

Dominant Factor of Economics Teachers' Job Satisfaction and Non-Adherence to Student-Centred Instructional Practice

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ABSTRACT

Job satisfaction for economics teachers stem from a combination of factors related to their passion for the subject, impact on students, autonomy in teaching, relationships with colleagues, recognition, professional development opportunities, and work-life balance. Thus, this quantitative cross-sectional survey investigated the relationship between job satisfaction among Senior High School (SHS) Economics teachers and their adherence to recommended instructional practices. The study, targeted 450 Form Three Economics students from 10 public schools and 66 Economics teachers in the Cape Coast metropolis, utilized a 5-point Likert scale questionnaire. The findings revealed that the salary of SHS economics teachers significantly influences their non-adherence to recommended instructional practices. The study recommends improved remuneration to motivate teachers to align with syllabus demands.

Keywords - Student-centred, Instructional practice, Economics teachers, Job satisfaction, Factors

INTRODUCTION

Instructed learning is the main way students in Ghana learn Economics as a accredited discipline in senior high schools. The syllabus outlines the course's aims, objectives, content and kind of examination. There are recommended instructional strategies for content delivery in the syllabus that can guarantee an effective instructional practice by the economics teacher. However, Arthur (1999) as cited in Ogah (2018) revealed that most teachers did not always plan their lessons within the syllabus framework. This implies that even though a list of recommended instructional strategies is provided to teachers, a guarantee that they are adhered to does not exist; nor is there an evidence to tell the effectiveness of these instructional strategies. This has widened the gap of effective practice of instructional strategies in SHS Economics classrooms. For public senior high school in Ghana where the threat of the teacher being sacked on the basis of poor student performance and poor teacher productivity has decreased or totally been removed (Boateng, 2020), there appears to be a gap as to how the job satisfaction of SHS economics teachers determines their adherence to recommended instructional practices. According to Senyamator et al., (2019), considering the relation between job satisfaction and productivity, the role of teachers, their level of satisfaction or how they feel about their work, is of utmost importance because a group of reasonably satisfied teachers constitute an important component for school improvement.

The teacher's job satisfaction affect their work behaviour and adherence to recommended practices of their profession. Job satisfaction encompasses other key factors, such as general well-being, stress at work, control at work, home-work interface, and working conditions and collectively describes the teacher's experience of work, or the quality of their working life. The job satisfaction has been defined in several ways by many different researchers and practitioners. One of the most widely used definitions in organizational research is that of Locke (1976. p. 1304), who defines job satisfaction as "a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or job experiences" (as cited in Yusuf, et al., 2025).

Research Objectives

- a. To examine the extent to which SHS Economics teachers in the Cape Coast Metropolis adhere to student-centred instructional practices.
- b. To identify the key factors (physical, psychological, and social) that determine Economics teachers' job satisfaction.
- c. To determine the dominant factor of job satisfaction that significantly influences Economics teachers' non-adherence to student-centred instructional practices.
- d. To identify the most influential physical factor (e.g., salary, GES policies, working conditions) contributing to the non-adherence.

Theoretical Viewpoint

Learner- centred instructional strategies advocate learning by engaging students actively in the classroom. Passarelli and Kolb (2011) also saw learning as through experience, because every current experience is an action affecting application of knowledge acquired. Cornelius, Gordon and Ackland (2011) added that learner-centred instructional strategies accommodate flexibility in content delivery and individual student learning needs. Driscoll (2005) earlier established the fact that “learners construct knowledge construct knowledge as they attempt to make sense of their experiences” (p. 387). Based on this argument, this study was premised on the economics teacher's ability to create stimulating classroom situations that elicit from learners the willingness to learn. The researcher and many others as stated above are of the view that learning must be situated in the context of meaningful activity for knowledge to be used in similar situations later in life. Hence, a well-designed syllabus prescribes the right context for teaching economics at the SHS level.

Economics as a subject and how it is taught has been rated low consistently by students in senior high schools (SHS) and universities (Hansen, 2013). The lecture method was found to be the predominant mode of instruction in economics, as opposed to learner centred methods recommended in the teaching syllabus. Several explanations have emerged from this effort. First, economics is one of the few social science disciplines that heavily utilizes statistical and mathematical models to analyse real-life problems (Hudson, 2017). Others such as the load of the content specified by the curriculum, the limited time available for instructional time, and the complexities of these learner-centred instructional strategies are all part of the explanations for the struggles of economics teachers' non-use of learner centred instructional strategies.

However, some economics teachers' help students learn how to learn, nurture their willingness to solve problems, and build their capacity for hard work and persistence. Students worldwide have been known to acquire inert knowledge, such as definitions and formulas that they do not know how to apply meaningfully. For that to occur, learning must involve authentic learner centred interactions (Patel-Junankar, 2017). With economics being more inert in knowledge, there is a greater need for the use of more learner-centred instructional strategies. This does not seem to be the case because the pressure on teachers to meet scheme of work makes learner centred strategies not preferable. Chiteng Kot (2019) argued that allocating time to academic content is insufficient. This therefore compels teachers to employ more teacher centred strategies that allow them more time to meet their scheme of work.

