

Teachers' Quality as a Predictor of Students' Academic Achievement in Public Secondary Schools

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Abstract

This study examined teachers' quality as predictor of students' academic achievement in Accounting in public secondary schools in Anambra State. The study was guided by two research questions and two hypotheses. The study adopted correlational research design. The population of the study comprised 569 senior secondary students two (SS2) students in Accounting (217 males and 352 females) in 267 public secondary schools in the six Education Zones of Anambra State. The sample comprised 569 Accounting students. The entire population of the Accounting students was adopted because of the manageable size. One instrument was used for data collection: Teachers' Quality Questionnaire (TQQ). The instrument contained 20 items spread across the clusters, A and B. The items were placed on 4-point scale of Strongly Agree (SA) – 4 points, Agree (A) - 3 points, Disagree (D) – 2 points and Strongly Disagree (SD) – 1 point. The range of scores was weighted as 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively. On the other hand, Students' Academic Achievement Scores (SAAS) measured the students' academic achievement in public secondary schools in Anambra State. Academic Achievement was measured with termly scores in

Accounting which were collected from Records Department, Post Primary School Service Commission (PPSSC), Awka Anambra State (2024). Three experts validated the instrument. The coefficient value of 0.85 for teachers' adaptability; 0.83 for teachers' classroom management was obtained. This gives an average coefficient value of 0.84 and was considered reliable for the study. The instrument was administered to the respondents by the researchers with the help of three (3) research assistants. It was 'on the spot hand delivery' for the administration and retrieval of the instrument. Simple linear regression analysis was used for data analysis at 0.05 level of significance. The study found that various teacher quality of adaptability and commitment significantly enhance students' academic achievement in Accounting in public secondary schools in Anambra State. Teachers' ability to adjust to dynamic educational needs fosters inclusivity and effective learning, while their dedication inspires and motivates students. These results highlight the critical role of well-rounded teacher capabilities in driving academic success, calling for policies that prioritize teacher training and resource allocation in public schools. The study recommended that the school managements should prioritize regular training programs to enhance teachers' adaptability in teaching Accounting effectively. Government should provide incentives such as recognition programmes, competitive salaries, and conducive work environments should be implemented to boost teachers' commitment to their profession

Keywords: Teachers, Qualities, Academic Achievement, and Accounting

Introduction

One of the objectives of education is to help learners acquire adequate productive skills, abilities and competencies, both mental and physical, to live in and contribute to the development of the society. To achieve the goals of education in Nigeria, the government has focused its efforts on making individuals contribute to the growth of the nation's economy and become self-reliant through a well-developed curriculum. This curriculum covers academic subjects at the secondary school level to boost the study of other courses such as accounting.

Accounting at the secondary school education level is one of the educational programmes that provide its recipients with knowledge, skills, understanding and attitude needed to compete favourably in the business world as producers or consumers of goods and services. Accounting is an academic programme that is designed to develop the individual's cognitive, psychomotor and affective domains in the following skills: teaching skills, secretarial/office skills, financial skills, and entrepreneurial skills for self-reliance (Amesi & Giami, 2018). In business organizations, accounting help in effective financial management of the organization which calls for the keeping of accounting records.

Accounting records are kept to evaluate the performance and profitability of the business organization, prevention of fraud, monitoring of the enterprise progress and for making economic comparison. It was for some of these reasons the accounting curriculum in the secondary schools was carefully designed to suit the needs of the students and other interested learners. The aim is to ensure it is properly inculcated into the students, many of them would be properly grounded and prepared to become professionally qualified accountants. Given the relevance of accounting knowledge and skills to economic and business affairs in Nigeria, offering it at the senior secondary school level is highly commendable. It necessitates qualified teachers who employ effective teaching methods and competencies to foster active student participation in accounting class activities, ensuring high academic achievement.

Academic achievement represents performance outcomes and indicates the extent to which a person has accomplished specific goals that were the focus of activities in instructional environments, specifically in school, colleges, and universities. It is also measured with cumulative grade point average (CGPA) as it provides a numerical representation of a student's overall academic performance across all courses taken over a period, typically on a scale from 0.0 to 4.0 or a similar range. It is used in secondary schools and university levels because it is made up of all graded continuous assessment class work and termly or semester examinations respectively. Oguejiofor and Eya stated that academic achievement is a test for the measurement and comparison of skills in various fields. Academic achievement is generally used to determine how well an individual is able to assimilate,

retain, recall and communicate his knowledge of what has been learnt. Chikendu (2023) asserted that academic achievement is the demonstrated performance of learning as opposed to the potential for learning.

