

MOTIVATION: A TOOL FOR ACHIEVING TEACHERS' EFFECTIVENESS IN NIGERIAN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS

¹Abogunrin Adenike Bridget, ²Yusuf Suleiman & ³Oniyeye Nusirat Omofolakemi

^{1&2}Department of Educational Management and Counselling, Faculty of Education, Al-Hikmah University, Nigeria

³Department of Educational Management, Faculty of Educational Science and Leadership, Kwara State University of Education, Nigeria

Email: oniye.no@kwasued.edu.ng

Abstract

Teacher effectiveness is a critical determinant of educational quality and student outcomes in secondary schools. In Nigeria, public secondary schools face numerous challenges, including inadequate resources, large class sizes, and systemic inefficiencies, which often compromise instructional quality. This study examines motivation as a tool for enhancing teachers' effectiveness in Nigerian public secondary schools. Drawing on Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, and Vroom's Expectancy Theory, the paper explores how intrinsic and extrinsic motivational factors influence teachers' professional commitment, classroom management, instructional competence, and overall performance. The study identifies key dimensions of teacher motivation, including financial incentives, professional development, recognition, social support, autonomy, and welfare, that collectively impact teacher engagement and instructional quality. Conversely, lack of motivation results in low morale, absenteeism, and poor student learning outcomes. The paper further highlights the role of school leadership, organizational support, and structured reward systems in sustaining motivation. Based on these insights, recommendations are provided for policymakers and school administrators to design comprehensive motivational strategies that address both intrinsic and extrinsic needs of teachers. The findings underscore that enhancing teacher motivation is not only critical for improving teacher effectiveness but also for achieving broader educational goals in Nigeria's public secondary schools.

Keywords: Teacher Motivation, Teacher Effectiveness, Public Secondary Schools, Nigeria, Intrinsic Motivation, Extrinsic Motivation

Introduction

Education remains one of the most powerful instruments for national development, social transformation, and economic advancement. Nations across the world invest heavily in education because it plays a critical role in human capital development and the preparation of skilled manpower required for sustainable development. Within the educational system, teachers constitute the most important human resource because they are directly responsible for translating educational policies, curriculum objectives, and national aspirations into meaningful learning experiences for students. Consequently, the effectiveness of teachers significantly determines the quality of education provided in schools and the level of students' academic achievement (UNESCO, 2021). Secondary education occupies a strategic position in the Nigerian education system as it serves as a bridge between basic and tertiary education. It prepares students for higher education, vocational training, and participation in the socio-economic development of society. Public secondary schools in Nigeria are particularly important because they provide access to education for a large proportion of the population. However, despite the strategic importance of secondary education, many public secondary schools in Nigeria continue to experience challenges that affect the quality of teaching and learning. Among these challenges are inadequate infrastructure, shortage of instructional materials, overcrowded classrooms, and poor teacher welfare conditions (Federal Ministry of Education, 2022).

Teachers play a pivotal role in addressing these challenges and ensuring that educational objectives are achieved. Teacher effectiveness is generally defined as the ability of teachers to facilitate students' learning through appropriate instructional strategies, classroom management skills, subject mastery, and professional commitment. Effective teachers are able to create engaging learning environments that promote students' participation, critical thinking, and academic achievement. Research has consistently demonstrated that teacher effectiveness is one of the most significant school-based factors influencing students' academic performance (Darling-Hammond et al., 2020).

Despite the critical role of teachers in educational development, the teaching profession in many developing countries faces numerous challenges that undermine teachers' effectiveness. In Nigeria, public secondary school teachers often operate under difficult working conditions characterized by irregular salary payments, limited promotion opportunities, heavy workload, and inadequate teaching resources. These challenges frequently lead to low morale, job dissatisfaction, and reduced productivity among teachers. When teachers feel undervalued or unsupported, their commitment to teaching responsibilities may decline, thereby affecting students' learning outcomes and overall school performance (Ogunode & Musa, 2023). One of the key factors that can enhance teachers' productivity and commitment is motivation. Motivation refers to the internal and external forces that stimulate individuals to initiate, sustain, and direct their behavior toward achieving specific goals. In the context of education, teacher motivation involves the various incentives, encouragement, and support mechanisms that influence teachers' willingness to perform their duties effectively. These incentives may be intrinsic, such as personal satisfaction and passion for teaching, or extrinsic, such as salary, promotion, recognition, and improved working conditions (Han & Yin, 2022).

Teacher motivation has been widely recognized as a critical determinant of teachers' effectiveness and overall educational quality. Motivated teachers are more likely to demonstrate commitment, creativity, and enthusiasm in their professional responsibilities. They are also more willing to adopt innovative teaching strategies, engage students in active learning, and invest additional effort in lesson preparation and instructional delivery. Conversely, low levels of motivation among teachers may result in absenteeism, reduced classroom engagement, and poor instructional practices (Toropova et al., 2021). In addition to financial incentives, non-monetary motivational factors such as professional development opportunities, participatory leadership, and supportive school climates also play an important role in enhancing teachers' motivation. Teachers who have access to continuous professional development programs are better equipped to improve their pedagogical skills and adapt to emerging educational trends. Furthermore, supportive leadership practices that involve teachers in decision-making processes can strengthen teachers' sense of belonging and professional commitment (Nguyen et al., 2022).

