



Principals' supporting professional development strategy and teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Ondo West Local Government, Nigeria

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Abstract: This study purposed to evaluate the relationship between principals' supporting professional development strategy and teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Ondo West Local Government, Nigeria. The study was guided by Social Exchange Theory. This study employed convergent parallel mixed-methods design. The target population was the 32 public schools in Ondo West Local Government. Ten (10) schools were selected through stratified random sampling. All the 10 principals of the sampled schools were included in the study. Yamene (1967) formula was used to sample of 211 teachers. Questionnaire was used to collect data from the teachers, while interview guide was used to collect data from the principals. In the analysis of quantitative data, descriptive analysis was employed and findings were reported in percentages, frequency tables, pie charts, and graphs. The qualitative data was thematically analyzed and presented in forms of narratives and direct quotations. The study's findings established that professional development strategy positively influence teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Ondo West Local Government. Majority of the teachers (68%) agreed that principals provide and support on going on-the-job training activities for teachers. However, minority of teachers (29%) expressed disagreement to the statement while 3% of the teachers were not sure about the statement. In order to improve on sub-optimal performance of teachers, the study recommended that principals should engage teachers more in decision making processes, align professional development to the needs of the teachers', principals be consistent and fair in their motivation strategy, and encouraging collaboration among teachers in the public schools in Ondo West Local Government.

Key words: Principals' supporting professional development strategy, teachers' performance, public secondary schools

1.1 Background of the Study

Achievement of educational goals in a school is conditional on principal's leadership strategy and has bearing on teachers' job performance. The leadership strategy adopted by a school principal has an influence on teachers' behavior and determines their job performance. The school principal is responsible for giving high valued visions, focused on day-to-day methods that serve to foster good culture and supportive of exceptional teacher performance (Saleem et al., 2020). The primary objective of leadership is to harness every unit of the school system into effective and efficient functioning part that will enhance the achievement of educational goals. School leadership directly influences school conditions that

enhance teachers' job performance. Every educational institution needs to have an effective leader as it is in the heart of every organization that could lead to high service delivery (Chebonye, et al., 2021).

Teacher performance refers to how a teacher acts while teaching and teacher's competence which measures the degree to which a teacher possesses the necessary knowledge and skills (Mbua, 2023). In the same vein, teachers' job performance can be measured by the outcome of students' academic performance. It is paramount that effective teachers be clear about their instructional goals, have adequate and appropriate subject knowledge, and understanding of the curriculum content. Ability to be able to use the right teaching methods and materials is a sign of quality job performance on the part of teachers as well. Teachers' failure in the delivery of expected services to the scholars in the teaching-learning process might culminate in the breakdown of the educational system (Ajetunmobi et al., 2020). Some other factors that contribute to teachers' job performance include classroom management, orderliness during lesson delivery, and organized classroom arrangement. The physical environment in which the learning takes place does contribute to the effectiveness of learning and enhances teachers' job performance.

Supporting teachers' professional development is one major way of fostering participatory leadership in a school setting. Professional development is a dynamic process that gives the employees needed encouragement and support in reviewing and reassessing their goals and activities (Alnajim, 2021). Participatory leadership strategy helps the school leader to inspire staff members in investing their innovative and creative skills thereby developing themselves as they learn by doing on the job. Teachers as professionals, have both the right and obligation to engage in professional development, in order to develop competencies and keep abreast with the developments in their field (UNESCO, 2019). Federal Republic of Nigeria (2014), through the national policy on education states that "efforts towards improvement of quality of education at all levels shall include improvement and regulation of career-long professional development of teachers through the provision of a wide range of programme and multiple pathways to provide serving teachers with regular opportunities to update their knowledge and skills" (p.45). Continuous professional development is an essential aspect of modern education systems, aiming to enhance teacher competency, efficacy, and student outcomes (Rajendran et al, 2023).

Some scholars studied how participatory leadership is related to teachers' job performance. Sultan (2019), conducted a study on leadership styles carried out by principals and academic coordinator in school in Gilgitistan, Pakistan. Following result findings, participatory leadership style was commonly practiced by head of schools. In addition, that because the subordinates participated in the leadership process, better results were recorded. It follows that the practice of principal engaging teachers in leadership process of the school is key in improving their overall job performance. This fact was established in Pakistan in a different culture and social background. This study aimed at establishing the influence of principals' practicing participatory leadership strategy specifically supporting teachers' professional growth on teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Ondo Local Government Area, Nigeria. This present study took place in a different culture, a different social background, and in a different context.

In a study carried out by Sithy and Samsudeen (2020), in Sri Lanka, the study focused on participatory, autocratic, and change-oriented principal leadership styles in relation to teachers' job performance. As established from the study's findings, participatory and change-oriented leadership styles significantly

impacted on teachers' job performance. This explicitly means that not purposively engaging teachers in issues concerning education could lead to underachievement of educational goals. Therefore, the study focused particularly on the principals' participatory leadership strategy and the influence on teachers' job performance in public secondary schools.

In Tanzania, a study was conducted by Aunga and Masare (2019), to establish the effect of leadership styles on teachers' performance in Arusha District. The study investigated the effect of leadership style on teachers' job performance in primary school. The study found out that as the participatory leadership strategies increased, the school overall performance became better. In other words, the performance of teachers became better because they were involved in the leadership process of the school which led to high students' academic performance. This implies that teachers participating in the leadership process of the school could boost their own job performance by putting efforts in their teaching and improve students' academic performance as well. Therefore, this study focused on the influence of participatory leadership strategy on teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Ondo Local Government Area, Nigeria.