With the economics teacher as the key agent of implementation of the SHS economics education, the teacher's job satisfaction is related to their productivity (Cooper, Knotts, McCord, & Johnson, 2013; Senyamator, et al., 2019). Porte and Lawler (1967) developed a more complete version of motivation depending upon expectancy theory. The theory was developed on the perception, effort reward and satisfaction of employees. It stated that the employees' effort was dependent on the value of the expected reward and the perception the employee has of the effort needed in obtaining reward. The theory concluded that employee's performance is the result of his or her effort, abilities and perception (Bušatlić & Musić-Kilic, 2018).

This implies that the economics teacher will compare the perceived equitable reward of adhering to effective instructional practices with the rewards he or she receives from teaching. Job satisfaction is determined after the comparison. If the difference between the perceived equitable reward and the reward is less the satisfaction is high. A failure to receive the perceived equitable reward will create a feeling of dissatisfaction.

There is a strong relationship between job satisfaction and job performance (Hakami, 2024; Okrah, Okyere & Gyasi, 2023, Sarpong, Yanchira, & Agyei, 2024). This relationship defines the organizational behaviour of workers (Sarpong, Yanchira, & Agyei, 2024). This notion that satisfied employees will perform their work more effectively is the basis of many theories of performance, reward, job design and leadership (Faryal, & Naqvi, 2023). It is the job satisfaction of employees that determines their performance on the job. Job satisfaction is an attitude that relates to overall attitudes towards life, or life satisfaction (Illies, Wilson, & Wagner, 2009) as well as to service quality. Some researchers suggests that the worker's job satisfaction affects his or her effectiveness on the job (Cooper, Knotts, McCord, & Johnson, 2013; Senyamator, et al., 2019).

METHODS

Descriptive research design was used collect quantitative data through the administration of a questionnaire to a sample of individuals (Siedlecki, 2020). The accessible population was Economics teachers in public Senior High Schools and 1500 Form 3 Economics students in the Cape Coast Metropolis. The target population consisted of Economics teachers from all the 10 public Senior High Schools in the Cape Coast Metropolis. This is essential since they are the key players in teaching of Economics in secondary schools. The census method was used for the teachers and proportionate sampling to select 45 students from each of the ten public senior high schools with 15 students each from General Arts, Business and Home Economics classes. Proportionate sampling made it possible for the researcher to select respondents from three Economics classes. Census method was used for teachers because the teachers were few and a larger simple size was needed to help arrive at more conclusion for the study. The number of respondents both teachers and students who responded to the research instrument are indicated in Table 1.

Table 1: Breakdown Of Respondents From All Public Shs In The Cape Coast Metropolis.

SN	Name of School	No of student	No of Teachers
1	Mfantsipim School	45	8
2	Ghana National College	45	8
3	Adisadel College	45	8
4	St' Augustine's College	45	7
5	Holy Child School	45	4
6	Wesley Girls High School	45	5
7	University Practice Senior High School	45	8
8	Oguaa Secondary Technical School	45	7
9	Effutu Senior High School	45	7
10	Academy of Christ the King	45	4
	Total	450	66

Source: EMIS, (2018)

The Minnesota Effective Practice Instructional Strategies Assessment (MEPISA) by Ford (2018) was adapted as the instrument for data collection. The recommended instructional practice in the teaching syllabus (2008) for SHS Economics fit within the MEPISA instrument. Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ Short Form) was also adopted to collect data on the job satisfaction of Senior High School Economics teachers. All responses for each item in the questionnaire was coded and analysed. Descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages, mean, and standard deviations were used. Dominance analysis was conducted and logistic regression were done to find out if there are probable relationship between drivers of teachers' job satisfaction and their non-adherence to effective instructional practice.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Return Rate

In all, 510 questionnaires were collected which gave a return rate of 100%. Details of the return rate of the questionnaire are provided in Table 2.

Table 2: Return Rate Of Questionnaire

Respondent	Instrument Administered	Returned Rate
Economics students	450	450 (100%)
Economics teachers	66	66 (100%)
Total	516	516

Source: Field Survey, 2019.

This return rate was considered adequate for the study since it points to the low rate of nonresponse, hence reducing the potential for biased estimates.

Examine the extent to which SHS Economics teachers in the Cape Coast Metropolis adhere to student-centred instructional practices.

