

## TEACHING ETHICS AS DETERMINANTS OF TEACHERS' JOB EFFECTIVENESS IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN OKIGWE EDUCATION ZONE, IMO STATE

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**Abstract:** In this study, the researcher investigated teaching ethics as determinant of teachers' effectiveness in public secondary schools in Okigwe Education Zone, Imo State. The descriptive research design was adopted in the study. Two research questions and two hypotheses guided the study. The population of the study consisted of 27,650 teachers in the study area and the proportionate sampling technique was used to choose 518 teachers as the sample size of the study. The instrument that was used for data collection was a 10-item questionnaire titled, "Teaching Ethics as Determinant of Teachers' Job Effectiveness in Public Secondary Schools in Imo State Questionnaire, (TEDTJEPSSISQ)". The instrument was validated by three experts, two from the Department of Educational Management and Policy and one from the Department of Educational Foundation, all from the Faculty of Education, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. The instrument was divided into two sections. Section A dealt with teaching ethics and teachers' attitude to work while section B was concerned with teaching ethics and teachers' job effectiveness with the two sections having an average correlational value of 2.84 which was considered high enough for the study. The reliability of the instrument was established by a pilot-test and analysis using cronbach alpha. For the purpose of analysis, each of item was weighted and scored as; strongly Agreed (SA) = 4points, Agreed (A) = 3points, Disagreed (D) = 2points, Strongly Disagreed (SD) = 1point. Pearson Product Moment Correlation was used to answer the research questions and test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significant. In testing the hypotheses, if p-value was less than 0.05 ( $p < 0.05$ ) the null-hypothesis was rejected but where it is otherwise, the null-hypothesis was accepted. The finding of the study among others is that the attitude of some teachers to work needs much to be desired. It was therefore recommended that teachers should be made to imbibe the ethics of their profession to enhance their job effectiveness.

**Keywords:** Teaching Ethics, Teachers' Job Effectiveness, Public Secondary Schools.

### Introduction

The word "Ethics" is derived from the Greek word, 'ethos' To the ancient Greek, it was more concerned with social norms. It was an instrument to classify behaviours and it was used to accord rightness or otherwise to what is done or what is left undone. Typologically, ethics is concerned with what is right or wrong. Campbell (2010) defined it as the science of conduct. It consists of the fundamental rules or principles according to which behaviours are predicted.

As a generic term, ethics contain the guidelines for the formulation of laws, regulations and rules. In modern times, values or norms that are taken for granted are translated into ethics (Campbell, 2013). Work ethics as a matter of fact, is an expression of organizational discipline. It is an attempt to manage human resources to conform to the norms and values prevalent in a vocation, profession or work setting.

In a school setting, ethics is a terminology that represents work attitude and discipline. It comprises behavioural specifications and institutional norms that form the collegiality of the school (Falloma and Canruff, 2013). One major concept of ethics is "moral maze management." It defines the challenges professionals and managers deal with on daily basis. It could be defined as conflicts of interests, wrong use of resources, information mismanagement and sometimes role ambiguity (Ruuteberg, 2015).

The emergence of teaching ethics is a corollary to institutional discipline. It is the observation of ethics in every school that makes it a learning environment. It connotes the discipline in human resource management that helps to achieve or realize educational targets or objectives (Haidt and Kesebir, 2010). This accounts for why academic

and extra-academic institutions organize staff training specifically on teaching ethics, roles of ethics, codes of ethics, policies and procedures that are used to resolve managerial and work dilemma (Mathony, 2009).

Teaching ethics can be defined as the process of prioritizing professional conducts and moral values in a school. Its purpose according to Walther (2013) is to ensure that teachers' behaviours are aligned with those values management and the entire school have agreed to accept. Any behaviour therefore, from a teacher that appears strange or considered contrary to what is accepted in a particular school is regarded as unethical. This presupposes that ethics are not only overtly stated by the ministry or the professional body. The meaning is also stretched to accommodate anything agreed within an industry or work place as acceptable (Warnick, 2011).

