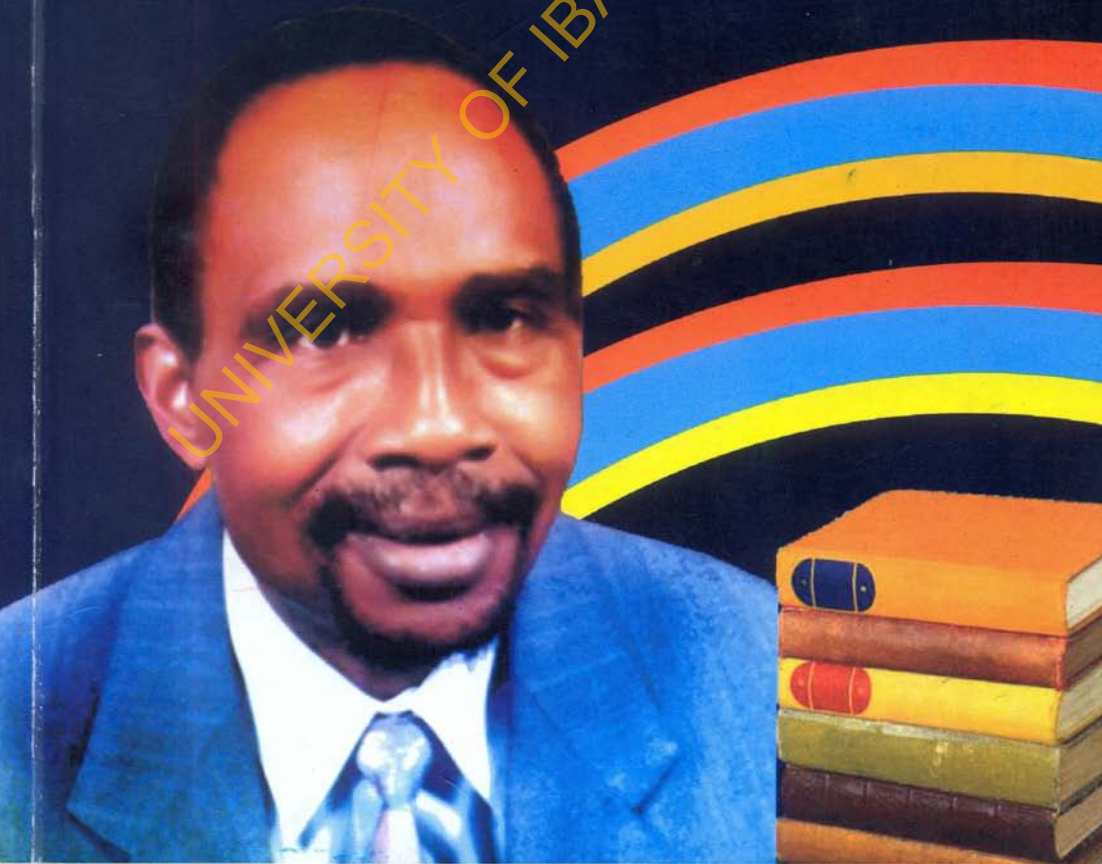


# ISSUES IN TEACHER EDUCATION IN AFRICA

Edited by: J. Gbenga Adewale



**ISSUES IN TEACHER  
EDUCATION IN AFRICA**

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**Prof. J. Gbenga Adewale**



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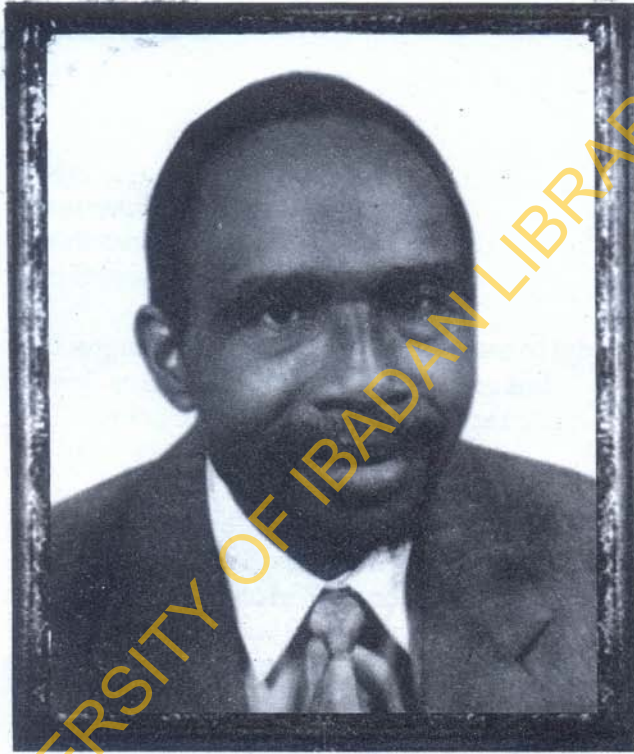
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Edited by  
J. Gbenga Adewale

