

Teachers Competencies as Predictor of Students' Academic Achievement in Accounting in Public Secondary Schools in Anambra State

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Abstract: This study examined teachers' competencies as predictor of SS 2 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 (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' Competencies Questionnaire (TCQ). 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). 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 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. The study found that Teachers with deep subject mastery can simplify complex concepts, provide relevant examples, and address misconceptions, leading to improved student comprehension and performance. Additionally, classroom management was found to be a strong predictor of students' success in Accounting. A well-organized learning environment minimizes disruptions, enhances student engagement, and fosters discipline. While effective classroom management is crucial, some scholars argue that other factors, such as instructional quality and teacher-student relationships, also play essential roles in academic achievement. The study recommended that the Ministry of Education and school administrators should organize regular training programs, workshops, and professional development courses to improve teachers' mastery of Accounting concepts.

Keywords: Teachers, Competencies, Academic Achievement, Accounting and Employability.

I. Introduction: Education serves as a fundamental driver of both human and economic development by fostering personal growth, social progress, and national advancement. It equips individuals with knowledge, skills, and competencies that enhance their employability, productivity, and contribution to societal development. Its significance stems from its ability to equip individuals with knowledge, skills, and competencies that enhance their employability, productivity, and contribution to societal development. One key discipline where education plays a vital role is in improving human knowledge, particularly among students in specialized disciplines such as accounting.

Accounting is a discipline centered on the systematic recording, analyzing, and interpretation of financial transactions within an organization. It provides critical financial information necessary for decision-making, financial planning, and resource management. Scholars such as Weygandt, Igbekoyi, et. al., (2023) defined accounting as the process of identifying, measuring, and communicating financial information to facilitate informed judgments and decisions by users. Similarly, Okoye and Onyeneke (2024) described accounting as the language of business, emphasizing its role in conveying financial information in a standardized manner that facilitates economic transactions and business operations. These definitions highlight accounting's essential role in business transparency, accountability, and effective financial management, demonstrating the need for a structured educational approach in the field.

The significance of accounting education, particularly for accounting students, extends beyond theoretical knowledge. First, it provides foundational principles essential for understanding financial systems, preparing students for careers in accounting, finance, and business management. Second, accounting education enhances analytical and critical thinking skills, enabling students to evaluate financial statements, identify discrepancies, and make informed financial decisions. Third, it fosters ethical awareness by instilling principles of transparency, integrity, and accountability, which are crucial for maintaining professionalism in the financial sector. Additionally, accounting education offers practical skills in areas such as bookkeeping, auditing, and taxation, broadening students' career prospects and employability in both public and private sectors.

One of the most influential education stakeholders in secondary schools in shaping accounting knowledge is the teacher. Teachers play a pivotal role in students' academic achievements by designing and delivering instructional content, assessing student

performance, and providing constructive feedback to enhance learning outcomes (Oguejiofor & Iyoha. 2023). According to Darling-Hammond (2024), effective teachers employ instructional strategies that foster student engagement, motivation, and conceptual understanding. Their role extends beyond classroom instruction to include mentoring and the provision of academic support that strengthens students' grasp of accounting principles.

A crucial aspect of teachers that directly influences students' academic achievement in accounting in public secondary schools is teacher competency. Teacher competency encompasses a range of skills, knowledge, and attributes that enable educators to effectively deliver instruction and facilitate student learning. It includes subject matter expertise, pedagogical skills, classroom management abilities, and the capacity to employ innovative teaching methods that enhance student comprehension. Competency in accounting education involves subject mastery, effective pedagogical skills, and the ability to integrate practical financial applications into lessons. Oguejiofor and Nwogu (2014) stated that teachers with higher qualifications and continuous professional development contribute significantly to improved student performance in accounting. Some of the most important aspect of teachers' competencies include teachers' content knowledge and classroom management.

