

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES AS PREDICTORS OF TEACHERS' TASK COMMITMENT IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN ANAMBRA STATE

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Abstract

The study examined professional development programmes as predictors of teachers' task commitment in public secondary schools in Anambra State. Two research questions guided the study and two null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance. The study was a correlational research design. The population of the study was 6,598 teachers in the 267 public secondary schools from the six education zones in Anambra State. The sample of 660 teachers was used for the study. Multistage sampling techniques comprising proportionate stratified and simple random sampling technique was used for the study. Two researcher-structured instruments were used for data collection: Professional Development Programmes Questionnaire (PDPQ) and Teachers' Task Commitment Questionnaire (TTCQ). The instruments were subjected to face and construct validation. Face validation was done by three experts while construct validation was carried out with Principal Component Analysis approach. The reliability of the instrument was done using Cronbach Alpha technique and the average coefficient values of 0.82 for PDPQ and 0.87 for TTCQ were obtained and considered highly reliable and suitable for the study. Simple regression statistical tool was used for the study. The study revealed that conference and in-service training positively and significantly predicted teachers' task commitment in public secondary schools in Anambra State. The study concluded that professional development programmes jointly are positive and significant predictors of teachers' task commitment in public secondary schools in Anambra State. Based on the findings, the study recommended among others that secondary school principals in conjunction with the Post Primary School Service Commission should organize professional development programmes annually for teaching staff in their respective schools to improve their skills which will enhance their task performance and commitment in Anambra State.

Keywords: Professional Development Programmes, Teachers' Task Commitment

Introduction

The achievement of the goals of education at the secondary school level is dependent to a large extent, on the teachers who are the most important resources in the school. They are the key figures for any changes (example, educational reforms) needed in schools. The provision of a high-quality education system depends on high quality teachers, a high-quality teacher morale, relevant subject knowledge and the teachers' specialized teaching skills (pedagogical knowledge) are central to quality teaching and learning. Adinna and Anokwute (2023) noted that teachers' job goes beyond teaching into moulding young lives, guiding youths, motivating students and general character training. Thus, the quality of teachers and their task commitment are the determinant factors for the students to benefit from the educational system.

Teachers' task commitment is the emotional bond teachers demonstrate toward their work. Ezeaku and Obi (2025) argued that teachers' commitment encompasses relationship with the schools where the teacher is willing to offer something to the school in order to assist the school thrives and perform. Aminu et al. (2023) defined task commitment as the agreement among members of school to the mission and vision along with their willingness to continue serving and displaying strong loyalty to the school. If a teacher possesses no commitment to the school, this will create numerous issues such as poor-quality work, attendance and disciplinary issues, reduced contribution to the success of the school, and reluctance to cooperate with other members within the school. Okaforcha et al. (2024) noted that teachers' task commitment has been recognized as one of the most critical factors in effective teaching. Thereby, teachers with high level of commitment can make a difference to the learning and achievement of their students and their work. Aminu et al. noted that committed teachers are characterized by four qualities: having a desire to be good teachers, being more fact purveyors and sources, meeting

professional responsibilities, recognizing and accepting individual worth. Thus, Adinna and Okafor (2023) stated that committed teachers need to be prepared, to maintain their commitment, and to improve their performance.

Teachers' task commitment can be seen in the unlimited involvement and initiative of the principals towards the development of the school system. Ifediorah-Okeke and Okaforcha (2019) stated that teachers' job commitment is the feeling of dedication among the individuals of a group towards their task accomplishment. This commitment area involves two essential components namely pride in one's being in the teaching job and a strong desire for professional development (Dashwep & Macha, 2022). In fact, after joining the teaching profession, teachers should fully understand as long as they are there that, they have to develop pride knowing that this is a Nobel job charged with great responsibilities as the society hands over its students to this system for their wholesome education. Adinna et al. (2024) described task commitment as total organism direction involving not only the conscious mind but the whole direction which is gradually achieved by the individual through a close relationship in which even unconscious tendencies are as much respected as conscious choices.

