

Influence of Motivation on Students' Academic Performance

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Abstract: This study investigated, the influence of motivation on students' academic performance. Four research questions and 4 null hypotheses were formulated to guide the study. The study employed the survey design. The sample comprised of 720 respondents comprising of 640 students and 80 teachers randomly drawn from 16 secondary schools and 15 people from different walks of life. Researcher's self-developed motivational questionnaire (IMOAP) on influence of motivation on academic performance for secondary school students and teachers duly vetted by specialists in educational measurement and evaluation, guidance and counselling and educational psychology were used to obtained information from the respondents. Data collected were analysed using the simple percentage. The results of data analysis showed that: Motivation of students is very important for better output in the academic pursuit. Students' motivation has high positive correlation in their academic performance. There is significant relationship between school environment and structure and students' motivation. Based on the findings some relevant educational implications were highlighted and some recommendations were made.

Key words: Motivation, influence, students' academic performance, secondary school, teachers

INTRODUCTION

Societies all over the world have used education as an instrument for the achievement of their national interests and objectives. Education is an instrument par excellence for effecting national development. It fosters the worth and development of the individual, for the individual's sake and for the general development of the society (National Policy on Education, 2004). All these call for functional education for the promotion of a progressive and united country. Therefore, school programs need to be relevant, practical and comprehensive, while interest and ability should determine the individual's direction in education. It is only when these 2 factors come together that we can achieve the nation's objectives.

In Nigeria, for example, in order to achieve the goals and objectives of education, the government set up 3 levels of education: primary education, secondary education and tertiary education (National Policy on Education, 2004). For the purpose of this research, the discussion is limited to secondary education.

Secondary education is the second level of education in Nigeria. According to National Policy on Education (2004), secondary education is the education children receive after primary education and before the tertiary stage. The goals of secondary education are to prepare the individual for:

- Useful living within the society.
- Higher education.

The question which this research raised is: Is our secondary education fulfilling these objectives for which it is set up? Again, how useful are those who pass through our secondary education to themselves, their parents, their society, the state and the nation as a whole? Another question to is: how has our secondary education prepared our youths for higher education?

On one hand, looking at the number of students that graduate from secondary schools every year, one may say that secondary education is trying to fulfill these obligations. But on the other hand, considering the quality of those students that graduate every year, it looks like secondary education is not realizing the goals and objectives for which it is set up. According to Uwadiae (2006), as long as there are still examination malpractices in secondary schools, the goals and objectives of secondary education are not being realized. Elaborating on this he says that, the percentage of reported cases of examination malpractice against Edo State of Nigeria, for example, has been on the increase. The state was 18th in 2001, 17th in 2002, 9th in 2003, 7th in 2004 and has increased to be the 4th ranked state with cases of examination malpractice in 2005. This 'monster' has cast some level of doubt on whether secondary education fulfills its' objectives and on the veracity of any good academic performance. If the number of reported

cases of examination malpractice could be as high, how are we sure that the number of unreported cases, some of which formed part of the good performance, are not as high or even higher? If examination malpractice is increasing every year in secondary education in Edo State of Nigeria, it implies that students are not being prepared well for higher institution. As Uwadiae (2006) said, the issue of examination malpractice in the secondary education should be a food for thought for all of us because it betrays the aim and goal of secondary education and reveals a lacuna in our secondary education. In the opinion of Awanbor (2005), this lacuna in our secondary education among other things is lack of students' motivation. It is the opinion of Rusillo and Arias (2004), that there is significant influence of academic motivation on learning at school. Awanbor (2005) holds that students, who lack sufficient level of academic motivation exhibit a weak drive towards the pursuit of academic goals. Such students manifest signs and symptoms of indifference and apathy towards school. Majority of such students, if not all, are those who are involved in examination malpractices.

