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ECONOMIC VOLATILITY AND TEACHERS' PERFORMANCE IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN PLATEAU STATE, NIGERIA: AN ORDINARY LEAST SQUARES (OLS) EVALUATION.

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Abstract

This study examines the relationship between economic volatility and teachers' performance in secondary schools across Plateau State, Nigeria. Specifically, it examines the impact of inflation, exchange rate fluctuations, training and development, and the minimum wage on teachers' performance. A survey research design was adopted, employing a 5-point Likert scale questionnaire to collect data from secondary school teachers. The sample size of 356 was determined using Taro Yamane's (1967) formula, and participants were selected through simple random sampling to ensure a representative sample. The regression analysis conducted showed that inflation, exchange rates, and training and development positively influence teachers' performance, while the minimum wage had a negative impact. The results suggest that economic volatility, particularly through inflation and exchange rates, can significantly affect teaching quality in Plateau State. The study concludes with recommendations for improving professional development programs, wage structures, and institutional support to mitigate the negative impacts of economic volatility on education quality.

Key Words: Inflation, exchange rate, minimum wage, teachers' performance

Introduction

Economic volatility, characterized by fluctuations in economic conditions such as inflation, unemployment rates, and changes in government spending, has substantial implications for various sectors, including education. In regions like Plateau State, Nigeria, economic instability affects not only households and the workforce but also educational institutions, which

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rely heavily on government funding and consistent resources. As secondary schools in Plateau State navigate these economic changes, the impacts on teachers' performance have emerged as a critical area of concern. Teachers play a fundamental role in student achievement and school effectiveness, yet their ability to perform optimally is often compromised by economic disruptions that affect their job security, motivation, and resource availability. This study examines the complex relationship between economic volatility and teachers' performance, aiming to provide insights that could inform policies and practices in Plateau State's secondary education sector.

A significant research problem lies in understanding how economic volatility translates into operational challenges within secondary schools and affects teacher performance. Evidence suggests that economic downturns can lead to cuts in educational funding, delays in teacher salaries, and reductions in benefits, all of which can demoralize teachers and reduce their productivity (Echor & Lohor, 2022). Teachers' performance encompasses their motivation, commitment, classroom effectiveness, and student engagement levels, and it can be impacted by a lack of resources, overcrowded classrooms, and the inability to access professional development opportunities. Despite the clear links between economic conditions and teachers' performance, studies on the specific impacts of economic volatility on teachers in Plateau State are sparse, revealing a gap in regional and context-specific research that this study seeks to address.

Another gap in existing literature concerns the role of economic volatility on teacher retention and satisfaction in economically vulnerable regions. Studies have shown that economic stability can enhance job satisfaction and retention among teachers, while financial instability tends to increase attrition rates and decrease job satisfaction (Bacher-Hicks et al., 2019). However, there is limited empirical evidence on how such trends specifically affect secondary school teachers in Plateau State, where economic pressures are compounded by socio-political challenges. Investigating these aspects in a localized context can help elucidate the broader effects of economic volatility on teacher welfare, commitment, and effectiveness in Nigerian secondary schools, potentially offering insights that could be relevant to similar regions facing economic instability.

Moreover, this study addresses a practical gap by focusing on the interplay between economic volatility and policy measures targeting educational outcomes in Plateau State. Previous research has shown that education systems often lack the resilience to respond to economic shocks effectively, leading to long-term repercussions on teaching quality and student outcomes (Hartiwi, Kozlova, & Masitoh, 2020). Understanding how economic volatility impacts teachers specifically will help policymakers and education administrators identify proactive measures, such as stabilizing teacher compensation or implementing support programs, that could mitigate adverse effects. By exploring these dimensions, this study aims to contribute to policy frameworks that strengthen educational resilience in the face of economic challenges.

Selecting two schools each from Plateau Central, Plateau North, and Plateau South ensures a comprehensive representation of Plateau State's educational landscape, capturing the diverse economic, social, and educational dynamics across the region. Each of these zones faces distinct socio-economic conditions and challenges, allowing the study to account for any regional variations in how economic volatility impacts teachers' performance. Using inflation and exchange rates as measures of economic volatility is justified because these indicators directly affect purchasing power, cost of living, and resource allocation. Inflation impacts the affordability of

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essential goods and services, affecting teachers' well-being and job satisfaction, while exchange rate fluctuations influence government budgets, including educational funding and salaries in Nigeria's import-reliant economy. Together, these metrics offer a robust framework for assessing the economic pressures that secondary school teachers face, thereby providing meaningful insights into the broader effects of economic instability on education in Plateau State.