ISBN: 978-978-54094-5-1

Printed by Esthom Graphic Prints  
Tel: 07030298365

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**PROF. AKINWOLE FALAYAJO**

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## TEACHER VARIABLES AS CORRELATES OF WORK ABSENTEEISM AMONG PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS IN THE SOUTHWESTERN NIGERIA

Ogundokun, Moses O. & Oderinde, Olayinka

### Introduction

Absenteeism has long been considered a significant and pervasive problem in industries and schools. Absence is more prevalent in schools serving disadvantaged children. This suggests that teacher work absenteeism compounds the disadvantages already faced by students in developing countries. As a result, theories have been developed and numerous studies conducted to identify the causes of absenteeism (Oluwatoyin, Muraina & Muraina, 2013). Probably one of the most common theories is the notion that absenteeism is caused by employees avoiding a painful or dissatisfying work situation. The teacher serves as the most important curriculum implementer in the classroom. Teachers all over the world are recognized as critical factors in the delivery of quality education at whatever level (Oluwatoyin, Muraina & Muraina, 2013). Becki (1983) opined that the successful attainment of the educational aspiration of any country depends on the inputs of its teachers.

The recognition of the key role of teachers in any curriculum implementation has prompted several interaction studies in Education in Nigeria (Edu, 2006). For decades business and industry have struggled with the problem of employee absenteeism, a fact that is supported by the vast body of literature

that addresses the issue. In fact, absenteeism and staff turnover are the two most frequent outcomes studied in organizational research (Long & Ormsby, 2001). Teacher absence often means that students have lost opportunities to learn. Furthermore, teacher absences disrupt the routines and relationships which support the learning process (Oluwatoyin, Muraina & Muraina, 2013). Moreover, teachers' work absenteeism in the schools may be determined by several factors which among others could be job satisfaction, job burnout, school climate and emotional intelligence among others. As such, the present study concentrates on teacher variables (job satisfaction, job burnout and emotional intelligence) as correlates of work absenteeism among public secondary school teachers in Southwestern Nigeria.

Job satisfaction is the level at which the secondary school teachers satisfied with the teaching profession. George and Jones (2002) maintain that many researchers have studied the relationship between absenteeism and job satisfaction in an attempt to discover ways to reduce absenteeism. Early job satisfaction research has emphasized the underlying assumption that job dissatisfaction represents the primary cause of absenteeism (Steers, Porter & Bigley, 1996). Steers (1978) supported the notion that employees who are dissatisfied with various aspects of their jobs are more likely to be absent. Studies by Mcshane (1984) found job satisfaction to be more highly related to frequency of absences than to number of days lost.

Kim, Leong and Lee, (2005) believed that employees with job satisfaction have lower levels of absenteeism than employees with higher job dissatisfaction. Thus, Mobley (1977) states that if dissatisfaction of employees with their work increases, they will develop intentions to absent from organization for other job conditions. Employees' job satisfaction has been related to organization outcomes such as teachers' work absenteeism (Farkas & Tetrick, 1989). According to some studies (Yang & Chang, 2008; Punnett, Greenidge & Ramsey, 2007; and Abraham, 2000) teachers' work absenteeism is related to job satisfaction.

Some studies (Deconinck, 2009; and Rutherford, Boles, Hamwi, Madupalli & Rutherford, 2009) indicated that some factors of job satisfaction (satisfaction with supervision, satisfaction with overall job, satisfaction with policy and support, and satisfaction with pay) were direct indicators of teachers' work absenteeism.

Job burnout refers to the response of school teachers towards stress placed on them in the course of their duties in the school. Bradley (2007) found teacher's control as potential resources for buffering the effects of burnout on the overall functioning of new start teachers in Australian schools. He found that teachers, who had more control as psychological resource, were having lower absenteeism as compared to other teachers (Bradley, 2007). Like teachers' control, the teacher's hardiness has also been found to have buffering effects on the burnout in such way that teachers who have more psychological hardiness are in better positions to handle burnout at work and they can perform well. Their performances are particularly good during tough times and when their jobs demand and pressures are higher. Hargreaves (2009) revealed role overload to be a major variable in teacher attrition. Teaching has been identified as a stressful profession (Kyriacou & Sutcliffe, 2008; Milstein and Golaszewski, 2005). High stress among teachers has many negative consequences, including higher than average levels of anxiety and depression and a desire to quit the profession and to use drugs (Watts & Short, 1990). Indeed, according to Bakewell (1988) and Kyriacou and Sutcliffe (2008), teachers' relationships with their students affect their stress levels significantly.

