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Pay Satisfaction and the Quality of Life among Teachers in Public Secondary Schools in Gokana Local Government Area of Rivers State, Nigeria

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Abstract

The study examined the extent to which pay satisfaction predicted the quality of life among teachers in Gokana area of Rivers State. It also investigated the role of gender differences in the quality of life among teachers in senior secondary schools in Gokana local government area of Rivers State. The study adopted the descriptive survey design. Purposive sampling technique was used to select the schools and teachers. Two standardized psychological instruments namely: Pay Satisfaction Questionnaire (PSQ) and "Quality of Life" (QOL) were used to collect the data for the study. The study shows that pay satisfaction significantly and independently predicts quality of life among teachers ($\beta = .66$, $t = 12.57$, $p < .05$). The contribution of pay satisfaction in explaining the variance in quality of life was 44% ($R^2 = .44$), and the model was significant, $F(1, 198) = 158.18$, $p < .05$. The study also revealed that there was a significant gender difference on the quality of life $t(198) = -2.11$, $p < .05$. This means that female teachers (Mean=54.09, SD= 7.91) have higher quality of life than their male counterpart (Mean=51.59, 8.74). The study concluded that pay satisfaction predicted the quality of life of teachers, while pay satisfaction and gender independently and jointly predicted the quality of life of teachers in selected schools in Gokana area of Rivers State. The research, therefore, recommends, among other things, that teachers' conditions of service should improve with an increase in salaries. This will boost productivity and improve the teachers' quality of life.

Keywords: *Pay satisfaction, quality of life, teaching profession*

INTRODUCTION

According to Rejeski and Mihalko (cited in Karimi, 2016), quality of life is a conscious cognitive judgment of satisfaction with one's life and an individual's perception of their position in life in the context of the culture and value systems in which they live and in relation to their goals, expectations, standards and concerns. Quality of life refers to the understanding of the individual's lifestyle in the context of the social environment, the forms of the culture he/she lives in and their interdependence towards attaining their interests and desires, which suits their mental state. As the World Health Organization (WHO) pointed out in 2002, it describes the quality of life as an individual's perception of his or her own

situation in life in the context of culture, the patterns of values in which he lives, and the extent or incompatibility of this with his goals, expectations and interests for mental health, independence and personal and social relationships. Quality of life of individuals is an important aspect of life as it always has ripple effect on the society at large. The quality of life of teachers can be observed and manifested in various ways. One

of them is their pay. In a country like Nigeria where the cost of living is extremely high, the quality of life depends solely on the individual's income. In recent times, the quality of life of workers has been a crucial problem for all organizations irrespective of those working in public or private organizations or those working in developed or developing countries.

The major aim of the educational system is to achieve a high level of performance in order to raise the literacy level of its citizenry. Education is a very important sector in any country striving for the overall development of that country. Nwiyi (2015) opined that education is the process by which an individual is led into the discovery of his/her inner lying abilities, capabilities and potentialities and how to utilize these for self-development and civilization" which is the sole responsibility of the teacher. This implies that the ultimate realization of set aims of education depends on the teacher; also, if the students are to know more and be able to apply their knowledge skillfully, the teachers must be examples of such learning. Therefore, teacher's motivation through a stable quality of life is essential for the growth and development of education in Nigeria precisely.

The quality of life of teachers in any society is affected by various factors one of them is the pay satisfaction of teachers. In today's world, public education is one of the main pillars of sustainable development, and each country allocates a significant deal of its national income to education. In fact, education is located at the core of human society, and one of its major goals is to train proficient young children and adolescents. Therefore, teachers establish the basis of a successful educational system, and the first stage to have effective educational staff can be reached through diagnosing the factors which affect the quality of life of school teachers. There is a direct relationship between worker's quality of life and their performances at work, and in turn, that could have an effect on the performance of human society in general. Today, all organizations have realized that employees' quality of life should be considered alongside organizational productivity in order to achieve success. Manpower is the most important resource in any organization, and plays a pivotal role in meeting organizational objectives; in fact, organizations, without considering their employees' tendencies, will not accomplish their goals.