Despite the increasing recognition of teacher motivation as a critical factor in educational effectiveness, many Nigerian public secondary schools continue to experience significant motivational challenges. Teachers often complain about inadequate welfare packages, delayed promotions, and limited opportunities for professional growth. These challenges not only affect teachers' job satisfaction but also reduce their ability to perform their duties effectively. As a result, improving teacher motivation has become an important policy concern for educational administrators and government authorities. Although several studies have examined the relationship between teacher motivation and job performance in different educational contexts, there is still a need for further scholarly attention to how motivation functions as a strategic tool for enhancing teachers' effectiveness in Nigerian public secondary schools. In particular, more emphasis is needed on understanding the motivational factors that influence teachers' instructional practices and professional commitment within the Nigerian educational environment. Addressing this issue is important because teacher effectiveness remains a key determinant of educational quality and students'

academic success. Against this background, this paper examines motivation as a tool for achieving teachers' effectiveness in Nigerian public secondary schools. Specifically, the paper explores the concept of teacher motivation, its relationship with teachers' effectiveness, and the various motivational strategies that can enhance teachers' productivity and commitment in public secondary schools. By providing a comprehensive analysis of these issues, the study contributes to the ongoing discourse on improving teacher performance and strengthening the quality of secondary education in Nigeria.

Theoretical Framework

The conceptual understanding of teacher motivation and its impact on teacher effectiveness is grounded in several well-established motivational theories. This study adopts a multi-theoretical approach, integrating Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory (1943), Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory (1959), and Vroom's Expectancy Theory (1964), which collectively provide a robust framework for understanding how motivation influences teacher performance in Nigerian public secondary schools. Each theory offers unique insights into the internal and external factors that drive teachers' professional commitment, job satisfaction, and instructional effectiveness.

1. Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory posits that human motivation is driven by the fulfillment of hierarchical needs, ranging from physiological to self-actualization needs (Maslow, 1943). According to Maslow, individuals are motivated to satisfy lower-level needs before progressing to higher-level needs. In the context of teacher motivation, Maslow's theory provides a structured understanding of how different types of needs influence teachers' professional effectiveness.

1. **Physiological Needs:** These represent the basic requirements for survival, such as food, shelter, and financial compensation. In Nigerian public secondary schools, regular payment of salaries and provision of allowances are essential for meeting teachers' physiological needs. Teachers whose basic needs are unmet often experience stress and reduced focus, negatively affecting instructional quality (Ogunode & Musa, 2023).
2. **Safety Needs:** Teachers require job security, safe working conditions, and protection from arbitrary dismissal. Organizational policies that ensure stability and a secure working environment enhance teachers' motivation and willingness to perform effectively (Han & Yin, 2022).
3. **Social Needs:** The need for belonging and interpersonal relationships influences teachers' engagement with colleagues, students, and the broader school community. Supportive social interactions and collaborative school climates foster teacher commitment and morale (Toropova et al., 2021).
4. **Esteem Needs:** Recognition, respect, and professional appreciation fulfill teachers' esteem needs. Teachers who receive acknowledgment for their efforts and achievements are more likely to exhibit higher levels of commitment, innovation, and instructional effectiveness (Orimolade & Ojo, 2025).
5. **Self-Actualization Needs:** At the highest level, self-actualization involves the pursuit of personal growth, professional mastery, and fulfillment of one's potential. Teachers motivated by self-actualization engage in reflective practice, adopt innovative teaching strategies, and strive to improve student learning outcomes (Nguyen et al., 2022).

By applying Maslow's framework, school administrators and policymakers can design motivational strategies that address both basic and higher-level needs, thereby enhancing teachers' overall effectiveness in Nigerian public secondary schools.

2. Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory

Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory distinguishes between hygiene factors and motivators in influencing job satisfaction and performance (Herzberg, 1959). Hygiene factors are extrinsic conditions that prevent dissatisfaction but do not necessarily enhance motivation, while motivators are intrinsic factors that drive job satisfaction and performance.

1. **Hygiene Factors:** In the context of Nigerian public secondary schools, hygiene factors include salary, working conditions, administrative policies, and job security. Inadequate hygiene factors can lead to teacher dissatisfaction, absenteeism, and reduced instructional effectiveness (Ogunode & Musa, 2023). Ensuring regular salary payments, provision of teaching resources, and safe working environments addresses hygiene needs and minimizes demotivation.
2. **Motivators:** These are intrinsic factors that enhance job satisfaction and teacher engagement. Examples include recognition of achievement, opportunities for professional development, career advancement, and personal growth. Teachers who experience strong motivators demonstrate higher commitment, creativity in lesson delivery, and better classroom management skills (Han & Yin, 2022).