Kosgei and Edabu (2023), in Kenya probed head teachers' participative leadership style and teachers' job satisfaction in public primary schools. The study emphasized that head teachers' participative leadership style significantly influences teachers' job satisfaction in public primary schools. This clearly indicated the importance of job satisfaction that led to better job performance. Hence, teachers' job performance in a school cannot be underestimated as it usually has ripple effects on the students and the society at large. The study was carried out in primary school context and the focus was on teachers' job satisfaction. Meanwhile, this study was conducted in public secondary schools and established the influence of principals' participatory leadership strategy on teachers' job performance.

In Cameroon, a study carried out by Mbua (2023) in Fako Division, investigated principal's participatory leadership approaches: An effective tool for teacher effectiveness. Based on the findings of the study, it was evident that principals' participatory leadership approaches were critical variables in teachers' effectiveness and job performance. Also, that principals' participatory decision-making, democratic leadership, and collective leadership strategies significantly exerted a strong and positive impact on teachers' effectiveness.

In line with the study's finding, the school leaders will have to ensure that teachers are involved in decision making as a way of improving their job performance. In the achievement of educational goals, both principals and teachers will have to complement one another's efforts, otherwise there may be underachievement of educational goals. The study focused on principals' participatory leadership approaches which comprised of decision-making, democratic, and collective leadership styles as an effective tool for teachers' effectiveness in Fako Division, Cameroon. Though similar to the present study, the present study focused on the influence of other aspects of principals' participatory leadership strategy particularly supporting professional development on teachers' job performance in public secondary school, Ondo West Local Government Area, Nigeria.

In Nigeria, Nwankwo et al. (2021), carried out a study that researched principals' administrative styles and teachers' job performance as predictor for secondary school effectiveness. Following the findings of the study, school effectiveness was underachieved because teachers were not fully engaged in the

leadership of the schools. The researchers in line with the findings encouraged school leaders to imbibe participatory leadership strategies for achievement of school effectiveness. As such, the current study investigated the influence of participatory leadership strategy on teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Ondo West Local Government. Busa et al. (2023), researched on principals' leadership skills and teachers' job performance of senior secondary schools in Dutsin-Ma Local Government Area of Katsina state, Nigeria. The study findings showed that leadership skills are very significant in teachers' job performance. This present study was carried out to establish the influence of principals' professional development supportive strategies on teachers' job performance in Western part of Nigeria with different cultural and social background.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The performance of teachers in public secondary school is pivotal determinant of quality education and student outcomes. The quality of education of any country can easily be measured by the quality of the teachers' job performance (UNESCO, 2017). One of the key factors that may influence teacher' job performance may be the leadership strategy adopted by the principals (Sarwar et al, 2022; Kurian et al, 2024). Specifically, supportive professional development strategies are considered to enhance teachers' job performance. Despite the theoretical benefits of supportive professional development, there is insufficient empirical evidence on its effectiveness in the context of public secondary schools in Ondo West Local Government. In Ondo west Local Government of Nigeria, there has been increasing concern regarding the sub-optimal performance of teachers, which is reflected in the declining educational goals achievement (IseOlorunkanmi, 2021). There are no readily and sufficient evidence to demonstrate that teachers are supported in accessing professional development. As argued by Rajendran et al, 2023. continuous professional development is an essential aspect of modern education systems, aiming to enhance teacher competency, efficacy, and student outcomes. The problem lies in the limited understanding of how principals' supportive professional development strategies influence teachers' job satisfaction and overall performance. This gap in knowledge hinders the development of effective leadership practices that could otherwise improve educational outcomes.

1.3 Objective of the Study

To evaluate the relationship between principals' supporting professional development strategy and teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Ondo West Local Government, Nigeria.

1.4 Significance of the Study

This study elicited information that are significant in informing the stakeholders in education on the influence of supportive professional development strategies on teachers' job performance in public secondary schools. The study may help to build upon the educational and organizational literature in relation to leadership and teachers work performance. Students may be beneficiaries of the study's findings as they are directly impacted by the teachers' job performance. The findings of the study may as well be of help to the parents who are also stakeholders in education to understand and play their roles correctly. The study findings are anticipated to be of benefit to the community at large because the community is impacted directly by the achievement of educational goals or underachievement of educational goals.

1.5 Scope and Delimitations of the Study

The study focused on evaluating the principals’ support on teachers’ professional development strategies on their job performance in public secondary schools in Ondo West Local government, Nigeria. The study was carried out in all the 32 public secondary schools in Ondo Local Government although there are other private secondary schools. The study participants were school principals and teachers. Principals participated because they exercise leadership roles in their various capacities and are perhaps well versed with the topic of study. Teachers participated because they are the group that experience leadership and are impacted by it in their performance. Besides, there are other participatory leadership strategies but only supporting professional development applied.

1.6 Conceptual framework

Independent variable

Dependent variable

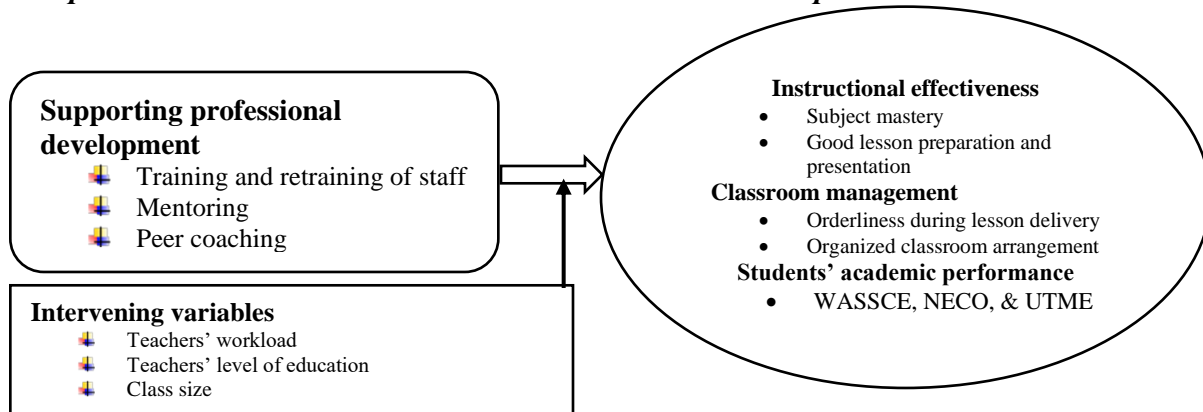


Figure 1: The Conceptual framework
 Source: *Own conceptualization, 2024*

1.7 Literature review

In this section, theoretical review and empirical reviews are presented. Social exchange theory guides this study. Empirical studies from various authors on supporting professional development and performance are critically presented.

