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Occupational Stress and Teachers' Job Effectiveness in Public Secondary Schools in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State

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Abstract

The study investigated occupational stress and teachers' job effectiveness in public secondary schools in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State. Descriptive survey research design was used for the study. Three research questions and three null hypotheses were formulated to guide the study. The population of the study consisted of 1,297 teachers in the area. Stratified random sampling technique was used to select a sample of 200 respondents for the study. A self-designed questionnaire titled: 'Occupational Stress and Teachers' Effectiveness Questionnaire' (OSTEQ) was used for data collection. The reliability coefficient for (OSTEQ) was $r=0.73$. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions while Independent sample t-test was used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The study revealed that stress due to inadequate infrastructural facilities, stress due to excess workload, stress due to students indiscipline negatively influence teachers' job effectiveness in public secondary schools in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area. And that there is significant difference in the mean rating of male and female teachers on the influence of stress due to inadequate infrastructural facilities, stress due to excess workload, stress due to students indiscipline on teachers' job effectiveness in public secondary schools in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area. It was recommended among others that; there should be good principal-teacher relationship as well as quiet, cool, clean and beautiful environment that will make teachers to be relieved of their work stress and be effective in their job performance.

Keywords: Effectiveness, Occupation, Stress, Teachers, Job

Introduction

Effective teachers must possess the knowledge and skills needed to attain the goals, and must be able to use that knowledge and those skills appropriately if these goals are to be achieved. The researcher observed that the standardised achievement test common in secondary schools in the study area are: school entrance examination, secondary school admission test, school placement test, achievement in specific school subjects, norm-referenced, group-administered achievement tests, criterion-referenced tests, terminal and external examinations conducted by West African Examinations Council, (WAEC), and National Examination Council (NECO). These various forms of test are used to ascertain the extent of teachers' job effectiveness hence it measures their level of achievements in the performance of their teaching task.

Teachers' job effectiveness may be influenced by several factors. Some of these factors may include: motivation, leadership style of the principals, working environment, availability of infrastructural facilities, workload, equipment's and instructional materials, remuneration and occupational stress among others. Stress is a feeling of tension, which is both physical and emotional (Wester, 2018). Stress is an aspect of the normal fabric of human existence. It is a fundamental part of the challenges which prompt mastery of new skills and behavioural patterns. However, problems arise when stress becomes excessive and chronic. The individual then experiences disputed emotional, cognitive, and physiological functioning (Kyria, 2021). Stress is an adaptive response mediated by individual characteristics and or psychological processes, which are consequence of any external action, situation or event that places special physical and /or psychological demands upon a person (Jepsob, 2016).

The effectiveness of the educational system largely depends upon active, resourceful and competent teachers (Usha, 2019). An effective teacher not only imparts the entire educational curricula allotted to him or her in the best and most efficient manner but also ensures the optimum development of the students. In today's scenario where there is fierce competition in all spheres of life, effectiveness of the teachers becomes imperative to empower the students to face global challenges. Effective teaching is a par excellence attribute of quality education. There are many factors, which influence the effectiveness of the teacher among others includes: intelligence, attitude towards teaching, experience, academic qualification, personality, mental health and so on (Raghu, 2018). Basava (2018) explained that effective teachers are those who achieve the goals which they set for themselves or which is set by others such as ministries of education, legislators and other government officials and school/college administrators.

Kyria (2021) evinced that work-related stress is defined as bad emotions or an uncomfortable emotional state. According to Bourke (2022), occupational stress is a subjectively unpleasant response to a job requirement that jeopardises a worker's wellness or sense of self-worth. According to Adeyemo (2022), it is a "global epidemic" that affects every industry. Therefore, professionals such as doctors, priests, prison guards, police officers, soldiers, nurses, customs agents, teachers, lawyers, pilots, sailors, bankers, and others may face occupational stress. Teachers' job seems to be very stressful especially in modern days where teachers' welfare seems to have been neglected by their employers. Ambode (2020) observed that up to one third of teachers perceive their occupation as highly stressful. It is clear that teachers can be

exposed to a number of sources of stress. Kyria (2021) reported that the main sources of teacher stress are teaching students who lack motivation, maintaining discipline in the classroom, confronting general time pressures and workload demands. It also includes being exposed to a large amount of change, being evaluated by others, having challenging relationships with colleagues, administration, and management. Moreover, being exposed to generally poor working conditions prospects, unsatisfactory working conditions, ambiguity of the teacher's role, poor relationships with colleagues, pupils and administrators and job insecurity are all main sources of teacher stress.

