



Teachers' Professional Ethics and Classroom Management as a Correlate of Students' Academic Performance in Public Secondary Schools in Abia State, Nigeria

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Abstract

The study examined teachers' professional ethics and classroom management as a correlate of students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Abia State, Nigeria. Two research questions and two null hypotheses guided the study. The study adopted a Correlational Research Design. The population of the study consisted of 9,200 Secondary School Students in Public Secondary Schools. The study sampled 920 students representing 10% of the populations using Stratified Random Sampling Technique. The instrument for data collection was structured questionnaire titled: "Teachers' Professional Ethics and Classroom Management of Students Academic performance (TPECMSAP)". The instrument was validated by three experts. The instrument was tested using t-test method and calculated with Pearson's Product Moment Correlation which yielded an index of 0.71 for teachers' professional ethics and 0.89 for classroom management. Data collected was analyzed using mean and standard deviation to answer the research questions. Pearson's r , R^2 (coefficient of determination) and multiple regression analysis was used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 levels of significance. The findings of the study revealed that there is a significant relationship between teachers' professional ethics, classroom management and students academic performance. The findings of the study revealed that employment of qualified teachers and other professionals' demands for practices to ensure high academic performance. Based on the findings, it was recommended among others that government and the school administrators should organize seminars, workshops and conferences to create more awareness on teachers' ethics and classroom managements on academic performance of students in Nigeria.

Keywords: Academic performance; Classroom management; Professional ethics; Teaching ethics.

1. Introduction

Academic performance of students in any country often depends on the quality of education been giving to the child and how the child has achieved their educational goals. Therefore, when academic performance of student is low, the educational system is said to be low as well [Moswela and Gobagoba \(2014\)](#). Therefore, academic performance can be defined as the end results in teaching and learning, the level at which the learner or the instructor has accomplished their learning aims and objectives. [Dimpka \(2015\)](#), perceived academic performance as the outcome of education, the extent at which a student, the teacher or the institution has achieved their educational set goals. Habitually, from the above definition, the researchers opined that in order to improve the quality of education, quantitative data such as time management, school location, conducive environment, qualified teachers, instructional materials, and infrastructure facilities are expected to be available and accessible in the learning environment. Nonetheless, issues like teachers' professional disposition, conduct and ethics of teaching profession are often time neglected. Therefore, it is suspected that teachers conduct and ethical inclination has a direct link with students' academic performance in school and also lack of adherence to professional ethics by teacher may therefore, impact

negatively on the students' learning behaviour. Hence, Jaques (2003) refers lack of adherence to teaching ethics as a violation of the ethical requirements of the teaching profession.

Ethics are standards that make an action right or wrong. It is those standards that influences behaviour and allow individual to make choices. On the other hand, teaching ethics are those standards that help to categorize different values such as integrity, discipline and honesty among others, that is apply in teaching and learning process. To Dienne (2012), teaching ethics are those rules and regulations which guide the conduct of teacher with morality. Dimpka (2015), opined that teaching ethics are organized system of standards for behaviour and practice of members of teaching professions. Operationally, teaching ethics can affect the image of individual's teacher; image of the school; image of teaching profession and image of the country at large.

Teachers' professional ethics is concern with the norms, values and principles that should govern the teaching professional conducts. To Anangisye (2011), teachers' professional ethics is a form of service which requires teacher's expert in knowledge and specialized skills acquired and maintained through rigorous and continuing study. However, teachers' professional ethics play a crucial role in educational achievement because teachers are ultimately responsible for translating educational policies and principles into actions based on practice during interaction with the students (Afe, 2001). Similarly, teachers' professional ethics requires basic management skills and ability to understand the nature of the profession. According to Carrie and Ellen (2003) teachers' professional ethics include teacher's knowledge of the subject matter, ability to communicate, emotional stability, good human relationship and interest in the job. Esmaeli *et al.* (2016) posited that meaningful correlation exist between professional ethics, using evaluation method to ascertain the relationship between university professors and academic progress of students in five subcategories, such like teaching, research, manners, humane relations and organization. Similarly, Fehintola (2014) assert that employment of teachers who are qualified and abreast of their professional demands and practices ensure high academic performance of students as well go a long way to reduce examination malpractice during their classroom examination.

Classroom management in this study involves curtailing learners' disruptive behaviour such as fighting, noise making, close observation, arrangement of classroom learning materials and response to students who suffer from poor sight, poor reading, poor writing and poor spelling habit (Morse, 2012). Similarly, Nicholas (2007) opined classroom management as the process to incorporate every element of classroom from lesson delivery to classroom environment. Scholar like Umoren (2010) posited that the concept of classroom management is broader than the notion of students control and discipline which include creating organized classroom, establishing expectations, inducing students' cooperation in learning tasks and dealing with procedural demands of the classroom. In essence Bassey (2012) opined that classroom management shows increased arrangement, reduction of inappropriate and disruptive behaviour, and promotion of students' responsibility for academic work and improved academic performance of students. Ndiyo (2011), posited that among the factors that influence students' academic performance is the teacher's efficiency in classroom management which stands as the most important factors. Furthermore, Baker (2000) also opined that effective management techniques supports and facilitates teaching and learning and in so doing enhances students academic performance.

