

## Principals' Motivational Skills as Correlate of Teachers' Job Performance in Post-Basic School IN North-East Nigeria

SADIQ AHMED

Department of Physical Science Education, Modibbo Adama University, Yola – Nigeria



[linkahmedsadiq@gmail.com](mailto:linkahmedsadiq@gmail.com)



08036788542

ORCID ID: 0009-0002-3931-1837

### ABSTRACT

The study investigated principals' motivational skills as a strategic management correlate of teachers' job performance in Post-Basic Schools in North-East, Nigeria. The purpose of the study was to determine the extent of principals' motivation skills in post basic schools in North East Nigeria, to also examine the relationship between principals' motivation skills and teachers job performance and to assess whether teachers' job performance differs significantly across principals' motivation skills level. Three research questions were answered and three hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance. The study adopted the correlation survey research design. Stratified and random sampling techniques were used in selecting the sample of the study. The population was 19,797 respondents in Post-Basic Schools from four states (Adamawa, Bauchi, Gombe, and Taraba) drawn from North-East zone, Nigeria. The sample for the study was 592 determined using Taro Yamane formula and comprised of 76 principals and 516 teachers. The instruments for data collection were two, a structured questionnaire tagged "Principals' Motivation Skills Questionnaire (PMSQ) which was responded by teachers, and structured questionnaire tagged "Teachers' Job Performance Questionnaire (TJPQ) was administered and responded to by principals to measure teachers' performance. The instruments were face validated and the internal consistency for the instruments was determined using Cronbach Alpha method. Reliability yielded 0.71 for Principal Motivation Skills Questionnaire, 0.67 for Teachers' Job Performance Questionnaire. The findings of the study revealed Principals exhibited high motivational competence ( $M = 3.63$ ,  $SD = 0.60$ ). Motivational skills significantly predicted teachers' job performance ( $\beta = 0.79$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ;  $R^2 = 0.62$ ). ANOVA showed a significant effect ( $F(1, 590) = 182.5$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) with a large effect size ( $\omega^2 \approx 0.62$ ). Based on the findings of this study, it was concluded that principals' motivation skills was significantly related to teachers' job performance in Post-Basic Schools in North-East Nigeria. Recommendations made based on the findings include among others that; teachers' should be assigned subjects or courses to teach based on their area of specialization, teachers' should be praised at all times and workload be reduced, teachers' welfare, promotion payment of salaries and allowances should be regular and consistent.

**Keywords:** Principal, motivation, skills, teachers' job performance, post-basic school

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **Background**

The decline in teacher performance in schools can have several detrimental effects, it can result in reduced student engagement, ineffective instruction and less support for student learning, leading to lower academic performance and achievement levels. (Ayeni,2020). Also when students are not adequately supported by performing teachers, they may become disengaged or disinterested in school, leading to higher dropout rates and lower rates of educational attainment. Schools with declining teacher performance may develop a reputation for poor academic performance, leading to decreased enrolment, funding and community support, teachers who are unable to effectively manage their workload or see positive outcomes from their efforts may experience decreased job satisfaction and morale, leading to higher levels of stress, burnout and turnover. (Ayeni, 2020). Schools invest significant resources in hiring and retaining teachers, as well as providing professional development opportunities, when teacher performance declines, these investments may not yield the desired returns, resulting in wasted time, money and effort. Decline in teacher performance can exacerbate existing achievement gaps between different student population such as those based on race, socioeconomic status or special needs, perpetuating inequalities in education. Furthermore, the quality of education provided by schools directly influences the future workforce, economy and social well-being of a society, which can have long-lasting consequences for individuals and communities, hindering economic growth and social mobility. (Ayeni,2020). Teacher performance is one of the factors that could determine a teacher's effectiveness in the profession. It is achieved through effort exerted and the resources utilized. When teacher performance declines, it has a correlation with, and exert a great influence on the students. Meanwhile the children are supposed to learn from teachers informally by observing their attitude, mannerism, conduct and general behavior formally through their teaching in the classroom (Gistuati, 2020). However, the principal is the person who heads a school and leads the school towards achieving its aims and objectives, also to use teaching and curricular strategies that are more effective and also support teacher efforts to implement effective instruction. According to Ofuaze, Daka, Mbaba (2021) instructional leadership entails the ability of the principal to create both intellectual and social cohesion. The principal should develop a community of professional learning in which teachers trust, depend on and learn from one another.