Teachers with robust content knowledge serve as role models, inspiring students to develop a deeper interest and engagement in their studies, ultimately contributing to improved academic outcomes across various subjects and levels of education in Nigeria. Akpan (2022) asserted that with content knowledge, teachers can clarify complex concepts and theories, making learning more accessible and understandable for students. They can tailor their teaching methods to meet diverse learning styles and abilities, ensuring that all students have opportunities to grasp and apply content. Suglo, *et al.*, (2023) suggested that to effectively utilize content knowledge for enhancing students' academic achievement, teachers should also incorporate classroom management. However, teachers often encounter challenges in content knowledge due to insufficient training, rapidly changing curricula, and limited access to professional development. These gaps can hinder their ability to deliver comprehensive lessons and foster critical thinking.

Classroom management directly impacts students' academic achievement by creating a structured and conducive learning environment. Effective classroom management minimizes disruptions, allowing more time for instruction and learning activities. Olaitan (2024) noted that well-managed classrooms lead to higher student engagement and better academic outcomes. Moreover, Khan, *et al.*, (2017) emphasized that clear expectations and consistent routines help students feel secure and focused, enhancing their ability to absorb and retain information. Osakwe (2014) also asserted that disciplined and orderly classrooms create a positive environment that promotes academic achievement by allowing students to concentrate better and engage actively in their learning. For these reasons, employing classroom management becomes essential for teachers as this will improve teachers' professional competencies (Ohamobi *et al.* 2024). However, classroom management poses significant challenges for teachers, including maintaining student engagement and addressing disruptive behaviors. High student-to-teacher ratios can overwhelm educators, making individualized attention difficult.

From the foregoing, there is urgent need for improvement in the teaching of accounting at the secondary school level because secondary school is a proper place for solid development for higher studies, acquisition of business skills and as well as sine qua non to education and economic development. Although there could be other intervening factors, the way a subject is taught generally can affect students' assimilation and retention. It is on this basis that this study was conceived to see whether teachers' quality and competencies could improve the academic achievement of students in accounting in public secondary schools. This is because the persistently poor performance of students in accounting at both secondary and post-secondary levels is a significant concern and a negative indicator for economic development. This ongoing issue undermines the goals of accounting in the senior secondary school curriculum, which aims to equip students with fundamental knowledge of accounting concepts and principles through carefully selected and organized content. Despite these commendable objectives, students' performance in accounting remains consistently low, preventing the achievement of these educational aims.

However, a number of works that were studied on the influence of competencies on students' academic achievement in public secondary schools have shown conflicting theoretical positions and results. This suggest 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 and competencies as predictors 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' competencies as a predictors of students' academic achievement in accounting in public secondary schools in Anambra State.

II. Statement of the Problem

The academic achievement of secondary school students in Accounting is significantly influenced by teachers' competencies, encompassing subject mastery, pedagogical skills, and instructional strategies. In Anambra State, concerns have been raised about students' poor performance in Accounting, which may be linked to inadequate teacher preparation, ineffective teaching methods, and limited professional development. WAEC and NECO results indicate a significant drop between 2021 and 2023, highlighting a growing challenge. Contributing factors may include teachers' competencies such as content knowledge and classroom management. Despite the critical role of competent teachers in enhancing students' understanding of Accounting concepts, research on this relationship remains insufficient. Therefore, this study examines how teachers' competencies predict students' academic achievement in Accounting, addressing gaps in teacher effectiveness and proposing strategies for improved teachers' competencies in Anambra State.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

What is the predictive value of teachers' content knowledge on students' academic achievement in Accounting in public secondary schools in Anambra State?

What is the predictive value of teachers' classroom management 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:

Teacher's content knowledge does not significantly predict students' academic achievement in accounting in public secondary schools in Anambra state.

Teachers' classroom management does not significantly predict students' academic achievement in Accounting in public secondary schools in Anambra State.

III. 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' Competencies Questionnaire (TCQ). The instrument contained 20 items spread across the clusters, A and B. Clusters 'A' elicited information on teachers' content knowledge with 10-items and Cluster 'B' elicited information on teachers' classroom management 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 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 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.

IV. Results

Research Question 1: What is the predictive value of teachers' content knowledge 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' Content Knowledge on Students' Academic Achievement in Accounting in Public Secondary Schools in Anambra State

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
	B	Std. Error	Beta(β)	t	Decision
Constant	.934	.102		9.182	Strong Positive Predictive Value
Content Knowledge	.751	.028	.777	27.017	

$R = .777$, $R \text{ Square} = .603$, Adjusted $R^2 = .602$, $F = 729.892$.

