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## STRESS AND SELF-EFFICACY AS DETERMINANT OF JOB PERFORMANCE AMONG SIGN LANGUAGE INTERPRETERS IN OYO TOWN

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### Abstract

This study investigated stress and self-efficacy as determinants of job performance among sign language interpreters in Oyo Town, addressing the dearth of literatures on these psychological factors. A descriptive survey research design targeted all sign language interpreters in Oyo town, specifically those at the Federal College of Education (Special), Oyo, and Sped International Secondary School, Oyo. Using a purposive sampling technique, 60 participants were selected. Data were collected through two self-developed questionnaires: the Stress and Sign Language Interpreters' Job Performance Questionnaire (SSLIJ PQ) and the Self-efficacy and Sign Language Interpreters' Job Performance Questionnaire (SESLIJ PQ) with 0.87 and 0.79 validity and reliability coefficients respectively. Pearson Product Moment Correlation was employed for data analysis at a 0.05 significance level. The findings revealed no significant relationship between stress and job performance ( $r = 0.21$ ,  $p = 0.87$ ) and between self-efficacy and job performance ( $r = -0.082$ ,  $p = 0.533$ ) among sign language interpreters. This study concluded that stress and self-efficacy do not significantly impact job performance among sign language language interpreters in Oyo State. The study recommended enhancing interpersonal relations, providing stress management programs, and offering training to improve self-efficacy.

### INTRODUCTION

Job performance can be described as how one executes the tasks, duties, and responsibilities associated with a specific role. Additionally, the author elaborates by stating that

job performance can also be understood as the attainment of set goals. It is viewed as the measurable output of an employee's efforts, quantifiable in terms of both quality and quantity of work completed. Job performance is characterized by the effectiveness with which employees carry out their duties within the organization and their adherence to company norms (Imran et al., 2020). Given that organizational success hinges on factors such as employee innovation, creativity, and dedication, maintaining high levels of job performance is crucial (Kreisman, 2002). Additionally, Martocchio (2015) defined job performance as the collective anticipated contribution to the organization stemming from the distinct behavioral occurrences executed by an individual within a designated timeframe. On the other hand, Kasemsap (2017) described job performance as the fulfillment of assigned tasks evaluated based on criteria such as accuracy, thoroughness, cost-effectiveness, and efficiency. Job performance pertains to the tasks completed by an individual or group of employees within their designated roles and responsibilities over a specific timeframe. It represents the behavioral manifestation of positive attitudes towards the organization.

Ekienabor (2016) opined that effective job performance enables employees to successfully fulfill their responsibilities, thereby playing a significant role in accomplishing organizational goals and objectives. Job performance means the manner in which an employee fulfills the requirements and expectations of their job role as outlined by the employing organization. Job performance is the actions outlined and required in an employee's job description, which are mandated, evaluated, and rewarded by the employer. It represents a composite of employee behaviors that hold anticipated value for organizations, whether positive or negative (Jansen, 2016). It pertains to how employees execute their job responsibilities, encompassing factors such as attendance, attitudes, effort, knowledge, behaviors, and skills (Kasemsap, 2017). It encompasses a range of behaviors and actions, including attendance, attitudes, effort, knowledge, and skills, which contribute to the overall effectiveness and productivity of the employee in their position. Job performance can be assessed based on the quality and quantity of work completed, adherence to organizational standards and procedures, as well as the ability to meet or exceed goals and objectives.

The job performance of sign language interpreters is a multifaceted concept. It involves linguistic competence, cultural competence, ethical considerations, and the ability to adapt to diverse communication contexts (Napier, et al., 2019). The effectiveness of an interpreter's service directly impacts the quality of communication experienced by deaf and hard-of-hearing individuals (Yabe, 2022). It is not gain saying then that the quality of sign language interpreting is crucial to the education of learners with hearing impairment. Sign language interpreters possess plurilingual competencies, which include a variety of skills. Among these are inter-comprehension which entails applying linguistic proficiency to comprehend and generate messages in many languages. Furthermore, interpreters are also skilled in selecting the proper variants of sign language for various communication scenarios. These scenarios may include trans-languaging or changing languages in the middle of a discourse (Marschark et al., 2004). Additionally, they exhibit code-blending, which is the sequential or simultaneous application of spoken and signed characteristics. Also, interpreters possess proficiency in a variety of mediation techniques, including translating or interpreting into another language and paraphrasing thoughts or concepts using various signs.

