IMPACT OF PROFESSIONAL LEARNING COMMUNITIES ON PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS' JOB SATISFACTION IN LAGOS STATE

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Abstract

The research was carried out on impact of professional learning communities on secondary school teachers' job satisfaction in Eti-Osa Local Government Area of Lagos state. The purpose of the study was to determine the level of teacher job satisfaction in Eti-Osa; assess the effect of participation in Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) on teachers' job satisfaction in Eti-Osa and identify the factors that influence the impact of PLCs on teachers' job satisfaction in Eti-Osa. Three research questions guided the study. The study was anchored on Arnold Bakker and Evangelia Demerouti Demands-Resources (JD-R) Theory. Descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. The population of the study comprised 247 teachers in the area. Census sampling techniques was used to select the entire population. This is because the population is manageable. Structured questionnaire was used for data collection. 232 teachers in public secondary schools were studied in the area. Mean ratings was used to analyze the data collected. Findings of the study revealed among others that there are different ways teachers are satisfied with their jobs in public secondary schools in Eti-Osa Local Government Area of Lagos state which include that teachers feel a sense of satisfaction from the impact they have on their students' lives; and building positive relationships with students, parents and colleagues can be very

fulfilling for teachers. Based on the findings, the study concluded that while the specific impact of PLCs on teachers' job satisfaction in Eti-Osa would require specific research, generally, PLCs can have a positive impact on teacher job satisfaction by providing opportunities for collaboration, professional development and support among colleagues. The study, therefore, recommended among other things that government should promote and recognize the importance of teacher well-being in job satisfaction and consider implementing strategies to support teachers' physical, emotional and mental health within the school environment. This would help to create an environment that supports teacher job satisfaction and retention

Keywords: Professional Learning Communities, Secondary School, Teacher, Teacher Job Satisfaction.

Introduction

In the dynamic landscape of education, the role of teachers is paramount in shaping the learning outcomes of students. Teacher job satisfaction is not only crucial for individual well-being but also significantly impacts student achievement, school effectiveness and overall educational quality. One promising approach to enhance teacher job satisfaction and professional development is through Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) (Cho et al., 2020). Teachers play a critical role in shaping the lives and futures of their students. Their job satisfaction is therefore of utmost importance, as it has a direct impact on the quality of education they provide and the overall success of their students. A satisfied teacher is more likely to be motivated, engaged and committed to their work, which can lead to better student outcomes. When teachers are happy and fulfilled in their jobs, they are more likely to remain in the profession for the long term, reducing teacher turnover rates and ensuring continuity in the education system (Zhao et al., 2021).

Moreover Ikegbusi et al (2022) posited that job satisfaction is closely linked to job performance, and teachers who are happy in their jobs are more likely to be productive, innovative, and effective in their teaching practices. Teacher job satisfaction is related to several factors, including the level of teacher autonomy, the quality of relationships with colleagues, and the level of support from school administrators (Wang & Guo, 2018).

Teachers' job satisfaction is related to the level of professional development opportunities available to teachers. In a study conducted by Kim and Lee (2022), they found that access to professional development opportunities, such as workshops and conferences, was positively correlated with teachers' job satisfaction. The authors suggested that providing opportunities for professional growth and development could improve teachers' job satisfaction and retention. This makes Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) very essential for teachers (Ikegbusi & Eziamaka, 2018).

Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) are collaborative groups of educators who come together to improve student outcomes through a shared commitment to

ongoing learning and professional development. According to Hord and Sommers (2018:5), PLCs are found on four critical questions: "What is it we want our students to learn? How will we know they are learning? How will we respond when they don't learn? How will we respond when they already know it?" These questions serve as a guide for PLC members to engage in inquiry-based collaboration, reflective dialogue, and continuous improvement.

PLCs have been found to have a positive impact on teacher practice and student learning outcomes and their academic achievement (Ikegbusi et al., 2023). In a study conducted by McLaughlin and Talbert (2018), they found that the implementation of PLCs resulted in improvements in teacher practice, student learning outcomes, and school culture. The authors also noted that successful PLCs require a supportive school and district leadership, a focus on student learning, and an ongoing commitment to continuous improvement.

