

# ACHIEVEMENT MOTIVATION AND ATTITUDE TO WORK: A DESIDERATION TO SOCIAL STUDIES STUDENTS' ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN CALABAR EDUCATION ZONE, CROSS RIVER STATE, NIGERIA.

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## **ABSTRACT**

This study investigated teachers' motivation and attitude to work: a desideration to social studies students' academic performance in Calabar education zone of Cross River State, Nigeria. A survey research design was adopted for the study. Two data collection instruments titled, Teachers Motivation and Attitude to Work Questionnaire (TMAWQ) and Social Study Achievement Test (SSAT) were used in the study. A split half reliability estimate of the instruments was determined through trial testing with reliability indices of .85 and .89. Two hundred (200) teachers and 200 students were selected using simple and stratified random sampling techniques. The Pearson Product Moment Correlation was used in analyzing the data at 0.05 level of significance. Findings showed that motivation of teachers in terms of salaries,/fringe benefits and teachers' attitude to work in terms of teacher-student relationship significantly relates to students' academic performance. It was concluded that students' academic performance is dependent on motivation of teachers and the attitude with which teachers' exhibit

towards their work. It was recommended that teachers' salaries be enhanced while they show commitment to their job. Keywords: Achievement motivation, attitude to work, desideration, academic performance.

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## **Introduction**

The general outcry on abysmal students' academic performance in both internal and external examination is an indicator to the fact that academic success is not just a wishful thinking. More worrisome, is the students' involvement in examination malpractice, cultism, impersonation, sexual immorality/promiscuity and other negative vices. Ene (2011) maintains that these deter academic progress, promote low productivity and unemployability. Success and failure at any level of learning can be attributed to how a student processes the information acquired from the teacher in the classroom, textbooks, peers and the world at large, how the student is motivated and how one responds to every confronting situations.

In her study of other influencing factors on achievement motivation and academic performance Eze (2002) observed that etiological perspective in psychology involves the study of human behaviour in terms of its adaptive qualities. She further reveals that students possess enormous potentials which need to be developed through the provision of a stimulating environment. She emphasizes that development results from the interplay between the student and the environment. Thus, a student's achievement motivation and academic performance is influenced not only by the parents and siblings

at home but also by the geographical location where the student grows, the school attended, the family's social status, ethnic and cultural background and values.

Among the factors influencing achievement motivation and academic performance of student's adversely, teachers seem to receive the greatest brunt of the blame and have been accused by parents and the general public for the poor performance of students and low standard of education. To say the least, every parent wants the best for the wards but little attention is paid to teachers' welfare. They are not acknowledged nor accorded recognition but it is pertinent to note that for teachers to be productive, students motivated to learn effectively; teachers' all round motivation must be given a priority. Teachers' role among others, include; monitoring and supervision of the students under their charge. Piaget (1970) observes that human beings pass through specific growth and developmental stages. As students develop from childhood into adolescence, the tendency to have self-identity, recognition and independence increases. Usually, adolescent students as young adults, try to question the authority and restriction over them, seeking greater freedom.

If students must be motivated to remain focus on their academic work, Lamanna (2002) indicated that, they must not be permitted so much freedom before they get themselves into trouble that they cannot manage. There is the need to have close supervision of students' school work before they are over taken by negative peer influences and jeopardize their academic work. The relationship between the teacher and students in the classroom has a great role to play in influencing students' academic performance. The importance of good teacher-student relationship has been stressed by Denga (2008), where he maintains that, the teacher is a significant figure to all students. The way they copy what he says and who he is, shows that he can destroy and also built

students character. A friendly professional relationship with students, Denga maintains, is capable of stimulating and motivating them learn effectively. Knowing the needs of individual students, establishing motivational relationship with them and being sensitive to their needs and problems is socially and psychologically healthy. On the other hand, irritable hostile, sarcastic, autocratic, indifferent and impersonal teacher has poor interpersonal relationship with students and is likely to be scaring to students. These have the tendency of dampening students' interest to learn, thereby bringing about poor academic performance.

An investigation into the influence of teacher-student relationship on academic performance was carried out by Ndifon (2006). 2000 students and 500 teachers, drawn from 100 schools were randomly sampled and served with questionnaire based on eight hypotheses. The data obtained from the study were analysed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation analysis. The findings revealed that attitude to work in terms of teacher relationship significantly relate to students learning outcome and academic performance. The findings further showed that a significant difference exists between the performance of students who related cordially with their teachers and those who did not. The interpretation of the above findings emphasized the fact that teachers who establish warm relationship with their students based on understanding, love and genuine concern for academic success of the students created a social environment/atmosphere that encouraged students to work harder and achieve higher.

