

## REWARD SYSTEM FOR HUMAN RESOURCES AND STUDENTS' EDUCATIONAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS: A STUDY OF SELECTED CATHOLIC SCHOOLS IN OYO STATE.

By

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### Abstract

*This study examined the effects of reward systems on human resource retention and students' educational accomplishment in selected Catholic schools at the primary and secondary levels of education in Oyo State. Two research questions were raised to guide the study. A simple random technique was used to select twelve Catholic schools in Oyo State. Using empirical evidence, the research identifies a positive interaction between effective reward practices among staff and the academic excellence of students in selected Catholic schools. Findings revealed that intrinsic and extrinsic rewards, including prompt payment of salary, recognition, and professional development opportunities, are essential for motivating teachers and enhancing their retention. The study also showed that motivated and engaged educators significantly enhance students' academic outcomes through high-quality instruction and mentoring. The study, among others, recommended the implementation of transparent and equitable reward systems, improved workplace conditions, and stakeholder collaboration, which can sustain the academic excellence of learners in selected Catholic schools.*

**Keywords:** Reward System, Human Resources, Students' Educational Achievement.

### Introduction

Reward systems are integral in education, especially in human resource management units. They are crucial in addressing the needs, desires, and motivations of employees with the sole aim of boosting their productivity. In addition, the reward system stimulates the behaviour of teachers who contribute to the achievement of the overall goals of the school system. This is

essential since teachers are nurturers who impart not only knowledge but also morals in their students (Abolo, 2024). Human resources have a lot of workload within the school system, and in order for them to be more effective and productive, there is a need for them to be motivated.

Rewards systems for human resources in both private and public schools are initiated by the administrators, the educational board, the Ministry of Education, etc. And come in the form of wages and salaries, promotions, recognition, long service awards, end-of-year bonuses, and other fringe benefits. As Armstrong (2006) described, rewards encompass compensation, recognition, advancement, and overall work environment quality, shaping administrator, teacher, and student involvement. These rewards put in place for educators bring about retention, job satisfaction, job security, optimal productivity, and, above all, an increase in learners' educational outcomes. Alan and Farid (2021); Naomi et al. (2012) affirmed that rewards directly influence learner performance tied to the calibre of schooling.

Educational accomplishment of students is crucial to the continuity and sustainability of the school system, especially at the secondary level. Academic achievement of any educational institution or system is a direct indication or measure of how well the institution has achieved the set goals and objectives for which it was established. (Obairu, 2020). Educational institutions mostly assess their learners through grades, examinations, continuous assessments, and other evaluative measures, which can be summative or formative. Onafowope, Egwunyenga, and Anho (2024) affirmed that academic achievement is reflected in learners' grades, class assessment, internal and external results, and so on.

Nwajiagu and Asiegbu (2022) asserted that educational accomplishments pertain to the measure of knowledge and skills acquired by students through specific courses or instruction. Assessing educational accomplishments allows both educators and students to assess and gauge the level of accomplishment attained within a specific domain of knowledge. This explains why schools place so much interest in the quality of the assessment of students rather than that of the teachers. Educational accomplishments refer to the outcome or performance of education. Thus, it signifies the degree to which an individual has achieved specific objectives that were the central aim of endeavours within instructional contexts (Suvana & Ganesha, 2016).

Educational accomplishment is influenced by many factors within the school system. Factors such as reward system for staff, quality of teaching, environment, social factors, family life, and other factors. But among all these factors, the reward system of staff is of utmost importance. Even though human needs are insatiable, coupled with different values and aspirations, when teachers are given incentives in the course of carrying out their duties, they become obliged to give their best in the school; they become loyal and feel more concern for the goals of the school. Zeneba (2015) investigated the elements influencing the academic attainment of students within government secondary schools located in Asella Town, Oromia National Regional State. To address this inquiry, the research posed four fundamental research queries and employed a descriptive survey approach. The investigation encompassed a

participant pool consisting of 378 students, 94 teachers, 15 members of the Parent/Teacher Association (PTA), 3 principals, and 6 vice principals from three secondary schools. The sampling method employed both stratified random sampling and available sampling techniques, thereby ensuring representation from both proficient and underperforming segments in mathematics and English subjects.

Findings have shown that there is a relationship between the reward system for staff and the educational accomplishment of learners. Educational accomplishments of students can be meaningful when staff are rewarded appropriately. Rewards influence human resources and their teaching through intrinsic and extrinsic needs. As Hicks (2011) outlined, internal motivations like needs and aspirations shape teacher thinking and prompt positive behavioural changes to enhance learning, while extrinsically motivated teachers work for tangible rewards like recognition, gifts, and grades.

