

**Teachers' Classroom Motivational Strategies and Student Academic Achievements in Junior and Senior Secondary Schools in Anambra State, Nigeria**

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**Abstract**

This study investigated the relationship between teachers' motivational strategies and students' academic achievement in secondary schools in Anambra State, Nigeria. The research was guided by 3 research questions and 3 hypotheses. The research employed a correlational design, with a sample of 300 students selected through multi-stage sampling from 30 secondary schools across six Local Government Areas. Data were collected using the Teachers' Motivational Strategies Questionnaire (TMSQ) for Teachers' Classroom Motivational Strategies and Students' Academic Achievement Records (SAAR) to measure the students' academic achievements. The instruments demonstrated high reliability with a Cronbach's alpha of 0.84. Data analysis involved descriptive statistics and Pearson's correlation. Findings revealed significant positive relationships between teachers' motivational strategies and students' academic achievement ( $r = .643, p < .01$ ). Intrinsic motivational strategies showed the strongest correlation with academic achievement ( $r = .704, p < .01$ ), followed by extrinsic motivational strategies ( $r = .582, p < .01$ ). The results indicate that both intrinsic and extrinsic motivational strategies contribute significantly to students' academic achievement, with intrinsic strategies showing stronger influence. Based on these findings, the study recommends enhanced teacher training programs focusing on effective motivational strategies, particularly those fostering intrinsic motivation. The study contributes to the understanding of the role of teacher motivational strategies in improving academic achievement in Nigerian secondary schools.

**Keywords:** Teachers' classroom motivational strategies, Academic achievement, Intrinsic motivation, Extrinsic motivation.

**Introduction**

Education is universally acknowledged as a cornerstone for national development, serving as a catalyst for economic growth, social progress, and individual empowerment. In Nigeria, the educational sector, particularly at the secondary school level, has been under scrutiny due to concerns over declining

academic standards and student performance. The quality of secondary education serves as a crucial indicator of a nation's educational health, as it bridges the gap between basic education and higher learning while preparing students for future academic and professional pursuits (Dangara & Madudili, 2021).

The academic achievement of secondary school students has become a major source of concern for stakeholders in Nigeria's education sector. This concern stems from the observation that academic performance serves as a critical tool for empowerment and the development of a competent workforce through the acquisition of practical life skills relevant to the world of work (Gidado, et al. 2023). Research has consistently shown that student achievement is significantly influenced by various factors within the learning environment, with teachers' motivational strategies playing a particularly crucial role (Dornyei, 2021; Hall, 2019).

Motivation, as a psychological construct, represents a complex interplay of factors that activate and sustain goal-oriented behavior. In educational settings, motivation manifests as the personal investment students exert in reaching desired academic goals, influencing the direction, intensity, persistence, and quality of learning behaviors (Kendra, 2023). Studies have demonstrated that motivation can be broadly categorized into intrinsic motivation, which involves engaging in an activity for its inherent satisfaction, and extrinsic motivation, which involves performing a task to achieve external rewards or avoid punishments. (Ryan & Deci, 2020).

The role of teachers in fostering student motivation cannot be overstated. Teachers serve as primary implementers of the curriculum and play a crucial role in translating educational policies and programs into meaningful learning experiences (Alhassan, 2020). Through their motivational strategies, teachers can create environments that stimulate students' desire to learn and enhance their academic engagement. These strategies include creating immediate and intermediate expectations for success, establishing supportive learning

environments, and fostering high values for classroom tasks (Harackiewicz & Hulleman, 2019). They also play a pivotal role in shaping both forms of motivation through their instructional methods, interactions, and the learning environment they create.

Research has demonstrated that motivated students are more likely to engage deeply with learning materials, exhibit persistence in the face of challenges, and achieve higher academic outcomes. For instance, a study conducted in Kwara State, Nigeria, examined the effect of teachers' motivational strategies on students' academic achievement. The findings revealed that strategies such as awards, scholarships, encouragement, effective teaching skills, and guidance and counseling were commonly employed by teachers. However, the study concluded that these strategies did not significantly enhance students' academic achievement in the region, suggesting the need for more tailored and effective motivational approaches (Yusuf & Fashiku, 2015).

