

Teachers' Gender Difference in Professional Awareness as Correlate of Job Satisfaction

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Abstract

The study investigated teachers' gender difference in professional awareness as correlate of job satisfaction among secondary school teachers in Rivers State of Nigeria. One research question and one null hypothesis were for the study. 3,460 was the study population. The sample consisted of 692 teachers who were selected through proportionate stratified random sampling technique based on gender distribution of the teachers in the population. Data was collated using questionnaire. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research question, while the t-test was used to test the hypothesis. The findings of the study revealed that gender in relation to professional awareness had no significant influence on the teachers' job satisfaction.

Keywords: Teachers, Gender, Professional Awareness, Job Satisfaction

1. Introduction

Social structuring and classification has made people to sense or reason differently in their various professions. Thus, male and female teachers in Nigeria react or behavior differently based on the gender difference they were branded with. **Ozaralli (2003)** has noted that improved organizational performance is achievable if gender interest is considered in workplaces. The discrimination, parity and inequality between men and women in our society have provoked interest in the study of influence of gender in the school system (**Alvesson and Billing, 1997**). In the case of teachers in Rivers State, it is not certain that gender has no significant influence on their knowledge of the profession and job satisfaction.

More and more interest had been stimulated in the areas of gender and professional awareness since it has been empirically proven that professional awareness improved organizational performance and outcomes, the school inclusive (**Ozaralli, 2003**). This interest was triggered off by gender reform

feminist theories that underscored the discrimination, parity and inequality between men and women in the society (**Alvesson and Billing, 1997**). Some previous scholarly analysis of the relationship between professional awareness and gender in the school system revealed men as more conscious than the women (**Limerick and Anderson, 1999; Tacey, 1997**). However, some studies had displayed high level skepticism regarding male teachers' professional awareness (**Grogan, 2000; Coleman, 1998**). **Collard (2001)** confirms in his analysis that gender differences in professional awareness was not consistent across school levels. At primary level, female teachers were found to be more sensitive to professional issues and students' needs, either as individuals or as in groups (**Collard, 2001**). Describing gender sensitivity from this point of view, one would assume that female teachers were more attuned to professional issues than male counterparts. On the contrary, male teachers in secondary schools were found to be more conscious of professional issues than female teachers (**Collard, 2001**). Hence it would mean that professional awareness was more pronounced at the school level where men were greater in number. In addition to this, Collard views relationship between gender and professional awareness as being dependent on multiple factors, such as school location, type of school and the socioeconomic nature of the place of school location. This would mean no conclusive evidence of one directional statement on the relationship between gender and professional awareness. This is consistent with the views of **Kark (2004)** that the answer to the question varied.

Gender is one of the demographic variables that its effect on job satisfaction of workers has been studied by many researchers. The effect of gender on the job satisfaction of workers (including teachers) has been a controversial issue for years. Some job satisfaction studies involving the demographic variable of sex showed significant difference between males and females while some other studies did not show any significant difference. This could be why **Newby (1999)** reported that there is little practical significance between males and females in job satisfaction. However, differences or otherwise strongly hinge on the circumstances of the workers. There are studies showing that males are significantly more satisfied than females in their jobs. One of such studies is that of **Forgionne and Peters (1982)** who studied job satisfaction of male and female managers. Their study revealed that male managers were more satisfied with their jobs than female managers at the same managerial level. **Amachree (1996)** studied job satisfaction among secondary school principals in Degema Local Government Area of Rivers State. The study revealed that the sex of the principals was closely associated with their levels of job satisfaction, with the balance apparently tilting towards the male principals. Furthermore, Patitu cited in Newby (1999) found that male educational administrators showed higher job satisfaction than the females. This was on the basis of higher mean score of the males in relation to opportunities for promotion. On the other hand, there are studies which show that females are significantly more satisfied than males in their jobs. One of such studies was carried out by **Frieson, Holdaway and Rice (1983)** which concluded that female principals had higher job satisfaction and professional awareness than their male counterparts. Similarly, **Fansher and Buxton (1984)**, **Vaughn-Wiles (1987)** and **Newby (1999)** reported that female principals are more satisfied with their jobs than the male principals. **Sloane and Williams (2000)** assert that despite differences in pay that favoured men more than women, women seemed to be more satisfied at their work place than men. **Clark (1997)** posits that it was because women had low expectations that could easily be fulfilled. This assertion gained the support of **Witt and Nye**

(1992), when they said that female employees had lower expectations than their male counterparts and so could easily be satisfied with their job. Consequently, they derived more satisfaction at work place than men.

