

## Assessment of Teachers' Professional Misconduct in Secondary Schools in Idemili South Local Government Area, Anambra State, Nigeria.

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### Abstract

*The study assessed the effects of teachers' professional misconduct in secondary schools in Idemili South Local Government Area, Anambra State. The objectives of the study were to: (i) examine the professional misconduct mostly practiced by secondary school teachers in Idemili south local government area, Anambra state; (ii) examine the causes of these professional misconducts; (iii) determine the relationship between teachers' professional misconduct, and secondary school effectiveness in Idemili south local government area, Anambra state; (iv) investigate the level of teachers' professional misconduct in Idemili south local government area, Anambra State.*

*The study adopted a descriptive research design of correlational type. Four research questions were raised to guide the study. The study covered 75 secondary schools in Idemili South Local Government Area, Anambra State (both private and public). Out of these schools, 20 secondary schools were selected for the study based on the year of establishment. This therefore gave a total number of 20 participants since only the principals are needed for the study. Mean and Standard Deviation were used to analyze the data obtained from the respondents. The three null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 levels using Pearson's Product Moment Correlation (PPMC).*

*The findings showed seduction and sexual abuse of students, teachers' regular absenteeism, teachers' unethical dressing, involvement in examination malpractices, extortion and corruption among the teachers, are the professional misconducts mostly practiced by the secondary school teachers in Idemili South LGA, Anambra State.*

*Based on the findings and conclusion of this study, it was recommended among others that the school should set up a disciplinary committee and any teacher caught with any of the misconduct should be punished accordingly.*

**Keywords:** Professional, misconduct, secondary schools, teachers, education.  
**Introduction**

Education in Nigeria is an instrument for affecting national development (NPE, 2013). The government's effort to provide qualitative and quantitative education for its citizenry is manifested in the expansion and population growth in schools, which is the reason the Federal and State Governments spend a huge proportion of their annual budgets on education. The National Policy on Education (2013) stipulated that

secondary education is an instrument for national development that fosters the worth and development of the individual for further education. Education at the secondary school level is also known as the bedrock and foundation of higher knowledge in tertiary institutions. It is an investment as well as an instrument that can be used to achieve rapid economic, social, political, technological, scientific, and cultural development in the country.

In educational institutions as in any other organization, especially at the secondary school level, the need for principal's effective leadership is paramount if the nation is to achieve the lofty aims and objectives of her education. This is not surprising, given the role of education as the hub from which every spoke of development rotates. Learners are more interested now than in the past in the importance of education and how crucial it is for their personal development and the nation's development.

Teachers are important components of education in the realization of educational goals. They are also the most important person in teaching who manages learning experiences and environments. In teaching, teachers use their knowledge, skills, attitude, and practice to make teaching and learning situation a stimulating experience and students' performance highly depends on teachers' readiness in establishing the activity (Namunga&Otunga, 2012). Teachers play an important role in the teaching and learning process to improve students' learning outcomes and their effects on students' learning appear to be sustained and accumulative (Darling-Hammond, Wei, & Johnson, 2012). The influence of a good or bad teacher not only affects the students' learning during their present year but also in their further years.

In many works of literature, teachers are required to have good competencies, and performance, be actively involved in professional development, engage knowledge with current issues, conduct the tasks ethically, and show commitment or responsibility in teaching practice at school. Teachers also require to engage in learning opportunities in professional development such as workshops, mentoring, and training to support their role (Tanang& Abu, 2014). Teacher professional development is a priority of education systems, for teachers need to update their skills and knowledge base. Studies have shown that professional development programs develop teachers' knowledge, and pedagogical skills, increase confidence in teaching and also develop positive attitude toward teaching and student learning (Radford, 2018).

Nigeria, like many other countries, has also been experiencing several cases of teacher professional misconduct in its educational institutions. Mass media such as radio, television, newspapers, and social networks, as well as different studies, have unraveled several different forms of teacher misconduct in the country. The common forms of misconduct among Nigerian schools include absenteeism, sexual misconduct, corruption, private tutoring, unethical dressing, drunkenness, unethical language, and examination malpractices (Mfaume&Bilinga, 2017; Mabagala, 2016; Betweli, 2013). Teacher misconduct regardless of its form or magnitude has a detrimental impact on the attainment of educational goals. Teacher misconduct, particularly absenteeism and lateness, affects the teaching of the subject content, where teachers fail or partially accomplish the syllabus (Betweli, 2013).