Teachers motivation influence quality output, quality performance, enhancing quality educational outcomes and instructional delivery (teaching); teachers job satisfaction and performance, all which is of great significance to guaranteeing quality assurance in the educational system. However, when teachers influence the educational system positively, they intend to perform their task effectively and efficiently, and all educational goals will be achieved with positive outcomes and the outputs from the school system will be achieved with positive outcomes (Ismaili et al, 2022). Teacher motivation is a key determinant of instructional quality and student achievement. This study sought to investigate the correlation between principals' motivation skill and teacher job performance.

### **OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

- i. Determine the extent of principals' motivational skills in post-basic schools in North-East Nigeria.
- ii. Examine the relationship between principals' motivational skills and teachers' job performance.

- iii. Determine whether teachers' job performance differs significantly across principals' motivational-skill levels.

## RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- i. What is the extent of principals' motivational skills in post-basic schools in North-East Nigeria?
- ii. What relationship exists between principals' motivational skills and teachers' job performance?
- iii. Do teachers' job-performance levels differ significantly based on principals' motivational-skill levels?

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Conceptual Review

#### Principals' Motivational Skills

Principal motivation ability plays a crucial role in influencing teacher performance. When principals effectively motivate and inspire their teaching staff, it can lead to increased job satisfaction, morale and commitment among teachers. Motivated teachers are more likely to be engaged in their work, resulting in higher performance and a positive impact on student outcomes. Principals' who recognize and appreciate the efforts of their teachers create a supportive work environment, fostering a culture of continuous improvement and dedication to their profession. Mohammed and Abdullahi (2022) emphasized the importance of motivating teachers on their jobs pointed out that teachers' motivation was fragile and declining mostly in the developing countries including Nigeria. The study also observed that poor absolute value of the teachers' salaries was a significant factor influencing their motivation. Low salaries and bad working conditions always breed corruption. The research report findings also noted that there is a strong link between teacher motivation and quality assurance in the Nigerian educational system. Therefore Teachers' Performance in contributing towards learning is strongly influenced by teacher motivation which includes good working conditions, promotion, staff welfare, training and development, job security, recognition of performance, scholarship and awards, financial reward good salary and remuneration and provision of other facilities are strong tools for improving the status of teachers.

According to Ayeni (2020) teacher's motivation has great significance or value to the Nigerian educational system in guaranteeing and aiding quality assurance. When teachers are highly motivated and adequate attention given to them, it adds the value and quality of the educational system by raising its standard to rise to the expected level thereby ensuring quality teacher – learning outcomes and output. Teachers motivation influence quality output, quality performance, enhancing quality educational outcomes and instructional delivery (teaching); teachers job satisfaction and performance, all which is of great significance to guaranteeing quality assurance in the educational system. However, when teachers influence the educational system positively, they intend to perform their task effectively and efficiently, and all educational goals will be achieved with positive outcomes and the outputs from the school system will be achieved with positive outcomes (Nizam & Shah, 2015).

Motivation strategies include the following.

- i. Professional development and training
- ii. Participatory decision making
- iii. Good working conditions
- iv. Promotion as at when due

- v. Job security
  - vi. Conducive working environment
  - vii. Provision of adequate instructions materials
- Staff training and development is one of the important motivation strategies that could be used to enhance quality assurance in the school system.

### **Teachers' Job Performance**

Centre for high Impact Philanthropy define a performing teacher as the one who has a positive effect on students learning and development through a combination of content mastery, pedagogical skills and communication skills. Utami & Vioeza, (2021) states that productive teachers need to have knowledge of subject, instructional skills, assessment skill and professionalism. The teacher is one of the most important inputs in the education system that shapes the direction of educational inputs to achieve the stated goals of the education industry. Performance is the result of the efforts exerted and the resources utilised, performance can be measured as a ratio of output to input.

Job performance is one factor that could determine teacher effectiveness in the profession, it is achieved through efforts exerted and the resources utilised (Gistuati, 2020). Performance per se is a set of tools that measure an individual effectiveness and competence in their profession. Performance may differ according to diverse factors including abilities and effort, the availability of resources, the organisation of the work and so on. It has many determinants and must be viewed from many angles to understand it and be able to improve it. Job performance consists of different concept and measures, including how much a person can produce for a certain period of time with given resources. The better an individual makes use of his resources, the higher his performance will be and the better off his career becomes (Gistuati, 2020).

