

Teachers' Motivation and Classroom Effectiveness in Public Senior Secondary Schools in Kwara State, Nigeria

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Abstract

This study investigates the impact of teacher motivation on classroom effectiveness in public senior secondary schools in Kwara State, Nigeria. It identifies the key factors influencing teacher motivation, examines its relationship with classroom performance, and proposes strategies for improvement. The study is guided by Herzberg's Motivation-Hygiene Theory and uses a descriptive survey design, 180 respondents from 15 public schools were selected, and data were gathered through a structured questionnaire. The descriptive statistics analysis of the data revealed that salary adequacy, work environment, and availability of teaching resources significantly affect teacher motivation. High motivation was found to correlate strongly with effective teaching practices, innovative methods, and improved classroom management. Based on the findings, recommendations include enhancing teacher welfare, providing adequate teaching resources, offering professional development, and promoting supportive leadership. The study underscores the critical need to prioritise teacher motivation in policy and school administration to improve educational outcomes in Kwara State.

Keywords: Teacher Motivation, Classroom Effectiveness, Public Secondary Schools, Educational Outcomes, Work Environment

Introduction

The effectiveness of education systems around the world largely hinges on the performance and dedication of teachers. In Nigeria, particularly in Kwara State, public senior secondary schools face significant challenges that can impede educational outcomes. One of the critical factors influencing these outcomes is the motivation of teachers. According to Akani, Gbolahan & Ukah (2019), motivated teachers are essential for fostering a conducive learning environment, enhancing student engagement, and improving academic performance.

Teacher motivation refers to the level of energy, commitment, and creativity that educators bring to their work. It is influenced by both intrinsic factors, such as personal passion for teaching and professional satisfaction, and extrinsic factors, including salary, working conditions, and administrative support (Ololube, 2019). Several studies have explored how these factors shape teacher performance. For example, Ololube

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(2019) found that salary satisfaction, working conditions, professional development opportunities, and administrative support significantly influence motivation among teachers in Nigeria.

In many public schools across the country, teachers often encounter demotivating conditions such as delayed salary payments, insufficient teaching resources, and overcrowded classrooms. Egwu (2015) emphasised that these factors negatively affect teachers' morale and instructional quality, thereby weakening classroom effectiveness. In line with this, Abubakar (2022) examined the effects of organisational culture and leadership styles on teacher motivation, concluding that supportive leadership and a conducive work environment are crucial for enhancing motivation and improving classroom dynamics.

Ohamobi et al. (2024) noted that the issue of teachers' non commitment in their job seems to have been a source of worry not only to principals', but to the society at large and needs to be addressed to ensure the attainment of school set goals and development of the society. Remuneration is critical and unless addressed with utmost urgency it can further degenerate to collapse of educational system. Despite these documented challenges, existing literature often focused on remuneration without exploring their combined effect on teachers' job commitment in public secondary schools. This problem underscores the need for comprehensive research to examine how these factors interact to influence teacher commitment. Therefore, this study sought to examine teachers' motivation as a correlate of teachers' classroom effectiveness in public secondary schools in Kwara State.

In Kwara State, the situation reflects these broader national trends. Schools are often under-resourced, and teachers may not receive the necessary support and incentives to sustain high motivation levels. This lack of motivation can lead to poor teaching practices, reduced student engagement, and lower academic performance. The National Policy on Education (2014) also recognises these concerns, advocating for improved teacher welfare and professional development to meet national educational goals. Agogbua and Agu, (2021), applying Maslow's hierarchy of needs, further suggest that teachers' basic and professional needs must be met to achieve optimal performance. However, the unique socio-economic and institutional context in Kwara State demands a more localised examination of these issues.

Despite the growing body of research on teacher motivation, gaps remain in understanding how these challenges play out specifically in Kwara State's public senior secondary schools. This study, therefore, seeks to investigate the impact of teacher motivation on classroom effectiveness in this context. It aims to explore the key motivational factors affecting teachers, assess how these factors influence classroom practices and student achievement, and propose practical strategies for enhancing motivation and, consequently, educational outcomes.

