

## TEACHERS' JOB COMMITMENT AS CORRELATES OF STUDENTS' ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN AWKA SOUTH LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA, ANAMBRA STATE

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### Abstract

The study examined teachers' job commitment as a correlate of students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Awka South Local Government, Anambra State. Two research questions guided the study and two null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance. Correlational research design was adopted for this study. The population of the study comprised 604 teachers from the 19 public secondary schools in Awka South Local Government Area, Anambra State. A census sampling technique was used to utilize all 604 teachers for the study, given the relatively manageable size of the population. Two sets of instruments, namely: "Teachers' Job Commitment Questionnaire (TJCQ)" and "Students' Academic Performance Records," were used for data collection. TJCQ was subjected to face validation by three experts, two experts in Educational Management and an expert in Measurement and Evaluation, all from the Department of Educational Foundations, Faculty of Education, Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University, Igbariam Campus. The internal consistency of the TJCQ was determined using Cronbach's Alpha, which yielded an overall reliability index of 0.81. The instrument was administered by the researcher with the help of four research assistants who are secondary school teachers in Awka South LGA, Anambra State. A total of 604 copies of the questionnaire were distributed, and 589 were properly filled out and successfully retrieved, indicating a 97.5% return rate. Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient was used to answer the research questions, while simple regression analysis was used to test the hypotheses. The study's findings revealed, among other things, that teachers' affective and continuance commitment have a high relationship with students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Awka South Local Government, Anambra State. It was also found that teachers' affective and continuance commitment have a significant relationship with students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Awka South local government, Anambra State. Based on the findings, it was recommended among others that the Post Primary Schools Service Commission should organize periodic training for teachers to upgrade their knowledge of continuance commitment to enhance the academic achievement of students.

**Keywords:** Teachers, Job Commitment, Students, Academic Performance, Schools

### 1.1 Introduction

Education has been universally acknowledged as a potent and dynamic instrument for national development and societal transformation. It is an important instrument for the development of the individual and society, as it serves as a weapon against poverty, illiteracy, and disease. Education, as seen by Nnebedum, Akinfolarin, and Obuegbe (2018), is a means of facilitating the acquisition of knowledge, skills, and expertise needed for the performance of

productive tasks or the manipulation of a nation's available resources. Eboh (2017) opined that through education, the nation can harness her numerous resources, develop her manpower and improve the quality of life of her citizens. As such, it is a major responsibility of the Nigerian government to pay proper attention to the sector in order to ensure quality education in the country. Students who receive quality education in learning institutions are more likely to achieve academic success.

The academic performance of students is the result that indicates the knowledge, skills, and ideas acquired and retained by learners in a specific subject. Okpanachi (2023) defined academic performance as the success of students or learners in acquiring the knowledge expected of them after completion of an educational programme. Furthermore, the author noted that academic performance is evaluated through various assessments, including class exercises, class tests, mid-semester academic assessments, assignments, mock examinations, and end-of-term or semester examinations. It serves as a measure of success and progress in acquiring the knowledge, skills, and competencies necessary to obtain educational certificates. Divine-Welekwe et al. (2023) defined academic performance as the ability of students to study and remember facts, as well as communicate the knowledge acquired, either verbally or in writing. It acts as a yardstick to evaluate the extent to which students have met the learning objectives and requirements of their educational programme. Operationally, students' academic performance can be seen as the educational outcomes of their learning experience, which is measured by their scores in continuous assessments and examinations.

Academic performance serves as a crucial indicator of intellectual development and is essential for both societal and individual success. On the other hand, academic failure begets negative consequences, as it is likely for students to miss out on life's opportunities if not properly guided. The academic performance of students, particularly in internal examinations, has become a significant concern in public secondary schools within the Awka South Local Government Area (LGA) of Anambra State. To buttress this, Okonkwo and Agu (2021) noted that the academic performance of students in public secondary schools in Anambra State is below expectations in Mock examinations, which are conducted under the same formats and conditions as those in the WASSCE. Furthermore, Okonkwo and Agu added that the failure of some students in English Language and Mathematics in the West African Senior Secondary Certificate Examination (WASSCE) over the years is a source of concern. Also, Obumse and Okafor (2023) asserted that WAEC examiner's report (2021) indicated that the percentage of candidates that had credit in English language in Nigeria between years 2017-2021 in West African Examinations Council (WAEC) are as follows: 27.53% in year 2017, 15.56% in 2018, 22.54% in 2019, 13.78% in 2020 and 24.94% in 2021. Furthermore, the WAEC chief examiner stated that the percentage of candidates who obtained credit passes in five subjects and above, including English Language and Mathematics, between 2017 and 2021, is as follows: 8.53% in 2017, 13.32% in 2018, 27.74% in 2019, 10.53% in 2020, and 1.80% in 2021. The academic performance of students is influenced by their attitude and the teachers who teach them in the classroom. Ligaya et al. (2015) noted that academic performance does not depend largely on the efforts and perseverance of students, but rather on both the teaching-learning process and the effort shown by teachers.

