

Managing Work-Life Balance and Married Teachers' Job Performance in Public Secondary Schools in Bayelsa State, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

This study empirically examined the relationship between managing work-life balance and married teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Bayelsa State, Nigeria. Specifically, it focused on four key components of work-life balance: leave policies, co-worker support, workload management, and organizational culture. A mixed-method research design was employed, integrating both quantitative and qualitative approaches. A structured 16-item questionnaire titled Managing Work-Life Balance and Married Teachers' Job Performance Questionnaire (MWLBMTJPQ), designed on a five-point Likert scale, was validated by two experts in Educational Management and administered to 250 married teachers. Additionally, 20 school administrators (principals and vice principals) participated in focus group discussions and in-depth interviews to provide qualitative insights. Reliability was established using the test-retest method, yielding a Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of 0.81. Descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation) were used for data analysis, while Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient was employed for hypothesis testing. The findings revealed a statistically significant positive relationship between managing leave policies, co-worker support, workload management, and organizational culture and married teachers' job performance. The study concludes that effective work-life balance management is essential for enhancing teaching efficiency and achieving improved educational outcomes. It recommends that policymakers and school administrators implement and sustain work-life balance policies to foster a supportive and high-performing work environment for teachers.

Keywords: Work-Life Balance, Leave Policies, Co-worker Support, Workload Management, Organizational Culture, Teachers' Job Performance

INTRODUCTION

Education is a crucial instrument for national development, playing a vital role in shaping economic, social, cultural, and political progress. The Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN), in its National Policy on Education (2014), defines secondary education as the formal education children receive after primary education and before tertiary education. To achieve the objectives of secondary education, it is essential that teachers—who serve as transmitters of knowledge, skills, and values—perform their duties effectively.

Teachers' job performance is critical in accomplishing educational goals and enhancing student achievement. It refers to the extent to which educators effectively execute their professional responsibilities, including lesson planning, classroom management, instructional delivery, and student evaluation (Obasi & Eke, 2019). High job performance among teachers contributes to quality education, while low performance can negatively impact student outcomes and institutional goals. Several factors influence teachers' job performance, including motivation, professional development opportunities, workload, and stress levels. Excessive administrative responsibilities, large class sizes, and inadequate teaching resources can lead to burnout, diminishing teachers' effectiveness (Liu & Onwuegbuzie, 2021). High levels of stress can further hinder teachers' ability to manage classrooms, plan lessons effectively, and provide personalized attention to students (Owolabi & Adebayo, 2018).

Addressing these challenges through workload reduction and stress management programs can enhance teachers' well-being and productivity (Mukhtar, 2020). Additionally, teachers with high emotional intelligence (EI) tend to foster a more inclusive and supportive learning environment, build positive relationships, and manage conflicts effectively (Salami, 2017). Leadership styles within schools also significantly impact teachers' performance, as principals who adopt transformational leadership styles—characterized by open communication, encouragement, and shared decision-making—foster higher job performance among teachers (Kouzes & Posner, 2019; Leigha et al., 2023).

The ability of teachers to balance professional responsibilities with personal lives is increasingly recognized as a crucial factor in job performance and overall well-being. School administrators play a key role in fostering a work-life balance (WLB) environment that enhances productivity and goal attainment. In recent years, the demands of the teaching profession, particularly for married teachers, have intensified. Married teachers, legally recognized as individuals living together as husband and wife (Clark, 2000), are expected to contribute not only to students' academic development but also to their emotional and social well-being. Their professional responsibilities include delivering instruction, evaluating students, managing large class sizes, attending professional development sessions, engaging in extracurricular activities, and adapting to technological advancements in education (Yusuf & Balogun, 2020). Simultaneously, they must fulfil personal obligations, including family care, social relationships, self-improvement, and community involvement (Tariq & Asim, 2021). The increasing demands on teachers make achieving a work-life balance challenging, which can impact their mental health, job satisfaction, and overall performance (Yukongdi, 2011).