Furthermore, the use of technology can enhance the effectiveness of PLCs by facilitating communication and collaboration among members (Ikegbusi et al., 2018).) Ikegbusi et al. (2020) suggested that technology tools such as online forums, video conferencing and collaborative documents can provide opportunities for educators to engage in ongoing professional learning and collaboration.

Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) have been shown to have a positive impact on teacher job satisfaction in several studies conducted in different countries, including Nigeria. The implementation of Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) in schools has become an increasingly popular approach to improving teacher job satisfaction and ultimately, student achievement. Several studies have investigated the impact of PLCs on teacher job satisfaction in different contexts, including Nigeria. In public secondary schools in Eti-Osa Local Government Area of Lagos state, there has been a growing interest in the implementation of PLCs in schools as a strategy for improving teacher job satisfaction and retention. However, there is a need to evaluate the impact of PLCs on teacher job satisfaction in this context. (Vescio et al, 2019).

PLCs are collaborative structures within schools where teachers work together to improve their practice and enhance student learning outcomes. These communities are characterized by a shared vision, reflective dialogue, collaborative inquiry and a focus on continuous improvement. Research suggests that PLCs can positively impact teacher efficacy, instructional practices and ultimately, student achievement. However, the extent to which PLCs influence teacher job satisfaction in the context of public secondary schools in Lagos State remains underexplored (Bender & Vredenburgh, 2019)

Understanding the impact of PLCs on teacher job satisfaction in this context is essential for informing educational policies and practices that promote teacher well-being and professional growth. Public secondary schools in Eti-Osa Local Government Area

of Lagos state, like many other schools in the state, and in Nigeria at large, has experienced various challenges related to education, including teacher shortages, inadequate infrastructure, and low student achievement. All these can be traced to have effect on teachers' job satisfaction. There is need, therefore, to explore the relevance of PLCs and its attendant impact on teacher job satisfaction in the area.

Statement of the Problem

Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) have been increasingly recognized as a means of enhancing teacher professional development and improving student learning outcomes. However, while there is some evidence to suggest that PLCs positively impact teacher job satisfaction, there is limited research on this topic in the Nigerian context. Given the critical role that teacher job satisfaction plays in improving teacher retention and student achievement, it is essential to explore the potential impact of PLCs on job satisfaction in Nigeria.

Eti-Osa Local Government Area of Lagos state, in particular, is a diverse and rapidly growing area with a large number of immigrant and English Language Learner students, faces unique challenges in its education system, including teacher retention and job satisfaction. As such, the potential benefits of PLCs may be particularly relevant in this area. However, despite the potential importance of PLCs, little is known about their impact on teacher job satisfaction in Eti-Osa. Therefore, the problem addressed in this study was to investigate the impact of PLCs on teacher job satisfaction in public

secondary schools in Eti-Osa Local Government Area of Lagos state.

This problem is significant for several reasons. Firstly, teacher job satisfaction is a crucial factor in improving teacher retention and reducing teacher turnover, which can have a negative impact on students' learning outcomes. Secondly, it seems that the Nigerian education system is currently facing significant challenges, including high rates of teacher absenteeism and low levels of student achievement. Identifying effective strategies to improve teachers' job satisfaction and students' outcomes is therefore critical for addressing these challenges. The present study, therefore examined the impact of Professional Learning Communities (PLC) on public secondary school teachers' job satisfaction in Eti-Osa Local Government Area of Lagos state.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study is to examine the impact of Professional Learning Communities (PLC) on public secondary school teachers' job satisfaction in Eti-Osa Local Government Area of Lagos state. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. Determine the level of teachers' job satisfaction in public secondary schools in Eti-Osa Local Government Area of Lagos state.

2. Assess the effect of participation in Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) on teachers' job satisfaction in public secondary schools in Eti-

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Osa Local Government Area of Lagos state.