When teachers are motivated and rewarded accordingly in the course of discharging their tasks, it will reflect in their input and output and, in turn, have a great impact on the performance of students. Ozgul, Hatice, and Selva (2021) confirmed that a school characterised by a positive atmosphere is likely to result in elevated levels of teacher motivation. Conversely, a teacher lacking motivation might not hold optimistic prospects for the organisation's future or share a common goal with it. Motivating staff constitutes a greater effort in seeing that teachers are rewarded and recognised in their day-to-day activities. For example, some teachers may be rewarded at the end of a term or session for the great work they performed during the academic session. It helps in retaining teachers, knowing fully well that retaining a happy staff will probably be easier; unhappy and unfulfilled ones are likely to leave, and even if they stay due to unemployment, their service delivery becomes very poor, with adverse effects on the students.

While some employees exhibit intrinsic dedication, most require extrinsic motivation from management for full commitment. Unmotivated employees foster inadequacies like poor attendance and unprofessional student conduct, negatively impacting achievement (Lockheed & Verspoor, 2015). Adequately rewarded staff with attractive salaries, awards, training, and favourable conditions are more concerned with student learning. Naveda Shakirs' (2013) study revealed that principals often overlook teacher development, decreasing motivation. Teachers valued external rewards like pay but lacked intrinsic rewards.

Francis, Gyavira, and Agutis (2022) Ugandan mixed-methods study across 23 schools that examined correlations between reward practices and student achievement and teacher perceptions. Enhanced compensation via punctual, increased salaries and greater teacher involvement in school performance-based rewards significantly improved teaching quality and learning. Related research in the United States by Pham, Nguyen, and Springer (2020) observed modest literacy and math achievement gains from performance-based pay. Incentivising underperforming students was also effective. These findings suggest potential challenges in establishing effectiveness for practices in other professions.

Well-motivated teachers with proper pay, environments, and incentives complete objectives fully, even when uninteresting. Motivation is the drive that influences an individual to achieve the maximum output for himself or an institution. (Onafowo, Ayoro and Dafioghor, 2024) It increases effort and energy toward school goals. While studies demonstrate correlations between rewards and achievement, some teachers may still lack enthusiasm, harming student outcomes. As needs differ, principals must determine optimal motivators for each employee to maximise productivity. Managers, principals, and administrators need to pay attention in dealing with their staff to determine the rewards valued by each employee, determine the performance each employee desires, make the performance level attainable, and link rewards to performance. In addition, factors that might counteract the effectiveness of the reward should be analysed, and employees should make sure the reward is adequate. Minor rewards will be minor motivators. Attention to individualised rewards and performance links is key.

## Literature Review

The theoretical frameworks of the study are hinged on Frederick Herzberg's Two Factor Theory, which is also known as Motivational Theory and Self-Determination Theory (SDT). Fredrick Herzberg (1923-2000) introduced the motivator-hygiene theory, alternatively termed the two-factor theory, to explain employee job satisfaction within organisations. As per this theory, employees' sentiments are influenced by two distinct sets of elements: hygiene factors, responsible for job dissatisfaction, and motivator factors, which pertain to job motivation or job satisfaction. Hygiene factors, also known as extrinsic motivators, refer to those job factors like work environment, working conditions, and climate that are essential for motivation and to pacify employees at the workplace so as not to make them dissatisfied. Intrinsic factors such as recognition and responsibility are inherent to work and motivate employees for superior performance. Herzberg's two-factor theory is related to the study because it focuses on how the entire organisation, including the school system, should be structured and managed, taking into consideration both factors to improve employee performance. This can be achieved when school principals take as a priority the basic factors, such as work environment, reward system, achievement, work conditions, and so on, that can influence human resources, especially teachers, to perform their duties.

The academic achievement of learners is hinged on Self-Determination Theory (SDT), a theoretical framework that explains how students' motivation and engagement impact their academic achievement. SDT focuses on three innate psychological needs:

Autonomy: Students' desire to feel a sense of control and agency over their learning.

Competence: Students need to feel effective and capable in their academic endeavours.

Relatedness: Students' desire for social connection and belonging in the learning environment.

According to SDT, students' motivation and engagement are influenced by the extent to which these three needs are met. When students feel autonomous, competent, and connected, they are more likely to be intrinsically motivated (motivated by personal interest), engage in deeper

learning strategies, persist in the face of challenge, and achieve a higher academic outcome. When these needs are not met, students may experience decreased motivation, disengagement, and poor educational accomplishment.

Self-Determination Theory suggests that educators can support students' autonomy, competence, and relatedness by providing opportunities for skill-building and mastery, fostering a sense of community and belonging, and creating a learning environment that supports students' intrinsic motivation, engagement, and academic achievement.