Academic achievement in the context of this study is the outcome of students' effort or achievement in examination. The researchers are worried that if poor achievement of students in Accounting remain unabated, it will worsen their employability status, hence aggravating the current unemployment rate among students and graduates in Anambra State. This is because the declining rate of academic achievement in accounting of public secondary school students in Anambra State is becoming more worrisome than envisaged. The abysmal academic achievement of students in West African Examinations Council (WAEC), and the National Examinations Council (NECO) is alarming that one begins to wonder if teachers possess the quality and apply proper competencies in teaching the students. Evidence from the report of WAEC chief examiner's report (2023) showed that students' academic achievement in Accounting in NECO results was reduced by 12 per cent between 2021 and 2023 while students' academic achievement in Accounting in WAEC results reduced by 8 per cent between 2021 and 2023. These showed the dangers of allowing students' academic achievement to decline. Since academic achievement reflects how students manage their studies and complete various tasks assigned by their teachers, the quality of teachers becomes crucial in determining students' academic success in schools.

Teachers' quality is the ability of teachers to demonstrate sound professional attributes like skills which is acquired through adequate training and retraining. Teachers shape the direction and influence to a great extent other educational inputs to achieve the stated goals of the education industry (Oguejifor & Ezenwanne, 2020). It is essential for effective teaching, students' learning outcomes and achieving quality education in secondary schools. Ayeni and Jajua (2022) noted that teachers' quality is manifested in their knowledge of the subject-matter, skills and competencies in the teaching and learning processes, which leads to the accomplishment of the stated educational goals. This means that the real teacher must possess the qualities for effective teaching and pleasant learning within the school setting. He must know what he is to teach, how he is to teach, and whom he is to teach (Ayeni & Jajua, 2022). The purpose is to deliver the curriculum efficiently, so as to achieve the set goals and standards in schools. Additional issues such as limited administrative support, diverse student needs, accountability pressures, and emotional stress further hinder their teaching quality, ultimately affecting student learning and overall educational outcomes. In this study, these attributes of teachers' quality as stated by Aribisala and Adekola (2023) and Martin (2023) include teachers' adaptation and commitment.

Adaptability according to Gyaryal *et al.* (2024) involves the mental and emotional adjustments individuals make in response to new or stressful situations. This type of adaptation helps individuals maintain their mental health and well-being by developing coping mechanisms and resilience. In education, adaptability as defined by Ifesinachi, *et al.*, (2024) referred to the modifications and adjustments made in teaching methods, curriculum design, and assessment practices to meet the diverse needs of students. Adaptive teachers can modify their instructional strategies to accommodate different learning styles and abilities, thereby enhancing student engagement and understanding as stated by Nguyen, *et. al.*, (2024).

Additionally, their responsiveness to feedback and willingness to implement innovative practices foster a supportive and dynamic learning environment (Khodadad, 2023). Consequently, such adaptability not only improves individual student performance but also contributes to overall academic achievement in secondary education. However, teachers often struggle to adapt due to inadequate professional development, resistance to change, and limited access to resources. High-stakes testing pressures can lead to a narrow focus, while diverse student needs and classroom dynamics further complicate adaptability. Emotional stress and burnout also hinder their capacity to implement new teaching strategies effectively except the teachers are committed to their jobs.

Teachers' commitment is another aspect of teachers' quality that has been attributed to students' academic achievement. As stated by Olatunji, *et. al.*, (2017), commitment is an individual's internal dedication and attachment to a task, goal, or relationship. It involves a strong sense of responsibility and willingness to persevere, even in the face of challenges. This form of commitment is often driven by personal values and intrinsic motivation. Umesi (2024) also defined commitment as the degree to which an employee identifies with their organization and is willing to put in effort to achieve its goals.

When teachers are unable to adapt, teachers often struggle to adapt due to inadequate professional development, resistance to change, and limited access to resources. High-stakes testing pressures can lead to a narrow focus, while diverse student needs and classroom dynamics further complicate adaptability. However, teachers' commitment is often challenged by low salaries, insufficient support, and inadequate professional development opportunities. High workload and burnout can diminish their motivation, while lack of recognition and appreciation further impact their dedication.

However, a number of works that were studied on the influence of teachers' quality on students' academic achievement in public secondary schools have shown conflicting theoretical positions and results. This suggests that the relevance of these variables needs to be further studied. This however necessitated the researcher to carry out an analytic examination of teachers' quality as predictor of students' academic achievement in Accounting in public secondary schools in Anambra State. It is on this note that this study seeks to determine the opinions of SS2 students on teachers' quality as a predictor of students' academic achievement in accounting in public secondary schools in Anambra State.

