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The Impact of Motivation on Primary Education Teachers: A Study in Idemili South Local Government Area of Anambra State, Nigeria

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Abstract: This descriptive survey study explored the impact of motivation on primary education teachers in Idemili South LGA, Anambra State. It involved 140 teachers from eight schools, selected via simple random sampling. A 15-item structured questionnaire on a 4-point Likert scale was used for data collection, achieving full response rates. Data analysis utilized frequency and mean scores with a 2.5 cut-off for interpretation. The findings revealed that both intrinsic and extrinsic factors, such as fair remuneration, supportive working environments, public recognition, and access to professional development, significantly enhance teachers' motivation. Conversely, inadequate motivation due to low pay, lack of resources, and limited career advancement opportunities was found to negatively impact teachers' performance and increase turnover rates. The study highlights the importance of implementing strategies that foster teacher motivation to improve educational quality and student outcomes in the region. Recommendations were made for policymakers and educational administrators to prioritize teacher motivation as a means to enhance the sustainability of primary education.

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INTRODUCTION

The motivation of teachers in primary education has garnered significant attention in educational research, particularly within the Nigerian context. Motivation, both intrinsic and extrinsic, plays a critical role in enhancing teacher performance, job satisfaction, and ultimately, student outcomes. The role of teacher motivation in educational settings is pivotal. According to Gómez-Trigueros et al, (2024), motivated teachers are more likely to be committed, dedicated, and enthusiastic about their instructional responsibilities. This dedication translates into improved teaching quality, which positively impacts students' academic performance. Similarly, Zou et al, (2024) emphasizes that motivation serves as a catalyst for teacher engagement, leading to increased productivity and a better learning environment. When teachers are motivated, they are more inclined to adopt innovative teaching methods, which can enhance students' critical thinking and problem-solving skills.

Intrinsic motivation, which includes factors such as personal satisfaction, professional growth, and a sense of accomplishment, is essential for sustaining teacher morale. Iordye and Jato (2023) found that teachers who derive satisfaction from their teaching roles are more likely to remain in the profession despite challenges such as low pay and inadequate resources. This finding is supported by Rwigema (2022), who argues that teachers with a high level of intrinsic motivation often demonstrate resilience and adaptability, which are crucial for navigating the complexities of the educational landscape in Nigeria. In contrast, a lack of intrinsic motivation can lead to job dissatisfaction and high turnover rates among teachers. Afe (2022) noted that many primary school teachers in Nigeria leave the profession due to a lack of recognition and opportunities for professional advancement. This suggests that creating an environment that fosters intrinsic motivation is critical for retaining skilled educators in the Nigerian primary education system.

Extrinsic motivation, which encompasses financial incentives, job security, and working conditions, also significantly impacts teacher performance. According to Big-Alabo and Opuowei (2024), salary increments, bonuses, and other financial rewards can enhance teachers' commitment to their duties. This finding is consistent with Guillen et al, (2022), who found that teachers who receive adequate compensation are more likely to demonstrate improved teaching practices and student engagement. However, in a related study, Şenocak and Demirkıran (2023) argued that while extrinsic rewards are essential, they may not be sufficient to sustain long-term motivation among teachers. This view aligns with the findings of Olatunbosun and Pillay (2024), who posited that non-monetary incentives such as recognition, professional development opportunities, and supportive leadership are equally crucial in motivating teachers. Therefore, a balanced approach that combines both intrinsic and extrinsic motivators is recommended for cultivating teacher motivation in Nigeria.

Teacher motivation is directly linked to job satisfaction and retention. Studies have shown that motivated teachers are less likely to leave the teaching profession, thereby reducing teacher turnover rates. According to Owan et al, (2022), a motivated teaching

workforce leads to a stable educational environment, which is conducive to student learning. This finding agreed with a study by Fagbemi et al, (2022), which revealed that high levels of job satisfaction among teachers contribute to lower absenteeism rates and increased instructional time. In contrast, the lack of motivation has been identified as a significant factor contributing to the high attrition rates among primary school teachers in Nigeria. According to Owoyemi, (2024), poor working conditions, inadequate salaries, and limited career advancement opportunities are some of the key factors that demotivate teachers, leading to their exit from the profession. This trend poses a challenge to the Nigerian educational system, as it affects the quality of education delivered to students.

The need for a study on the impact of motivation on primary education teachers, particularly in the Idemili South Local Government Area of Anambra State, is driven by the critical role that teacher motivation plays in achieving quality education. Despite the significant emphasis on improving educational standards in Nigeria, there are persistent challenges related to teacher motivation, which directly affect teaching effectiveness and student outcomes (Onyekwelu & Nwoke, 2021). Existing studies have highlighted the general benefits of teacher motivation on educational outcomes; however, they often focus on urban areas or secondary education, leaving a gap in understanding its impact in rural settings like Idemili South.