Table 1 shows the summary of the regression results of the predictive value of teachers' content knowledge on students' academic achievement in Accounting in public secondary schools in Anambra State. The results revealed that the $R = .777$, $R \text{ Square} = .603$, Adjusted $R^2 = .602$, $F = 729.892$. This result indicated a strong positive predictive value of teachers' content knowledge on students' academic achievement in Accounting in public secondary schools in Anambra State because teachers' content knowledge has 60.3% predictive value. This reveals that teachers' content knowledge 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' classroom management 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' Classroom Management 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	1.640	.094		17.362	Strong Positive Predictive Value
Classroom Management	.568	.026	.704	21.688	

R= .704, R Square = .495, Adjusted R²=.494, F = 470.350.

Table 2 shows the summary of the regression results of the predictive value of teachers' classroom management on students' academic achievement in Accounting in public secondary schools in Anambra State. The results revealed that the R= 0.704, R Square = 0.495, Adjusted R²= 0.494, F = 470.350. This result indicated a strong positive predictive value of teachers' classroom management on students' academic achievement in Accounting in public secondary schools in Anambra State because teachers' classroom management has 49.5% predictive value. This reveals that teachers' classroom management has a strong positive predictive value on students' academic achievement in Accounting in public secondary schools in Anambra State.

Test of Hypotheses

Hypothesis One

Teacher's content knowledge does not significantly predict students' academic achievement in accounting in public secondary schools in Anambra State

Table 1: Summary of the Regression Results of the Test of the Predictive Value of Teachers' Content Knowledge 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	.934	.102		9.182	0.00	Significant
Content Knowledge	.751	.028	.777	27.017		

R= .778, R Square = .605, Adjusted R²=.605, F = 918.111.

Table 1 shows the summary of the regression results of the predictive value of of teachers' content knowledge on students' academic achievement in Accounting in public secondary schools in Anambra State. The results revealed that the R= .777, R Square = .603, Adjusted R²=.602, F = 729.892. This result indicated that teachers' content knowledge has a significant predictive value on students' academic achievement in Accounting in public secondary schools in Anambra State because teachers' content knowledge has 60.3% 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, teacher's content knowledge significantly predicts students' academic achievement in accounting in public secondary schools in Anambra State.

Hypothesis Two

Teachers' classroom management does not significantly predict students' academic achievement in Accounting in public secondary schools in Anambra State

Table 2: Summary of the Regression Results of the Test of the Predictive Value of Teachers' Classroom Management 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	1.640	.094		17.362	0.00	Significant
Classroom Management	.568	.026	.704	21.688		

R= .803, R Square = .645, Adjusted R²=.644, F = 1088.196.

Table 2 shows the summary of the regression results of the predictive value of teachers' classroom management on students' academic achievement in Accounting in public secondary schools in Anambra State. The results revealed that the R= 0.704, R

Square = 0.495, Adjusted R^2 = 0.494, F = 470.350. This result indicated that teachers' classroom management has a significant predictive value on students' academic achievement in Accounting in public secondary schools in Anambra State because teachers' classroom management has 49.5% 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' classroom management 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:

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

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

Teachers' content knowledge 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' content knowledge 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 teacher's content knowledge significantly predicts students' academic achievement in accounting in public secondary schools in Anambra State. These findings suggested that a teacher's deep understanding of subject matter enhances students' learning outcomes. Teachers with strong content knowledge effectively explain complex Accounting concepts, provide clear examples, and address students' misconceptions. Their expertise allows them to use appropriate teaching methods and real-life applications, making lessons more engaging. Additionally, knowledgeable teachers can confidently answer students' questions and adapt explanations to different learning needs. This mastery fosters student confidence, improves comprehension, and ultimately leads to better academic performance in Accounting.