Work-life balance has gained global attention due to evolving job demands, workplace conditions, and international standards. Educators often experience an increasing workload, including responsibilities unrelated to their core teaching roles (Adni et al., 2023). Work-life balance refers to an individual's ability to effectively manage both personal and professional responsibilities (Greenhaus & Allen, 2011). Darko-Asumadu et al. (2018) define WLB as the achievement of role-related expectations that are mutually agreed upon in both work and family domains. A harmonious balance between these obligations is essential for teacher motivation, job satisfaction, and overall job performance. Poor work-life balance can lead to burnout, absenteeism, and reduced job performance (Maslach & Leiter, 2008). Hence, understanding how WLB affects teachers' job performance is crucial for sustaining an effective education system.

Key WLB variables include leave policies, co-worker support, workload management, and organizational culture. Leave policies are essential for promoting work-life balance, as they allow employees to take time off for personal and family needs, contributing to overall well-being and job satisfaction (Wadsworth & Owen, 2007; Fapohunda, 2014). Co-worker support refers to employees' perceptions of how much their colleagues provide valuable emotional and professional backing, particularly during challenging situations (Susi, 2010). Workload management refers to the distribution of tasks and responsibilities in a manner that prevents excessive work demands from encroaching on personal time. Research suggests that unmanageable workloads contribute to stress and burnout, negatively impacting work-life balance (Schieman & Young, 2013). On the other hand, organizations that implement effective workload management strategies, such as task delegation and realistic performance expectations, often report improved employee satisfaction and reduced turnover rates (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017). Organizational culture, defined as the shared values, beliefs, and practices within a workplace, also plays a fundamental role in shaping employees' work-life balance (Thompson et al., 2015). A culture that prioritizes work-life balance, such as those promoting flexible work arrangements and supportive managerial policies, fosters greater job satisfaction and employee engagement (Richman et al., 2008). Conversely, an organizational culture that emphasizes long working hours and constant availability can lead to work-life conflicts and diminished well-being (Perlow & Porter, 2009).

In Nigeria, work-life balance is further complicated by challenges such as inadequate teaching resources, large class sizes, low pay, and a lack of supportive policies for teachers' welfare (Akinbile, 2013). Institutional factors, personal relationships, and societal expectations also shape the ability of teachers to manage professional and personal responsibilities effectively. A well-managed work-life balance can reduce stress, enhance job satisfaction, and improve teacher retention rates, which is critical for maintaining a stable and effective educational workforce (Obasi & Eke, 2019). Proper management of WLB variables, such as leave policies, co-

worker support, workload management, and organizational culture, can enhance teachers' job performance and overall school productivity.

Managing leave policies involves ensuring that provisions such as annual leave, sick leave, maternity/paternity leave, and casual leave are adequately defined and made available to teachers as needed. A well-structured leave policy balances organizational goals with employees' personal needs, reducing stress and preventing burnout (Kalliath & Brough, 2008). Paid leave, for instance, enables employees to take necessary time off without financial concerns, promoting mental and physical recovery. Maternity and paternity leave support parents in fulfilling family responsibilities, leading to higher job satisfaction and retention rates (Allen et al., 2013). Sick leave policies prevent employees from feeling compelled to work while unwell, which can otherwise compromise productivity and overall health (Fapohunda, 2014).

Co-worker support fosters a positive work environment that enhances teachers' job performance. It involves creating a school climate that encourages mutual support, particularly for married teachers balancing work and family responsibilities. Strong co-worker support enhances job satisfaction, engagement, and resilience among teachers (Susi, 2010; Wadsworth & Owen, 2007). Supportive colleagues provide valuable resources, including emotional and professional assistance, helping employees navigate personal and work-related challenges. Effective co-worker relationships improve job satisfaction and overall morale (Kirrane & Buckley, 2005). Conversely, workplace incivility can undermine job performance and job satisfaction, necessitating proactive conflict resolution strategies by school administrators (Newsham, 2014).

In Bayelsa State, while leave policies and workload management are recognized as essential for work-life balance, their implementation faces challenges. Educational institutions often prioritize workflow continuity and cost considerations, sometimes limiting access to leave benefits. Additionally, cultural perceptions may influence how teachers utilize available leave policies. Understanding these challenges and developing strategies to enhance work-life balance is crucial for optimizing teachers' job performance and overall well-being.

Problem Statement

The teaching profession is increasingly demanding, requiring teachers to balance professional responsibilities with personal obligations amidst external pressures such as societal expectations. This challenge is particularly pronounced for married teachers, who must navigate the dual burden of workplace duties and family responsibilities. As the need for work-life balance (WLB) becomes more evident, the mechanisms to effectively manage it remain inadequate, particularly in Nigerian secondary schools. Despite the recognized benefits of WLB for employee well-being and productivity, many Nigerian schools lack structured policies and support systems that enable teachers to achieve a sustainable balance.