Emotional intelligence is the level at which the secondary school teacher is able to understand the emotion of other people and relate with them based on their emotions or thoughts. A number of studies revealed weak to moderate relationships between trait emotional intelligence measures and absenteeism (Adegoroye, 2009; Adeyoju, 2009). Wong and Law (2002) observed a positive association between an ability based emotional intelligence and absenteeism in employees and their

managers. Kulshrestha and Sen (2006) found a positive correlation between high levels of emotional intelligence and subjective well-being among executives. Bar-On (1997) found that measures of emotional intelligence predicted a slightly significant relationship between total emotional intelligence scores and absenteeism. Platsidou (2010) found a positive relationship between emotional intelligence and absenteeism and special education teachers. Guleryuz, Guney, Aydin and Asan (2008) found emotional intelligence to be significantly and positively related to absenteeism and organizational commitment. Anari (2012) revealed a positive significant relationship between emotional intelligence and absenteeism among high school English teachers.

Fasilizadeh, Oreyzi and Nouri (2012) report a positive significant relationship between emotional intelligence and absenteeism. Najafi and Mousavi (2012) also report a significant positive correlation between emotional intelligence and all dimensions of absenteeism. Mousavi, Yarmohammadi, Nostrat and Tarasi (2012) studied the relationship between emotional intelligence and absenteeism of Physics Education teachers in Iran. The results showed that there was a significant positive relationship between emotional intelligence and absenteeism. On the contrary, Donaldson-Feilder and Bond (2004) found no association between emotional intelligence and absenteeism of 290 workers in the United Kingdom.

On this note, the presents study examines the teacher variables (job satisfaction, job burnout and emotional intelligence) as correlates of work absenteeism among public secondary school teachers in Southwestern Nigeria. In recent time, the performance of students in the school is declining to the expectations of the stakeholders (parents/guardians, policy makers, educationists, school administrators and teachers.) In the 2014 WASSCE result, Osun and Oyo states fell into the group of States which had 15-24% percentage of students that had five credit passes including English and Mathematics, next only to the group of Zamfara and

Gombe states with 10% pass. In addition, Ogun, Ondo, Ekiti and Lagos states were in the category of states with 26-45% pass.

With these glaring statistics of poor performance at the secondary school education level, public opinion has among other reasons, put the blame on the doorsteps of teachers. Often, teachers have been blamed to be responsible for students' poor academic performance. The forgoing therefore attests to the importance of teachers in students' academic performance. In view of this, the present study concentrates on teacher variables (job satisfaction, job burnout and emotional intelligence) as correlates of work absenteeism among public secondary school teachers in Southwestern, Nigeria. Specifically, the study sought for the following:

- examine relationship between the independent variables (job satisfaction, job burnout and emotional intelligence) and teachers' work absenteeism.
- Investigate joint contribution between the independent variables (job satisfaction, job burnout and emotional intelligence) and teachers' work absenteeism and,
- Determine relative contribution between the independent variables (job satisfaction, job burnout and emotional intelligence) and teachers' work absenteeism.

### **Research Questions**

Taking into consideration, the set objectives of this study, the following questions were raised.

1. What is the relationship between the independent variables (job satisfaction, job burnout and emotional intelligence) and teachers' work absenteeism?
2. What is the joint contribution of the independent variables (job satisfaction, job burnout and emotional intelligence) and teachers' work absenteeism?
3. What is the relative contribution of the independent variables (job satisfaction, job burnout and emotional intelligence) and teachers' work absenteeism?

## Methodology

### Design

The research design used in this study was descriptive survey of *ex-post- facto* type. It is going to ascertain the effects of the independent variables (job satisfaction, job burnout and emotional intelligence) on the dependent variable (teachers' work absenteeism) without manipulations. However, it is carefully observed and recorded information as it naturally occurred at the time the study was conducted.

### Participants

The population for the study comprise all public secondary school teachers in Southwestern Nigeria. The study will cut across all schools and the teachers in the schools.

### Sample and Sampling Procedure

The respondents for this study were randomly selected from five (5) states of the South west using the multistage random sampling technique. Ten (10) Local Government Areas were randomly selected in each state and five (5) public secondary schools were randomly selected from each Local Government Areas. 5 public secondary school teachers were randomly selected each of the secondary schools. This gave a total of one thousand, two hundred and fifty (1,250) public secondary school teachers.