Statement of the Problem

The continuous decline in students' academic achievement in Accounting in Anambra State has become a pressing issue, raising concerns about its impact on employability. Accounting, as a core business discipline, demands a strong foundation in financial management, yet students' poor performance signals instructional and curricular deficiencies. WAEC and NECO results indicate a significant drop between 2021 and 2023, highlighting a growing challenge. Contributing factors may include teachers' qualities such as adaptability and commitment. Addressing this issue is vital to improving students' comprehension, ensuring career readiness, and enhancing their role in economic growth and financial decision-making.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What is the predictive value of teachers' adaptability on students' academic achievement in Accounting in public secondary schools in Anambra State?
2. What is the predictive value of teachers' commitment on students' academic achievement in Accounting in public secondary schools in Anambra State?

Hypotheses

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

1. Teachers' adaptability does not significantly predict students' academic achievement in Accounting in public secondary schools in Anambra State.
2. Teachers' commitment does not significantly predict students' academic achievement in Accounting in public secondary schools in Anambra State.

METHOD

The study adopted correlational research design. The population of the study comprised 569 senior secondary students two (SS2) students in Accounting (217 males and 352 females) in 267 public secondary schools in the six Education Zones of Anambra State. The sample comprised 569 Accounting students. The entire population of the Accounting students was adopted because of the manageable size. One instrument was used for data collection: Teachers' Quality Questionnaire (TQQ). The instrument contained 20 items spread across the clusters, A and B. Clusters 'A' elicited information on teachers' adaptability with 10-items and Cluster 'B' elicited information on teachers' commitment with 10-items. The items were placed on 4-point scale of Strongly Agree (SA) – 4 points, Agree (A) - 3 points, Disagree (D) – 2 points and Strongly Disagree (SD) – 1 point. The range of scores was weighted as 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively. On the other hand, Students' Academic Achievement Scores (SAAS) measured the students' academic achievement in public secondary schools in Anambra State. Academic

Achievement was measured with termly scores in Accounting which were collected from Records Department, Post Primary School Service Commission (PPSSC), Awka Anambra State (2024). Three experts validated the instrument. The coefficient values of 0.82 for teachers' adaptability; 0.84 for teachers' commitment was obtained. This gives an average coefficient value of 0.83 and was considered reliable for the study. The instrument was administered to the respondents by the researcher with the help of three (3) research assistants. It was 'on the spot hand delivery' for the administration and retrieval of the instrument. Simple linear regression analysis was used for data analysis at 0.05 level of significance.

RESULTS

Research Question 1: What is the predictive value of teachers' adaptability on students' academic achievement in Accounting in public secondary schools in Anambra State?

Table 1: Summary of the Regression Results of the Predictive Value of Teachers' Adaptability on Students' Academic Achievement in Accounting in Public Secondary Schools in Anambra State

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		t	Decision
	B	Std. Error	Beta(β)			
Constant	1.644	.095			17.390	Strong Positive Predictive Value
Adaptability	.567	.026	.702		21.617	

R = .702, R Square = .493, Adjusted R² = .492, F = 467.279.

Table 1 shows the summary of the regression results of the predictive value of teachers' adaptability on students' academic achievement in Accounting in public secondary schools in Anambra State. The results revealed that the R = .702, R Square = .493, Adjusted R² = .492, F = 467.279. This result indicated a strong positive predictive value of teachers' adaptability on students' academic achievement in Accounting in public secondary schools in Anambra State because teachers' adaptability has 49.3% predictive value. This implies that teachers' adaptability has a strong positive predictive value on students' academic achievement in Accounting in public secondary schools in Anambra State.

Research Question 2: What is the predictive value of teachers' commitment on students' academic achievement in Accounting in public secondary schools in Anambra State?

Table 2: Summary of the Regression Results of the Predictive Value of Teachers' Commitment on Students' Academic Achievement in Accounting in Public Secondary Schools in Anambra State

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		t	Decision
	B	Std. Error	Beta(β)			
Constant	.823	.099			8.283	Strong Positive Predictive Value
Commitment	.779	.027	.795		28.758	

R = .795, R Square = .633, Adjusted R² = .632, F = 827.035.