Conceptual Issues

Inflation, exchange rate, and student achievement and learning outcomes are key economic and educational concepts with significant implications. Inflation refers to the general rise in prices of goods and services over time, reducing purchasing power and affecting the affordability of essential items. High inflation can strain household budgets, potentially impacting educational funding and teachers' wages, and indirectly affecting schools' operational capacities. The exchange rate is the value of one currency in relation to another, such as the Naira to the Dollar, which influences the cost of imported goods, government spending, and international trade. Exchange rate fluctuations impact the economy broadly and can influence educational resources by altering government budgets for education. Student achievement and learning outcomes measure educational success, often represented by students' knowledge, skills, and competencies gained from schooling. These outcomes, tracked through grades, test scores, and skill assessments, reflect the effectiveness of teaching and educational systems, ultimately shaping students' future opportunities and societal contributions. Together, these concepts are interconnected in the context of education, as economic conditions can influence both the resources available to students and the environment in which learning takes place.

Theoretical Background

Ecological Systems Theory, developed by Urie Bronfenbrenner, emphasizes that individuals are influenced by a complex set of environmental systems that interact to shape their experiences and behaviors. These systems range from the immediate, close-knit settings where people actively participate, to broader, external conditions that impact individuals indirectly. Teachers operate within various interconnected systems: the microsystem, which includes the classroom and school environment where daily interactions with students and colleagues occur; the mesosystem, encompassing relationships between the school, families, and community; the exosystem, representing broader economic, political, and social influences; and the macrosystem, which includes overarching societal values, beliefs, and policies. Understanding these multiple layers helps to explain how teachers' experiences and performance are shaped by a combination of personal and external factors.

The exosystem, which represents the broader economic and political conditions in a society, has an indirect but significant impact on the educational environment within the microsystem. Economic volatility, such as inflation and fluctuating exchange rates, is a key factor within the exosystem that can affect teachers' working conditions and access to resources. For instance, limited school funding due to economic instability may lead to a shortage of educational materials, increased class sizes, or inadequate school facilities. Such constraints can heighten stress levels among teachers, affecting their job satisfaction and overall motivation. These stressors, although

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originating from the external economic environment, manifest in the classroom as reduced instructional quality, less effective teaching practices, and potentially lower student engagement and achievement. The exosystem's impact, therefore, illustrates how economic conditions beyond teachers' immediate control can influence their day-to-day effectiveness.

At the macrosystem level, societal values and policy decisions also shape the experiences of teachers by influencing education policies and funding allocations. Societal beliefs about the value of education, teachers' roles, and the importance of adequately compensating educators all contribute to shaping teachers' working conditions and, ultimately, their performance. For example, policies on salary adjustments to account for inflation or economic support for schools during volatile periods reflect societal priorities and can either buffer teachers against economic stress or, if lacking, exacerbate it. This multilevel framework provided by Ecological Systems Theory highlights how teachers' performance is affected by a chain of interrelated systems, making it an ideal theoretical foundation for studying the indirect effects of economic volatility on teachers within their educational environment.

Empirical Review

Echor and Lohor (2022) investigated the effects of economic recession on secondary school education in Benue State, revealing significant impacts on funding, teacher quality, and household support. Using a sample of 400 respondents from a population of over 670,000 residents, they found that the recession adversely affected educational resources, teacher and student quality, and increased financial strain on households, hindering students' educational attainment. The study's recommendations included policy interventions to mitigate the impact of future recessions on education and advocating for households to diversify income sources to reduce economic vulnerability. These findings echo similar concerns by Adesina et al. (2016), who highlighted that economic factors significantly affect teachers' productivity and students' academic outcomes, emphasizing the need for supportive policies. Likewise, Adeoti and Yinusa (2016) found a direct correlation between teachers' qualifications and student performance, underscoring the importance of teacher quality in educational outcomes.