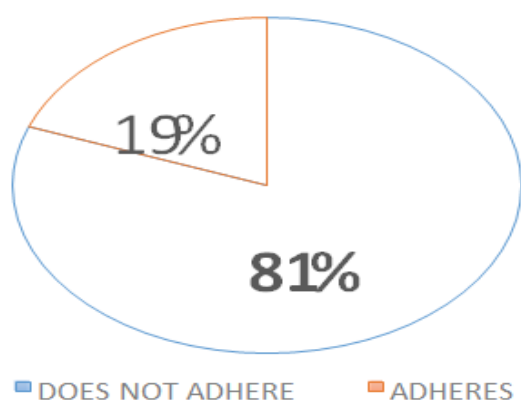


Figure 1: Shs Economics Teacher's Adherence To Recommended Instructional Practices

Source: Field Survey. 2019

Figure 1 revealed that 80.7% of the students reported their teachers did not adhere to the recommended instructional practices, while only 19.3% confirmed adherence. This alarming level of non-adherence echoes earlier studies such as Arthur (1999, as cited in Ogah, 2018), suggesting a longstanding pattern. Sarpong et al. (2024) emphasised that effective instructional delivery is a product of teacher satisfaction, which affects motivation and, ultimately, classroom practice.

This finding aligns with the perspective of Locke (1976) and Baron and Greenberg (2003), who noted that satisfaction, influenced by perceived fairness and reward, plays a pivotal role in shaping teacher behaviour and instructional commitment. Hence, it is reasonable to explore which aspects of teacher job satisfaction predict this non-adherence.

Identify the key factors (physical, psychological, and social) that determine Economics teachers' job satisfaction.

Data on the job satisfaction of economics teachers revealed three main groups of determinants of job satisfaction which were physical factors, psychological factors and social factors. These three factors are presented in tables 3, 4 and 5.

Table 3: Physical Factors Affecting Job Satisfaction Of Shs Economics Teachers

Determinants of Job Satisfaction	Mean	SD
GES Policies	1.77	1.29
Salary	1.79	1.47
Working conditions	1.92	1.54

Source: Field Survey. 2019

The factors that the teachers reported dissatisfaction with were grouped under physical factors since they were all tangible factors teachers interact with regularly.

Table 4: Psychological Factors Affecting Job Satisfaction Of Shs Economics Teachers

Determinants of Job Satisfaction	Mean	SD
Independence	2.03	1.40
Co-workers	2.14	1.32
Creativity	2.18	1.29
Achievement	2.20	1.47
Job Security	2.23	1.23
Activity	2.33	1.48
Advancement	2.50	1.30
Responsibility	2.56	1.23
Supervision-Human	2.62	1.16
Relations Authority	2.64	1.18
Social Service	2.64	1.39
Supervision –Technical	2.77	1.21
Recognition	2.80	1.10
Moral Values	2.83	1.16

Source: Field Survey. 2019

The moderately satisfying factors were all grouped under psychological factors.

Table 5: Social Factors Affecting Job Satisfaction Of Shs Economics Teachers

Determinants of Job Satisfaction	Mean	SD
Variety	3.00	1.07
Ability Utilization	3.05	1.04
Social Status	3.14	1.15

Source: Field Survey. 2019

Teachers feel satisfied with their jobs for a variety of reasons, which can be broken down into physical, psychological, and social factors:

When it comes to physical factors; like GES policies, salary, and working conditions—the scores were the lowest, suggesting that there's a general dissatisfaction among teachers. This finding is in line with the research by Hakami (2024) and the meta-analysis by Panda et al. (2025), both of which highlighted that concrete aspects of the workplace, such as clear policies and fair compensation, significantly influence job performance.

On the psychological side, teachers reported a moderate level of satisfaction with factors like recognition, creativity, and moral values. This supports the observations made by Batta et al. (2023), who noted that intrinsic motivators play a crucial role in enhancing job satisfaction, which in turn affects performance.

Finally, social factors like variety, social status, and ability utilization turned out to be the most satisfying elements. This aligns with findings from Okrah et al. (2023), which pointed out that having social relevance and being respected in their profession greatly boosts teachers' morale.

For the highly satisfying factors, they were grouped as social factors. To find out which of the three factors accounted for the non-adherence of the teachers to the recommended instructional practices, logistic regression and dominance analysis were conducted using the physical, psychological and social factors of job satisfaction as the predictors and binary variable (Adherence) as the predicted. The results are presented in the table 6 and 7.

Determine the dominant factor of job satisfaction that significantly influences Economics teachers' non-adherence to student-centred instructional practices.

Table 6: Logistic Regression Analysis Of Job Satisfaction Of Shs And Adherence To Recommended Instructional Practices.