Ntoaduro et. al. (2023) stated that for efficient job performance, the role of a sign language interpreter demands a set of essential qualities, including proficiency in sign language, strong communication skills, active listening abilities, and the capacity to accurately convey messages. The demands in sign language interpreting encompass the various challenges and obstacles faced by interpreters, influencing their decision-making during the interpretation process. These demands encompass interpersonal, paralinguistic, intrapersonal, and environmental factors. The assignment's environment includes factors like the responsibilities of participants, specialized terminology, physical space constraints, weather conditions, and odours. Interpersonal demands arise from interactions between the parties involved, such as cultural differences, power dynamics, and

differing perspectives or goals. Paralinguistic demands pertain to consumers' expressive communication, like dealing with individuals with strong accents or Deaf individuals signing while holding objects. Intrapersonal demands relate to the interpreter's mental and emotional state.

Memorial Hearing (2024) defined sign language interpreter as someone who possesses the expertise to translate spoken language into sign language for individuals or groups with hearing impairments. These interpreters utilize various forms of manual communication, including sign language, finger spelling, miming, and facial expressions, alongside speech and auditory cues, to facilitate comprehensive communication. Their aim is to bridge the communication divide effectively during interpretation. According to the National Deaf Centre (2023), a sign language interpreter is a skilled professional dedicated to facilitating communication. Their role involves conveying both auditory and signed information, ensuring that individuals with and without hearing impairments can fully engage and interact with each other. According to Najib(2024), sign language interpreter is a proficient professional fluent in two or more languages. Their role involves interpreting between a source language and a target language while bridging cultural gaps. The interpreter's objective is to facilitate communication impartially, guaranteeing equitable access to information and enabling full participation.

A sign language interpreter is an individual who undergoes training to facilitate communication between spoken language and signed language. Typically, this entails interpreting spoken words into signs for individuals who are unable to hear but comprehend sign language. A sign language interpreter possesses the ability to interpret sign language with precision, impartiality, and effectiveness, both in receiving and conveying messages. They utilize any required specialized vocabulary to ensure accurate communication (Barber, 2015). Ntoaduro et al. (2023) added that sign language interpreting is a challenging profession that necessitates a high level of skill and expertise. Interpreters must meet numerous occupational expectations, which can affect the quality of their work and hinder effective communication between spoken and sign language users. Factors like the amount of time spent interpreting in a day, the shortage of qualified sign language interpreters, and long work hours can lead to stress, exhaustion, and burnout, making it challenging for interpreters to maintain the focus required for quality interpretation. Addressing these demands is vital to ensure that Deaf individuals have equal access to effective communication and can fully participate in society, as these demands add stress and fatigue to the interpreter's decision-making process.com.ng

Job performance means the manner in which an employee fulfills the requirements and expectations of their job role as outlined by the employing organization. Job performance is the actions outlined and required in an employee's job description, which are mandated, evaluated, and rewarded by the employer. It represents a composite of employee behaviors that hold anticipated value for organizations, whether positive or negative (Jansen &Yperen, 2016). It pertains to how employees execute their job responsibilities, encompassing factors such as attendance, attitudes, effort, knowledge, behaviors, and skills (Kasemsap, 2017). It encompasses a range of behaviors and actions, including attendance, attitudes, effort, knowledge and skills, which contribute to the overall effectiveness and productivity of the employee in their position. Job performance can be assessed based on the quality and quantity of work completed, adherence to organizational standards and procedures, as well as the ability to meet or exceed goals and objectives.

Ifioque, (2024) expressed that job performance refers to an employee's capability to meet or surpass expectations in their role, encompassing both task performance and contextual performance. Task performance involves completing specific job duties and achieving objectives, while contextual performance involves behaviors contributing to overall organizational effectiveness, such as assisting colleagues and adhering to organizational protocols. This means that job performance is how an employee meets job expectations, as evaluated and rewarded by

the employer. It includes behaviors like attendance, attitudes, effort, and skills, impacting overall productivity. Assessments consider quality/quantity of work, adherence to standards, and goal achievement (Jansen et al., 2016).