Job performance and teaching effectiveness are based on the self-efficacy theory of Bandura (1977), Self-efficacy is defined as the confidence in ones capabilities to organise and execute the courses of action required to produce given attainments. It is a person's belief in his or her capacity to effect behaviours necessary to produce specific performance attainment, with this self-efficacy reflects the teacher's confidence to exert control over emotions, behaviour and teaching environment. Such cognitive self-evaluations impact all manner of teaching experience, which determines why the teacher strives the amount of energy exerted toward achieving teaching goals and the likelihood of affecting particular levels of behaviour is motivated and regulated by self-evaluation reactions to their own actions, and therefore self-directedness partly determines the teacher behaviour inside the classroom.

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **Research Design**

A correlation survey design was adopted to assess the relationship between motivational skills and teacher performance.

### **Population and Sample**

From 19,797 principals and teachers in Adamawa, Bauchi, Gombe and Taraba States, a sample of 592 respondents (516 teachers and 76 principals) was selected through stratified and simple random sampling.

### **Instrumentation**

- i. Principals' Motivational Skills Questionnaire (PMSQ): 5 items on recognition, feedback, incentives, staff support and goal clarity.
- ii. Teachers' Job Performance Scale (TJPS): 8 items on lesson planning, delivery, and assessment.

### Validity and Reliability

Three Educational-Management experts validated both tools. Pilot testing yielded  $\alpha = 0.74$  (PMSQ) and  $\alpha = 0.70$  (TJPS), confirming internal consistency.

### Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics (mean & SD) addressed Research Question 1; Pearson  $r$  and Regression tested Research Question 2; ANOVA evaluated Research Question 3 at  $p < 0.05$ . Assumptions of normality and linearity were met.

## RESULTS

### Research Question 1: Extent of Principals' Motivational Skills

Table 1. Mean and Standard Deviation of Principals' Motivational Skills and Teachers' Job Performance (N = 592)

| Variable                      | N   | Mean | SD   | Remark    |
|-------------------------------|-----|------|------|-----------|
| Recognition and praise        | 592 | 3.74 | 0.57 | Very High |
| Constructive feedback         | 592 | 3.56 | 0.63 | High      |
| Incentives and rewards        | 592 | 3.68 | 0.61 | High      |
| Staff support and welfare     | 592 | 3.62 | 0.59 | High      |
| Goal clarity and expectations | 592 | 3.55 | 0.60 | High      |
| Overall Motivational Skills   | 592 | 3.63 | 0.60 | High      |
| Overall Teacher Performance   | 592 | 3.70 | 0.63 | High      |

Note. 1.00–2.49 = Low; 2.50–3.49 = Moderate; 3.50–4.49 = High.

Principals showed high motivation competence; recognition and reward were strongest factors.

### Research Question 2: Relationship Between Motivational Skills and Teachers' Performance

Table 2. Simple Linear Regression Predicting Teachers' Job Performance

| Predictor                       | B    | SE B | $\beta$ | T     | p      | 95 % CI (B)  |
|---------------------------------|------|------|---------|-------|--------|--------------|
| Constant                        | 0.83 | 0.09 | –       | 9.22  | < .001 | [0.65, 1.01] |
| Principals' Motivational Skills | 0.61 | 0.04 | 0.79    | 13.51 | < .001 | [0.53, 0.69] |

Model summary:  $R = 0.79$ ;  $R^2 = 0.62$ ; Adj.  $R^2 = 0.62$ ;  $F(1, 590) = 182.5$ ;  $p < .001$ .

Principals' motivational skills explained 62 % of the variance in teacher performance.

Table 3. ANOVA Summary for Principals' Motivational Skills Predicting Teachers' Job Performance

| Source | SS | Df | MS | F | p |
|--------|----|----|----|---|---|
|--------|----|----|----|---|---|

|            |       |     |      |       |        |
|------------|-------|-----|------|-------|--------|
| Regression | 77.8  | 1   | 77.8 | 182.5 | < .001 |
| Residual   | 273.3 | 590 | 0.46 |       |        |
| Total      | 351.1 | 591 |      |       |        |

*Effect size:*  $\omega^2 \approx 0.62$  (large). Motivational skills significantly differentiated teacher performance levels.