Stress, up to moderate level, is inevitable and leads to motivation, but prolonged teacher stress has been found to result in both physiological and psychological ailments which ultimately have adverse effects on teachers' professional efficacy (Usha, 2019). Teaching has seemed to become very stressful profession in the present times. It is an established fact that the performance of a teacher mainly depends upon his/her psychological state of mind. Teacher stress affects the physical and psychological wellbeing of the teacher which in turn may definitely influence efficiency and performance of the teacher. There are numerous factors that can contribute to teacher stress levels. These factors, Ebuka (2020) stated that work overload, student-teacher ratios in class, poorly defined program structures, and the constant responsibility for others. In a separate review, Adeyemo (2022) noted four contributing factors such as: role ambiguity, role conflict, role overload, and lack of administrative support as factors attributed to teachers' occupational stress.

Ebuka (2020) submitted that stress can be the result of any number of situations in the occupational workplace of a person which influence their extent of job effectiveness. Murphy illustrates the following as categories of workplace stressors in one's occupation to include: poor working environment, inadequate infrastructural facilities, excess workload, inadequate instructional materials, lack of in-service training and students' discipline. Others include: conflicts occurring due to ill-defined organizational boundaries, over promotion; under promotion; lack of job security; thwarted ambitions, relationship at work; poor relations with boss, subordinates or colleagues; difficulties in delegation, threat of violence, harassment; organizational structure and climate which include: participation or non-participation in decision making; management style and communications patterns.

The researcher observed in the study area that unconducive working environment is a source of stress which seems to influence teachers' job effectiveness. The speculation is that, most secondary schools in the area seem to have poor working environment such as dilapidated facilities, hostile premises and dirt among others which does not mean well for the teachers. Teachers find it difficult to teach in such environment. In addition, inadequate infrastructural facilities is another area of concern expressed by concerned individuals in the study area such as: parents, students and members of the public which seem to increase teacher stress and have negative influence on teachers' job effectiveness. Most secondary schools hardly have enough learning facilities like library, laboratory, classrooms, furniture, playground, canteen among others. This situation seems to have negative implication on the level of teachers' conformability, preparedness and confidence.

The issue of students' indiscipline is also a thing of worry as expressed by concerned individuals in the study area. They speculate that students' indiscipline such as drug abuse, cultism,

gangsterism, stealing, fighting, truancy increase teacher stress and make them ineffective in the performance of their duties. This is because; such teachers spend most of their time dealing with disciplinary behaviours of students instead of using such time in teaching the students. Overloading of teachers is also another area of worry expressed by relevant educational stakeholders which seem to negatively influence teacher job performance in the study area. Overloading of teachers entails giving teachers extra hours in their lesson and assigning of too much non-teaching duties.

In the past ten years, stakeholders in the education sector have been troubled by a number of worrying concerns, including the decreased productivity of teachers. Teachers' job effectiveness can be easily inferred from results of various external examinations such as the Joint Admission and Matriculation Board (JAMB), West African Examination Council (WAEC) and National Examination Council (NECO) among others. Some in-service programmes have been organized by government at various times towards improving teachers' job effectiveness. Such programmes include sponsoring of teachers for in-service training, organizing seminars, workshops, conferences and symposia in educational matters. The fact that noticeable improvement has not been recorded in the issue of teachers' job effectiveness implies that more intellectual efforts should be made in this regard and hence the rationale for this present effort. It therefore ignited the researcher to examine the influence of occupational stress on teachers' job effectiveness in public secondary schools in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State.