The findings of Nwogbo (2023) affirmed that teachers' mastery of the subject matter is foundational to effective teaching, as it ensures accurate and comprehensive delivery of concepts. Afolabi-Ajayi (2021) findings agreed that when teachers possess robust content knowledge, they can explain topics clearly, provide relevant examples, and address students' misconceptions effectively. This facilitates deeper understanding and improved academic performance among students. Ajuma and Tshelane (2024) findings revealed that teachers well-versed in Accounting, Mathematics or Science are better equipped to break down complex problems, making these subjects more accessible to learners.

Moreover, Wordu et. al., (2018) findings revealed that teachers with strong content knowledge often exude confidence in their teaching, which positively influences students' perception of the subject and their motivation to learn. Such teachers can adapt their instruction to suit diverse learners, employing differentiated teaching methods that cater to varying levels of ability within the classroom. Additionally, Maisiba and Azaliwa (2024) findings agreed that teachers' subject matter expertise enables them to design challenging yet attainable assessments, which promote critical thinking and reinforce students' academic growth.

Teachers' classroom management 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' classroom management 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 2 showed that teachers' classroom management significantly predicts students' academic achievement in Accounting in public secondary schools in Anambra State. These findings suggested that a well-organized learning environment enhances student performance. Effective classroom management ensures minimal disruptions, maintains discipline, and fosters a structured atmosphere conducive to learning. Teachers who establish clear rules, engage students actively, and use appropriate instructional strategies create a positive environment that promotes focus and comprehension. When distractions are minimized, students can better absorb Accounting concepts, participate in discussions, and complete tasks efficiently. Ultimately, strong classroom management enhances student motivation, engagement, and overall academic success in Accounting.

In agreement with these findings, Akinola and Oredein (2021) found that effective classroom management involves creating a structured, organized, and conducive learning environment that minimizes distractions and maximizes student engagement. Nwosu et. al., (2021) findings attested that teachers who exhibit strong classroom management skills establish clear rules, maintain discipline, and promote respectful interactions, which are critical for fostering an environment where academic success thrives. Bawalla (2021) findings revealed that classrooms with well-defined routines and expectations allow students to focus on learning tasks, leading to improved academic performance, particularly in subjects requiring sustained attention, such as Accountancy, Mathematics and Science.

Moreover, Ikpa and Obilor (2022) findings revealed that classroom management ensures that learning time is optimized, as disruptions are minimized. Research indicates that teachers who maintain control over their classrooms and use effective

strategies to handle misbehavior can devote more time to instruction, which positively impacts students' academic outcomes. Shulman (2016) findings added that effective classroom management also promotes an emotionally safe environment, where students feel valued and motivated to participate, which is essential for boosting academic performance. These align with Suglo, *et al.*, (2023) findings that students in well-managed classrooms often exhibit better concentration and engagement, as they are free from anxieties about safety or peer conflicts.

However, while these arguments are valid, there are criticisms regarding the overemphasis on classroom management as a determinant of students' academic success. Fakeye (2022) findings revealed that effective classroom management alone cannot guarantee academic achievement, as other factors such as instructional quality, teacher-student relationships, and curriculum content also play significant roles. For instance, even in a well-managed classroom, a lack of engaging teaching methods or relevant materials could hinder student learning outcomes.

V. Conclusion

The study concluded that teachers' content knowledge significantly predicts students' academic achievement in Accounting in public secondary schools in Anambra State. Teachers with deep subject mastery can simplify complex concepts, provide relevant examples, and address misconceptions, leading to improved student comprehension and performance. Additionally, classroom management was found to be a strong predictor of students' success in Accounting. A well-organized learning environment minimizes disruptions, enhances student engagement, and fosters discipline. While effective classroom management is crucial, some scholars argue that other factors, such as instructional quality and teacher-student relationships, also play essential roles in academic achievement.

Recommendations

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

The Ministry of Education and school administrators should organize regular training programs, workshops, and professional development courses to improve teachers' mastery of Accounting concepts. These programs should focus on equipping teachers with advanced knowledge, innovative teaching strategies, and real-world applications to enhance student comprehension and performance.

Schools should implement continuous professional development in effective classroom management techniques. Teachers should be trained on strategies for maintaining discipline, fostering student engagement, and creating a structured learning environment. Additionally, school authorities should provide necessary resources to support teachers in managing classrooms efficiently, ensuring an optimal learning atmosphere for students.

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