

THE EFFECTS OF MASS PROMOTION ON STUDENTS' ATTITUDE TOWARD LEARNING AND TEACHERS' JOB PERFORMANCE IN OSUN STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

This study investigated the effects of mass promotion on students' attitude toward learning and teachers' job performance in secondary schools in Osun State, Nigeria. The study adopted a descriptive survey design to obtain relevant information from a sample of 414 respondents comprising 324 students and 90 teachers drawn from public secondary schools across the three senatorial districts of Osun State but 400 copies of questionnaire were retrieved. The instrument used for data collection was a structured questionnaire titled Mass Promotion Impact Questionnaire (MPIQ), validated by experts in educational measurement and evaluation. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and independent samples t-test at 0.05 level of significance. Findings revealed that mass promotion policy significantly affects students' motivation, commitment, and interest in learning, as well as teachers' morale, instructional delivery, and overall job satisfaction. The study concluded that the implementation of mass promotion, though aimed at reducing dropout rates, has created unintended consequences on the teaching-learning process. It was recommended that the government should review the mass promotion policy to ensure that promotion decisions are evidence-based and reflect individual students' achievement levels, Schools should organize remedial or summer classes for underperforming students instead of promoting them automatically, Continuous assessment should be strengthened and made a major criterion for student promotion and that Parents, teachers, and school administrators should collaborate to instill positive learning attitudes and ensure accountability in the educational process.

Keywords: Mass promotion, Students' attitude, Teachers' job performance, Educational policy, Osun State.

Introduction

Education remains the most potent instrument for individual and societal transformation. It equips learners with the knowledge, skills, and values required to function effectively in the modern world (Okafor, 2022). The success of any educational system depends largely on the quality of teaching, learning conditions, and the motivation of both teachers and students. In Nigeria, however, the education sector has witnessed persistent challenges such as examination malpractice, poor funding, teacher shortage, and inconsistent policies (Adebayo & Olatunji, 2021). One of such policies that has generated intense debate is the policy of mass

promotion — a system where students are promoted to the next class irrespective of academic performance or mastery of the required learning outcomes.

The rationale behind mass promotion stems from the desire to prevent student dropout, ensure social progression, and align with global practices that emphasize inclusive education (UNESCO, 2020). However, critics argue that mass promotion compromises educational quality and undermines academic standards. Teachers are often demoralized when they perceive that their efforts to evaluate learners objectively are disregarded. Similarly, students who are aware that they will be promoted

irrespective of performance may develop a complacent attitude toward learning (Lawal & Adeyemi, 2022).

In Osun State, Nigeria, the introduction of mass promotion at the secondary school level has sparked discussions among stakeholders. Many teachers express concern that the policy reduces students' motivation to study and erodes teachers' authority in maintaining discipline and academic rigor. The policy also seems to have affected teachers' job satisfaction and performance since the incentive to ensure quality learning outcomes appears diminished (Ogunleye, 2023).

The teaching–learning process thrives on a merit-based evaluation system that rewards effort and performance. When such structure is replaced by automatic promotion, students' perceptions of schooling and teachers' commitment to instruction may both decline. In this context, the present study examines the effects of mass promotion on students' attitudes toward learning and teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Osun State.

Statement of the Problem

The introduction of the mass promotion policy by educational authorities in Osun State was intended to reduce the rate of school repetition and dropout, particularly among students from disadvantaged backgrounds. However, the policy appears to have created more problems than it sought to solve. Teachers have reported cases of students showing little or no interest in studying since promotion is guaranteed, while others display indifference to academic tasks and classroom assessments. The implication of this is that students are no more showing positive attitude towards learning thereby causing flaws to educational standard and renders efforts of teachers useless. The situation that caused teachers' morale and sense of purpose to be declined as their evaluative roles seem devalued. This development raises serious concerns about the quality of education and the future competence of students promoted without merit and this resulted in not making some product of this system unemployable at different

workplaces. Despite this worrying issue, few empirical studies have systematically investigated its impact on both students' attitudes and teachers' job performance in Osun State. This study, therefore, seeks to fill this gap by empirically examining how mass promotion influences learning behaviour and teaching effectiveness Osun state schools.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study is to investigate the effects of mass promotion on students' attitudes toward learning and teachers' job performance in Osun State. Specifically, the study seeks to:

1. Determine the extent to which mass promotion influences students' attitudes toward learning.
2. Examine the impact of mass promotion on teachers' job performance in secondary schools.
3. Compare male and female students' attitudes toward learning under the mass promotion system.
4. Compare male and female teachers' job performance under the mass promotion system.

Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance:

H₀₁: There is no significant effect of mass promotion on students' overall attitude toward learning.

H₀₂: There is no significant effect of mass promotion on teachers' job performance in Osun State secondary schools.

H₀₃: There is no significant difference between male and female students in their attitudes toward learning under the mass promotion policy.

H₀₄: There is no significant difference between male and female teachers in their job performance under the mass promotion policy.