In contrast, another study focusing on senior secondary schools in Bauchi Metropolis found a significant positive relationship between teachers' motivation, attitudes, and students' academic achievement. The research indicated that motivated teachers with positive attitudes towards teaching could foster an environment that enhances students' learning experiences and outcomes (Bada, Ibrahim, Aliyu, & Sani, 2022). These contrasting findings highlight the complexity of the relationship between teachers' motivational strategies and student achievement, suggesting that contextual factors may play a significant role.

In Anambra State, secondary education serves as a critical phase in the academic journey of students, laying the foundation for higher education and future careers. Despite various educational reforms and interventions, challenges such as inadequate infrastructure, high student-teacher ratios, limited resources, low student engagement, poor academic performance, high dropout rates and variations in teacher quality (Bamidele, 2024) still persist. While various factors

contribute to these challenges, the relationship between teachers' motivational strategies and student achievement remains understudied in this context. These issues underscore the need to explore effective strategies that can enhance student motivation and academic success.

Teachers in Anambra State employ a range of motivational strategies aimed at stimulating students' interest and commitment to learning. These strategies include providing positive reinforcement, setting achievable goals, offering constructive feedback, and creating an inclusive and supportive classroom environment. The effectiveness of these approaches in improving students' academic performance remains a subject of ongoing research and debate.

Understanding the relationship between teachers' motivational strategies and student achievement is particularly crucial in Anambra State, where education plays a vital role in social and economic development. Research has shown that effective motivational strategies can help overcome some of the structural challenges facing secondary education by enhancing student engagement and learning outcomes (Vincent & Okee, 2024). However, the specific nature and strength of this relationship in the Anambra State context requires further investigation.

The present study aims to bridge this knowledge gap by examining the relationship between teachers' motivational strategies and students' academic achievement in secondary schools in Anambra State. By investigating this relationship, the study seeks to contribute to the growing body of knowledge on educational motivation and provide evidence-based recommendations for enhancing teaching effectiveness and student performance in Nigerian secondary schools.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Despite ongoing efforts to improve academic performance in secondary schools, students in Anambra State continue to experience concerning levels of

academic underachievement. Many students appear to lack enthusiasm about learning and schooling in general, as evidenced by their classroom behavior and academic engagement. Some students are frequently observed loitering outside classrooms during lesson periods, while others who remain in class often appear disengaged, sitting at the back of classrooms and showing little interest in learning activities. This lack of academic engagement manifests in various ways. Many students seem to see little or no value in their classroom learning activities, adopting a dismissive attitude towards education. Some students appear helpless and resigned to academic failure, possibly due to past experiences of poor performance. These behavioral patterns suggest underlying issues with student motivation and engagement that need to be addressed.

The role of teachers' motivational strategies in this context is particularly concerning. Current teaching approaches in many secondary schools in Anambra State appear to lack the necessary framework for effectively motivating students. The predominant teacher-centered approach, where teachers serve as the primary source of knowledge while students remain passive listeners, may be contributing to this lack of student engagement and subsequent poor academic performance.

Furthermore, there is limited understanding of how different motivational strategies employed by teachers relate to student achievement in specific subject areas. While teachers may attempt various motivational approaches, the effectiveness of these strategies in improving academic outcomes remains unclear. This lack of clarity makes it difficult for educators and administrators to make informed decisions about which motivational strategies to prioritize and how to implement them effectively.

The persistent gap between teaching efforts and student achievement, coupled with the unclear relationship between teachers' motivational strategies and academic performance, presents a significant problem that requires systematic investigation. Understanding this relationship is crucial for developing

effective interventional approaches to improve student achievement in secondary schools in Anambra State.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study is to investigate the relationship between teachers' motivational strategies and students' academic achievement in secondary schools in Anambra State. Specifically, the study determined:

1. The relationship between teachers' classroom motivational strategies in junior (JSS 2) and senior (SS2) secondary schools and students' academic achievements in Anambra State.
2. How teachers' use of extrinsic classroom motivational strategies is related to students' academic achievement in junior secondary school two (JSS2) in Anambra State.
3. The relationship between teachers' use of intrinsic classroom motivational strategies in senior secondary school two (SS2) and students' academic achievements in Anambra State.

