AJEMATES
African Journal of Educational Management, Teaching and Entrepreneurship Studies
VOL.17 (1), January-April, 2026; https://ajemates.org

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF CURRICULUM AND TEACHERS' MOTIVATION IN PRIVATE AND PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN BENIN METROPOLIS

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ABSTRACT

This study examined differences in curriculum implementation and teachers' motivation between public and private senior secondary schools in Benin Metropolis, Edo State, Nigeria. A comparative survey research design was adopted. The population comprised 442 public and private senior secondary schools in the metropolis. Using cluster sampling, proportionate stratified sampling, and simple random sampling techniques, a sample of 150 teachers and 150 students was selected from the sampled schools across selected local government areas. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire designed to measure curriculum implementation and teachers' motivation. The instrument was validated by experts in education, and its reliability was established using the Cronbach's Alpha method, yielding coefficients of 0.846 for the curriculum scale and 0.769 for the teachers' motivation scale. Two research questions and corresponding hypotheses were formulated and tested at the 0.05 level of significance. Descriptive statistics and independent samples t*-test were employed for data analysis. The findings revealed a significant difference in curriculum implementation between public and private senior secondary schools, with private schools demonstrating more effective implementation of the prescribed curriculum. However, no significant difference was found in the level of teachers' motivation between public and private schools. The study concludes that while curriculum delivery varies across school ownership, teachers' motivational levels remain comparable. It is recommended that the Ministry of Education strengthen supervision and monitoring to ensure full and effective implementation of the curriculum, particularly its practical components, in public schools. Furthermore, both government and private school proprietors should enhance teacher motivation through structured reward and recognition schemes that acknowledge commitment and performance.*

Keywords: Curriculum, Teachers' Motivation, Private and Public schools, Quality indicators

Introduction

Education remains a fundamental instrument for national development, social integration, and human capital formation. In Nigeria, education is constitutionally recognised as a right of every child and a critical pathway for improving individual productivity and societal well-being. The National Policy on Education positions secondary education as a pivotal stage in the educational system, serving as a bridge between primary and tertiary education and equipping learners with academic, vocational, and civic competencies necessary for national development (Federal Republic of Nigeria [FRN], 2013).

Consequently, the quality of secondary education has far-reaching implications for manpower development and the sustainability of the entire education system.

The concept of quality in education has evolved beyond simplistic interpretations of examination success to encompass a multidimensional framework that includes inputs, processes, and outcomes. Contemporary scholars conceptualise quality education as one that satisfies both internal stakeholders (students and teachers) and external stakeholders (parents, employers, and policymakers) through effective curriculum delivery, competent staffing, supportive learning environments, and meaningful learning outcomes. This systems-oriented understanding underscores the importance of examining not only what is taught (curriculum content) but also how it is implemented and the motivational conditions under which teachers operate.

Curriculum implementation is widely recognised as a critical determinant of educational quality. It refers to the translation of curriculum plans and objectives into actual classroom practices, encompassing instructional strategies, learning activities, assessment techniques, and use of instructional materials (Marques and Xavier, 2020; Nevenglosky, 2018). Although curriculum documents may be well designed, their effectiveness ultimately depends on the extent to which teachers can faithfully and creatively implement them in classroom settings. Recent Nigerian studies indicate that curriculum implementation remains inconsistent across secondary schools due to inadequate instructional resources, insufficient teacher preparation, overcrowded classrooms, and weak monitoring mechanisms (Ayodele et al., 2025). These challenges often manifest differently across school ownership types, particularly between public and private secondary schools.

Teacher motivation constitutes another vital quality indicator within the education system. Motivation influences teachers' commitment, instructional effectiveness, classroom management, and willingness to adopt innovative teaching practices (Oyiza, 2025). Empirical evidence suggests that motivated teachers are more likely to demonstrate higher levels of professional dedication and positively influence student learning outcomes (Abubakar, 2024). While financial incentives remain important, recent studies emphasise the role of non-monetary factors such as professional recognition, opportunities for career advancement, availability of teaching resources, and supportive school leadership in sustaining teacher motivation (Erhabor and Erhabor, 2025; Sari and Yetkiner, 2020).

