Research Article

Teachers Motivation as A Determinant of School Effectiveness: An Empirical Analysis from Edo South Senatorial District, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the impact of teachers motivation on school effectiveness in public secondary schools across Edo South Senatorial District, Nigeria. Recognising teachers as pivotal drivers of educational outcomes, the researchers investigates how factors such as promotion, professional development, work environment and remuneration correlate with indicators of school effectiveness including leadership, accountability and productivity. Employing a correlational survey design, data were gathered from 149 randomly selected teachers across 19 schools using validated instruments. The study revealed a significant positive relationship between teachers motivation and school effectiveness, with further variations observed based on teachers experience and classroom size. Gender and school location, however, did not present significant moderating effects. Findings reveal the importance of structured motivation strategies to enhance performance and educational quality in public schools. The study concludes with recommendations for policy and administrative reform that are targeted at teachers welfare and engagement.

KEYWORDS

Teachers Motivation, School, Effectiveness and Classroom Size

1. INTRODUCTION

Education remains a cornerstone of national development and teachers play a central role in ensuring the quality and effectiveness of school systems. In many developing countries, including Nigeria, the challenges facing secondary education are often rooted in the low levels of teachers motivation (Bennell & Akyeampong, 2007). School effectiveness, which encompasses goal attainment, instructional quality and student achievement, is intrinsically linked to how motivated teachers are to carry out their responsibilities. As the implementers of educational policies and direct agents of student learning, teachers' morale and commitment significantly determine whether schools fulfill their intended functions (Adeyemi, 2008; Alam, 2011).

In Edo South Senatorial District, Nigeria, public secondary schools have experienced mixed outcomes in recent years, with concerns over fluctuating academic performance and teachers engagement. These issues raise important questions about the conditions under which teachers work and how these conditions influence the broader performance of schools. Motivation, defined as the internal or external drive that stimulates and sustains behaviour (Ryan & Deci, 2000), is increasingly recognized as a determinant of educational success. In the context of education, teachers motivation encompasses

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factors such as professional recognition, working conditions, training opportunities, and remuneration (Herzberg, 1966; Maslow, 1970).

This study investigates teachers motivation as a determinant of school effectiveness in public secondary schools in Edo South Senatorial District. It further examines how variables such as teacher gender, experience, classroom size, and school location interact with motivational factors to influence educational outcomes. By analysing these dimensions, the study seeks to provide empirical insight into policy and administrative strategies for improving school effectiveness through enhanced teachers motivation.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Understanding Teachers Motivation

Teachers motivation is increasingly recognized as a foundational element in the quality of education delivery, particularly in resource-constrained settings such as sub-Saharan Africa (Béteille & Evans, 2020; Eyal & Roth, 2019). It encompasses intrinsic drivers (passion, purpose, satisfaction) and extrinsic factors such as remuneration, career progression, recognition, and institutional support (Agu et al., 2022).

Contemporary researchers argue that motivated teachers demonstrate stronger commitment, engage students more effectively, and adopt innovative teaching methods (Toropova et al., 2021). In contrast, demotivation has been linked to high teachers turnover, absenteeism, and a decline in student outcomes (Opdenakker & Van Damme, 2015; UNESCO, 2023).

2.2 Concept of School Effectiveness

School effectiveness refers to the extent to which a school achieves its stated educational objectives. Modern frameworks include not only academic outcomes but also leadership effectiveness, instructional quality, equity and school climate (Teddlie & Reynolds, 2016; Scheerens, 2020). Effective schools are typically characterized by high teachers expectations, shared vision, data-informed decisions and a supportive professional culture (OECD, 2018).

There is mounting evidence that school effectiveness is directly influenced by the quality and motivation of teachers. Teachers who are emotionally and professionally invested tend to create inclusive, engaging and results-oriented classrooms (Leithwood et al., 2020).

2.3 Theoretical Framework

This study is guided by three foundational motivation theories:

- Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs remains relevant, but modern interpretations highlight its dynamic nature rather than a strict hierarchy (McLeod, 2018). Contemporary models stress the role of psychological safety and self-efficacy as modern equivalents of esteem and self-actualization needs (Ryan & Deci, 2020).
- Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory has been expanded in recent years to consider contextual nuances in public sector work, especially in education (Raza et al., 2020). Hygiene factors like salary and job security must be satisfied before motivators like growth and achievement can drive performance.
- Vroom's Expectancy Theory has been validated in various teachers motivation contexts, where effort, performance, and outcomes are mediated by perceived rewards and institutional fairness (Li, Hallinger, & Ko, 2017).

These theoretical models collectively provide a lens for understanding how teachers motivation drives school effectiveness, especially in complex and under-resourced environments.

2.4 Recent Empirical Studies

Recent studies provide empirical backing for this research effort. For example, Iwu and Gwija (2021) found a significant correlation between teacher satisfaction and student performance in South African secondary schools. In Nigeria, Onuma and Osu (2020) confirmed that teachers morale, autonomy, and advancement opportunities positively influenced school culture and student engagement.