1.7.1 Theoretical review

The study was guided by the Social Exchange Theory. Social exchange theory was developed by George Homans in the year 1958. According to Usman et al. (2021), social exchange theory helps to explain how supportive professional development affect job performance. This implies that social exchange theory can be used to better explain the influence that participative leadership strategies have on teachers’ job performance. Leaders in exchange relationship such as employing participative leadership strategies make the subordinates perceived being valued and respond with positive attitudes and behavior (Wang et al., 2021). Participative leaders give room for employees to air their own individual views and opinions and positively engage them in decision-making about their own work and duties. Following this act, employees in turn have the sense of belonging springing from motivation received from the leadership and put in their best in achieving the goals of the institution. Teachers under the guidance of participative leadership strategies will feel very well part of the school system, be encouraged to air their own opinions in decision-making, experience professional growth and development, be motivated, and willing to collaborate with one another. For instance, the teachers who experience participative

leadership strategies practices, would further be of great help, resourceful, and collaborate with their colleagues.

Social exchange theory creates a sense of mutual co-responsibility for the leader and the followers. In a school setting, social exchange theory gives the understanding that there is need for participatory leadership strategies where all stakeholders have the sense of belonging through contributing their ideas and opinions in a formal or informal way. Notably, the principal is still very much responsible for the school as the head even though there is shared responsibility. In a sense that the process of leaders consulting employees before making decisions makes a positive social exchange relationship, employees tend to perform better at work (Wang et al., 2022). This theory makes it explicit that school setting is democratic in nature where every member's opinion and behavior is of utmost important in achievement of educational goals.

Social exchange theory is a scientific theory that explains how individuals minimize their costs and maximize their reward in a relationship. It is a timely and systematic approach that is applicable in all situations. It helps to understand the nature of social relationship that should exist between the principal and teachers in a school setting. It advocates principals' participatory leadership strategies of participating in decision-making, supporting staff development, motivation, and collaboration that will encourage better job performance on the part of the teachers. The theory is fairly simple to apply, allowing easy understanding of its general assumptions in order to be able to relate with them. Becoming knowledgeable of the theory will aid in having more balanced work relationships especially between principals and teachers. It equally provides awareness of principals' responsibilities towards the teachers as well as teachers' obligations towards their duties.

There is uncertainty however, in the practice of social exchange theory due to individual differences on the part of the leader and the subordinates. The whole theory revolves around rewards only and neglects the cultural contexts and variations of cultures. It can make people feel individualistic and reward seeking. Nevertheless, the strengths of the theory far outweigh the weaknesses; therefore, the researcher grounded the theoretical argument of the present study on social exchange theory

In the study, social exchange theory gave the insights into the relationship dynamics among principals and teachers. Principals can apply social exchange theory by supporting and investing in teachers' development and growth. This act could be done through training and retraining of teachers, mentoring and encouraging peer coaching among them. Through this principals' act, teachers may feel encouraged and put in their best performance. Social exchange theory helps principals to understand motivation of teachers.

1.7.2 Empirical review

Principals' Supporting Professional Development Strategy and Teachers' Job Performance

One importance of professional development is the facts that it makes the teacher up to date and enable them keep up with the constant changing educational environment. The school principal as instructional leader should encourage the teachers in keeping up with professional development and upgrade the knowledge in their relative subject matter. Teacher professional development include training, retraining of teachers, organizing workshops and seminar to acquire more knowledge and skills that will aid teachers in discharging their duties.

In Pakistan, research that investigated the continuous professional development of teachers: A case study of public universities was carried out by Dilshad et al. (2019). The study explored teachers' professional development activities, the importance of different professional development activities, skills needed for future training, and barriers in professional development of teachers. Questionnaire was administered to 700 conveniently selected teachers from four faculties. Descriptive statistics analysis including frequency of responses, mean scores and standard deviation, and t-test of independent samples were employed for data analysis, and for comparing views of respondents from different groups.

The results of the study revealed that teachers were moderately engaged in all the fifteen professional development activities and some suggestions were made. The suggestions include that university teachers' professional development should be taken as ongoing process. University leadership should encourage and facilitate their teachers' participation in continuous professional development activities. Workshops and seminars must frequently be planned and organized by the universities to help teachers improve their academic and research skills. The study was carried out in public university settings in Pakistan. Employing mixed method approach, this present study was carried out in public secondary schools in Ondo West Local Government, Nigeria investigating the influence of professional development on teachers' job performance.

In Dubai, Abbassi and David (2021), investigated impact of professional development on teachers' job performance. The main objective of the study was to explore the role of professional development on the performance of teachers working in private school sector of Dubai. It was quantitative research. The findings of the study showed that the performance of teachers is influenced by professional development and its associated variables. This implies that school level professional development strategy adopted by a school principal can enhance the quality of job performance among teachers. The present study employed mixed method research approach to establish the influence of principal supporting professional development on teachers' job performance in secondary school in Ondo West Local Government, Nigeria.

