

ISRG Journal of Education, Humanities and Literature (ISRGJEHL)



ISRG PUBLISHERS

Abbreviated Key Title: ISRG J Edu Humanit Lit

ISSN: 2584-2544 (Online)

Journal homepage: <https://isrgpublishers.com/isrgjehl/>

Volume – I Issue- VI (November-December) 2024

Frequency: Bimonthly



The Motivational Factors on Teacher Performance in Senior Secondary Schools in Western Rural District, Sierra Leone

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| **Received:** 16.10.2024 | **Accepted:** 20.10.2024 | **Published:** 27.11.2024

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Abstract

This research aims to investigate the Motivational Factors on Teacher Performance in Senior Secondary Schools in Western Rural District; Sierra Leone. The study employed a descriptive survey research design. The target population was 319 respondents, comprising 29 principals and 10 teachers from each school. Stratified random sampling was used to select schools that participated in the study. Simple random sampling was used to select the principals and teachers. The sample size was 177 respondents, comprising 12 principals and 165 teachers. The study used questionnaires for the teachers and interview schedules for the school principals as research instruments.

The study established that teaching load, working conditions, salary and remuneration, reward, and recognition had a positive and significant effect on teacher performance in government-assisted senior secondary schools in the Western Rural District of Sierra Leone. The study recommends emphasizing the importance of teacher evaluation to enhance classroom practice, recognize teachers' work, and help teachers and schools identify professional development opportunities. Use well-trained professional and administrative staff to help reduce the burden on teachers. Provide better facilities at schools for staff preparation and planning.

Keywords: Motivational Factors, Teacher Performance, Senior Secondary Schools, Western Sierra Leone

INTRODUCTION

Motivation according to Momanyi, V. N. (2015) is the force that causes people to behave as they do. Motivation involves the energy and drives to learn, work effectively, and achieves potential as indicated by Jacob et al. (2020). Gbeke-kalagbor,i.(2023). observe

that high motivation may enhance school teachers' efficiency and effectiveness leading to improved teacher and student performance. On the other hand, Oloo, R. K. (2022) note that teachers' low motivation may lead to apathy, reduced performance, request for

transfers to other schools, increased value on material rewards, hostility to school officials, and working for promotion to other positions with better prospects. The motivation of a teacher is, therefore, very important as it directly affects his/her performance.

Mohammed, I., & Abdulai, R. (2022) maintain that the psychological drive that directs a person toward an objective is motivation. In order to perform well in their teaching activities, teachers need to be motivated. There could be many factors that can affect their motivation. Such factors characterize the schools' effectiveness in terms of performance. Akram M.et al (2018) asserts that effective schools endeavor to create professional environments, that facilitate teachers to accomplish their tasks, participate in decisions affecting their work, have reasonable autonomy to execute their duties, share purpose, receive recognition, are treated with respect and dignity by others, work together as colleagues, and are provided with ample staff-development opportunities so as to help them develop further. This will result in teacher's creativity, persistence, and commitment to work Geiger, T., & Pivovarova, M. (2018). In the United Kingdom (UK), teacher motivation and satisfaction are found to be related to working with children while dissatisfaction is related to work overload, poor pay, and how teachers are recognized by the society Spear, A. M. (2019).

Geiger, T., & Pivovarova, M. (2018) observe that for teachers to be highly motivated, they need a high level of professional autonomy, an intellectual challenge, feel they are benefiting the society, enjoy good relations with others, and spend sufficient time working with children. In South Asia teachers' responsibility in schools is found to be very low due to the politicization of the teaching profession. This low accountability by teachers in school matters has also a disastrous effect on other aspects of job motivation, including job promotion, school management, deployment and recruitment Bennell, P. (2024).