In the realm of teacher performance, Elliott (2015) discussed the complexities of teacher appraisal, weighing performance and developmental aspects. Elliott suggested that effective appraisal systems not only assess teacher competency but also contribute to professional growth, thus enhancing educational quality. This notion aligns with Bacher-Hicks et al. (2019), who found that teacher evaluation methods, including classroom observations and value-added measures, can reliably predict teacher effectiveness. The study cautioned, however, against over-relying on student surveys as they showed weaker predictive validity. Similarly, Hartiwi et al. (2020) noted that certified teachers and supportive principal leadership positively influenced teacher performance, pointing to the benefits of developmental support structures within schools for improving overall teacher efficacy.

Teacher attitudes, experience, and self-efficacy have also been shown to play critical roles in educational outcomes. Adesina et al. (2016) examined these factors in Oyo State, Nigeria, and found that positive attitudes and self-efficacy significantly enhance teacher productivity. The study emphasized that experienced teachers with strong self-efficacy foster better academic

performance among students, a finding that aligns with Adeoti and Yinusa (2016), who also observed that teaching experience positively correlates with student performance. This research complements Iwu et al. (2018), who identified teacher job satisfaction as a determinant of educational quality, showing that motivated teachers contribute more effectively to students' learning outcomes. Together, these studies highlight the interconnectedness of teacher characteristics and student performance, stressing the need for continuous professional development to foster these attributes.

Additionally, structural support within schools and policy interventions are crucial for sustaining teacher motivation and student success. Hartiwi et al. (2020) emphasized the role of principal leadership in creating a conducive environment for teacher performance, noting that effective leadership amplifies the positive impacts of teacher certification. Iwu et al. (2018) further argued that teacher job satisfaction is essential for achieving educational quality, advocating for policies that address job satisfaction determinants such as workload, professional growth opportunities, and remuneration. These findings align with Echor and Lohor's (2022) recommendation for targeted policies to buffer the education sector against economic shocks, underscoring the importance of comprehensive support mechanisms in fostering resilience in education. These empirical studies collectively demonstrate the value of structured support systems and teacher-centered policies to enhance educational outcomes amid economic fluctuations.

Ajayi and Ayodele (2020) explore how economic factors such as inflation and exchange rates impact teacher performance, suggesting that economic instability can hinder effective teaching. Olaniyan and Ojo (2008) examine the role of teachers in shaping student outcomes, highlighting that teacher quality is crucial for educational success, especially in resource-constrained environments. Darling-Hammond (2000) discusses the importance of teacher preparation and professional development, arguing that continuous training is essential for enhancing teacher effectiveness and student learning outcomes. Salifu (2012) investigates challenges teachers face in low-income settings, emphasizing that inadequate remuneration and poor working conditions reduce teacher motivation and performance. Together, these studies underscore that both economic stability and support for teacher development are vital for improving educational outcomes and teacher performance.

Research Gaps

The existing literature reveals a significant impact of economic factors, such as recessions, inflation, and exchange rates, on education quality, teacher performance, and student outcomes. Studies like Echor and Lohor (2022) and Adesina et al. (2016) demonstrate that economic instability strains educational resources and affects teachers' and students' performance, while Adeoti and Yinusa (2016) emphasize the importance of teacher quality on student outcomes. Other studies, such as Elliott (2015) and Bacher-Hicks et al. (2019), address the role of teacher evaluation and appraisal systems in enhancing teacher performance, suggesting that structured evaluation can contribute to professional growth. However, there is a gap in exploring how specific economic variables—such as inflation and exchange rate fluctuations—directly correlate with teacher performance, especially in secondary schools in economically volatile regions like Nigeria.

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Moreover, while previous studies acknowledge the importance of support structures, such as principal leadership (Hartiwi et al., 2020) and professional development (Darling-Hammond, 2000), there is limited research on how these factors interact with economic volatility to influence teacher efficacy and student achievement. The role of economic policies, such as minimum wage adjustments and professional training programs, as buffers against economic shocks has not been fully explored. This study addresses these gaps by investigating the direct impacts of inflation and exchange rates on teacher performance, while also examining the moderating effects of minimum wage and training and development as control variables.

By focusing on these economic and structural factors, this research contributes to the broader understanding of how economic volatility affects educational quality. It provides insights for policymakers on designing interventions that can shield the education sector from economic instability, enhancing teacher performance and, consequently, student achievement. This study adds to the literature by specifically analyzing the relationship between economic fluctuations and teacher performance in Plateau State, Nigeria, with practical recommendations for sustaining education quality amid economic challenges.