Statement of the Problem

Recently, educational stakeholders have been seriously debating the issue of occupational stress among teachers. The researcher observes that the issue of occupational stress may have contributed to teachers' job ineffectiveness in areas like: students' poor performance on school entrance exams, poor performance on school admission tests, poor performance on students' placement tests, and poor performance of students on aptitude tests that are intended to predict achievement in particular school subjects, as well as student poor performance in external examinations administered by the West African Examination Council (WAEC) and National Examination Council (NECO). The researcher notes that the following indicators of occupational stress appear to be seriously affecting teachers' job ineffectiveness in the aforementioned areas: an unfavourable working environment that discourages teachers from preparing themselves for effective teaching; an inadequate supply of infrastructural facilities; an excessive workload for teachers; and a lack of instructional materials for teaching and learning. Hence the study examined the influence of occupational stress on teachers' job effectiveness in public secondary schools in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State.

Aim and Objectives of the Study

The main aim of the study was to investigate occupational stress and teachers' job effectiveness in public secondary schools in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State. Specifically, the study intended to:

1. determine the influence of stress due to inadequate infrastructural facilities on teachers' job effectiveness in public secondary schools in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area

2. ascertain the influence of stress due to excess workload on teachers' job effectiveness in public secondary schools in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area
3. find out the influence of stress due to students' indiscipline on teachers' job effectiveness in public secondary schools in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study

1. What is the influence of stress due to inadequate infrastructural facilities on teachers' job effectiveness in public secondary schools in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area?
2. What is the influence of stress due to excess workload on teachers' job effectiveness in public secondary schools in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area?
3. What is the influence of stress due to students' indiscipline on teachers' job effectiveness in public secondary schools in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated to guide the study.

1. There is no significant difference in the mean rating of male and female teachers on the influence of stress due to inadequate infrastructural facilities on teachers' job effectiveness in public secondary schools in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area
2. There is no significant difference in the mean rating of male and female teachers on the influence of stress due to excess workload on teachers' job effectiveness in public secondary schools in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area
3. There is no significant difference in the mean rating of male and female teachers on the influence of stress due to students' indiscipline on teachers' job effectiveness in public secondary schools in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area

Method

The study employed a descriptive research design. The study was conducted in Obio-Akpor is a Local Government Area, Rivers State, Nigeria. The survey comprised 1,297 teachers from 21 public senior secondary schools in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area. Convenience sampling technique was used to select a sample of 200 public senior secondary school teachers for the study. The research instrument were self-designed instruments titled "Occupational Stress and Teachers' Effectiveness Questionnaire" (OSTEQ). The instrument had 12 item statements and was made up of two sections. Section A contained demographic information's of the teachers, while section B was structured on a four point modified Likert Scale of Strongly Agree (SA) = 4, Agree (A) = 3, Disagree (D) = 2, and Strongly Disagree (SD) = 1. The (OSTEQ) yielded a reliability index of $r=0.73$. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions while Independent sample t-test was used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The data collected were analyzed with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 25.0.

Results

Research Question One: What is the influence of stress due to inadequate infrastructural facilities on teachers' job effectiveness in public secondary schools in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area?

Table 1: Mean and standard deviation showing the influence of stress due to inadequate infrastructural facilities on teachers' job effectiveness in public secondary schools in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area. Criterion $\bar{X} = 2.5$

S/N	Item Statements	\bar{X}	SD		Remarks
1	Inadequate facilities in school create anxiety in the task of teaching thereby making teaching difficult and reducing teachers' teaching effectiveness	3.16	0.97		Agreed
2	Inadequate classrooms result to overcrowding of students in class and adversely influence teaching effectiveness of teachers	3.38	0.79		Agreed
3	The maintenance of school buildings and provision of chairs are important in curtailing of teachers' stress and increasing their effectiveness in lesson delivery.	3.08	0.95		Agreed
4	Absence of good toilet facilities for defecation can make the teacher uncomfortable	3.24	0.85		Agreed
	Cluster mean/Standard Deviation	3.19	0.88		

(Survey Data, 2025)

Table 1 shows the influence of stress due to inadequate infrastructural facilities on teachers' job effectiveness in public secondary schools in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area. Specifically the result indicates a grand mean of 3.19 which is higher than the criterion mean of (>2.50). This further indicates that stress due to inadequate infrastructural facilities negatively

influence teachers' job effectiveness in public secondary schools in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area.