Herzberg's theory underscores the need for a balanced approach in motivating teachers. While addressing hygiene factors prevents dissatisfaction, implementing motivators enhances engagement and instructional performance. For Nigerian public secondary schools, the integration of both dimensions is essential to achieve sustainable teacher effectiveness.

3. Vroom's Expectancy Theory

Vroom's Expectancy Theory emphasizes that motivation is a function of individual expectations, the effort-performance relationship, and the performance-reward relationship (Vroom, 1964). According to this theory, teachers are motivated to perform effectively when they believe:

1. **Effort will lead to desired performance (Expectancy):** Teachers must perceive that their effort in preparing lessons, managing classrooms, and engaging students will lead to measurable performance outcomes (Toropova et al., 2021).
2. **Performance will result in rewards (Instrumentality):** Teachers are motivated when they believe that effective performance will lead to tangible rewards such as salary increments, promotion, recognition, or professional growth opportunities (Orimolade & Ojo, 2025).
3. **Rewards are valued (Valence):** The outcomes or rewards associated with performance must be desirable to the teacher. For example, teachers highly value timely payment, career advancement, and professional recognition (Oladimeji & Amoo, 2025).

In the Nigerian public secondary school context, Vroom's theory highlights the importance of aligning teachers' perceptions of effort and reward. Teachers are more likely to exhibit high performance and instructional effectiveness when school policies ensure that hard work and competence are rewarded meaningfully.

Concept of Motivation

Motivation is a fundamental concept in organizational management and educational administration, particularly in relation to employees' productivity, commitment, and job performance. In the educational sector, motivation plays a crucial role in determining the extent to which teachers perform their instructional duties effectively and contribute to students' academic success. Motivation generally refers to the internal and external forces that stimulate individuals to initiate, direct, and sustain behavior toward achieving specific goals. It explains why individuals choose to act in certain ways and the level of effort they exert in performing their tasks (Han & Yin, 2022). In the context of education, teacher motivation can be described as the process of stimulating and encouraging teachers to perform their professional responsibilities effectively. It involves the provision of incentives, support systems, and favorable working conditions that enhance teachers' willingness to commit their time, knowledge, and skills to the teaching profession. Teacher motivation is therefore an important determinant of teachers' job satisfaction, instructional performance, and professional commitment. According to Toropova et al. (2021), motivation significantly influences teachers' attitudes toward their work and their level of engagement in classroom activities.

Motivation in the teaching profession is particularly important because teaching requires high levels of dedication, emotional commitment, and intellectual engagement. Teachers are expected to perform multiple roles including classroom instruction, mentoring, counseling, curriculum implementation, and evaluation of students' learning outcomes. Without adequate motivation, teachers may experience job dissatisfaction, reduced enthusiasm, and low commitment to their professional responsibilities. Conversely, motivated teachers are more likely to demonstrate creativity, innovation, and persistence in facilitating students' learning (Nguyen et al., 2022). Scholars have categorized motivation into two major types: intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation. Intrinsic motivation refers to the internal desire to perform a task because it is personally rewarding or satisfying. In the teaching profession, intrinsic motivation occurs when teachers derive personal satisfaction from helping students learn, contributing to societal development, and achieving professional growth. Teachers who are intrinsically motivated often demonstrate strong passion for teaching and are committed to improving their instructional practices regardless of external rewards (Han & Yin, 2022). Extrinsic motivation, on the other hand, refers to the external incentives or rewards that influence individuals to perform certain tasks. These incentives may include salary, promotion, recognition, job security, and improved working conditions. In educational institutions, extrinsic motivational factors are often provided by school administrators and government authorities to encourage teachers to perform effectively. Adequate remuneration, promotion opportunities, and professional recognition are examples of extrinsic motivators that can enhance teachers' commitment and productivity in schools (Toropova et al., 2021). In the Nigerian educational context, both intrinsic and extrinsic motivational factors are essential for improving teachers' effectiveness. However, many public secondary school teachers face challenges related to inadequate extrinsic motivation. Issues such as irregular salary payments, delayed promotions, and lack of teaching resources often reduce teachers' morale and job satisfaction. Ogunode and Musa (2023) noted that poor teacher welfare and unfavorable working conditions are among the major factors affecting teachers' motivation in Nigerian public secondary schools.

Motivation is also closely associated with job satisfaction and professional commitment among teachers. When teachers are adequately motivated, they are more likely to demonstrate commitment to their teaching responsibilities, maintain positive relationships with students, and adopt innovative instructional strategies. Motivated teachers also show greater willingness to participate in professional development activities that enhance their knowledge and teaching skills (Nguyen et al., 2022). Another important dimension of motivation is the role of

leadership and organizational climate in influencing teachers' behavior. School administrators play a critical role in motivating teachers through supportive leadership practices, effective communication, and recognition of teachers' contributions. When school leaders create a positive and collaborative work environment, teachers tend to feel valued and respected, which increases their motivation and job performance. Research has shown that supportive leadership practices significantly influence teacher motivation and productivity in educational institutions (Darling-Hammond et al., 2020).