3. Identify the factors that influence the impact of PLCs on teachers' job satisfaction in public secondary schools in Eti-Osa Local Government Area of Lagos state.

Scope of the Study

The geographical scope of this study was delimited to public secondary schools in Eti-Osa Local Government Area of Lagos state. The study in its content scope examined the level of teachers' job satisfaction, assess the extent of participation in Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) and assess the effect of participation in Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) on teachers' job satisfaction.

Research Questions
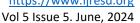
The following research questions guided the study:

1. In what ways are teachers satisfied with their jobs in public secondary schools in Eti-Osa Local Government Area of Lagos state?

2. What is the effect of participation in Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) on teacher job satisfaction in public secondary schools in Eti-Osa Local Government Area of Lagos state?

3. What factors influence the impact of PLCs on teacher job satisfaction in public secondary schools in Eti-Osa Local Government Area of Lagos state?

Literature Review

Professional Learning Communities (PLCs)

Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) is a group of professionals who share a common interest in improving their teaching practices, and who work together to develop knowledge and skills that will enhance their effectiveness in the classroom. Through this explanation, the idea that a PLC is a voluntary group of educators who come together to support one another in their professional growth and development is highlighted (Hord, 2019). Shirley and Hargreaves (2021) stated that a PLC is a structured approach to collaborative teacher learning that emphasizes collective inquiry, ongoing assessment, and shared responsibility for student learning. Ikegbusi and Okeke (2022) explained that PLC shows the importance of structured processes and shared responsibility for student learning, as well as ongoing assessment to inform instructional decisions. To DuFour et al. (2018) and Vescio et al. (2020) a PLC is a group of educators who collaborate on an ongoing basis to improve teaching and learning through shared inquiry, reflection and action. This definition emphasized the importance of ongoing collaboration and reflection in the pursuit of improving teaching and learning. Mullen and Hutinger (2022) stated that Professional Learning

Community is a group of educators who engage in regular, collaborative and reflective inquiry about their teaching practices with the aim of improving students' learning.

Teacher

A teacher, also called a school teacher or formally an educator, is a person who helps students to acquire knowledge, competence or virtue through the practice of teaching. Ikegbusi (2018) explained that a teacher is a professional who is responsible for creating a learning environment that fosters student growth and development by planning and delivering instruction, assessing student learning, and providing feedback and support. This emphasizes the professional responsibility of teachers to create effective learning environments and support students' development. Wragg (2018) viewed a teacher as a skilled practitioner who is able to design and implement effective learning experiences that meet the needs of individual students. This highlights the importance of teacher expertise in designing and delivering effective instruction. To Shulman (2019), a teacher is a knowledge worker who is responsible for helping students to acquire knowledge, skills, and dispositions that are valued in society. This emphasizes the role of teachers in imparting valued knowledge and skills to students. Ikegbusi, and Chigbo-Okeke (2016); Johnson and Birkeland (2020) defined a teacher as a relational educator who establishes positive connections with students, encourages their growth and development, and supports their

achievement. This definition in the views of Ikegbusi and Manafa (2023) highlighted the relational aspect of teaching and the importance of establishing positive connections with students.

Teacher Job Satisfaction

Teacher job performance can be defined as the extent to which teachers demonstrate the skills, knowledge, and attitudes necessary to promote student learning and development (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2019). This definition emphasized the importance of teachers' skills, knowledge, and attitudes in facilitating student learning. Ikegbusi et al (2022) explained that teacher job performance is the degree to which teachers meet the expectations and standards of their profession, including the ability to plan and deliver effective instruction, assess student learning and provide feedback and support to students. This highlighted the professional expectations and standards that shape teacher job performance. To Frymier and Shulman (2021), teacher job performance is the extent to which teachers are able to establish positive relationships with students, create a supportive and engaging classroom environment, and effectively communicate with parents and colleagues. This emphasized the relational and communication skills necessary for effective teacher job performance (Eziamaka et al., 2022).