Research Question Two: What is the influence of stress due to excess workload on teachers' job effectiveness in public secondary schools in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area?

Table 2: Mean and standard deviation showing the influence of stress due to excess workload on teachers' job effectiveness in public secondary schools in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area. Criterion $\bar{X} = 2.5$

S/N	Stress due to Excess Workload and Teachers' Job Effectiveness	\bar{X}	ST.D		Remarks
5	Teachers who are allocated with too much workload may feel over stressed and not plan lesson note before going to teach the students which makes them ineffective in teaching.	3.03	0.97		Agreed
6	Overloading teachers with duties and teaching hours makes it difficult for them to plan and deliver lesson	3.06	0.96		Agreed
7	Overloading of teachers may result to a hurried lesson preparing which may negatively influence lesson delivery	3.10	0.99		Agreed
8	Teachers who are given moderate work will be more relaxed and effective in their lesson preparation/delivery	3.42	0.85		Agreed
	Cluster mean/Standard Deviation	3.15	0.94		

(Survey Data, 2025)

Table 2 shows that items 5, 6, 7 and 8 respectively were all agreed as the influence of stress due to excess workload on teachers' job effectiveness in public secondary schools in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area. The table showed that the mean ratings of items 4-8 were 3.03, 3.06, 3.10 and 3.42 respectively with the corresponding standard deviations of 0.97, 0.96, 0.99 and 0.85. The cluster mean of 3.15 with the standard deviations of 0.94 was also

found to be above the cut-off point of 2.50. This further indicates that stress due to excess workload negatively influence teachers' job effectiveness in public secondary schools in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area.

Research Question Three: What is the influence of stress due to students' indiscipline on teachers' job effectiveness in public secondary schools in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area?

Table 3: Mean and standard deviation showing the influence of stress due to students' indiscipline on teachers' job effectiveness in public secondary schools in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area. Criterion $\bar{X} = 2.5$

S/N	Stress due to Students' Indiscipline and Teachers' Job Effectiveness	\bar{X}	ST.D	Remarks

9	Students' indiscipline is a major source of stress among teachers which is making their job tough for them and ineffective	3.44	0.94	Agreed
10	Serious breach of school policy can have profound negative influence on teachers by causing them much stress as well as reduce their effectiveness in job performance	3.36	0.90	Agreed
11	Students' misconduct in the classroom interferes with teaching and learning as well as contributes to teachers' stress which tends to affect their job effectiveness	3.03	0.55	Agreed
12	Students' noise making in class makes teachers spend much time in controlling them thus making the teachers ineffective in their lesson delivery	3.19	0.93	Agreed
Cluster mean/Standard Deviation		3.25	0.95	

(Survey Data, 2025)

Table 3 shows that items 9, 10, 11 and 12 respectively were all agreed as the influence of stress due to students' indiscipline on teachers' job effectiveness in public secondary schools in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area. The table showed that the mean ratings of items 9-12 were 3.44, 3.36, 3.03 and 3.19 respectively with the corresponding standard deviations of 0.94, 0.90, 0.55 and 0.93. The cluster mean of 3.25 with the standard deviations of 0.95 were also found to be above the cut-off point of 2.50. This further indicates that stress due to students indiscipline

negatively influence teachers' job effectiveness in public secondary schools in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area.

