was provided by Ejidike and Oyelana (2015) who studied factors influencing the teaching of chemistry in secondary schools in Buffalo City Metropolitan Municipality, Eastern Cape Province of South African. Their study involved both teachers and students with data collection through a structured questionnaire containing 30 items on 4-point likert scale, responses from 120 participants were analyzed using chi-square statistics and the results showed that teachers displayed good performance in lesson note preparation, an important aspect of effective teaching. Ebenezer and Ade-Ajayi (2015) examined teachers variables and school effectiveness in Ekiti State using ex-post-facto and descriptive survey designs. Their study employed two instrument titled Teachers' Self-report Inventory (TSRI) and Teaching Effectiveness Questionnaire (TEQ) which was completed by students. Results revealed that while most teachers in the state were professionally qualified and teacher-student ratio met acceptable standards, the overall teaching effectiveness was still low.

Baliyan and Mokoena (2018) investigated stress among teachers in private secondary schools in Botswana. Their aim

was to identify stressors, determine their impact on classroom performance and propose strategies for managing them. The research was conducted in two stages: a pilot phase, where teachers were interviewed to provide information for designing a questionnaire and the main phase where 90 teachers were selected using stratified random sampling. Data were analyzed with descriptive statistics such as mean and standard deviation. The study found that excessive workload (Teaching and extra duties), conflicting school policies and student indiscipline were the major stressors. These factors negatively affected teachers by lowering morale, reducing job satisfaction and increasing workplace conflict. Similarly, Suguna et al (2021) explored the influence of job stress on classroom performance among administrative staff in government hospitals in Selangor, Malaysia. The study employed probability sampling to select participants from hospitals listed by the ministry of Health Malaysia. Stress-related variables such as workload, work-life conflict, time pressure and social pressure were assessed. Result showed that all these factors had a significant negative influence on classroom performance, confirming that stress plays a major role in shaping how effectively teachers and staff carry out their

responsibilities. In another context, Justyna et al (2015) studied burnout among Polish teachers by examining the relationship between personality traits and the match between teachers and their work environment. The study sampled 205 teachers who completed the Maslach Burnout Inventory and the Areas of Work life Scale. Findings revealed three burnout profiles: burnout, engaged and ineffective. Teachers in the burnout group reported greater mismatch with their work environment compared to engaged teachers. They also experienced higher levels of negative emotions and lower self-directedness, showing that both personality traits and environmental conditions contribute to teacher burnout.

Mutua (2022) studied principals' administrative practices and how they influence teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Kathiani Sub-County, Machakos Country. The study focused on four areas: supervision, motivation, professional development and delegation of duties. Guided by the Path-Goal theory, the research targeted 32 principals and 107 teachers. Stratified random sampling was used for teachers while all principals were included through census. Data were collected using questionnaires and interviews. A pilot test with 10% of the population ensured

validity and reliability. Both quantitative and qualitative data were analyzed; data were processed using SPSS version 27 and presented in tables, graphs and charts while qualitative data were analyzed through content analysis. Results showed that principals' administrative practices significantly affect teachers' performance. Similarly, Carmelta (2024) explored the effect of ancillary services on teachers' efficiency in Misamis Oriental Division. The study involved 481 teachers, sampled through stratified random sampling and examined how workload from ancillary services influenced teaching performance in areas such as pedagogy, curriculum and professional development. Finding revealed a strong link between ancillary services and teaching outcomes with factors like age, gender, education level and years of service contributing to differences. In another study, Adesegue and Adewuyi (2024) investigated how head teachers' administrative effectiveness relates to teachers' job performance. Using a descriptive survey design with 520 participants, data were collected through a reliable researcher made questionnaire. Findings indicated a positive relationship between head teachers' leadership management skills, ethics and teachers' job performance.