Operationally, classroom management is the process that includes all teachers' activities that is expected in the classroom to foster students, academic involvement and cooperation in the classroom management. Nonetheless, despite all studies and remedies to academic performance of secondary school students in public secondary school, thus far, their performance still continued to decline in the areas of their academic performance. Therefore, this study sought to find out the correlation between teachers professional ethics and classroom management towards academic performance of students in public secondary schools in Abia State, Nigeria.

1.1. Statement of the Problem

The quality of education both in teaching and learning depends on the teachers. For the past years, student's academic performance both internal and external examinations is been used to evaluate the teachers methods of teaching. Thus, effective teacher has been conceptualized as one who produces desirable results in the course of his duty as a teacher. Therefore, the issue of poor academic performance of students in Nigeria has been much concern to all and sundry. The problem has led to a wide acclaim fallen in the standard of education in Abia State in particular and Nigeria at large. Despite government huge investment in public secondary schools, nevertheless, the output is still rate poor when compare with the students' academic performance in both internal and external examinations. Furthermore, the increase nature of poor academic performance of students in public secondary schools in external examinations like West Africa Examination Council (WAEC), Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board (JAMB), and National Examination Council (NECO), tends to shift the blame to the teachers as not been qualified or as a result of poor examination conductions before or during the classroom management. Based on the above challenges such as irregularity of the teachers in the school, poor attitude towards the students, unqualified teacher and absenteeism of the teachers which has contributed the fast declining on academic performance of students that the problem of this study, therefore, put in a question form is: What is the correlation between teachers professional ethics and classroom management towards academic performance of students in public secondary schools in Abia State.

1.2. Purpose of the Study

The general purpose of this study is to determine teachers' professional ethics and classroom management as a correlate of students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Abia State, Nigeria. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. determine the correlation of teachers’ professional ethics and students’ academic performance in public secondary schools.
2. determine the correlation of classroom management and students’ academic performance in public secondary schools.

2. Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What is the correlation of teachers’ professional ethics with students’ academic performance in public secondary schools?
2. What is the correlation of classroom management with students’ academic performance in public secondary schools?

3. Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses tested at 0.05 levels of significance guided the study:

1. There is no significant different between the correlation of teachers’ professional ethics with students’ academic performance in public secondary schools.
2. There is no significant different between correlation of classroom management with students’ academic performance in public Secondary Schools.

4. Methods

The study adopted a Correlational Research Design. The study was carried out in Public Secondary Schools in Abia State, Nigeria. The Population of the study was 9, 200 SS2 students in the three Education Zones in public secondary schools in Abia State. The study sampled 920 senior students representing 10% of the populations using Stratified Random Sampling Technique. The instrument for data collection was structured questionnaire titled: “Teachers’ Professional Ethics and Classroom Management of Students Academic performance (TPECMSAP)”. The instrument was validated by three experts, two from the Department of Educational Foundations, and one from the Department of Science Education (Measurement and Evaluation), all from the Faculty of Education, University of Nigeria, Nsukka. The instrument was grouped into Two (2) clusters of twelve (12) items. Cluster A was on Teachers’ Professional Ethics and Students Academic Performance. Cluster B was on Classroom Management and Students Academic Performance. The items were structured on four scale rating points such as Strongly Agree (4-points), Agree (3-points), Disagree (2-points) and Strongly Disagree (1-point). The instrument was tested using t-test and calculated with Pearson’s Product Moment Correlation which yielded an index of 0.71 for teachers’ professional ethics and 0.89 obtained. Data collected were analyzed using mean and standard deviation. Pearson’s r, R² (coefficient of determination) and multiple regression analysis was used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 levels of significance. The hypotheses of no significant difference will not be rejected if the F or t-calculated value is less than the t-table value at 0.05 level of significance and appropriate degree of freedom and rejected if otherwise.

5. Result

Research Question One: What is the correlation of teachers’ professional ethics with students’ academic performance in public secondary schools?

Table-1. Relationship between teachers’ professional ethics with students’ academic performance in public secondary schools

R	R Square	Adjusted R Square
.894(a)	.800	.799

Data in table 1 indicate a positive relationship between teachers’ professional ethics with students’ academic performance in public secondary schools. This shows that the calculated r of .98 and the calculated R² of .80 indicate teachers’ professional ethics to an extent correlates with students’ academic performance in public secondary schools.

