



THE ROLE OF TEACHERS' MOTIVATION IN ENHANCING TEACHERS' PRODUCTIVITY IN AKURE-SOUTH LGA, ONDO STATE

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the critical factors influencing teachers' motivation and productivity in public senior secondary schools within Akure South Local Government Area, Ondo State, Nigeria. The primary focus is to understand how intrinsic and extrinsic motivational elements, along with incentives, school plant conditions, staff management practices, and training opportunities, collectively shape teacher performance and, consequently, student learning outcomes. Employing a descriptive survey design, data were gathered from a stratified random sample comprising 10 principals and 290 teachers selected from 10 public senior secondary schools. A structured questionnaire, validated through expert review and reliability-tested with a Cronbach's alpha of 0.70, served as the main instrument for data collection. Descriptive statistics and the Pearson Product-Moment Correlation coefficient were used to analyse the data. The findings revealed that prompt salary payment, job security, favourable working conditions, and opportunities for promotion significantly enhance teacher motivation, which in turn positively correlates with higher productivity. However, gaps were identified in the provision of recreational facilities, technological resources, and crisis management practices, indicating areas requiring policy attention. The study underscores the necessity for policymakers and educational managers to prioritise comprehensive motivational strategies and resource allocation to sustain teacher engagement and effectiveness. By situating the analysis within the local Nigerian context, this research contributes to the broader discourse on improving teacher productivity in developing education systems and suggests pathways for future empirical exploration.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Motivation has a fundamental role in shaping teacher productivity, directly affecting performance, commitment, and teaching effectiveness in the classroom (Layek, & Koodamara, 2024; Van Waeyenberg, et al., 2022). Teachers who are driven by intrinsic motivations, such as the desire to grow and the passion for teaching, tend to apply innovative methods and create an engaging learning atmosphere (Calderón, et al., 2020; Chaudhuri, 2020). Conversely, low motivation has the potential to trigger work burnout, decreased job satisfaction, and ultimately lower the quality of education (Bakaç, et al., 2022).

Conceptually, motivation can be categorized into two: intrinsic motivation that arises from an individual's internal drives, and extrinsic motivation that is influenced by factors outside of the self such as incentives, working conditions, and rewards (Morris, et al., 2022; Van den Broeck, et al., 2021). These two types of motivation work together in shaping teacher behavior, both in designing teaching, carrying out tasks, and adapting to professional challenges (Miller, et al., 2021). Therefore, understanding motivational dynamics is essential to increase teacher productivity in a sustainable manner.

However, although teacher motivation studies have been widely conducted in various global contexts (Daumiller, et al., 2020), its application to the local context in Nigeria, particularly in Akure South, is still poorly explained. Teachers in this region often face complex work challenges: limited support facilities, low salaries, high workloads, and minimal administrative support (Joarder, et al., 2020; Reddy, et al., 2022). This has a direct impact on their job satisfaction and motivation, as well as implications for the quality of learning students receive.

In the education system, teacher productivity is not only measured by teaching results, but also daily work behaviors, such as classroom management skills, student involvement, and self-development (Huang, et al., 2020; Masnawati, & Darmawan, 2022). Some of the determinants of productivity include education and skill levels, technological innovations in the classroom, availability of teaching materials, quality of school leadership, government policies, and teacher morale and motivation (Ngwenya, 2021).

In Akure South, various structural and economic constraints still limit teachers' motivation and productivity. This situation requires serious attention from stakeholders to design education management policies and practices that focus on improving welfare, providing supporting facilities, and strengthening professional support for teachers. Thus, it is hoped that teachers' motivation can be maintained so that the goals of national education can be achieved optimally.

Based on this background, this study aims to explore the relationship between motivation (intrinsic and extrinsic) and teacher productivity in the Akure South region, Nigeria. These findings are expected to make an empirical contribution and practical recommendations for improving education policy at the local level.

