

# ENHANCING SECONDARY EDUCATION FOR RELEVANCE AND SUSTAINABLE NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT THROUGH TEACHER MOTIVATION

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## Abstract

Education is a means by which a poor nation can be transformed into a wealthy nation. This is because, in any country, education is a sure way to economic mobility, social improvement and cultural growth. We cannot talk of education and how it contributes to national development without making mention of the teachers who are responsible for the transmission of this education to the young minds (students). This paper therefore, focuses on motivating teachers in secondary schools to carry out this responsibility of transmitting knowledge to the students who will in turn change the destiny of this nation to a better one through quality knowledge.

## Introduction

Secondary education is an education we get after primary school and before tertiary institution. The objectives of secondary education according to (F. R. N, 2004), is to train individuals for useful living and for higher education.

From the above objectives, an individual cannot train him/her self for useful living without the help of a teacher, neither can the individual go further to higher institution to teach his/her self.

It is the teacher that will teach these students in the higher institution. If education in Nigeria is to survive and continue to play a vital role in the promotion of national development, it is important that the teachers who are responsible for helping the students to acquire the knowledge, skill and practical orientation essential for self as well as for national development, be effectively motivated.

In fact, without teachers, the educational objectives as specified in the National Policy on Education would not be realized, Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN, 2004), Reformers of education may established new schools, effect changes on the structure and curriculum, recommend and prescribe teaching methods and aids but in the end the teacher will be responsible for applying them. The teacher is the one that will translate educational objectives into knowledge and skill and transfer them to students in the classroom. The teacher emits and commands the image of one who improves the physical condition of the classroom through orderliness, discipline and control and of one who makes diagnosis of students' feeling and attitudes inferred from their behaviour and response in the classroom environment. In the absence of school programmes the major responsibility of working with children in the school rests with the teacher (Lash and Kirkpatrick 1990).

Nowadays, despite the obvious leading roles teachers play in the classroom towards attaining educational objectives, their motivation has remained a very serious problem. Ndu (1998), in her studies asserted that teacher's motivation was very low. The International Labour Organization (ILO) in 1990 lamented that the situation of teachers in the school system was so bad that it had reached "an intolerable low point". In a study, Ozigi (1992), found that teachers were unhappy, frustrated, uninspired and unmotivated. He then concluded that the nation's educational system was doomed.

## The Concept of Motivation

Motivation is community assumed to be a good thing that goes on influencing individual's behaviour and performance at work.

Ukeje (1991), said, "Motivation could make a mole dance." The relative incidence of specific behaviours such as teaching and learning, discipline and could be undermined if one was not motivated.

According to Cole (1995), motivation is a term used to describe those processes, both initiative and rational by which people seek to satisfy the basic drives, perceived needs and personal goals, which trigger human behaviour.

In' other words, motivation is a management function that stimulates individuals to accomplish laid down' institutional goals (Oluchukwu 2000). It is purposive, designated and goal-oriented in order to imitate, sustain and direct behaviour (Oluchukwu, 2000).

Motivation could therefore, be viewed as any force that would reduce tension, stress, worries and frustration arising from a problematic situation in a person's life. Where such an incidence of tension, stress and worries are traceable to as work situation it might be referred to as negative

organizational motivation. Teacher motivation could therefore, be referred to as those factors that operate within the school system which if not made available to the teacher would hamper performance, causes stress, discontent and frustration all of which subsequently reduce student quality output. This implies that, teacher motivation included factors that causes, channel and sustain and influence teacher's behaviour towards high academic achievement standards and job satisfaction.

### **The Need to Motivate Secondary School Teachers**

There are various reasons why secondary school teachers should be motivated in their work. When Secondary School teachers are not adequately taken care of especially with regards to regular and prompt payment of their salaries and other entitlements, their attitude to school work automatically change. They refuse to obey school rules and regulations. They could come to school but no meaningful work would be done, no effective teaching and learning. Instead of teaching many of them resort to discussing their personal woes in their staff rooms. But if they are encouraged, they put in their best and the education of the students will continue to grow from strength to strategies of teaching, more and deeper knowledge of their subjects, more sophisticated instructional materials, effective teaching and learning could not be said to be taking place. This will adversely affect the quality of education. Due to this lack of exposure of the teachers to modern system of education, the students will be functionally defective.