Chan (2010) posited that among psychological factors that affect job performance of workers are stress and self-efficacy. This suggests that stress and self-efficacy of sign language interpreters could have psychological effects on their job performance. Workplace stress has long been a prevalent issue, impacting employee performance, mental well-being, and overall productivity negatively (Bui et al., 2021). For instance, Ajayi (2018) conducted a study examining the impact of stress on employee performance and job satisfaction within Nigeria's banking sector. Employing a descriptive survey research design, the study focused on the staff of Access Bank Plc. located in Victoria Island, Lagos. Simple random sampling was utilized to select 150 participants for the study, who provided responses via a questionnaire. Data analysis involved percentile regression analysis and chi-square tests. Among the respondents, 38.67% were male (58 individuals) and 61.33% were female (92 individuals). The findings highlighted that 48% of respondents strongly agreed that job stress affects Nigerian bankers, with an additional 37.33% in agreement, 13.33% undecided, and 1.33% in disagreement. These results indicate a significant negative impact of job stress on the performance of service workers.

Relatedly, individuals with low self-efficacy tend to harbor doubts about their abilities, shy away from challenging tasks, and exhibit a proclivity for giving up easily. Their performance tends to be subpar, and they are more inclined to disregard or resist feedback (Hossain, 2024). This suggests that stress and self-efficacy of workers have psychological effects on workers' performances while social factors that influence workers' performance include rewards and recognition and interpersonal relationships. Pelago (2024) emphasized that recognition serves as crucial mechanisms for motivating employees and enhancing their performance. Rewards may encompass bonuses, salary increases, or special privileges, while recognition can manifest through expressions of appreciation or awards. When utilized adeptly, rewards and recognition contribute to fostering a favorable work environment and elevating employee satisfaction.

Moreover, they serve to uplift morale and inspire employees to exert greater effort and attain superior outcomes.

Considering the background above, stress and low self-efficacy will negatively impact the job performance, mental well-being, and overall productivity of sign language interpreters. Despite the significance of these psychological factors, there is still a relative dearth of literature regarding them as determinants of the job performance of sign language interpreters especially in Oyo Town. This study was therefore conducted to fill this gap.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Sign language interpreters play a critical role in facilitating communication between students with hearing impairment and the hearing world. Sign language interpreters' job performance has a direct impact on the quality of communication, accessibility, and overall well-being of students with hearing impairment. Consequently, sign language interpreters in the discharge of their duties are faced with stress and low self-efficacy that interfere with their job performance. Additionally, the psychosocial factors that influence sign language interpreters' job performance have been understudied with scarce literature in that regard. Hence, this study was conducted to provide empirical data regarding stress and self-efficacy as determinants of job performance among sign language interpreters in Oyo town.



## Research Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated and tested at the 0.05 level of significance:

**Ho1:** There is no significant relationship between stress and job performance among sign language interpreters in Oyo town

**Ho2:** There is no significant relationship between self-efficacy and job performance among sign language interpreters in Oyo town

## METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a descriptive survey research design. A descriptive survey research design is a type of research that provides a detailed and accurate picture of the characteristics and behaviors of a particular population or subject by observing and collecting data on a given topic, descriptive research helps researchers gain a deeper understanding of a specific issue and provides valuable insights that can inform future studies (Sirisilla & Sirisilla, 2023). The design was considered suitable for this study because the researcher elicited information on the psychosocial factors as predictors of sign language interpreters' job performance in Oyo town without any form of manipulation of the variable.

### Population of the Study

The target population for this study consisted of all one hundred and three (103) sign language interpreters in Oyo town. This study covered Sign language interpreters in Federal College of Education (Special) Oyo and Sped International Secondary School, Oyo

### Sample and Sampling Technique

The researcher made use of a purposive sampling technique to select 60 participants who were professional and educational sign language interpreters from FCE (special), Oyo and Durbar School for the Disabled, Durbar Oyo.

### Research Instruments

Two instruments were used to elicit responses from the respondents for this study. The instruments are:

1. Stress and Sign language interpreters' job performance Questionnaire (SSLIJPQ)
2. Self-efficacy and sign language interpreters' job performance Questionnaire (SESLIJPQ)

### Procedure for Data Collection

The researcher collected a letter of introduction from the Head of the Department of Special Education, Kwara State University, Malete to seek permission from the institution and school management respectively. Prior to the administration of the instruments, the participating sign language interpreters were given instruction and guide of the instruments. One higher institution of learning and one secondary school was used. The researcher made use of the school teachers as research assistants.