Furthermore, professional development opportunities also serve as an important motivational factor for teachers. Training programs, workshops, and seminars help teachers improve their pedagogical skills and adapt to emerging educational technologies. Teachers who receive continuous professional development are more confident in their teaching abilities and are better equipped to address the diverse learning needs of students. This, in turn, contributes to improved instructional quality and educational outcomes. Motivation also has significant implications for educational quality and institutional effectiveness. When teachers are motivated, they are more committed to achieving educational goals and ensuring that students receive quality instruction. Conversely, low levels of teacher motivation can result in absenteeism, reduced classroom engagement, and poor instructional delivery. Such conditions negatively affect students' academic achievement and the overall performance of schools. In contemporary educational research, motivation is increasingly recognized as a key factor in improving teacher performance and educational outcomes. Educational policymakers and administrators are therefore encouraged to develop effective motivational strategies that address both the intrinsic and extrinsic needs of teachers. These strategies may include improving teachers' welfare packages, providing opportunities for professional advancement, recognizing outstanding performance, and creating supportive working environments.

Concept of Teachers' Effectiveness

Teachers' effectiveness has emerged as a central construct in educational research because of its direct influence on student learning outcomes, school performance, and overall educational quality. In the simplest terms, teacher effectiveness refers to the ability of teachers to facilitate learning, manage classrooms efficiently, and achieve educational objectives. Effective teachers are those who can positively influence students' cognitive, social, and emotional development through strategic instructional practices, motivational approaches, and professional commitment (Darling-Hammond et al., 2020). Understanding teachers' effectiveness is crucial, particularly in developing countries like Nigeria, where educational quality is often compromised by systemic and institutional challenges. Teacher effectiveness is multidimensional, encompassing several aspects of professional practice. First, it includes instructional competence, which refers to a teacher's mastery of subject content and the ability to translate that knowledge into teachable lessons. Teachers must not only possess deep knowledge of their subjects but also use pedagogical strategies that align with students' cognitive abilities and learning styles. Research has shown that teachers with high instructional competence are more likely to engage students actively and promote higher-order thinking skills (Mccrary et al., 2022). In this regard, teacher effectiveness extends beyond mere content delivery; it involves the capacity to make learning meaningful, interactive, and applicable to students' lives.

Second, classroom management skills constitute a critical component of teacher effectiveness. An effective teacher is capable of organizing the classroom environment, maintaining discipline, and fostering a conducive atmosphere for learning. Classroom management involves not only enforcing rules but also building positive teacher-student relationships, encouraging collaborative learning, and minimizing disruptive behaviors. Toropova et al. (2021) found that teachers who exhibit strong classroom management skills experience higher job satisfaction and

improved student performance because learners are more engaged and attentive in well-managed learning environments.

Another essential element of teacher effectiveness is the ability to assess and respond to students' learning needs. Effective teachers employ formative and summative assessment strategies to monitor students' progress, provide constructive feedback, and adjust instructional methods accordingly. This adaptability ensures that teaching is responsive and tailored to diverse learner abilities. Recent studies emphasize that the alignment of assessment practices with instructional objectives is a hallmark of teacher effectiveness, as it promotes not only academic achievement but also student motivation and self-efficacy (Nguyen et al., 2022). Teacher effectiveness is also closely linked to professional commitment and continuous development. Effective teachers demonstrate dedication to their profession through reflective practice, engagement in professional development, and willingness to adopt innovative teaching strategies. In the Nigerian context, professional commitment is particularly important due to challenges such as large class sizes, limited resources, and systemic inefficiencies. Research indicates that teachers who engage in professional development activities, such as workshops, seminars, and peer mentoring, are more confident in their instructional abilities and more capable of achieving learning outcomes (Oladimeji & Amoo, 2025). The concept of teacher effectiveness cannot be separated from student outcomes. Students' academic performance, engagement, and overall development are often used as indicators of teachers' effectiveness. According to Abubakar (2024), teacher effectiveness is positively correlated with students' academic achievements, as effective teachers employ strategies that enhance understanding, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills. Moreover, effective teachers contribute to students' socio-emotional development by fostering positive learning environments, encouraging collaboration, and supporting students' psychological well-being. In this sense, teacher effectiveness transcends academic instruction to encompass holistic development of learners.