In the Nigerian context, disparities in teacher motivation have been linked to differences in working conditions between public and private schools (Igbafe and Igbineweka, 2024). Private schools are often perceived to offer better supervision, accountability, and incentive structures, whereas public schools are constrained by bureaucratic inefficiencies and resource limitations (Abubakar, 2024). However, findings remain inconclusive, with some

recent studies reporting comparable motivational levels across school types when intrinsic factors such as professional commitment and job satisfaction are considered (Erhabor and Erhabor, 2025). These mixed outcomes suggest the need for context-specific investigations that jointly examine curriculum implementation and teacher motivation.

In Edo State, and particularly within Benin Metropolis, emerging evidence highlights persistent quality challenges in secondary education. Adeyemi and Adewale (2022) demonstrated that teacher quality significantly predicts student academic performance in Benin Municipality, while Omoigui and Uyigue (2025) reported that teachers' attitudes towards assessment practices influence instructional effectiveness. Additionally, evaluations of recent reform initiatives such as the EdoBEST 2.0 programme indicate that despite policy innovations, gaps remain in instructional delivery, resource availability, and teacher support at the secondary school level (Omoera and Nwaoboli, 2025). These findings reinforce the need to interrogate how curriculum implementation and teacher motivation differ across school ownership structures within the local context.

Despite the growing body of literature, most comparative studies in Nigeria have tended to focus on singular indicators of quality—such as infrastructure, student achievement, or teacher qualifications—without simultaneously examining curriculum implementation and teacher motivation using validated instruments and multiple respondent groups. Moreover, few recent studies provide empirical evidence specific to Benin Metropolis, where public and private schools coexist under varying socio-economic and administrative conditions.

Statement of the Problem

Secondary education occupies a strategic position in Nigeria's educational system, serving as the bridge between basic and tertiary education and playing a crucial role in human capital development. Despite the existence of well-articulated national policies and curricula aimed at ensuring quality and uniform standards across schools, concerns persist regarding the effectiveness of curriculum implementation and the motivational conditions of teachers in secondary schools. In practice, disparities in instructional delivery, resource availability, and teacher commitment continue to undermine the attainment of the objectives of secondary education in many parts of the country.

In Benin Metropolis, Edo State, public and private senior secondary schools operate under distinct administrative, funding, and accountability frameworks, which may influence how the prescribed curriculum is implemented and how teachers are motivated. While private schools are often perceived to deliver superior educational quality due to closer supervision and greater accountability, public schools are frequently criticised for inadequate curriculum coverage, limited instructional resources, and declining teacher morale. However, empirical evidence to substantiate these perceptions remains inconsistent, with existing studies yielding

mixed findings across different regions of Nigeria.

Moreover, much of the available literature has examined quality indicators in isolation, focusing either on curriculum implementation or on teacher motivation, without adequately exploring the interaction between these two critical variables. In addition, few recent studies have provided locality-specific empirical evidence from Benin Metropolis using validated instruments and multiple respondent groups. This lack of up-to-date, context-based comparative data creates uncertainty for policymakers, school administrators, and proprietors seeking to design targeted interventions to improve instructional quality and teacher effectiveness.

Against this backdrop, there is a clear need for a systematic and comparative investigation of curriculum implementation and teachers' motivation in public and private senior secondary schools in Benin Metropolis. Addressing this gap will contribute to a clearer understanding of whether school ownership influences these key quality indicators and provide empirical evidence to guide educational planning and reform in Edo State and similar contexts.

Purpose of the Research

The main purpose of this study is to conduct a comparative analysis of curriculum implementation and teachers' motivation in public and private senior secondary schools in Benin Metropolis, Edo State, Nigeria. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. Examine the extent to which the prescribed senior secondary school curriculum is implemented in public and private secondary schools in Benin Metropolis;
2. Determine the level of teachers' motivation in public and private senior secondary schools in the study area;
3. Compare curriculum implementation practices between public and private senior secondary schools in Benin Metropolis; and
4. Compare the level of teachers' motivation between public and private senior secondary schools in Benin Metropolis.

The findings of this study are expected to provide empirical evidence that will assist educational policymakers, the Ministry of Education, school administrators, and private school proprietors in developing strategies aimed at improving curriculum delivery and enhancing teacher motivation. Ultimately, the study will contribute to ongoing efforts to strengthen the quality of secondary education in Edo State and Nigeria at large.