Methodology

The research design adopted for this study focuses on systematically addressing the research issue while integrating various scientific review segments. Following the recommendations of Shamaki, Ibrahim & Azu (2022), a survey research design is utilised to examine a large population of secondary school teachers in the three senatorial zones of the Plateau State, Nigeria. To obtain a representative sample, the Taro Yamane (1967) sample size determination formula is applied, resulting in a sample size of 400 Secondary school teachers. Simple Random Sampling is then utilised to efficiently and cost-effectively capture responses from different senatorial zones of the state. A five-point Likert scale questionnaire is designed in two parts: Part A gathers respondents' biodata. At the same time, Part B focuses on eliciting opinions and views regarding the influence of economic volatility on teachers' performance in Plateau State, Nigeria.

Model Specification

Adesina et al. (2016), who highlighted that economic factors significantly affect teachers' productivity and students' academic outcomes, emphasizing the need for supportive policies. The research identified inflation as a major factor that influences the purchasing power of teachers. However, for the purpose of this study, we have identified inflation and exchange rate as major economic variables that fluctuates and influences the prices of goods and services in Nigeria. Thus:

$$SPR = f(INF, EXC) \quad (1)$$

Where SPR_i represents a students' performance as a measure of teachers' performance, INF is the perceived inflation, EXC stand for perceived exchange rate. This can be transformed to econometric equation as follows:

$$SPR_i = \varphi_0 + \varphi_1 INF_i + \varphi_2 EXC_i + \mu_i \quad (2)$$

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φ_0 stands for the constant, μ_i stands for the white noise error term, while $\varphi_1, \varphi_2, \varphi_3$ are the parameters to be estimated.

$$SPR_i = \varphi_0 + \varphi_1 INF_i + \varphi_2 EXC_i + \varphi_3 MMW_i + \varphi_4 TRN_i + \mu_i \quad (3)$$

MMW_i is Minimum wage TRN_i represents training and development while φ_3 and φ_4 are their corresponding parameters to be estimated.

The selection of inflation and exchange rate as key variables for assessing economic volatility in relation to teachers' performance is well-grounded, as both factors directly impact the cost of living, financial stability, and purchasing power of individuals, including teachers. Inflation reflects the rate at which prices for goods and services increase, affecting teachers' real incomes and potentially impacting their financial well-being and job satisfaction (Ajayi & Ayodele, 2020). Similarly, exchange rate fluctuations influence the economy by altering the cost of imported goods, which can affect overall living expenses for teachers. By examining inflation and exchange rate, this model captures two central dimensions of economic volatility that likely impact teachers' ability to maintain effective performance in the classroom.

Minimum wage and training and development were selected as control variables due to their significant influence on teachers' performance. Minimum wage represents the baseline financial security for teachers, which can affect their motivation and commitment to teaching. When wages are low, teachers may be more stressed or distracted, impacting their performance in the classroom (Salifu, 2012). Training and development, on the other hand, are critical to equipping teachers with updated skills and strategies for effective teaching. Continuous professional development opportunities enable teachers to adapt to evolving educational demands and improve student outcomes (Darling-Hammond, 2000). Including these controls allows for a more accurate assessment of how inflation and exchange rate fluctuations uniquely influence teachers' performance by accounting for fundamental job support factors.

Methods of Data Analysis

This research utilized the Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) estimation technique within a multiple regression framework, complemented by correlation analysis to assess relationships between the variables. By examining the significance values (p-values) associated with each independent variable, the study was able to determine whether there were statistically significant relationships with the dependent variable, thereby shedding light on the impact of economic volatility indicators on teachers' performance. The coefficient of determination (R^2) provided insights into the model's explanatory power, illustrating the extent to which variations in the independent variables could predict changes in the dependent variable, in line with the approach outlined by Shamaki, Ibrahim, and Azu (2022).

In addition, the Durbin-Watson statistic was employed to assess the model's stability, addressing potential issues of serial correlation among residuals, which can distort the reliability of regression results. This diagnostic tool helped confirm that the model was not compromised by autocorrelation, a potential issue when independent variables are correlated over time (Yusuf et

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al., 2023). This approach ensured a robust estimation, enhancing the validity of the regression model's results and supporting accurate inferences from the data.