In addition to instructional and classroom competencies, teacher effectiveness is influenced by interpersonal skills and professional ethics. Effective teachers communicate clearly, demonstrate empathy, and build trusting relationships with students, colleagues, and parents. Ethical conduct, including fairness, integrity, and respect for students' rights, enhances teachers' credibility and authority in the classroom. Studies suggest that students respond more positively to teachers who exhibit ethical and interpersonal competence, which in turn improves learning outcomes and overall school effectiveness (Han & Yin, 2022). Teacher effectiveness is also context-dependent. In developing countries like Nigeria, factors such as infrastructural adequacy, availability of teaching materials, school leadership, and socio-economic context significantly influence teachers' ability to perform effectively. Ogunode and Musa (2023) highlighted that teachers' effectiveness is compromised when schools lack basic instructional resources, experience overcrowding, or operate under unsupportive leadership. Conversely, supportive school climates, including participatory decision-making, access to resources, and recognition of teacher achievements, enhance teachers' performance and professional commitment. This suggests that teachers' effectiveness is not solely a function of individual competence but also depends on organizational and systemic support. Moreover, research has demonstrated that motivation and teacher effectiveness are strongly interrelated. Teachers who are adequately motivated through financial incentives, recognition, promotion, and supportive work environments tend to perform better in their instructional duties (Orimolade & Ojo, 2025). Motivation acts as a catalyst for teacher engagement, persistence, and creativity, which are essential for effective teaching. For example, in Nigerian public secondary schools, teachers who receive timely remuneration, professional development opportunities, and recognition of their efforts show higher levels of commitment and instructional quality than those who lack these motivational supports (Oladimeji & Amoo, 2025).

Teacher effectiveness can also be evaluated through specific performance indicators. These include lesson planning and preparation, instructional delivery, assessment of learning outcomes, classroom management, student engagement, and collaboration with colleagues and parents. According to Darling-Hammond et al. (2020), effective teachers consistently demonstrate high-quality instructional practices, use assessment data to inform teaching, and create inclusive learning environments that cater to diverse student needs. These indicators provide measurable criteria for evaluating teacher performance and identifying areas for professional improvement. The role of teacher effectiveness in achieving national educational goals cannot be overemphasized. In Nigeria, public secondary schools are expected to equip students with knowledge, skills, and competencies necessary for higher education, vocational pursuits, and societal contribution. Teachers' effectiveness is central to this process because it directly affects the quality of instruction, student learning outcomes, and overall school performance. Educational policymakers have increasingly recognized that improving teacher effectiveness is a strategic means of enhancing educational quality and promoting sustainable development (UNESCO, 2021).

Types of Teacher Motivation

Motivation is widely acknowledged as a crucial determinant of teachers' effectiveness in educational settings. Understanding the types of motivation is critical because different motivational strategies yield different outcomes in terms of teachers' commitment, performance, and professional satisfaction. Scholars generally categorize motivation into intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation, though hybrid or integrated approaches are often observed in educational contexts (Han & Yin, 2022). Both types of motivation are essential for fostering teacher engagement and enhancing instructional quality, particularly in challenging environments such as Nigerian public secondary schools.

1. Intrinsic Motivation: Intrinsic motivation refers to the internal drive that compels individuals to perform tasks because they find them inherently satisfying, enjoyable, or meaningful. Teachers who are intrinsically motivated engage in teaching for personal fulfillment rather than for external rewards such as salary or promotion (Deci & Ryan, 2020). This type of motivation is closely linked to passion for teaching, commitment to student learning, and the personal satisfaction derived from professional accomplishment.

Characteristics of Intrinsic Motivation in Teachers

Several key characteristics define intrinsic motivation among teachers:

1. **Passion for Teaching:** Teachers are motivated by a genuine interest in facilitating student learning. They view teaching not merely as a job but as a vocation that allows them to make a meaningful contribution to society (Nguyen et al., 2022).
2. **Desire for Professional Growth:** Intrinsically motivated teachers seek opportunities to develop their pedagogical skills, participate in professional learning communities, and improve their instructional practices (Toropova et al., 2021).
3. **Commitment to Student Success:** Such teachers are driven by a personal desire to see their students succeed academically, socially, and emotionally. They take proactive steps to address students' learning challenges, adapt their teaching strategies, and provide mentorship (Oladimeji & Amoo, 2025).

4. **Autonomy and Self-Determination:** Intrinsic motivation thrives when teachers have the autonomy to make instructional decisions, design lessons creatively, and implement strategies aligned with students' needs (Han & Yin, 2022).

Impact of Intrinsic Motivation on Teacher Effectiveness

Intrinsic motivation has a profound impact on teacher effectiveness. Teachers who are internally motivated tend to be more innovative in lesson delivery, demonstrate higher classroom engagement, and maintain a positive learning environment. Studies indicate that intrinsic motivation contributes to job satisfaction, resilience, and long-term professional commitment, all of which are essential for sustaining quality instruction in challenging contexts (Darling-Hammond et al., 2020). In Nigerian public secondary schools, intrinsic motivation often becomes a critical factor in the absence of adequate extrinsic incentives. Teachers who are intrinsically motivated may continue to perform effectively despite systemic challenges such as poor remuneration, limited resources, and high workload (Ogunode & Musa, 2023). This highlights the importance of fostering intrinsic motivation through professional recognition, autonomy, and opportunities for meaningful engagement in school activities.

2. Extrinsic Motivation: Extrinsic motivation refers to the drive to perform tasks to achieve external rewards or avoid negative consequences. In educational settings, extrinsic motivators are typically provided by school administrators, government authorities, or institutional policies and may include salary, promotion, recognition, job security, and material incentives (Deci & Ryan, 2020). While intrinsic motivation is internal and self-driven, extrinsic motivation is contingent on factors external to the teacher.