## Statement of the Problem

In recent years parents, guardians and concerned members of the public have expressed worries about the poor academic performance of students in examinations conducted by the West African Examinations Council (WAEC) and the National Examinations Council (NECO), particularly in public secondary schools. Alongside this poor performance is a noticeable decline in the quality of secondary school graduates produced each year. Many of these graduates lack basic skills in numeracy, writing and spoken English as well as the ability to think critically or make sound decisions about their future. Several factors have been identified as causes of this problem which include poor condition of public-school facilities, lack of government commitment to providing quality education, non-employment of teaching staff, moral decline in society and teachers' lack of motivation due to poor and discouraging conditions of service. Observation have showed that over fifteen years now, the State Government is yet to declare vacancy nor employ teachers rather contract teachers who are not well granted in education are temporarily engage in teaching which could be major reason for poor performance of students and the few qualified and experience teachers left are

compare to increase their duties in schools. Since it is not possible to study all these factors at once, this research focuses on the teacher factor base on the fact that teachers are professionals who play a vital role in the delivery of education. Therefore, this study examined the relationship between occupational stress and teachers' classroom performance in public secondary schools in Edo North Senatorial District.

## Research Questions

1. What is the level of occupational stress among teachers in public secondary schools in Edo North Senatorial District?
2. What is the level of teacher's classroom performance in public secondary schools in Edo North Senatorial District?
3. What is the relationship between excess workload and classroom performance of teachers in public secondary schools in Edo North Senatorial District?
4. What is the relationship between administrative

pressure and classroom performance of teachers in public secondary schools in Edo North Senatorial District?

### Research Hypotheses

1. What is the relationship between excess workload and classroom performance of teachers in public secondary schools in Edo North Senatorial District?
2. What is the relationship between administrative pressure and classroom performance of teachers in public secondary schools in Edo North Senatorial District?

### Methodology

This study adopted a correlational research design to examine the relationship between occupational stress and teachers' classroom performance. The population of the study consisted of all teacher (327) and principals (43) working in public secondary schools in Edo North Senatorial District. Since the population were relatively small, all teachers and principals were included in the study. Data were collected using two modified

instruments: Occupational Stress Questionnaire (OSQ) and Teachers' Classroom Performance Questionnaire (TECLAPQ). The design of these instruments were adapted from the work of Kyriacou and Sutcliffe (1978) and the Annual Performance Review Report for Staff of Ekiti State University. OSQ consisted of 10 items grouped into five categories each addressing different aspects of teachers' work-related stress while the TECLAPQ contained 9 items divided into three sections with each section focusing on a key aspect of classroom performance. Both questionnaire were rated on a 4-point scale. The reliability of the instrument was confirmed using the Cronbach Alpha method, reliability coefficients were 0.67 for excess workload, 0.73 for administrative pressure, 0.71 for class control, 0.71 for questionnaires skills, 0.72 for students interaction and 0.71 for the overall instrument. The questionnaires were administered to both teachers and principals, research question 1 and 2 were analyzed using mean scores and standard deviation a benchmark of 2.50 was used to determine the level of classroom performance and occupational stress. This was derived by adding the values of the four response options ( $4+3+2+1=10$ ) and dividing by 4, which gave 2.50. A mean score of 2.50 and above

indicated a high level of stress or teachers' classroom performance while a score of 2.49 or below indicated a low level of stress or teachers' classroom performance. The study's hypotheses were tested using the Pearson Moment Correlation (PPMC) at 0.05 level of

significance.

## RESULTS

**Research Question1:** what is the level of occupational stress of teachers in public secondary schools in Edo North Senatorial District?

**Table 1: Level of Occupational Stress Among Teachers**

S/N	ITEMS	N	$\bar{X}$	SD	Remarks
	<b>Excess workload</b>				
1	workload often leaves me with insufficient time to prepare for lessons.	327	2.90	1.08	High
2	Managing multiple responsibilities at school negatively affects teaching.	327	2.85	1.05	High
3	Struggle to meet deadlines due to excessive teaching and administrative tasks.	327	2.83	1.04	High
4	Amount of paperwork impact's ability to focus on classroom instruction.	327	2.56	0.86	Moderate
5	Large class sizes contribute to stress that affects performance.	327	3.47	0.68	High
	<b>Cluster mean = 2.92</b>				
	<b>Administrative Pressure</b>				
6	Frequent administrative demands reduce effectiveness in teaching.	317	2.83	1.04	High
7	Stressed due to the constant changes in school policies.	327	2.56	0.86	Moderate
8	Lack of administrative support impact's ability to manage the classroom.	327	2.85	1.05	High
9	Burdened with non-teaching tasks, which detract teaching performance.	327	2.90	1.08	High
10	Unrealistic administrative expectations lead to stress that hinders classroom effectiveness.	327	2.89	1.07	High

	<b>cluster mean = 2.81</b>				
	<b>Overall mean on occupational stress = 2.87</b>				<b>High</b>

The result in Table 1 above shows the views of teachers on excess workload and administrative pressure as a source of occupational stress affecting their classroom performance. The overall mean score of 2.87 indicates that occupational stress among teachers was generally high. This means that most teachers in the study location face significant challenges from their workload

and administrative pressures, which may negatively affect their classroom performance and effectiveness. It therefore means that the level of occupational stress of public secondary school teachers in Edo North Senatorial District was high.