Another factor influencing academic performance is teachers' level of job satisfaction. It is certain that, when employees like their job, they become satisfied with it. If they are enthusiastic with their job, they will be happy to come to work daily. In the same vein teachers will do better in the discharge of their duty if they are satisfied with

their job and this will increase productivity for high students' academic performance. Inyang (2008) researched on job satisfaction among civil servants in Cross River State. The researcher's sample was made up of 300 civil servants Pearson Product Moment Correlation statistics was used in the analysis of the data obtained at 0.05 level of significance. Identified factors leading to job satisfaction include; good human relation, promotion prospect, recognition of ability, working condition, social support and job design. Inyang (2008) concluded that an individual's job satisfaction leads to commitment to the organization while dissatisfaction results in behaviours detrimental to the organization. The implication here is that, a teacher who is satisfied with his job is committed to it but dissatisfaction results in behaviours detrimental to educational sector. This in turn brings about poor academic performance among students.

Education is important in the life of every individual, family or nation and it is one of the major instruments for national development. It is a means by which potentials are discovered but education, as important as it is cannot achieve its goals and objectives without quality teachers or instructional resources. In every organization human resources or personnel's constitute the most important resources because they play the most important roles. How teachers are managed has a significant influence on their effectiveness. Armstrong (2000) defines human resources management as a strategic, integrated and coherent approach to the employment, development and well-being of the people working in an organization. Human resource management is a distinctive approach to employment management which seeks to achieve competitive advantage through the strategic employment of a highly committed and capable workforce, using an integrated array of cultural, structural and personnel techniques. Moreover, Boxall et al (2007) view human resource management as the management of work and people

towards desired ends. The government's management of human resources, therefore, affects teachers' effectiveness and social studies students' academic performance.

### **Statement of the problem**

It is generally believed that teachers' effectiveness is related to devotion to duty and ease with course materials. The teacher is perhaps the most potential and essential resource in dispensing and control over knowledge. Behem (2010), stresses that teacher motivation is closely related to his effectiveness in teaching students. In the classroom setting the teacher comes with potentials and enthusiasm to perform, at the same time get ones needs met. When the government/employer reneges in its obligation and tampers with the motivation of teacher or through delay in payment of salaries and fringe benefits, lack of promotion and lack of professional advancement opportunities, it becomes a problem between the teacher and service delivery. Besides, such deprivations kill teachers' initiative and the drive to work. The resultant effect is inefficiency, ineffectiveness as well as poor academic performance of students.

The government/education reformers may establish new schools, effect changes in the structure and curriculum, recommend and prescribe teaching materials and methods, in the final analysis the teacher is responsible for the implementation to make it work or otherwise. Despite these obvious leading roles towards attainment of educational objectives, teachers' motivation has remained a very serious problem. The social image of teachers has been seriously battered thus teaching profession has become unattractive and teachers incapable of meeting their social and economic obligations. Parents, on their part, want their children to acquire knowledge, skills, good morals and values without

adequate incentives and enabling environment to enhance teachers' performance of these expected tasks.

Cognizant of the intensity of the nature of the problems and difficulties encountered by teachers in the discharge of their functions instigates this research on, achievement motivation and academic performance of students in social studies.

The question, therefore is, how does teachers' motivation and their attitude to work relate to students' academic performance in Calabar Education Zone of Cross River State, Nigeria?

### **Methodology**

The research design adopted for this study was the survey design. This design involves direct contact with a population or sample that has characteristic personality qualities or attributes which are relevant to a specific investigation. It also enables researchers to employ questionnaire to seek the opinion of representative sample on which inferences, generalization and conclusions are made on cotemporary phenomenon. Moreover, the design has wide scope of advantage because a great deal of information could be obtained from a large population and the characteristics of the defined population can also be inferred from the sample drawn from such population. In view of these reasons, therefore, the design is appropriate for this study.

The target population involved in this study consisted of all the teachers and social studies students in Cross River State. The accessible population to the researcher believed to typify and reasonably represent the target population consisted all the teachers and social studies students in the Calabar Education Zone of Cross River State. The simple random sampling and the stratified random sampling techniques were employed in the selection of the subjects for the study. The sample for the study comprised two hundred (200) teachers and one thousand (200) social studies students drawn from 50 schools.

The next stage involved the sampling of the consensus who adjudged the instrument to be appropriate for its intended data collection. Two experts in educational measurement and evaluation validated and affirmed the instruments suitable for measuring what it purports to measure. To establish the reliability of the instruments, a pilot testing was conducted using 50 teachers and students who were not part of the main study. The reliability co-efficient was 0.85 and 84 which is considered significant.

### **Data analysis**

Two null hypotheses were formulated for the study.

#### Hypothesis one

This hypothesis speculated that there is no significant relationship between teachers' attitude to work and students' academic performance in social studies. Pearson Product Moment Correlation analysis was used in testing the hypothesis at.05 level of significance. The result is presented in table I.

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**Table I**

**Pearson Product Moment Correlation analysis of the relationship between attitude to work in terms of teacher-student relationship and academic performance in social studies (N = 200)**

Variables	$\sum X$ $\sum Y$	$\sum X^2$ $\sum Y^2$	$\sum XY$	r-value
Attitude to work in terms of teacher-students relationship.	3465	5976	89438	0.61*
Academic performance in social studies.	3346	5485		

Significant at .05 level, critical  $r = .138$ ,  $df = 198$ .