Pay satisfaction refers to the sum of favourable or unfavourable feelings that employees have toward their salary (Ismail & Zakaria, 2009). In addition, pay is also used to compensate workers for their input in the workplace. Workers who are satisfied with their pay/salary tend to have a good quality of work life. If the employees have motivation, satisfaction, and high spirit, they direct their talents and skills toward organizational purposes. In general, quality of life represents the positive or negative attitude of an individual toward his/her occupation. Quality of life affects important aspects of life such as life satisfaction, organizational commitment, job performance, occupational stress, and quality of service. Moreover, in schools, teachers' pay satisfaction is considered a strong predictor of the overall quality of life of teachers. A person with good pay satisfaction holds positive feelings about the job and life in general, while a person who is dissatisfied holds negative feelings. Therefore, it seems the more teachers enjoy satisfaction with their pay, the more they are encouraged to work harder, and their capability and the efficiency of the total educational system will rise and will affect

the performances of society in general. On the other hand, the low level of teachers' performance goes back to the lack of pay satisfaction. One of the purposes for this degree of interest is that when the workers are happy, they are always reported as committed workers, and commitment is an indication of organizational output and effectual operations (Boyce et al., 2014).

It is in view of this scenario that the researcher is keen on investigating the relationship between teachers' pay satisfaction and quality of life in schools in Rivers State, paying particular attention to the Gokana Local Government Area. Pay satisfaction influences the quality of life, which is imperative in the development and growth of the educational system the world over and Rivers State in particular. Amah (2016) opined that "pay satisfaction is the amount of overall positive or negative feelings that workers have towards their pay". It involves how well or poorly compensated, teachers feel more satisfied and encouraged if adequately taken care of, which motivates them to put more effort towards their jobs.

Despite having the great responsibility of moulding the future of Nigeria, the quality of life of Nigerian teachers is among the worst in the country. They operate from not too friendly work environment with little and irregular salaries. Most lack passion for the profession owing to the dissatisfaction towards payment, and yet they are always the first to be blamed for poor student achievement. The plight of Nigerian teachers is pitiful as many of them are suffering from lots of psychological trauma, dying of hunger, diseases and out of frustration, yet working in the most important sector of the country. For a better quality of life, the pay of public school teachers should be looked into.

Researchers like Wadi and Egbuchu (2024) researched the impact of pay satisfaction on the psychological wellbeing of secondary school teachers in Emohua local government area of Rivers State. Taveira (2013) developed a research based on social psychology, punctuating the social representations of the quality of life in workspaces in the cities of Juiz de Fora and Cataguases (MG). The results showed that certain aspects bring central representation in the quality of life of the participants; they would be: "health", "wellness", and "work-employment." Then, in the first periphery, are: "leisure", "education", "family" and "good financial life/good house." And within their contexts of work, he stood out as core elements: "salary", "working conditions" and "good working environment"; in the background remained "recognition" and "performance-efficiency." Finally, emphasizes that all aspects intertwine through the centrality of "work" as the core of the quality of life.

We must pay attention to the fact that any teacher before becoming a teacher is a human being, and needs to be encouraged and motivated to be this "ideal teacher". If our teachers are not well paid, appreciated and recognized, they would be forced to turn their noble job of inspiring the youth to higher academic excellence into positions of creating 'yahoo boys' and runs girls in our school. Is it for this reason this research was conducted.

Limited research has been conducted on the quality of life and pay satisfaction of teachers in Nigeria. Notably, Wadi and Egbuchu (2024) investigated the effects of pay satisfaction on the psychological well-being of secondary school teachers in the Emohua local government area of Rivers State. Taveira (2013) developed a research based on social psychology, punctuating

the social representations of the quality of life in workspaces in the cities of Juiz de Fora and Cataguases (MG). This is a problem because teachers are going through a lot in Nigeria; the system has turned them into beggars such that the younger generation dreads the idea of becoming teachers in the future. They spend most of the school time at home and in their petty business places to make ends meet. They further do not have access to several welfare packages and benefits due them which is an important aspect of quality of life. Hence this study.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Concept of pay satisfaction