Teacher job performance is the extent to which teachers are able to effectively use technology to enhance student learning,

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integrate technology into their instructional practices, and use data to inform their teaching decisions. This highlights the importance of technology and data literacy in shaping teacher job performance (Karim & Khan, 2022). Nelsen and Cottrell (2023) noted that teacher job performance is the degree to which teachers are able to promote positive student outcomes, including academic achievement, social-emotional development and college and career readiness. This explained the ultimate goal of teacher job performance in promoting positive student outcomes (Darling-Hammond & Sykes, 2020)

Theoretical Framework

Demands-Resources Theory by Arnold Bakker and Evangelia Demerouti (2007)

Demands-Resources (JD-R) theory is a job stress model that explains the relationship between job demands, job resources and job performance. The theory was first proposed by Arnold Bakker and Evangelia Demerouti in 2007 and has since become a widely accepted theory in the field of occupational health psychology. According to JD-R theory, job demands are the physical, psychological, social, or organizational aspects of a job that require sustained physical or mental effort and are associated with certain physiological and psychological costs. Job demands include workload, time pressure, role ambiguity, emotional demands and interpersonal

conflict. These demands can lead to negative outcomes such as stress, burnout, and poor job performance.

On the other hand, job resources refer to the physical, psychological, social or organizational aspects of a job that can be used to effectively deal with job demands and achieve work goals. Job resources include autonomy, social support, feedback, training and development opportunities, and job security. These resources can lead to positive outcomes such as work engagement, job satisfaction, and better job performance. JD-R theory suggested that job demands and job resources influence job performance and well-being through two separate but related processes. The first process is the health impairment process, which occurs when job demands exceed the individual's capacity to cope with them. This leads to negative outcomes such as stress and burnout, which in turn can lead to reduced job performance and health problems.

In this context, job demands could be seen as the challenges and stressors that teachers face in their work, such as heavy workload, lack of support, and lack of opportunities for professional development. Job resources, on the other hand, could be seen as the factors that help teachers cope with job demands and achieve their work goals, such as access to training and development opportunities, social support, and feedback.

Participation in Professional Learning Communities (PLC) could be considered as a job resource for teachers. Through participation in PLCs, teachers can

connect with and learn from their peers, develop new skills and knowledge, and receive feedback on their teaching practices. This can increase their sense of competence and job satisfaction, and reduce stress and burnout. By providing teachers with the opportunity to collaborate, share best practices, and receive support from their peers, PLCs can act as a buffer against the negative effects of job demands. JD-R theory suggests that by providing teachers with job resources such as participation in PLCs, it is possible to reduce the negative effects of job demands and increase teacher job satisfaction. This can lead to better performance, lower turnover rates, and improved quality of education in Eti-Osa Local Government Area of Lagos state.

Methodology

The study adopted the descriptive survey research design. This research design was chosen as a result of the fact that the study is set to study people, their attitudes, belief system, opinions and other behavioral manifestations (Ikegbusi, 2022). The study was carried out in public secondary schools in Eti-Osa Local Government Area of Lagos state. There are 12 schools in this regard. This comprised schools in both urban and rural areas of the Local Government Area. Majority of the secondary schools in this area are mixed schools; and the major languages spoken are English and Yoruba. The population of the study was made up of 247 teachers in the area (Source: Eti-Osa L.G.A. Basic Education Board, 2024). Census sampling technique was used to select the entire population; this is because the population is manageable (Obi et al, 2022).

Structured questionnaire was used for data collection. The questionnaire contained 15 items grouped in 3 clusters which were used to seek the response of the respondents on the subject matter. The researchers collected data with the help of two research assistants who were teachers in the sampled schools. These research assistants were briefed on how to administer and retrieve the copies of the questionnaire and to ensure strict adherence to instructions. In each school visited, copies of the questionnaire items were administered on the respondents by the researchers and the research assistants. They waited for the respondents to fill the items. However, during the time of retrieval, it was discovered that 12 were damaged while 3 were missing, leaving the researchers with 232 valid questionnaire items. The sample size therefore was 232.