In Kenya, Shikokoti et al. (2021) carried out a study on principals promoting professional development on teachers' job satisfaction in public secondary schools in Kakamega County, Kenya. The study adopted a survey research design. It used a purposive sampling technique to select five sub counties out of 12 Sub-Counties in Kakamega County and stratified sampling technique getting 64 schools out of a total of 324 schools. The study participants were 64 principals and 12 TSC officers who were selected using purposive sampling and 300 teachers selected from simple random sampling. Questionnaires were used as tool for data collection and analysis was done using descriptive statistics. The result showed that teacher professional development enhances skills development which resulted in the achievement of the school goals. The study reviewed is similar to the present study in terms of data collection methods, sampling methods and analysis methods, and focused on principals' promotion of teacher professional development. However, it is different in that it focused on principals' promotion of teacher professional development and job satisfaction while the current study focused on the influence of principal supporting teacher professional development on teachers' job performance in public secondary school in Ondo West Local Government, Nigeria.

In Nigeria, a correlational survey study that examined professional development, participatory management, and teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Ogun State was carried out by Ajetunmobi et al. (2020). The sample size consists of 504 participants that were selected through a multi-stage technique from 12,745 teachers from 217 schools. Two researcher-designed instruments PM/PDQ and TJPS were used to collect data. The Pearson Product-Moment Correlation statistical tool was used for data analysis. The result of the study showed that teachers' job performance was significantly and positively related to both professional development and participatory management respectively. The study proposed the need to improve the 21st Century skills of teachers through continuing professional development opportunities as a concern for authorities of public secondary schools. Therefore, this present study explored the influence of principal supporting professional development strategy on teachers' job performance in Ondo West local Government, Ondo State.

A study was carried out by Ogunbayo and Mhlanga (2022) to establish the effect of training on teachers' job performance in Nigeria public secondary schools. The study investigated the effects of training on teachers' job performance in teaching technical/engineering-based subjects in public secondary schools. The study was a field survey conducted among teachers in selected public secondary schools in Mainland Education District Lagos, Nigeria. In the study, a simple random sampling was employed, questionnaires were used to gathered data from 200 schoolteachers of the selected public secondary schools. The study revealed that teachers who got professional development in teaching technical/engineering-based subjects in secondary schools improved on their job performance and the students' outcomes improved as well. Recommendation from the study was that government and educational stakeholders need to organize and facilitate technical/engineering-based subject teachers into having different on-the-job training that allows professional growth. Following the recommendation of the study reviewed that was limited to only technical/engineering-based subjects' teachers, this study investigated the influence of professional development on teachers' job performance in secondary schools by purposely engaging all teachers in different subject specialization. Stratified random sampling technique was employed ensuring that different subject teachers participated, in examining the influence of principals supporting professional development on teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Ondo West Local Government, Nigeria.

1.8 Research methods and design

Mixed-methods research approach was employed in this study. Mixed-methods provided more insight into the phenomenon. The choice of convergent parallel mixed methods design was because it aided the researcher to triangulate the two methods by comparing both quantitative and qualitative findings as well as providing a broad analysis of the research problem (Demir & Pismek, 2018). In this study, adopting convergent parallel mixed-method design enabled the researcher to collect both qualitative and quantitative data concurrently, analyzed them separately, then merged, and compare the result to draw meaningful conclusions. The researcher integrated both findings from qualitative and quantitative data to gain comprehensive understanding of the complex dynamics between principals' participatory leadership strategies and teachers' job performance. The study was conducted in selected public secondary schools in Ondo West Local Government. Ondo West Local Government Area is situated in Ondo State, Nigeria. Its headquarters is in Ondo town, the second largest town in Ondo State. It covered an area of 970 square kilometers. It borders Ore to the Southwest and borders Ifetedo, Osun State to the Northeast. It has a total number of 32 public secondary schools. Ondo Local Government Area is predominantly occupied by Yoruba people (Omotosho et al., 2020). The choice of Ondo Local

Government came because of consistently sub-optimal teachers' job performance in the area (Ayeni, 2020). With all the efforts put in place to improve teachers' job performance and welfare by the government, teachers are not allowed to participate in the formulation of policies and decision-making both at the school and local government levels. Notably, Chebonye et al. (2021), argued that the strategies employed by school leaders' impact teachers' job performance. Hence, this study investigated the influence of principals' professional support on teachers' job performance in Ondo Local Government Area, Nigeria.

The target population for the study was the public secondary schools in Ondo West Local Government Area. It had principals and teachers as participants. The principals were included in the study because of the administrative role that they play as school leaders in coordination and organization of teachers work. Teachers equally participated in the study because they were directly impacted by the leadership strategy of the school leader and it is important to get their views on how the professional development strategies influence their job performance. Therefore, the study targeted 32 public schools, 32 principals, and 976 teachers in Ondo West Local Government Area (Post Primary School Management Board (PPSMB) Statistical Unit, Ondo Local Government Zonal Office 2023/2024 Academic Session).

Probability sampling technique was used to select a total of 10 schools from target population of 32 schools. According to Kothari and Garg (2014) a sample of 10% to 30% of the total population is sufficient for generalization in a study. A sample size of 30% of the target population resulted to 10 schools. A simple random sampling technique was employed to draw a sample from 7 boys' public secondary schools, 4 girls' secondary schools, and 21 mixed public secondary schools. Stratified random sampling was used to select schools from categories of boys' public secondary schools, girls' public secondary schools and mixed public secondary schools. Two (2) boys' schools, one (1) girls' school, and Seven (7) mixed schools was selected from each stratum to make up the total of 10 schools. Stratified random sampling involves dividing the population into homogeneous subgroups and then taking a simple random sample in each subgroup (Kombo & Tromp, 2018). Purposive sampling which is a non-probability sampling technique was used to select 10 principals from the selected public secondary schools. In purposive sampling method, the researcher purposely targets a group of people believed to be reliable for the study (Kombo & Tromp, 2018).