Contextually, teachers' task commitment is defined as the willingness of teachers to respect the norms, values and promptly be involved or participate in the affairs of the school with the intention of facilitating the attainment of desired objectives. It is considered the consciousness of teachers to fully bring in their strength, skills, knowledge and even resources in the pursuit of school set goals. School principals can help teachers be committed to teaching, for example, by organising or making provision for teachers to attend professional development programmes that could contribute to their task commitment in schools.

Professional development programmes can be regarded as the on-the job training for teachers that is aimed at improving and enhancing their competency skills. It is regarded as series of activities an organization put in place in order to assist its staff members acquire the skills and knowledge necessary for efficient and effective performance of jobs and responsibilities in the organization. Obi et al. (2024) mentioned that professional development programmes is the provision of skills to enable staff members effectively performs their jobs. Obi et al. (2024) further noted that the types of professional development programmes include: simple orientation programme, organized visit, seminars and conferences, participatory management, internal training programmes, formal professional library education and short courses and all these training programmes can help both professional and para-professional staff to be current with new knowledge and development in the field. Manafa and Adinna (2023) argued thus, that the more staff undergoes staff development programmes, the more committed they are to job.

Staff professional development consists of all managerial strategies and staff trainings targeted at improving and updating the skills and knowledge of teachers which prepare them for future and new positions. Nwagbata (2024) noted that professional development programme helps teachers to cope with increasing new trends and innovation in the education system. Staff professional development practices include workshops, refresher courses, orientation, seminars, distance learning programmes, personal enrichment courses, conferences, coaching, symposia and mentoring. Similar to this, Onyekwelu (2024a) averred that the professional development practices are conferences, seminars, orientation, workshops, on-job training, distance and open education, job rotation from section to section among others. Ohamobi et al. (2024) defined professional development as the development of individuals in their professional roles through formal or informal experiences such as seminars, conferences, reading professional publications etc.

Contextually, professional development programmes are trainings, courses and classes that help teachers learn new skills or maintain a certification. It is learning experiences which help individuals develop and improve their professional practice. Generally speaking, development programme through in-service, conference, workshop, seminar and mentoring offer one of the most promising ways of improving work performance and commitment. There are different types of professional development programmes available but this study considered professional development programmes such as conference and in-service training.

Conference is an elaborate gathering of expertise where papers and research findings are presented in order to find lasting solution to a common problem that is rampant. In a conference gathering, conferees come from different institutions of learning to bring about their own perspective on the theme of issue at hand in order to find a lasting solution to it. Through conference attendance, it is believed that teachers that are active will smile home distinguished with new knowledge. Adi et al. (2019) disclosed that conference attendance advances the professionalization of staff by providing valuable opportunities to keep current on various tools necessary to perform day-to-day job responsibilities, to be knowledgeable of industries ideal, to learn new tips and methods and to build an informed network of colleagues. Conference attendance affords teachers the opportunity of learning about professional issues and brainstorm with colleagues and elites to keep abreast of the latest trend. Thahir et al. (2021) highlighted the benefits of conference attendance to high networking value, strengthening team building, enhancing current and future challenges in the profession. Through attending conference and in-service training, teachers can improve their work commitment and improvement in the schools.

In-service training refers to all those activities that contribute to professional growth and qualification of teachers such as participating in workshops, seminars, conferences and visits to educational institutions that give the employee sense of security and a feeling of self-confidence while discharging routine duties in the school. Osuji et al. (2022) focused in-service training on areas where skills are inadequate, assists staff to further their teaching skills and improve teachers' classroom management skills. In-service training programmes are activities involved in raising skills, knowledge and behavioural change. It is the process for continuous updating of teachers' knowledge, skills and interests in chosen field. Onuorah and Onyekwelu (2024) sees in-service training as the process of increasing human efficiency through which people are offered the opportunity to acquire new skills and current knowledge required in carrying out various specialized tasks in their place of work. When principals and teachers are offered in-service training, they acquire new and improved skills as well as knowledge that will enable them to perform better thereby enhancing their productivity.