In Nigeria, WLB initiatives are yet to be fully integrated into the school system, leaving teachers—especially married teachers—struggling to meet professional expectations while maintaining personal well-being. Many teachers are reluctant to take leave due to concerns about being perceived as uncommitted or unfit for their roles. Consequently, they continue working with minimal or no leave periods, leading to exhaustion and decreased job satisfaction. Additionally, the prevailing school climate often lacks strong co-worker support systems, making it difficult for teachers to seek assistance or collaborate effectively, particularly in challenging times.

Workload management remains another critical concern, as excessive administrative duties, large class sizes, and unrealistic expectations contribute to prolonged working hours and heightened stress levels. Without proper workload distribution, teachers experience burnout, which negatively impacts their teaching effectiveness and overall job performance. Furthermore, organizational culture within schools often emphasizes long working hours and rigid policies rather than fostering flexibility and employee well-being. Schools with unsupportive cultures fail to acknowledge the importance of WLB, leading to high stress levels and reduced engagement among teachers.

The continued exposure to high job demands, inadequate leave utilization, poor co-worker support, ineffective workload management, and unsupportive organizational cultures has resulted in increased stress and burnout among married teachers in secondary schools in Bayelsa State. This situation not only affects teachers' ability to

manage their personal and professional responsibilities but also has broader implications for students' academic success and the overall quality of education.

Despite the growing recognition of WLB as a determinant of job performance, there remains a significant gap in research on the factors influencing WLB among Nigerian secondary school teachers. The relationship between WLB variables—leave policies, co-worker support, workload management, and organizational culture—and teachers' job performance remains underexplored. Addressing this gap is essential for developing evidence-based strategies to improve teachers' well-being, enhance job performance, and ultimately contribute to better educational outcomes in Nigeria's secondary schools.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of the study is to evaluate the empirical connection between managing work-life-balance and married teachers' job performance in Bayelsa State's public secondary schools in Bayelsa State, Nigeria. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. Assess how managing leave policies affect married teachers' performance on the job in Bayelsa State's public secondary schools.
2. Determine how managing co-worker support affects married teachers' job performance in Bayelsa State public secondary schools.
3. Determine the effect of workload management on married teachers' job performance in Bayelsa State public secondary schools.
4. Determine the effect of organizational culture on married teachers' job performance in Bayelsa State public secondary schools.

Research Questions

1. How does managing leave policies affect married teachers' performance on the job in Bayelsa State's public secondary schools?
2. How does managing co-worker support affect married teachers' job performance in Bayelsa State public secondary schools?
3. How does workload management affect married teachers' job performance in Bayelsa State public secondary schools?
4. Does organizational culture affect married teachers' job performance in Bayelsa State public secondary schools?

Hypotheses

The study was guided by the following null research hypotheses:

- H₀₁: Managing leave policy does not significantly relate with married teachers job performance in public secondary schools in Bayelsa State.
- H₀₂: Managing co-worker support and married teachers' job performance does not have significant relationship in public secondary schools in Bayelsa State.
- H₀₃: Workload management and married teachers' job performance does not have significant relationship in public secondary schools in Bayelsa State.
- H₀₄: Organizational culture and married teachers' job performance does not have significant relationship in public secondary schools in Bayelsa State.

THEORETICAL REVIEW

This study is anchored on **Spillover Theory** and **Work-Family Conflict Theory**, both of which provide insights into how professional and personal responsibilities interact and influence one another.

Spillover Theory

Spillover Theory explains how experiences, emotions, and behaviors in one domain of life—such as work—can transfer into another, such as family or personal life (Clark, 2000). This interdependence between work and life domains highlights the bidirectional nature of WLB, where work experiences can enhance or diminish personal well-being, and vice versa.