The study investigated 211 teachers. The researcher ensured that the number of teachers from each selected school is proportionate to the total population of teachers in each school. Proportionate sampling method was applied with the use of the formula designed by Yamane (1967) to calculate the sample size of teachers in the schools as follows:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N e^2}$$

Whereby:

n= is the sample size

N = is the size of the population (447)

e = is the desired level of confidence (0.05)

The sample size will be computed as stated below:

$$n = 447 \div (1 + 447 \times 0.05^2)$$

$$n = 447 \div (1 + 1.1175)$$

$$n = 447 \div 2.1175$$

$$n = 211 \text{ teachers}$$

Hence, a sample size of 211 teachers was distributed proportionally among the 10 schools in Ondo West LGA. Stratified random sampling was employed to determine teachers that participated from each of the schools. This enabled the researcher ensure that male and female teachers participated in the study in proportion to their number.

Table 1: *Sample Matrix*

| Group | Target population | Sampling Technique | Participants | % |
|------------|-------------------|------------------------------|--------------|-----|
| Schools | 32 | Stratified and Simple Random | 10 | 30% |
| Principals | 32 | Criterion purposive | 10 | 30% |
| Teachers | 447 | Stratified and Simple Random | 211 | 47% |

Source: *Field data, 2024*

The researchers made use of questionnaires and interview guides as research instruments for data collection. A questionnaire is a behavioral/psychological measuring instrument designed to collect quantitative information from members of a population which can then later be transformed into quantitative or numerical data for analysis (Amin, 2005). Interviews offer important information and allow respondents to give a detailed and in-depth description of their personal experiences (Cresswell, 2018). Interviews equally allowed the researcher to seek for clarification by asking probing questions. Questionnaires containing both closed ended and open-ended items were used to collect data from the teachers. In the study, interview guides with semi-structured questions were used to collect data from the principals. This allowed the researcher to collect comprehensive data through face-to-face interaction and further probing.

The researcher made sure that the necessary documents were obtained and available before embarking on the data collection. These documents included a clearance letter from Tangaza University and a signed research proposal which was used to apply for a research permit from the Ondo State Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology, Nigeria. The researcher used this permit to get permission from the Ondo West Local Education Officer to collect data from the public secondary schools in the Local Government Area. The researcher informed principals of the visit to conduct the study ahead of time via email. The researcher ensured that the principals and the teachers signed the consent form before embarking on data collection from them. The researcher supervised the filling of the questionnaires by the teachers and after proceeded to conduct interviews for the principals. In analyzing quantitative data, the researcher used descriptive statistics. The descriptive statistical techniques that were employed in this study comprised of frequency distributions and tabulation, percentages, pie charts, and graphs. Qualitative data gathered through interviews and open-ended questions were read through by the researcher in order to clear any ambiguities. Data were then transcribed, coded, and organized into themes and sub themes.

1.9 Presentation, Interpretation, and Discussion of the Findings

The Response Rate of the Participants

In this study, a questionnaire and an interview guide were used to collect data from the participants. The questionnaire was used for teachers and interview guide for principals. A summary of the results is presented in Table 2.

Table 2: *The Response Rate of the Participants*

| Participants | Sample participants | Actual Participants | Response Rate |
|--------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------|
| Teachers | 211 | 201 | 95.2% |
| Principals | 10 | 9 | 90% |
| Total | 221 | 211 | 95.4% |

Source: *Fild data, 2024*

As shown in Table 2, out of the research's target sample of 211 teachers, data was collected from 201 of the sample who successfully filled the questionnaires administered. Five (5) questionnaires were returned unfilled, three (3) were wrongly filled, and two (2) were not returned which made teachers response 95.2%. The researcher did not force her way to get all the questionnaires filled since participation was voluntary. The response rate for the principals was 90% due to the absence of one of the principals who was on sick leave as at the time of data collection. As contended by Mugenda and Mugenda (2013), response rate of 50% is deemed adequate enough for analysis and reporting and a response rate of more than 60%-69% is considered to be good while that of above 70% is excellent. Therefore, the data collected from the respondents were deemed sufficient enough to shed light on the issues under investigation.

Distribution of Gender of the Teachers

To establish the composition of gender in the responding sample of the research, data was collected on the gender of teachers. The findings are presented in Figure 2.

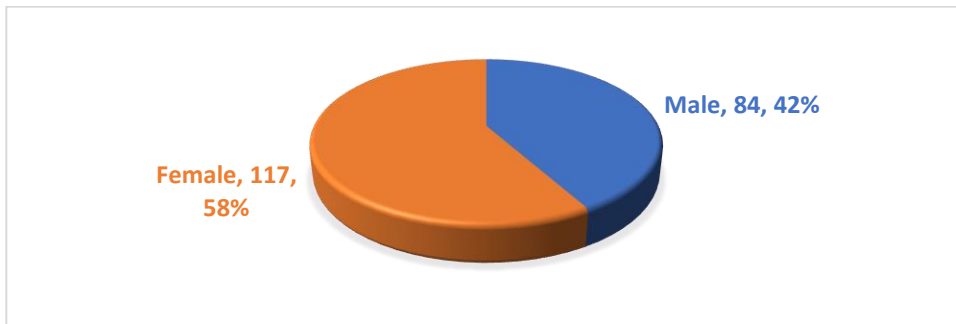


Figure 2: Gender Distribution of Teachers

Source: Field data, 2024

The findings of the study revealed, there are slightly more female teachers as compared to male teachers, with females represented by 117(58%) while male was represented by 84(42%) of the teachers. The disparity in the distribution of the genders was not much and therefore, their views or contribution to the research were considered well taken care of. Nevertheless, it is important for school leaders to prioritize gender balance in attending to school related issues as it can bring about diverse ideas and opinions. Therefore, principals’ leading the school community based on gender balance in employing joint decision making, in organizing for professional development, collaboration, and motivation strategies as they discharge their duties may help to improve teachers’ job performance. As argued by Bush (2021), there is need to promote gender balance in school administration in order to make better use of the available talent pool in the school system.