As a result of the prevalence and impact of teacher misconduct in schools, different countries have put in place through their education policies, strategies to mitigate teachers' professional misconduct in the attainment of educational goals. These



countries have established some strategies to ensure the head teachers and teachers' effectiveness in fulfilling their daily responsibilities. Such strategies range from pre-service preparation (training), appointment (recruitment), and in-service training.

### **Statement of the Problem**

It is a fact that no education system can rise above the level of its teachers. However, obtaining and retaining quality teachers for better performance is a major source of concern that is facing educational planners at all levels worldwide. Many teachers are discontent with their noble careers, and to a majority of them, teaching is just a stepping stone to better careers (Appiah-Agyekum, Suapim&Peprah, 2013; George, &Nyagaya, 2015). Njiru (2014) stated that many studies indicated that teachers have low job satisfaction due to poor working conditions such as low pay, high workload, lack of in-service training, promotion, and lack of accommodation among others. Researchers on education-related issues such as Oswald (2012); Ngimbudzi (2009) showed that the working conditions among secondary school teachers, particularly in rural areas do not attract teachers.

Many researchers have carried out different studies on the roles of school management and the outcomes on students' learning outcomes but those that focus on the teachers' unprofessionalism and secondary school effectiveness are either very scanty or not in existence. This has opened a wide research gap to be filled on the effect of teachers' professional misconduct and secondary school effectiveness in Idemili South Local Government Area, Anambra State.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The main purpose of the study was to assess teachers' professional misconduct in secondary school in Idemili South Local Government Area of Anambra State. Specifically, the study tends to:

1. Examine the professional misconducts mostly practiced by secondary school teachers in Idemili South LGA, Anambra State.
2. Examine the causes of professional misconduct among secondary school teachers in Idemili South LGA, Anambra State.
3. Examine the level of teachers' professional misconduct in secondary schools in Idemili South LGA, Anambra State.

The following research questions were raised to guide the study;

1. What are the professional misconducts mostly practiced by secondary school teachers in Idemili South LGA, Anambra State?
2. What are the causes of professional misconduct among secondary school teachers in Idemili South LGA, Anambra State?
3. What is the level of teachers' professional misconduct in secondary schools in Idemili South LGA, Anambra State?

### **Concept of Education and Secondary Education**

Consequently, Aghenta (2000) stated that this has generally generated great interest in the daily operation of the school system. Principals' role performance and teachers' professional competence are vital in educational objectives for the improvement of teaching and learning which is the sole responsibility of the head of the school. Providing qualitative education for Students rests merely

with the principal and teachers who professionally interact in planning and organizing instruction for the process of school goals performance.

### **Teachers' Professionalism**

Teacher professionalism is a consensus of the norms, which may apply to being and behaving like a professional within the personal, organizational, and broader political condition; socially constructed; subject to geographical and cultural differences in interpretation; and may change over time (Day, 2009; Helsby, 2015). To be professional, a teacher is required to commit to the students and their learning, have in-depth mastery of the subjects and how to teach them, be responsible to monitor student learning outcomes through various means of evaluation, can think systematically, and should be part of a learning community within the profession (Supriadi, 2018).

Professionals need to learn from experience, update their competence, and ensure that their knowledge, skills, and understanding are also up to date. Pedagogical transformation of the teacher can be facilitated through ongoing teacher professional development which enables them to reflect on their practice and improve their professional practice through interaction with other practitioners (Sari, 2012).