1. **Positive spillover** occurs when beneficial experiences in one domain improve outcomes in another. For instance, teachers who feel valued and supported at work may bring home enthusiasm and emotional stability, which strengthens family relationships (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006). Likewise, a fulfilling home life can enhance creativity, motivation, and efficiency in the workplace.
2. **Negative spillover** occurs when stress, excessive workload, and workplace dissatisfaction affect personal life, leading to burnout, strained family relationships, and reduced job performance (Allen et al., 2000). For teachers, negative spillover may result from unmanageable workloads, inadequate co-worker support, and rigid organizational cultures, all of which can create stress and emotional exhaustion.

Several factors determine the extent and nature of spillover effects, including role clarity, workload management, and social support (Ashforth et al., 2000). Organizations can mitigate negative spillover by implementing supportive leave policies, fostering collegial support, and promoting a balanced work culture. However, **critics of Spillover Theory** argue that it oversimplifies the complexities of work-life interactions and does not fully account for **boundary management**, where individuals consciously separate work and personal domains to reduce spillover effects (Bulger et al., 2007).

Work-Family Conflict Theory

While Spillover Theory emphasizes the bidirectional influence of work and life, Work-Family Conflict (WFC) Theory focuses on the **incompatibility** between work and family demands, which creates stress and hinders an individual's ability to fulfill obligations in both areas (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985).

Work-family conflict manifests in three primary ways:

1. **Time-based conflict** – When work demands take up excessive time, reducing availability for family and personal responsibilities.
2. **Strain-based conflict** – When stress and emotional exhaustion from work interfere with personal well-being and relationships.
3. **Behavior-based conflict** – When behaviors required in the workplace (e.g., strict discipline or assertiveness) are incompatible with expectations at home (e.g., nurturing and patience).

For married teachers, work-family conflict is exacerbated by long working hours, lack of workplace flexibility, and unsupportive organizational cultures. When schools fail to provide **structured leave policies**, **co-worker support**, and **workload management strategies**, teachers struggle to balance their professional and personal responsibilities, leading to job dissatisfaction and lower performance (Carlson et al., 2019).

By integrating **Spillover Theory** and **Work-Family Conflict Theory**, this study provides a holistic understanding of how work-life balance impacts married teachers' job performance. While Spillover Theory explains the transfer of experiences between work and family domains, Work-Family Conflict Theory highlights the challenges that arise when these domains are in competition. Together, these perspectives emphasize the need for effective workplace policies that promote positive spillover while minimizing work-family conflict, ultimately enhancing teachers' well-being and productivity.

Previous Studies

Ahmed et al. (2019) investigated the effects of work-life conflict on the job performance of female teachers in

primary schools in Nigeria. The study utilized structured questionnaires distributed to 300 respondents. Findings revealed that high levels of work-life conflict, particularly for married female teachers, significantly impaired their classroom effectiveness and attendance. The study recommended supportive policies such as on-site childcare facilities and parental leave to mitigate these challenges.

Tariq & Asim (2021) conducted a mixed-method study to examine the influence of work-life balance on teacher retention and performance in rural schools in India. Through interviews and surveys with 200 teachers, the study discovered that poor work-life balance due to long commutes and lack of infrastructure contributed to high turnover rates. Teachers with a better work-life balance demonstrated higher commitment and performance. The study recommended government intervention to improve working conditions in rural schools.

Oluwatobi et al. (2020) evaluated the effect of work-life balance training programs on the productivity of secondary school teachers in Lagos State, Nigeria. A quasi-experimental design was employed, involving pre- and post-intervention assessments of 120 teachers. The results showed that teachers who received training on time management and stress reduction strategies reported improved work-life balance and productivity. The study emphasized the need for ongoing professional development programs addressing work-life challenges.

Greenhaus and Powell (2017) investigated the influence of organizational support in improving work-life balance and job performance among university professors in the United Kingdom. The research, which included 180 participants, found that supportive leadership and access to work-life balance measures including counselling services and workload changes greatly improved teachers' performance. The study emphasized the importance of building a supportive organisational culture.

METHODOLOGY

This study employed a mixed-method approach, integrating both quantitative (survey) and qualitative (focus group discussions and in-depth interviews) research designs. The descriptive survey method was used to collect numerical data from married teachers, while qualitative insights were gathered from school administrators to provide deeper context to the findings. This approach allowed for a comprehensive examination of the relationship between work-life balance factors and married teachers' job performance in Bayelsa State secondary schools.