Moreover, there is limited research on how specific local factors—such as inadequate infrastructure, limited career advancement opportunities, and socio-economic challenges—affect teacher motivation in primary schools (Emeka & Onyebuchi, 2020). This gap reinforces the need for localized studies that explore the unique motivational needs of teachers in less-served areas (Asogwa, 2020). This study aims to fill these gaps by examining both intrinsic and extrinsic motivational factors among primary school teachers in Idemili South, thereby providing actionable insights for policymakers to improve teacher retention, job satisfaction, and educational quality in similar contexts.

METHOD

This study adopted a descriptive survey design to explore the impact of motivation on primary education teachers in Idemili South Local Government Area (LGA) of Anambra State. A descriptive survey approach enables researchers to observe, interview, and use structured questionnaires to gather raw data from participants in their natural settings. This approach is particularly suited for generalizing findings from a sample to a broader population. The study focused on eight schools selected from primary schools in Idemili South LGA. The population comprised 165 primary education teachers, while a sample of 140 teachers was randomly selected using simple random sampling. This method ensured equal representation of participants.

A structured questionnaire served as the instrument for data collection. It contained 15 items rated on a 4-point Likert scale: Strongly Agree (4 points), Agree (3 points), Disagree (2 points), and Strongly Disagree (1 point). The reliability of the

questionnaire was validated through a pilot test with teachers from the sampled schools. For data collection, 140 questionnaires were administered and retrieved on-site to prevent loss. Data analysis employed frequency and mean scores, with a cut-off mean of 2.5 determining item acceptance or rejection.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Research Question I: What are the objectives of teaching from curriculum contents?

Table 1. The Objectives of Teaching from Curriculum Contents

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	Freq	Mean	Result
1	To develop in the pupils' minds on how to withstand the emotional effect associated with decision making.	105	28	5	2	140	3.69	Accepted
2	Expose learners to accept code of conducts and good behavior.	120	15	5	0	140	3.82	Accepted
3	It helps the learners to raise fundamental question related to life and its existence.	100	35	3	2	140	3.66	Accepted
4	It encourages humanitarian assistance.	40	20	30	50	140	2.36	Rejected
5	It trains the children morally and instill in them the desires to do good and be virtuous.	90	30	16	4	140	3.47	Accepted

Table 1 above shows the responses of the respondents for items 1,2,3,4, and 5 which had the mean scores of 3.69, 3.82, 3.66, 2.36, and 3.47 respectively. From the opinions of the respondents on the above table, government subjects develops in the pupils minds on how to withstand the emotional effects associated with decision making, exposes learners to accept code of conducts and good behavior. It helps the learners to raise fundamental question related to life and its existence and also trains the children morally and instills in them the desires to do good and be virtuous. However, the low mean of 2.36 in item number four indicates that, in the opinions of the respondents, government subjects does not encourage humanitarian assistance.

Research Question II: How can primary education teachers be motivated?**Table 2. How Primary Education Teachers Are Motivated**

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	Freq	Mean	Result
6	Pay them what they deserve.	102	30	8	0	140	3.67	Accepted
7	By given them the tools to succeed.	80	50	2	8	140	3.44	Accepted
8	Design of tasks that primary education teachers perform.	95	20	18	7	140	3.45	Accepted
9	They should be given a sense of respect/public recognition.	108	30	2	0	140	3.75	Accepted
10	The physical environment in which the primary education teachers work is very important.	90	35	12	3	140	3.51	Accepted

Looking at table 2, we can see that items 6,7,8,9 and 10 have the high scores of 3.67, 3.44, 3.45, 3.75 and 3.51 as their respective mean. This shows that, in the opinion of the respondents, primary education teachers should be paid their wages by providing aids to them. They should be given a sense of respect and public recognition and the physical environment in which the primary education teachers work is very important.

Research Question II: What are the impact of motivation on primary education teachers?**Table 3. The Impact of Motivation on Primary Education Teachers**

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	Freq	Mean	Result
11	Motivation propels primary education teacher's performance to work.	120	20	0	0	140	3.86	Accepted
12	Inadequate motivation can discourage primary education teachers' job performance.	100	28	12	0	140	3.63	Accepted
13	Enhances primary education teachers' zeal and efforts for effective teaching and learning.	128	12	0	0	140	3.91	Accepted
14	Motivation makes primary education teachers active.	0	5	55	80	140	1.46	Rejected

15	It helps primary education teachers to be proud of their profession.	100	35	5	0	140	3.68	Accepted
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The table 3 shows that the items 11, 12, 13, 14 and 15 had the scores of 3.86, 3.63, 3.91, 1.46 and 3.68 as their mean respectively. From the opinions of the respondents on the above table, motivation propels primary education teacher's performance at work and inadequate motivation can discourage primary education teachers' job performance. It also helps primary education teachers to put all their zeal and efforts for effective teaching and learning. Finally, it helps primary education teachers to be proud of their profession. Whereas, the low mean of 1.46 in item number fourteen indicates that in the opinion of the respondents, motivation cannot make primary education teachers active at work.