### **Teachers' Professional Misconduct**

Teacher professional misconduct has increasingly emerged as one of the serious issues of concern, which affects the attainment of educational goals across the globe in recent years. Incidents of teacher professional misconduct of varied natures have been reported in several countries. In England, sexual relationships with pupils, and downloading of extreme pornography on school laptops are among serious teacher misbehavior practiced by teachers in schools (Page, 2014). In Africa, particularly Sub-Saharan African countries experience serious cases of teacher misconduct in educational institutions (Ng'oma&Simatwa, 2013; Hallack& Poisson, 2007; Bennell&Akyempong, 2007; Anangisye& Barrett, 2006; Bennell&Mkyanuzi, 2005).

Nigeria, like many other countries, has been also experiencing several cases of teacher professional misconduct in its educational institutions. Mass media such as radio, television, newspapers, and social networks, as well as different studies, have unearthed several different forms of teacher misconduct in the country. The common forms of misconduct among Nigerian schools include absenteeism, sexual misconduct, corruption, private tutoring, unethical dressing, drunkenness, unethical language, and examination malpractices (Mfaume&Bilinga, 2017; Mabagala, 2016; Betweli, 2013; Anangisye, 2006; Boimanda, 2004). As noted elsewhere, teacher misconduct regardless of its form or magnitude has a detrimental impact on the attainment of educational goals. Teacher misconduct, particularly absenteeism and lateness, affects the teaching of the subject content, where teachers fail or partially accomplish the syllabus (Betweli, 2013).

### **Research Design**

This study adopts a descriptive survey method. The survey is considered appropriate for this study because it involves direct contact with the samples that are relevant to the investigation.



### Population, Sample, and Sampling Techniques

This study is restricted to the teachers' professional misconduct in secondary schools in Idemili South Local Government Area of Anambra State. The study covers all secondary schools in Idemili South Local Government Area, Anambra State (both private and public). Out of these schools, 20 secondary schools were selected for the study as the target population. The study focused on all the school principals of the selected schools only. This therefore gave a total number of 20 participants. To elicit information from the respondents, a rating scale for the level of cognitive development was used.

### Answering research questions

Research question one: What are the professional misconducts mostly practiced by secondary school teachers in Idemili South LGA, Anambra State?

**Table 1: The mean ratings on the professional misconducts mostly practiced by the secondary school teachers in Idemili South LGA, Anambra State**

Items	Mean	SD	Remark
1. Seducing and sexual abuse of students	1.14	0.655	Mostly Practiced
2. Downloading of extreme pornography on school laptops	1.05	0.218	Mostly Practiced
3. Teachers' regular absenteeism	1.29	0.717	Mostly Practiced
4. Extortion and corruption among the teachers	1.14	0.655	Mostly Practiced
5. Teachers' unethical dressing	1.29	0.463	Mostly Practiced
6. Involvement in examination malpractices	1.24	0.436	Mostly Practiced
7. Unethical and abusive language	1.19	0.402	Mostly Practiced
<b>Weighted Mean</b>	<b>1.19</b>		<b>Benchmark = 1.00</b>

Table 1 revealed that the professional misconducts mostly practiced by the secondary school teachers in Idemili South LGA, Anambra State have their mean ratings above the benchmark of 1.00. This implies that Seducing and sexual abuse of students, Teachers' regular absenteeism, Teachers' unethical dressing, Involvement in examination malpractices, Extortion and corruption among the teachers, and so on are the professional misconducts mostly practiced by the secondary school teachers in Idemili South LGA, Anambra State

Research question two: What are the causes of professional misconduct among secondary school teachers in Idemili South LGA, Anambra State?

**Table 2: The mean ratings on the causes of professional misconduct among secondary school teachers in Idemili South LGA, Anambra State**

Items	Mean	SD	Remark
1. The poor condition of service is one of the causes of professional misconduct	3.00	1.049	Agreed
2. Poor professional training leads to teachers' misconduct	2.67	0.966	Agreed
3. Government policy and societies negative influence on teachers	2.95	0.805	Agreed
4. Indiscipline among teachers lead to their misconducts	2.43	0.811	Agreed
5. Poor management of disciplinary cases of teachers by the school head	1.76	0.700	Agreed
6. Irregularity in the promotion and payment of teachers' salary	3.14	0.910	Agreed
7. Lack of professional cooperation among teachers	1.95	0.805	Agreed
<b>Weighted Mean</b>	<b>2.56</b>	<b>Benchmark = 2.00</b>	

Table 2 revealed that the causes of professional misconduct among secondary school teachers in Idemili South LGA, Anambra State have mean ratings above the benchmark of 1.00. This implies that poor condition of service, Poor management of disciplinary cases of teachers by the school head, Indiscipline among teachers leading to their misconduct, irregularity in the promotion and payment of teachers' salary etc. are some of the causes of professional misconduct among secondary school teachers.