### Measures

**Demographic information of the teachers such as age, gender, length of service, religion and marital status were collected from the respondents. The respondents completed the four questionnaires: Work Absenteeism Scale (WAS) developed by Mohamed and Uli (2010); Emotional Intelligence Scale (EIS) developed by Shuttle, Malouff, Hall, Haggerty, Cooper, Golden, and Dornheim (1998); Job Satisfaction Scale (JSS) developed by**

Worrell (2004) and **Job Burnout Scale (JBS)** developed by Cohen and Williamson (1998).

### **Work Absenteeism Scale**

□ Absenteeism Scale developed by Mohamed and Uli (2010) was adapted for the study to measure teachers' work absenteeism. The original version of the scale has eighteen (18) items by trial testing it with responses hinged on agreement and based on the four points of: Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD). According to the Authors, the scale has Cronbach alpha coefficient of .80. The adapted instrument has twenty (20) items with frequency response format of: Often (1), Sometimes (2), Rarely (3) and Never (4). It was re-validated by trial testing it on a selected sample of thirty (30) public secondary school teachers across five (5) local government areas in Lagos State, Nigeria. And Cronbach alpha value of .80 was obtained.

### **Emotional Intelligence Scale**

□ The Emotional Intelligence Scale developed by Shuttlesworth et al. (1998) was used as a measure of teachers' Emotional Intelligence. It is a thirty three (33) item scale of a four point response format. According to Shuttlesworth et al. (1998), the scale has the Cronbach alpha coefficient of 0.85. The instrument was however re-validated and Cronbach alpha value of .88 was obtained after administering the instrument in a trial testing to a selected sample of thirty (30) public secondary school teachers across five (5) local government areas in Lagos State, Nigeria which were not part of the respondents for the study.

### **Job Satisfaction Scale**

Job satisfaction scale developed by Worrell (2004) was used as a measure of job satisfaction of the teachers. The instrument has twenty two (22) items with a reliability coefficient of .80. The response format is the four point- response of: Strongly Agree (4), Agree (3), Disagree (2) and Strongly Disagree (1). The instrument

was however re-validated and Cronbach alpha value of .82 was obtained after administering the instruments in a trial testing to a selected sample of thirty (30) public secondary school teachers in Lagos State, Nigeria which were not part of the respondents for the study.

### **Job Burnout Scale**

Burnout scale developed by Cohen and Williamson (1998) was used to measure job burnout among teachers. According to Cohen and Williamson (1998), the scale has a Cronbach alpha reliability coefficient of 0.64. The responses anchored based on four points. The instrument was however re-validated and Cronbach alpha value of .84 was obtained after administering the instruments to a selected sample of thirty (30) public secondary school teachers in Lagos State, Nigeria which were not part of the study.

### **Procedure**

The instruments were administered to the respondents on the day approved by the school authorities for the exercise. The researchers were assisted by research assistant in the administration and collection of the instruments. In each of selected school, the administration and collection of instruments were done on the same day of administration. The instruments were administered on the respondents in their various schools by the researchers with the support of the research assistant. Out of one thousand, two hundred and fifty (1,250) questionnaire distributed one thousand, one hundred and ten (1,110) were properly filled and used in the data analysis.

### **Data Analysis**

□ The Pearson's Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) and Multiple Regression analysis were used to analyse the data at 0.05 level of significance.



## Results

The results based on the research questions were presented

**Table 1: Product Moment Correlation Distribution comparing the predictor variables (Job Satisfaction, Job Burnout and Emotional Intelligence) and the criterion variable (Teachers' Work Absenteeism)**

Variables	N	Mean	SD	Work Absenteeism	Job Satisfaction	Job Burnout	Emotional Intelligence
Work Absenteeism	1110	34.01	23.38	1.00			
Job Satisfaction	1110	24.73	16.89	.761**	1.00		
Job Burnout	1110	21.85	14.47	.895**	.678	1.00	
Emotional Intelligence	1110	26.83	18.27	.743**	.719	.729	1.00

\*denotes correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

Table 1 contains descriptive statistics and inter-correlations among the study variables. As shown in the table 1, teachers' work absenteeism is significantly correlated with job satisfaction ( $r = .761$ ;  $p < .05$ ), job burnout ( $r = .895$ ;  $p < .05$ ) and emotional intelligence ( $r = .743$ ;  $p < .05$ ). Also, there were also significant correlations among the independent variables.