The studies considered so far indicated that either males or females were more satisfied with their jobs. There are studies that did not show significant difference in job satisfaction of male and female employees, implying that both sex groups were equally satisfied with their jobs. For instance, **Asika (1985)** studied job satisfaction among Nigerian bank employees. Results of the study indicated that there was no significant effect of sex on job satisfaction of the bankers. Furthermore, **Nestor and Leary (2000)** found from their study that sex had no effect on job satisfaction of their male and female respondents. From the foregoing, some studies revealed that males were more satisfied with their jobs than females. Contrarily, other studies showed that female respondents were more satisfied than the males. Yet, there are studies that indicated that males and females were equally satisfied with their jobs. The true position in relation to Rivers State male and female secondary school teachers in terms of who are more satisfied remains uncertain hence this current study. This study aims to understand teachers' gender difference in professional awareness as the correlates of job satisfaction among secondary school teachers in Cross River State.

2. Method

A correlational research design was employed for the study. The study population comprised all the 3,460 teachers in the government owned secondary schools in Rivers State. Based on the population, a total of 692 teachers were sampled. This represents 20% of the overall population. The choice of this size is in agreement with **Ndiyo (2005:183)** when he said: "... statistically speaking, a sample should be about 15 – 30% of the population." Proportionate stratified random sampling was adopted in selecting the 692 teachers. The instrument for data collection for this study is the questionnaire titled: "Teachers Gender Professional Awareness and Job Satisfaction Questionnaire" (TGPAJSQ). The researchers designed this instrument through information got from literature review. The instrument which was used for collection of relevant data for this study was given out to two experts in Sociology of Education and three experts in Measurement and Evaluation from University of Port Harcourt, Choba and University of Nigeria, Nsukka. The researchers, with the help of seven research assistants distributed the questionnaire. The research assistants were prepared beforehand for the task by explaining the purpose of the research to them. Three of them assisted the researchers in collecting data from schools where there was no teacher research assistant. The rest research assistants collected data from their respective schools. Mean and standard deviation were used to analyze data for research question while the t-test statistic was applied for their corresponding null hypothesis.

3. Results and Discussion

Research Question and Hypothesis

- ✓ How do the teachers differ in their responses on professional awareness based on their gender?
- ✓ There is no significant difference between male and female teachers' mean ratings on professional awareness.

In order to answer this research question and test the corresponding null hypothesis, mean, standard deviation and t-test for each item were computed based on the male and female teachers' responses. The results obtained are summarized and presented as in Table 4.

Table 1: mean rating, standard deviation and t-test analysis of male and female teachers on professional awareness.

Items	Teachers	N	Mean	SD	df	t-cal	t-crit
1 The teaching profession provides essential services	male	472	3.69	0.58	683	0.25	1.96
	female	213	3.68	0.62	683		
2 It possesses a unique body of knowledge and skills	male	472	3.50	0.64	683	1.23	1.96
	female	213	3.56	0.56	683		
3 Professional decisions are made in accordance with valid principles and theories.	male	472	3.13	0.73	683	3.21	1.96
	female	213	2.91	1.02	683		
4 Professional associations control the actual work and conditions.	male	472	2.54	0.90	683	5.65	1.96
	female	213	2.95	0.89	683		
5 There are performance standards for admission and continuance.	male	472	2.85	0.78	683	4.38	1.96
	female	213	3.14	0.82	683		
6 It requires a protracted preparation programme	male	472	3.23	0.85	683	3.48	1.96
	female	213	2.98	0.88	683		
7 There is high level of public trust and confidence.	male	472	2.85	0.85	683	0.21	1.96
	Female	213	2.83	0.85	683		
8 Strong service motivation and commitment to competence	male	472	2.79	0.80	683	1.08	1.96
	female	213	2.71	0.90	683		
9 The profession itself determines individual competence	male	472	2.77	0.83	683	5.81	1.96
	female	213	3.17	0.82	683		
10 There is relative freedom from direct or public supervision of individual practitioner	male	472	2.56	0.81	683	5.63	1.96
	female	213	2.94	0.84	683		
Overall mean	male	472	2.99	0.79	683	1.29	1.96
	female	213	3.08	0.82	683		

The results in Table 1 show that the mean ratings of the male teachers were a little higher than that of the female in items 1,3,6,7, and 8 while the mean ratings of the female teachers a little higher than that of the male in items 2, 4, 9 and 10. In testing whether the observed differences were significant, t-test analysis was used. From the Table, the results show that significant difference existed in six items which are items 3, 4,5,6,9, and 10. This is because their calculated t-values were greater than their corresponding critical t-values of 1.96 at 683 degrees of freedom and a 0.05 level of

significance (alpha level). Accordingly, there was no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female teachers on four items (1,2,3 and 4). This is because their calculated t-values were less than their corresponding critical t-value of 1.96 at 683 degrees of freedom (df) and 0.05 alpha level. Finally, in the same Table 1, it is shown that the calculated t-value of 1.29 for the overall mean scores of the male and female teachers on the professional awareness scale is less than the critical t-value of 1.96 at degrees of freedom at 683 and 0.05 alpha levels. Thus, the null hypothesis of no significant difference between the male and female teachers difference in mean ratings of professional awareness on job satisfaction is accepted.