Distribution of Gender of the Principals

The study sought information from the principals regarding their gender to investigate if there was a difference between the male and female participation in the study and whether gender had an influence on principals’ participatory leadership strategies and teachers’ job performance. The findings are summarized in Figure 3.

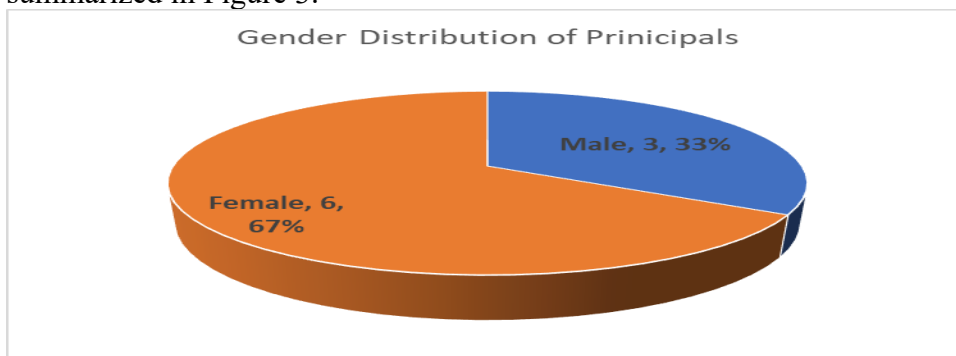


Figure 3: Gender Distribution of Principals

Source: Field data, 2024

The findings in Figure 3 reveal out of 9 principals that participated in the study 3(33%) were male while 6(66%) were female. The findings indicated that female participants were more which indicated gender imbalance among the school leaders in public schools in Ondo Local Government Area. This gender disparity can influence teachers’ job performance as male and female tend to act differently while discharging their duties as school leaders. Hence, there is need for school managers and policy makers

to take into cognizance the issue of gender balance among school leaders. As argued by Heinz et al. (2021), there is need for considering male patterns of representation in teaching for more just and equitable society.

Distribution of Teachers by Years of Experience

Data was collected from the sampled teachers in relation to their years of experience in teaching. This was done to establish if teachers’ years of experience had impact on principals’ participatory leadership strategies and teachers’ job performance. Figure 4 has the summary of the findings.

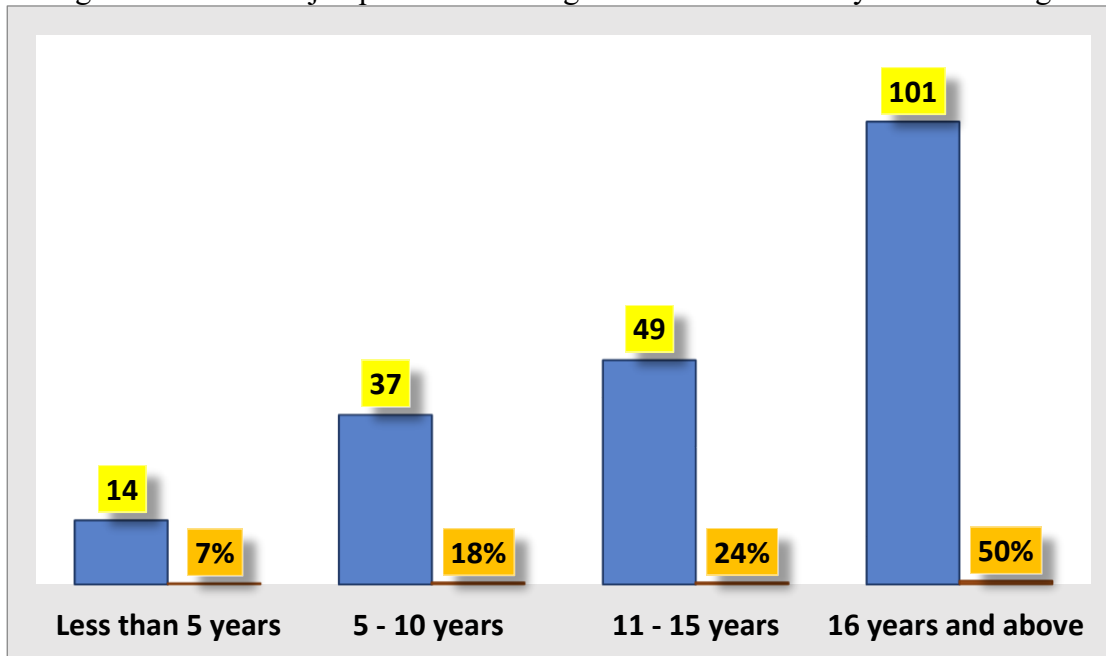


Figure 4: Distribution of Teachers’ Years of Experience

Source: Field data, 2024

The study findings in Figure 4 indicate that the average sampled teachers (50%) had teaching experience of 16 years and above, while 24% of the teachers had teaching experience ranging between 11 and 15 years. The minority of the teachers (7%) sampled had teaching experience of less than 5 years. Given that most of the teachers had considerable years of teaching experience, they were in an informed position to shed light on the specific objectives been investigated in the study. According to Podolsky et al. (2019), a more experienced teaching workforce offer numerous benefits to the school system.

4.3.4 Distribution of Principals’ Years of Experience

The study sought to establish principals’ years of experience in order to determine whether the principals have acquired skills and knowledge that would enable them practice participatory leadership strategies, in the management of teachers in their schools which could lead to further improve the quality of teachers’ job performance. Figure 5 has the summary of the findings.