Ethics are aimed at establishing the integrity of a teacher and the school where he is teaching. It enhances the rating of a school and boosts the moral responsibilities and commitment as they interface with the challenges of pedagogy in their quest to realize educational objectives (Stangel, 2013). Within the teaching profession, rules of ethics include but not limited to punctuality to school and lesson. Sanger and Osguthorge, (2013) submitted that teachers' punctuality is the attitudinal expression of his continued interest in his job. This means that a teacher that comes late to school or even goes late to class for lesson is passing a simple message to school authority that he is done with the job.

Lesson preparation and delivery is another essential ethical practice. A teacher has to take time to prepare his lesson and he does that with the use of relevant and current books and non-book materials in the concerned or affected subject area. This as Campbell (2013) puts it requires thoroughness. Lesson delivery according to Snarey and Samuelson (2008) is as important as the preparation of lesson itself. The language of teaching or delivery they added should be understandable to the students. In other words, communication has to be right.

Curriculum interpretation should rather precede lesson preparation and delivery. It is unethical for a teacher not to interpret his subject curriculum correctly and be conversant with the contents. It is at this stage that a teacher looks for books and other instructional materials that could be used in the class for lesson delivery (Winston, 2007). Closely following lesson delivery is class control or management. Labarce (2008) defined it as the process of holding a class at an acceptable state of emotional and psychological equilibrium that create sufficient allowance for the transmission of knowledge. It involves keeping students mentally alert to respond to questions when necessary. It is bringing the students into a relationship with the objects or contents of lesson in such a way that they can ask and answer questions as occasions demand (Maryarna and Uero, 2010).

Another important teaching ethics is dressing. Though there is no prescribed mode of dressing for teachers, it is important to state that a teacher is addressed the way he dresses. The dressing of a teacher contributes immensely to his appearance, personality and carriage. The totality of all these, make him acceptable or otherwise to students (Johnson, Vare and Evers, 2013). A teacher should not over-dress or under-dress. Modesty and decorum should form his dressing and character.

Record keeping is a very essential ethical responsibility of a teacher. Curmings, Maddux and Cladianos (2010) explained it as the process of keeping statutory records and their contents in a good state and making them available when needed. Statutory records in the school are the orange diary, attendance register, staff attendance register (time book), admission register, the log book, staff movement book and the lesson note (lesson plan). They are the books that professionally help teachers to do their work effectively.

Effectiveness can be defined as the ability to achieve pre-determined objectives or target within a stipulated time (Agbata, 2006). It is knowing what to do and doing it with dexterity and commitment that result in the realization of targets set at the planning stage. Teaching ethics is purpose driven and the essence is to achieve educational objectives (Thomas, 2006).

The public secondary school is a school established and regulated by the government. Government employs teachers and post them to such schools. The activities of public secondary schools are regulated or supervised by the Ministry of Education. The principals of such schools report to the government and all the staff (teaching and non-teaching) are paid monthly by the government.

As indicated earlier, teaching ethics is designed to enhance the social rating of a school and boosts its moral responsibility. However, the concept and practice seem to be instinct in most institutions and this is because of the definition problem, misconception, difficult management and what appears to be superficiality of ethics.

### Statement of the Problem

The study examined the relationship between teaching ethics and teachers' job effectiveness. Teaching ethics by definition is the totality of all the rules, guidelines, norms and attitudinal specifications that are designed to guide teachers' jobs and even the schools where they teach.

In most cases, the school rules or regulations are extracted from the ethics of the teaching profession. Teaching ethics is therefore the bond between teachers and their jobs on one hand and between teachers and their supervising ministry on the other hand.

However, the attitude of some teachers to their work is worrisome. It appears some teachers are oblivious of their call to duty. Their appearance and carriage through their dressing affect their effectiveness. This could be seen through the performance of students in examinations (WAEC Examiner's Report, 2018).