In sub-Saharan Africa, most schooling systems are faced with teacher motivation crisis that are related to salary, advancement, achievement, recognition, responsibility, poor school facilities, among others which have far reaching consequences Iliya, A., & Ifeoma, L. G. (2015).In Nigeria for instance, Chukwukelu, T. I. (2023) identifies teacher motivation as based on the way teachers are deployed, working conditions, teachers' competence, teachers' status, vocational intent, career advancement, fringe benefits, and remunerations. Furthermore, some schools are inadequate, dilapidated, overcrowded, lack teaching materials. Such factors are prevalent elsewhere in the least developed countries. They have an impact on the teachers' performance and academic quality and need to be improved.

In Uganda, Azaliwa, E. A., & Casmir, A. (2016) found that the quality of Universal Primary Education as deteriorating due to pupils' overcrowding resulting from large class sizes; inadequate training, motivation, commitment and monitoring of teachers; less active and contribution by parents; less disciplinary control of students by teachers; and lack of housing for teachers, especially in rural areas. In Tanzania, younger-qualified teachers are generally less satisfied than their older counterparts who still take teaching as a privilege. These younger qualified teachers are heavily concentrated in urban areas Bennell, P. (2024) Rwanda as one of the developing countries in the world with the main education goal of Education For All (EFA) by 2015 recognizes that the teacher is the main instrument in bringing about the desired improvements in quality learning Mizala, A., & Schneider, B. (2020).

In Kenya, a study done by Wanjala, C. (2018) on the influence of class size on classroom interaction in the wake of Free Primary Education (FPE), they found that FPE created increased class sizes, shortage of teachers, heavy teachers' working load and lack of teacher motivation. They further found that teachers are demoralized with heavy workloads, handling many lessons, many pupils and work for long hours.

Mathew, O., Jeremiah, K. M., & Ursulla, O. (2021) also reported in a study in Busia District in Kenya that public secondary school teachers with high levels of job satisfaction tend to have high social, and psychological atmosphere in the classroom that result in high productivity and effectiveness in job performance and willingness to stay longer.

According to Nyakundi, E. N., et al. (2019) the primary factor that contributes to good performance of teachers is strong motivation. Motivated teachers are often associated with producing motivated students with high achievements Bal-Taştan. et al (2018). Thus, in order to bring change to an educational system, factors that enhance teacher motivation are essential. Planning for such improvements would require the planner to know the existing state of teacher motivation and motivational factors affecting teachers' performance. This study sought to investigate motivational factors on the performance of secondary schools teachers in Western Rural District, of Sierra Leone

Objectives of the Study

The study was guided by the following research objectives to:

- (i) Examine the influence of teaching load on the performance of secondary schools teachers in Western Rural District,
- (ii) Establish the influence of working conditions on the performance of secondary schools teachers in West Rural District.
- (iii) Examine the influence of salary and remuneration on the performance of secondary schools teachers in Western Rural District.
- (iv) Investigate the influence of reward and recognition on the performance of secondary schools teachers in Western Rural District.

Research Questions

The Research Questions formulated are:

- (i) What is the influence of teaching load on the performance of secondary schools teachers in Western Rural District?
- (ii) What is the relationship between working conditions and the performance of secondary schools teachers in West Rural District?
- (iii) How does salary and remuneration improve the performance of secondary schools teachers in Western Rural District?
- (iv) What is the influence of reward and recognition on the performance of secondary schools teachers in Western Rural District?

Methodology

This study employed a descriptive survey research design. In exploratory and preliminary research, descriptive survey research designs are employed to collect data, compile, present, and interpret for understanding Shinali, M. C. (2020). Mugenda and