The population of the study comprised 781 married teachers from public secondary schools and 105 school administrators (principals and vice principals) from both public and private schools. A stratified random sampling technique was used to select 250 married teachers from the teacher population, ensuring diversity in school type, geographic location, and demographic characteristics, thereby enhancing the generalizability of the findings. For the qualitative component, 20 school administrators were purposively selected from public and private schools. This sample included 10 principals and 10 vice principals, ensuring balanced representation across different school management levels. These administrators participated in four focus group discussions (FGDs) and in-depth interviews, offering valuable insights into institutional policies, challenges, and the practical implications of work-life balance measures.

Data were collected using both quantitative and qualitative instruments. The primary quantitative instrument was a structured questionnaire titled "Managing Work-Life Balance and Married Teachers' Job Performance Questionnaire" (MWLBMTJPQ), designed to assess four key work-life balance variables: leave policies, co-worker support, workload management, and organizational culture. The questionnaire consisted of 16 items, with responses measured on a five-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree, 5 = Strongly Agree). For qualitative data collection, semi-structured in-depth interviews and FGDs were conducted with school administrators to explore their perspectives on work-life balance policies and challenges. Each FGD consisted of five administrators, allowing for rich discussions.

To ensure validity and reliability, the questionnaire was reviewed by two experts in Educational Management to enhance content validity. Reliability was tested using the test-retest method, and a Cronbach's Alpha reliability coefficient of 0.81 was obtained, indicating a high level of internal consistency. The interview guide used for qualitative data collection was peer-reviewed to ensure clarity and alignment with the research objectives. Data

were collected both in person and electronically, ensuring broad participation.

For data analysis, descriptive and inferential statistical methods were applied to the quantitative data. Mean and Standard Deviation were used to analyze responses to the research questions, while Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMCC) was employed to test the hypotheses using SPSS Version 23. Qualitative data were analyzed thematically by transcribing, coding, and categorizing responses. A frequency analysis was also conducted to identify patterns in administrators' responses, particularly regarding institutional work-life balance practices.

RESULT AND ANALYSIS

Univariate Analysis of the Variables

In this section, a uni-variate analysis of data is made. Thus, each of the concepts or variables investigated are analyzed.

Table 1: Descriptive Outcomes of Leave Policy (n = 250)

S/No.	Items	Means	Std. Dev.
1.	My institution grants teachers leave annually.	3.52	1.20
2.	Maternity/Paternity leave is considered for married teachers.	3.79	1.22
3.	Few emergencies absent for teachers, are granted by management to meet up family demands.	4.05	1.22
4.	Teachers are permitted to apply for their leave when it's favorable to meet up personal life.	3.81	1.21

Source: Field Survey Data, 2025.

Table 1 shows the descriptive data for the leave policy component of the work-life balance. The statistics show that all mean scores are more than the median value of 3.0, indicating that respondents generally agree on the statements that assess the rate of managing leave policy.

Table 2: Descriptive Outcomes of Co-worker Support (n = 250)

S/No.	Items	Means	Std. Dev.
5.	Encourage co-workers to give listening ears and provide valuable backings in times of challenges boosts my engagement among co-workers	3.5745	1.32447
6.	Encourage co-workers to treat one another with respect increases my self-acceptance and flexibility.	3.6702	1.31827
7.	Written rules and regulations about co-workers keep me constantly reminded of accepted norms	3.6099	1.33004
8.	Assisting with work tasks gives me a sense of belonging	3.5355	1.30172

Source: Field Survey Data, 2025.

Table 2 shows the descriptive data for managing co-worker component of work-life balance. As seen in the table, all mean scores are higher than the median value of 3.0, indicating that respondents generally agree on the statements assessing managing co-worker support.

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics for Workload Management (n = 250)

S/No.	Items	Mean	Std. Dev.
9	My workload allows time for personal and family responsibilities.	3.42	1.29
10	I receive adequate support to manage my workload.	3.61	1.26
11	Workload distribution is fair among colleagues.	3.55	1.30
12	I am able to meet deadlines without excessive stress.	3.70	1.27

Source: Field Survey Data, 2025.

Table 3 shows the descriptive findings of workload management. The mean scores suggest that teachers generally agree that workload management affects their job performance, though responses vary slightly. The low standard deviation suggests that responses are relatively consistent.

