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CAREER ASPIRATION, JOB DEMANDS AND SOCIAL INTEREST AS PREDICTORS OF JOB SATISFACTION OFSECONDARY SCHOOLTEACHERS

By

Moses Oluwafemi OGUNDOKUN, Ph.D
femtopng@gmail.com

and

Beatrice Iyabo KOMOLAFE
Bkomolaf2001@yahoo.com

Department of Guidance and Counselling
University of Ibadan, Ibadan

Abstract

This study examines how career aspiration, job demands and social interest predict job satisfaction of secondary school Teachers. The study adopted a survey research design. Three hundred Secondary School teachers from Odeda Local Government Area, Ogun State responded to a set of questionnaires consisting of measures of Career Aspiration (α =.73), Job Demands (α =.84), Social Interest (α = .90) and Job Satisfaction (α =.98). Their age ranged between 24 and 55 years with mean age of 35.35years. Pearson's Product Moment Correlation and Multiple regression analyses were used to analyse the data. The result shows that career aspiration and social interest were the potent predictors associated to teachers' job satisfaction. The study also reveals a significant relationship among career aspiration, job demands and social interest on the job satisfaction of teachers. The study has implications for the government and organisations responsible to the career developmental needs of teachers by providing career opportunities that match teachers' career aspirations. This will go a long way in making them get satisfy with their career, enhance efficiency and increase productivity. Intending teachers should consider the job demands of the profession in secondary schools; develop the required prerequisite before taking up teaching as a career.

Key words: *Career aspiration, job demand, social interest, job satisfaction and teachers*

Introduction

There has been difficulty among managers, directors and political leaders today in ignoring the issue of job satisfaction at a time when demand for meaningful work is increasing. There are two major reasons while this is so. First,

managers have a moral responsibility to do with what they can to provide their employees with a satisfying environment. Second, they believe that the behaviour of satisfied workers will make positive contributions to the organisation as studies show that job satisfactions have direct effect on turnover (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980).

Job satisfaction is one of the most researched areas of organisational behaviour and education. It was first used by Hoppockin 1935, as a combination of physiological, psychological and environmental circumstances that make an individual feel satisfied with his or her job. Job satisfaction is conceived as an attitudinal variable measuring the degree to which employees like their jobs and the various aspects of their jobs (Stamps, 1997). Locke and Lathan (1990) give a comprehensive definition of job satisfaction as pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or job experience. It is a result of employee's perception of how well their job provides those things that are viewed as important. Luthan (1998) posits that there are two important dimensions to job satisfaction, namely; Job satisfaction as an emotional response to job situation (as such it cannot be seen, it can only be inferred); and Job satisfaction as a determinant of how well an outcome meet or exceed expectations. For instance, if an organisation participants feel that they are working much harder than others in the department but are receiving fewer rewards they will probably have a negative attitudes towards the work, the boss and/or co-workers.

On the other hand, if they feel they are being treated very well and are being paid equitably, they are likely to have positive attitudes towards the job. The way each employee responds towards their work is an indication of the satisfaction derived from their employers and jobs. Many workers are of the opinion that downsizing, rightsizing and re-engineering give employer an opportunity to dispose those workers who are liability to the organisation.

Researchers have linked job satisfaction to variables such as salaries, credentialing, opportunities for promotion, supervision, recognition, working conditions and sense of autonomy (Evans, 1998; Prelip, 2001). Ethnic minorities generally have expressed lower job satisfaction than their White counterparts (Sanderson et al., 2000; Tack &Patitu, 1994). Likewise, women have reported lower levels of job satisfaction than men (Hagedorn, 1996, 1998; U.S. Department of Education, 1998;Tang &Talpade, 1999; Fiorentino, 1999), although results have not been consistent across each facet of job satisfaction.