Research Questions

The following research questions were raised to guide the study.

1. Will there be differences in curriculum implementation as a quality indicator of education in public and private secondary schools in the Benin metropolis?
2. Will there be differences in motivation of teachers as a

quality indicator of education in public and private secondary schools in the Benin metropolis?

Hypotheses

The corresponding research questions were formulated into hypotheses.

1. There will be no significant difference in curriculum implementation as a quality indicator of education in public and private secondary school in the Benin metropolis.
2. There will be no significant difference in teacher's motivation as a quality indicator of education in public and private secondary school in the Benin metropolis.

Methodology

Research Design

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design to enable a comparative analysis of selected quality indicators—curriculum implementation and teachers' motivation—in public and private senior secondary schools in Benin Metropolis, Edo State, Nigeria. The survey design was considered appropriate because it facilitates the collection of quantitative data from a representative sample of respondents and allows for statistical comparison and generalisation of findings to the wider population (Creswell and Creswell, 2017; Fraenkel et al., 2019).

Population of the Study

The population of the study comprised all teachers and students in public and private senior secondary schools in Benin Metropolis, which covers Oredo, Egor, and Ikpoba-Okha Local Government Areas. At the time of the study, public secondary schools in the metropolis consisted of 47 schools with 1,643 teachers and 50,183 students, while private secondary schools comprised 395 schools with 3,020 teachers and 6,680 students.

Sample and Sampling Techniques

The sample for the study consisted of 300 teachers and 300 students drawn from 147 public and private senior secondary schools within the metropolis. A multi-stage sampling procedure was employed to ensure adequate representation of school ownership types and local government areas (Cohen et al., 2018; Taherdoost, 2016). At the first stage, proportionate stratified sampling was used to select 33% of the secondary schools across the three local government areas, resulting in the selection of 16 public schools and 131 private schools. This ensured that both public and private schools were represented in proportion to their distribution within the study area.

At the second stage, cluster sampling was applied to select students from different classes within the senior secondary school level (SS1–SS3) in the selected schools, ensuring diversity in academic level and learning experience. At the third stage, simple random sampling using the ballot method was employed to select the respondents. For each selected school, teachers and students were asked to pick folded papers containing numerical codes from separate blind bags. Respondents who picked odd numbers were selected for participation in the study. Through this process, a total of 300 teachers and 300

students were randomly selected across Oredo, Egor, and Ikpoba-Okha Local Government Areas.

Instrumentation

Two structured questionnaires were used for data collection: the Curriculum Content Questionnaire (CCQ) and the Teachers' Motivation Questionnaire (TMQ). The CCQ was administered to students to assess the extent of curriculum implementation, while the TMQ was administered to teachers to measure their level of motivation. Each questionnaire consisted of two sections. Section A elicited demographic information, including the school ownership type of the respondents. Section B comprised 20 items designed to measure curriculum content implementation and teachers' motivation. The items were structured on a four-point Likert scale ranging from *Strongly Agree (4)* to *Strongly Disagree (1)*, which is commonly employed in educational research to measure attitudes and perceptions (Joshi et al., 2015).

Validity and Reliability of the Instrument

Content validity of the instruments was established through expert review, a widely accepted approach for ensuring that research instruments adequately represent the constructs being measured (Creswell and Creswell, 2017; Polit and Beck, 2006). The questionnaires were examined by three specialists from the Department of Educational Evaluation and Counselling Psychology, Faculty of Education, who assessed the relevance, clarity, and adequacy of the items in relation to the study objectives. Their comments and suggestions were incorporated into the final versions of the instruments. The reliability of the instruments was determined using the Cronbach's Alpha method, which is a widely accepted reliability coefficient for Likert-type scales (Tavakol and Dennick, 2011). A pilot study was conducted using 20 secondary school students and teachers drawn from the three local government areas but excluded from the main sample. The reliability analysis yielded coefficients of 0.846 for the Curriculum Content Questionnaire and 0.769 for the Teachers' Motivation Questionnaire, indicating acceptable internal consistency and confirming that the instruments were reliable for the study.