**Research Question 2:** What is the level of teachers' classroom performance in public secondary schools in Edo North Senatorial District?

**Table 2: Level of Teachers Classroom Performance**

S/N	ITEMS	N	$\bar{X}$	SD	Remarks
	<b>Class management</b>				
1	Ability to keep his students attentive all through his lesson	43	2.54	1.05	High
2	Managing the classroom space for delivery of instruction	43	2.27	0.91	Low
3	Managing the marker board for presentation of lessons in class	43	2.52	0.90	High
	<b>Over all mean = 2.44</b>				
	<b>Class questioning behavior</b>				
4	Responding to students' questions promptly	43	2.02	1.15	Low
5	Encouraging students to ask questions during a lesson	43	2.30	1.07	Low
6	Rewarding learners who answer questions correctly in class	43	2.13	0.80	Low
	<b>Over all mean = 2.15</b>				

<b>Classroom interaction with learners</b>					
<b>7</b>	Ensuring students participate in the lesson of the day	43	2.44	0.87	Low
<b>8</b>	Maintaining eye contact with each student during instruction	43	2.61	0.85	High
<b>9</b>	Calling students by name to evaluate them based on the lesson taught	43	2.51	1.09	High
<b>Over all mean = 2.52</b>					
<b>Grand mean on classroom performance of teachers = 2.37</b>					

The overall result from Table 2 shows that teachers' classroom performance was at a low to moderate level (grand mean =2.37), while teachers demonstrate some strengths in keeping students attentive, managing the board, maintaining eye contact, and calling students by name. They show clear weaknesses in classroom questioning behavior. In particular, they are not consistent in responding to students' questions, rarely encourage learners to ask questions, and do not often reward students

who give correct answers. These weaknesses reduce student motivation, limit participation, and make lessons less interactive; hence, the level of teachers' classroom performance in public secondary schools in Edo North Senatorial District was Low.

**Hypothesis 1:** There is no significant relationship between excess workload and teachers' classroom performance in public secondary schools in Edo North Senatorial District.

**Table 3: Excess Workload and Teachers Classroom Performance**

Variables	N	$\bar{X}$	S.D	Pearson r-coefficient	p-value	Remarks
Excess Workload	2.37	.94				
Teachers' classroom performance	2.87	.97		0.412*	0.003	Null hypothesis rejected (p<0.05)

significant at p<0.05

The results in Table 3 show a Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.412, which means there was a moderate positive relationship between teachers' workload and their classroom performance. The p-value of 0.003 is lower than the 0.05 level of significance, showing that the relationship is statistically significant. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected. This finding suggests that when teachers' workload increases, their classroom

performance also increases to a moderate extent. It may also mean that having a reasonable workload can motivate teachers and improve the effectiveness of their teaching.

**Hypothesis 2:** There is no significant relationship between administrative pressure and teachers' classroom performance in public secondary schools in Edo North Senatorial District.

**Table 4: Administrative Pressure and Teachers' Classroom Performance**

Variables	N	$\bar{X}$	S.D	Pearson r-coefficient	p-value	Remarks
Administrative Pressure	2.39	1.02				Null hypothesis rejected (p<0.05)
Teachers' classroom performance	2.13	.97		0.321*	0.002	
significant at p< 0.05						

Table 4 shows that the Pearson correlation coefficient ( $r=0.321$ ) indicates a weak but positive relationship between administrative pressure and classroom performance. Even though the relationship is not very strong, the  $p$ -value of 0.002 is statistically significant because it is less than 0.05. This means the null hypothesis is rejected. The result suggests that administrative pressure has a significant effect on teachers' classroom performance in public secondary schools in the study area. The weak correlation further shows that although administrative tasks may not strongly reduce teaching effectiveness, they still play an important role in influencing classroom activities and performance.