Teachers are the engine that powers the transfer of knowledge, ideas, information, and skills to learners. Teachers coordinate all factors in the teaching and learning process to promote

the attainment of educational objectives. As such, the success of any educational institution depends to a great extent on the job performance of teachers. Obikwelu and Nwasor (2021) stated that teachers make concerted efforts to enhance human capital in the school and contribute to students' academic, social, and emotional development.

Teachers are the human resource that direct, instruct and impart skills, knowledge, values and morals to learners. There is no doubt that the role of teachers in improving students' academic performance is enormous. Teachers are the engine that drives the education of any nation. Ofoegbu (2017) opined that teachers' interactions, views, duties, and behaviour play a vital role in ensuring the achievement of educational goals. This vital role teachers play makes their job performance essential. It is said that a student's good performance depends on their teacher's effective teaching. As professionals, teachers need to be appropriate role models and exhibit to their students a commitment to their scholarly values and to lifelong learning (Raza, 2018). Teachers are the machine that propels knowledge, information, ideas and skills transfer to learners. Offorma and Chukwuma-Nosike (2016) observed that teachers are the people who coordinate all the factors in the teaching and learning process to promote the attainment of educational objectives. However, the success of any educational institution depends to a great extent on the job commitment of the teachers.

Teachers' job commitment involves identifying and participating in various instructional activities to achieve set goals. Nwabuaku (2023) opined that teachers' job commitment is a passionate drive that influences teachers to put in productive effort and time in promoting their students' achievement. Teachers' job commitment is the degree to which members of the teaching staff are devoted and involved in their work activities. Job commitment is the sense of responsibility that an individual feels towards the mission and goals of an organization. Teachers' job commitment is the emotional bond teachers demonstrate toward their work. Ataine (2020) posited that job commitment is an attitude reflecting the loyalty of staff to the organization and an ongoing process through which organization members express their concerns for the organization and its continued success and well-being. Teachers who are committed to their job are energetic and dedicated to their duties in secondary schools. Contextually, teachers' job commitment refers to the willingness of teaching staff to devote time and energy to fulfilling their teaching roles.

Teachers who are committed to their job display a positive attitude toward work in secondary schools. Umeozor and Nnebedum (2022) maintained that the teachers' job commitment could be determined by their proper execution of basic tasks and additional responsibilities assigned by the principals, active involvement in school functions, punctuality to work, remaining in school till the closing hour, willingness to help students to learn and regularity in school. Uwaleke, Sani and Mildred (2023) asserted that teachers who are committed to their job are more enthusiastic and interested in devoting more energy and time to teaching students in a manner that could improve their academic performance. Teachers could display their job commitment in various dimensions. Several scholars have highlighted three dimensions of teachers' job commitment, including affective commitment, normative commitment, and continuance commitment (Obianwu & Benstowe, 2023; Adewoyin et al., 2020; Ezeanokwasi et al., 2019). The focus of this study is on the two dimensions of teachers' job commitment, namely: affective commitment and continuance commitment



Affective commitment refers to the feelings of emotional identification and attachment that teachers have towards the school. Oredein and Ebo (2021) noted that affective commitment, also referred to as employees' identification, involvement, and attachment to their organizations, is characterized by their desire to work cooperatively to complete assigned tasks and make desirable changes to achieve organizational goals. The authors added that affective commitment could also be reflected in the passion that such a teacher has for teaching their students; they would be willing to go the extra mile to ensure that the students understand the topic being taught. Affective commitment relates to remaining in the teaching profession because teachers feel a sense of connection to other members of staff. Wapmuk et al. (2022) noted that affective commitment occurs when teachers feel emotionally connected to the organisation and see personal and organisational goals as aligned. Teachers exhibit affective commitment in situations where their personal priorities, needs, and values align with those of their schools.