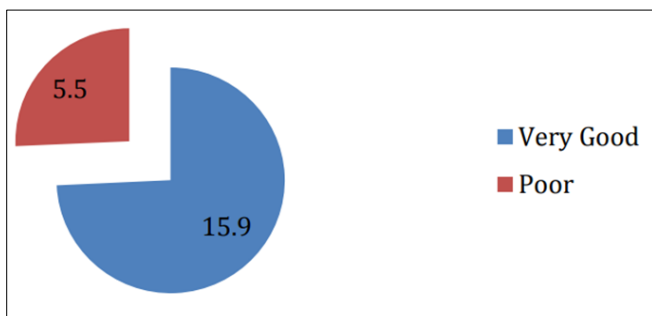
Mugenda (2003) on the other hand give the purpose of descriptive research as determining and reporting the way things are. Hammond, M., & Wellington, J. (2019) noted that descriptive survey research is intended to produce statistical information about aspects of education that interest policymakers and educators. The researcher plans to gather information and report on respondents' responses without changing any variables, the study fit the requirements of a descriptive survey research design. The study's participating schools were chosen through stratified random sampling. Principals and teachers were chosen by simple random sampling. The strata identified for this study were day schools, mixed boarding schools, boys' schools, and girls' schools. The study's participating schools were chosen through stratified random sampling. To choose the principals and teachers, simple random sampling was utilized. The strata that were identified for this study were day schools, mixed boarding schools, boys' schools, and girls' schools. The sample size is an important feature of any empirical study in which the goal is to make inferences about a population from a sample. In descriptive research, a sample size of 10-50% is accepted (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). The researcher worked with a sample size of 40%.

Results and Discussion

Analysis for Answering the Research Questions

Research Question One: What is the influence of teaching load on the performance of secondary schools teachers in Western Rural District?

Figure 1. Teaching Load and Teacher Performance



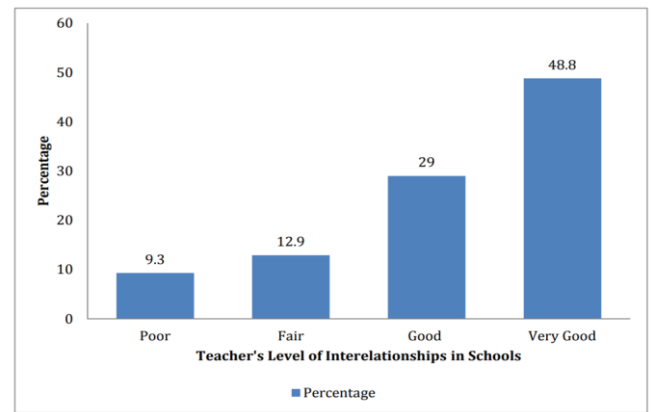
Source: Field Survey 2024

Figure 1. Teaching Load and Teacher Performance

The first research objective sought to examine the influence of teaching load on the performance of secondary schools teachers in western rural district Majority 151(93.2%) agreed that they assigned any administrative duties in their school while 11(6.8%) were not, this shown in Figure1

Research Question Two: What is the relationship between working conditions and the performance of secondary schools teachers in West Rural District?

Figure 2. Working Conditions and Teacher Performance



Source: Field Survey 2024

Figure 2. Working Conditions and Teacher Performance

The second research objective sought to establish the influence of working conditions on the performance of secondary schools teachers in Western Rural District. An analysis of the general working conditions in the schools revealed that majority 79(48.8%) of the respondents indicated had very good interpersonal relationships in their school, 47(29.0%) indicated good interpersonal relationships, 21(12.9%) indicated fair and 15(9.3%) indicated poor. This is shown in Figure 2

Research Question Three: How does salary and remuneration improve the performance of secondary schools teachers in Western Rural District?

Table 1. Salary and remuneration of Teachers Performance

Statement	f (%)	f (%)	f (%)	M	SD
Benefits influence teacher performance positively	107(66.0)	6(3.7)	49(30.2)	3.2	0.321
Incentives demonstrate that employee contributions are valued thus increase their performance	118(72.8)	4(2.5)	40(24.7)	2.7	0.214
Special awards improves teacher performance	99(50.9)	5(3.1)	58(35.8)	1.9	0.624
Incentives motivate teachers thus improve their performance	135(83.3)	2(1.2)	25(15.4)	2.3	0.135
Salary and remuneration effects the employee decision making to stay their organizations	124(76.5)	3(1.9)	35(21.6)	3.5	0.344
Service pay motivates teachers thus increase their	109(67.3)	1(0.6)	52(32.1)	2.9	0.514

performance					
Effective pay plan motivates teacher thus increasing their performance	115(70.9)	2(1.2)	45(27.8)	2.6	0.105

