

Teachers' Motivation and Its Implications on Students Performance

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Abstract

This paper examined the influence of teachers' motivation and its implications on students' performance in Nigerian secondary schools. Motivation is important in achieving goals, either within the society or at individual level. This paper posited that when teachers are well motivated they will achieve the desired result of enhancing students' performance. When teachers are well motivated through promotion, improved salaries and emoluments, good health programme, and so on, they would be willing to put in their best for improved students' performance. This paper suggested that teachers should be well remunerated as obtained in other professional sectors and provision should also be made for attendance of short courses for development and motivation of teachers to guarantee quality assurance to improve students' performance.

Keywords: Teachers' Motivation, Students' Performance

Introduction

The term motivation is derived from a Latin word, 'Movere', which means to move into action. Hence, motivation simply implies the cause and why of human behavior. McInerney and McInerney (2010) described motivation as internal state that instigates, arouses, directs, and sustains/maintains behavior. Motivation can be defined as factors that direct and energize the behavior of humans and other organisms (Feldman, 2005). Slavin (2006) viewed motivation as what gets one going, keeps one going and determines where one is going. Ofoegbu (2004) opined that motivation is an interesting concept that is commonly assumed to be a good thing that influences individual's behavior and performance at work. Motivation can be described as the process of stimulating a person to take some actions in order to achieve certain goals.

Motivation plays a very significant role in attaining the overall educational aims and objectives. It is relevant in the classroom to increase efficiency and adequacy of behavior of teachers. Ekong (2006) suggested that to achieve effective performance in the teaching learning process, the teachers must be motivated. Teachers' motivation can simply be described as teachers' attitude to

teaching. Ofoegbu (2004) explained that teachers' motivation has to do with teachers' desire to participate in the pedagogical processes within the school environment. Ofojebe and Ezugoh (2010) stated that teachers' motivation is a way of empowering teachers which involves the strategies and activities employed by the management for the purpose of providing a climate that is conducive to teachers' satisfaction to obtain a dedicated and efficient teacher. A motivated teacher works tirelessly in the pursuit of curriculum implementation by preparing lesson notes at the appropriate time, teaches students, gives assignments, conducts both formative and summative assessments, provide results as at when due and also adopts innovative teaching aids in instructional method to facilitate effective teaching.

This is in recognition of teachers' importance as stated in the Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN, 2004) that "no education system may rise above the quality of its teachers, teacher education shall continue to be given major emphasis in all educational planning". This policy statement brings to the fore the concern about teachers' motivation in achieving optimum students' performance as lack of motivation of teachers which include irregular payment of teachers' salaries has been identified as one of the problems militating against students' performance. Teachers are indispensable to students' performance because of their obligations to the success of curriculum objectives as they are central to the implementation of the curriculum. Teachers are also the link between the students, school and society. Motivation of teachers is necessary for the achievement of educational objectives. Adequate motivation of teachers lead to good performance of students which in turn results to high productivity to the sustenance of national growth and development.

Over the years, educationists have expressed great concern about the educational output from the Nigerian school system and the blame has always been on teachers' motivation (Ofoegbu, 2004; Ofojebe & Ezugoh, 2010; Imo, 2013). Teachers must be well motivated towards the success of the learners and to be adequately motivated. Teachers need to be provided with enabling environment that allows them to freely explore and see the effect of their actions through their students' performance. A conducive teaching environment challenges the teacher to create activities that would make teaching-learning process effective and improve students' performance. Undoubtedly, education has beneficial effect on socio-cultural and economic development of an individual and the society.

It has been established in literature that teachers who are adequately motivated in terms of remuneration, conducive environment, job security, regular promotion and all other benefits are more comfortable and this can help to improve the performance of students, particularly low achieving students (Milken Foundation for Education Technology, 2007). Imo (2013) examined the influence of motivation of teachers and their incentives on students' academic performance in Biology in Ikot Ekpene Local Government Area of Akwa Ibom

State, Nigeria which revealed that teachers who are motivated teach effectively in the classroom than those teachers that were not motivated at all. In similar vein, Ofoegbu (2004) investigated teachers' motivation as an essential factor for classroom effectiveness and school improvement in Nigeria. The findings also revealed that teachers agreed that motivation is a vital factor for classroom effectiveness and school improvement.

Uche, Fiberesima & Christiana (2011) revealed that teachers' motivation is very poor and teachers are not satisfied with their working and salary conditions which directly affects students' performance. Students' poor results in national examinations have raised concern about improvement of students' performance and teachers' motivation. Tables 1 and 2 below show students' performance in some core subjects in National Examination Council (2003 -2007).