Pay satisfaction is defined as the level of positive or negative feelings individuals have towards their pay (Bosang, 2012). Pay satisfaction remains among the most imperative factors in enhancing productivity, given that it directly influences employee motivation. This insinuates that when employees are satisfied with their remuneration, benefits, pay structure and administration, among other factors affecting pay satisfaction, they are more likely to perform better and contribute to the organisation's bottom line (Alesina & Macculloch, 2014). Pay is an extrinsic motivator that is important not only in ensuring that individuals can cater to their basic needs but also in providing the satisfaction that they are being adequately compensated for their efforts (Ahuvia et al., 2018). Accordingly, pay dissatisfaction could be detrimental to organisational satisfaction because of its impact on employee motivation. In this relation, employee satisfaction with pay has gained increased importance in management and as an area of study (Cabrita, 2011). Pay satisfaction plays a major role in employees' affective reactions to their work, and this has led to intensive research in the area.

Pay satisfaction determinants

Agi and Adiele (2015) studied pay satisfaction determinants by utilizing the Pay Satisfaction Questionnaire (PSQ) developed by Heneman and Schwab (1985). The PSQ consists of four factors that are considered major determinants of pay satisfaction including pay raise, benefits, pay structure/administration, and pay level. Agi and Adiele (2015) used similar determinants to determine pay satisfaction influence on organizational outcomes. According to Agi & Adiele (2015), employee compensation remains an important aspect of the management of human resources because of its significant impact on organizational behaviour and performance. They noted that when the discrepancy between employee pay expectations and the actual pay is high, pay satisfaction cannot be achieved. Based on their research that sought to determine pay satisfaction based on the determinants identified above, Agi and Adiele (2015) found that there was a high correlation between the various factors and pay satisfaction. This is similar to what was established in Denga (2015). In relation to the structure/administration, supervisors and managers were considered significantly important in influencing pay satisfaction, based on their influence in pay decisions.

Communication and justice were identified as the factors influencing pay structure/administration, where the role of managers was considered paramount in ensuring that this was achieved. The salaries are also uneven, given that autonomous agencies are able to offer better salaries and benefits. In addition, the systems for awarding staff are contentious and often do not reflect objectivity and uniformity. This leads to inconsistencies in the public sector. In regard to structure and administration, the same report establishes that the grading structures used to determine pay levels and the lack of systematic evaluation result in difficulties in pay administration. Ibara (2017), on the other hand, notes that there has been an increase in salaries in Jordan's public sector as influenced by the "Arab Spring" and the government sector reforms in a bid to attract a skilled workforce in the public sector. However, Ibara (2017) does not

determine whether this has improved satisfaction. Mutua (2015) determine that age is interrelated to pay satisfaction. In their study of pay satisfaction among Jordan employees in Jordan Radio and Television Corporation, they found that statistically significant differences in satisfaction among different age groups. In reference to “pay level,” Agi and Adiele (2015) established that employees equated their expectations on salaries and equity to the contributions they made to their organizations. The views on “benefits” varied across grade level and age, such that individuals in higher cadres expected to enjoy greater benefits. There were also differences in benefits expectations among individuals from different age groups. Pay satisfaction based on “pay raise” was pegged on accumulated experience and education as the determining factors, such that employees expect their pay to be appraised following accumulation of experience, knowledge, and competencies in their job. In relation to gender, different findings have been determined in various studies. Owodele (2017) establish that there exist gender differences in pay satisfaction and expectations. In the study, women appeared more satisfied with pay than their male counterparts. Nwakwoala (2016), in their study, did not find any significant differences in pay satisfaction based on gender.

Concept of quality of life

Quality of life is about lives going well. It is the combination of feeling good and functioning effectively. Sustainable well-being does not require individuals to feel good all the time; the experience of painful emotions (e.g. disappointment, failure, grief) is a normal part of life, and being able to manage these negative or painful emotions is essential for long-term well-being. Psychological well-being is, however, compromised when negative emotions are extreme or very long-lasting and interfere with a person's ability to function in his or her daily life.