2. Statement of the Problem

The performance of teachers plays a pivotal role in determining the success of educational systems, particularly in the Akure-South Local Government Area of Ondo State, Nigeria. Teachers are expected not only to deliver effective instruction but also to instill discipline, values, and essential life skills in their students. However, there is an evident disparity between these expectations and the actual support teachers receive to fulfil their roles optimally. The Ministry of Education consistently demands high standards of teaching effectiveness, loyalty, dedication, and professional commitment (Alzoraiki, et al., 2023), yet many teachers face persistent challenges that hinder their motivation and productivity. Low salaries, inadequate housing, insufficient teaching resources, and long commutes are among the recurring issues that negatively impact teachers' capacity to perform their duties effectively (Evans, & Acosta, 2023). These structural deficiencies have repeatedly sparked industrial actions such as strikes and protests, exposing systemic neglect within the educational sector.

Furthermore, leadership approaches and governmental policies significantly shape the motivational climate within schools. While supportive leadership can enhance collaboration and teacher engagement, authoritarian management styles often suppress morale and discourage initiative (Huang, & Yin, 2024; Zheng, et al., 2021). Poor remuneration relative to workload erodes teachers' enthusiasm, and the absence of basic amenities, safe facilities, and necessary

instructional materials undermines efforts to maintain quality education. As a result, many teachers struggle to motivate their students or implement innovative teaching methods, contributing to increased absenteeism and truancy among students and, ultimately, declining academic performance in public secondary schools within Akure-South LGA.

Given this context, it is imperative to clarify what constitutes a productive teacher within this study: a productive teacher is operationally defined as an educator who consistently demonstrates high teaching effectiveness, class management, punctuality, and the ability to engage students actively despite prevailing challenges. Similarly, motivation in this research encompasses intrinsic factors such as passion for teaching and personal growth, as well as extrinsic elements like incentives, leadership support, and the availability of adequate teaching resources.

Despite various interventions, including seminars and workshops aimed at improving teacher productivity, desired educational outcomes remain largely unmet. Previous research suggests that aligning organisational policies with the diverse needs and expectations of employees can significantly enhance motivation and performance (Akdere, & Egan, 2020). Thus, there is a pressing need to empirically examine the extent to which motivational factors influence the productivity of public secondary school teachers in Akure-South. This study therefore seeks to investigate the levels of teacher motivation and the adequacy of incentives, explore the influence of school infrastructure and staff management practices on teacher productivity, and assess how training opportunities contribute to teachers' ability to deliver effective instruction.

To guide this inquiry, the following research questions have been formulated in explicit terms: What is the current level of motivation among public secondary school teachers in Akure-South Local Government Area? To what extent are incentives provided to support teacher productivity in this region? How does the quality of school infrastructure (school plant) impact teachers' productivity? What are the prevailing staff management practices and how do they affect teacher performance? Lastly, what is the status of teacher training and how does it relate to productivity outcomes? In line with these questions, the study hypothesises that there is no significant relationship between teachers' motivation and their productivity in public senior secondary schools in Akure-South, Ondo State.

By addressing these specific aspects, this research intends to offer valuable insights for policymakers and educational stakeholders, providing evidence-based recommendations to enhance teacher motivation and, consequently, student academic achievement in the region

3. Literature Review

Teacher motivation is a fundamental aspect of the educational landscape, playing a crucial role in shaping teaching effectiveness and, by extension, students' learning experiences. At its core, teacher motivation encompasses the internal and external drives that inspire educators to engage deeply with their profession and strive for excellence in their classrooms (Bardach, & Klassen, 2021; Urhahne, & Wijnia, 2023). Understanding teacher motivation begins with recognising its dual nature. On one hand, intrinsic motivation arises from within the individual. This form of motivation is driven by personal satisfaction, a sense of purpose, and the intrinsic rewards of teaching. Intrinsically motivated educators often enjoy facilitating learning, building student relationships, and witnessing their academic and personal growth (Printer, 2023). They are more enthusiastic, innovative, and committed, often going beyond standard expectations to create enriching learning environments. On the other hand, extrinsic motivation involves external factors that can significantly influence a teacher's engagement and performance (Baroudi, et al., 2022). This includes tangible rewards such as salary, job security, professional development opportunities, and working conditions. For teachers, adequate compensation is

essential for their financial stability, sense of worth, and recognition within the educational system. When teachers feel that their efforts are not justly rewarded, their motivation can diminish, leading to frustration and disengagement.