Key: A- Agree; U - Undecided; D- Disagree; M- Mean: SD- Standard Deviation; f-Frequency

Source: Field Survey 2024

Table 1 shows that the majority (83.3%) of the respondents agreed that incentives motivate teachers and thus improve their performance with a mean of 2.3 and a standard deviation of 0.135, and also a large number (76.5%) agreed that salary and remuneration affect the employee decision-making to stay in their organizations with a mean of 3.5 and a standard deviation of 0.344. On the other hand, the majority (35.6%) disagreed that special awards improve teacher performance with a mean of 1.9 and a standard deviation of 0.623, and also a large number (30.2%) disagreed that benefits influence teacher performance positively with a mean of 3.2 and a standard deviation of 0.321. Principals indicated that salary and remuneration systems in any educational institution are vital tools and play an important role as far as teacher motivation and performance are concerned. The way organizations manage their salary and remuneration systems determines or influences the attitudes of teachers towards work, as well as their performance.

Research Question Three: What is the influence of reward and recognition on the performance of secondary schools teachers in Western Rural District?

TABLE 2 Rewards and Recognition on the Performance Teachers

Statement	A f(%)	U f(%)	D f(%)	M	SD
Teachers' salary is worth the services they render	97(59.9)	11(6.8)	54(33.3)	4.1	0.541
The performing teachers are encouraged by giving them prizes	111(71.9)	5(3.1)	46(28.4)	3.9	0.414
Teachers are promoted on the basis of their qualifications and performance	124(76.5)	3(1.9)	35(21.6)	3.5	0.554
Teachers are judged for their professional competence	132(81.5)	2(1.2)	28(17.3)	3.1	4.57

Table 2 shows that the majority (81.5%) of the respondents agreed that teachers are judged for their professional competence with a mean of 3.1 and a standard deviation of 4.57, and also a large number (76.5%) agreed that teachers are promoted based on their qualifications and performance with a mean of 3.5 and a standard deviation of 0.554. On the other hand, the majority (33.3%) of the

respondents disagreed that teachers' salaries are worth the services they render, with a mean of 4.1 and a standard deviation of 0.541. Principals indicated that when teachers are rewarded, they get work done. Positive reinforcement encourages the desired behavior in educational institutions.

Discussion of Findings

From the interviews on the influence of teaching load on the performance of secondary school teachers in Western Rural District, principals indicated that the teaching load of a teacher in the district is generally high in terms of the number of lessons handled per week; however, he/she prepares a small number of West African Senior Secondary School Certificate Examination (WASSCE) candidates every year. Even though the teachers view the high load as a manageable challenge, it is clear that the high teaching load negatively affects the performance of the teacher.

Principals interviewed indicated that the physical environment where teachers have been working has a greater impact on their performance, which consists of office design, ventilation, lighting, and other basic amenities. A well-designed office structure, the principal's relationship with the teachers, and social behavior are some of the significant aspects that determine the teacher's productivity and performance.

These findings are in line with the findings of Clements-Croome, D. (2015) who argue that the environment in which people work affects both job performance and job satisfaction. The tasks workers perform in modern office buildings are increasingly complex and depend on sophisticated technology, and companies whose occupancy costs are increasing generally seek to reduce them without adversely affecting the workers. Such workspace decisions aspire to create an investment in employees' quality of life; the argument being made is that measurable productivity increases will result. Ziadzor, P. Y. (2018). adds that researchers are increasingly finding links between employee health and aspects of the physical environment at work, such as indoor air quality and lighting.

From Principals interviewed on working conditions and the performance of secondary schools teachers in West Rural District, they indicated that the physical environment where teachers have been working has a greater impact on their performance, which consists of office design, ventilation, lighting, and other basic amenities. A well-designed office structure, the principal's relationship with the teachers, and social behavior are some of the significant aspects that determine the teacher's productivity and performance.