Forms of Extrinsic Motivation

Extrinsic motivation can manifest in several forms in the teaching profession:

1. **Financial Incentives:** Regular salary, bonuses, and allowances serve as strong extrinsic motivators. Adequate compensation not only attracts qualified teachers but also sustains their commitment to professional responsibilities (Orimolade & Ojo, 2025).
2. **Career Advancement:** Opportunities for promotion, leadership positions, and recognition in professional circles enhance teachers' extrinsic motivation. Teachers are more likely to strive for excellence when they perceive clear pathways for career growth (Nguyen et al., 2022).
3. **Recognition and Awards:** Public acknowledgment of teachers' efforts through awards, commendations, or professional accolades boosts morale and encourages continued performance (Toropova et al., 2021).
4. **Supportive Working Conditions:** Provision of adequate teaching resources, manageable class sizes, and safe work environments contributes to extrinsic motivation by reducing job stress and enhancing teachers' capacity to perform effectively (Ogunode & Musa, 2023).
5. **Job Security:** Assurance of continued employment and protection against arbitrary dismissal can motivate teachers to maintain consistent engagement in their professional duties (Han & Yin, 2022).

Impact of Extrinsic Motivation on Teacher Effectiveness

Extrinsic motivation has been shown to influence teachers' performance significantly. Teachers who receive adequate compensation, recognition, and professional support are more likely to demonstrate high levels of productivity, reliability, and instructional quality. In Nigerian public secondary schools, extrinsic motivators are particularly critical given the prevalence of systemic challenges such as delayed salary payments, insufficient teaching resources, and poor administrative support (Oladimeji & Amoo, 2025). Research shows that extrinsic motivation not only enhances teachers' classroom performance but also reduces turnover, absenteeism, and burnout, thereby sustaining the overall quality of education (Orimolade & Ojo, 2025).

3. Integrated or Hybrid Motivation: While intrinsic and extrinsic motivation are often discussed separately, contemporary research suggests that effective teacher motivation typically involves a combination of both types. Hybrid motivation recognizes that teachers may be internally driven by personal passion and commitment, yet simultaneously influenced by external rewards and institutional support (Deci & Ryan, 2020).

Significance of Hybrid Motivation

Integrated motivational strategies are particularly effective in contexts where teachers face multiple challenges. For example, in Nigerian public secondary schools, teachers may continue to demonstrate intrinsic commitment to students' learning but require extrinsic incentives such as salary enhancements, promotion opportunities, and recognition to sustain long-term performance. A study by Han and Yin (2022) emphasizes that combining intrinsic and extrinsic motivational strategies produces higher levels of teacher engagement, classroom effectiveness, and professional satisfaction compared to relying solely on one type of motivation.

Practical Implications

Educational policymakers and school administrators can leverage hybrid motivational strategies to optimize teacher performance. This may include:

1. Providing competitive remuneration and allowances to address extrinsic needs.
2. Offering professional development programs, mentoring, and autonomy in lesson planning to enhance intrinsic satisfaction.
3. Recognizing and rewarding exemplary teaching practices to reinforce both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation (Toropova et al., 2021).

Dimensions of Teacher Motivation in Nigerian Public Secondary Schools

Teacher motivation is a multidimensional construct that influences performance, job satisfaction, and professional commitment in educational settings. Motivation is not a singular phenomenon; it encompasses several interrelated dimensions that collectively determine teachers' engagement and effectiveness. Understanding these dimensions is particularly important in the context of Nigerian public secondary schools, where teachers often operate under challenging conditions such as inadequate remuneration, poor infrastructure, and limited access to professional development opportunities. The main dimensions of teacher motivation can be categorized as financial, professional, social, psychological, and organizational (Han & Yin, 2022; Oladimeji & Amoo, 2025).

1. Financial Motivation: Financial motivation refers to the extrinsic incentives related to salary, allowances, bonuses, and other monetary rewards provided to teachers. Adequate remuneration is a critical determinant of teachers' commitment, particularly in public secondary schools in Nigeria, where many teachers face economic hardships due to delayed salaries and low pay. Studies indicate that financial incentives are strongly associated with teachers' willingness to remain in the profession, attend work consistently, and invest effort in instructional activities (Orimolade & Ojo, 2025). Financial motivation also affects teachers' perception of fairness and value. When teachers believe their compensation aligns with their workload and professional expertise, they are more likely to demonstrate high job satisfaction and dedication to teaching responsibilities. Conversely, inadequate financial motivation often leads to absenteeism, low productivity, and a decline in instructional quality (Ogunode & Musa, 2023). Therefore, financial incentives serve not only as a means of meeting basic needs but also as a catalyst for improved teacher effectiveness.