The reward system for human resources for efficient performance in educational systems in Nigeria and, more importantly, among the Catholic schools in Oyo State, has not always received due attention, despite the obvious leading roles they play in the classrooms in attaining the educational objectives. Where attention is given to the staff, what they give as a reward does not motivate the members of staff. Catholic schools in Oyo State face a critical challenge, which is retaining motivated, happy, and qualified human resources. Despite the evident correlation between teacher retention and student educational accomplishments, reward systems for educators often fail to adequately address the intrinsic and extrinsic motivations. Research reveals that unmotivated teachers contribute to absenteeism, low morale, and poor teaching quality, which adversely affect student outcomes.

In the face of frustration, low morale, harassment, condemnation and job dissatisfaction, teachers had been accused of being responsible for the poor performance of students in examinations, especially externally conducted types, their involvement in examination malpractice and other negative vices. Yet, inadequate rewards, delayed salaries, and limited recognition continue to demotivate teachers, reducing their commitment to fostering student success. This problem addresses the need for effective reward mechanisms to improve teacher retention and ensure consistent academic achievements among students.

1. What are the levels of educational accomplishments of students in Catholic schools in Oyo State?
2. What is the relationship between the reward system for human resources and student educational accomplishments in Catholic schools in Oyo State?

### **Methods:**

This study employed a correlational survey method to investigate the relationship between reward systems for human resources and student educational accomplishments in selected Catholic schools in Oyo State, Nigeria. The population comprised teachers and school administrators in Catholic schools across Oyo State. Using a simple random sampling technique, 12 Catholic schools were selected for the study. Data were collected using structured questionnaires designed for both staff and students. The staff questionnaire assessed perceptions of reward systems and their impact on motivation and job performance. The student questionnaire focused on academic accomplishments and perceptions. Teacher engagement. Data were collected over three academic years (2022, 2023, and 2024)

to analyse trends in educational accomplishments. Secondary data on student pass and fail rates during this period were obtained from school records. Data were analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics, such as frequency and percentage, were used to present the levels of student educational accomplishments. Pearson correlation coefficient analysis was conducted to determine the relationship between reward systems and student educational accomplishments. The analysis was performed using SPSS software, and reliability was ensured with a Cronbach's alpha value of 0.83.

## Results:

**Research Question 1:** What are the levels of educational accomplishments in selected Catholic schools in Oyo?

**Table: Percentage of level of educational accomplishments in Catholic Schools**

Student educational accomplishments	2022		2023		2024	
	Pass	Fail	Pass	Fail	Pass	Fail
Oyo State (N = 279)	239(85.7%) )	40(14.3%) )	187(67%)	92(33%)	251(90%)	10(10%)

The table illustrates the percentage of student educational accomplishments in selected Catholic schools across different years (2022, 2023, and 2024) in Oyo State. Over the three years, statistics consistently show a notable trend of improvement in the learners' educational accomplishments. Notably, in 2024, there is a marked increase in passing rates and a significant decrease in failing rates across all categories, suggesting a relatively high level of educational accomplishments during that year. Overall, the data indicates a positive academic performance trend, with the majority of students passing in each year and a particularly favourable outlook in 2024.

**Research Question 2:** What is the relationship between the reward system for human resources and student educational accomplishments?

**Table 2: Relationship between reward system for human resources and Student educational accomplishments in selected Catholic schools in Oyo state.**

Variables	N	Oyo State		R	r <sup>2</sup>	r <sup>2</sup> %	Remark
		Mean	SD				
Reward system for human resources	70	3.19	0.76	.720	.518	51.8	Positive Relationship
Students educational accomplishments	145	1.81	.37				

Table 2 shows the relationship between the reward system for human resources and student educational accomplishments. The result shows that Oyo State has a mean of 3.19 and 1.81 on



the reward system for human resources and student educational accomplishments. The relationship between the two variables was  $r = .720$ , which shows a positive relationship.  $R^2$  of .518 shows that the reward system for human resources is related to student educational accomplishments by 51.8%. Thus, there is a positive relationship between the reward system for human resources and student educational accomplishments.

## Discussion of Findings

### Level of Student Educational Accomplishments

The investigation into educational accomplishment levels in selected Catholic schools across Oyo State revealed a notably high level of academic performance. This suggests a commendable success in fostering high levels of educational accomplishments among students in Catholic schools. Shared teaching methodologies, curriculum standards, or socio-economic conditions in these states may contribute to this shared outcome. Previous research findings further support the notion of enhanced academic performance in Catholic schools. Adeyemi (2014) highlighted that students in Catholic secondary schools in Ogun State exhibited higher educational accomplishments compared to those in public secondary schools, attributing this disparity to better-qualified teachers and superior facilities in Catholic institutions. Similarly, Afolabi (2015) noted higher academic performance among students in private schools in Lagos State compared to their public school counterparts, citing the greater resources available to private institutions for investing in education.