Table 4: Descriptive Statistics for Organizational Culture (n = 250)

S/No.	Items	Mean	Std. Dev.
13	My school's policies support work-life balance.	3.75	1.25
14	The leadership promotes a healthy work environment.	3.68	1.24
15	There are clear communication channels for work concerns.	3.62	1.28
16	The school culture encourages professional and personal growth.	3.80	1.23

Source: Field Survey Data, 2025.

Table 4 shows the descriptive findings of organizational culture. Mean values indicate that teachers perceive organizational culture as supportive of work-life balance. The consistency in responses (low standard deviation) suggests a shared understanding of school culture's role in job performance.

Qualitative Data Analysis: Responses from School Administrators (n=20)

Table 5: The qualitative responses were analyzed based on the **frequency of agreement or disagreement ("Yes" or "No")** among school administrators. The table below summarizes the results:

Question	Yes (%)	No (%)	Key Insights
Do teachers in your school take their entitled leave without fear of negative consequences?	35%	65%	Many administrators noted that teachers hesitate to take leave due to workload pressure.
Is there a structured co-worker support system in your school?	40%	60%	Some schools have informal support systems, but structured programs are rare.
Are there policies in place to help teachers manage workload effectively?	30%	70%	Workload management remains a challenge due to understaffing and administrative demands.
Does the organizational culture encourage a work-life balance for teachers?	45%	55%	Some administrators claim efforts exist, but cultural and systemic barriers persist.
Have you observed a direct impact of work-life balance policies on teacher performance?	80%	20%	Most administrators acknowledge that better WLB policies improve teacher effectiveness.

Inferential Analysis

Correlation Analysis and Hypothesis Testing

Table 5: Correlation Between Work-Life Balance Variables and Job Performance

Variables	Leave Policy	Co-worker Support	Workload Management	Organizational Culture	Job Performance
Leave Policy	1	0.509**	0.432**	0.467**	0.358**
Co-worker Support	0.509**	1	0.470**	0.512**	0.370**
Workload Management	0.432**	0.470**	1	0.489**	0.395**
Organizational Culture	0.467**	0.512**	0.489**	1	0.410**
Job Performance	0.358**	0.370**	0.395**	0.410**	1

Note: $p < 0.01$ (2-tailed), significant correlation at the 0.01 level

Source: SPSS Computation, 2025.

Table 6 above reveals statistically significant positive correlations between all work-life balance variables and married teachers' job performance. As a result, the null hypotheses (H01 - H04) are rejected. The analysis confirms that managing leave policies has a significant relationship with married teachers' job performance, indicating that well-structured leave provisions contribute to improved efficiency and job satisfaction. Similarly, co-worker support is significantly related to job performance, highlighting the importance of a collaborative and supportive work environment in enhancing teachers' productivity. Additionally, workload management plays a crucial role in influencing job performance, as effective strategies for balancing workload demands contribute to reduced stress and increased efficiency among married teachers. Finally, the study establishes that organizational culture significantly affects married teachers' job performance, suggesting that institutional policies, values, and work environment shape teachers' ability to balance professional responsibilities with personal life, ultimately enhancing overall job effectiveness.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The findings of this study indicate that work-life balance variables, including leave policies, co-worker support, workload management, and organizational culture, have significant positive relationships with married teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Bayelsa State. The results suggest that effective leave policies contribute to improved job performance, as they provide teachers with the opportunity to attend to personal and family responsibilities without fear of professional repercussions. This finding aligns with the work of Adebola and Umeh (2020), who found that structured leave arrangements significantly reduce teacher burnout and enhance job satisfaction. Similarly, Okeke and Nwankwo (2021) emphasized that when teachers can access their entitled leave without unnecessary restrictions, they are more likely to return to work refreshed and motivated, leading to greater productivity in the classroom.

Additionally, the study establishes that co-worker support significantly influences married teachers' job performance. A supportive work environment fosters collaboration, mutual assistance, and emotional encouragement, all of which are critical for maintaining morale and reducing work-related stress. This result is consistent with the findings of Hassan et al. (2019), who argued that strong social support among colleagues enhances teacher engagement and commitment. Similarly, Nwosu and Eze (2022) reported that schools with well-structured co-worker support systems experience higher levels of teacher job satisfaction and performance.

In contrast, institutions lacking peer support structures tend to struggle with teacher motivation, resulting in diminished productivity and efficiency.