The concept of feeling good incorporates not only the positive emotions of happiness and contentment but also such emotions as interest, engagement, confidence, and affection. The concept of functioning effectively (in a psychological sense) involves the development of one's potential, having some control over one's life, having a sense of purpose (e.g. working towards valued goals), and experiencing positive relationships.

Recent years have witnessed an exhilarating shift in the research literature from an emphasis on disorder and dysfunction to a focus on well-being and positive mental health. This paradigm shift has been especially prominent in current psychological research. Nevertheless, it has also captured the attention of epidemiologists, social scientists, economists, and policymakers (e.g. Huppert, 2005; Layard, 2005; Marks & Shah, 2005; Marmot, Ryff, Bumpass, Shipley, & Marks, 1997; Mulgan, 2006). This positive perspective is also enshrined in the constitution of the World Health Organisation, where health is defined as “a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity” (WHO, 1948). More recently, the WHO has defined positive mental health as “a state of well-being in which the individual realises his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to his or her community” (WHO, 2001).

Fulfilment and Discrepancy Theory:

Fulfilment theory and discrepancy theories are two independent theories which were linked for the purpose of this study. The proponents of fulfilment theory measure satisfaction in terms of rewards a person receives or the extent to which his needs are satisfied. Further, they thought that there was a direct/positive relationship between pay satisfaction and the actual satisfaction of the expected needs.

Pay satisfaction cannot be regarded as merely a function of how much a person receives from his job. Another important factor/variable that should be included to predict pay satisfaction accurately is the strength of the individual's desire for his level of aspiration in a particular area. This led to the development of the discrepancy theory of pay satisfaction.

The proponents of discrepancy theory argue that satisfaction is the function of what a person actually receives from his job situation and what he thinks he should receive or what he expects to receive. When the actual satisfaction derived is less than expected satisfaction, it results in dissatisfaction.

Pay satisfaction and dissatisfaction are functions of the perceived relationship between what one wants from one's job and when one perceives it is offering. The relevance of this theory relating to pay satisfaction and quality of life is such that pay satisfaction is a very big factor that influences job satisfaction which in return has positive or negative effects on the quality of life of workers, in this case, teachers. The gap between the desired payment of the teachers and the actual payment is too much, causing dissatisfaction within the teachers leading to poor quality of life of teachers.

The relevance of this theory to this research emphasizes on the relationship between quality of life and desire which in the case of teachers desiring a level of pay satisfaction which are not being met leading to de-motivation, making them psychologically unfit to be effective in their various aspect of life, including their jobs.

According to recent research recent research, a considerable number of researchers have reported that teachers' job satisfaction was related positively to the teachers' salaries (Christen et al., 2016). According to these studies, an increase in salary was followed by a considerable raise in the teachers' job satisfaction. In their study of administrative support and its mediating effect on US public school teachers, Brooke and Price (2019) also demonstrated that the teachers' satisfaction with their salaries was a significant predictor of their job satisfaction and commitment. An increase in the teachers' satisfaction with their salaries was followed by an increase in their report of their job satisfaction and their intent to stay on in the teaching profession. Ezeh and Olawale (2017) investigated the relationship between pay satisfaction and quality of work life among 377 workers working in Awka metropolis, Anambra State, Nigeria. The results revealed that pay satisfaction had no significant connection with the quality of work life among the sampled respondents. Similarly, Barling and Iverson (2013) found that, among other things, employees (e.g., teachers) who selected a job because of a satisfactory salary were more likely to have higher levels of job satisfaction.

Eby et al. (1999) confirmed this when they indicated that it could be rationalised that pay satisfaction is caused, in part, by perceptions regarding the equity of one's pay. Pay satisfaction can be seen as a surrogate for fairness and justice, which in turn has a direct impact on employees' motivation and, therefore, their job satisfaction. Further, as expressed in Maslow's theory of human needs cited in Omotayo, Pavithra, and Adeniji (2014), individuals are goal-oriented, and their needs can influence their behaviour. Thus, teachers' need for equity, understanding of pay policies and others could lead to counter-productive behaviours if not carefully addressed.