Continuance commitment refers to teachers' awareness of the costs associated with leaving the school. Obianwu and Benstowe (2023) maintained that teachers' continuance commitment is the perceived costs that a teacher would incur if they left their job. Continuing, Obianwu and Benstowe asserted that these costs can be financial, such as lost wages or benefits, or they can be psychological, such as the loss of status or self-identity. Continuance commitment motivates teachers to remain in the teaching profession, enabling them to accumulate work experience and skills to effectively teach students in the classroom.

It seems that there are laxities in the level of teachers' job commitment in Public secondary schools in Awka South Local Government Area of Anambra State. Ibezim (2024) observed that some laxities in teachers' job commitment, such as frequent absenteeism, disengagement from official duties, departure from school before the closing hour and procrastination in teaching students, may indicate laxities in their job commitment in public secondary schools in Anambra State. In the same vein, Obi et al. (2024) noted that teachers' lack of job commitment in public secondary schools in Anambra State is evidenced in several cases of heightened absenteeism, low morale, a lack of interest in the teaching job, poor class attendance, and other statutory demands, such as preparing lesson notes. This lack of commitment among teachers is the greatest danger, as it leads to the failure to fulfill school goals and objectives and has invariably resulted in poor student performance. It is against this background that the study investigated teachers' job commitment as a correlate of students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Awka South Local Government, Anambra State.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

In Anambra State, public secondary schools face ongoing concerns regarding teachers' job commitment and its potential impact on students' academic performance. The academic performance of students is found to be below expectations in both internal and external examinations in public secondary schools in Awka South Local Government, Anambra State. The undesirable academic performance of students, especially in English and Mathematics, cannot depend solely on the efforts of learners, but also on the efforts put in by teachers in the classroom.

Some teachers appear to arrive late to work, are absent from school without a fair reason, feel reluctant to teach the students, fail to prepare their lesson plans, detach from official duties and leave the school premises before the official closing hour in public secondary schools in Awka

LGA, Anambra State. Consequently, there appears to be a decline in the quality of education received by students in public secondary schools in Awka LGA, Anambra State. This could lead to a shortage of semi-skilled manpower that might significantly contribute to the development of Awka LGA, in particular, and Anambra State, in general. In response to these problems, this study was conducted to investigate the relationship between teachers' job commitment and students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Awka South Local Government, Anambra State.

### **1.3 Purpose of the Study**

The main purpose of this study is to examine teachers' job commitment as correlates of students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Awka South local government, Anambra State. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. Find out the relationship between teachers' affective commitment and academic performance of public secondary school students in Awka South local government.
2. Ascertain the relationship between teachers' continuance commitment and academic performance of public secondary school students in Awka South local government.

### **1.4 Research Questions**

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What is the relationship between teachers' affective commitment and academic performance of public secondary school students in Awka South local government area, Anambra state?
2. What is the relationship between teachers' continuance commitment and academic performance of public secondary school students in Awka South local government area, Anambra State?

### **1.5 Hypotheses**

The following null hypotheses were formulated and were tested at .05 level of significance:

1. There is no significant relationship between teachers' affective commitment and academic performance of public secondary school students in Awka South local government area, Anambra state.
2. There is no significant relationship between teachers' continuance commitment and academic performance of public secondary school students in Awka South local government area, Anambra State.

## **2. Methods**

A correlational research design was adopted for this study. The study was conducted in Awka South Local Government Area, Anambra State, Nigeria. The Awka South Local Government Area was chosen for this study due to its proximity, accessibility, and convenience. The study population consisted of 604 teachers from the 19 public secondary schools in Awka South LGA, Anambra State. A census or total sampling technique was used since the entire population is relatively small and manageable. Therefore, the 604 teachers in public secondary schools in Awka South LGA were utilized for the study.

Two sets of structured instruments titled “Teachers’ Job Commitment Questionnaire (TJCQ)” and “Students’ Academic Performance Records were used for data collection. The TJCQ was developed by the researcher based on insight gained from literature and consultation with experts. TJCQ was divided into sections A and B. Section A provided personal information of the respondents, while Section B included Clusters I and II, which focused on the components of teachers' job commitment. Cluster I contained 5 items related to affective commitment, and Cluster II had 5 items related to continuance commitment. TJCQ, therefore, contained 5 items. The instrument was structured on a four-point rating scale: Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree. The results of the 2022/2023 third-term students in English Language and Mathematics were used for the study. The results of the 2022/2023 third-term students in English Language and Mathematics were collected from the examination units of each school in Awka South LGA.