One of the major determinants of job satisfaction identified in the study is Career Aspiration. It is literally defined as the desire to achieve a particular vocation (Merriam-Webster, 2004). In other words, career aspirations, are ways in which an individual's expresses career-related goals or choices (Rojewski, 2005); it constitutes a central component of many career development theories, where they are viewed as developing from wishful thinking to well-considered evaluations that take into account one's interests,

abilities and opportunities (Gottfredson, 2002; Super, 1990).

Career aspirations set in train decisions can have lifelong consequences, such as where one lives and works, and the quality of one's life. A wide range of variables has been shown to be associated with career aspirations. These include background variables such as age, gender (Wahl &Blackhurst, 2000) and socio-economic status (Hellenga, Aber, & Rhodes, 2002), situational variables such as family and school environments (Bo, 1994), social support (Wall, Covell, &MacIntyre, 1999) and parental aspirations (Wilson & Wilson, 1992), personality based variables such as self-esteem, self-efficacy (Fouad& Smith, 1996) and locus of control (Taylor, 1982). However, a consistent criticism of the research into career aspirations is that the studies have been largely cross-sectional, rather than longitudinal; thus, making it difficult to tease out causal relationships between career aspirations and the other variables (Hartung, Porfeli, &Vondracek, 2005; Lee &Rojewski, 2009).

Wang and Staver (2001) observe that career aspiration, for both men and women, is recognized as the most important variable affecting later work experiences.In this study, it is defined as the intrinsic motivation for succeeding in ones chosen career field (Farmer, 1997b; Plucker, 1998). It is important to understand one's vocational behaviour because it relates to persons achievement and persistence in one's career.

Career aspirations provide a way of understanding the significance of non-monetary factors which affect work, career satisfaction and career decisions. In line with this, organisation should be aware that workers have various forms of aspirations towards work where these aspirations form the basis for individual's career decisions. Therefore, it is important for the organisations to be responsive to the career developmental needs of workers by providing career opportunities that match the career aspirations of workers.

Job demands is another variable studied as a predictor to job satisfaction. In which in its entirety improves employees' satisfaction. Job demands refer to those physical, psychological, social or organisational aspects of job that is required to sustain physical or psychological (cognitive and emotional) effort and are, therefore, associated with certain physiological and psychological cost, Examples are high look pressure, role overload, poor environmental conditions and problems related to reorganisation. In such a situation, reducing commitment can be an important self-protection mechanism that may prevent the future frustration of not obtaining work-related goals (Hackman & Oldham, 1976; 1980; Antonovski, 1987).Increased demands at work were strongly related to all components of burnout, and especially to emotional exhaustion.

Job demand for secondary school teachers in Nigeria could be reflected in the academic term which starts in the beginning of September and finishes by the end of July the following year. Secondary Schools have closed to a total of one hundred and fifty (150) days per year on account of different holidays (Saturday and Sundays, mid-term, end of

term and session vacations and other specified holidays). The length of a school day is 7 hours for public and 8 hours for private secondary schools. A secondary school teacher can have responsibility for seven to ten periods per day with/without a break. Among the workloads of teachers are the responsibility of daily routine teaching and learning, keeping records, giving and checking assignments, evaluating and assessing students' performance, doing exercises at the end of lessons, using teaching/learning aids, keeping the classrooms clean and conducive for learning, and so on. Darmody and Smyth (2010) report that in Cyprus, teachers chose the teaching profession because of the salary, the hours, and the holidays associated with this profession (Zembylas, 2004).

Social Interest is another variable studied that plays an important role in the research of job satisfaction. Employees are assumed to make trade-offs between costly effort exertion and the resultant benefits that accrue to themselves or their organisation. Social interest is the hallmark concept of Adlerian theory. Adler theorized social interest as a feeling of community, an orientation to live cooperatively with others, and a lifestyle that values the common good above one's own interests and desires" (Guzick, Dorman, Groff, Altermatt, & Forsyth, 2004). It is also conceptualized as an active interest in the welfare of humankind, identification and empathy with others (Ansbacher & Ansbacher, 1956).