Test of Hypotheses

Hypothesis One: There is no significant difference in the mean rating of male and female teachers on the influence of stress due to inadequate infrastructural facilities on teachers' job effectiveness in public secondary schools in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area

Table 4: T-test analysis showing significant difference in the Mean Rating of Male and Female Teachers on the Influence of Stress Due To Inadequate Infrastructural Facilities on Teachers' Job Effectiveness

Inadequate Infrastructural Facilities	N	Mean	Standard deviation	Df	t-cal	P-value	Sig.	Remark
Male	100	10.13	0.52	198	.078	.060	0.05	Ho is Accepted
Female	100	14.62	0.45					

(Survey Data, 2025)

From the results in table 4, it can be observed that at 0.05 level of significance and 198 degrees of freedom, $t\text{-cal} = .078$ and $p\text{-value} = .060 > 0.05$ level of significance. Since the $p\text{-value} = .060 > 0.05$ level of significance, the null hypothesis that there is no significant difference in the mean rating of male and female teachers on the influence of stress due to inadequate infrastructural facilities on

teachers' job effectiveness in public secondary schools in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area is *accepted*.

Hypothesis Two: There is no significant difference in the mean rating of male and female teachers on the influence of stress due to excess workload on teachers' job effectiveness in public secondary schools in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area

Table 5: T-test analysis showing significant difference in the Mean Rating of Male and Female Teachers on the Influence of Stress Due to Excess Workload on Teachers' Job Effectiveness

Excess Workload	N	Mean	Standard deviation	Df	t-cal	P-value	Sig.	Remark
Male	100	8.01	0.83	198	.066	.070	0.05	Ho is Accepted
Female	100	15.11	0.92					

(Survey Data, 2025)

From the results in table 5, it can be observed that at 0.05 level of significance and 198 degrees of freedom, $t\text{-cal} = .066$ and $p\text{-value} = .070 > 0.05$ level of significance. Since the $p\text{-value} = .070 > 0.05$ level of significance, the null hypothesis that there is no significant difference in the mean rating of male and female teachers on the influence of stress due to excess workload on teachers' job

effectiveness in public secondary schools in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area is *accepted*.

Hypothesis Three: There is no significant difference in the mean rating of male and female teachers on the influence of stress due to students indiscipline on teachers' job effectiveness in public secondary schools in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area

Table 6: T-test analysis showing significant difference in the Mean Rating of Male and Female Teachers on the Influence of Stress Due to Students Indiscipline on Teachers' Job Effectiveness

Students Indiscipline	N	Mean	Standard deviation	Df	t-cal	P-value	Sig.	Remark
Male	100	13.99	0.78	189	.082	.060	0.05	Ho is Accepted
Female	100	12.73	0.92					

(Survey Data, 2025)

From the results in table 6, it can be observed that at 0.05 level of significance and 189 degrees of freedom, t-cal =.082 and p-value = .060 >0.05 level of significance. Since the p-value = .060 >0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis that there is no significant difference in the mean rating of male and female teachers on the influence of stress due to students indiscipline on teachers' job effectiveness in public secondary schools in Obio/Akpore Local Government Area is *accepted*.

Discussion of Findings

Stress due to Inadequate Infrastructural Facilities and Teachers' Job Effectiveness

The finding of research question one (Table 1) revealed that stress due to inadequate infrastructural facilities negatively influence teachers' job effectiveness in public secondary schools in Obio/Akpore Local Government Area. And hypothesis one (Table 4) revealed that there was no significant difference in the mean rating of male and female teachers on the influence of stress due to inadequate infrastructural facilities on teachers' job effectiveness in public secondary schools in Obio/Akpore Local Government Area. This finding is in consonance with that of Basaypa (2018) in their study on the causes and impact of stress on teachers' job effectiveness as expressed by secondary school teachers in Nigeria revealed that lack of job satisfaction, inadequate school facilities, were major causes of stress among primary school teachers. The study also revealed that stress had negative impacts on teachers' job effectiveness. Similar in agreement with the finding is Kyria, (2021) who in their study on infrastructural facilities as determinants of productivity among secondary school teachers found that availability of adequate physical working condition led to job satisfaction and subsequent increase in productivity; that shabby and unconducive working environment contributed to the high rate of malingering and truancy among teachers. The researchers found a significant relationship between physical working conditions and secondary school teachers' productivity. The researcher also agreed with the finding as they observing that, when infrastructural facilities are not adequately provided in a school, teachers will be more stressed in performing their duties hence they are things that help to complement the efforts of the teachers. These may result to their ineffectiveness in teaching and ultimately their entire job performance.