From the researcher's personal experience showed that some teachers in public secondary schools in Anambra State are not committed to their work as expected. It is worthy to note that poor task commitment of some school teachers will not only affect peace and stability of the schools but will also increase poor task performance of teachers in the schools respectively. Presently in Anambra State, there appear to be problems in public secondary school administration. The challenges facing school principals include: lack of interest of some principals to arrest loitering behaviour of teachers and students, lack of social set-up among staff, the inability of the principals to make out time to visit and communicate with members of staff, principals inability to listen to advice, improper supervision which requires the principals watchful eye and constant presence. Other problems in the State include lack of organized professional development programmes and poor coordination of the various departments in the school due to disobedience to school rules and regulations. Ezendianefo (2023) called for training of teachers in Anambra State to increase their proficiency for effective classroom management. Thus, could poor task commitment of teachers in public secondary schools in Anambra State be related to lack of prompt professional development programmes? This study therefore investigated professional development programmes as predictors of teachers' task commitment in public secondary schools in Anambra State.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of the study was to examine professional development programmes as predictors of teachers' task commitment in public secondary schools in Anambra State. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. determine the predictive value of conference on principals' task commitment in public secondary schools in Anambra State.
2. find out the predictive value of in-service training on principals' task commitment in public secondary schools in Anambra State.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What is the predictive value of conference on teachers' task commitment in public secondary schools in Anambra State?
2. What is the predictive value of in-service training on teachers' task commitment in public secondary schools in Anambra State?

Hypotheses

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

1. Conference does not significantly predict teachers' task commitment in public secondary schools in Anambra State.
2. In-service training does not significantly predict teachers' task commitment in public secondary schools in Anambra State.

Research Methods

The study was carried out in Anambra State, Nigeria. The study was a correlational research design. The population of the study was 6,598 teachers in the 267 public secondary schools from the six education zones in Anambra State. The sample of 660 teachers was used for the study. Multistage sampling techniques comprising proportionate stratified and simple random sampling technique was used for the study. Two researcher-structured instruments were used for data collection: Professional Development Programmes Questionnaire (PDPQ) and Teachers' Task Commitment Questionnaire (TTCQ). The instruments were subjected to face and construct validation. Face validation was done by three experts while construct validation was carried out with Principal Component Analysis approach. The reliability of the instrument was done using Cronbach Alpha technique and the average coefficient values of 0.82 for PDPQ and 0.87 for TTCQ were obtained and considered highly reliable and suitable for the study. On the spot delivery was utilized by the researcher together with four research assistants who were secondary school teachers in Anambra State. Out of 660 copies of the instrument administered, 628(95%) of the instrument were correctly completed and returned. Simple regression statistical tool was used for data analysis.

Data Analysis

Research Question One: What is the predictive value of conference on teachers' task commitment in public secondary schools in Anambra State?

Table 1: Summary of simple regression analysis on conference as predictor of teachers' task commitment in public secondary schools in Anambra State

	Unstandardized β	Std. Dev. β	Standardized β
Constant	26.509	4.158	
Conference	0.657	0.306	0.631
R	0.631		
R ²	0.592		
Adj. R ²	0.454		