Validity of the Research Instrument

The reliability statistics presented in Table 1 indicate high internal consistency across all variables, as measured by Cronbach's Alpha. Each variable exceeds the generally accepted threshold of 0.7, with values ranging from 0.854 to 0.912, suggesting that the items in each scale are consistently aligned. Specifically, the "Teachers' Performance" variable, with an Alpha of 0.872, demonstrates strong reliability, showing that the items effectively capture this construct. Similarly, "Inflation" and "Exchange Rate" have Alphas of 0.854 and 0.901, respectively, which indicate a high degree of reliability and strong consistency in responses concerning these economic factors. The "Training and Development" variable also shows robust internal consistency, with an Alpha of 0.896, signifying that the items within this category are cohesive. Finally, "Minimum Wage," scoring the highest at 0.912, reflects excellent reliability, suggesting respondents consistently understood and rated this factor similarly. Overall, the high Cronbach's Alpha values across all variables confirm the reliability of the survey items used in this study, providing confidence that these measures accurately reflect the underlying constructs, making them suitable for further analysis in understanding the relationship between economic volatility and teachers' performance.

Table 1 Reliability Statistics

Variables	Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardised Items	N of Items
Teachers Performance	0.872	0.815	5
Inflation	0.854	0.812	5
Exchange rate	0.901	0.873	5
Training and Development	0.896	0.831	5
Minimum Wage	0.912	0.838	5

Sources: Author's Computation, 2024

Results and Discussion

Using Google Forms for questionnaire distribution enhanced data collection efficiency and accessibility, leading to a higher response rate. The table summarizes the distribution and return rate of questionnaires across three senatorial zones in Plateau State. A total of 400 questionnaires were distributed, with 356 returned, yielding an overall response rate of 89%. Plateau South had the highest response rate, with 125 out of 135 questionnaires returned, representing 35.11% of the total responses. Plateau Central followed closely, with 121 returns out of 135 distributed, accounting for 33.99%. Plateau North had the lowest response rate, with 110 out of 130 questionnaires returned, making up 30.90% of the total. These figures indicate a fairly even distribution and high return rate across the zones, ensuring broad representation from each area in the study.

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Table 1 Questionnaire Distribution

Senatorial Zone	Distributed	Returned	Percentage (%)
Plateau South	135	125	35.11%
Plateau Central	135	121	33.99%
Plateau North	130	110	30.90%
Total	400	356	100%

Source: Author's Compilation, 2024

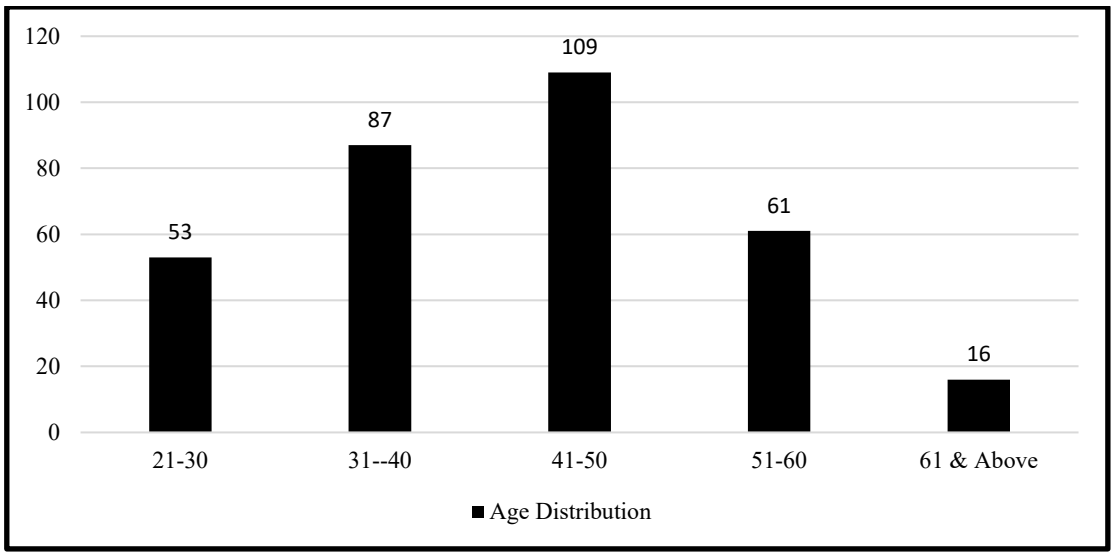


Figure 1 Age Distribution of the Respondents
Sources: Author's Compilation, 2024

Figure 2 provides an age distribution of individuals, indicating the number of respondents within each age bracket. The largest group falls within the 41–50 age range, with 109 individuals, suggesting a significant portion of the sample is in mid-career. The next largest group is 31–40 years, with 87 individuals, followed by the 51–60 age range, which includes 61 people. The youngest group aged 21–30, comprises 53 individuals, indicating a smaller representation of younger respondents. The smallest group is 61 years and above, with only 16 individuals. This distribution implies a workforce or study sample dominated by mid-aged individuals, which may affect perspectives or insights related to experience, stability, or career advancement, given the lower representation of younger and older age brackets.