Table 2 shows the summary of the regression results of the predictive value of teachers' commitment on students' academic achievement in Accounting in public secondary schools in Anambra State. The results revealed that the

$R = .795$, $R^2 = .633$, Adjusted $R^2 = .632$, $F = 827.035$. This result indicated a strong positive predictive value of teachers' commitment on students' academic achievement in Accounting in public secondary schools in Anambra State because teachers' commitment has 63.3% predictive value. This suggests that teachers' commitment has a strong positive predictive value on students' academic achievement in Accounting in public secondary schools in Anambra State.

Test of Hypotheses

Hypothesis One

H₀: Teachers' adaptability does not significantly predict students' academic achievement in Accounting in public secondary schools in Anambra State

Table 3: Summary of the Regression Results of the Test of the Predictive Value of Teachers' Adaptability on Students' Academic Achievement in Accounting in Public Secondary Schools in Anambra State

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		t	Sig.	Decision
	B	Std. Error	Beta(β)				
Constant	1.644	.095			17.390	0.000	Significant
Adaptability	.567	.026	.702		21.617		

$R = .826$, $R^2 = .683$, Adjusted $R^2 = .682$, $F = 1287.801$.

Table 3 shows the summary of the regression results of the predictive value of teachers' adaptability on students' academic achievement in Accounting in public secondary schools in Anambra State. The results revealed that the $R = .702$, $R^2 = .493$, Adjusted $R^2 = .492$, $F = 467.279$. This result indicated that teachers' adaptability has a significant predictive value on students' academic achievement in Accounting in public secondary schools in Anambra State because teachers' adaptability has 49.3% predictive value. More so, the p-value (0.00) is below the 0.05 significance level. Thus, the null hypothesis was rejected and the alternative hypothesis was retained. Therefore, teachers' adaptability significantly predicts students' academic achievement in Accounting in public secondary schools in Anambra State

Hypothesis Two

H₀: Teachers' commitment does not significantly predict students' academic achievement in Accounting in public secondary schools in Anambra State

Table 4: Summary of the Regression Results of the Test of the Predictive Value of Teachers' Commitment on Students' Academic Achievement in Accounting in Public Secondary Schools in Anambra State

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		t	Sig.	Decision
	B	Std. Error	Beta(β)				
Constant	.823	.099			8.283	0.00	Significant
Commitment	.779	.027	.795		28.758		

$R = .794$, $R^2 = .631$, Adjusted $R^2 = .630$, $F = 1023.554$.

Table 4 shows the summary of the regression results of the predictive value teachers' commitment on students' academic achievement in Accounting in public secondary schools in Anambra State. The results revealed that the

$R = .795$, $R^2 = .633$, Adjusted $R^2 = .632$, $F = 827.035$. This result indicated that teachers' commitment has a significant predictive value on students' academic achievement in Accounting in public secondary schools in Anambra State because teachers' commitment has 63.3% predictive value. More so, the p -value (0.00) is below the 0.05 significance level. Thus, the null hypothesis was rejected and the alternative hypothesis was retained. Therefore, teachers' commitment significantly predicts students' academic achievement in Accounting in public secondary schools in Anambra State.

Summary of the Findings

Based on the results of the study, the following were found:

1. Teachers' adaptability has a strong positive predictive value on students' academic achievement in Accounting in public secondary schools in Anambra State.
2. Teachers' commitment has a strong positive predictive value on students' academic achievement in Accounting in public secondary schools in Anambra State.

Teachers' adaptability has a strong positive predictive value on students' academic achievement in Accounting in public secondary schools in Anambra State.

The findings of the study as shown in table 1 revealed that teachers' adaptability has a strong positive predictive value on students' academic achievement in Accounting in public secondary schools in Anambra State. The results of the corresponding null hypothesis in table 1 showed that teachers' adaptability has a significant predictive value on students' academic achievement in Accounting in public secondary schools in Anambra State. These findings suggested that teachers' ability to adjust teaching strategies, adopt new methods, and respond to students' needs positively influences learning outcomes. Adaptable teachers effectively manage classroom challenges, integrate innovative instructional techniques, and create supportive learning environments, ultimately enhancing students' understanding and performance in Accounting. This highlights adaptability as a key factor in academic success.

In line with these findings, Okpara and Ezeador (2024) found that teachers who adapt to diverse learning needs, classroom dynamics, and changes in curricula foster environments conducive to learning. Adaptability enables teachers to employ differentiated instructional strategies, accommodate varied student abilities, and integrate technology to enhance Accounting education, thereby improving student outcomes. Ojelade, et. al., (2024) findings attested that teachers who effectively adapt by using real-life accounting scenarios or interactive software may help students understand complex concepts, resulting in higher achievement levels.