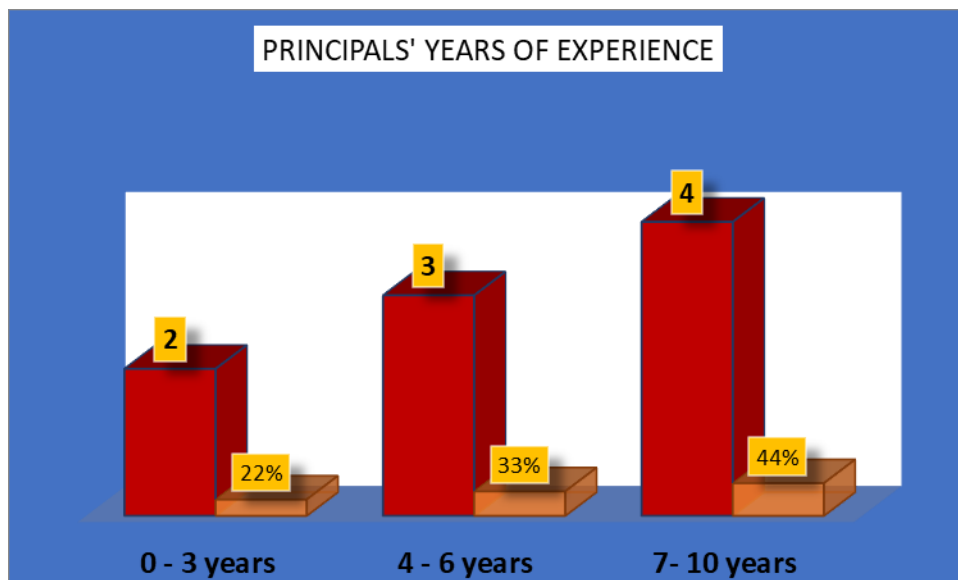


Figure 5: Distribution of Principals' Years of Experience

Source: Field data, 2024

The findings in Figure 5 showed that majority of the sampled principals (44%) have been in school administrative position for 7-10 years. Also, 33% have been in school leadership position for 4-6 years, while only 22% have been in school leadership position for 0-3 years. The principals' leadership experiences are sufficient for them to carry out their duties as school leaders and manage the teachers in public secondary school. as contended by Mbangula (2022), the effectiveness and efficiency of school leaders in carrying out their roles are significantly related to their years of experience.

Principals' Supporting Professional Development Strategy and Teachers' Job Performance

The study further evaluated the influence of principals' supporting professional development strategy on teachers' Job Performance. A numerical descriptive summary of the responses, on a five-point Likert scale rating is presented in Table 3 and the narration of the main outcomes.

Table 3: Principals' Supporting Professional Development Strategy and Teachers' Job Performance

| Statement | SD | | D | | NS | | A | | SA | |
|--|----|---|----|----|----|---|-----|----|----|----|
| | F | % | f | % | f | % | F | % | f | % |
| My principal provides and supports on going on-the-job training activities for teachers | 8 | 4 | 50 | 25 | 6 | 3 | 101 | 50 | 36 | 18 |
| My principal offers professional development training that aligns with the needs of the teachers | 13 | 6 | 63 | 31 | 13 | 6 | 82 | 41 | 30 | 15 |
| My principal fosters a culture of continuous professional development through mentoring and coaching within the school | 10 | 5 | 42 | 21 | 9 | 4 | 106 | 53 | 34 | 17 |

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|----|---|----|----|----|---|-----|----|----|----|
| My principal supports me to work with teachers from other schools for creativity and innovation | 8 | 4 | 57 | 28 | 14 | 7 | 95 | 47 | 27 | 13 |
| My principal encourages teachers to assist one another in areas of difficulties within the school | 4 | 2 | 15 | 7 | 6 | 3 | 114 | 57 | 62 | 31 |
| I get the resources needed to implement new strategies learned during professional development training | 13 | 6 | 51 | 25 | 8 | 4 | 90 | 45 | 39 | 19 |
| My principal engages teachers in networking and linkages that enhance their teaching practice | 6 | 3 | 45 | 22 | 11 | 5 | 101 | 50 | 38 | 19 |
| I found professional development training timely and helpful among the teachers within the school | 6 | 3 | 36 | 18 | 9 | 4 | 112 | 56 | 38 | 19 |
| I feel supported and encouraged by the principal for my professional growth and development | 11 | 5 | 34 | 17 | 4 | 2 | 113 | 56 | 39 | 19 |
| Professional development has positive impact on my job performance as a teacher | 8 | 4 | 20 | 10 | 3 | 1 | 104 | 52 | 66 | 33 |

Source: Field data, 2024

As indicated in Table 3, majority of the teachers (68%) agreed that principals provide and support on going on-the-job training activities for teachers. However, minority of teachers (29%) expressed disagreement to the statement while 3% of the teachers were not sure about the statement. In line with the findings from the teachers, a principal in an interview asserted that:

“In my school, majority of the teachers are currently undergoing Diploma in Educational Management from the public service training institute organized by the government. Even though, not all teachers of all levels are involved in the training. I support those involved by granting them permission to meet up with their studies, exempting them from some school tasks as well as encouraging them to put in their best for self-development. From those who engage in the on-the-job training, there is improvement on their level of engagement with the students which translate to better job performance on their part” (Principal E, 28/7/2024).

These differing views suggest that there are varying needs and expectations among the teachers in relation to professional development support from the school leaders. Notwithstanding, the teacher’s agreement underscores the fact the principals to a large extent support teachers in on going on-the-job activities. As argued by Rajendran et al (2023), continuous professional development is an essential aspect of modern education systems, aiming to enhance teacher competency, efficacy, and student outcomes.