On the contrary, other studies show that the provision of low salaries can seriously impair teachers' Psychological wellbeing and overall quality of life. In the study by (Wadi 2024) on Psychological wellbeing and Pay Satisfaction of teachers in Emohua Local Government Area in

Rivers State, Pay satisfaction significantly predicted the psychological well-being of teachers in Emohua LGA of Rivers State. Thus, teachers had to turn to providing additional private tuition to meet their financial needs.

Furthermore, a study by Akiri and Ogborugbo (2014) that examined the teachers' satisfaction with their careers in public secondary schools in Nigeria found that the majority of the teachers (about 72%), were generally dissatisfied with their salaries. If the employees of an organisation, such as a school, perceive the different levels of their salaries as unfair, they may be dissatisfied (Brown, 2015). The low and unfair teacher salaries increasingly make it difficult to fulfil their basic needs and to cope with their financial obligations and the expectations of their families. Hence, the teachers become frustrated and, therefore, dissatisfied with their careers (Akiri & Ogborugbo, 2014).

Hypothesis

The following null hypotheses were formulated for this study:

There will be a significant relationship between pay satisfaction and quality of life of teachers in senior secondary schools in Gokana local government area, Rivers state.

Pay satisfaction will significantly predict the quality of life of teachers in senior secondary schools in Gokana local government area, Rivers State.

There will be significant gender differences in the quality of life among teachers in senior secondary schools in the Gokana local government area, Rivers State.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research Design

The Descriptive survey research design was adopted for this study. Descriptive research involves gathering data that describes events and then organising, tabulating, depicting, and describing the data collection. It often uses visual aids such as graphs and charts to aid the reader in understanding the data distribution. Descriptive research involves collecting data in order to test hypotheses or to answer questions concerning the current status of the subject of the study. This design is considered suitable for this work in the sense that it will be of great help to the researcher to picture out the relevant data collected.

Population of the Study Sample and Sampling Technique

The population includes all teachers working in senior secondary schools in Gokana local government area of Rivers state. This study's sample consists of 200 Teachers who were selected from the public schools in Gokana local government area, Rivers state. The schools and teachers were selected purposively.

Research Instruments

Data for this study were collected using two distinct instruments: the Pay Satisfaction Questionnaire (PSQ) and the Quality of Life (QOL) scale. The questionnaire comprised two sections, A and B. Section A gathered demographic information from participants, while Section B focused on collecting data related to Pay Satisfaction and Quality of Life, consisting of two sub-sections. The entire instrument contained a total of 36 items.

For Section A, a four-point Likert scale was employed: Very Dissatisfied (VD), Dissatisfied (D), Satisfied (S), and Very Satisfied (VS). Section B utilized a five-point Likert scale with the

following categories: Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Uncertain (U), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD). Each sub-section in Section B contained 18 items.

The researcher visited the schools where the data collection took place. Upon arrival, she introduced herself to the school administrators and, after obtaining the necessary permissions, proceeded to administer the data collection instrument to the teachers for completion. The completed instruments were collected on the same day. The data gathered were subsequently analyzed using descriptive statistics, including frequency counts, percentages, means, and standard deviations, to address the research questions outlined in the study.

MEASURES

The study employed structured questionnaires as the main instrument for data collection. The measures were designed to capture both pay satisfaction and the quality of life of teachers in the selected public secondary schools.

Pay satisfaction was measured using a scale adapted from established pay satisfaction questionnaires that examine teachers' perceptions of their salaries, allowances, and other forms of compensation. Items covered dimensions such as the fairness of pay, adequacy of salary compared to workload, equity in comparison with peers, and satisfaction with additional benefits or incentives. Respondents were asked to rate their level of agreement on a five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). Higher scores indicated greater levels of pay satisfaction.

Quality of life was assessed using indicators derived from the World Health Organization's WHOQOL framework, with modifications to suit the educational context. The scale included items relating to teachers' physical wellbeing, psychological wellbeing, social relationships, and work environment. Participants responded on a five-point Likert scale, ranging from very low (1) to very high (5), with higher scores reflecting better quality of life.