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These findings in Table 1 concur with the findings of Yu, Q., et al (2019) they found that good remuneration has been found over the years to be one of the policies the organization can adopt to increase their workers' performance and thereby increase the organization's productivity. Also, with the present global economic trend, most employers of labor have realized the fact that for their organizations to compete favorably, the performance of their employees goes a long way in determining the success of the organization. Employees want to earn a reasonable salary and payment and desire their workers to feel that is what they are getting Eze, C. I. (2018). Money is the fundamental inducement; no other incentive or motivational technique comes even close to it concerning its influential value Gyamfi, Linda (2017).

These findings in Table 2 are in line with the findings of Mazikana, A. T. (2019) who observed that reward management is one of the strategies used by human resource managers for attracting and retaining suitable employees as well as facilitating them to improve their performance through motivation and compliance with employment legislation and regulation. As a result of these pressures, HR managers seek to design reward structures that facilitate the organization's strategic goals and the goals of individual employees. Reward systems are very crucial for an organization. Reward and recognition are the two, along with many other factors, that can affect the job satisfaction and motivation of teachers. About statistics, there is an important link between reward and recognition and between motivation and satisfaction Asaari, et al (2019). This encourages teachers to take positive actions leading to rewards. Reward programs should be properly designed in educational institutions to reinforce positive behavior, which leads to better performance. A good reward system that focuses on rewarding teachers and their teams will serve as a driving force for the teachers to have higher performance and hence end up accomplishing the educational goals and objectives.

Awarding a financial benefit to an employee without any prominent show also loses its importance. When an employee gets a monetary reward with exceptional amusement and excitement, that experience becomes more tremendous for the recipient Ahmad, M. A. A., & Jameel, A. S. (2018). Types and nature of rewards have a direct relation with the motivation and satisfaction of the employees. Changes in rewards and recognition can bring a definite change in work motivation and satisfaction Thabit, F., et al (2022).

Conclusion and Recommendations

From the findings and summary, the study concludes that: Reward and recognition are the two, along with many other factors, that can affect the job satisfaction and motivation of teachers. Types and nature of rewards have a direct relation with the motivation and satisfaction of the employees. Changes in rewards and recognition can bring a definite change in work motivation and satisfaction. Rewards have been known to have a positive effect on teacher performance.

However, no reward system is perfect; this is because motivation is personal, and what motivates one teacher could be different from what motivates the next. There is a strong positive effect of rewards and recognition on job motivation and satisfaction.

Motivation and job performance of employees can be increased considerably if more attention is given to employee rewards and recognition. Considering recognition, it can be said that it is an important factor affecting employee motivation. Therefore, the

school should get to know its employees well so that they can employ the right motivational strategy. The school should hence change the intrinsic nature and content of jobs by enriching them to enhance teachers' sovereignty and opportunities for them to have additional responsibilities, gain recognition, and develop their skills so that teachers can achieve peak performance.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the study therefore recommends emphasizing the importance of teacher evaluation to enhance classroom practice, recognize teachers' work, and help both teachers and schools identify professional development opportunities. Make sure that teacher appraisal occurs within a framework of profession-wide agreed statements of teachers' responsibilities and standards of professional performance. Ensure that measures used to assess teacher performance are broadly based to reflect school objectives and take account of the school and classroom.

Ensure that all new teachers participate in structured induction programs that involve a reduced teaching load, trained mentor teachers in schools, close partnerships with teacher education institutions, and ensure that new teachers are not concentrated in the more difficult locations. Develop a dual approach by creating new positions associated with specific tasks and roles in addition to classroom teaching; create a competency-based teaching career ladder associated with extra responsibilities. Improve training, selection, and evaluation processes for school leaders and provide them with upgraded support services and more attractive compensation packages.

Recognize the breadth and complexity of teachers' roles and responsibilities in job profiles. Use well-trained professional and administrative staff to help reduce the burden on teachers. Provide better facilities at schools for staff preparation and planning. Develop programs aimed at retaining important skills in schools, including professional development activities for older teachers, reduced classroom teaching and overall hours, and new tasks including curriculum development, advising other schools, and mentoring new teachers.

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