Additionally, studies by Abdu-Raheem (2023) and Muntazir, Zubair, and Suleiman (2021) show that motivation impacts not only instructional quality but also teachers' willingness to implement curriculum reforms and support school-wide initiatives. Internationally, meta-analyses (e.g., Liu et al., 2022) confirm that investment in teachers well-being correlates strongly with institutional performance, regardless of socioeconomic context.

3. METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a correlational survey design, a non-experimental approach suitable for examining the relationships between naturally occurring variables without manipulation (Creswell & Creswell, 2020). The target population included 993 public secondary school teachers across 129 schools in Edo South Senatorial District, Nigeria. Using a multi-stage sampling technique, 149 teachers from 19 schools were selected through stratified and proportional random sampling to ensure balanced representation in terms of gender and location (Fraenkel et al., 2019). Data were collected using two structured instruments: the Teachers' Motivation

Questionnaire (TMQ) and the School Effectiveness Questionnaire (SEQ). Both tools, adapted from Momoh (2017), were updated to reflect contemporary standards. The TMQ focused on five indices of motivation—promotion, interpersonal relationships, growth opportunities, work environment, and remuneration—while the SEQ captured leadership, efficiency, accountability, productivity, and teacher effectiveness. Responses were measured on a 4-point modified Likert scale, combining ease of interpretation with reliability (Boone & Boone, 2012).

Content validity was ensured through expert review, and reliability testing using a pilot sample of 20 teachers yielded strong Cronbach's alpha coefficients (TMQ = questionnaires0.92, SEQ = 0.94), indicating excellent internal consistency (Taber, 2018).

Data collection was conducted over three weeks using researchers-administered to ensure clarity and completeness. Ethical considerations such as voluntary participation, anonymity, and data protection were upheld following BERA (2018) guidelines. Also, data analysis involved descriptive statistics to determine motivation and effectiveness levels, and Pearson's correlation to assess relationships. Fisher's Z transformation was used to test for differences across demographic subgroups. Analyses were performed using SPSS v25, with significance set at $\alpha = 0.05$.

4. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

4.1 Research Question 1: What is the level of teachers' motivation in public secondary schools in Edo South Senatorial District?

To assess teacher motivation, five key indices were measured. The results are presented in Table 1 below:

Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation Scores of Teachers' Motivation (N = 149)

Motivation Indicator	Mean	SD	Remark
Regular Promotion	2.81	0.95	Moderate
Interpersonal Relationship at Workplace	3.26	0.76	High
Opportunity for Growth/Advancement through Training and Retraining	3.03	0.87	High
Good Working Environment	2.65	0.82	Moderate
Prompt Payment of Salaries	2.72	0.97	Moderate
Grand Mean	2.89	0.87	Moderate

The overall level of teachers motivation was moderate (M = 2.89). Teachers reported relatively high satisfaction with interpersonal relationships and growth opportunities, but motivation related to salary, promotions, and working conditions remained only moderate. This aligns with findings by Bennell and Akyeampong (2007), who note that teachers satisfaction in many African contexts is often hindered by systemic issues like salary delays and poor infrastructure.

4.2 Research Question 2: What is the level of school effectiveness in public secondary schools in Edo South Senatorial District?

Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation Scores of School Effectiveness (N = 149)

School Effectiveness Indicator	Mean	SD	Remark
Leadership	3.13	0.75	High
Efficiency	2.78	0.81	Moderate
Accountability	2.74	0.86	Moderate
Productivity	2.85	0.86	Moderate
Teachers' Effectiveness	3.30	0.70	High
Grand Mean	2.96	0.77	Moderate

Effectiveness was measured using five indicators. Table 2 presents the summary statistics School effectiveness was found to be moderate overall (M = 2.96), with strengths in leadership and teachers' effectiveness while efficiency, accountability and productivity were less consistent. These results suggest that while schools' benefit from competent leadership and dedicated teachers, systemic and operational challenges persist.

4.3 Hypothesis 1: There is no significant relationship between teachers motivation and school effectiveness.

To test this hypothesis, a Pearson correlation was conducted.

Table 3: Correlation between Teachers Motivation and School Effectiveness

Variables	r	p-value
Teachers Motivation & School Effectiveness	0.345	0.000

Based on this table, there is a moderate, positive, and statistically significant correlation between teachers motivation and school effectiveness ($r = 0.345$, $p < 0.05$). Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected, confirming that motivated teachers are significantly more likely to contribute to effective school performance. This finding is consistent with Ibechukwu (2017), who found similar correlations in Nigerian schools.

4.4 Hypothesis 2: There is no significant difference in the motivation-effectiveness relationship based on gender.

Table 4: Fisher Z-Test for Gender Differences

Gender	r	Z'	Z-value	Z-critical
Male	0.478	0.5230		
Female	0.290	0.2986	1.254	1.96

Since the calculated Z (1.254) is less than the critical Z (1.96), the null hypothesis is retained. There is no significant gender-based difference in the relationship between teachers motivation and school effectiveness, aligning with Uyanne et al. (2020).

4.5 Hypothesis 3: There is no significant difference in the motivation-effectiveness relationship based on years of experience.