Regarding principals offering professional development training that align with the needs of the teachers, just a little above average teachers (56%) agreed with the statement, 37% of the teachers disagreed, and 6% of the teachers were not sure. The findings revealed that it is not in all cases that the professional development organized by the school leaders align with the needs of the teachers. The findings also show that in some cases, school leaders do not organize professional training rather encourage the teachers to avail of any professional training that they could afford on their own. The findings agree with the study finding of Dilshad et al. (2019), teachers are moderately engaged in professional development activities in the school. There is need for school leaders to encourage and facilitate teachers' participation in continuous professional development activities. Workshops and seminars must frequently be planned and organized for the teachers in relation to their needs of professional growth and improvement.

There were 70% of the teachers that agreed to the statement of principal fostering a culture of continuous professional development through mentoring and coaching within the school. In relation to the finding, when the principals were requested to describe the roles played in supporting teachers' professional development, a principal in an interview commented:

"I create enabling environment for teachers to be professionally trained and encourage them to go for professional courses to help them in their carrier development. I give them incentives to encourage them. At the beginning of each session, the school organize seminars and workshops on skill acquisition to facilitate improvement on the school work and teachers' job performance. Some of the workshops are facilitated by me and I also invite external facilitators at other times. Teachers are always advised and encouraged to put in more efforts in the areas where they are lacking" (Principal D, 28/7/2024).

The teachers' response leaned more towards agreement with the principals' supporting staff professional development impacting positively on teachers' job performance than on disagreement. The findings highlight that principal supporting professional development is crucial to enhance teachers' job performance. The findings conform with the study finding of Dilshad et al. (2019) which revealed that teachers were engaged in professional development activities and that it helped to improve their job performance.

Most of the teachers (60%) consented to the statement that principals support and encourage them work with teachers from other schools for creativity and innovation. The finding showed that principals allow teachers to interact with their colleagues from other schools to build on their skills for better performance. The finding aligns with the study finding of Alnajim (2021), professional development is a dynamic process that gives the employees needed encouragement and support in reviewing and reassessing their goals and activities with their colleagues for improvement.

In relation to the statement of principal encouraging teachers to assist one another in areas of difficulties within the school, 88% of the teachers agreed to the statement. A principal revealed similar finding asserting that, *"I promote enabling environment that foster strong relationships between teachers to share ideas and help one another in their duties"*. These results reveal teachers feeling comfortable consulting their colleagues which improve their performance. The findings reveal that teachers benefit from peer coaching engaged in among themselves that are encouraged by the principals. The findings agree with the study finding of Abbassi and David (2021), that showed school level professional development strategy adopted by a school principal can enhance the quality of job performance among teachers.

Regarding getting the resources needed to implement new strategies learned during professional development training, most teachers (64%) consented to the statement. One of the principals in an interview revealed similar finding by commenting that: “I encourage the teachers to go for professional trainings and I give them incentives to be able to get needed materials that will help them put into practice the skills acquired from the training”. The findings revealed that not only do the principals organize trainings and workshop for professional development of teachers, provision is made to cater for the resources needed to put into practice the skills acquired. The findings align with the study finding of Shikokoti et al. (2021), teacher professional development enhances skills development which resulted in the achievement of the school goals.

Majority of the teachers (75%) consented to finding professional training timely and helpful. This finding aligns with one of the principals’ views regarding professional development and teachers job performance who commented:

“Professional development trainings have been helpful because it enables the teachers to be focused so as not to be found wanting in the area of their teaching. Professional development training enhances better performance of teachers in teaching-learning process as it encourages them to improve on their skills. Professional development has helped more teachers in the school to attain their goals and made their work easier” (Principal F, 28/7/2024).

These findings highlight the essence of professional development in improving teachers job performance and the need for the school principals to adopt it as one of the strategies to engage the teachers in administration of the school. The more the teachers acquire skills, the more they will be competent in discharging their duties. The findings agree with the study finding of Alnajim (2021), professional development gives the educators needed encouragement and support in reviewing and reassessing their goals and activities and improve on them.

In regards to teachers feel supported and encouraged by the principal for professional growth and development, 75% of the sampled teachers agreed to the statement while 22% of the teachers disagreed with the statement. A principal in an interview revealed similar finding by commenting “*some of the teachers find ways of attaining professional development on their own because not all of them are involved in the government plan at the same time. Teachers who engage in professional development training perform better in the classroom*”. The findings give the insight to the fact that not all the teachers get opportunities for professional development. The teachers who do not participate in the professional development growth may not perform well on their job. The findings agree with the study finding of Ogunbayo and Mhlanga (2022), teachers who got professional development based on their subjects in secondary schools improved on their job performance and those who do not get the professional development performed poorly on their job delivery. Majority of the teachers (85%) consented that professional development has positive impact on their job performance. The findings conform with the findings of the study by Shikokoti et al. (2021), teacher professional development enhanced their skills development and job performance which resulted in the achievement of the school goals. As indicated by the result of the finding in Table 3, teachers’ professional development needs to be continuous for improved teachers’ job performance.

1.10 Conclusion

In terms of principals’ supporting professional development strategy and teachers’ job performance, it was concluded that professional development contributes to continuous improvement of teachers which

leads to enhancement of their job performance. It was also concluded that not all the teachers were engaged in professional development and this impacts negatively on their job performance. Hence, continuous professional development will significantly improve teachers' job performance and needs to be continuously practiced by principals in Ondo West Local Government to improve teachers' job performance.

1.11 Study Recommendations

The study found out that not all the teachers are engaged in professional development training. The recommendation of the study is that policy makers through the Ministry of Education put measures in place to ensure continuous professional development of teachers at all levels to enhance their job performance. In addition, principals in public secondary schools should ensure that teachers are supported to improve on their skills by organizing timely workshops, seminars, and webinars that align with the professional needs of the teachers, in order to aid them improve and perform better on their job.

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