Table-2. Relative contribution of teachers’ professional ethics with students’ academic performance in public secondary schools

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta	B	Std. Error
1	(Constant)	.140	.048		2.941	.003
	Teachers’ professional ethics	.933	.015	.894	60.506	.000

Data in table 2 shows that the predictive index of teachers’ professional ethics is .89. That means the data suggested that classroom environment had .89% contribution in predicting the students’ academic performance in public secondary schools.

Research Question Two: What is the correlation of classroom management with students’ academic performance in public secondary schools?

Table-3. Relationship between classroom management with students' academic performance in public secondary schools

R	R Square	Adjusted R Square
.875(a)	.766	.766

Data in table 3 indicate a positive relationship between classroom management with students' academic performance in public secondary schools. This shows that the calculated r of .87 and the calculated R^2 of .76 indicate that classroom management to an extent correlates with students' academic performance in public secondary schools.

Table-4. Relative Contribution of classroom management with students' academic performance in public secondary schools

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t		Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta	B	Std. Error	
1	(Constant)	.493	.047		10.464		.000
	Classroom management	.926	.017	.875	54.890		.000

Data in table 4 show that the predictive index of classroom management is .87. The data suggested that classroom management had .87% contribution in predicting the students' academic performance in public secondary schools.

5.1. Hypotheses

Hypothesis One: There is no significant different between the correlation of teachers' professional ethics with students' academic performance in public secondary schools.

Table-5. One-Way ANOVA on teachers' professional ethics as correlate of students' academic performance in public Secondary Schools

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	864.781	1	864.781	3660.916	.000(a)
Residual	216.850	918	.236		
Total	1081.630	919			

Data in table 5 shows that teachers' professional ethics is a significant correlate of academic performance in public secondary schools. This is shows that the F-value of 3660.916 has a probability value of .000 with significant at 0.05 levels. Therefore, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant different between the correlations of teachers' professional ethics with students' academic performance in public secondary schools is rejected. Consequently, there is significant correlation professional ethics with students' academic performance in public secondary schools.

Hypothesis Two: There is no significant different between correlation of classroom management with students' academic performance in public Secondary Schools.

Table-6. One-Way ANOVA of classroom management as correlate with students' academic performance in public secondary schools

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	761.133	1	761.133	3012.886	.000(a)
Residual	231.911	918	.253		
Total	993.043	919			

Data in table 6 shows that classroom management is a significant correlate of academic performance in public secondary schools. This table shows the F-value of 3012.886 which has a probability value of .000 and significant at 0.05 levels. Therefore, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant different between correlations of classroom management with students' academic performance in public Secondary Schools is rejected. Consequently, there is significant correlation between classroom management and students' academic performance in public secondary schools.

6. Discussion

The findings of the study revealed that teachers' professional ethics has a relationship with academic performance with secondary school students as teachers' professional ethics had 89 percent contribution in predicting students' academic performance in public secondary schools. There was therefore significant correlation between teachers' professional ethics and students' academic performance in public secondary schools. The finding of the study is line with the findings of *Esmaeili et al. (2016)* who posited evaluated the relationship between professional ethics of university professors and academic progress of students. The findings of the study also revealed that meaningful correlation exist between professional ethics of in five subcategories (teaching, research, manners, humane relations and organization) with academic progress of students. Furthermore, the finding also is in line with the study of *Fehintola (2014)* who posited that employment of teachers who are well qualified and abreast

of their professions demands and practices ensure high academic performance of students and go a long way to reduce examination malpractice in the country.

The findings of the study also revealed that classroom management has a relationship with academic performance of secondary school students as classroom management had 87% contribution in predicting students' academic performance in public secondary schools. Therefore, there was significant correlation between classroom management and students' academic performance in public secondary schools. The findings of the study is consonance with the study of Ndiyo (2011) who posited that students' academic performance and teachers efficiency in classroom management stands as one of the most important factors that can influence students performance in both internal and external examinations. The findings is also in agreement with the study of Baker (2000) who opined that effective management techniques, supports, teaching facilities and conducive learning environment enhances students academic performance.

7. Conclusion/Recommendations

This study examined teachers' professional ethics and classroom management as a correlate of students' academic performance in public secondary schools. It started with introduction on the major variables. The concept of academic performance, ethic, teacher's professional ethic and classroom management were discussed. Hence, employments of qualified teachers who embrace their teaching professions by practice go a long way to motivate and enhance high academic performance of public secondary schools students and the society at large. Based on findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Government, school administrators and religious groups should organize seminars, workshops and conferences to create more awareness on the relationship between teacher's ethics, classroom managements and academic performance of the students.
2. Teachers should be discouraged from engaging in negative practices such like sexual relationship with their students, unfairly treating, lack of positive attention to the students and other activities that will hinder student's academic performance.
3. There is need for regular professional training on relevant knowledge expected to improve the teacher's teaching behaviour toward classroom management.
4. Teachers should establish rules and regulation in classroom against disruptive behaviour and also ensure they are disciplined to lead by examples because no one give what he does not have.

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