Table 5: Fisher Z-Test for Experience Differences

Experience	r	Z'	Z-value	Z-critical
≤ 5 Years	-0.075	-0.0738		
> 5 Years	0.450	0.4847	2.581	1.96

With $Z = 2.581 > 1.96$, the null hypothesis is rejected. This indicates a significant difference based on experience, with more experienced teachers showing a stronger motivation-effectiveness link. This confirms research by Aina and Olanipekun (2015) that experienced teachers contribute more effectively to student achievement.

4.6 Hypothesis 4: There is no significant difference in the motivation-effectiveness relationship based on classroom size.

Table 6: Fisher Z-Test for Experience Differences

Experience	r	Z'	Z-value	Z-critical
≤ 5 Years	-0.075	-0.0738		
> 5 Years	0.450	0.4847	2.581	1.96

$Z = 2.518 > 1.96$ indicates a significant difference, meaning classroom size moderates the relationship.

Smaller classes are associated with stronger motivation-effectiveness links, echoing findings by Halbach et al. (2001) and Obiakor & Oguejiofor (2020).

4.7 Hypothesis 5: There is no significant difference in the motivation-effectiveness relationship based on school location.

Table 7: Fisher Z-Test for School Location Differences

Location	r	Z'	Z-value	Z-critical
Urban	0.362	0.3769		
Rural	0.303	0.3095	0.411	1.96

$Z = 0.411 < 1.96$, so the null hypothesis is retained. There is no significant difference in the motivation-effectiveness relationship based on school location. This aligns with findings by Darma (2017) and Mosha (2014), which suggest that motivation can be strong in both urban and rural settings when conditions are right.

5. DISCUSSION

The findings of this paper affirm the critical role of teachers motivation in determining school effectiveness within public secondary schools in Edo South Senatorial District. The moderate levels of both teachers motivation and school effectiveness suggest that while foundational supports exist, there is room for strategic improvement in areas such as salary, work conditions, and resource allocation. The significant positive correlation between teachers motivation and school effectiveness ($r = 0.345$, $p < 0.05$) substantiates the theoretical assertions of Maslow (1970) and Herzberg (1966), who emphasized that human motivation directly influences job performance.

Teachers who feel valued through interpersonal support, professional development, and appropriate compensation are more likely to engage fully in the instructional process and foster environments conducive to learning (Ryan & Deci, 2000; Hicks, 2011). Interestingly, the study revealed no significant differences in motivation-effectiveness correlations based on gender. This supports the view of Anderson (2011) and Uyanne et al. (2020), who noted that teacher effectiveness is not inherently gendered but shaped more by access to resources and support systems.

However, teaching experience emerged as a significant moderating factor, with more experienced teachers showing a stronger correlation between motivation and school effectiveness. This aligns with Aina and Olanipekun (2015), who emphasized the compounded benefits of professional knowledge and classroom management skills accumulated over time. Similarly, classroom size influenced the strength of the motivation-effectiveness relationship, confirming that overcrowded classrooms may dilute teacher motivation by increasing stress and workload (Halbach et al., 2001; Obiakor & Oguejiofor, 2020). On the contrary, school location did not produce significant differences, suggesting that with equitable motivation strategies, teachers in both urban and rural settings can perform effectively echoing findings from Darma (2017).

These findings collectively highlight that teachers motivation is a multi-dimensional construct influenced by personal, institutional, and contextual variables, all of which must be strategically addressed to optimize school outcomes.

6. CONCLUSION

This study concludes that teachers motivation is a significant determinant of school effectiveness in public secondary schools in Edo South Senatorial District, Nigeria. Although both motivation and effectiveness levels were found to be moderate, the positive correlation between the two indicates that increasing teachers motivation could lead to measurable gains in educational quality.

Variables such as teaching experience and class size significantly influenced the motivation-effectiveness link, while gender and school location did not. Therefore, policies aimed at enhancing school performance must consider not only blanket incentives but also targeted interventions addressing classroom realities and teacher career development stages.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. Enhance Teachers Incentive Structures: The government and school management boards should ensure prompt promotion, regular salary reviews, and recognition systems that acknowledge teachers contributions.
2. Invest in Professional Development: Teachers should have regular access to training and retraining programs that align with current pedagogical trends and curriculum updates (Herzberg, 2015).

3. Reduce Class Sizes: Particularly in urban schools, strategies should be implemented to maintain optimal classroom sizes (maximum 40 students as per ANCOPSS, 2007) to enhance motivation and management.

4. Support Early-Career Teachers: Targeted support and mentorship should be given to less experienced teachers to help bridge the performance gap and reduce early-career attrition (Frase & Sorenson, 1992).

5. Equitable Resource Allocation Across Locations: Despite no location-based differences found in this study, continuous efforts should be made to equip rural schools with comparable infrastructure and access to educational resources.

6. Strengthen Interpersonal and Institutional Relationships:

School leaders should foster a collaborative environment through participatory leadership and staff inclusion in decision-making processes, which are shown to boost morale (Ondigo, 2011).

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