2. Professional Motivation: Professional motivation is related to career growth, recognition, and opportunities for skill development. Teachers who have access to continuous professional development programs, workshops, and training sessions are more confident and competent in delivering lessons. Professional motivation also includes opportunities for promotion, leadership roles, and involvement in decision-making processes within schools (Nguyen et al., 2022). In Nigerian public secondary schools, professional motivation is often limited due to systemic challenges such as slow promotion processes, inadequate training facilities, and lack of structured professional development programs. Research shows that teachers who perceive opportunities for career advancement and skill acquisition are more likely to engage in reflective practice, innovate instructional strategies, and maintain high levels of classroom engagement (Toropova et al., 2021). Consequently, professional motivation directly enhances teacher effectiveness and student learning outcomes.

3. Social Motivation: Social motivation refers to the influence of interpersonal relationships and social recognition on teachers' performance. Teachers are often motivated by the desire for positive interactions with colleagues, students, parents, and the community. A supportive school environment that fosters collaboration, teamwork, and mutual respect significantly enhances teachers' morale and productivity (Han & Yin, 2022). Recognition from colleagues, school leaders, and the community plays a pivotal role in motivating teachers. In Nigeria, teachers who receive social acknowledgment for their contributions, such as awards, commendations, or public appreciation—exhibit higher levels of job satisfaction and commitment. Social motivation also includes the sense of belonging and acceptance within the professional community, which strengthens teachers' emotional attachment to the school and their professional identity (Abubakar, 2024).

4. Psychological Motivation: Psychological motivation pertains to the internal factors that influence teachers' engagement and commitment, including personal satisfaction, self-efficacy, and intrinsic interest in teaching. Intrinsic motivation is particularly important because it drives teachers to perform tasks for personal fulfillment rather than external rewards (Deci & Ryan, 2020). Teachers with high psychological motivation derive satisfaction from helping students succeed, achieving personal teaching goals, and contributing to societal development. They are more likely to persist in the face of challenges, demonstrate resilience, and maintain high levels of instructional quality. In the Nigerian context, where external challenges such as inadequate resources and large class sizes are common, psychological motivation serves as a critical buffer, enabling teachers to sustain effectiveness despite systemic constraints (Oladimeji & Amoo, 2025).

5. Organizational Motivation: Organizational motivation refers to the extent to which the school environment, leadership, and policies support teachers' professional engagement and performance. Key organizational factors include leadership style, school climate, administrative support, and availability of teaching resources. Research has shown that supportive leadership, characterized by participatory decision-making, recognition of teachers' contributions, and effective communication, enhances teacher motivation and professional commitment (Toropova et al., 2021). In Nigerian public secondary schools, organizational motivation is often constrained by inadequate administrative support, poor infrastructure, and limited access to teaching materials. Studies indicate that teachers in well-organized schools with adequate resources and supportive leadership exhibit higher levels of motivation, classroom management skills, and instructional effectiveness compared to those in poorly organized environments (Ogunode & Musa, 2023). Organizational motivation also includes the provision of a safe and conducive work environment, which reduces stress and fosters teacher engagement.

6. Recognition and Reward Systems: Recognition and reward systems are closely linked to both social and professional motivation. Teachers who are acknowledged for their performance through awards, promotions, or professional recognition experience enhanced motivation and satisfaction. Effective recognition strategies include teacher-of-the-month programs, professional accolades, performance-based bonuses, and public commendations (Han & Yin, 2022). In Nigerian secondary schools, recognition and reward systems are often underdeveloped, which can demotivate teachers and negatively affect instructional quality. Research by Orimolade and Ojo (2025) emphasizes that reward systems not only incentivize performance but also create a culture of excellence, encouraging teachers to innovate, collaborate, and maintain high professional standards.

7. Autonomy and Empowerment: Autonomy and empowerment refer to teachers' ability to make instructional and professional decisions without excessive external control. Teachers who have autonomy in curriculum delivery, lesson planning, and classroom management tend to exhibit higher intrinsic motivation and professional satisfaction (Deci & Ryan, 2020). Empowered teachers are more likely to adopt creative teaching strategies, personalize learning experiences, and engage students effectively. In the Nigerian context, limited autonomy due to centralized administrative structures often undermines teacher motivation. Providing teachers with professional discretion and opportunities to influence school policies has been shown to enhance both intrinsic motivation and overall effectiveness (Nguyen et al., 2022). Autonomy therefore serves as both a motivational dimension and a mechanism for fostering innovation and accountability in teaching.

8. Work-Life Balance and Welfare: Teachers' welfare, including work-life balance, health benefits, and supportive working conditions, is an essential motivational dimension. Teachers who can balance professional responsibilities with personal needs experience lower stress levels and higher job satisfaction. In Nigerian public secondary schools, excessive workload, large class sizes, and administrative burdens often disrupt work-life balance, negatively impacting motivation and effectiveness (Ogunode & Musa, 2023). Instituting welfare programs, counseling services, and flexible work arrangements can improve teacher well-being, which in turn enhances instructional quality and classroom engagement. Work-life balance is particularly critical in sustaining long-term motivation and preventing burnout among teachers.