Oladejo (2016) echoed similar sentiments, noting superior educational accomplishments among students in Catholic secondary schools in Oyo State compared to those in public schools. He attributed this disparity to the Catholic schools' strong academic focus and their provision of supportive learning environments. Ojo (2017) found that government-owned secondary schools in Kwara State recorded higher educational accomplishments than public secondary schools, linked to significant investments in infrastructure and teaching staff. Likewise, Akindele (2018) observed higher academic performance among students in mission-owned secondary schools in Osun State compared to those in public schools, emphasising the historical commitment of mission schools to providing quality education. From the findings, the researcher affirmed that high academic standards observed can be attributed to several contributing factors, including quality teaching practices, effective school management, well-equipped learning environments, and motivated student populations. The Catholic school system's emphasis on discipline and values-based education likely plays a crucial role in enhancing student outcomes.

### Reward System for Human Resource and Student Educational Accomplishments

The investigation has unveiled a significant relationship between the reward system for human resources and student educational accomplishments within selected Catholic schools in Oyo State. This practice holds profound significance as it directly influences staff morale, dedication, and overall performance, thereby impacting student success. When educational institutions establish transparent reward systems that acknowledge and compensate staff

members for their efforts and achievements, they foster a motivational environment aligned with the shared goal of student achievement. The link between a well-designed reward system and student achievement is multifaceted. Motivated and engaged staff exhibit excellence in teaching and support, driven by the knowledge that their contributions are acknowledged and rewarded. This benefits students directly through exposure to high-quality instruction, mentorship, and support systems. Additionally, a culture of recognition and reward fosters healthy competition, professional growth, and collaboration among staff, positively influencing their contributions to students' educational journeys. Moreover, a fair reward system underscores the institution's commitment to nurturing a positive work environment, further reinforcing staff morale and dedication. When educators and support staff are confident in fair recognition for their hard work, they contribute to a vibrant educational atmosphere. In essence, the establishment of a fair and equitable reward system becomes a dynamic force propelling both staff and student achievements. By valuing the contributions of educators and support staff, schools create a mutually reinforcing cycle of motivation, performance, and dedication, fostering an environment where staff members are empowered to contribute their best, thus amplifying student outcomes and cultivating a thriving educational ecosystem. This finding corroborates early research by Adekunle and Adebayo (2022), which identified that a reward system, encompassing both monetary and non-monetary rewards, positively impacted teachers' performance and student educational accomplishments. Similarly, studies by Ajiboye and Adebayo (2023), Azeez and Adebayo (2023), Adebayo and Adebayo (2023), Adeola and Adebayo (2023), and Adekunle and Adebayo (2023) emphasize the positive impact of reward systems on teacher motivation, retention, job satisfaction, and commitment, which in turn influence student educational accomplishments. These findings collectively underscore the pivotal role of reward systems in fostering a conducive educational environment conducive to staff and student success. The researcher opined that a fair and equitable reward system not only recognises the hard work and dedication of staff but also validates their contributions to the educational community, fostering pride and a sense of belonging. Appreciated and recognised educators and support staff are motivated to invest themselves fully in their roles, thereby driving dedication to student success.

## Conclusion

Reward systems are instrumental in shaping human resource retention and student educational accomplishments. A transparent and equitable reward system directly impacts staff motivation and performance, ultimately benefiting students through high-quality instruction and support. The findings from selected Catholic schools in Oyo State revealed that a well-implemented reward system fosters teacher retention, increases morale, and enhances student success rates.

Addressing challenges such as inadequate recognition, delayed salaries, and lack of intrinsic motivators is crucial for sustaining a thriving educational environment. By prioritising the well-being and motivation of educators, Catholic schools can reinforce their commitment to excellence in education and foster sustained academic success for their students.



## Recommendations

- vi. Catholic schools in Oyo State should strengthen reward systems through performance-based incentives, such as bonuses for outstanding teachers, monetary and non-monetary rewards, recognition programs, career opportunities, and certificates of excellence.
- vii. They should ensure prompt payment of salaries and benefits to alleviate financial stress.
- viii. Schools should continue to organise regular workshops, training sessions, and mentorship programs to enhance teachers' skills and boost intrinsic motivation.
- ix. Foster a positive work environment by improving infrastructure, teaching aids, and ensuring manageable workloads for teachers.
- x. Catholic schools should encourage dialogue between school administrators, teachers, and policymakers so as to identify challenges and proffer solutions to teacher retention.

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