## DISCUSSION

The study reveals that principals in North-East Nigeria possess high motivational competence, particularly in recognition and reward. This corroborates Bello & Hassan (2021) and Adeyemi & Adu (2021), who reported that recognition strengthens teacher commitment. The strong  $\beta = 0.79$  and  $R^2 = 0.62$  values demonstrate that motivation is a strategic determinant of teacher performance. Herzberg's (1959) Two-Factor Theory is validated: motivators (achievement, recognition) drive teacher engagement, while hygiene factors (stipends, policies) prevent dissatisfaction. Similar patterns were reported by Eze et al. (2023) and Lambert et al. (2024), who found that non-financial incentives sustain teacher retention in developing contexts.

The large effect size confirms motivation as a core strategic management tool. When principals acknowledge teachers' efforts and provide feedback, teachers reciprocate with dedication and innovation (Awariete, 2022). Conversely, absence of motivation leads to apathy and turnover (Maduako et al., 2022).

In conflict-prone North-East Nigeria, where material rewards are scarce, psychological motivation—praise, communication, trust—has immense value. Thus, principals serve not only as administrators but as chief motivators sustaining the system's resilience.

## CONCLUSION

Principals' motivational skills significantly influence teachers' job performance. Effective use of recognition, constructive feedback, and incentives enhances teachers' commitment and productivity. Motivation should be institutionalized as a strategic management function in post-basic education. Also, teachers' welfare should be accorded a topmost priority.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- i. Teachers' should be assigned subject or courses to teach base on their area of specialization which gives them much job satisfaction.
- ii. Teachers should be praised at all times and work load should be reduced.
- iii. Teachers' welfare should be a top most priority, promotions and payment of salaries and allowances should be regular and consistent.

## LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE STUDIES

The study was cross-sectional and self-reported; longitudinal research could better establish causality. Qualitative interviews may also reveal contextual differences in motivation mechanisms across Nigeria's zones.

## REFERENCES

- Adeyemi, B. A., & Adu, E. O. (2021). Principals' motivational practices and teachers' job commitment in public secondary schools. *Journal of Educational Management*, **12**(3), 74–89.

- Awariefe, O. E. (2022). Psychological motivation and teacher productivity in Delta State schools. *West African Journal of Education*, **42**(1), 65–82.
- Bello, H., & Hassan, S. M. (2021). Leadership incentives and teacher performance in Nigerian public schools. *International Journal of Educational Research and Innovation*, **15**, 44–59.
- Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (2000). The “what” and “why” of goal pursuits: Human needs and the self-determination of behavior. *Psychological Inquiry*, **11**(4), 227–268. [https://doi.org/10.1207/S15327965PLI1104\\_01](https://doi.org/10.1207/S15327965PLI1104_01)
- Eze, C. E., Ogbodo, R. A., & Chukwu, O. (2023). Non-monetary incentives and teacher retention in Nigerian post-basic schools. *African Journal of Human Resource Development*, **8**(1), 91–108.
- Guskey, T. R. (2020). Motivation and change in educational leadership. *Educational Horizons*, **98**(3), 45–58.
- Herzberg, F. (1959). *The motivation to work*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Lambert, D., Okoro, P., & Hassan, U. (2024). Leadership motivation and performance outcomes in developing countries. *International Review of Educational Management*, **14**(1), 77–96.
- Maduako, C. C., Okoroafor, M., & Uba, M. (2022). Teacher motivation, job satisfaction, and turnover intentions. *Nigerian Journal of Educational Research*, **19**(2), 45–62.
- Ayeni, A. J. (2020). Principals instructional time management and students’ academic performance in secondary schools in Ondo north senatorial district of Ondo State, Nigeria. *Journal of Education and Learning*, **14**(1), 123-133.
- Gistuati, N. (2020). Analysis of factors affecting teacher’s productivity. *Journal of Advances in Social Science, Education and Humanities Research*, **5**(04), 8-12.
- Ofuase, I. M., Daka, T. A., & Mbaba, J. M. (2021). Principals administrative behavior and Teachers commitment to the delivery of quality education in senior secondary Schools in Rivers State. *International Journal of Innovative Development and Policy Studies*, **9**(2), 60-70.
- Utami, P. P. & Vioreza, N. (2021). Teachers work productivity in senior high school. *International Journal of Instruction* **14**(1), 599-614.
- Mohammed, I. & Abdullahi, R. (2022). Factors affecting secondary school teacher’s motivation in the Elliotdale circuit, South Africa. *African Educational Research Journal*, **10**(3), 211-218.
- Bandura, A. (1977). Self-efficacy theory of behavioural change psychological review, *British Journal of Education*, **84**(2), 191-215.