The data collected were analyzed using mean scores. Four point rating scores of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD) with assigned numerical values 4, 3, 2, and 1, respectively. Mean rating of any item ranged from 2.5 and above was regarded to be agreed, while those below 2.5 was regarded as disagreed, this formed the decision rule.

Data Presentation and Analysis

Research Question 1: In what ways are teachers satisfied with their jobs in public secondary schools in Eti-Osa Local Government Area of Lagos state?

Table I: Respondents mean ratings on the ways teachers are satisfied with their jobs in public secondary schools in Eti-Osa Local Government Area of Lagos state

S/N	Items Statements	$\sum fx$	$\overline{x}$	Decision
1	Teachers feel a sense of satisfaction from the impact they have on their students' lives	757	2.9	Agree
2	Building positive relationships with students, parents and colleagues can be very fulfilling for teachers	695	3.2	Agree
3	Teachers often have opportunities for professional development and growth, which can be satisfying	706	3.3	Agree
4	Teachers often have the opportunity to be creative in their teaching	640	3.0	Agree
5	Teachers often have a degree of autonomy in their work, which can be satisfying	598	2.9	Agree
	Grand Mean		**3.1**	**Agree**

N- 232

Table 1 above showed that all the items 1,2,3,4 and 5 have the mean scores of 2.9, 3.2, 3.3, 3.0 and 2.9, respectively and they are all above the cut-off mean. This indicated that majority of the respondents accepted that there are different ways teachers are satisfied with their jobs in public secondary schools in Eti-Osa Local Government Area of Lagos State.

Research Question 2: What are the effects of participation in Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) on teachers' job satisfaction in public secondary schools in Eti-Osa Local Government Area of Lagos state?
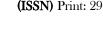
Table 2: Respondents mean ratings on the effects of participation in Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) on teachers' job satisfaction in public secondary schools in Eti-Osa Local Government Area of Lagos state

S/N	Items Statements	∑fx	$\bar{x}$	Decision
6	Increased collaboration and sense of community among teachers	488	2.2	Disagree
7	Improved instructional practices and teaching methods	625	2.8	Agree
8	Enhanced student learning outcomes and academic achievement	749	3.1	Agree
9	Opportunities for ongoing professional development and growth	771	2.8	Agree
10	Increased sense of purpose and achievement in teaching	774	2.8	Agree
	Grand Mean		**2.7**	**Agree**

N- 232

Result in table 2 above revealed that 6 has 2.2 which is below the cutoff point, while items 7 to 10 have the mean scores of 2.9, 3,1, 2.8 and 2.8 respectively and they are all above the cut-off mean. This revealed that majority of the respondents accepted that there are effects of participation in Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) on teachers' job satisfaction in Eti-Osa Local Government Area of Lagos state.

Research Question 3: What factors influence the impact of PLCs on teacher job satisfaction in public secondary schools in Eti-Osa Local Government Area of Lagos state?

Cluster 3: Respondents mean ratings on the factors that influence the impact of PLCs on teacher job satisfaction in public secondary schools in Eti-Osa Local Government Area of Lagos state

S/N	Items Statements	∑fx	$\bar{x}$	Decision
11	Teachers who are more actively involved in PLCs tend to experience greater benefits	707	2.6	Agree
12	The quality of interaction among PLC members can affect the impact of PLCs on teacher job satisfaction.	744	3.0	Disagree
13	The culture of the school can also influence the impact of PLCs on teacher job satisfaction.	683	2.3	Agree
14	The support of school leaders, such as principals, can impact the effectiveness of PLCs in improving teacher job satisfaction	725	2.9	Agree
15	The diversity and inclusivity of PLCs can also affect their impact on teacher job satisfaction.	706	2.6	Agree
	Grand Mean		**2.7**	**Agree**

N- 232

Data in table 3 above revealed that item 12 has mean score of 2.3 which is below the cutoff point, while items 11, 13, 14 and 15 have the mean scores of 2.8, 3,0, 2.9 and 2.6 respectively and they are all above the cut-off mean. From the above data presented, it indicated that majority of the respondents accepted that there are factors that influence the impact of PLCs on teachers' job satisfaction in public secondary schools in Eti-Osa Local Government Area of Lagos state.