Moreover, Okpara and Ezeador (2024) findings affirmed that adaptable teachers often demonstrate resilience and problem-solving abilities, which are essential in addressing challenges such as large class sizes, limited resources, and varying student competencies. These qualities create a supportive classroom atmosphere where students feel motivated and engaged. In agreement with this study, Khodadad (2023) found that adaptability fosters teacher-student relationships, allowing educators to recognize individual student needs and provide tailored support, which is crucial for subjects like Accounting that require precision and conceptual understanding. Despite these benefits, some criticisms arise regarding the overemphasis on adaptability as a determinant of academic success in Accounting. Gyaryal, et. al., (2024) found that focusing on teachers' adaptability might overlook systemic issues such as inadequate instructional materials, poor infrastructure, and lack of professional development opportunities. Afzal, et al., (2023) findings affirmed that even the most adaptable teacher may struggle to improve student performance if Accounting textbooks or practical materials are unavailable. Additionally, Bartanen, and Grissom (2023) found that external factors such as socio-economic status, parental involvement, and student motivation significantly impact academic achievement and may not be mitigated solely by teachers' adaptability.

Teachers' commitment has a strong positive predictive value on students' academic achievement in Accounting in public secondary schools in Anambra State.

The findings of the study as shown in table 2 revealed that teachers' commitment has a significant predictive value on students' academic achievement in Accounting in public secondary schools in Anambra State. The results of the corresponding null hypothesis in table 2 showed that teachers' commitment significantly predicts students'

academic achievement in Accounting in public secondary schools in Anambra State. These findings showed that dedicated teachers positively influence learning outcomes. Committed teachers invest time and effort in lesson preparation, student engagement, and instructional delivery, ensuring a deeper understanding of Accounting concepts. Their passion fosters a supportive learning environment, motivating students to excel. Additionally, committed teachers provide academic guidance, timely feedback, and mentorship, which enhance students' confidence and performance. Their consistency in maintaining high teaching standards and addressing individual learning needs significantly contributes to improved academic achievement in Accounting among students.

In agreement with these findings, Patience (2023) found that teachers' commitment, encompassing their dedication to teaching, enthusiasm for student development, and consistent effort in instructional delivery, has a direct impact on students' learning outcomes. Committed teachers invest time in lesson planning, adopt innovative teaching strategies, and provide individualized support, all of which enhance students' understanding and performance. This aligns with Balogun (2016) findings that a teacher who remains enthusiastic and perseveres despite challenges inspires students to adopt a positive attitude toward learning, fostering academic success.

Additionally, Orji and Enyiamaka (2017) found that teachers' commitment influences the learning environment. Teachers who demonstrate high levels of dedication create a supportive and encouraging classroom atmosphere, which motivates students and boosts their academic confidence. Okpara and Ezeador (2024) findings attested that when teachers are committed, they also prioritize professional development, staying updated with modern teaching techniques that cater to diverse student needs. This alignment of commitment with skill improvement ensures better academic outcomes for students.

However, criticisms arise regarding the complexity of solely attributing students' academic achievement to teachers' commitment. Ifesinachi, et. al., (2024) findings revealed that while teacher dedication is important, other factors such as school resources, parental involvement, and student socio-economic backgrounds significantly influence academic performance. Adekola and Aribisala (2018) findings attested that a highly committed teacher may still face limitations in under-resourced schools or with students facing socio-economic hardships, which hinders the translation of commitment into academic success. Furthermore, Khodadad (2023) found that overemphasis on teachers' commitment as a predictor might overlook structural and systemic issues in the education sector. Challenges such as large class sizes, insufficient teaching materials, and inadequate teacher remuneration can erode the morale of even the most committed educators, diminishing their ability to positively impact student outcomes. This context reveals the need for a more nuanced understanding of how commitment interacts with broader systemic challenges.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the findings underscore that various teacher quality of adaptability and commitment significantly enhance students' academic achievement in Accounting in public secondary schools in Anambra State. Teachers' ability to adjust to dynamic educational needs fosters inclusivity and effective learning, while their dedication inspires and motivates students. These results highlight the critical role of well-rounded teacher capabilities in driving academic success, calling for policies that prioritize teacher training and resource allocation in public schools.

Recommendations

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

1. School managements should prioritize regular training programs to enhance teachers' adaptability in teaching Accounting effectively.
2. Government should provide incentives such as recognition programmes, competitive salaries, and conducive work environments should be implemented to boost teachers' commitment to their profession

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