The result in table I indicates that the critical r-value of .138 is less than the calculated r-value of 0.61 at .05 level of significance with 198 degree of freedom. With this result of the analysis, the null hypothesis that, there is no significant relationship between attitude to work in terms of teacher-student relationship and students' academic performance in social studies was rejected. This implies that attitude to work in terms of teacher-student relationship has a significant relationship with students' academic performance in social studies.

**Hypothesis Two**

Motivation in terms of teachers' level of job satisfaction, does not significantly relate to students' academic performance in social studies. Pearson Product Moment Correlation analysis was employed in testing this hypothesis. The result of the analysis is presented in Table II.

**Table II**

**Pearson Product Moment Correlation analysis of the relationship between motivation in terms of teachers’ level of job satisfaction and students academic performance in social studies (N = 200)**

Variables	$\sum X$ $\sum Y$	$\sum X^2$ $\sum Y^2$	$\sum XY$	R-value
Motivation in terms of teachers’ job satisfaction.	3682	6088		
			90757	0.55*
Performance in social studies.	3316	5485		

Significant at .05 level, critical r = .138, df = 198.

The result in table II shows that the calculated r-value of 0.55 is greater than the critical r-value of .138 at .05 level of significance with 198 degree of freedom. With the result of this analysis, the null hypothesis that motivation in terms of teachers’ level of job satisfaction does not significantly relate to students academic performance in social studies was rejected. This implies that teachers’ level of job satisfaction is significantly related to students’ academic performance in social studies.

**Discussion of findings**

The results of hypothesis one reveals that attitude to work in terms of teacher-student relationship significantly relates to students academic performance in social studies. The hypothesis which stated that, there is no significant relationship between teachers attitude to work in terms of teacher-students’ relationship and students academic performance in social studies was rejected. This implies that the better the relationship between the teacher and the student, the better the students’ academic performance. On the other hand, if there is no cordial relationship between the student and the teacher, there will be rancour, schism and bias which adversely influence students’ academic

performance. This findings agree with the study of Ndifon (2006) on teacher-pupils' relationship and academic performance in English Language, Mathematics and Primary Science. At the end of the study, the researcher found that attitude to work in terms of teacher-pupil relationship significantly relate to pupils performance in English Language, Mathematics and Primary Science. Furthermore, the study agrees with Agbatonu (2001) investigation on the influence of teacher-student relationship on students' academic performance. Acholous' findings showed that a significant difference exists between academic performances of students, who related cordially with their teachers and those who did not. Moreover, teachers who establish warm relationship with their students based on understanding, love and genuine concern for the academic success of the students create a learning environment which enable students to study and achieve higher.

Suffice it to say that the relationship existing between the teacher and the student in the classroom will directly affect the learning atmosphere and the tone of the school. A teachers' personality can either enhance the achievement of his objective or deter him completely. Conversely, a teacher who is democratic in approach is likely to inspire and foster creativity in the students, thus bring about high academic outcome. The reverse is likely to be the case when the teacher is autocratic. Teachers should therefore, exhibit a friendly inter-personal relationship with their students to enhance academic performance of students.

The result of the second hypothesis reveals that motivation in terms of teachers' level of job satisfaction significantly relates to students' academic performance in social studies. By implication it means that teachers who are satisfied with their jobs will do better in the discharge of their assigned roles which in turn will be evident in the

students' high academic performance. Furthermore, it means that, teachers who are not adequately motivated in their job will lack the urge to put in their best in teaching and encouragement of students in their academic and subsequent performance. If teachers are adequately motivated through regular payment of their salaries, allowances, promotions and other incentives, their efforts will be boosted and relationship with students more cordial. This result is in consonant with Aboderin (2011) which states that achievement motivation has a positive effect on the academic performance of students. A satisfied teacher exhibits a more positive attitude and inner calmness in his dealing with the students which produces positive outcomes in the student academic performance.

Moreover, by implication the finding of this study shows that the higher the level of teachers' job satisfaction, the higher the performance of students. On the other hand, the lower the level of teachers job satisfaction, the lower the students' academic performance in social studies. However, the finding of this study contradicts Obi-Akatchak (1993) study on the level of satisfaction among secondary school teachers which showed no significant difference in the level of job satisfaction and academic performance of students.

## **Conclusion**

Suffice to say that in this study, students' academic performance is greatly determined by the extent to which teachers are motivated, meaning that motivation of teachers affects performance of students. It could also be concluded that, the attitude exhibited by teachers towards their work is capable of affecting the attitude of students to their studies and consequently influencing academic performance of social studies students either positively or negatively. Motivation cannot be undermined in influencing students' academic performance.

## Recommendations

1. Teachers' salaries/fringe benefits should be paid regularly and promptly as this will serve as motivating factor and boost the morale of teachers for enhanced productivity.
2. Teachers should cultivate warm and positive relationship towards students to encourage good academic performance.
3. Teachers should show continuous commitment to their job by always writing their notes of lessons, teaching effectively and doing all that is expected of them.

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