1) Theoretical Perspectives on Teacher Motivation

Teacher motivation has long been recognised as a cornerstone in the pursuit of educational quality, with substantial theoretical and empirical support highlighting its role in driving teaching effectiveness and enriching student learning experiences (Wang, et al., 2024). At a conceptual level, motivation is broadly classified into intrinsic and extrinsic dimensions. Intrinsic motivation refers to the internal drives that compel teachers to teach out of personal satisfaction, a sense of purpose, and the inherent joy of facilitating learning. Educators motivated intrinsically tend to display higher levels of enthusiasm, creativity, and resilience, often exceeding routine expectations to nurture positive classroom climates and strong teacher-student relationships (Xu, & Wang, 2024). Conversely, extrinsic motivation encompasses external incentives and situational factors, such as competitive salaries, job security, professional growth opportunities, and conducive working conditions, which significantly shape how teachers perceive their roles and responsibilities (Baroudi, et al., 2022). The interplay of these motivational dimensions creates a dynamic landscape where the fulfilment of internal aspirations is either supported or undermined by external realities.

2) Intrinsic and Extrinsic Determinants of Teacher Motivation

Empirical findings consistently demonstrate that intrinsic motivation is a strong predictor of teachers' commitment and willingness to innovate in their pedagogical approaches (Li, et al., 2024). Teachers who derive satisfaction from shaping students' intellectual and moral development tend to invest more energy into lesson planning, student engagement, and continuous self-improvement (Xu, & Wang, 2024). However, this motivation is highly susceptible to contextual stressors such as excessive administrative demands, unmanageable workloads, and limited autonomy, which may erode teachers' sense of purpose and lead to burnout and disengagement. On the extrinsic side, adequate compensation and resource availability are indispensable for sustaining morale. In the Nigerian context, teachers often encounter irregular salary payments, inadequate teaching materials, and poor infrastructural support, which collectively dampen their motivation and restrict effective classroom delivery (Kosec, & Wantchekon, 2020). These extrinsic deficiencies frequently overshadow teachers' intrinsic passion, underscoring the need for a balanced approach that addresses both motivational domains.

3) Influence of Leadership and Government Policies

Beyond individual factors, the organisational climate-particularly leadership style-plays a decisive role in shaping motivation levels. Studies have shown that supportive, participative, and transformational leadership practices foster teacher collaboration, recognition, and professional growth, which in turn strengthen intrinsic motivation (Ghamrawi, et al., 2024). When school leaders acknowledge teachers' contributions, encourage decision-making autonomy, and prioritise continuous training, teachers are more likely to feel valued and committed to their roles. In contrast, rigid, top-down leadership can stifle creativity, induce job dissatisfaction, and exacerbate feelings of marginalisation. Similarly, national educational policies and government attitudes directly influence the motivational ecosystem. In Nigeria, reforms and policy decisions often fail to incorporate teachers' voices, resulting in misaligned strategies that do not adequately respond to their daily challenges (Hennessy, et al., 2022). When educators

are excluded from policy formulation, their sense of agency and professional identity diminishes, which negatively impacts morale and effectiveness.

4) Teacher Motivation in the Nigerian Context: Challenges and Gaps

Despite the wealth of global literature on teacher motivation, much of the discourse remains concentrated within Western settings, rendering it less adaptable to the unique socio-economic and institutional realities of Nigerian educators. Teachers in Akure-South LGA, like many counterparts nationwide, grapple with systemic inadequacies ranging from insufficient infrastructure and delayed remuneration to limited career progression pathways. While previous studies have explored aspects of motivation in Nigeria, they often adopt a fragmented lens, isolating intrinsic or extrinsic factors without sufficiently examining how these elements interact within a challenging local environment. Moreover, leadership dynamics within Nigerian schools have received limited nuanced exploration; existing research tends to generalise leadership influence without unpacking the distinct characteristics and implications of leadership styles prevalent in specific localities like Akure-South.