The summary of the simple regression analysis as shown in Table 1 indicated that the regression line has a positive intercept as presented by the constant of 26.509. This means that if all the variables are held constant or fixed (zero) at the expense of conference, teachers' task commitment will be valued at 27%. The analysis showed that conference positively predict teachers' task commitment in public secondary schools in Anambra State as shown by the regression coefficient ($R = 0.631$). More so, the standardized beta also weight ($\beta = 0.631$) which means that conference is a positive predictor of teachers' task commitment in public secondary schools in Anambra State. This implies that an improvement in attending conference led to 0.631(63%) improvement in teachers' task commitment in public secondary schools in Anambra State. Thus, the positive prediction of conference on teachers' task commitment

means that teachers' task commitment moderately depends on teachers attending conference in public secondary schools in Anambra State. The coefficient of determination (R^2) value of 0.592 indicated that the explanatory power of the variable was moderately strong. This implies that 59% of the variations in teachers' task commitment in public secondary schools in Anambra State were accounted for by the variations in teachers' attending conference. The adjusted R^2 supported the claim of the R^2 with a value of 0.454 indicating that 45% of the total variation in the dependent variable (teachers' task commitment) was explained by the independent variable (conference).

Research Question Two: What is the predictive value of in-service training on teachers' task commitment in public secondary schools in Anambra State?

Table 2: Summary of simple regression analysis on in-service training as predictor of teachers' task commitment in public secondary schools in Anambra State

	Unstandardized β	Std. Dev. β	Standardized β
Constant	31.942	3.151	
In-Service Training	0.751	0.265	0.715
R	0.715		
R^2	0.606		
Adj. R^2	0.569		

The summary of the simple regression analysis as shown in Table 2 indicated that the regression line has a positive intercept as presented by the constant of 31.942. This means that if all the variables are held constant or fixed (zero) at the expense of in-service training, teachers' task commitment will be valued at 32%. The analysis showed that in-service training positively predict teachers' task commitment in public secondary schools in Anambra State as shown by the regression coefficient ($R = 0.715$). Again, the standardized beta also weight ($\beta = 0.715$) which means that in-service training is a positive predictor of teachers' task commitment in public secondary schools in Anambra State. This implies that an increase in in-service training led to 0.715(72%) increase in teachers' task commitment in public secondary schools in Anambra State. Thus, the positive prediction of in-service training on teachers' task commitment means that teachers' task commitment highly depends on in-service training in public secondary schools in Anambra State. The coefficient of determination (R^2) value of 0.606 indicated that the explanatory power of the variable was highly strong. This implies that 61% of the variations in teachers' task commitment in public secondary schools in Anambra State were accounted for by the variations in teachers' in-service training. The adjusted R^2 supported the claim of the R^2 with a value of 0.569 indicating that 57% of the total variation in the dependent variable (teachers' task commitment) was explained by the independent variable (in-service training).

Test of Hypotheses

Hypothesis One

H₀₁: Conference does not significantly predict teachers' task commitment in public secondary schools in Anambra State.

Table 3: Test of significance of simple regression analysis on conference as predictor of teachers' task commitment in public secondary schools in Anambra State

	Unstandardized β	Std. Dev. β	Standardized β	t-value	p-value
Constant	26.509	4.158		23.425	0.000
Conference	0.657	0.306	0.631	20.548	0.000
R	0.631				
R^2	0.592				
Adj. R^2	0.454				
F	28.524				0.000

The summary of the test of significance of simple regression analysis as shown in Table 3 showed that the regression line is constant at 26.509; simple regression coefficient (R) is 0.631 while the R^2 is 0.592 and Adjust R^2 is 0.454. The F-ratio associated with regression is significant at 28.524, the t-test is 20.548 and the p-value = 0.000. Since p-value (0.000) is less than the specified level of significance 0.05, the study therefore rejected the null hypothesis that conference does not significantly predict teachers' task commitment in public secondary schools in Anambra State and accepted the alternative hypothesis that conference significantly predict teachers' task commitment in public secondary schools in Anambra State.

Hypothesis Two

H₀₂: In-service training does not significantly predict teachers' task commitment in public secondary schools in Anambra State.