Table 2 Correlation Coefficients

Variables	Y	X1	X2	X3	X4
Teachers Performance	1.000	0.556	0.721	0.641	0.544
Inflation	0.556	1.000	0.478	0.596	0.354
Exchange rate	0.721	0.478	1.000	0.624	0.623
Training and Development	0.641	0.596	0.624	1.000	0.611

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Variables	Y	X1	X2	X3	X4
Minimum Wage	0.544	0.354	0.623	0.611	1.000

Note: Y- Teachers Performance; X1-Inflation; X2- Exchange Rate; X3- Training & Development; X4- Minimum Wage
Source: Author's Computation

Table 2 presents the correlation coefficients among the variables, showing the strength and direction of their relationships. Teachers' Performance has a moderate to strong positive correlation with all independent variables, particularly with Exchange Rate at 0.721, indicating that as fluctuations in exchange rates increase, teachers' performance is likely impacted significantly. The correlation with Training and Development is also strong at 0.641, suggesting that investment in training positively relates to teachers' performance. Inflation and Minimum Wage show moderate correlations with teachers' performance at 0.556 and 0.544, respectively, indicating that these economic factors also contribute to variations in performance, though less strongly than exchange rate changes and training. Among the independent variables, Exchange Rate and Training and Development have moderate correlations with each other (0.624), as does "Training and Development with Inflation (0.596), suggesting some interdependence between economic variables. Overall, the correlations indicate that all factors examined contribute positively to teachers' performance, with exchange rates and training showing the strongest relationships.

Hypotheses Testing

The regression table provided presents the relationship between economic volatility and teachers' performance in secondary schools in Plateau State, examining how inflation, exchange rates, training and development, and minimum wage influence performance. The dependent variable in this model is teachers' performance, and the independent variables are inflation, exchange rate, training and development, and minimum wage. The R-squared value is 0.645, indicating that approximately 64.5% of the variance in teachers' performance can be explained by these four predictors. This is a relatively strong level of explanatory power, suggesting that the selected economic and professional factors significantly contribute to understanding teachers' performance. The adjusted R-squared of 0.611, slightly lower than the R-squared, confirms the model's stability by adjusting for the number of predictors.

Examining the individual predictors reveals varying levels of significance and impact on teachers' performance. Inflation has a positive coefficient (B = 0.215) with a t-statistic of 2.778 and a significance level of 0.028. This indicates that inflation is statistically significant ($p < 0.05$) and positively affects teachers' performance. This could imply that as inflation increases, teachers may adjust their expectations and work efforts in response to the rising cost of living, potentially influencing their performance positively, though this could also reflect compensatory behaviour amidst economic strain.

The exchange rate variable also shows a positive and highly significant relationship with teachers' performance, with a coefficient of 0.383, a t-statistic of 4.545, and a significance level of 0.000 ($p < 0.01$). This strong positive relationship suggests that fluctuations in the exchange rate, potentially affecting the broader economic environment and teachers' purchasing power, might influence

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teachers to either seek additional sources of income or maintain performance standards to secure their jobs. Exchange rate volatility may also impact the school resources available for teaching, indirectly affecting teachers' performance.

Table 3 Assessment of the Relationship between Economic Volatility and Teachers' Performance in the Secondary School of Plateau State

Variable	B	Std. Error	t-stat	sig.
(Constant)	0.127	0.256	0.272	0.436
Inflation	0.215	0.074	2.778	0.028
Exchange rate	0.383	0.093	4.545	0.000
Training and Development	0.214	0.078	4.279	0.001
Minimum Wage	-0.311	0.495	-2.435	0.036
R-Square	0.645	Durbin-Watson		2.012
Adjusted R-square	0.611			

a. Dependent Variable: **Teachers' Performance**
b. Predictors: (Constant), Inflation, Exchange rate, Training and Development Minimum Wage

Source: Author's Computation

The training and development variable is similarly significant, with a positive coefficient of 0.214, a t-statistic of 4.279, and a significance level of 0.001. This suggests that training and development opportunities contribute positively to teachers' performance, likely by equipping them with enhanced skills and pedagogical techniques. This aligns with the understanding that professional development is crucial in helping teachers adapt to changing educational demands, motivating them to perform better.