A critical methodological limitation in prior studies lies in their over-reliance on cross-sectional survey designs that capture a snapshot of teachers' motivational states but fail to probe deeper into the evolving nature of these motivations over time or under varying policy and leadership conditions. Furthermore, much of the research overlooks secondary education as a focal level, despite its vital role in shaping students' academic trajectories and life prospects. This study therefore seeks to bridge these gaps by providing an integrated analysis of how intrinsic and extrinsic motivators interact within the real-world constraints of Akure-South's public secondary schools, how school leadership styles amplify or hinder these motivational processes, and how existing policies align with or deviate from teachers' practical needs and expectations.

By critically synthesising and extending the literature, this research aspires to generate contextually grounded insights that can inform policy refinements, leadership training, and resource allocation strategies tailored to boost teacher motivation and productivity. Ultimately, these contributions aim to revitalise the quality of secondary education in Akure-South LGA and serve as a scalable reference for other similar settings across Nigeria.

4. RESEARCH METHODS

This study adopted a descriptive survey design to systematically examine the existing levels and dynamics of teacher motivation and productivity without manipulating any variables. This design was chosen because it allows the researcher to observe phenomena as they occur naturally, providing a factual representation of teachers' motivational states and their corresponding performance in the classroom context. The target population comprised 8,327 public secondary school teachers working across 310 government-owned secondary schools in the three senatorial districts of Ondo State. To ensure fair representation and reduce sampling bias, a stratified random sampling technique was employed (Howell, et al., 2020). The schools were first categorised based on geographical and administrative strata corresponding to each senatorial district. From these strata, random samples were drawn proportionally to guarantee that schools of varying sizes and contexts were adequately represented. Specifically, within Akure South Local Government Area, the researcher selected a sample consisting of 10 principals and 290 teachers drawn from 10 public senior secondary schools, reflecting a balanced distribution of both leadership and teaching staff for diverse perspectives.

The primary data collection instrument was a structured, closed-ended questionnaire developed based on an extensive review of relevant literature and aligned with the research

questions and hypotheses (Shoukat, et al., 2024). To ascertain content validity, the questionnaire items were reviewed and vetted by experts in educational measurement and psychology, ensuring that each item accurately captured constructs related to teacher motivation and productivity. In addition, a pilot test was conducted in a comparable setting outside the study area to refine the instrument further. Reliability of the instrument was established using Cronbach's alpha, yielding a coefficient of 0.70, which is considered acceptable for social science research, thereby confirming internal consistency across all sections.

Responses were measured using a four-point Likert-type scale ranging from strongly agree (1) to strongly disagree (4). The four-point scale was intentionally chosen to avoid a neutral midpoint, thereby encouraging respondents to take a clear stand on each statement, which is deemed appropriate for capturing attitudinal positions in contexts where respondents may otherwise exhibit central tendency bias. Although five- and seven-point scales are common, the four-point structure is justified for clarity and ease of interpretation in a large sample survey within the Nigerian secondary education context.

Data collection adhered strictly to ethical standards. Respondents were informed about the purpose of the study, assured of the confidentiality and anonymity of their responses, and provided informed consent prior to participation (Husband, 2020). The administration of the questionnaires was conducted during staff meetings with the approval and cooperation of the school principals, ensuring minimal disruption to academic activities. Out of the 300 questionnaires distributed to both teachers and principals, 298 were retrieved in usable form, reflecting a high response rate indicative of participant engagement.

In terms of data analysis, (Paul, & Barari, 2022). To test the hypotheses, the Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient was employed at a 0.05 level of significance to determine the strength and direction of the relationships between motivation and productivity. Prior to correlation analysis, statistical assumptions including normality and linearity were tested using the Shapiro-Wilk test and scatterplot inspections, respectively. When necessary, data transformations or alternative non-parametric tests were considered to maintain the validity of the inferential results.

Through this rigorous methodological framework, the study ensured credible, valid, and ethically sound findings that contribute meaningfully to the understanding of teacher motivation and productivity in public senior secondary schools in Akure South Local Government Area, Ondo State.

5. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

The analysis of data collected from public senior secondary schools in Akure South Local Government Area revealed important insights into teachers' motivation and its impact on productivity.

Table 1. Level of school motivation on teachers productivity n = 1925

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Remark
1	Prompt payment of salary	166	453	327	147	2.58	High
2	Security of life and property	132	486	321	154	2.54	High
3	Physical Factors	422	186	221	264	2.70	High
4	Promotion of staff	493	234	213	153	2.98	High
Overall Mean						2.47	High

Regarding the first research question, Table 1 indicates that key motivational aspects such as prompt payment of salaries (mean = 2.58), security of life and property (mean = 2.54), adequate physical factors (mean = 2.70), and staff promotion opportunities (mean = 2.98) were rated relatively high by respondents, with an overall mean of 2.47. This suggests that teachers perceive a moderate to high level of motivation in relation to these factors. Contrary to an earlier erroneous statement, a higher level of teacher motivation is theoretically and empirically expected to enhance, not hinder, their productivity. This positive association aligns with the self-determination theory and past findings by McAnally, and Hagger, (2024), indicating that motivated teachers are more committed and effective in achieving educational goals.

Table 2. Level of incentives on teacher's productivity = 1925

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Remark
1	Housing schemes	454	163	290	186	2.63	High
2	Recreational Facilities	332	183	448	130	2.49	Low
3	Technological amenities	299	91	243	460	2.21	Low
4	Availability of instructional material	266	401	197	229	2.64	High
5	Teachers' Exposure to training	163	454	290	186	2.54	High
Overall Mean						2.50	High

For the second research question, Table 2 demonstrates that while housing schemes (mean = 2.63), availability of instructional materials (mean = 2.64), and training exposure (mean = 2.54) were rated favourably, recreational facilities (mean = 2.49) and technological amenities (mean = 2.21) lag behind, bringing the overall mean to 2.50. This pattern implies that although core incentives related to basic needs and professional resources are moderately adequate, gaps in supplementary facilities and technological support persist. Such deficits may limit teachers' ability to integrate modern teaching methods, a concern corroborated by Mnguni, (2024), who emphasised the role of adequate resources in sustaining teacher satisfaction and performance.

Table 3. Perception of school plant on teacher's productivity n = 1925

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Remark
1	Regular power supply	454	163	290	186	2.63	High
2	Infrastructures	332	183	448	130	2.39	Low
3	Technological amenities	299	91	243	460	2.20	Low
4	Availability of toilet and water	266	401	197	229	2.64	High
5	Health scheme	163	454	290	186	2.54	High
Overall Mean						2.50	High

Table 3 addresses the third research question by assessing the impact of the school plant on teachers' productivity. Regular power supply (mean = 2.63), access to clean toilets and water (mean = 2.64), and health schemes (mean = 2.54) were viewed positively, whereas infrastructural quality (mean = 2.39) and technological amenities (mean = 2.20) were perceived as lacking. An overall mean of 2.50 suggests that while some physical conditions are satisfactory, improvements in infrastructure and technology are urgently needed. Nhlapo, (2020) similarly

noted that well-maintained facilities are essential for creating an enabling learning environment that supports teacher effectiveness.

Table 4. Level of staff management on teacher's productivity n =1925

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Remark
1	Good leadership style	166	453	327	147	2.58	High
2	Crisis management	332	183	448	130	2.39	Low
3	Delegation of duty	422	186	221	264	2.70	High
4	Reward of hard work	493	234	213	153	2.98	High
Overall Mean						2.47	High

In relation to staff management (Table 4), findings show high scores for good leadership style (mean = 2.58), delegation of duties (mean = 2.70), and reward for hard work (mean = 2.98), while crisis management received a lower mean of 2.39. The overall mean of 2.47 highlights that supportive leadership and appropriate delegation contribute positively to teacher productivity, but schools may lack adequate crisis response strategies. This is in line with Wang'ombe (2023), who argued that competent leadership is vital for nurturing a positive school culture and managing challenges effectively.