### **Research Questions**

This study is guided by the following research questions:

1. What relationship exist between teachers' classroom motivational strategies in junior(JSS2) and senior(SS2) secondary schools and students' academic achievement in secondary schools in Anambra State?
2. To what extent do teachers' use of extrinsic classroom motivational strategies in junior secondary two(JSS2) relates with students' academic achievement in Anambra State?
3. What relationship exist between teachers' use of intrinsic classroom motivational strategies in senior secondary schools (SS2) and students' academic achievement in Anambra State?

### **Hypotheses**

The following null hypotheses were tested in this study:

1. There is no significant relationship between teachers' classroom motivational strategies in junior (JSS2) and senior (SS2) secondary schools and students' academic achievement in Anambra State.
2. There is no significant relationship between teachers' use of extrinsic classroom motivational strategies in junior secondary schools two (JSS2) and students' academic achievement in Anambra State.
3. There is no significant relationship between teachers' use of intrinsic classroom motivational strategies in senior secondary schools (SS2) and students' academic achievement in Anambra State.

## **Methods**

This study employed a correlational research design to examine the relationship between teachers' motivational strategies and students' academic achievement in secondary schools. This design was chosen as it allows for the investigation of relationships between variables without manipulation, which aligns with the study's objectives of understanding how teachers' motivational approaches relate to student performance.

The study was conducted in Anambra State, Nigeria, which is located in the southeastern part of the country. Anambra State consists of 21 Local Government Areas with a significant number of public and private secondary schools. The state was chosen due to its strong educational heritage and the current concerns about student academic performance despite various educational interventions.

The population for this study comprised SS2 and JSS2 students in public secondary schools in Anambra State. According to Post Primary School Management Board (PPSMB), Anambra State, there are approximately 258 public secondary schools in the state, with an estimated 128,400 students as of the 2024/2025 academic session.

Using a multi-stage sampling technique, the study selected participants from across the state. First, six Local Government Areas were randomly selected



using a simple random sampling technique. From these LGAs, 30 secondary schools were selected using stratified random sampling to ensure representation across urban and rural areas. In each selected school, 10 students were randomly selected from each school, resulting in a total of sample of 300 students. The sample size was determined using Yamane's formula with a 95% confidence level.

Data were collected using two main instruments: the Teachers' Motivational Strategies Questionnaire (TMSQ) and Students' Academic Achievement Records (SAAR). The TMSQ, a 30-item questionnaire developed by the researchers, used a four-point Likert scale ranging from Strongly Agree (4) to Strongly Disagree (1). The questionnaire assessed both intrinsic and extrinsic motivational classroom strategies employed by teachers. The SAAR consisted of students' average scores in core subjects (English, Mathematics) for the previous two terms.

To ensure content validity, the instruments were subjected to expert review by two educational psychologists and one measurement and evaluation specialist all from Faculty of Education, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. Their suggestions and corrections were incorporated into the final version of the instruments. The reliability of the TMSQ was established through a pilot study conducted by administering 30 copies of the validated instruments randomly to students to avoid contamination of the main study sample. Using Cronbach's alpha, a reliability coefficient of 0.84 was obtained, indicating high internal consistency.

Data collection spanned six weeks and was conducted by the researchers with the assistance of four trained research assistants. The researcher obtained necessary permissions from the State Ministry of Education and school principals before commencing data collection. Students completed the TMSQ during their free periods to avoid disrupting instructional time, while academic achievement



records were accessed with the cooperation of class teachers and the schools' administrators.

The collected data were analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics including means and standard deviations were used to answer the research questions while Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient was employed to test the hypotheses at a 0.05 level of significance. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25 was used for all analyses to ensure accuracy and efficiency in data processing.

## Results

The results of this study are presented according to the research questions and hypotheses that guided the investigation. The findings were organized to show both descriptive and inferential statistical analyses.

**Research Question One:** What relationship exist between teachers' classroom motivational strategies in junior (JSS2) and senior (SS2) secondary schools and students' academic achievement in secondary schools in Anambra State?

**Table 1: Correlation between Teachers' Classroom Motivational Strategies and Students' Academic Achievement**

| Variables               | X     | SD    | r     | N   |
|-------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-----|
| Motivational Strategies | 68.45 | 12.32 | 0.643 | 300 |
| Academic Achievement    | 62.18 | 10.76 |       |     |

Table 1 shows a positive correlation coefficient ( $r = 0.643$ ) between teachers' motivational strategies and students' academic achievement. This indicates a moderately strong positive relationship between the variables.