Table 1: Students' Performance in Economics and English Language (2003 – 2007)

Performance in Economics and English Language (2003 – 2007)																				
Subject	Year	Total that Sat and Results Released	Number and % Obtained Grades (Credit 1-6)										Total Credit			Numbers and % Obtained			Total Pass	F9
													1-6	Grades (Pass)		7	8			
			1	2	3	4	5	6	6	7	8									
Economics	2007	873428	142	287		63236	163805	193340	421096	188217	112652	300869	151463							
			0.015%	0.03%	286	0.03%	6.66%	20.37%	48.21%	19.83%	11.87%	34.44%	15.96%							
	2006	773406	94	482		65615	152011	167661	386462	189972	83396	273366	113576							
			0.012%	0.06%	599	0.08%	3.98%	21.67%	49.97%	24.56%	10.78%	35.35%	14.69%							
	2005	782,448	435	11828	12,289	36,208	38,714	109,923	209,397	172,270	15,629	26566	190,967							
2004	815,420	1,362	2,039	4,790	26,744	45501	104,310	184,936	142,056	268100	410,151	187,702								
		0.165%	0.25%	0.58%	3.27%	5.58%	12.79%	22.66%	17.42%	32.89%	50.30%	22.96%								
2003	827,688	5466	0.66	24,369	28,276	42,549	126,267	226,511	453445	34806	4.21	129842	221879							
English	2007	282	496	1305	64889	200522	247444	514938	66941	92088	297717	137135								
		0.027%	0.04%	0.12%	6.39%	19.74%	24.36%	54.22%	10.52%	14.47%	31.35%	13.50%								
Language	2006	52	261	593	42808	205072	193547	442333	138312	40186	178498	222369								
		0.006%	0.03%	0.07%	5.08%	24.32%	22.95%	52.46%	16.40%	4.77%	21.17%	26.7%								

2005	840,024	182.02%	586	1,460.017	29,631.3.53	53,047.6.31	94,407	179,313.21.35	190,532	127,821	318,353	281,631
		0.07%		%	%	%	11.24 %	%	22.68 %	15.22%	37.89%	33.53%
2004	878,125	199.02 %	308	45,290.5.16	93,117	197,980	337,352	856,669.76	114,456	287,070	200,122	287,070
		0.04%		%	10.60%	22.55 %	38.42%	%	%	13.03%	22.79%	32.69%
2003	884,780	6,719.0.67	48,408	156,456	156,448	101,348	156,949	626,328	388,082		433,699	10654
		%	4.81%	15.55%	15.55%	10.07%	15.60 %	62.24%	38.56 %	45,617.4.53%	43.09%	1.06%

Source: National Examination Council Office (NECO) Headquarter, Minna, 2009

Table 2: Students' Performance in Mathematics and Biology (2003 – 2007)

Subject	Year	Results Released	Total that Sat and	Numbers and % Obtained Grades (Credit 1-6)										Total Pass	F9
				1	2	3	4	5	6	Total Credit 1-6	Numbers and % Obtained Grades (Pass)				
Mathematics	2007	901745	526 0.05%	1316	1483 0.14%	72024	202694	246304	524347	92283 9.08	83361	175644	201754	22.37%	
2006	724585	518 0.071%	963	1497	56814	163406	211609	434807	74354	188360	67971	27064	3.74%		
2005	838012	0.77%	6438	10,594	11,591 1.38	29,281	58,489 6.98	102274	228,657	181,939	146,483	328,422	214958	25.65%	
2004	873989	0.07 %	642	967 0.11	2311 0.26	47,093	69,714 7.98	174951	295678	71,232 8.15	141,515	212,747	302242	34.58%	
2003	880148	%	6,108 0.69	22701	32,504 3.69	34731	103,206	173380	372630	36,313 4.13	69,792	106105	362,616	41.19%	
2007	938534	130 0.02%	%	582 0.05	503 0.04 %	7.84 %	19.89 %	22.10%	53.64%	15.36%	8.45 %	2.56%	19.37 %		
2006	830738	238 0.02%	%	929 0.11	1813 0.22%	7.34%	23.11%	22.18%	52.99%,	16.23%	9.32%	25.56%	178245	21.46%	

Biology

2005	835012	1636 0.19 %	14404 1.73 %	40429 4.84 %	36440 4.36 %	47,016 5.73 %	89392 10.71 %	228317 27.34 %	199,784 23.93 %	124353 14.89 %	324137 38.82 %	228383 27.35 %
2004	863771	1098 0.12 %	2457 0.28 %	5837 0.67 %	671842 7.85 %	111,183 12.87 %	308391 35.70 %	496808 57.52 %	67735 7.84 %	104304 12.08 %	223152 25.83 %	
2003	862423	5244 0.61 %	11093 1.30 %	33686 3.91 %	37,857 4.39 %	150,316 17.43 %	217897 25.27 %	456093 52.84 %	95111 11.02 %	34463 3.99 %	129514 15.02 %	248384 28.80 %