Table 4: Test of significance of simple regression analysis on in-service training as predictor of teachers' task commitment in public secondary schools in Anambra State

	Unstandardized β	Std. Dev. β	Standardized β	t- value	p- value
Constant	31.942	3.151		28.204	0.000
In-service training	0.751	0.265	0.715	25.435	0.000
R	0.715				
R^2	0.606				
Adj. R^2	0.569				
F	40.852				0.000

The summary of the test of significance of simple regression analysis as shown in Table 4 showed that the regression line is constant at 31.942; simple regression coefficient (R) is 0.715 while the R^2 is 0.606 and Adjust R^2 is 0.569. The F-ratio associated with regression is significant at 40.852, the t-test is 25.435 and the p-value = 0.000. Since p-value (0.000) is less than the specified level of significance 0.05, the study therefore rejected the null hypothesis that in-service training does not significantly predict teachers' task commitment in public secondary schools in Anambra State and accepted the alternative hypothesis that in-service training significantly predicts teachers' task commitment in public secondary schools in Anambra State.

Discussion of the Findings

Findings on the predictive value of conference on teachers' task commitment in public secondary schools in Anambra State revealed that conference positively predicted teachers' task commitment in public secondary schools in Anambra State. The study also indicated that conference significantly predicted teachers' task commitment in public secondary schools in Anambra State. This finding is in agreement with earlier studies conducted by Akpam et al. (2022) that staff who were exposed to training programmes performed more effectively in their classroom job than those who were not. Similarly, the outcome of this study confirms an earlier finding by Ngabirano et al. (2023) that teachers whose training programmes focused on the curriculum taught well when what was learnt were applied in the classroom. The outcome of this research further confirm the view of Ejiofor (2022) that teachers attending conferences and seminars 2-3 times in a year can be adequate for updating teachers' knowledge for their teaching job. in agreement with the above, Oche et al. (2024) posited that conference provide solution to issues and doubts the new teachers may likely have with their new job and that it helps to raise retention rate of this teachers. Oche et al. (2024) further posited that an absence of conference, seminar or induction will bring about low motivation and commitment on the teachers part. Obi et al. (2024) agreed that a new teacher in a school system can be confused if not guided and this can lead to frustration and not having a positive outcome which will amount to withdrawal in activity. In addition, Nwagbata (2024) advocated that new teachers find themselves confused and out of place when they get to a new environment hence the importance of mentoring which is aimed at retraining talented and creative teachers to ensure the desired productivity is attained.

Findings on the predictive value of in-service training on teachers' task commitment in public secondary schools in Anambra State revealed that in-service training positively predicted teachers' task commitment in public secondary schools in Anambra State. The study also indicated that in-service training significantly predicted teachers' task commitment in public secondary schools in Anambra State. This is in line with the findings of Amalu and Oyo-Ita (2023) that staff development practices provide opportunities for teachers to update their skills and knowledge for effective carrying out of their duties. By offering teachers opportunity to learn and grow professionally makes them inclined to work harder to increase their job performance and commitment. The finding is also in agreement with the findings of Obi et al. (2024) that provision of staff development programme is imperative in enhancing teachers' effectiveness in the discharge of their duties in the secondary school system. Thus, teachers need to be regularly provided with opportunities for them to improve their knowledge of the subject they teach and the teaching skills they had acquired in the pre-service courses they offered. This is based on the recognition that Onuorah and Onyekwelu (2024) submitted that we are living in a rapidly changing world such that whatever knowledge and skills teachers learnt in their pre-service training becomes stale very fast, just as new challenges and realities emerge in the socio-economic and political environment.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, the study concluded that professional development programmes jointly are positive and significant predictors of teachers' task commitment in public secondary schools in Anambra State.

Recommendations

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

1. Ministry of education and State Secondary Education Board in Anambra State should on a regular basis organize in-service training programmes for teachers' self improvement. Such programmes should relate to the subject contents, use of teaching and lesson preparation and delivery, classroom management and students evaluation.
2. Secondary school principals in conjunction with the Post Primary School Service Commission should organize professional development programmes annually for teaching staff in their respective schools to improve their which will enhance their task performance and commitment in Anambra State.

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