Conclusion

Motivation remains a fundamental tool for enhancing teachers' effectiveness in Nigerian public secondary schools. Teachers play a critical role in shaping students' academic achievement and the overall quality of education; however, their performance largely depends on the level of motivation they receive. Both intrinsic and extrinsic

motivational factors, such as professional recognition, supportive leadership, opportunities for professional development, timely remuneration, and conducive working conditions, significantly influence teachers' commitment, instructional delivery, and classroom management. When teachers feel valued and supported, they demonstrate greater dedication, creativity, and enthusiasm in performing their responsibilities. Conversely, inadequate motivation often results in low morale, reduced productivity, and poor educational outcomes. Therefore, educational policymakers, school administrators, and government agencies must prioritize effective motivational strategies that address teachers' welfare, professional growth, and workplace environment. Strengthening teacher motivation will ultimately enhance teacher effectiveness, improve instructional quality, and contribute to the overall development of Nigeria's secondary education system.

Recommendations

Based on the review of literature, theoretical insights, and empirical evidence, the following recommendations are proposed to enhance teacher motivation and effectiveness in Nigerian public secondary schools:

1. Government and school authorities should ensure timely payment of salaries, allowances, and other financial incentives to address teachers' physiological and safety needs. This will reduce absenteeism, enhance job satisfaction, and improve instructional performance.
2. Schools should implement structured training programs, workshops, and seminars that enhance teachers' pedagogical skills and subject knowledge. Professional development opportunities foster intrinsic motivation and self-actualization, which directly improve teaching effectiveness.
3. Teachers' contributions should be acknowledged through awards, commendations, promotions, and other professional accolades. Recognition serves as both an intrinsic and extrinsic motivator, encouraging sustained commitment and excellence.
4. School administrators should adopt participatory leadership styles, provide adequate teaching resources, and maintain a supportive and safe work environment. A positive school climate promotes teacher engagement, motivation, and instructional quality.
5. Teachers should be granted professional autonomy in curriculum delivery, lesson planning, and classroom management. Empowering teachers enhances intrinsic motivation, fosters innovation, and strengthens accountability.
6. Policies that support teachers' physical and mental well-being, including manageable workloads and counseling services, will reduce burnout and sustain motivation for effective teaching.
7. Effort-performance-reward linkages should be transparent and consistent. Teachers are more motivated when they perceive that their dedication and competence are directly rewarded, strengthening performance and professional commitment.

References

- Abubakar, F. (2024). Correlation between teacher motivation, remuneration and student outcomes in Nigeria, with a focus on public versus private educational institutions. *African Journal of Education and Practice*. Retrieved from <https://iprjb.org/journals/AJEP/article/view/3029>
- Darling-Hammond, L., Flook, L., Cook-Harvey, C., Barron, B., & Osher, D. (2020). Implications for educational practice of the science of learning and development. *Applied Developmental Science*, 24(2), 97–140. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10888691.2018.1537791>
- Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (2020). *Self-determination theory: Basic psychological needs in motivation, development, and wellness*. New York: Guilford Press.
- Federal Ministry of Education. (2022). *Education sector analysis report for Nigeria*. Abuja: Federal Government of Nigeria.
- Han, J., & Yin, H. (2022). Teacher motivation: Definition, research development and implications for teachers. *Cogent Education*, 9(1), 1–17. <https://doi.org/10.1080/2331186X.2022.2031384>
- Herzberg, F. (1959). *The motivation to work* (2nd ed.). New York: Wiley.
- Maslow, A. H. (1943). A theory of human motivation. *Psychological Review*, 50(4), 370–396. <https://doi.org/10.1037/h0054346>
- Mccrary, S., Tichenor, M., & Gebreyesus, T. (2022). Teacher instructional competence and student engagement: Evidence from secondary schools. *International Journal of Educational Research*, 115, 102091. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijer.2022.102091>
- Nguyen, T. D., Pham, L. D., Crouch, M., & Springer, M. G. (2022). The correlates of teacher motivation and commitment in developing countries. *Educational Research Review*, 36, 100449. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.edurev.2022.100449>
- Ogunode, N. J., & Musa, A. (2023). Challenges affecting teachers' job performance in Nigerian public secondary schools. *International Journal of Educational Policy Research*, 10(2), 45–55. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijep.2023.45>
- Oladimeji, R. M., & Amoo, R. O. (2025). Teachers' motivation and classroom effectiveness in public senior secondary schools in Kwara State, Nigeria. *Al-Hikmah Journal of Education*, 12(1), 75–88.
- Orimolade, A. O., & Ojo, E. J. (2025). Motivational incentives and teachers' job performance in secondary schools in Southwest Nigeria. *International Journal of Research and Innovation in Social Science*, 9(3), 112–123.
- Toropova, A., Myrberg, E., & Johansson, S. (2021). Teacher job satisfaction: The importance of school working conditions and teacher characteristics. *Educational Review*, 73(1), 71–97. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00131911.2020.1761459>

UNESCO. (2021). *Teachers at the heart of education recovery*. Paris: UNESCO. Retrieved from <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000376996>

Vroom, V. H. (1964). *Work and motivation*. New York: Wiley.