The instrument is subjected to face validation by three experts from the Department of Educational Foundations, Faculty of Education, Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ujukwu University, Igbariam Campus. The experts were given a copy of the questionnaire items, the project topic, the study's purpose, and the research question. The experts made several corrections, including the reframing and separation of double-barred items. The suggestions were incorporated into the final draft of the questionnaires, which were administered to the respondents for data collection. The reliability of the instruments was ascertained by administering them to 20 public secondary school teachers in two public secondary schools in Njikoka Local Government Area, which was not part of the study area but shares similar characteristics with the study area. Cronbach's Alpha was used to assess the internal consistency of the instrument, yielding coefficient values of 0.82 and 0.80 for the three clusters of the TJCQ, with an overall reliability index of 0.81.

Data were collected by the researcher with the help of four research assistants who are secondary school teachers in Awka South LGA. The research assistants were briefed by the researcher on the mode of distributing and retrieving the instrument. A total of 604 copies of the questionnaire were distributed, and 589 were properly filled out and successfully retrieved, indicating a 97% response rate. At the end of the exercise, duly completed and retrieved copies of the instruments were used for data analysis. Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient was used to answer the research questions and simple regression to test the hypotheses. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 27 was used for the data analysis. For decision on the research questions, the coefficient (r) and the size of the relationship are interpreted using the correlation coefficient by Wonu et, al. (2021) as follows:

Coefficient	Relationship
0.00 – 0.19	Negligible
0.20 – 0.39	Low
0.40 – 0.59	Moderate
0.60 – 0.79	High
0.80 – 1.00	Very high.

In taking decisions on the null hypotheses, if the exact p-value is equal to or greater than the significance value of 0.05, the null hypothesis is not rejected, but if the exact p-value is less



than the significance value of 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected. The use of simple regression analysis is justified by the fact that it is a statistical tool for identifying a linear relationship between independent and dependent variables.

### 3. Results

**Research Question 1:** What is the relationship between teachers' affective commitment and academic performance of public secondary school students in Awka South local government area, Anambra State?

**Table 1: Pearson (r) on Relationship between Teachers' Affective Commitment and Students' Academic Performance in Secondary Schools** Table 1 showed a Pearson's correlation

Variables		N	Teachers' Affective Commitment	Students' Academic Performance	Remarks
Teachers' Commitment	Affective	589	1.00	0.618	High
Students' Performance	Academic	589	0.618	1.00	

coefficient (r) of 0.618. This shows that there is high relationship between teachers' affective commitment and academic performance of public secondary school students in Awka South local government area, Anambra State. This indicated that an increase in teachers' affective commitment will lead to a high increase in academic performance of students.

**Research Question 2:** What is the relationship between teachers' continuance commitment and academic performance of public secondary school students in Awka South local government area, Anambra State?

**Table 2: Pearson (r) on Relationship between Teachers' Continuance Commitment and Students' Academic Performance in Secondary Schools**

Variables		N	Teachers' Continuance Commitment	Students' Academic Performance	Remarks
Teachers' Commitment	Continuance	589	1.00	0.788	High
Students' Performance	Academic	589	0.788	1.00	

As shown in Table 2, Pearson's correlation coefficient ( $r$ ) of 0.788 was obtained. This shows that there is high relationship between teachers' continuance commitment and academic performance of public secondary school students in Awka South local government area, Anambra State. This indicated that an improvement on teachers' continuance commitment will highly increase in academic performance of students.

**Hypothesis One:** There is no significant relationship between teachers' affective commitment and academic performance of public secondary school students in Awka South local government area, Anambra State.

**Table 3: The Summary of the Test of Significance of Simple Regression Analysis of the Relationship between Teachers' Affective Commitment and Students' Academic Performance in Secondary Schools**

Predictor	R	R <sup>2</sup>	F	P-value	Remark
Teachers' Affective Commitment	0.618	0.382	363.033	0.000	*S

\*Significant

As shown in Table 3, the simple regression coefficient ( $r$ ) is 0.618, while the  $R^2$  is 0.382 showing that teachers' affective commitment makes 38.2% contribution to the variance in public secondary school students' academic performance. The  $F(1/589) = 363.033$  and the  $p$ -value of 0.000 is less than 0.05. Therefore, since the  $p$ -value is less than the stipulated .05 level of significance, the null hypothesis was rejected. Therefore, there is significant relationship between teachers' affective commitment and academic performance of public secondary school students in Awka South local government area, Anambra State.

**Hypothesis Two:** There is no significant relationship between teachers' continuance commitment and academic performance of public secondary school students in Awka South local government area, Anambra State.