Conversely, the minimum wage variable has a negative coefficient (-0.311) with a t-statistic of -2.435 and a significance level of 0.036, indicating a significant negative relationship with teachers' performance. This might reflect that, in contexts where minimum wage adjustments lag behind inflation or fail to meet living costs, teachers' performance could suffer as financial stress increases. This finding underscores the complex interaction between financial security and job performance, suggesting that inadequate minimum wage levels could hinder teachers' motivation and overall effectiveness.

Finally, the Durbin-Watson statistic of 2.012 suggests that there is minimal autocorrelation in the residuals, which supports the reliability of the regression results. Overall, the analysis indicates that economic factors, such as inflation and exchange rate fluctuations, alongside training, development, and wage adequacy, play significant roles in influencing teachers' performance. The model highlights both the positive impact of professional development and the potential challenges posed by insufficient financial compensation.

Discussion of Findings

The findings of this study indicate that inflation and exchange rate fluctuations significantly affect teachers' performance in Plateau State secondary schools. Specifically, inflation was found to have

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a positive relationship with teachers' performance, which suggests that teachers may respond to inflation by seeking additional income through extra jobs, thus improving their financial stability. This aligns with the findings of Ajayi and Ayodele (2020), who argued that inflation impacts teachers' economic well-being and motivation, thereby indirectly influencing their teaching quality. Similarly, exchange rate fluctuations, which directly affect the cost of living, were also positively correlated with teachers' performance, possibly due to the pressure to maintain their purchasing power in the face of rising costs. This is consistent with the work of Olaniyan and Ojo (2008), who noted that economic pressures from exchange rate fluctuations often result in increased stress and reduced work engagement, even as teachers attempt to maintain their performance.

Training and development emerged as a significant positive determinant of teachers' performance, suggesting that professional growth opportunities are crucial in sustaining high levels of teaching efficacy. This finding supports previous research by Darling-Hammond (2000), who emphasized the importance of continuous professional development in enhancing teachers' knowledge, skills, and overall performance. As teachers benefit from targeted training programs, their capacity to adapt to the changing demands of the educational environment improves, ultimately reflecting in their teaching effectiveness. In this study, the positive impact of training and development highlights the importance of institutional support in providing teachers with opportunities for professional growth, which in turn contributes to improved student outcomes.

On the other hand, the negative relationship between minimum wage and teachers' performance in Plateau State is particularly noteworthy. The significant negative effect suggests that low wages may serve as a demotivating factor for teachers, potentially affecting their dedication and commitment to the profession. This finding corroborates the work of Salifu (2012), who argued that poor remuneration negatively affects teachers' morale and teaching outcomes. Teachers who struggle with financial insecurity may experience stress, burnout, or absenteeism, which can diminish their performance in the classroom. To address this issue, the government and educational authorities should prioritize improving the wage structure for teachers, ensuring that their compensation is adequate to support their livelihood, thereby fostering a more motivated and effective teaching workforce.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this study reveals a significant relationship between economic volatility and teachers' performance in Plateau State's secondary schools. Key economic indicators like inflation and exchange rate fluctuations are positively associated with teachers' performance, suggesting that these macroeconomic factors indirectly impact how teachers respond to economic pressures. Training and development also emerged as critical drivers, highlighting the importance of professional growth opportunities in maintaining and enhancing teachers' performance. However, the negative relationship between minimum wage and performance underscores the detrimental effect of insufficient financial support, which can undermine teachers' motivation and job satisfaction.

Based on these findings, it is recommended that policymakers consider implementing regular training and development programs to strengthen teachers' skills and adaptability in challenging

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economic climates. Additionally, adjustments to the minimum wage should be made to better align with inflation and living costs, reducing financial strain on teachers and supporting higher performance levels. Addressing these economic challenges could improve both teacher well-being and overall educational quality, fostering a more resilient educational system in Plateau State.

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