Statement of the Problem

Teacher motivation is a key factor in ensuring quality education and improving student performance. However, in public senior secondary schools in Kwara State, Nigeria, declining teacher motivation has become a growing concern. Despite various policy efforts to enhance the educational system, many teachers continue to experience low motivation due to inadequate salaries, poor working conditions, limited professional development opportunities, and insufficient administrative support. These challenges

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negatively impact classroom effectiveness, as unmotivated teachers are less likely to adopt innovative teaching methods, provide additional student support, or maintain consistent classroom engagement. Research has shown a significant link between teacher motivation and student achievement, indicating that the current decline in teacher motivation may contribute to poor academic performance in public schools.

Several factors contribute to low teacher motivation, including delayed salary payments, lack of teaching resources, large class sizes, and limited career growth opportunities.

These issues create frustration among teachers, reducing their job satisfaction and effectiveness in the classroom. Addressing this problem is essential to improving the quality of education in Kwara State. Therefore, this study aimed to investigate the causes of low teacher motivation and assess its impact on classroom effectiveness.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study is to discuss the impact of teachers' motivation on classroom effectiveness in public senior secondary schools in Kwara State, Nigeria. Specifically, the study aims to:

- i. Identify the key factors influencing teacher motivation in public senior secondary schools in Kwara State.
- ii. Examine the relationship between teacher motivation and classroom effectiveness.
- iii. Recommend strategies to enhance teacher motivation and improve classroom effectiveness.

Research Question

Based on the objectives outlined, the following research questions will guide the study:

- i. What are the key factors influencing teacher motivation in public senior secondary schools in Kwara State?
- ii. What is the relationship between teacher motivation and classroom effectiveness?
- iii. What strategies can be recommended to enhance teacher motivation and improve classroom effectiveness in public senior secondary schools in Kwara State?

Literature Review

Teacher Motivation

Teacher motivation refers to the internal and external factors that influence a teacher's willingness to engage with their teaching duties. Motivation can come from within (intrinsic) or from outside rewards (extrinsic). Intrinsic motivation involves personal growth, passion for teaching, and the joy of student success, while extrinsic motivation includes salary, recognition, job security, and working conditions (Ryan & Deci, 2020). According to Akinyele (2020), teachers who are highly motivated tend to show more commitment, creativity, and passion in their work.

Motivation helps teachers overcome the daily stress and demands of the profession. When teachers feel appreciated, respected, and well-compensated, they are more likely to stay in the profession and perform at a high level (Ololube, 2021). Motivation also leads to positive teacher-student relationships and increased engagement in the

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classroom. However, lack of motivation can lead to absenteeism, burnout, and poor performance (Uchechi & Adebayo, 2019). Therefore, improving teacher motivation is essential for a functional and effective school system.

Classroom Effectiveness

Classroom effectiveness refers to a teacher's ability to manage the classroom, implement instructional strategies, and facilitate learning in a productive and inclusive environment. Effective teachers manage time well, set clear expectations, monitor student progress, and adapt lessons to meet learners' needs (Marzano & Marzano, 2003). They also create a supportive classroom culture where students feel safe and encouraged to participate (Stronge, 2018).

According to Darling-Hammond et al. (2020), classroom effectiveness is closely tied to student achievement. The more effective the teacher, the better the academic performance of the students. Effective classroom practices also help reduce disruptive behavior and promote equity and inclusion (Adu & Olatundun, 2021). Thus, classroom effectiveness depends not only on the teacher's skill but also on their attitude, preparedness, and motivation.

Relationship between Teacher Motivation and Classroom Effectiveness

There is a direct and positive relationship between teacher motivation and classroom effectiveness. A motivated teacher is more likely to use student-centered teaching strategies, maintain discipline, and strive for academic excellence (Ajayi & Olatunji, 2018). According to Yusuf and Adekunle (2019), teachers who feel motivated are better able to manage their time, deliver quality instruction, and engage students in meaningful learning. Motivated teachers also tend to have better classroom control and are more willing to take up professional development opportunities (Ofojebe & Ezugoh, 2019). These actions, in turn, improve their teaching performance and student learning outcomes. In contrast, poorly motivated teachers often exhibit low enthusiasm, lack of creativity, and minimal interaction with students, which hampers classroom effectiveness (Ugwuegbulam & Mbaegbu, 2020). Hence, teacher motivation serves as a strong predictor of classroom performance and effectiveness.

