

# Assessment of Job Satisfaction among Early Childhood Education Teachers in Edo State, Nigeria

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## ABSTRACT

The study examined job satisfaction among early childhood education teachers in Edo State. Four research questions were raised for the study, and three were formulated into hypotheses. The study adopted a descriptive survey design. The study's population comprises all the one thousand and twenty-one (1021) public early childhood education schools and one thousand two hundred and sixty-three (1263) early childhood education teachers in Edo State. A multi-stage sampling technique was used to select a sample of one hundred and two early childhood schools and one hundred and twenty-six early childhood teachers in the three senatorial districts of Edo State. A questionnaire (JSAECETQ) validated with a reliability coefficient of 0.97 was used to collect data from the respondents. The research questions were analysed using mean and standard deviation while hypotheses were tested using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient at 0.05 level of significance. The findings revealed that the level of job satisfaction among early childhood education teachers in Edo State is low and that there is a positive and significant relationship between working conditions, professional growth and advancement opportunities and job satisfaction among early childhood teachers in Edo State. The finding also revealed that there is no significant relationship between the involvement of early childhood teachers in school administration and job satisfaction among early childhood education teachers in Edo State. Based on the findings, the study recommended that the working conditions of early childhood teachers should be improved upon by the relevant stakeholders by making adequate provision for their "welfare needs such as car loans, accommodation facilities, study leave with pay, leave of absence when needed, provision of instructional materials to improve their job performance, protection from occupational hazards and regular promotion as at when due

**Keywords:** Job satisfaction, early childhood education, teachers, working conditions, professional growth and advancement, teachers' involvement

## INTRODUCTION

Education is recognized worldwide as a tool for achieving socio-economic growth and national development. It is in recognition of this vital role that Mgbodile (2004) observed that it is through

well-planned and implemented educational systems that advanced nations of the world have attained a high level of social, economic, scientific, and technological advancement. This viewpoint is equally in agreement with the views of Sergiovani and Starrat (1996), Okeke (2008), and Chukwu (2011) that any nation that wants to be developed must have a worthwhile system of education for its citizens. In Nigeria, the educational system is organized into different education levels: early childhood education, primary education, secondary education, and higher education. However, it is worth noting that in this study, we are interested in early childhood education teachers' job satisfaction.

Early childhood education has been conceptualized in different ways. According to Bright (2006), early childhood education refers to the formal teaching of young children by people outside the family or in settings outside the home. Ogbonnaya (2003) briefly defined early childhood education as the education received by children before the age of primary education; while the Federal Republic of Nigeria (2004) conceptualized it as the education given in an educational institution to children prior to entering the primary school. Early childhood education is the foundational education given to children aged 3 to 5 years plus in creche, nursery and kindergarten to properly form their minds for primary education. Therefore, early childhood education is the gateway to sound primary education.

The objectives of early childhood education in Nigeria include effecting a smooth transition from the home to the school; preparing the child for the primary level of education; providing adequate care and supervision for the children while their parents are at work; inculcating social norms; inculcating in the child the spirit of enquiry and creativity through the exploration of nature, the environment, art, music and playing with toys, artistic and musical activities; developing a sense of co-operation and team-spirit; learning good habits, especially good health habits; and teaching the rudiments of numbers, letters, colours, shapes and forms through play (NPE, 2014).

It is pertinent to note that the achievement of the above laudable objectives of early childhood education requires that the early childhood education teachers who are responsible for delivering education to young children have to be satisfied with their jobs to be motivated to perform maximally towards realising the identified goals of early childhood education. Therefore, job satisfaction among early childhood education teachers is pivotal to achieving the objectives of early childhood education. Job satisfaction has been defined in diverse ways. According to Breed and Breda (1997), job satisfaction is when the employee of an organization evaluates the current conditions of their job and sees these conditions as meeting their expectations. Christopher (2005) defined job satisfaction as a positive employee's emotional state arising from the performance of job in a manner that is motivated to perform appointed duties effectively and efficiently; while Emenike (2007) and Chukwukere (2009) in their perspective succinctly defined job satisfaction as a feeling of joy, contentment and achievement arising from the performance of one's job. One can, however, conclude from the above definitions of job satisfaction that job satisfaction is a feeling of happiness and fulfilment, about the work that one does in an organization; the above definitions of job satisfaction also indicate that job satisfaction implies doing ones job with enthusiasm and

happiness; job satisfaction is also the key ingredient that leads to recognition, income, promotion and the achievement of other goals that lead to a feeling of fulfilment (Kaliski, 2007).