Furthermore, Awanbor (2005) noted that because of poor motivation due to inadequate remuneration, poor teaching environment as a result of lack of basic teaching materials, listless and unmotivated learners in the classroom, among others, the teachers have become the endangered species in their own profession. They no longer teach and the students in turn no longer learn. He suggested that students should be academically motivated as this will go a long way to solving most of the problems faced in education system and also increase students' academic performance. He further remarked that motivating students will help them to be more responsible and have more interest in studies. He also holds that motivation of students will reduce, if not completely eliminate, high school dropout rates, low enrolment rates, truancy, etc. In the view of Renchler (1992), every educator needs to be concerned about motivation. It is a quality that students, teachers, parents, school administrators and other members of the community must have if our educational system is to prepare young people adequately for the challenges and demands of the coming century. Of course, the way these various groups of individuals generate and use motivation differs greatly. Students need motivation to learn, parents need it to track the educational progress of their sons and daughters, teachers need it to become better teachers and school administrators need it to ensure that every facet of the schools they manage continues to improve. How true is this claim that students are not academically motivated in Edo State of Nigeria? It is against this background

that this study investigated the influence of motivation on students' academic performance in Edo State of Nigeria.

- Is there any relationship between motivation and students' academic performance?
- Is there any relationship between school environment and students' motivation?
- Is there any relationship between home environment and students' motivation?
- Is there any relationship between government activities and policies and students' motivation?

H₁: There is no significant relationship between motivation and students' academic performance.

H₂: There is no significant relationship between school environment and structure and students' motivation.

H₃: There is no significant relationship between the home environment and students' motivation.

H₄: There is no significant relationship between government activities and students' motivation.

The main purpose in this research, was to find out the influence of motivation on students' academic performance. Specifically, the research explored the extent to which teachers and school environment affect students' motivation. It also examined how parents and family environment affect students' motivation. Furthermore, it investigated whether government policies and activities affect student's motivation.

It is hoped that the research should be able to:

- Identify the effect of motivation on students' academic performance.
- Provide information on those whose duty it is to motivate students.
- Suggest ways students can be motivated.
- Help teachers in the classroom situation, towards identifying the techniques for motivation of students and thus improve their academic performance.
- Provide parents, families, schools and the government information on their roles in motivating students and improving academic performance.
- Show that motivation of students will help to solve some of the problems of education, especially examination malpractices and by doing that, help achieve educational goals and objectives.

The scope of this study was limited to Edo State of Nigeria. Also, the study was limited to only public secondary schools.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Population of the study: The population of the study comprised of 4,460 individuals made up of all senior and junior secondary schools students, teachers and principals of the 16 public secondary schools in Esan West Local Government Area of Edo State and some members of the public including educationists, parents and some public figures.

Sample and sampling technique: Six hundred and forty students from both Junior and Senior Secondary Schools and 80 teachers totaling 720 respondents randomly drawn from the 169 public secondary schools in Esan West Local Government Area of Edo State of Nigeria constituted the sample for this study. Outside the target group, 5 educationists, 2 psychologists, 3 parents and 3 other public figures were interviewed.

Instrument for data collection: The instrument for gathering information was the questionnaire. To buttress this, oral interview was also conducted. The questionnaire was of 2 types: The secondary school students' questionnaire and the secondary school teachers' questionnaire.

Validity of the instrument: The instrument was validated by 2 psychologists, 2 guidance counsellors and 2 professors in educational measurement and evaluation.

Reliability of the instrument: The reliability of instrument was based on the split-half method. The reliability coefficient obtained was 0.75. This confirmed that the instrument is reliable.

Research procedure/administration of instrument: The questionnaire for the students and those for the teachers were administered by the researcher and some research assistants. The questionnaires were retrieved from the respondents after 5 days.

Technique for data analysis: The data collected were analysed using the simple percentage.

RESULTS

Test of hypotheses

H₂: There is no significant relationship between motivation and students' academic performance.

From Table 1, it was observed that 69% of student respondents and 75% of teacher respondents strongly agreed that motivation of students improves their

Table 1: Effect of motivation on students' academic performance

Degree of estimation	Students' response	Students' (%)	Teachers' response	Teachers' (%)
Strongly agreed	439	69	60	75
Agreed	192	30	20	25
Disagreed	9	1	0	0
Strongly disagreed	0	0	0	0
Total	640	100	80	100

Table 2: Students' response to effect of teachers and school environment on students' motivation

Degree of estimation	Responses item 2	Item 2 (%)	Responses item 3	Item 3 (%)	Responses item 4	Item 4 (%)
Strongly agreed	320	50	338	53	288	45
Agreed	320	50	224	35	192	30
Disagreed	0	0	46	7	96	15
Strongly disagreed	0	0	32	5	64	10
Total	640	100	640	100	640	100

academic performance. About 30% of students and 25% of teachers agreed that motivation of students improve their academic performance, while 1% of student respondents disagreed with the opinion. Thus, 99% of the students and 100% of the teacher respondents accepted that motivation of students, improve their academic performance.