Source: National Examination Council Office (NECO) Headquarter, Minna, 2008

The trend of performance of students in the four subjects (Economics, English Language, Mathematics, and Biology) taken by most students is shown in Tables 1 and 2. Obtaining credits and above passes in these subjects is essential for admission into most programmes in Nigeria higher institutions. The results in Table 1 indicate that the performance of students in Economics for the four years (2004 – 2007) was poor as majority of candidates (more than 50%) had less below credit. It was only in the year 2003 that 54.78% of the candidates had credits and above in Economics. The performance was better for the English language, a subject in which all students require a minimum of credit for admission into higher institutions. For the years 2003, 2006, and 2007, over 50 percent of the candidates had credits and above. That is 62.24%, 52.46%, and 54.22%, for 2003, 2006, and 2007, respectively where credits and above performance by students were recorded. However, less than 40% of the candidates had credits and above performance in English Language, for the years 2004 and 2005. Thus, the performance in English language indicates non-consistent trends.

The performance of students in mathematics was also equally not consistent. Table 2 indicates that less than 50 percent of the candidates had credits and above, in mathematics, a subject that is so essential to science, social sciences, and some art related disciplines. For three years, the performance indicated that only 42.34%, 33.83%, and 27.29%, passed the subject at credits level and above, for years 2003, 2004, and 2005, respectively. For biology, a subject offered by most students, the performance was the best compared with other subjects. In spite of the improvement in performance over the years, the standard is still low, when critically examined as less than 60 percent (52.84%, 57.52%, 52.99%, and 53.64%), were recorded for the year 2003, 2004, and 2006, and 2007, respectively. For the year 2005 less than 30 percent had credits and above.

The trend of performance in these basic subjects which cuts across major categorisation (Arts, Social Sciences, and Science) is a reflection of the quality of instruction in Nigerian schools. Thus, the failure of students in some core subjects in the National Examination Council (2003 – 2007) can be attributed partly to lack of motivation for the subject teachers. Though, some other factors may be responsible for this failure, still, teacher motivation can be one of the panaceas to address the problems of poor students' performance in national examinations. From the preceeding, it can be deduced that teachers' motivation is central to the achievement of the goals of the school.

How Teachers can be Motivated for Optimum Students' Performance

Every individual should be motivated to exhibit the natural potential which ordinarily will be hidden. Motivation plays a major role in enhancing teachers' performance (Adelekan, 2011). Teachers' motivation is paramount to good

teaching which may influence students' success. The motivation to teach is personal and should be within an individual known as intrinsic, which can be influenced by external factors such as good working environment, attractive salaries, promotion of the teachers to the appropriate cadre as at when due. The relevance attached to the importance of teaching must be seen in terms of adequate remuneration. The teachers in Nigeria are the least paid professionals, the salaries of medical doctors is ten times that of a teacher who actually trained the doctors from the primary school level to the university (Oyeleke, 2012). If they are well motivated in area of salaries they will strive to put in their best. The following are other ways through which teachers can be motivated to improve students' performance:

- i. Enhancement of teachers' skill by making it possible for them to attend workshops, seminars, conferences and so on will make them to acquire more knowledge and experience in their career, a desirable approach that can motivate teachers quality assurance.
- ii. For teachers to be motivated, they should be given commendation when they excel.
- iii. There should be provisions for job security because it will stimulate confidence in the teacher and guarantee his freedom;
- iv. There should also be support from the employer in form of care, respect and guidance in skill development.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were made from this study:

1. Teachers should be well remunerated as obtained in other sectors (such as health, law, engineering, oil and gas sector, paramilitary and military) in our national development plan
2. Government should give high premium to teaching profession by making it a respected career especially in the area of recognition of teachers' certification. This will create quality assurance and ensure appropriate stratification for various cadres of teachers. Teachers must be certificated before he can practice as a classroom teacher.
3. Teachers should be given incentives such as vehicle, furniture and housing loans.
4. Government should encourage teachers' attendance at National and International conferences and workshops through funding and allowances.
5. Government should have political will with the implementation of teachers salary scale with necessary improvement which should be tied with the rate of inflation in the country.

6. Provisional development of short courses should be encouraged as motivational forces for the teachers to guarantee quality assurance to improve students' performance.

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