Obi and Okeke (2025) investigates how teachers' remuneration, specifically salary and allowance schemes affects job commitment in Anambra State's public secondary schools. Using a sample of 660 teachers from 267 schools, the researchers applied a correlational design and Pearson's correlation analysis. Findings revealed strong, positive, and significant correlations with teachers' salary and job commitment, $r = 0.872$ and allowance schemes and job commitment, $r = 0.867$. The validated instruments and reliability coefficients up to 0.899 support the study's credibility. Though comprehensive, it suggests future research could examine causality. This emphasizes the need for study on teachers' motivation and classroom effectiveness in Kwara State public secondary schools.

Empirical Review

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Several empirical studies have examined the relationship between teacher motivation and classroom effectiveness. Akinyele (2020), in a study of public secondary schools in Lagos State, found that teachers who received recognition and had good working conditions demonstrated better classroom control and student engagement. Similarly, Bello (2021) investigated schools in Kwara State and concluded that financial incentives, leadership support, and regular training significantly improved classroom performance.

Uchechi and Adebayo (2019) carried out a study in Enugu State and found that intrinsic motivation, such as personal fulfillment and commitment to student success, had a stronger impact on teacher effectiveness than extrinsic motivation. Ofojebe and Ezugoh (2019) also reported that motivated teachers in Anambra State showed higher levels of preparedness, student engagement, and academic outcomes.

In another study, Okeke and Okwuanaso (2022) analyzed motivation levels among secondary school teachers in Imo State. The findings revealed that teachers who were involved in decision-making processes were more motivated and more effective in class. The study concluded that participatory school leadership fosters both motivation and effectiveness.

Additionally, a large-scale study by UNESCO (2020) across sub-Saharan Africa highlighted that teacher motivation is a key factor in educational quality. The study emphasized the need for fair pay, continuous professional development, and recognition to keep teachers motivated and effective. These findings align with the view that teacher motivation is essential for delivering quality education and achieving classroom goals.

Theoretical Framework: Herzberg's Motivation-Hygiene Theory

This study is guided by Herzberg's Motivation-Hygiene Theory, developed in 1959. According to Herzberg, job satisfaction and dissatisfaction are influenced by two separate sets of factors. Motivators such as recognition, achievement, responsibility, and growth lead to job satisfaction. Hygiene factors such as salary, supervision, policies, and working conditions prevent dissatisfaction but do not necessarily lead to satisfaction (Herzberg, Mausner, & Snyderman, 1959).

In the context of teaching, motivators like student success, personal growth, and praise from administrators can enhance teacher performance. Hygiene factors like fair pay, safe classrooms, and access to teaching materials must be present to prevent frustration (Nwachukwu & Nwafor, 2020). If hygiene factors are missing, teachers may feel demoralized regardless of intrinsic motivators. This theory helps explain how different factors interact to influence a teacher's behavior and effectiveness in the classroom.

Methodology

This study employed a descriptive survey research design to examine the impact of teacher motivation on classroom effectiveness in public senior secondary schools in Kwara State. A purposive sampling technique was used to select 15 schools across

three local government areas: Ilorin East, Ilorin South, and Ilorin West. From each school, 10 teachers and 2 principals were selected, resulting in a total sample of 180 respondents. Data were collected using a structured and validated questionnaire titled *Teachers' Motivation and Classroom Effectiveness Questionnaire (TMCEQ)*. The instrument was validated by experts in the field, and its reliability was confirmed using the test-retest method. Descriptive statistics (mean and percentage) were used to analyse demographic data and responses to research questions, while the results were presented in frequency tables and interpreted in relation to existing literature.