Table 5. Level of teachers training on teacher's productivity n =1925

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Remark
1	Furtherance of education	166	453	327	147	2.58	High
2	Exchange programme	332	183	448	130	2.28	Low
3	In-house training	422	186	221	264	2.70	High
4	Seminar/Workshop	493	234	213	153	2.98	High
Overall Mean						2.47	High

Table 5 reveals that teachers value opportunities for further education (mean = 2.58), in-house training (mean = 2.70), and seminars/workshops (mean = 2.98), whereas exchange programmes scored lower (mean = 2.28), resulting in an overall mean of 2.47. This indicates an appreciation for continuous professional development, though there is a need to broaden training experiences through exchange initiatives. Garzón Artacho, et al., (2020) similarly emphasised the necessity of diverse and ongoing training to enhance teacher competence and classroom impact.

For hypothesis testing, the Pearson Product-Moment Correlation analysis presented in Table 6 demonstrates a statistically significant positive relationship between teacher motivation and productivity, with a correlation coefficient (r) of 0.418 and p -value of 0.002. This medium effect size indicates a moderate positive relationship, implying that as teachers' motivation increases, their productivity tends to improve correspondingly. Practically, this means that schools and policymakers must recognise motivation as a central lever for boosting teacher performance and, by extension, student achievement. The significant p -value confirms that this finding is unlikely due to chance within the tested sample.

These results reinforce the theoretical consensus that motivated teachers are generally more productive, better engaged, and more likely to contribute to a thriving educational environment (Robinson, 2022). However, certain limitations must be acknowledged. The reliance on self-

reported data may introduce bias, and the use of a four-point Likert scale, while justified for discouraging neutrality, may limit the nuance of respondents' opinions. Additionally, although assumptions of normality and linearity were tested and satisfied, future studies could benefit from triangulating quantitative findings with qualitative methods such as interviews to gain deeper insights into the lived experiences of teachers.

In summary, the study underscores the multifaceted nature of motivation and its tangible impact on teacher productivity within the local context of Akure South. It highlights areas where strategic interventions-such as improving infrastructure, expanding technological resources, strengthening leadership capacities, and diversifying training opportunities-can further enhance the professional well-being and output of teachers. By addressing these factors comprehensively, educational stakeholders can create a more conducive environment that empowers teachers to perform optimally and supports sustainable improvements in student learning outcomes.

6. CLOSING / CONCLUSION

This study has systematically examined the factors influencing teachers' motivation and productivity in public senior secondary schools in Akure South Local Government Area, Ondo State. The findings demonstrate that teachers generally exhibit a moderate to high level of motivation, driven by timely salary payments, job security, conducive working conditions, and clear opportunities for career advancement. These motivational factors, supported by adequate incentives and a functional school plant, significantly contribute to sustaining teachers' commitment and effectiveness in the classroom. Areas such as recreational facilities, technological resources, and crisis management mechanisms, however, were identified as needing considerable improvement to ensure a holistic support system for teachers. The study did not find any evidence suggesting that high motivation might induce complacency; on the contrary, the positive and significant relationship observed between motivation and productivity aligns with established motivation theories, reinforcing that when teachers' professional and welfare needs are met, their performance naturally improves. This confirms that strategic investments in teachers' well-being and professional development are key levers for achieving quality education outcomes.

Based on these insights, this study underscores the urgency for policymakers and educational stakeholders to prioritise timely and fair remuneration, modernise school infrastructure with adequate learning materials and technological facilities, and cultivate supportive leadership and participatory management practices. Empowering teachers through delegation of responsibilities and involving them in decision-making processes can further strengthen their sense of ownership and professional fulfilment. By grounding these recommendations in both the statistical evidence and established motivational frameworks, this research provides practical guidance for improving teacher productivity at the local level while offering a contextual contribution to the broader discourse on teacher motivation in developing educational systems. Future studies should expand on this work by employing longitudinal or mixed-methods approaches to deepen understanding of how motivational dynamics evolve over time and under varying policy interventions, thereby enriching global literature and informing sustainable educational reforms.

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