Discussion of Findings

The study found that there are different ways teachers are satisfied with their jobs in public secondary schools in Eti-Osa Local Government Area of Lagos state; these include that teachers feel a sense of satisfaction from the impact they have on their students' lives, building positive relationships with students, parents and colleagues can be very fulfilling for teachers, teachers often have opportunities for professional development and growth, which can be satisfying; and teachers often have the opportunity to be creative in their teaching. This is in line with the views of Wragg (2018) who noted that there are no specified ways of making teachers to feel satisfied in his job. The school director can achieve this by knowing what works in their environment. In support of the findings, Ikegbusi and Eziamaka (2018) noted that professional development can help to bolster employees' confidence in their work. Greater confidence can, in turn, translate into higher overall job satisfaction, employee performance, productivity and overall morale for teachers.

Also, the study showed that the respondents agreed that there are effects of participation in Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) on teachers' job satisfaction in public secondary schools in Eti-Osa Local Government Area. These include increased collaboration and sense of community among teachers, improved instructional practices and teaching methods, enhanced student learning outcomes and academic achievement and opportunities for ongoing professional development and growth. This idea is supported by Frymier and Shulman (2021) who noted that ideas from Professional Learning Communities enable teachers to understand how best to carry out their jobs and achieve satisfaction through it. Ikegbusi and Okeke (2022) in support of the findings explained that PLCs allow educators opportunities to directly improve teaching and learning. PLCs give teachers an easy way to share best practices and brainstorm innovative ways to improve learning and drive students' achievement. The key to an effective PLC is collaboration, as it provides an opportunity to share one's own knowledge and expertise and learn what other colleagues are doing in their classrooms. This approach facilitates personal growth as well as students' understanding.

Again, the study revealed that the respondents agreed that there are factors that influence the impact of PLCs on teachers' job satisfaction in public secondary schools in Eti-Osa Local Government Area. These include the quality of interaction among PLCs members, the culture of the school, the support of school leaders, such as principals, and the diversity and inclusivity of PLCs. Frymier and Shulman (2021) supported this by stating that the effect of PLCs can be influenced by different factors and these have a way of determining the teachers' job satisfaction. Zhang and Yuan (2020) found that PLCs promoted teachers' job satisfaction in three main ways viz: by fostering harmonious interpersonal relationships, providing professional and emotional support

for one another and relieving pressure by solving problems together.

Conclusion

The study has shown that Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) can have a positive impact on teachers' job satisfaction. PLCs provide opportunities for teachers to collaborate, share ideas and resources and engage in professional development, which can improve their teaching practices and increase their sense of efficacy and job satisfaction. Additionally, PLCs can promote a sense of community and support among teachers, which can lead to greater job satisfaction and retention. The study, therefore, concludes that while the specific impact of PLCs on teacher job satisfaction in public secondary schools in Eti-Osa Local Government Area of Lagos state would require specific research, generally, PLCs can have a positive impact on teachers' job satisfaction by providing opportunities for collaboration, professional development and support among colleagues.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions of this study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Government should promote and recognize the importance of teacher well-being in job satisfaction and consider implementing strategies to support teachers' physical, emotional and mental health within the school environment. This would help to create an environment that supports teachers' job satisfaction and retention.

2. Schools in Eti-Osa Local Government Area should promote and encourage a culture of collaboration and teamwork among teachers by fostering trust, promoting open communication and recognizing and celebration achievements with PLCs. This would go a long way to improve teachers' effectiveness in the classroom.

3. Government and school leaders should provide opportunities for teachers to have autonomy and voice within PLCs by involving them in decision-making processes, allowing them to contribute ideas and strategies and recognizing their expertise and contributions. This would make the teachers to experience fulfillment and satisfaction in their roles.

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