Research question three: What is the level of teachers' professional misconduct in secondary schools in Idemili South LGA, Anambra State?

**Table 3: The mean ratings on the level of teachers' professional misconduct in secondary schools in Idemili South LGA, Anambra State**

Items	Mean	SD	Remark
1. Use of unethical and abusive language	1.95	1.117	Agreed
2. Teachers' regular absenteeism	1.95	1.117	Agreed
3. Teachers' unethical dressing	1.90	1.044	Agreed
4. Extortion and corruption among the teachers	1.67	0.966	Agreed
5. Teachers' involvement in examination malpractices	1.76	1.044	Agreed
6. Seducing and sexual abuse of students	1.38	0.865	Agreed
<b>Weighted Mean</b>	<b>1.77</b>	<b>Benchmark = 1.00</b>	

Table 3 showed that the causes of professional misconduct among secondary school teachers in Idemili South LGA, Anambra State have mean ratings above the benchmark of 1.00. Causes of professional misconduct among secondary school teachers include teachers' regular absenteeism, extortion, and corruption among the teachers, teachers' unethical dressing, and use of unethical and abusive language among others.



## Discussion of Findings

It was found from research question one that seduction and sexual abuse of students, teachers' regular absenteeism, teachers' unethical dressing, Involvement in examination malpractices, extortion and corruption among the teachers, and so on are the professional misconducts mostly practiced by the secondary school teachers in Idemili South LGA, Anambra State. This is in line with findings of Mfaume & Bilinga, 2017, that common forms of misconduct among Nigerian schools include absenteeism, sexual misconduct, corruption, private tutoring, unethical dressing, drunkenness, unethical language, and examination malpractices.

Findings from research question two showed that poor condition of service, poor management of disciplinary cases of teachers by the school head, indiscipline among teachers leading to their misconduct, irregularity in the promotion and payment of teachers' salary etc. are some of the causes of professional misconduct among secondary school teachers Idemili South LGA, Anambra State. The common forms of misconduct among Nigerian schools include absenteeism, sexual misconduct, corruption, private tutoring, unethical dressing, drunkenness, unethical language, examination malpractices. Teacher misconduct regardless of its form or magnitude has a detrimental impact on the attainment of educational goals. Teacher misconduct, particularly absenteeism and lateness, affects the teaching of the subject content, where teachers fail or partially accomplish the syllabus.

It was found from research question three that professional misconducts among secondary school teachers include teachers' regular absenteeism, extortion, and corruption among the teachers, teachers' unethical dressing, and use of unethical and abusive language among others showing the level of professional misconduct. Teacher professionalism is a consensus of the norms, which may apply to being and behaving like a professional within personal, organizational, and broader political conditions; socially constructed; subject to geographical and cultural differences in interpretation; and may change over time (Day, 2009; Helsby, 2015). To be professional, a teacher is required to commit to the students and their learning, have in-depth mastery of the subjects and how to teach them, be responsible to monitor student learning outcomes through various means of evaluation, can think systematically, and should be part of a learning community within the profession (Supriadi, 2018). Snoek (2010) also proposed 3 elements that contribute to the professionalism of teachers namely knowledge, skills, and attitudes. Attributes in knowledge consist of knowledge of the subject, knowledge of the teaching and learning process (including being up to date with relevant outcomes of educational research), knowledge of society, and knowledge of policy and organization in education. Attributes in skills consist of the ability to communicate and discuss educational issues with a wider audience, to account for the quality of work to the outside world, to conduct research within the practice of schools, to contribute to collaborative learning of professional communities, and to translate outcomes of educational research to innovations in the classroom/school. Sava (2002) stated that when students perceive their teachers as misbehaving, several negative outcomes can occur. Wanzer and Mc Croskey (1998) as cited in Sava (2012) found that students whose teachers were perceived as misbehaving reported a higher level of negative effect on the subject matter. Unfortunately, the study did not specify cases of teacher misconduct that affected students' learning. But Kuecken and Valfort (2012) reported that high absenteeism among teachers resulted in low achievement levels among learners.

## Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, it can be concluded that the professional misconduct of teachers includes seduction and sexual abuse of students, teachers' regular absenteeism, teachers' unethical dressing, Involvement in examination malpractices, extortion, and corruption among teachers. Also, professional misconduct does influence school effectiveness. Teachers' professional misconduct rather destroys the image and reputation of the school.

## Recommendations

The following recommendations were made based on the findings;

1. The school should set up a disciplinary committee and any teacher caught with any of the misconduct should be punished accordingly.
2. The school should look into the causes of the various misconducts such as poor management of disciplinary cases of teachers by the school head, indiscipline among teachers etc. and address it properly and tag a disciplinary action on each according to how serious it is.
3. The principal should be proactive enough to interrogate any teacher who regularly absences himself/herself from school for cogent reasons, teachers who extort and corrupt the students, and also teachers who dress unethically.
4. Teachers and students are to work rigidly according to the school timetable to have a good academic record/performance in both internal and external examinations to enhance the school's effectiveness.
5. Teachers should discard those misconducts that destroy the reputation of the school in order not to give the school a bad name.
6. Teachers who will not comply with the rules and regulations of the school should be asked to go or sacked.
7. Principals are to take full responsibility to ensure that the school's effectiveness is improved. There must be no favoritism. All teachers should be treated equally.

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Podcasting 51 (63.7%). While the few web-based learning tools accessible are text chat 55 (68.7%), instant messaging 49 (61.3%) and Google classroom 44 (55%). This thus implies that the accessibility of these web-based learning tools is low.

**Research Question Three:** How often do students use the web-based learning tools for their learning?

**Table 7: Distribution Showing the Frequency of Use of Web-Based Learning Tools for their Learning**

Web-Based Learning Tools	Frequently Utilized	Not Frequently Utilized	Not Utilized at all
Edublogs	28 (35%)	27 (33.7%)	25 (31.3%)
Wiki	31 (38.8%)	31 (38.8%)	18 (22.4%)
Podcasting	24 (30%)	30 (37.5%)	26 (32.5%)
Text chat	33 (41.3%)	30 (37.5%)	17 (21.3%)
Skype	16 (20%)	44 (55%)	20 (25%)
Edmodo	11 (13.8%)	34 (42.4%)	35 (43.8%)
Google Classroom	39 (48.8%)	22 (27.5%)	19 (23.8%)
Vodcasting	18 (22.5%)	35 (43.8%)	27 (33.8%)
Moodle	23 (28.8%)	26 (32.5%)	31 (38.8%)
Instant messaging	36 (45%)	18 (22.5%)	26 (32.5%)

Table 7 shows the frequency of use of web-based learning tools for use by students in Colleges of Education in Ilorin. The result indicates that web-based learning tools are frequently used by these students for their learning purpose. Some of the web-based learning tools frequently used for learning by students in Colleges of Education in Ilorin include: Google classroom 39 (48.8%), Instant messaging 36 (45%), text chat 33 (41.3%), Wiki 31 (38.8%) and Edublogs 28 (35%).

**Research Question Four:** What are the factors militating against students' effective use of the web-based learning tools?

**Table 8: Mean and Rank Order on the Factors Militating Against Students' Effective Use of the Web-Based Learning Tools**

Item No.	Items	Mean	Rank
8	High cost of purchasing ICT facilities	3.18	1 <sup>st</sup>
1	Irregular power supply	3.02	2 <sup>nd</sup>
10	Lack of adequate personnel to train students on the use of web-based learning tools in schools	3.00	3 <sup>rd</sup>
2	Inadequate computer systems	2.83	4 <sup>th</sup>
9	Lack of interest on the part of the students to utilize web-based tools for learning	2.82	5 <sup>th</sup>