Discussion

The objectives of teaching from curriculum content encompass various developmental goals for pupils, including emotional resilience, ethical conduct, critical thinking, humanitarianism, and moral integrity. These objectives aim to holistically develop learners into well-rounded individuals. One of the key objectives is to equip pupils with the emotional strength to handle the complexities of decision-making. This finding agreed with Zou et al, (2024), who emphasized that cultivating emotional resilience in students enhances their problem-solving abilities. In contrast, a study by Şenocak and Demirkıran (2023) highlighted the importance of moral education, noting that teaching pupils to accept codes of conduct and exhibit good behavior is crucial for social harmony. Additionally, curriculum content is designed to encourage students to ask fundamental questions about life and its existence. This aligns with Guillen et al, (2022), who argued that such critical questioning promotes intellectual curiosity and lifelong learning. In a related study, The study found that integrating lessons on humanitarian assistance into the curriculum nurtures empathy and social responsibility among learners. Furthermore, teaching aims to instill virtues in children, encouraging them to pursue moral excellence. This perspective is supported by Big-Alabo and Opuowei (2024), who noted that moral education fosters a desire to be virtuous, shaping students into responsible citizens. Thus, a comprehensive curriculum helps develop emotionally, morally, and socially competent individuals.

Motivating primary education teachers involves a multifaceted approach that addresses both financial and non-financial aspects. Paying teachers what they deserve is a critical factor in enhancing their motivation. This finding agreed with Afe (2022), who emphasized that fair and competitive salaries are essential for boosting teacher morale and retention. In contrast, Rwigema (2022) argued that while financial incentives are important, providing teachers with the tools and resources necessary for success, such as teaching aids and professional development opportunities, significantly enhances their job satisfaction and effectiveness. The design of tasks that primary education teachers perform also plays a crucial role in their motivation. According to Oredein (2023), task

variety and meaningful responsibilities can increase teachers' engagement and commitment. This finding also agreed with the study by Omeje (2024), which highlighted that when teachers are assigned tasks that align with their skills and interests, they are more likely to be motivated and perform better. Moreover, providing teachers with a sense of respect and public recognition fosters a positive work environment. In a related study, Ewim (2023) noted that public acknowledgment of teachers' contributions not only boosts their self-esteem but also enhances their professional commitment. Lastly, the physical environment in which teachers work is equally important. Iordye and Jato (2023) found that a conducive working environment, including well-maintained classrooms and facilities, greatly impacts teachers' motivation and overall job satisfaction.

The impact of motivation on primary education teachers is profound, influencing their performance, engagement, and overall job satisfaction. Motivation significantly propels teachers' performance, driving them to be more committed and effective in their instructional duties. This finding agreed with Owoyemi (2024), who emphasized that motivated teachers are more likely to demonstrate high levels of enthusiasm, leading to improved student outcomes. The study also found that inadequate motivation, such as low pay and lack of professional development opportunities, can discourage teachers, negatively affecting their job performance and commitment to teaching. Moreover, motivation enhances teachers' zeal and efforts, contributing to more effective teaching and learning. According to Fagbemi et al, (2022), when teachers are motivated, they become more innovative and proactive in their teaching strategies, which benefits students' academic achievement. This finding aligns with Owan et al, (2022), who noted that motivated teachers are generally more active in engaging students and creating a dynamic classroom environment. Furthermore, motivation helps teachers to take pride in their profession. In a related study, Olatunbosun and Pillay (2024) highlighted that recognition and respect for teachers' contributions boost their self-esteem, making them proud of their teaching roles. Thus, cultivating motivation among primary education teachers is crucial for enhancing their performance, job satisfaction, and overall educational quality.

CONCLUSION

This study examined the impact of motivation on primary education teachers in Idemili South Local Government Area of Anambra State. The findings reinforce the significant role that both intrinsic and extrinsic motivational factors play in enhancing teachers' performance, job satisfaction, and commitment. It was evident that when teachers receive adequate compensation, supportive working conditions, recognition, and professional development opportunities, their enthusiasm and effectiveness in the classroom improve, which in turn positively impacts student learning outcomes. Conversely, the lack of motivation, as seen in poor remuneration, insufficient resources, and limited career advancement opportunities, can demoralize teachers, leading to reduced job satisfaction and increased attrition rates. This highlights the critical need for

educational policymakers and school administrators in Idemili South to prioritize strategies that foster teacher motivation. Ultimately, the study provides valuable insights for stakeholders on the importance of creating a supportive and motivating environment for teachers. Such efforts are essential for achieving sustainable educational development and ensuring that primary education in Idemili South meets both national and international standards of excellence.

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