**Table 2: Multiple Regression Analysis on Adolescents' Teachers' Work Absenteeism Data**

Multiple R (adjusted)=.725					
Multiple R <sup>2</sup> (adjusted)=.692					
Standard error of estimate= 40.26					
Source of variance	Sum of square	(SS)	DF	Mean square	F
Regression	9590.94		3	3196.98	39.42
Residual	89699.08		1106	81.10	
Total	32290.02		1109		

The above shows that the independent variables when pulled together have significant contribution to teachers' work absenteeism. The value of R (adjusted) = .725 and R<sup>2</sup>(adjusted) = .692. The analysis of variance performed on the multiple regressions yielded an F-ratio value of 39.42 p

**Table 3: Multiple Regression showing relative contribution of the independent variables to the prediction teachers' work absenteeism**

Model	Unstandardized coefficients	Standardized coefficients		T	P
	B	Standard error	Beta		
Constant	14.176	.518		11.385	p<.05
Job Satisfaction	.072	.341	.076	5.071	p<.05
Job Burnout	.380	.183	.662	9.542	p<.05
Emotional Intelligence	.407	.065	.248	6.471	p<.05

The above shows that each of the independent variables made a significant contribution to the prediction of teachers' work absenteeism. In term of magnitude of contribution, job burnout made the most significant contribution ( $\beta = .662$ ;  $t=9.542$ ;  $p<0.05$ ). Other variables made contribution in the following order: emotional intelligence ( $\beta = .248$ ;  $t=6.471$ ;  $p<0.05$ ) and job satisfaction ( $\beta = .076$ ;  $t= 5.071$ ;  $p<0.05$ ).

### Discussion

The result of the present study shows that job satisfaction had a significant correlation with teachers' work absenteeism. This finding is consistent with the earlier research findings of Abraham (2000); Yang and Chang (2008); Punnett, Greenidge and Ramsey(2007) who revealed a substantial result concerning the relationship between work absenteeism and aspect of job satisfaction. Kim, Leong and Lee (2005) also revealed that employees with job satisfaction have lower levels of absenteeism than employees with higher job dissatisfaction. Rutherford, Boles, Hamwi, Madupalli, and Rutherford, 2009) indicated that some factors of job satisfaction like satisfaction with supervision, satisfaction with overall job, satisfaction with policy and support, and satisfaction with pay were direct indicators of teachers' work absenteeism. This shows that if the more dissatisfaction of employees with their work increases, the more they will develop intentions to absent from work for other job conditions.

Job burnout was found to be significant contributor to the teachers' work absenteeism. This lends support for the credibility of the findings which have shown positive correlations between job burnout and teachers' work absenteeism (e.g. Hargreaves, 2009; Kyriacou and Sutcliffe, 2008; Milstein and Golaszewski, 2005) emphasized the link between beliefs and behaviours, suggesting that high stress among teachers has many negative consequences, including higher than average levels of anxiety and depression and a desire to quit the profession and to use drugs. One explanation for this phenomenon relates to the fact that teachers who have more psychological hardiness are in better positions to handle burnout at work and they can perform well and relationships with their students affect their stress levels significantly.

The findings of this study indicate that a significant correlation was found between emotional intelligence and teachers' work absenteeism. This result is in consonance with prior studies (Fasilizadeh, Oreyzi & Nouri, 2012; Adeyoju, 2009) who found a significant relationship between emotional intelligence and absenteeism. The effect of emotional intelligence on teachers' work absenteeism is well documented in the literature (Najafi & Mousavi, 2012; Adegoroye, 2009). This result is easily explainable bearing in mind that emotional intelligence competences, such as ability to regulate one's feeling, problem solving, intrapersonal and interpersonal skills are highly germane to work success.

### **Implications of the findings for educational and counselling practice**

This study has implication for the work of counselling and educational psychologists. They need to develop a greater awareness and understanding of the various interactions involving variable that predicts teachers' work absenteeism.

For the fact that job satisfaction, job burnout and emotional intelligence are predictors of teachers' work absenteeism, there is

need for the government at all level, parents, teachers, educational planners, decision and policy makers as well as other stakeholder in educational settings to know and ascertain the contributions of these factors on teachers' work absenteeism, thereby making the school to prepare appropriate working condition in finding lasting solution to such in the school.

There is hope that with the improvement of school climate and job satisfaction, the situation can be changed for the better.

The public and private schools should endeavour to provide enabling environment for the staff and students of the schools, so as to reduce the level of teachers' work absenteeism in the school. School management also should motivate their teacher and give attractive welfare packages to enhance their job satisfaction, because their level of job satisfaction has significant influence on teachers' job absenteeism in the school.

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