Nwankwo (1982) asserted that teacher's job satisfaction can be achieved through; enhancing the feelings of teachers achievement by recognition and rewarding excellence; involving teachers in decision-making and leadership; providing healthy social climate in the school and improving teachers personal outlook; making the work challenging and enjoyable to teachers by way of assigning special duties and protect them; assigning responsibilities for special function to teachers and ensure adequate authority for carrying them and promoting teachers' personal and professional advancement through recognition of the role played by the teacher. Ayeniyo (2015) opined that fringe benefits are forms of supplementary compensation that can provide mutual advantages to both the employers and employees in terms of increased productivity, job satisfaction and improved standard of living. Korlo and Akintunde (2016) stated that job satisfaction is a function of the extent to which a staff aspirations, desires and needs are met or satisfied on the job.

Evans (1998) contends, "Teachers are feeling disillusioned, demoralized, and angry at being forced to carry out unpopular government policies, while being constantly blamed for society's ills. They are fed up with having to teach children in ever larger classes, working in schools which are dilapidated, underfunded, and overstretched". The way individual teachers view themselves as contributors to the whole school, appear to be important to their level of satisfaction beyond the classroom, and the formation of this view of teachers is related to their school culture environment (Lortie, 1975)

The importance of job satisfaction among staff of any organization has been highlighted. According to Lawler (2001) and George and Jones (2008), staff job satisfaction brings about the effectiveness and efficiency of organizations because when workers are satisfied with their jobs, they are happy and make maximum contributions to the realization of organizational goals. In the same vein, Blanchard (1998) and Emenogu (2003) remarked that the job satisfaction of staff is important to every organization in the sense that workers who are satisfied with their jobs will be much more productive and they will be retained in the organization for a longer period in comparison to dissatisfied workers who will be less useful to the organization and have a greater tendency to quit the job.

The views above show that, job satisfaction is an important factor in an organization's success since it brings about increased productivity on the part of the employees. This means that when early childhood education teachers are not satisfied with their jobs, it will result in dissatisfaction, frustration, negligence, and consideration to quit the job (Egbokhare, 2010). These will in turn hamper the realization of the goals of their institutions of learning, hence, the need for job satisfaction among early childhood education teachers.

According to Nwafor (2011), working conditions are the conditions under which the job must be done and the extent to which the conditions make the job disagreeable or pleasant. Therefore, making available good working conditions to early childhood education teachers entails adequate and prompt payment of their salaries and allowances; supplying them with all the necessary facilities, equipment and materials that make for effective teaching and learning; giving them

regular promotion; and making adequate provision for their welfare and security needs (Unugbro, 1995; Igwe, 2003). In assessments of working and employment conditions, including issues of occupational safety and health, maternity protection, work-family issues, homework, working time, wages and income, work organization, workload, worker's welfare facilities, housing, nutrition and environment, teachers face perhaps the greatest problems among the working population (Nwankwo (1982). A conducive work environment ensures the wellbeing of employees, which always enabled them to exert themselves to their roles with all force that may translate to higher productivity (Akinyele, 2007).

Professional growth and advancement opportunities is other factors that could be responsible for job satisfaction among early childhood education teachers. These, essentially, are in the form of staff training and development programmes organized for early childhood education teachers to enable them to perform their duties effectively and be prepared for higher responsibilities in their schools. Thus, for early childhood education teachers to be satisfied with their jobs, they have to be provided with opportunities for their professional growth and advancement which Peretomode (2003) and Oboegulelem (2004) see as encompassing in-service educational programmes, periodic seminars, sandwich programmes, regular supervision for improving their knowledge and skill, and providing them with modern library with adequate facilities and equipment. In support of the above viewpoint, Nwuzor and Ogbonna (1995) and Obinwa (2007) remarked that training and development of the staff of educational institutions aim at providing them with opportunities for the development of leadership through the exercise of responsibility, development of problem-solving and decision-making skills, participation in decision-making on significant issues which affect them, experiment and initiate change, exchange ideas and information, give clear understanding of roles and responsibilities, and accept new challenges and experiences

Involvement of early childhood teachers in the administration of schools could also influence them to be satisfied with their jobs. Okeke (2007) sees this as an opportunity to give them a sense of belonging, recognition and job satisfaction needed for effective and successful school administration. Early childhood education teachers can be involved in the administration of their school by encouraging their participation in the running of their school, accepting their suggestions and constructive criticisms in matters concerning their school, engaging them in frequent discussions on their school's problems and achievements, the school administrators making themselves accessible, and delegating administrative responsibilities (Ulco and Ekeruo, 1992; Nwankpa, 2007).