In addition to the above, there seem to be insufficient empirical research work on how teaching ethics can enhance teachers' job effectiveness in the study area. It is on account of this, that this work was directed to investigate teaching ethics as determinant of teachers' job effectiveness.

### Purpose of the Study

The study examined the relationship between teaching ethics and teachers' job effectiveness. Specifically, the purpose of the study is to investigate;

1. The relationship between teaching ethics and teachers' attitude to work.
2. The relationship between teaching ethics and teachers' job effectiveness.

### Research Questions

The following research questions were adopted to guide the study.

1. What is the relationship between teaching ethics and teachers' attitude to work?
2. What is the relationship between teaching ethics and teachers' job effectiveness?

### Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated to aid the study;

1. There is no significant relationship between teaching ethics and teachers' attitude to work.
2. There is no significant relationship between teaching ethics and teachers' job effectiveness.

### Method

The study investigated teaching ethics as determinant of teachers' job effectiveness in public secondary schools in Okigwe Education Zone, Imo State. The descriptive research design was adopted for the study. The population of the study was 27,650 teachers in the study area. The proportionate sampling technique was used to select 518 teachers from 6 secondary schools from the 3 educational zones of the state with two schools taken from each zone. The instrument used to collect data from the respondents was a 10-item questionnaire titled, "Teaching ethics as Determinant of Teachers' Job Effectiveness in Public Secondary Schools in Imo State Questionnaire, (TEDTJEPSSISQ)". Two research questions and two hypotheses guided the study.

The instrument was validated by three experts, two from the Department of Educational Management and Policy and one from the Department of Education Foundations. The instrument was divided into two sections; section A dealt with teaching ethics and teachers' attitude to work while section B was concerned with teachers' ethics and teachers' job effectiveness with an average correlational value of 2.84 which was considered high enough for the study. The reliability of the instrument was established through pilot testing and analysis using Cronbach alpha.

Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient was used to answer the research questions and test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. For the purpose of analysis, each of the items was weighted and scored as Strongly Agreed (SA) = 4points, Agreed (A) = 3points, Disagreed (D) = 2points and Strongly Disagreed (SD) = 1point. In testing the hypotheses when p-value was less than 0.05 ( $p < 0.05$ ), the null hypothesis was rejected but when it is otherwise, it was accepted. The analyses were done using SPSS version 23. They were presented as follows;  $r = .00$ , no relationship;  $r = \pm 0.0$  to  $\pm 0.2$  very low relationship;  $r = \pm 0.2$  to  $\pm 0.4$  low relationship;  $r = \pm 0.4$  to  $\pm 0.6$ , medium relationship;  $r = \pm 0.6$  to  $\pm 0.8$  high relationship and  $r = \pm 0.8$  to 1.0, very high relationship.

## Result

This section deals with the analysis of research questions and hypotheses

### Research Question 1

What is the relationship between teaching ethics and teachers' attitude to work?

**Table 1: Summary of Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) test for relationship between teaching ethics and teachers' attitude to work**

Variables	N	$\bar{X}$	SD	r.	Remarks
Teaching ethics (X)		27.36	1.83		
	506			0.74	High positive relationship
Teachers' attitude to work (Y)		28.85	1.87		

Table 1 shows the summary of the Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) test for relationship between teaching ethics and teachers' attitude to work. The result shows that the calculated r. is 0.83, indicating a strong positive relationship between teaching ethics and teachers' attitude to work. This shows that teaching ethics has a high positive relationship with teachers' attitude to work.

### Research Question 2

What is the relationship between teaching ethics and teachers' job effectiveness?

**Table 2: Summary of Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) Test for relationship between teaching ethics and teachers' job effectiveness**

Variables	N	$\bar{X}$	SD	r.	Remarks
Teaching Ethics (X)		23.81	1.98		
	506			6	Very High positive Relationship
Teachers' Job Effectiveness (Y)		28.85	1.83		

Table 2 shows the summary of the PPMC test for relationship between teaching ethics and teachers' job effectiveness. The result of the analysis shows that the calculated correlation index is 0.86, indicating a very high positive relationship between teaching ethics and teachers' job effectiveness.