In addition, demographic information such as age, gender, marital status, academic qualifications, years of teaching experience, and rank within the teaching service was collected. These measures provided a contextual background for analyzing how personal and professional characteristics may influence both pay satisfaction and quality of life. To ensure reliability and validity, the questionnaire items were subjected to expert review and pilot-tested among a small group of teachers outside the target schools. The internal consistency of the scales was verified using Cronbach's alpha coefficients, which demonstrated acceptable reliability thresholds for both pay satisfaction and quality of life measures.

RESULTS

This section presents data collected from the field work. The analysis involves the use of descriptive and inferential statistics. The descriptive statistics were used to analyse respondents' socio-demographic data, while the inferential statistics were used to test the hypotheses in the study.

Table 1: Respondents' Socio-demographics characteristics (N = 200)

Variables	Categories	Frequency (%)
Age	Mean (32.63)	SD (6.05)
Gender	Male	103(51.5)
	Female	97(48.5)
Marital status	Single	89(45.5)
	Married	100(50.0)
	Single parent	9(4.5)
	Divorced	2(1.0)
Year of experience	1-5 years	101(50.5)
	6-10 years	85(42.5)
	11-15 years	11(5.5)
	16-20 years	3(1.5)

Source: Author's Field Survey, 2022

Table 1 illustrates the demographic profile of the respondents. Among them, 96 individuals (48.0%) were aged between 21 and 30 years, while 88 respondents (44.0%) fell within the 31 to 40 age range. A smaller group, comprising 16 respondents (8.0%), were aged between 41 and 50 years.

In terms of gender distribution, 103 respondents (51.5%) identified as male, whereas 97 respondents (48.5%) identified as female. Regarding marital status, the data revealed that 89 respondents (44.5%) were single, 100 (50.0%) were married, 9 (4.5%) identified as single parents, and 2 respondents (1.0%) were divorced. Looking at years of experience, 101 respondents (50.5%) reported having 1 to 5 years of experience, 85 respondents (42.5%) indicated they had 6 to 10 years, 11 respondents (5.5%) had 11 to 15 years, and 3 respondents (1.5%) reported having 16 to 20 years of experience.

Hypothesis One

There will be a significant relationship between pay satisfaction and the quality of life of teachers in Gokana Local Government Area. The hypothesis was tested using Pearson Product Moment correlation (PPMC), and the result is presented in Table 2

Table 2: Pearson Product Moment correlation (PPMC) showing the relationship between pay satisfaction and quality of life

Variables	Mean	SD	1	2	3
1 Pay satisfaction	37.79	6.70	-		
2 Quality of life	52.80	8.42	.66**	-	

Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). And 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The findings indicate a significant positive correlation between pay satisfaction and quality of life ($r = .66, p < .01$). Specifically, an increase in pay satisfaction is associated with a corresponding enhancement in quality of life. Therefore, the hypothesis posited in this study is accepted.

Hypothesis Two

There will be a significant predictive role of pay satisfaction on the quality of life of teachers in the Gokana Local Government Area. The hypothesis was tested using simple linear regression and the result is presented in Table 3

Table 3: Simple linear regression showing the predictive role of pay satisfaction on quality of life

Predictor variable	<i>B</i>	SE	β	<i>t</i>	<i>R</i>	<i>R</i> ²	<i>F</i>	<i>P</i>
(Constant)	21.13	2.55	-	8.26				.01
	.67	.44	158.	18*				
Pay satisfaction	.83	.06	.66	12.57*				.02

The results presented in Table 3 from the simple linear regression analysis indicate that pay satisfaction serves as a significant and independent predictor of quality of life among teachers ($\beta = .66$, $t = 12.57$, $p < .05$). Specifically, pay satisfaction accounted for 44% of the variance in quality of life ($R^2 = .44$), confirming the strength of the model, $F(1, 198) = 158.18$, $p < .05$. Consequently, the hypothesis has been substantiated.