However, it has been insinuated that early childhood education teachers in Nigeria (Edo State inclusive) are not satisfied with their jobs. To bolster this assertion, Igbuzor (2009) opined that early childhood education teachers in Nigeria are not satisfied with their jobs because they lack good working conditions as they are faced with the problems of inadequate salaries and allowances, inadequate promotion and opportunities for their professional growth and advancement. The above viewpoint indicates a lack of job satisfaction among early childhood teachers in Nigeria. The findings of this study would be of benefit to the government by providing

a useful guide to the government on the various strategies that could be employed to improve, achieve and sustain the job satisfaction of early childhood teachers in Edo state.

#### Statement of the Problem

Job satisfaction among early childhood education teachers in Nigeria including Edo State has been a source of concern, this concern arises from the fact that the level of job satisfaction among early childhood teachers seems not to be high and this has affected their level of job performance and commitment. In recent times, early the salaries and allowances for early childhood teachers are not adequate, especially in this present economic situation in Nigeria where the cost of living is relatively high compared to the take-home pay. This has resulted in their dissatisfaction as evidenced in their negative attitude towards their work which has shown in truancy or being late to work, ineffective use of working hours; poor performance; teaching late; completing assignments late; often leaving the office before office hours are over and trading during school days within the school compound. These negative attitudes of early childhood teachers show that they are not satisfied with their job. This dissatisfaction negatively impacts the quality of education and does not fulfil students' rights to study optimally.

It is perceived that early childhood education teachers in Edo State lack good working conditions in the area of poor salary, inadequate instructional material, lack of professional growth and advancement opportunities. Consequently, this study seeks to assess job satisfaction among early childhood teachers in Edo State to ascertain the veracity of the situation

#### Research Questions

The following research questions guided this study:

- i. What is the level of job satisfaction among early childhood education teachers in Edo State?
- ii. Does working conditions influences job satisfaction among early childhood education teachers in Edo State?
- iii. Do professional growth and advancement opportunities influence job satisfaction among early childhood education teachers in Edo State?
- iv. Does the involvement of early childhood teachers in school administration influences job satisfaction among early childhood education teachers in Edo State?

#### METHODOLOGY

This study focused on the indices of job satisfaction among early childhood education teachers namely: good working conditions, professional growth and advancement opportunities and involvement of early childhood education teachers in the administration of their school. This study is delimited to all the public early childhood education institutions in Edo State, Nigeria. The study adopted a descriptive survey design. This study's population comprised all the one thousand two hundred and sixty-three (1263) early childhood education teachers in Edo State. The sample

consisted of 126 respondents representing 10% of the total number of early childhood education teachers in Edo State using multi-stage sampling procedure. Stage 1: the State was stratified into three (3) Senatorial Districts using the Stratified Sampling Technique. Stage 2: from each of the Senatorial Districts, approximately ten percent (10%) of early childhood schools were randomly selected using the simple random sampling technique which were thirty (30) public early childhood education schools from Edo North Senatorial District, forty-nine (49) public early childhood education schools from Edo South senatorial District and twenty-three (23) public early childhood education schools from Edo Central Senatorial District. Stage 3: From each of the sampled schools in each Senatorial District, ten percent (10%) of early childhood teachers were selected using the simple random sampling technique which is thirty eight (38) teachers in Edo North Senatorial District, sixty-six (66) teachers from Edo South Senatorial District and twenty-three (23) teachers from Edo Central senatorial District. Thus, one hundred and twenty-six (126) teachers were selected from the sampled public early childhood education schools in Edo State. A questionnaire which was titled "Job Satisfaction among Early Childhood Education Teachers Questionnaire (JSAECETQ)" was used to collect relevant data for the study. The validity of the there is something missing here was ascertained through three (3) academic staff of the department of Educational Management, University of Benin, their choice was based on their expertise and experience in developing research instruments. To ascertain the instrument's reliability, "it was trial-tested on 20 staff of selected early childhood education institutions in neighbouring Delta State. Cronbach's Alpha method of reliability estimate was used to determine the instrument's internal consistency and the overall reliability coefficient was 0.975". This value was considered high enough to make the instrument reliable in obtaining the needed information for the study. The questionnaires were administered to the respondents by the researchers in their various schools. The data collected were analysed using mean and standard deviation for research questions while the hypotheses were tested using Pearson product moment correlation. The hypotheses were all tested at 0.05 level of significance. A mean value of 2.50 which is the arithmetic mean of the 4-points Likert scale was used for the acceptance for the research question

**FINDINGS**

**Level of Job Satisfaction among Early Childhood Education Teachers**

**Research Question 1:** What is the level of job satisfaction among early childhood education teachers in Edo State?

To answer this question, the data collected on job satisfaction among early childhood education teachers in Edo State were analysed using mean and standard deviation as shown in *Table 1*.