Results

Demographic Data Analysis

Table 1:

Gender Distribution of Respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	100	55.6
Female	80	44.4
Total	180	100

Table 1 shows the gender distribution of the respondents. Out of 180 respondents, 100 (55.6%) are male, while 80 (44.4%) are female. This indicates a slightly higher representation of male teachers and administrators in the sampled public senior secondary schools in Kwara State.

Table 2:

Age Distribution of Respondents

Age Range	Frequency	Percentage (%)
20-29 years	20	11.1
30-39 years	60	33.3
40-49 years	70	38.9
50 years and above	30	16.7
Total	180	100

Table 2 presents the age distribution of the respondents. The majority of respondents are in the 40-49 years age range (38.9%), followed by those aged 30-39 years (33.3%). This distribution suggests that most of the teachers and administrators have considerable professional experience.

Table 3:

Years of Teaching Experience

Years of Experience	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1-5 years	25	13.9
6-10 years	50	27.8
11-15 years	65	36.1
16 years and above	40	22.2
Total	180	100

Table 3 illustrates the distribution of respondents based on their years of teaching experience. The largest group consists of teachers with 11-15 years of experience

(36.1%), followed by those with 6-10 years (27.8%). A significant portion also has over 16 years of teaching experience (22.2%), indicating a well-experienced sample group.

Table 4:

Current Position of Respondents

Current Position	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Teacher	150	83.3
School Administrator	30	16.7
Total	180	100

Table 4 provides an overview of the current positions of the respondents. A majority of the respondents are teachers (83.3%), while the remaining 16.7% are school administrators. This reflects the primary focus of the study on classroom teachers, who are directly involved in the teaching-learning process.

Research Question 1

What are the key factors influencing teacher motivation in public senior secondary schools in Kwara State?

Table 5:

Mean rating of respondents on the key factors influencing teacher motivation in public senior secondary schools in Kwara State

S/N	Item	Strongly Agree (4)	Agree (3)	Disagree (2)	Strongly Disagree (1)	Mean Score
1.	Salary adequacy	40%	30%	20%	10%	3.00
2.	Work environment	50%	35%	10%	5%	3.30
3.	Availability of teaching materials and resources	45%	40%	10%	5%	3.25
4.	Administrative support	35%	40%	15%	10%	3.00
5.	Professional development opportunities	30%	45%	15%	10%	2.95

Table 5 highlights the key factors influencing teacher motivation in Kwara State. The work environment and availability of teaching materials scored the highest mean values, indicating these are perceived as the most crucial motivators. Salary adequacy and administrative support also have notable mean scores, though slightly lower, suggesting these areas require attention to improve teacher motivation. Professional development opportunities have the lowest mean score, indicating a perceived gap in this area.

Research Question 2

What is the relationship between teacher motivation and classroom effectiveness?

Table 6:

Mean rating of respondents on the relationship between teacher motivation and classroom effectiveness

S/N	Item	Strongly Agree (4)	Agree (3)	Disagree (2)	Strongly Disagree (1)	Mean Score
1.	Impact of motivation on teaching quality	55%	35%	7%	3%	3.42
2.	Motivation and innovative teaching methods	50%	40%	8%	2%	3.38
3.	Motivation and classroom management skills	45%	40%	10%	5%	3.25
4.	Low motivation and absenteeism/classroom engagement	60%	30%	7%	3%	3.47
5.	Motivation and support for individual students	50%	35%	10%	5%	3.30

Table 6 illustrates the strong relationship between teacher motivation and classroom effectiveness. The highest mean score is associated with the link between low motivation and issues like absenteeism and poor classroom engagement. High scores are also observed for the impact of motivation on teaching quality, innovative methods, and classroom management, showing that motivation is crucial for effective teaching and student support.

Research Question 3

What strategies can be recommended to enhance teacher motivation and improve classroom effectiveness in public senior secondary schools in Kwara State?