Procedure for Data Collection

The researcher personally administered the questionnaires to the selected teachers and students in the sampled schools. Prior to administration, the purpose of the study was explained to the respondents, and they were assured of confidentiality and anonymity. Respondents were instructed to complete the questionnaires independently without consulting external sources or discussing their responses with others. All administered questionnaires were retrieved on the spot or within an agreed timeframe to ensure a high response rate.

Method of Data Analysis

Data collected were analysed using descriptive and inferential statistical techniques. Descriptive statistics, including mean, standard deviation, and standard error of mean, were used to answer the research questions. Inferential analysis was conducted using the independent samples *t*-test to test the stated hypotheses and

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determine differences between public and private secondary schools, in line with standard statistical procedures for comparing group means (Field, 2024). All hypotheses were tested at the 0.05 level of significance.

Results

Curriculum Implementation in Public and Private Senior Secondary Schools

The first research question examined whether there were differences in curriculum implementation between public and private senior secondary schools in Benin Metropolis. As presented in Table 1, teachers in private senior secondary schools recorded a higher mean score (M = 30.12, SD = 3.49) on curriculum implementation compared with their counterparts in public schools (M = 27.67, SD = 2.37). Although the standard deviations suggest some overlap in responses across the two school types, the observed mean difference indicates a stronger level of curriculum implementation in private schools. To determine whether this difference was statistically significant, an independent samples *t*-test was conducted. The results (Table 2) revealed a statistically significant difference in curriculum implementation between public and private senior secondary schools ($p < .05$). Consequently, the null hypothesis stating that there is no significant difference in curriculum implementation between public and private schools was rejected. This finding suggests that school ownership significantly influences the extent to which the prescribed curriculum is implemented in senior secondary schools in Benin Metropolis.

Table 1: Distribution of Public and Private Schools Curriculum Implementation

	School	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Curriculum	Public	148	27.67	2.36691	.17691
	Private	148	30.12	3.49270	.32290

Table 2: Independent t-test of Curriculum Implementation between Public and Private Senior Secondary Schools in Benin Metropolis

Variables	N	$\bar{X}$	Sd	Df	t-value	p.value	decision
Public	148	27.67	2.366	185	6.660	.000	significant
Private	148	30.12	3.492	294	7.201		

N = Number, SD = Standard deviation, df = degree of freedom, $\bar{X}$=Mean

Teachers' Motivation in Public and Private Senior Secondary Schools

The second research question investigated whether there were differences in teachers' motivation between public and private senior secondary schools. As shown in Table 3, the mean motivation score for teachers in public schools (M = 26.79, SD = 2.33) was marginally higher than that of teachers in private schools (M = 26.05, SD = 2.36). However, the difference between the mean scores was minimal, indicating comparable levels of teacher motivation across both school types. The independent samples *t*-test conducted to test the corresponding hypothesis (Table 4) showed

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that the difference in teachers' motivation between public and private schools was not statistically significant ($p > .05$). As a result, the null hypothesis was retained. This finding indicates that teachers' motivation does not significantly differ based on school ownership in Benin Metropolis.

Table 3: Group Statistics Showing the Level of Teachers' Motivation

	School	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Motivation	Public	148	26.79	2.325	.21495
	Private	148	26.05	2.361	.17650

Table 4: Independent t-test of Teachers Motivation between Public and Private Senior Secondary School in Benin Metropolis

Variables	N	$\bar{X}$	Sd	df	t-value	p.value	decision
Public	148	26.79	2.325	294	2.668	.215	not significant
Private	148	26.05	2.361	250	2.677		

N = Number, SD = Standard deviation, df = degree of freedom, $\bar{X}$=Mean

Discussion

The findings of this study reveal a significant difference in curriculum implementation between public and private senior secondary schools in Benin Metropolis, with private schools demonstrating higher levels of curriculum implementation. This result corroborates recent empirical studies that report more effective curriculum delivery in private schools, often attributed to closer supervision, better accountability mechanisms, smaller class sizes, and greater availability of instructional resources (Marques & Xavier, 2020; Ayodele et al., 2025). In many private schools, proprietors and parents exert considerable pressure on teachers to complete syllabi and adhere strictly to instructional schedules, which may enhance curriculum fidelity.