**Table 1: Mean and standard deviation scores on the level of job satisfaction among early childhood education teachers in Edo State**

<b>Item</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Remarks</b>
"I feel I am being paid a fair amount for the work I do".	126	2.46	0.95	Low
"I don't feel my efforts are rewarded the way they should be".	126	2.07	0.34	Low
"I would consider leaving my job for another with greater opportunities for advancement".	126	2.71	0.75	Moderate

“I receive the information, tools and resources I need to do my job”	126	2.57	0.73	Moderate
My physical working environment is conducive for my job.	126	2.34	0.77	Low
There is availability of schemes for personal growth and development for early childhood teachers.	126	2.06	0.65	Low
Grand Mean		2.37	0.70	Low
<i>Mean score less than 2.50 is low, 2.50 to 2.99 is moderate, while 3.00 and above is high, SD: standard deviation</i>				

Data in Table 1 shows the computed mean which ranges from 2.06 – 2.71 and SD which ranges from 0.34 – 0.95 respectively. The computed grand mean of all the items is (2.37) falling below 2.50 on the scale. This implies that the level of job satisfaction among early childhood education teachers in Edo State is low.

#### Hypothesis One

There is no significant relationship between working conditions and job satisfaction among early childhood education teachers in Edo State.

**Table 2: Pearson’s Correlation of working conditions and Job Satisfaction among early childhood teachers in Edo State.**

Variables	Job Satisfaction		
	N	Pearson’s correlation	Sig/2-Tailed
Working conditions	126	0.947	0.000
<i>P-value significant at 0.05 level (2-tailed), (Reject Hypothesis)</i>			

Table 2 shows a Pearson’s r of 0.947 and a p value of 0.000 testing at an alpha level of 0.05. The p value is less than the alpha level so the null hypothesis that “there is no significant relationship between working conditions and job satisfaction among early childhood education teachers in Edo State” is rejected. Consequently, there is a positive and significant relationship between working conditions and job satisfaction among early childhood teachers in Edo State.

#### Hypothesis Two

There is no significant relationship between professional growth and advancement opportunities and job satisfaction among early childhood education teachers in Edo State

**Table 3: Pearson’s Correlation of professional growth and advancement opportunities and job satisfaction among early childhood education teachers in Edo State**

Variables	Job Satisfaction		
	N	Pearson’s correlation	Sig/2-Tailed
Professional growth and advancement	126	0.802	0.000
<i>P-value significant at 0.05 level (2-tailed), (Reject Hypothesis)</i>			

Table 3 shows a Pearson’s r of 0.802 and a p value of 0.000 testing at an alpha level of 0.05. The p-value is less than the alpha level so the null hypothesis which states that “there is no significant relationship between professional growth and advancement opportunities and job satisfaction among early childhood education teachers in Edo State” is rejected. Consequently, there is a positive and significant relationship between professional growth and advancement opportunities and job satisfaction among early childhood education teachers in Edo State

#### Hypothesis Three

There is no significant relationship between involvements of early childhood teachers in school administration and job satisfaction among early childhood education teachers in Edo State.

**Table 4: Pearson’s Correlation of involvements of early childhood teachers in school administration and job satisfaction among early childhood education teachers in Edo State**

Variables	Job Satisfaction		
	N	Pearson’s correlation	Sig/2-Tailed
Involvements in school administration	126	0.155	0.084
<i>P-value significant at 0.05 level (2-tailed), (Reject Hypothesis)</i>			

Table 4 shows a Pearson’s r of 0.155 and a p value of 0.084 testing at an alpha level of 0.05. The p value is greater than the alpha level so the null hypothesis which states that “there is no significant relationship between involvements of early childhood teachers in school administration and job satisfaction among early childhood education teachers in Edo State” is accepted. Thus, there is no significant relationship between the involvements of early childhood teachers in school administration and job satisfaction among early childhood education teachers in Edo State

## DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The findings from research question one revealed that the level of job satisfaction among early childhood teachers in Edo State is low. This is because early childhood teachers in Edo State are not rewarded with salaries commensurate with what they put in their jobs. Also, their low level of job satisfaction may be as a result of their physical working environment is not conducive for them to do their job, the low level of job satisfaction could also be as a result of inadequate attention of Edo state government towards the provisions of welfare needs such as “car loans, recreational and accommodation facilities, study leave with pay, and leave of absence when needed”, hence, early childhood teachers in Edo state are not satisfied with their working conditions. This study is in agreement with Modest and Onyango (2021) who revealed that poor salaries and lack of a conducive environment of work were responsible for low levels of job satisfaction among teachers in public secondary schools in Bukoba Rural District Bukola in Kagera Region, Tanzania. The Authors further identified poor teacher-supervisor relationships, inadequate teacher housing, and concerns about teachers' health and safety as factors influencing job satisfaction. This study was also in agreement with the findings of Ada (2021) who revealed that indices of good working



conditions such as “prompt payment of salaries and allowances, adequate provision of physical facilities and equipment, provision of instructional materials, regular promotion, provision of security needs and adequate provision of welfare” where indices of good working conditions that can enhance the job satisfaction of primary schools’ teachers in Tanzania.

The findings of hypothesis one revealed a significant relationship between working conditions and job satisfaction among early childhood education teachers in Edo State. This finding was supported by Jentsch, Hoferichter, Blömeke, König, and Kaiser (2023) who researched the relationship between working environment and teachers' job satisfaction, perceived work-related stress, as well as work-related self-efficacy and found out that there is a significant relationship between working conditions and job satisfaction. The finding of this study was also in agreement with the study by Sadikin, Andriana, Manap, Ramli and Hendrajaya (2023) on the relationship between job satisfaction and working environment of teachers in Islamic Private Schools in South Tangerang City, Indonesia. The results of the study revealed that there is a significant relationship between working conditions and job satisfaction. This study was further corroborated by Admiraal (2023) who averred that working conditions significantly influence the teachers’ job satisfaction. The findings of this study also draw support from Ertürk (2022) who posited that there is a strong positive relationship between all dimensions of good working conditions of teachers and job satisfaction. However, this study is at variance with Veletic, Price and Olsen (2023) who revealed no significant relationship between working conditions and job satisfaction among secondary school principals and teachers in the thirty-seven countries that participated in their study.

The findings of hypothesis two revealed a significant relationship between professional growth and advancement opportunities and job satisfaction among early childhood education teachers in Edo State. The finding agreed with the findings of Mwititi, Moguche and Rintari (2021) who revealed that “there is a significant relationship between career advancement and job satisfaction of secondary school teachers in Igembe North sub-county”. However, the finding of this study is at variance with Brown (2018) who discovered that no statistically significant relationship exists between the perception of principals and teachers on the level of professional growth and advancement and job satisfaction in a professional learning community regardless of their gender identity or educational role in California secondary schools.

The findings of hypothesis three revealed that “there is no significant relationship between involvements of early childhood teachers in school administration and job satisfaction among early childhood education teachers in Edo State”. This finding corroborates with that of Hirsch, Emerick, Church and Fuller (2007) who posited that “there was no significant relationship between the perception of principals and teachers on the level of involvement and job satisfaction in community schools in North California”. However, the finding of this study is at variance with Ayegbusi and Ogunlade (2020) who conducted a study to investigate the relationship between teachers’ decisional participation and job satisfaction in secondary schools in Ekiti State, the study revealed that “there was a significant relationship between teachers’ decisional participation and their job satisfaction”. This study also disagrees with the findings of Okeke (2022) who carried out a study to investigate the influence of distributed leadership on teachers’ job satisfaction in the

Awka Educational Zone of Anambra State. Findings from the study revealed that teachers' participation in decision making, teachers' belonging to the leadership teams and teachers' collaboration influence their job satisfaction.

#### Implication of the Findings for Educational Management

This study's findings will guide education policymakers, educational managers, ministries, and agencies of education on the importance of job satisfaction among early childhood teachers and the strategies to adopt to enhance job satisfaction among teachers in educational institutions.

## CONCLUSION

It was observed that the level of job satisfaction among early childhood education teachers in Edo State is low, that there is a positive and significant relationship between working conditions and job satisfaction, there is also a positive and significant relationship between professional growth and advancement opportunities and job satisfaction among early childhood education teachers in Edo State. However, there is no significant relationship between the involvement of early childhood teachers in school administration and job satisfaction among early childhood education teachers in Edo State.

#### Recommendations

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

1. The relevant stakeholders should improve upon the working conditions of early childhood teachers by making adequate provision for their “welfare needs such as car loans, recreational and accommodation facilities, study leave with pay, and leave of absence when needed, provision of instructional materials to improve their job performance, provision of health insurance, protection from occupational hazards as well as regular promotion of early childhood teachers as at when due”.
2. Early childhood teachers should have more opportunities for professional growth and advancement through in-service training and scholarships to upgrade their knowledge and certificates.

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