Table 7:

Mean rating of respondents on the strategies that can be recommended to enhance teacher motivation and improve classroom effectiveness in public senior secondary schools in Kwara State

S/N	Item	Strongly Agree (4)	Agree (3)	Disagree (2)	Strongly Disagree (1)	Mean Score
1.	Salary increments	65%	25%	5%	5%	3.50
2.	Improving school facilities	60%	30%	7%	3%	3.47
3.	Provision of teaching aids and materials	55%	35%	7%	3%	3.42
4.	Recognition and rewards for good performance	50%	40%	8%	2%	3.38
5.	Opportunities for career advancement	45%	35%	12%	8%	3.17

Table 7 above presents strategies to enhance teacher motivation. The highest mean score is observed for salary increments, indicating that financial rewards are seen as a primary motivator. Improving school facilities and providing teaching aids are also

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highly rated strategies. Recognition and rewards for performance are valued, while opportunities for career advancement, though still important, received a comparatively lower mean score.

Discussion of Findings

The analysis revealed that several key factors significantly influence teacher motivation in Kwara State. The findings indicated that the work environment, availability of teaching materials, and salary adequacy were among the most critical motivators for teachers. These factors align with Maslow's lower and middle levels of needs, such as physiological needs (e.g., salary adequacy) and safety needs (e.g., work environment), underscoring their importance in ensuring teachers are motivated to perform effectively in the classroom. The literature reviewed supports these findings, with studies by Ololube (2019) and Egwu (2015) emphasizing the significance of intrinsic and extrinsic motivators like working conditions and salary satisfaction. These studies highlight that meeting these basic needs is essential for fostering a conducive teaching environment, which is crucial for maintaining high levels of motivation among teachers.

The study's results further demonstrated a strong relationship between teacher motivation and classroom effectiveness. High motivation levels were closely linked with improved teaching quality, the adoption of innovative teaching methods, and better classroom management. This finding is consistent with Maslow's theory, which posits that once basic needs are met, individuals are more likely to pursue higher-level goals, such as self-esteem and self-actualization. In the educational context, this translates into teachers being more engaged, creative, and effective in their instructional roles when they feel motivated. Empirical studies reviewed such as those by Abubakar, F. (2022) and Agogbua and Agu, (2021), corroborate these findings by showing that motivated teachers are more likely to foster interactive learning environments and engage students effectively, leading to better educational outcomes. The direct correlation observed between low motivation and issues like absenteeism and poor classroom engagement further emphasizes the critical role that motivation plays in maintaining classroom effectiveness.

The findings also identified several strategies that could enhance teacher motivation in Kwara State. Salary increments, improving school facilities, and providing adequate teaching materials were among the most highly rated strategies by the respondents. These strategies address the fundamental needs identified in Maslow's hierarchy, particularly the physiological and safety needs, which must be met before teachers can focus on higher-level needs such as esteem and self-actualization. The emphasis on salary increments and improved working conditions echoes the findings of Ololube (2019) and Egwu (2015), who identified these factors as pivotal in maintaining teacher morale and enhancing classroom effectiveness.

Conclusion

The study concludes that teacher motivation plays a significant role in determining classroom effectiveness in public senior secondary schools in Kwara State. By addressing the fundamental needs of teachers such as salary and working conditions, schools can significantly enhance teacher motivation, which in turn leads to improved classroom outcomes. The findings support Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, demonstrating that once basic needs are met, teachers are more likely to pursue higher-level goals that contribute positively to their teaching practices and student engagement.

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The results also align with existing literature, which highlights the importance of both intrinsic and extrinsic motivators in maintaining high levels of teacher motivation. Addressing these needs through targeted strategies can lead to more effective teaching and better student outcomes, underscoring the need for continued focus on teacher motivation in educational policy and practice.

Recommendations

1. Competitive and timely remuneration should be prioritised to enhance job satisfaction and reduce demotivation.
2. Schools should be equipped with adequate teaching materials and modern facilities to foster a better teaching environment.
3. Training programmes, workshops, and career growth opportunities should be regularly organised to keep teachers engaged and motivated.
4. School leaders should foster supportive relationships with teachers through regular feedback, recognition of efforts, and inclusive decision-making.

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