As Ukeje (1986), clearly put it, education is the key that unlocks the door to modernization, but it is the teacher who holds the key to the door. With his new knowledge, ideas, modern skills, he raises his work output and up-dates his students' knowledge. Adequate motivation of secondary school teachers makes them to develop the traits of honesty, sincerity and a conducive atmosphere in their schools. They are just and fair in their dealings with their students. They are quick to admit their faults and weakness and readily and willingly accept corrections from their principals. They are eager to adapt to change introduced to better the lot of the students and the schools. As the Hawthorne experiments of Roethlisberger and Dickson (1993), showed, when employee feel that they are important, and that the management values their work, it will lead to high performance even if some aspects of working conditions are poor.

Secondary school teachers need to be motivated. This is to prevent them from engaging in sharp and unhealthy activities in order to make both ends meet to live up to the expectations of the society. As Fafunwa (1992), rightly said, the Nigerian society is highly materialistic, so in a situation where the teacher is not living up to expectation, he is looked down upon. He is seen as belonging to the never do well group. So, in order to live up to expectation, some teachers exploit their students in one form or the other, which can cause a strain in relationship between them and their students. When teachers are motivated in the desired manner, they become contented. Unethical conduct will be reduced. They will be satisfied with the much they get knowing full well why and how they get what they get and to expect as their dues in future. This should make them to be considerate, dependable, committed to their work and induce trust and caring attitude, which are specific work place behaviour, according to Chermis (2001), the students will naturally try to reciprocate this by putting in their best that in turn raises the moral and academic tone of the school.

### **Some Ways of Motivating Secondary School Teachers**

Some of the welfare packages that could motivate secondary school teachers are:

#### **Recognition**

Secondary school teachers need recognition. Their effort in teaching students should be recognized and be appreciated. Each school should have weekly or quarterly bulletin where activities and outstanding performance of teachers are featured. Well-defined criteria should be established to give awards to outstanding teachers. As stated by Cole (1995), most people are usually de-motivated if their contributions are neither recognized nor rewarded. Praise, recognition, awards and titles are part of the series of motivational pattern used to motivate staff and thus increase their productivity.

#### **Regular and Prompt Payments of Salaries and Allowances**

Irregular and overdue payment of salaries and allowances for secondary school teachers have been a problem in the life of salaries can dampen the efforts of secondary school teachers. It is therefore, necessary that teachers salaries be paid as at when due each month to avoid any mental stress, which is always the aftermath.

## **Responsibility**

Teachers should be given responsibility and authority that are commensurate with the assigned responsibility. It is a frustrating experience to be given responsibility without adequate authority to execute the functions of the office. A teacher will find self-fulfillment in his job if he is allowed to use his initiative and be able to express himself in his chosen profession.

## **Promotion of Teachers**

Secondary school teachers should be promoted as at when due. Regular promotion should be part of the fruits of their labour, which enhance productivity. It is sad to note that many teachers are forced to stay on the same salary level for ten years or more.

## **In-Service Training**

This is needed by secondary school teachers to update their knowledge of the subjects they teach and to be self-actualized.

## **Sponsored Conference, Seminars and Workshops**

Secondary school teachers should be sponsored to attend conferences, seminars and workshop at least once a year. This will give them the opportunity to rub minds with other educationalists thereby keeping them abreast of modern trends in education.

## **Provision of Well-equipped Library and Laboratories**

Secondary school teachers need library and laboratories that are fully equipped with current books and instruments for their study and teaching.

## **End of Year Party for Teachers**

There should be end of year party for teachers. Such a party which should be funded by the school should feature speeches, riddles and jokes, eating, drinking and dancing, other welfare packages which need to be mentioned are grant of furniture and car loans, adequate medical services, prompt payment of gratuity and pension, adequate office accommodations, etc.

## **Conclusion**

No nation can rise above the standard set and taught by its intellectuals. Therefore, the quality of education provided in any society and the nature of the change effected by that education are both dependent on the quality of teachers and the effectiveness of their teaching in schools. If secondary school teacher are apathetic, uncommitted, uninspired, lazy and unmotivated, the whole nation is doomed, because secondary school teachers produce students for useful living and for higher educations. If they do not carry out their duties effectively students will not be self-employed and we cannot get students who will proceed to higher institutions. What this paper is emphasizing is, if the best of students are offered admission in fully equipped schools, without a highly motivated teaching staff, the lofty aims and objectives of education in this country will not be achieved. Urgent attention should be shifted back to improving secondary school teachers welfare by all concerned to ensure relevance and sustainable national development in the country.

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