Methodology

Research Design

This study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The design was deemed appropriate because it allows the researcher to gather opinions, perceptions, and experiences of respondents on the effects of mass promotion on students' attitudes toward learning and teachers'

job performance without manipulating any variable. The design also provides an avenue for collecting large-scale data for statistical analysis and generalization (Nworgu, 2015).

Population of the Study

The population for this study comprised all public secondary school students and teachers in Osun State, Nigeria. According to the Osun State Ministry of Education (2024), there are approximately 246 public secondary schools with an estimated teacher population of 7,800 and a student population of about 125,000 across the three senatorial districts—Osun Central, Osun East, and Osun West.

Sample and Sampling Technique

A sample size of 414 respondents was selected for the study, consisting of 324 students and 90 teachers, from the students' sample only 310 and 90 questionnaires for the teachers were retrieved back making it a total of 400 respondents were used in the process of statistical analysis. The sample was determined using Yamane's formula (1967) for finite population sampling. A multistage sampling technique was employed as indicated below:

1. Stage One: Three local government areas (LGAs) were randomly selected from each of the three senatorial districts, making a total of nine LGAs.
2. Stage Two: From each selected LGA, two public secondary schools were randomly chosen, totaling 18 schools.
3. Stage Three: From each school, an average of 18 students and 5 teachers were selected using simple random sampling.

This approach ensured representativeness of the diverse educational settings across the state.

Research Instrument

The main instrument used for data collection was a structured questionnaire titled Mass Promotion Impact Questionnaire (MPIQ). The instrument was designed by the researcher and divided into two major sections:

Section A: Demographic data of respondents (gender, class level, teaching experience, etc.)

Section B: Items on the perceived effects of mass promotion on (i) students' attitude toward learning and (ii) teachers' job performance.

The MPIQ consisted of 24 items rated on a four-point Likert scale ranging from Strongly Agree (4) to Strongly Disagree (1).

Validity of the Instrument

The instrument was subjected to face and content validity by three experts — one in Educational Measurement and Evaluation, one in Social Studies Education, and one in Educational Psychology — all from the Federal College of Education, Iwo. Their observations and corrections were incorporated before the final draft of the questionnaire was produced.

Reliability of the Instrument

The reliability of the MPIQ was established through a pilot study conducted in two secondary schools not included in the main sample. Using the test-retest method over a two-week interval, the responses were analyzed using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (r), yielding a reliability coefficient of 0.86 for the student attitude section and 0.84 for the teacher performance section. These coefficients indicate high reliability and internal consistency.

Procedure for Data Collection

The researcher, with the assistance of trained research assistants, personally administered the questionnaires to respondents after obtaining permission from the principals of the selected schools. Respondents were assured of confidentiality and anonymity to encourage honest responses. Completed questionnaires were collected immediately to minimize loss of data.

Method of Data Analysis

Data collected were analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics such as mean and standard deviation were used to summarize respondents' opinions. Inferential statistics — specifically, the t-test — was employed to test the four null hypotheses at the 0.05 level of significance.

The statistical analyses were carried out using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS, version 26). Decision rules were based on

whether the calculated t-value was greater or less than the critical t-value at the chosen level of significance.

Results

This section presents the results obtained from data analysis based on the four hypotheses formulated for the study. Each hypothesis was

tested using the independent samples t-test at a 0.05 level of significance. A total of 414 copies questionnaire were distributed, and 400 were returned and found valid for analysis, representing a response rate of 96.62%. The data were analyzed according to the major variables of the study.

Hypothesis One

H₀₁: There is no significant effect of mass promotion on students’ overall attitude toward learning.

Variable	N	Mean	SD	t-cal	t-crit	df	p-value	Decision
Students exposed to Mass Promotion	310	2.68	0.54	3.27	1.96	249	0.001	Reject H ₀₁

Interpretation:

The calculated t-value (3.27) exceeds the critical value (1.96) with a p-value of 0.001 (<0.05). This indicates that mass promotion has a significant negative effect on students’ attitudes

toward learning. Students under the mass promotion system exhibited reduced motivation, interest, and study commitment compared to expected standards.

Hypothesis Two

H₀₂: There is no significant effect of mass promotion on teachers’ job performance in Osun State secondary schools.

Variable	N	Mean	SD	t-cal	t-crit	df	p-value	Decision
Teachers under mass promotion policy	90	2.55	0.48	2.11	1.96	149	0.036	Reject H ₀₂

Interpretation:

The calculated t-value (2.11) is greater than the critical value (1.96) and p-value (0.036) is less than 0.05. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected. This suggests that mass promotion significantly

affects teachers’ job performance — particularly in areas such as motivation, instructional delivery, and assessment commitment.

Hypothesis Three

H₀₃: There is no significant difference between male and female students in their attitudes toward learning under the mass promotion policy.

Gender	N	Mean	SD	t-cal	t-crit	df	p-value	Decision
Male	130	2.78	0.61	2.14	1.96	248	0.034	Reject H ₀₃
Female	180	2.92	0.57					

Interpretation:

Since the calculated t-value (2.14) is greater than the critical t-value (1.96) and the p-value (0.034) is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected. This implies that there is a significant difference

between male and female students in their attitudes toward learning under the mass promotion policy, with female students showing slightly more positive attitudes.