Also, from oral interview conducted, all respondents held the view that motivation of students is very important for students' academic performance. Therefore, the hypothesis is rejected.

H₂: There is no significant relationship between school environment and structure and students' motivation.

To test this hypothesis, the 2 groups of respondents-students and teachers were consulted. For students, items 2, 3 and 4 on the questionnaire for secondary school students were used (Appendix 1).

Table 2 showed that all the respondents agreed that corrective feedback from teachers stimulates proper study habit and better output among students.

Item 3 showed that 53% of the respondents strongly agreed that students work harder academically in schools which organize prize/award days, 35% agreed to the opinion, while 7 and 5%, disagreed and strongly disagreed, respectively. Hence, 88% accepted and 12% disagreed that students work harder academically in schools which organize prize/award days. In addition, 75% of the respondents accepted that school environment and structure help to motivate students for academic excellence, while 25% did not accept the opinion.

The hypothesis was further tested with the response of teachers to items 2-4 in the questionnaire for secondary school teachers (Appendix 2).

Table 3: Teachers' response to effect of teachers and school environment on motivation of students

Degree of estimation	Responses item 2	Item 2 (%)	Responses item 3	Item 3 (%)	Responses item 4	Item 4 (%)
Strongly agreed	48	60	64	80	48	60
Agreed	32	40	16	20	32	40
Disagreed	0	0	0	0	0	0
Strongly disagreed	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	80	100	80	100	80	100

Table 4: Students' response to effects of the home on students' motivation

Degree of estimation	Responses item 5	Item 5 (%)	Responses item 6	Item 6 (%)	Responses item 7	Item 7 (%)
Strongly agreed	336	52.5	336	52.5	368	57.5
Agreed	228	45.0	160	25.0	192	32.5
Disagreed	16	2.5	112	17.5	32	5.0
Strongly disagreed	0	0.0	32	5.0	32	5.0
Total	640	100.0	640	100.0	640	100.0

Table 3 showed that all the respondents (100%) accepted that inter-class debates and quizzes promote hard work among students.

Also, all the respondents agreed that instructional materials stimulate proper study habits and better output among students.

In addition, 60 and 40% respondents strongly agreed and agreed, respectively that qualified teachers motivate students better than untrained ones, which implies that all the respondents accepted that qualified teachers motivate students better than untrained teachers.

Thus, from the responses in Table 2 and 3, it can be deduced that there is significant relationship between school environment and structure and students' motivation. The same view was held by those interviewed orally. Hence, it can be concluded that school has a lot of role to play in the motivation of students for a better academic performance. Therefore, the hypothesis is rejected.

H₃: There is no significant relationship between the home environment and students' motivation.

The hypothesis was tested with items 5-7 in the questionnaire for secondary school students (Appendix 2).

Table 4 showed that 97.5% of the respondents accepted that prizes and other encouragements inspire students to excellence especially when they come from the home, while 2.5% of the respondents disagreed with this opinion.

In addition, 77.5% of the respondents accepted that conducive home environment usually motivate students to work harder in academic work.

Finally, 90% of the respondents accepted the opinion that students, who are accepted and praised by their parents are motivated to study harder than those who are not.

This hypothesis was further tested with teachers' responses to items 5-7 on the teachers' questionnaire.

Table 5 showed that all respondents (100%) agreed that parents-assisted home studies inspire students' motivation, students, who attend home lessons are inspired to work harder for excellence and conducive home environment helps students to study harder.

Therefore, with all the responses in Table 4 and 5, it can be deduced that there is significant relationship between home and students' motivation. The home has great role to play in motivating students for better academic performance. The same information was also gathered from oral interview. The hypothesis is therefore, rejected.

H₄: There is no significant relationship between government activities and students' motivation. This hypothesis tended to examine if government activities, policies and provision of educational amenities could help to motivate students in their academic performance.