Furthermore, the study finds that workload management plays a crucial role in married teachers' job performance. Excessive workloads, if not well managed, can lead to stress, fatigue, and decreased effectiveness in instructional delivery. This finding supports the work of Johnson (2020), who found that poor workload management contributes to teacher burnout and job dissatisfaction. Similarly, Adeyemi and Bello (2021) highlighted that schools with clear policies ensuring reasonable task allocation and workload distribution create an environment where teachers can effectively plan and execute their responsibilities, thereby improving their overall performance. When teachers are overburdened with excessive administrative and instructional responsibilities, their ability to balance work and family commitments becomes significantly impaired, leading to reduced efficiency in the classroom.

Finally, the study confirms that organizational culture significantly influences married teachers' job performance. A school's culture, including its policies, leadership approach, and overall work environment, shapes how teachers perceive and experience their professional roles. Institutions that promote a work-life balance culture by fostering open communication, recognizing teachers' personal commitments, and ensuring flexible work arrangements tend to report higher levels of job satisfaction and performance among their staff (Smith & Taylor, 2021). In support of this, Olatunji and Adebayo (2022) found that schools with rigid and unsupportive organizational cultures often struggle with teacher dissatisfaction, increased turnover, and reduced performance levels. Consequently, this study reinforces the need for school administrators and policymakers to prioritize work-life balance initiatives to enhance the productivity and well-being of married teachers.

CONCLUSION

The study employed empirical methods to examine the relationship between work-life balance and married teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Bayelsa State. Specifically, the research investigated four key work-life balance variables: leave policies, co-worker support, workload management, and organizational culture. The inferential analysis revealed that all four variables significantly influence teachers' job performance, indicating that effective work-life balance measures contribute to improved teaching efficiency and job satisfaction. Furthermore, the findings demonstrated a strong positive association between workload management and job performance, emphasizing the need for reasonable task allocation to prevent burnout. Similarly, organizational culture was found to play a crucial role in shaping teachers' work experiences and overall productivity. The study concludes that a well-structured work-life balance framework positively impacts married teachers' job performance, reinforcing the need for school administrators and policymakers to implement supportive policies. Effective management of work-life balance in the educational sector is essential for enhancing teaching quality, promoting teacher well-being, and achieving better educational outcomes.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Public secondary schools should implement and effectively manage leave policies that promote teachers' work-life balance, allowing them to rest and attend to personal commitments without negatively affecting their job performance.
2. School administrators should foster a supportive work environment by encouraging co-worker support systems that accommodate teachers' diverse needs, such as parental responsibilities, health considerations, and workload sharing.
3. Regular training sessions and workshops should be organized to educate teachers on the importance of work-life balance and equip them with effective strategies for managing their professional and personal lives.
4. Policymakers in the education sector should establish comprehensive frameworks that integrate work-life balance initiatives—such as workload management and supportive organizational culture—into school management systems to enhance teachers' job performance.

5. Schools should develop monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to regularly assess the effectiveness of leave policies, co-worker support systems, and workload management strategies, ensuring they align with teachers' needs and contribute positively to their productivity.
6. Future research should explore innovative approaches to leave policies, workload distribution, and organizational culture that consider evolving labor dynamics and advancements in technology to enhance work-life balance for teachers.

Educational Implications

The findings of this study have significant implications for educational policy and school management practices. The integration of comprehensive work-life balance strategies—encompassing leave policies, co-worker support, workload management, and organizational culture—into the policy framework for public secondary schools in Bayelsa State can enhance teachers' job satisfaction, reduce burnout, and improve overall job performance. Educational policymakers and school administrators should prioritize these measures to create a more supportive and productive work environment. By fostering work-life balance, schools can improve teaching quality, enhance student learning outcomes, and contribute to the overall advancement of the education sector.

Contribution to Knowledge

This study provides empirical evidence on the critical role of work-life balance factors—including leave policies, co-worker support, workload management, and organizational culture—in enhancing married teachers' job performance in public secondary schools. By demonstrating the significant relationship between these variables and teacher effectiveness, this research offers valuable insights for educational stakeholders to develop policies that promote both professional efficiency and personal well-being. Additionally, the study contributes to the broader discourse on teacher welfare, emphasizing the need for structured institutional support systems to sustain job performance in the education sector.

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