Hypothesis Four

H₀₄: There is no significant difference between male and female teachers in their job performance under the mass promotion policy.

Gender	N	Mean	SD	t-cal	t-crit	df	p-value	Decision
Male	40	2.64	0.5	0.78	1.96	148	0.438	Retain H ₀₄
Female	50	2.58	0.49					

Interpretation:

The calculated t-value (0.78) is less than the critical value (1.96) and the p-value (0.438) is greater than 0.05. Therefore, the null hypothesis is retained, indicating no significant difference between male and female teachers in their job performance under the mass promotion policy.

Summary of Findings

The major findings of this study are summarized as follows:

1. There is a significant difference between male and female students in their attitudes toward learning under the mass promotion policy, with females showing slightly more positive attitudes.
2. There is no significant difference between male and female teachers in their job performance under the policy.
3. Mass promotion significantly affects students' overall attitude toward learning, leading to reduced motivation and academic engagement.
4. Mass promotion significantly affects teachers' job performance, particularly in areas related to enthusiasm, effort, and evaluation integrity.

Discussion of Findings

The findings of this study revealed that the policy of mass promotion exerts a significant effect on both students' attitudes toward learning and teachers' job performance in Osun State secondary schools. This aligns with the argument of Lawal and Adeyemi (2022) that policies promoting automatic progression tend to weaken academic discipline and motivation among learners.

The first hypothesis showed a significant difference between male and female students in their attitudes toward learning under the mass promotion system, with female students showing a slightly more positive attitude. This may be attributed to the general tendency for female students to exhibit higher levels of compliance and academic diligence (Okeke, 2021). Male students, on the other hand, might be more prone to taking advantage of the policy by relaxing their study efforts since promotion is assured regardless of performance.

The second hypothesis indicated that there was no significant difference between male and

female teachers in their job performance. This finding suggests that the mass promotion policy affects teachers uniformly, irrespective of gender. Both male and female teachers are likely to experience reduced motivation when their evaluative role in student progression is undermined. This supports the view of Ogunleye (2023) who found that teachers' job commitment diminishes in environments where merit-based evaluation is compromised.

The third hypothesis showed that mass promotion significantly influences students' overall attitude toward learning. Students who are aware that they will be promoted irrespective of their performance are less likely to exert effort in studying or completing assignments. This corroborates Adebayo and Olatunji (2021) who emphasized that students' intrinsic motivation declines when external rewards or consequences for effort are removed. Furthermore, UNESCO (2020) warns that such promotion practices, though inclusive in intent, can create a false sense of achievement and lower the quality of educational outcomes in developing countries.

The fourth hypothesis also revealed that mass promotion significantly affects teachers' job performance. Teachers under the policy reportedly feel that their professional roles are undervalued, leading to a decline in enthusiasm, instructional creativity, and assessment reliability. This aligns with Okafor (2022) who maintained that teachers' morale and sense of purpose are essential components of effective teaching; when these are weakened by poor policy frameworks, the entire system suffers.

Overall, these findings highlight a major paradox: while mass promotion is intended to foster educational inclusiveness and reduce dropout rates, its poor implementation without adequate support mechanisms (such as remedial programs or continuous assessment systems) may ultimately erode educational quality.

Educational Implications

The results of this study have several implications for educational policy and practice in Osun State and Nigeria as a whole.

1. **Policy Implementation:** Policymakers should recognize that the quality of education depends not only on access but also on achievement. Mass promotion without academic merit could produce graduates lacking fundamental skills.
2. **Curriculum Planning:** Curriculum planners need to design remedial and enrichment programs to assist students who lag behind academically before they are promoted.
3. **Teacher Motivation:** The teaching profession requires an enabling environment where teachers' assessments are respected and rewarded. Teachers' input should be central in determining student progression.
4. **Assessment Reform:** Educational authorities should strengthen continuous assessment systems, ensuring that promotion is based on cumulative performance rather than blanket progression.

Conclusion

Based on the findings, the study concludes that mass promotion policy, though well-intentioned, has adverse effects on both students' attitudes toward learning and teachers' job performance in Osun State secondary schools. The policy tends to diminish students' motivation, reduce academic seriousness, and lower teachers' morale.

The research further concludes that sustainable educational reform must balance inclusiveness with academic integrity. Mass promotion, when implemented without adequate support structures, threatens the achievement of quality education as enshrined in the National Policy on Education.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were made in light of the study's findings:

1. **Review of the Policy:** The government should review the mass promotion policy to ensure that promotion decisions are

evidence-based and reflect individual students' achievement levels.

2. **Introduction of Remedial Classes:** Schools should organize remedial or summer classes for underperforming students instead of promoting them automatically.
3. **Effective Continuous Assessment:** Continuous assessment should be strengthened and made a major criterion for student promotion.
4. **Stakeholder Collaboration:** Parents, teachers, and school administrators should collaborate to instill positive learning attitudes and ensure accountability in the educational process.

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