The hypothesis was tested with responses to items 8 and 9 in the students' questionnaire.

Table 6 showed that 100% of the respondents accepted that availability of reading materials in the classroom, libraries and laboratory encourage readership among students.

For item 9, all the respondents accepted that provision of variety of activities and sensory stimulations encourage excellent academic performance among students.

The hypothesis was further tested with teachers' responses to items 8 and 9 in the secondary school teachers' questionnaire (Appendix 1).

Table 7 showed that availability of reading materials in classrooms, libraries and laboratory equipment encourage readership among students and that good educational policies motivate students in their academic performance. The hypothesis is therefore, rejected.

This study revealed that students need to be motivated both intrinsically and extrinsically. Both ways of motivation are necessary for a better academic performance and the more students are motivated the better chance of their academic performance. Thus agreeing with Afolabi and Imhonde (2003), who hold that what counts for the difference in performance of an individual in doing something is usually the level of

Table 5: Teachers' response to effect of the home on students' academic motivation

Degree of estimation	Responses item 5	Item 5 (%)	Responses item 6	Item 6 (%)	Responses item 7	Item 7 (%)
Strongly agreed	48	60	32	40	32	40
Agreed	32	40	48	60	48	60
Disagreed	0	0	0	0	0	0
Strongly disagreed	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	80	100	80	100	80	100

Table 6: Students' response to government role on motivation of students

Degree of estimation	Responses item 8	Item 8 (%)	Responses item 9	Item 9 (%)
Strongly agreed	464	72.5	320	50
Agreed	176	27.5	320	50
Strongly disagreed	0	0.0	0	0
Disagreed	0	0.0	0	0
Total	640	100.0	640	100

Table 7: Teachers' response to government role on the motivation of students

Degree of estimation	Responses item 8	Item 8 (%)	Responses item 9	Item 9 (%)
Strongly agreed	32	40	48	60
Agreed	48	60	32	40
Strongly disagreed	0	0	0	0
Disagreed	0	0	0	0
Total	80	100	80	100

motivation. This also agrees with Scales and Roehlkeparlain (2003) who, from the result of their study with Colorado Springs 9th and 12th grades concluded that comprehensive, asset-based approaches to education and youth development have tremendous potential to contribute to the academic success of students from all backgrounds.

Ascertained that students' motivation is very important for their academic performance, the question to ask is whose duty is it to motivate students? Oniyama and Oniyama (2005) hold that students play a major role in motivating themselves for a better academic performance, but also other people have their role to play.

The investigation also revealed that both teachers, vice-principals, principals and school organizations have great role to play in the motivation of students for their improved academic performance. This result is not surprising because at least, 1/3rd of students' daily life is spent in school. The result corroborated the views of Aluede and Omoregie (2005), who showed that teachers have great role to play in motivation of students. Maehr (1990), gave teachers some skills to apply in carrying out their role in motivating students during their teaching-learning encounter. It is believed then that schools with better organization, good academic environment and qualified teachers will motivate their students more and students from such schools stand the chance of better academic performance than schools that do not have such

academic environment organization and qualified teachers. Brown *et al.* (2003) stressed the need to introduce asset building to teachers to encourage them in helping for achievement gains of students.

The results obtained from this study also showed that parents and home environment have great role to play in the motivation of students for an improved academic performance.

It was discovered that students, who are accepted, supported and encouraged by their families stand better chance of performing better in their academic pursuit. Again, where there is an academic environment in the home, students tend to study harder and better. This study therefore, contributes to the existing evidence (Scales and Roehlkepartain, 2003; Oniyama and Oniyama, 2005) to suggest that family and structure of the family have a great role in children's performance in their academic pursuits. They hold that if the family has the resources, supports their children and creates academic environment, children reared-up in such families do better in their academic performance. So, one can simply infer here that family and home environment enhance students' academic motivation.

The findings of this study showed that both students and teachers strongly believe that government provision of library, school equipment, qualified teachers and good policies, etc, would go a long way to motivate students in their academic pursuit. Perhaps, this is why (Akabogu *et al.*, 1992) said that academic performance of students derives a lot from the educational administration and policies. As they hold, the more educational needs are satisfied and good and realizable policies are made, the better students perform.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions were drawn:

- That students need to be motivated so that they can do better in their academic pursuit. In motivating students, there is need to use both intrinsic and extrinsic ways of motivation. Both ways of motivation are necessary and none of them is dispensable.
- Parents and every family member should be involved in motivation of students. Each family member has a role to play in the motivation of the member, who is a student.