## Discussion

The findings of the study showed that public secondary school teachers in Edo North Senatorial District experience a high level of occupational stress. This may be linked to factors such as poor working conditions and an unsupportive administrative system. When teachers work in difficult environments and deal with rigid or unhelpful administration, their stress levels rise. These challenges reduce their ability to concentrate fully on teaching, which explains the high stress levels reported in the study. This result supports the findings of Ogbeide and Enabunene (2023) who

reported high stress among public secondary school teachers. It also agrees with the study of Renemlila et al (2023) which showed that more than half of the participants experienced occupational stress. Similarly, Amiso (2019) found both positive and negative relationships in job stress management among principals in Rivers State.

The study also revealed that the level of classroom performance of teachers in Edo North Senatorial District was low. This could be due to several reasons such as lack of teaching materials, poor welfare provisions that lower teachers' morale, irregular payment of salaries and the government's poor response to teachers' needs. In some cases, teachers may even withdraw from performing their duties because of unfair treatment in schools. Other possible reasons include heavy workload and leadership style adopted by school heads. This outcome is consistent with Wang (2012) who found that teachers' overall performance was relatively poor. It also agrees with Adu-Ebenezer and Ade-Ajayi (2015) who reported that although many teachers were qualified and teacher-students ratio was acceptable, teaching effectiveness remained low. However, the result does not support the findings of Indhumathi (2011) who reported that

teachers demonstrated high job performance. It also disagrees with Ejidike and Oyelana (2015) who found that teachers performed well in lesson not preparation which is an important part of effective teaching.

The findings of the study revealed that there was a moderate and significant positive relationship between teachers' workload and their classroom performance in public secondary schools in Edo North Senatorial District. This outcome may be linked to several factors such as the government's failure to employ more teaching staff over a long period and the excessive demands placed on teachers by school principals. When few teachers are available to handle many responsibilities, their workload increases leaving them physically tired and mentally exhausted. Such conditions reduce their ability to teach effectively and keep students engaged in learning. Result agrees with the study of Baliyan and Mokoena (2018) who identified heavy workload (teaching and extra duties), inconsistent school policies and student indiscipline as major stressors for teachers. It also supports the findings of Suguna et al. (2021) who reported that these factors had a significant negative impact on classroom performance showing that stress strongly affects how well teachers carry out their

duties. Similarly, the study is in line with Justyna et al. (2015) who identified three burnout category felt a poor match with their work environment compared to engaged teachers, experienced more negative emotions and showed less self-direction. This demonstrates that both personal traits and workplace conditions play an important role in teacher burnout and overall performance.

The findings of the study showed that there was a weak positive significant relationship between administrative pressure and teachers' classroom performance in public secondary schools in Edo North Senatorial District. The outcome of this result could be as a result of leadership style and high expectation from school principals. When principals use a strict controlling or unfriendly leadership style, teachers may feel stressed and uncomfortable at work more so, when school principals expect teachers to meet many targets such as covering the syllabus quickly, achieving high student pass rates and taking on extra tasks like supervising events or writing reports knowing that the condition of service is poor such level of expectation is necessary too much which can become a burden. The result agreed with Mutua (2022) who showed that principals' administrative practices significantly affect teachers' performance.

Result agreed with Carmellta (2024) who revealed a strong link between ancillary services contributing to differences. Result align with Adesegue and Adewuyi (2024) who's findings indicated a positive relationship between head teachers' leadership, management skills, ethics and teachers' job performance.

### Conclusion

The role of occupational stress in the teaching and learning process of the school system cannot be undermined as it plays a critical part in shaping the effectiveness and quality of education delivery. Based on the findings it was concluded that that public secondary school teachers experience high level of occupational stress, level of classroom performance of teachers was low, a significant relationship between workload, administrative pressure and teachers' classroom performance in public secondary schools in Edo North Senatorial District.

### Recommendations

1. To improve classroom performance, teachers should be encouraged to adopt more interactive teaching methods, they should give prompt feedback to students' questions, create an environment where students feel free to ask questions and recognize or reward learners who contribute positively to the lesson.

2. Training and workshops can also be organized to help teachers manage classroom space better and to build skills in questioning techniques.

3. School administrators should also provide supportive supervision and incentives that encourage interactive teaching. If these areas are strengthened, teachers will be able to create a more engaging classroom environment which will ultimately improve students' learning outcomes.

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