Predictor	B	SE	z	P-value
Constant	.560	1.329	0.42	0.674
Physical factors	-.606	.295	-2.05	0.040
Psycho. factors	.648	.670	1.06	0.288
Social factors	-.571	.405	-1.41	0.159

Source: Field Survey. 2019

Table 6 revealed that only physical factors significantly predicted adherence to instructional practices ($p = 0.040$), while psychological and social factors were not significant. This finding mirrors the evidence presented

by Hakami (2024), who emphasized that external, tangible job conditions such as compensation and institutional policy are more immediate motivators for behavioural change. Furthermore, Panda et al. (2025) confirmed in their meta-analysis that job satisfaction's impact on performance is mediated by context; physical elements often exert stronger influence in public service environments like education.

Using a dominance analysis to establish the dominant predictor out of the three also revealed the result in Table 7.

Table 7: Dominance Analysis Weights Of The Physical, Social And Psychological Factors That Affect Job Satisfaction Shs Economics Teachers

Adherence	Predictor(s)	Standardized Dominance. Stat.	Dominance Ranking
	Physical factors Social factors	0.6474 0.2795	1 2
	Psychological factors	0.0731	3

Source: Field Survey, 2019

Table 7 identified physical factors as the most dominant predictor (standardized dominance statistic = 0.6474), outranking social and psychological factors. This supports the earlier regression findings and echoes the study by Faryal and Naqvi (2023), where dissatisfaction with physical conditions (especially among healthcare staff) significantly predicted job disengagement. This is further supported by Sarpong et al. (2024), who found that for Ghanaian tertiary staff, tangible workplace factors influenced job performance more than relational or intrinsic motivators.

Identify the most influential physical factor (e.g., salary, GES policies, and working conditions) contributing to the non-adherence.

To find out the particular factor amongst these physical factors that drives the job satisfaction of teachers towards adherence to instructional practices, a dominance analysis was conducted again using the physical factors. The results are presented in Table 8.

Table 8: Dominance Analysis Weights Of The Physical Factors That Affect Job Satisfaction Shs Economics Teachers

Adherence	Predictor(s)	Standardized Dominance. Stat.	Dominance Ranking
	Salary	0.6602	1
	Working conditions	0.2881	2
	GES policies	0.0518	3

Source: Field Survey, 2019

Porter and Lawler's Model stated that the teacher's job satisfaction depends upon expectancy theory. The results obtained on the third research question revealed that the perception of the teacher, reward received for teaching efforts and job satisfaction are strongly related. Within the physical factors, salary emerged as the most influential predictor of adherence (dominance stat. = 0.6602), followed by working conditions and GES policies (Table 8). This aligns with the conclusion of Batta et al. (2023), who reported that adequate financial compensation directly boosts motivation and work output in Indian transportation workers, and also mirrors findings in the construction sector (Sustainability, 2023), where poor salaries suppressed performance.

CONCLUSIONS

From the study, it was concluded that a major gap between what educational policies expect and what actually happens in the classroom. When examining job satisfaction, it turned out that teachers were most satisfied with social aspects (like their social standing and making good use of their skills), somewhat satisfied with psychological aspects (like feeling recognized and being creative), but least satisfied with physical aspects (like salary, working conditions, and a clear understanding of GES policies). Notably, these physical factors were the key predictors of how well teachers adhered to effective teaching practices. Teachers who view their pay and working conditions as unsatisfactory are less likely to put in the extra effort needed to adopt more effective or engaging teaching methods, even if those methods are known to work well. Consequently, any efforts to enhance classroom instruction should start by tackling these fundamental issues.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Since salary was identified as the most impactful factor for sticking to effective teaching practices, it's crucial for the Ministry of Education and the Ghana Education Service (GES) to reassess and improve teacher salary schemes, particularly for Economics teachers. Fair pay isn't just fair; it's essential for boosting performance. Schools need to be well-resourced to foster inviting teaching conditions. This means providing updated teaching materials, digital tools, suitable classroom furniture, and smaller class sizes. Enhancing these aspects could lead to higher satisfaction and better instruction. Teachers mentioned they were unclear about GES policies. It's vital to improve how these policies are communicated. This could involve workshops, handbooks, and ongoing professional development (CPD) that clearly outline how to enact instructional reforms and connect teacher expectations to national objectives. Although psychological factors didn't emerge as strong predictors in this study, moderate levels of satisfaction suggest they still hold value. Schools and district offices should create formal recognition systems (like Teacher of the Month awards and public acknowledgments) to encourage positive teaching behaviours. Many teachers are accustomed to traditional, teacher-centred methods based on their own educational experiences. Practical, subject-specific CPD workshops that include peer feedback can help teachers learn and apply student-centred approaches. Training should address real classroom challenges and include mentoring and follow-ups for support. Department heads and School Improvement Support Officers (SISOs) should take a more proactive stance in overseeing lesson delivery. Utilizing observation checklists based on national instructional standards can facilitate constructive feedback and guidance.

Motivation can also be heightened with non-monetary incentives like housing support, scholarships for further education, and promotions based on performance and innovation in teaching.

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