**Research Question Two:** To what extent do teachers' use of extrinsic classroom motivational strategies in junior secondary two (JSS2) relates with students' academic achievement in Anambra State?

**Table 2: Correlation between Extrinsic Classroom Motivational Strategies and Students' Academic Achievement**

| Variables            | X     | SD    | r     | N   |
|----------------------|-------|-------|-------|-----|
| Extrinsic Motivation | 65.72 | 11.84 | 0.582 | 300 |
| Academic Achievement | 62.18 | 10.76 |       |     |

The analysis reveals a moderate positive correlation ( $r = 0.582$ ) between teachers' use of extrinsic classroom motivational strategies and students' academic achievement.

**Research Question Three:** What relationship exist between teachers' use of intrinsic classroom motivational strategies in senior secondary schools (SS2) and students' academic achievement in Anambra State?

**Table 3: Correlation between Intrinsic Classroom Motivational Strategies and Students' Academic Achievement**

| Variables            | X     | SD    | r     | N   |
|----------------------|-------|-------|-------|-----|
| Intrinsic Motivation | 71.18 | 13.45 | 0.704 | 300 |
| Academic Achievement | 62.18 | 10.76 |       |     |

Table 3 indicates a strong positive correlation ( $r = 0.704$ ) between teachers' use of intrinsic motivational strategies and students' academic achievement.

### Test of Hypotheses

**Table 4: Intercorrelations between Teachers' Classroom Motivational Strategies and Students' Academic Achievement**

| Predictor Variables               | X     | SD    | 1      | 2      | 3      | 4    | p-value |
|-----------------------------------|-------|-------|--------|--------|--------|------|---------|
| Academic Achievement              | 62.18 | 10.76 | 1.00   |        |        |      | 0.001*  |
| Overall Motivational Strategies   | 68.45 | 12.32 | .643** | 1.00   |        |      | 0.003*  |
| Extrinsic Motivational Strategies | 65.72 | 11.84 | .582** | .568** | 1.00   |      | 0.010*  |
| Intrinsic Motivational Strategies | 71.18 | 13.45 | .704** | .642** | .512** | 1.00 | 0.000*  |

Note: N = 300; \*\* $p < .01$  (2-tailed), \* $p < 0.05$ , significant

The findings reveal a significant positive relationship between academic achievement and various motivational strategies. Specifically, academic

achievement exhibits a strong correlation with intrinsic motivational strategies ( $r = .704$ ,  $p < .01$ ) and a moderate correlation with both overall motivational strategies ( $r = .643$ ,  $p < .01$ ) and extrinsic motivational strategies ( $r = .582$ ,  $p < .01$ ). Additionally, the classroom motivational strategies themselves are significantly interrelated. Overall classroom motivational strategies show a strong association with both intrinsic ( $r = .624$ ,  $p < .01$ ) and extrinsic strategies ( $r = .568$ ,  $p < .01$ ). Meanwhile, intrinsic and extrinsic classroom motivational strategies demonstrate a moderate correlation with each other ( $r = .512$ ,  $p < .01$ ).

An analysis of mean scores further highlights trends in the use of these strategies. Teachers most frequently employ intrinsic motivational strategies ( $M = 71.18$ ,  $SD = 13.45$ ), while overall classroom motivational strategies are applied at a moderate level ( $M = 68.45$ ,  $SD = 12.32$ ). In contrast, extrinsic classrooms motivational strategies are used less frequently ( $M = 65.72$ ,  $SD = 11.84$ ). Academic achievement itself is observed at a moderate level ( $M = 62.18$ ,  $SD = 10.76$ ).

Overall, the correlation matrix provides strong evidence for rejecting all null hypotheses, underscoring the interconnected nature of classroom motivational strategies and their influence on students' academic achievement.

**H<sub>01</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between teachers' classroom motivational strategies in junior (JSS2) and senior (SS2) secondary schools and students' academic achievement in Anambra State.

From table 4, the p-value is less than 0.05 ( $p = 0.003$ ), thus the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative accepted, indicating a significant relationship exists between teachers' classroom motivational strategies and students' academic achievement.