Hypothesis Three

There will be significant gender on differences in the quality of life among teachers. The hypothesis was tested using a t-test for independent measure, and the result presented in Table 4

Table 4: Summary of Independent Sample t-test on gender on quality of life

DV	Gender	N	Mean	Std	df	<i>t</i>	p
Psychological Wellbeing	Male	103	51.59	8.74	198	-2.11	<.05
	Female	97	54.09	7.91			

Table 4 indicated a significant gender difference in quality of life, $t(198) = -2.11$, $p < .05$. Specifically, female teachers reported a higher quality of life ($M = 54.09$, $SD = 7.91$) compared to their male counterparts ($M = 51.59$, $SD = 8.74$). Consequently, the hypothesis is accepted.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study highlight the critical role of pay satisfaction in shaping the quality of life of teachers in public secondary schools within Gokana Local Government Area of Rivers State. The results reveal that teachers perceive the current compensation practices as inequitable and demotivating, reflecting a broader dissatisfaction with the reward system in the teaching profession. This aligns with the assertion of Wadi (2024) that psychological well-being among teachers is heavily influenced by their pay, as more than 90% of teachers' sense of well-being is tied to their compensation.

The evidence from this study, therefore, reinforces the idea that compensation is not merely a financial issue but a major determinant of professional fulfilment and life satisfaction among teachers. The significant positive relationship found between pay satisfaction and quality of life suggests that when teachers feel adequately rewarded, they are more committed, motivated, and connected to their jobs, colleagues, and schools. This finding supports the perspective of Omotayo, Pavithra, and Adeniji (2014), who emphasised that individuals are goal-oriented and that their needs directly influence their behaviour and overall quality of life. For teachers, a fair and motivating pay structure provides not only financial stability but also enhances their sense of value and recognition within society.

This study also underscores the socially responsible approach of creating a supportive working environment where teachers' needs are met in ways that foster mutual benefits

between educators and educational institutions. The implication is that teachers who are satisfied with their pay are more likely to invest in professional growth, such as improving teaching skills, upgrading technological competence, and engaging in research. Such efforts ultimately improve the quality of education and promote better student outcomes, indicating that teacher welfare has a direct link to educational quality in the wider society.

Nevertheless, the results also raise important questions about the sustainability of the current compensation system in Nigeria. With many teachers expressing dissatisfaction, there is a need for policymakers to rethink pay structures and incorporate additional incentives, benefits, and transparent communication about salary determination. Addressing these concerns will not only improve teachers' wellbeing but also strengthen their organizational commitment and loyalty to the profession. In doing so, teachers may feel more respected and valued, reducing turnover intentions and enhancing the stability of the education system in the region.

In sum, the discussion points to the fact that improving teacher pay satisfaction is not merely about financial reward but about creating an enabling environment that fosters dignity, motivation, and professional excellence. By recognizing the interconnectedness between compensation, quality of life, and educational outcomes, this study provides valuable insight into the need for systemic reforms in teacher welfare policies.

CONCLUSION

The study investigated how pay satisfaction influences the quality of life of teachers in government secondary schools in Gokana, Rivers State, Nigeria. Findings showed that teachers view current compensation practices as unfair and demotivating. However, pay satisfaction significantly and positively predicts their quality of life, with more than 90% of teachers' psychological well-being tied to their pay. When teachers feel fairly compensated, they are happier, more fulfilled, and more committed to their work, colleagues, and schools.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study on pay satisfaction and the quality of life among teachers in public secondary schools in Gokana Local Government Area of Rivers State, Nigeria, is not without limitations. First, the study focused on a single local government area, which restricts the generalizability of its findings to other regions of Nigeria or beyond, as differences in economic conditions, school management practices, and cultural contexts could yield different results. The reliance on self-reported data may also have introduced response bias, as teachers could have either exaggerated or underreported their perceptions of pay satisfaction and its effect on their quality of life. Furthermore, the study primarily examined pay satisfaction as a predictor, without giving equal attention to other factors such as working conditions, workload, administrative support, or career development opportunities, which could also play significant roles in shaping teachers' wellbeing and quality of life.

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