- Teachers and principals have a big responsibility in motivating students. In their approach to teaching-learning environment, teachers should use skills and methods of teaching that will help to motivate students. They should realise that students vary in their rate of assimilation, hence, the need to adopt different techniques in teaching-learning situation.
- The organisation, administration of the school and the environment of the school should be such that can motivate students in their studies. Administrators and supervisors of schools should ensure an academic environment in schools.
- Government activities and policies on education play major role in students' motivation. Thus, government should always ensure that they make good policies and try to implement them.
- Every citizen has a role to play in motivating students and in seeing to the achievement of educational goals.
- Companies, private and public enterprises and individuals also have great role to play in motivating students. They can do this by awarding scholarships, donating educational equipment in the form of chairs, books, laboratory equipments, sports equipments, etc.
- Motivation of students will play great role in minimising examination malpractices and go a long way in seeing to the realisation of educational goal.
- Students should be made to understand that education is first for their own benefit as they are beneficiaries of their academic pursuit before any other person.
- Trained teachers, who know what they are doing and are interested in students improvement should be employed to teach.
- Schools should give awards to students, who perform well, as this will help to motivate students.
- Local government education section or local government executive should organise awards for best performed schools as this will help both teachers and students to improve in their academic work.
- Both local government authority and school authority should organise debates and other competitions as this will help to motivate students.
- Teachers should be diligent in their duties and should try to employ the different methods of teaching in their teaching-learning encounter with students.
- Teachers should be giving students' parents assisted home work daily or weekly.
- The different individuals, private and public enterprises and companies should be encouraged to take up some educational projects.
- Parents should try to instill educational environment in their homes and try as much as possible to accept and encourage their wards.
- Parents should make sure that they assist their children with their home work, reward those, who have done well and show their children love and acceptance.
- Parents should try to organize home lessons for their children and wards.
- There should be counsellors in schools to help both parents and students.
- Schools should publish annual reports of academic achievements of students and mail such to parents.
- Academic awards and trophies should be displayed in school trophy case.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the result of this study, the following recommendations are offered:

- Students should be conscientious and empowered to realise that no matter what anybody does to motivate them, they play the most important role of motivating themselves. No matter what one does to motivate students, if they do not respond positively, all the efforts will be a waste. Students should be made to know and understand that their destiny lies in their hands.

Appendix 1: Questionnaire for secondary school students (IMOAP II)

Items	Options			
	SA	A	D	SD
1. Motivation of students improve their academic performance				
2. Corrective feedback from teachers stimulates proper study habit and better out put among students.				
3. Students work harder academically in schools which organize prize/award days.				
4. Close supervision by the principal and vice-principal stimulate students to greater output				
5. Prizes and other encouragements inspire students to excellence especially when they come from the home.				
6. Conducive home environment usually motivate students to work harder in academic work.				
7. Students, who are accepted and praised by their parents are motivated to study harder than those who are not.				
8. Availability of reading materials in the classroom, libraries and laboratory encourage readership among students.				
9. Provision of variety of activities and sensory stimulations encourage excellent academic performance among students.				

Key: SA = Strongly Agree A = Agree D = Disagree SD = Strongly Disagree

Appendix 2: Questionnaire for secondary school teachers (IMOAP I)

Items	Options			
	SA	A	D	SD
1. Motivation of students improve their academic performance				
2. Inter-class debates and quizzes promote hard work among students.				
3. Instructional materials stimulate proper study habits and better output among students.				
4. Qualified teachers motivate students better than untrained ones				
5. Parent-assisted home studies inspire students' motivation.				
6. Students, who attend home lessons are inspired to work harder for excellence.				
7. Conducive home environment helps students to study harder				
8. Availability of materials in the classrooms, libraries and laboratory equipment encourage readership among students.				
9. Good educational policies also motivate students to do better in academics.				

Key: SA = Strongly agree A = Agree D = Disagree, SD = Strongly Disagree

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