### Null Hypothesis 1

There is no significant relationship between teaching ethics and teachers' attitude to work.

**Table 3: Summary of PPMC Significant Relationship Test for teaching ethics and teachers' attitude to work**

Variables	$\bar{X}$	SD	df	r	p-value	Decision
Pupils' self-efficacy (X)	27.36	1.83	504	0.74	0.00	Significant
Academic Achievement (Y)	27.36	1.83				

\* $p < .05$ ;  $df = 504$ ; critical  $r = 0.74$

Table 3 reveals that at 0.05 level of significance and 504 df, the calculated  $r$  is 0.74 with P-value of 0.00 which is less than 0.05. Therefore, the first null hypothesis is rejected. Thus, there is a significant relationship between teaching ethics and teachers' attitude to work.

### Null Hypothesis 2

There is no significant relationship between teaching ethics and teachers' job effectiveness.

**Table 4: Summary of PPMC Significant Relationship Test for Teaching Ethics and Teachers' Job Effectiveness**

Variables	N	$\bar{X}$	SD	df	r.	P-value	Decision
Teaching Ethics (X)	506	23.81	1.98	504	0.86	0.01	Significant
Teachers' Job Effectiveness(Y)		28.85	1.83				

\* $p < .05$ ;  $df = 504$ ; critical  $r = 0.86$

Table 4 reveals that at 0.05 level of significance and 504 df, the calculated  $r$  is 0.86 with P-value of 0.01 which is less than 0.05. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. This means that there is a significant relationship between teaching ethics and teachers' job effectiveness.

### Discussion

Table 1 indicates that there is a strong positive relationship between teaching ethics and teachers' attitude to work. This indication is supported by the works of Campbell (2013) who stated that teachers' attitude to work should be a response to the provisions of teaching ethics. He argued further that teaching ethics are consisted of the characters of a teacher in the work place. This presupposes that teaching ethics is the alternative name for organizational behavior in the school setting. From the above finding, it could be stated there is a significant relationship between teaching ethics and teachers' attitude to work.

Table 2 shows that there is a significant relationship between teaching ethics and teachers' job effectiveness. Teachers' job effectiveness as indicated earlier has to do with the capacity of the teacher to deliver expected result. Maryama and Ueno (2010) suggested that teaching ethics do not just suggest the attitudinal behavior of teachers at the place of work but that it includes the use of available teaching and resource materials to produce required results without waste. This submission agrees with the result as stated above that there is a positive relationship

between teaching ethics and teachers' job effectiveness.

From the findings of the study, it is difficult to separate teaching ethics from teachers' attitude to work and teachers' job effectiveness. As a matter of fact, Teachers' capacity to deliver good result in line with the contents of the demand of his job is the whole essence of the ethics of the teaching profession (Slengel, 2013). Beyond this, teaching ethics, Waither (2013) added is designed to promote teachers' job effectiveness. The ethics of the teaching job he submitted is meant to align teacher's attitude to the demands of the teaching job.

Table 3 and Table 4 of the study are all in agreement that there is a significant relationship between teaching ethics and teachers' work attitude and their job effectiveness.

## Conclusion

The study was to determine the relationship between teaching ethics and teachers' attitude to work and teachers' job effectiveness. The findings of the study indicated that there is a positive relationship between the dependent variables and the independent variables. This means that teaching ethics have a significant influence on teachers' work attitude and their job effectiveness.

## Recommendation

In view of the above findings of the work, the researchers therefore recommend that;

- a. Heads of schools should ensure that teachers' behaviour at the place of work must comply with the provisions of the ethics of their job.
- b. Teachers themselves should acquaint themselves with the contents of the ethics of the teaching profession.
- c. Ethics and disciplinary committee should be set up in schools to monitor teachers' attitude to work.
- d. Errant teachers should be called to order or even disciplined to ensure compliant to their teaching ethics.

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