It is often suggested that those workers who showed greater social interest are more likely to seek out and sustain their involvement in altruistic activity and commitment to work (Crandal & Harris, 2000). They also reported workers with high social interest to likely motivate others to work and be more committed to organisational goals and while doing that they are getting satisfaction.

Social interest is typically viewed as being predictive of individuals' adjustment and psychological health (Ansbacher, 1968; 1991,Manaster, Zeynep, &Knill, 2003). According to Adler, social interest protects individuals against feelings of inferiority and promotes better coping and a healthier attitude towards stressful situations (Crandall & Putman, 1980). Richardson and Manaster (2003) explain that the ideal of social interest is intended to inspire a way of life that counters such disconnectedness and helplessness with a sense of wider belonging and purpose. Social support from colleagues can have a direct influence on teachers' job satisfaction in several ways. For example, collaboration can facilitate the development of a series of procedures and techniques that teachers could use to reassert themselves in relation to the quality of their own work and, hence, adjust their expectations that inadequate development of social interest in children and adolescents leads to psychological difficulties in adulthood (Guzick et. al., 2004; Maltby, Macaskill, Day, & Garner, 1999; Nikelly, 2005; Sweitzer, 2005).

According to Adler, parent-child relationships and family life affect the development of social interest, a contention which has been supported by research. For example, Johnson, Smith, and Nelson (2003) found that higher levels of family cohesion and expressiveness and lower levels of conflict were associated with higher levels of social interest in young adults. These results are in-line with prior research that indicates social interest is higher in individuals whose families were helpful and supportive, emotionally and behaviourally expression, and did not experience excessive conflict (Amerikaner, Monks, Wolfe, & Thomas, 1994; Leak & Williams, 1989).

Teachers are widely respected and held in high esteem. It is a common adage that teaching is the mother of all professions. Teachers' commitment to their work is also a major factor in determining the social interest of teaching. Public recognition of the service rendered by teachers is reflected, among other things, by national awards and other incentives. However, teachers are hardly represented in administrative, developmental or legislative bodies. Economic status is linked with salary. The remuneration paid to teachers at private schools (low income private schools) is generally very low with hardly any job security or any guarantee of pension and further professional development opportunities. In a survey conducted, six out of the 30 teachers with about four years teaching experience expressed satisfaction with teaching and intended to remain in the profession for the long term (Kudos Zeal Renewal, KZR, 1997).

In the light of this, the study sought to examine the significant relationship, joint and relative contributions of career aspiration, job demands and social interest to the prediction of job satisfaction of Secondary School teachers.

Research Questions

The above mentioned objective necessitates the raising of the following research questions, which were tested in the study:

1. Are there any significant relationship among career aspiration, job demand, social interest and job satisfaction?
2. What are the joint contributions of each career aspiration, job demand, social interest and job satisfaction of secondary schools' teachers?
3. What are the relative contributions of the independent variables on job satisfaction of secondary schools' teachers?

Methodology

Research Design

The study adopts a descriptive research design of an ex-post facto type in which career aspiration, job demands and social interest are the independent variables while job satisfaction is the dependent variable.

Participants

The target population for this study consists of all Secondary School teachers in Odeda Local Government Area, Ogun State. A simple random sampling technique was employed in selecting 321 teachers (male =141; 43.92 per cent, female = 180; 56.07 per cent). A stratified random sampling technique with a ratio of

3:1 allocation was employed in selecting 231 teachers from eleven government-owned and 90 teachers from nine private owned Secondary Schools, this gave a total of 321 teachers. The participants were randomly selected using dip hand method for each type of School. Their ages range between 24 and 55 years with a mean age of 35.4 years and the standard deviation of 4.65. Of the original copies of the questionnaires distributed, 21 copies were not returned and were not used for the analysis, 300 were finally used for analysis.