Based on the available result, the study further analysis male and female teachers mean responses on job satisfaction

Table 2: Mean ratings, standard deviation and t-test analysis of the male and female teachers responses on job satisfaction.

S/N	Item statement	Gender	N	Mean	SD	df	t-cat	t-crit
1	Working conditions	Male	472	2.20		683	0.96	1.96
		Female	213				2.14	
0.86								
2	Salary	Male	472	2.01	0.59	683	2.26	1.96
		Female	213	1.89	0.73			
3	Job security	Male	472	2.68	0.99	683	4.30	1.96
		Female	213	2.33	1.03			
4	Quality of supervision	Male	472	2.68	0.99	683	2.85	1.96
		Female	213	2.46	0.94			
5	Relationship with others	Male	472	2.94		683	5.37	1.96
		Female	213	2.61	0.93			
6	Nature of the job	Male	472	2.62	0.70	683	2.56	1.96
		Female	213	2.45	0.95			
7	Achievement in the work	Male	472	2.66		683	2.53	1.96
		Female	213	2.48	0.96			
8	Promotion opportunities	Male	472	1.93	0.61	683	2.44	1.96
		Female	213	1.80	0.74			
9	Chances for personal growth	Male	472	2.49	0.76	683	4.32	1.96
		Female	213	2.21	0.86			
10	Recognition and prestige	Male	472	2.16	0.75	683	2.90	1.96
		Female	213	1.97	0.87			
Overall mean		Male	472	2.44	0.75	683	3.00	1.96
		Female	213	2.23	0.89			

The results in Table 2 reveal that the mean responses of the male teachers were higher than those of the females in all the items. When t-test analysis was done, the results showed that the mean differences were significant in nine items, which are items 2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9 and 10. These items had higher calculated t-values than their corresponding critical t-value of 1.96 at 683 degree of freedom and 0.05 alpha level. Hence, there is a significant difference in the mean ratings of the male and female teachers' responses on the following: salary, job security, quality of supervision, relationship with others, nature of job, achievement in the work, promotion opportunities, chance for personal growth, recognition and prestige. The same Table 2 reveals that no significant mean difference existed between the male and female teachers responses on item 1, which represents working condition. This is because the calculated t-value 0.96 is less than the critical t-value of 1.96 at 683 degree of freedom and 0.05 alpha level.

Finally, in the overall mean responses of the male and female teachers on job satisfaction, the Table shows that a significant mean difference existed. This is because the calculated t-value of 3.00 is greater than the critical t-value of 1.96 at 683 degree of freedom and 0.05 alpha level. Therefore, the null hypothesis of no significant difference between the mean responses of the male and female teachers on job satisfaction is rejected. This implies that teachers gender difference in professional awareness influence job satisfaction of secondary school teachers in Cross River state, Nigeria.

The finding that teachers gender difference in professional awareness influence job satisfaction of secondary school teachers in Cross River state, Nigeria is inconsistency with that **Collard (2001)** who said that female teachers at primary level were found to be more sensitive to professional issues and students' needs, either as individuals or as groups. **Amachree (1996)** revealed that female principals were more dissatisfied with their job. **Forgionne and Peters (1982)**, and **Patitu (1991)** reported that women teachers, despite recent gender equity campaigns, seem not to have the same status in the schools because most principals prefer male teachers to handle certain responsibilities like admissions, social activities, agriculture, games/sports, labour, hostel affairs, etc. Since, men occupy these positions with allowances; the average earnings of female teachers are lower than the case of the male teachers. **Adetayo (2008)** reported that majority of secondary school teachers were satisfied with their teaching job and that the teachers differed significantly by gender, age group and qualification in their levels of job satisfaction.

4. Conclusion

Based on the findings of this research, the researchers thereby conclude that teachers' gender difference in professional awareness influence job satisfaction of secondary school teachers in Cross River State, Nigeria. The study therefore, recommend that the state government should offer equal sensitization among male and female teaching staff to enable them gain full knowledge about their profession for system stability or job satisfaction among them.

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