## Method of Data Analysis

The data collected was analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation. The method of analysis was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

## Results

### Testing of Research Hypothesis

**H<sub>01</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between stress and job performance among sign language interpreters in Oyo town.

**Table 1:** *Pearson Product Moment Correlation shows the significant relationship between stress and job performance of sign language interpreters in Oyo State.*

Variables	N	Mean	SD	r-cal	Df	p-value	DECISION
Stress	60	43.97	6.19				
				0.21	58	0.87	Not Sig
Job performance	60	33.85	4.45				

Table 1 shows the correlation between stress and job performance of sign language interpreters in Oyo town. It was revealed that the mean and standard deviation of stress were 43.97 and 6.19 respectively, while the mean and standard deviation of job performance were 33.85 and 4.45 respectively. The calculated value of  $r_{cal}$  was 0.21 and degree of freedom was 58, the observed p-value was 0.87 and the fixed p-value 0.05. The observed p-value was greater than the fixed p-value ( $p > 0.05$ ). Therefore, the null hypothesis that states that no significant relationship between stress and job performance among sign language interpreters in Oyo town was accepted. This implies that stress does not significantly determine job performance among sign language interpreters in Oyo town.

**H<sub>01</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between self-efficacy and job performance among sign language interpreters in Oyo Town.

**Table 2:** *Pearson Product Moment Correlation shows the significant relationship between self-efficacy and job performance of sign language interpreters in Oyo State.*

Variables	N	Mean	SD	r-cal	df	p-value	DECISION
Self-efficacy	60	29.72	5.58				
				-0.082	58	0.533	Not Sig
Job performance	60	33.85	4.45				

Table 2 showed the correlation between self-efficacy and job performance among sign language interpreters in Oyo town. It was revealed that the mean and standard deviation of self-efficacy were 29.72 and 5.58 respectively, while the mean and standard deviation of job performance were

33.85 and 4.45 respectively. The calculated value of  $r_{cal}$  was -0.082 and degree of freedom was 58, the observed p-value was 0.533 and the fixed p-value 0.05. The observed p-value was greater than the fixed p-value ( $p > 0.05$ ). Therefore, the null hypothesis that states that no significant relationship between self-efficacy and job performance among sign language interpreters in Oyo town was accepted. This implies that self-efficacy does not significantly determine job performance sign language interpreters in Oyo town.

## Discussion of Findings

Based on the relationship between stress and job performance among sign language interpreters in Oyo town. The results of the study indicated that there is no significant relationship between stress and job performance among sign language interpreters in Oyo town. The study's finding that stress is not significantly related to job performance among sign language interpreters in Oyo town suggests that other factors, such as professional skills, workplace resources, and support systems, may be more influential in shaping performance outcomes. This highlights the need for organizations to prioritize skill development, resource provision, and research into other performance determinants while exploring whether similar trends exist in other regions or contexts. **This finding is in contrast with** Bui et al. (2021) who found that increased stress correlated with decreased productivity. Ajayi (2018) also indicated a significant negative impact of job stress on the performance of service workers.

Based on the relationship between self-efficacy and job performance of sign language interpreters in Oyo State. The results of the study indicated that there was no significant relationship between self-efficacy and job performance among sign language interpreters in Oyo State. The findings imply that factors other than self-efficacy, such as organizational support, job resources, or external conditions, may play a more significant role in influencing job performance among interpreters. This suggests a need for employers to focus on enhancing workplace conditions and addressing other potential performance determinants beyond self-efficacy. **This finding is contrary to that of** Hadi (2023) who found that Self-efficacy positively influences employee performance, with work motivation and work involvement both serving as significant and positive mediators in this relationship.

## Conclusion

The study concluded that neither stress nor self-efficacy significantly impacts the job performance of sign language interpreters in Oyo State, emphasizing the importance of exploring other factors such as organizational support, workplace resources, and external conditions. These findings challenge previous research that identified stress and self-efficacy as critical performance determinants, highlighting the need for context-specific approaches to performance enhancement in this profession.

## Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations were made:

7. **Institutions of learning that employ the service of sign language interpreters** should focus on enhancing interpersonal relations among sign language interpreters by promoting teamwork, communication, and collaboration through Workshops and team-building activities could make this to be achieved.
8. Institutions should provide stress management programs to ensure the overall well-being of interpreters.

9. Training programs aimed at improving self-efficacy should be provided to interpreters, focusing on skill development and confidence-building activities.

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