Instrumentation

Demographic information was collected from the participants regarding their age, gender and marital status. The participants completed the four questionnaires: Career Aspiration Scale (CAS) O'Brien (2007), Job Demands Scale (JDS) by Karasek (2000), Social Interest Inventory (SII) by Greever, Tseng and Friend land (1973) and Job Satisfaction Scale (JSS)by MacDonald and MacLntyre (2005).

CAS(O'Brien, 2007) was adapted and used to assess the career aspiration of the participants. It is a ten item scale with response format ranging from Not at all true of me =1 to very true of me =5. High score on the scale indicates a higher career aspiration and vice versa. A Cronbach Alpha of .67 was found for the internal consistency of the scale. The test-retest showed a reliability of .73 after three weeks.

JDS(Karasek, 2000) was adapted and used to measure participants' Job demands. It consists of 16 items with response format ranging from Strongly Agree =5 to Strongly Disagree =1. The

internal consistency of the scale was found to be .93. The test-retest showed a reliability of .84 after three weeks.

SII(Greever, Tseng & Friendland, 1973) was adapted and used to measure Social Interest. It is a 31 item scale with response format ranging from Not at all like me =1 to very much like me =5. A Cronbach Alpha Coefficient measure of .87 was found for the internal consistency of the scale. The test-retest showed a reliability of .90 after three weeks.

JSS (MacDonald &MacLntyre, 2005) was adapted and used to measure Job Satisfaction. It is a ten item scale with response format ranging from Strongly Agree = 5 to Strongly Disagree =1. The internal reliability coefficient measure was .77. The test re-test showed a reliability of .98 after three weeks.

Procedure

The questionnaires were administered to the participants in their various schools. The researchers were assisted by the management of each school. Participants were briefed on the purpose of the study. After the explanation on the instructions to the participants, they were given the questionnaires to be completed at their leisure time. The questionnaires were collected within the space of two (2) weeks. Of the three hundred and twenty (320) distributed, only three hundred (300) was recovered and found useful for the study.

Data Analysis

The data were analysed using **Pearson's** Product Moment Correlation and **Multiple** Regression analysis tested at the 0.05level of significance.

Results

The results based on the research questions are presented below.

Table 1: Mean, Standard Deviation and Relationship among Independent Variables (Career Aspiration, Job Demands and Social Interest) and Job Satisfaction (N=300)

Variables	M	SD	1	2	3	4
Job Satisfaction	62.60	9.82	1.000			
Career Aspiration	57.40	9.62	.265**	1.000		
Job Demands	67.68	12.37	-.129**	-.160**	1.000	
Social Interest	64.33	11.28	.150**	.250**	.085*	1.000

The result from the table above shows that there was significant relationship among career aspiration(r=.265; p<0.05), Job Demands (r= -.129; p< 0.05) and social interest (r=0.150; P<0.05).

Table 2: Regression Analysis Result of Independent Variables (Career Aspiration, Job Demands and Social Interest) on Job Satisfaction

R = .305
R^2 = .093
Adj R^2 = .084
Std. Error = 9.40

Model	Sum of Square	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	2675.521	3	891.840	10.086	.000
Residual	26174.275	296	88.427		
Total	28849.797	299			

The table above shows that there was joint contribution of the independent variables (Career Aspiration, Job Demands and Social Interest) on the Job Satisfaction yielded a coefficient regression R= .305, multiple R^2 of .093 and adjusted R^2 of .084 accounting for about 8.4% of the variation in the independent variables. Hence, the table further shows that the linear contribution of the Career Aspiration, Job Demand and Social Interest on the Job Satisfaction was significant ($F_{(3,296)}$ = 10.086, p< 0.05). This indicates the causal relationship of the independent variables on the dependent variable was significant and other variables not included in this model may have accounted for the remaining variance.