**Table 4: The Summary of the Test of Significance of Simple Regression Analysis of the Relationship between Teachers' Continuance Commitment and Students' Academic Performance in Secondary Schools**

Predictor	R	R <sup>2</sup>	F	P-value	Remark
Teachers' Continuance Commitment	0.788	0.620	959.304	0.000	*S

\*Significant

Table 4 indicated that the simple regression coefficient ( $r$ ) is 0.788, while the  $R^2$  is 0.620. showing that teachers' continuance commitment could account for 62.0% variance in public secondary school students' academic performance. The  $F(1/589) = 959.304$  and the  $p$ -value of 0.000 is less than 0.05. Therefore, since the  $p$ -value is less than the stipulated .05 level of significance, the null



hypothesis was rejected. Therefore, there is significant relationship between teachers' continuance commitment and academic performance of public secondary school students in Awka South local government area, Anambra State.

### **Discussion of the Findings**

The finding of the study revealed that there is a high relationship between teachers' affective commitment and academic performance of public secondary school students in Awka South local government area, Anambra state. This agrees with the finding of Uwaleke, Sani, and Mildred (2023), which indicates that teachers' affective commitment has a high relationship with students' academic performance in secondary schools. This finding disagreed with that of Nwabuaku (2023), which showed that teachers' affective commitment was a low predictor of students' academic performance in biology. The disagreement with the finding could be attributed to differences in geographical location and subject in which the academic performance was correlated with teachers' affective commitment. A possible explanation for this finding is that teachers who exhibit affective job commitment are more willing to teach and motivate learners to participate in instructional activities, which may account for the strong relationship with students' academic performance in secondary schools. Affective commitment among teachers enables them to pay attention to learners and assist them in studying hard, which may contribute to the high academic performance of students.

It was also found that there is a significant relationship between teachers' affective commitment and the academic performance of public secondary school students in Awka South Local Government Area, Anambra State. This affirmed the finding of Obianwu and Benstowe (2023), which revealed a significant relationship between teachers' affective commitment and students' academic performance in public senior secondary schools. The similarity in participants and the secondary level of education in which the studies were conducted could be responsible for the agreement with the findings. This refuted the finding of Nwabuaku (2023), which showed that teachers' affective commitment is not a predictor of students' academic performance in biology. Teachers who are effectively committed to valuing and respecting students may be more motivated to engage in teaching activities, which can lead to a significant relationship with their academic performance in secondary schools.

The study's results showed that teachers' continuance commitment has a high relationship with the academic performance of public secondary school students in Awka South Local Government Area, Anambra State. This is consonant with the finding of Abyot et al. (2017), which revealed a high relationship between teachers' continuance commitment and female students' academic performance in some selected secondary schools. This finding disagrees with that of Ligaya et al. (2015), which showed that teachers' continuance commitment had a weak relationship with students' performance in English at a University. The difference in time span, geographical location, and educational levels at which the studies were carried out could contribute to the disagreement with the findings. The possible reason for this finding is that teachers demonstrate a continuance commitment through a strong desire and devotion to their teaching roles, which could account for the high relationship between academic performance and public secondary school students in Awka South Local Government Area, Anambra State. Teachers with continuance commitment devote their time and energy to discharging their duties because of fear

of losing their job and this might be responsible for the high relationship with academic performance of public secondary school students in Awka South Local Government Area, Anambra State.

Further results revealed a significant relationship between teachers' continuance commitment and the academic performance of public secondary school students in Awka South Local Government Area, Anambra State. This supported the finding of Abyot et al. (2017), which revealed a significant relationship between teachers' continuance commitment and female students' academic performance in some selected secondary schools. This finding contradicts that of Nwabuaku (2023), which showed that teachers' continuance commitment is not a predictor of students' academic performance in biology.

### **Conclusion**

Based on the findings, it was concluded that teachers' job commitment has a positive and significant academic performance of public secondary school students in Awka South Local Government Area, Anambra State. Teachers demonstrate affective and continuance commitment through a strong desire to remain in the teaching profession, devoting time and putting in substantial effort to discharge their duties, thereby improving the academic performance of public secondary school students in Awka South Local Government Area, Anambra State.

### **Recommendations**

In line with the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Principals should organize regular interactive sessions with teachers to discuss issues that could facilitate their affective job commitment to improve students' academic performance.
2. Post Primary Schools Service Commission should organize periodic training for teachers to upgrade their knowledge of continuance commitment to enhance the academic achievement of students.

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