Stress due to Excess Workload and Teachers' Job Effectiveness

The finding of research question two (Table 2) revealed that stress due to excess workload negatively influence teachers' job effectiveness in public secondary schools in Obio/Akpore Local Government Area. And hypothesis two (Table 5) revealed that there was no significant difference in the mean rating of male and female teachers on the influence of stress due to excess workload on teachers' job effectiveness in public secondary schools in Obio/Akpore Local Government Area. The finding is in tandem

with the study of Bourke (2022) who revealed that students were over worked as there were less number of recruited teachers in both public primary and secondary schools which affected their job effectiveness their ineffectiveness in job performance.

Stress due to Students Indiscipline and Teachers' Job Effectiveness

The finding of research question three (Table 3) revealed that stress due to students indiscipline negatively influence teachers' job effectiveness in public secondary schools in Obio/Akpore Local Government Area. And hypothesis three (Table 6) revealed that there was no significant difference in the mean rating of male and female teachers on the influence of stress due to students indiscipline on teachers' job effectiveness in public secondary schools in Obio/Akpore Local Government Area. This finding is in agreement with Usha (2019), the study found that occupational stress and workers' environment were correlates of teacher's job effectiveness in secondary schools in Ijebu-Ode Local Government. Usha found that a teacher with a conducive working environment would experience a positive mood and increase concentration on his work, and that if all elements causing stress on the job were absent, the teachers' job effectiveness would be enhanced. Another agreement with the finding of this study is Ambode (2020) who found in his study on linking the school infrastructural facilities condition to teachers' level of teachers' job effectiveness in secondary schools, discovered that the state of infrastructural facilities had influence on the school climate. Moreover, the provision of accommodations is an issue which reduced the stress of teaching and enhanced teachers' job effectiveness. School facilities determine the trends in school activities and processes which influence teachers' job effectiveness. In addition, the provision and quality of infrastructures affected the ability and enthusiasm of teachers to teach. Teachers' morale, health and safety of were also improved. The study further revealed a significant relationship between sources of stress and the teaching effectiveness of the teachers. Contrary to this finding, Jepsob (2016) stated that teachers' job effectiveness mainly depends on the teacher characteristics such as knowledge base, sense of responsibility, inquisitiveness and the student characteristics such as opportunity to learn, and academic work. Other factors are teaching factors such as lesson structure and communication; the learning aspects such as involvement of success; and organization and management. If teachers take care of these factors, their effectiveness can be enhanced to the optimum level. Moreover, in line with the finding, the researchers observed that if working environment is not conducive for teachers, they may feel much stressed and some students may not want to attend such schools. Many teachers may resort to absenting themselves even in attending classes in an unconducive class. This is capable of affecting teachers' job effectiveness

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, the researcher concluded that stress due to inadequate infrastructural facilities, stress due to excess workload, stress due to students indiscipline negatively influence teachers' job effectiveness in public secondary schools in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area. And that there was no significant difference in the mean rating of male and female teachers on the influence of stress due to inadequate infrastructural facilities, stress due to excess workload, stress due to students indiscipline on teachers' job effectiveness in public secondary schools in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study the researcher made the following recommendations:

1. Government in collaboration with the Counselling Association of Nigeria (CASSON) should set-up counselling centres at all secondary schools in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area to help combat discipline challenges of students;
2. The management of secondary schools, parents and other education stakeholders should make teachers work environment more conducive by paying more attention to the motivational needs of teachers such as: good offices, canteen, good recreation centres among others in order to boost their effectiveness;
3. Government should work tirelessly in making sure that adequate infrastructural facilities such as; buildings, furniture, sanitary facilities, electricity, recreational facilities, libraries, laboratories, computer system, school records and teaching aids are provided. This will go a long ways in reducing the stress of teachers and make them happy to be part of the school and use the facilities towards actualization of the school goals.

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