Table 3: *Multiple regression showing Relative contributions of each of the Independent Variables to the prediction of Job Satisfaction*

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficient	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
Constant	51.246	5.393		9.502	.000
Career Aspiration	.233	.059	.228	3.971	.000
Job Demand	.098	.044	.124	1.215	.051
Social Interest	.072	.050	.082	1.440	.028

The table above shows the relative contributions made by the independent variables to the Job Satisfaction of Secondary School Teachers. It was observed that Career Aspiration (β= .228, t= 3.971; p< 0.05); Job Demands (β = .124, t=1.215;p< 0.05) and Social Interest (β = .082, t=1.440; p< 0.05) respectively. The table further shows that Career Aspiration (β = .228; p< 0.05) appears as the most potent contributor to the Job Satisfaction.

Discussion

The results of the present study clearly show that career aspiration had a significant relationship with job satisfaction. The finding is not far-fetched as it was consistent with Roziah, Maimunah, Jegak and Sidek, (2009); Bartley, Sacker, Schoon, Kelly and Carmona (2005) which asserts that positive relationship exist between job satisfaction and job aspirations and the realities of work. Also, the work of Schein (1990) and Feldman & Bolino (1996) lend credence to the result that when an individual achieve congruence between his or her career and jobs, he or she is more

likely to achieve positive career outcomes. This shows that career aspirations were truly internals and that the teachers strongly belief in their ability to control the direction of their career. Furthermore, the teachers had attributed their success to strong desire and motivation to succeed as well as avoid failure. Besides that, the teachers also possessed strong beliefs, values and interest conforming to their career aspirations. It is, therefore, established that job satisfaction will be higher if there is a closer fit between people's career aspirations.

Similarly, job demands was found to be a significant contributor to job satisfaction of teachers. This is in consonance with Clark (2004);Karasek (1979) who established that workers with high job demands at work are the most stressed individuals and would likely experience dissatisfaction. One probable explanation for the gap in the job satisfaction of teachers could be with the high level of time pressure, job demands may constitute a potential source of stress and dissatisfaction. It could be that job

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demands contain an important physical component, which might directly contribute to the emergence of emotional exhaustion without interfering with need satisfaction (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004).This also suggests that teachers who engage in initiatives to create more challenging jobs for themselves influence their own well-being to some extent. It is possible that simply knowing that one has influenced his or her challenging demands has beneficial effects on well-being. When employees do not decrease their hindering job demands, we cannot expect to observe a change in these demands over time. Also, employees may have felt reluctant to report that they had attempted to decrease their job demands; they may have felt that decreasing one's job demands was socially undesirable.

The study further indicates a significant correlation between social interest and of job satisfaction of teachers. The result is in consonance with prior studies (Schwartz, Bell, Ma, & Reed, 2003; Nikelly, 2005) who concluded that social interest was associated with higher and low levels of job satisfaction. The possible explanation for the result may not be unconnected with how some teachers are dissatisfied with the high workload, low remuneration packages and other benefits that the school management offered. This also suggests that social interest provides for sustained altruism in the face of challenges. Teachers with the highest social interest

show the greatest declines in their connectedness to school.

Implication

This study has implication for the work of Counselling and Educational Psychologists as well as researchers. Poor career aspirations, excessive job demands and poor social interest about teaching profession contribute to poor job satisfaction and vice-versa.

As the career aspiration is a strong predictor of job satisfaction, hence, it is necessary that government and private schools management should give teachers opportunity to function in the subject and areas which suite their aspirations as this will go a long way in making them get satisfy with their career, enhance efficiency and increase productivity.

Recommendations

Career aspiration of intending teachers should be considered during the employment exercise.

Private schools' management should reduce teachers' workload, provide attractive remuneration package and other benefits to make teaching more attractive and thus increase the social interest of the profession.

Intending teachers should consider the job demands of the profession in secondary schools; develop the required prerequisite before taking up teaching as a career. The level of teachers' satisfaction in the profession will greatly influence the school and the students.

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