The result also aligns with earlier Nigerian studies indicating that curriculum implementation varies across schools due to differences in institutional capacity and management practices (Ayodele et al., 2025). While the curriculum may be uniform at the policy level, its classroom enactment depends largely on school-level factors such as teacher workload, availability of teaching materials, and administrative monitoring. The significantly lower mean score observed among public school teachers suggests persistent structural constraints in public secondary schools, including overcrowded classrooms, inadequate instructional resources, and limited instructional supervision—challenges that have been widely documented in recent Nigerian education sector analyses (FRN, 2020; World Bank, 2021).

Conversely, the finding that teachers' motivation does not significantly differ between public and private senior secondary schools is noteworthy. This outcome supports recent evidence suggesting that teacher motivation is

influenced by a complex interplay of intrinsic and extrinsic factors rather than school ownership alone (Sari & Yetkiner, 2020; Abubakar, 2024). While private school teachers may face stricter supervision and performance expectations, public school teachers often benefit from greater job security and more structured career progression, which may balance motivational outcomes across the two sectors.

This finding is also consistent with Edo State–based studies that report comparable motivational levels among teachers across school types when intrinsic commitment to teaching and professional identity are considered (Erhabor & Erhabor, 2025). Many teachers enter the profession due to personal interest and a sense of social responsibility, factors that sustain motivation despite differences in remuneration or working conditions. As noted by Neves de Jesus and Lens (2005), intrinsic motivation remains a critical driver of teacher effectiveness, particularly in contexts where material incentives are limited.

Overall, the findings suggest that while private schools in Benin Metropolis demonstrate stronger curriculum implementation, teacher motivation remains broadly similar across public and private schools. This implies that improving educational quality in public secondary schools may require targeted interventions focused on strengthening curriculum delivery mechanisms—such as enhanced instructional supervision, provision of teaching resources, and reduced class sizes—rather than relying solely on motivational incentives. At the same time, structured reward and recognition systems for teachers across both sectors could further enhance commitment and instructional effectiveness.

Conclusion

This study examined curriculum implementation and teachers' motivation as key quality indicators in public and private senior secondary schools in Benin Metropolis, Edo State, Nigeria. Using a comparative survey approach, the study generated empirical evidence on how school ownership influences instructional quality and teacher-related factors within the secondary education system. The findings revealed a statistically significant difference in curriculum implementation between public and private senior secondary schools, with private schools demonstrating higher levels of curriculum enactment. This suggests that although the national curriculum is uniform, its implementation varies considerably across school types due to differences in institutional management, instructional supervision, and availability of teaching and learning resources. In contrast, the study found no significant difference in teachers' motivation between public and private schools, indicating that teacher motivation in the study area is shaped more by intrinsic commitment and professional identity than by school ownership alone.

Overall, the study underscores that improving the quality of secondary education requires more than curriculum design; it demands effective implementation supported by enabling

school environments and motivated teachers. The findings contribute to the existing literature by providing recent, locality-specific evidence from Benin Metropolis and by jointly examining curriculum implementation and teacher motivation as complementary indicators of educational quality.

Recommendations

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

1. The Ministry of Education should intensify instructional supervision and monitoring in public senior secondary schools to ensure full coverage and faithful implementation of the prescribed curriculum, particularly its practical and skill-oriented components.
2. Government should prioritise the provision of adequate teaching and learning materials, including laboratories, workshops, and instructional aids, to support effective curriculum delivery in public secondary schools.
3. Regular in-service training, workshops, and subject-based capacity-building programmes should be organised for teachers in both public and private schools to enhance their pedagogical skills and curriculum delivery competence.
4. Both government and private school proprietors should adopt structured motivation strategies that go beyond salary increments to include recognition, awards, career advancement opportunities, and supportive school leadership practices.
5. Educational policymakers should utilise findings from empirical studies such as this to guide policy reviews and targeted interventions aimed at improving instructional quality and teacher effectiveness at the secondary school level.
6. Further studies are recommended to explore additional quality indicators—such as instructional leadership, student learning outcomes, and school climate—and to adopt mixed-methods approaches that incorporate classroom observations and interviews for deeper insights.

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