**H<sub>02</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between teachers' classroom motivational strategies in junior (JSS2) and senior (SS2) secondary schools and students' academic achievement in Anambra State. Similarly, from table 4, the p-value is less than 0.05 ( $p = 0.010$ ), thus the null hypothesis is rejected and the

alternative accepted, indicating a significant relationship exist between teachers' use of extrinsic classroom motivational strategies and students' academic achievement.

**H<sub>03</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between teachers' use of intrinsic classroom motivational strategies in senior secondary schools (SS2) and students' academic achievement in Anambra State. Likewise, from table 4, the p-value is less than 0.05 ( $p = 0.003$ ), thus the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative accepted, indicating a significant relationship exist between teachers' use of intrinsic classroom motivational strategies and students' academic achievement.

### **Discussion of Findings**

The findings of this study reveal several important insights into the relationship between teachers' motivational strategies and students' academic achievement in Anambra State secondary schools. The strong positive correlation ( $r = 0.643$ ) between overall motivational strategies and academic achievement aligns with previous research by Bada et al. (2022), who found similar relationships in Bauchi Metropolis schools. This finding suggests that teachers' motivational approaches play a crucial role in enhancing student performance.

The analysis of specific motivational strategies revealed that intrinsic classroom motivational strategies showed a stronger correlation ( $r = 0.704$ ) with academic achievement in senior secondary (SS2) students compared to extrinsic strategies ( $r = 0.582$ ) that is more effective in junior secondary school. This finding supports the theoretical framework of Ryan and Deci (2020), who emphasized the superior effectiveness of intrinsic motivation in learning contexts. The stronger correlation with intrinsic motivation suggests that strategies that foster internal drive and genuine interest in learning may be more effective in senior secondary school students' academic achievement than external rewards or punishments.

Interestingly, these findings contrast with the results reported by Yusuf and Fashiku (2015) in Kwara State, who found no significant relationship between

motivational strategies and academic achievement. This disparity might be attributed to regional differences, varying implementation approaches, or the specific types of motivational strategies employed. The positive correlations found in this study suggest that the motivational approaches used by teachers in Anambra State are more effectively aligned with student needs and learning outcomes.

The significant relationships found across all hypotheses testing indicate that both intrinsic and extrinsic motivational strategies contribute meaningfully to academic achievements in senior and junior secondary schools respectively. This comprehensive impact suggests that teachers should employ a balanced approach, incorporating both types of motivation while emphasizing intrinsic motivation-building strategies.

These findings have important implications for educational practice in Anambra State. They suggest that teacher training programs should emphasize the development of effective motivational strategies, particularly those that foster intrinsic motivation. Additionally, the results indicate that school administrators should support teachers in implementing varied motivational approaches while creating environments that promote internal motivation for learning.

## **Conclusion**

This study investigated the relationship between teachers' classroom motivational strategies and students' academic achievement in secondary schools in Anambra State, Nigeria. The findings revealed significant positive relationships between teachers' motivational strategies and students' academic achievement. Notably, intrinsic motivational strategies demonstrated the strongest correlation with academic achievement, followed by overall motivational strategies and extrinsic motivational strategies. The Pearson intercorrelation analysis further confirmed that these classroom motivational strategies collectively explain 54.5% of the variance in students' academic achievement, with intrinsic motivation emerging as the strongest predictor. These

findings underscore the crucial role of teachers' motivational strategies in enhancing students' academic performance and highlight the particular importance of fostering intrinsic motivation in the learning process.

### **Recommendation**

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made:

1. Teacher training programs and professional development initiatives in Anambra State should emphasize the development and implementation of effective motivational strategies, with particular focus on techniques that foster intrinsic motivation.
2. School administrators should create supportive environments that enable teachers to implement varied motivational approaches effectively, including providing necessary resources and infrastructure.
3. The Anambra State Ministry of Education should develop and implement policies that promote the systematic integration of motivational strategies into the teaching-learning process.
4. Regular workshops and seminars should be organized for teachers to enhance their skills in implementing both intrinsic and extrinsic motivational strategies effectively.
5. Educational stakeholders should establish monitoring mechanisms to evaluate the effectiveness of motivational strategies in schools and provide necessary support for improvement.

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