EXTENT OF TEACHERS' COMPLIANCE TO TEACHERS' REGISTRATION COUNCIL OF NIGERIA PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIP OBLIGATION STANDARDS IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN ANAMBRA STATE

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Abstract
This study on Teachers' compliance to professional membership obligations standards of Teachers' Registration Council of Nigeria in public secondary schools in Anambra State, adopted a descriptive survey research design. The population of the study centered at 5,549 respondents. The sample size for this study comprised 557 respondents made of 29 principals and 528 teachers drawn using proportionate random sampling technique. A researcher-developed 8-itemed questionnaire titled 'Teachers' Registration Council of Nigeria Professional Membership Obligation Standards Questionnaire (TRCN-PMOSQ)'' was used for data collection. The instrument was subjected to face validation by three experts, while Cronbach alpha was used to obtain a reliability coefficient value of 0.78. Using direct method approach, a total of 557 copies of questionnaire were distributed to the respondents. A total of 541 copies of questionnaire were properly filled and used which indicates 97 percent return rate. Mean and standard deviation were used for answering the research question and t-test statistics was used to test the null hypothesis. Result of the study shows that Teachers' compliance to professional membership obligation standards in public secondary schools in Anambra State is to a low extent. It was recommended that Officials of TRCN in conjunction with Government should periodically demand that teachers present evidence of payment of dues, teaching license and recertification as requirement for promotion in order to facilitate enforcement of TRCN professional membership obligations in the Country.

Keywords: Teachers' compliance, professional membership obligation standards, TRCN

Introduction

A teacher is a professional who utilize his or her skills and experiences to guide and impart knowledge to learners through instructional activities in classroom. According to Gupta (2022), a teacher as a person who has acquired teaching certificate or other equivalent certificate, issued by the education authority to engage in the practice of teaching. A teacher is a person who is trained and certified to impart skills, knowledge and shape the attitude of learners in educational institution. A teacher is the prime implementer of curriculum in the school and as such, performance of students depends so much on him/her (Asiegbu & Ezeugbor, 2014). A good teacher possesses attributes such as integrity, diligence, discipline, punctuality, empathy, respect and patience among others. The increasing awareness of the importance of teachers in educational institutions has awakened a conscious effort at professionalization of teaching. Nwosu (2017) opined that there is continuous demand for the establishment of a professional body or association to regulate entrance into the teaching profession and to control ethical conducts of members and eliminate quacks. The fact that teachers require high degree of professionalism contributed to the establishment of Teachers' Registration Council of Nigeria (TRCN) by Act 31 of 1993.

TRCN is the association concerned with maintaining specific minimum ethical standards in teaching profession. According to Adetoro (2021), Teachers Registration Council of Nigeria (TRCN) is a body that registers, licenses and regulates the conduct of teachers in educational institution. TRCN is saddled with the responsibility of ensuring that every teacher acquires the prescribed teaching qualification(s) and registers as a member of the teaching profession. Operationally, TRCN is the

body that registers, licenses, monitors and ensures that teachers act in accordance with ethical standards, values and norms in educational institution. TRCN was established to uphold standard instructional practices that create a high level of confidence and trust in the teaching profession. Nwosu (2017) noted that since its establishment, the TRCN has been working tirelessly to uphold the teaching profession in Nigeria by launching campaigns, initiating awareness and professional development programmes for teachers. The author stressed that to avoid excuses and claim of ignorance by teachers, TRCN distributed their pamphlets, handbills, statistical digest, teachers' code of conduct and handbook on teaching professionalism standards.

Professionalism standards are codes of ethics or conduct put in place to make sure that the prestige of the teaching profession is maintained; and that teachers exercise their professional duties in accordance with the agreed principles (Akinwarere, 2021). Professionalism standards are developed based on the principles of respect, character, trust, honesty, competence and moral virtues. Professionalism standards are the basis for determining whether behaviour of staff is right or wrong. Zaure (2017) defined professionalism standards as reliable reference point for teaching practice in educational institutions. Operationally, professionalism standards are the act of ensuring that teachers acquire certain qualifications, skills and also strictly comply with stipulated norms in discharging their duties.

Compliance has been defined by several scholars in varying ways. According to McKay and Verhagen (2015), compliance is the act of an individual conforming to professional recommendations or rules. The authors added that this requires the measurement of behaviour relative to a fixed standard. This definition points to the fact that compliance entails following instruction or standard. In this study, Compliance involves doing what is required or expected. It is the act of behaving in accordance to stipulated guidelines or standards. compliance is the act of conformity to the professionalism standards stipulated by TRCN. There are a lot of criteria developed by TRCN (2012) for determining the teachers' compliance to teaching professional standards. This study will focus only on membership obligations. The study therefore investigated the membership obligation of professionalism standards developed by TRCN (2012) due to the existing problems and misconduct of teachers.

Professional membership obligations are the responsibilities of teachers towards promoting teaching profession. Every profession has obligations which members discharge to their regulating bodies. One of the teachers' professional obligations standards is to register with TRCN. Teachers who register with TRCN are subjected to recertification in every five years (TRCN, 2012). Teachers are expected to renew their teaching license in very three years and also pay their dues to TRCN. Osiesi and Odinko (2022) pointed out that TRCN teaching license is legally backed by law as a teaching credential that every teacher willing to practice in the Nigerian education sector must possess. Continuing, the authors stressed that obtaining teaching license as approved by the TRCN is mandatory for all teachers as it open variety of opportunities for their recruitment and promotion in school. Teachers are required to pay their annual TRCN subscription and possess up-to-date teaching license (TRCN, 2012). New education graduates are expected to undertake internship programme organized by TRCN. TRCN (2012) noted that the new teachers under internship are expected to co-operate with TRCN and other stakeholders who serve as mentors.

The issue of according teaching a profession status has continued to take the frontline of academic discourse. The establishment of the TRCN remains one of the bold steps towards strengthening the professionalization of teaching. However, the compliance to TRCN professionalism standards with respect to membership obligation tend to be in serious doubt as teachers fails to register as members of the teaching profession which leads them to engage in unethical acts that compromise integrity of the teaching profession in public secondary schools in Anambra State. It is a well-known fact that there are scores of teachers who are not duly registered with TRCN and also those without teaching license in secondary schools in Anambra State. This will certainly affect their conduct and services towards promoting effective teaching and learning which is the ultimate goal of the teaching profession.

There are unpleasant situations that may suggest that TRCN professionalism standards are inadequately adhered to in public secondary schools in Anambra State. Ezeaku and Obikeze (2021) noted that some aspects of processional code of conduct, rules and regulations are not religiously followed by the teachers in public secondary schools in Anambra State. They also observed that most of the teachers are not registered/licensed members of TRCN. Similarly, Ikedimma and Okorji (2023) observed a general trend of misconduct and low commitment of teachers to their job as evidenced from their minimal devotion and dedication to duties, absenteeism, low turnover in the workplace, lateness to class and withdrawal from some vital school functions in secondary schools in Anambra State.

Some secondary school students struggle to complete their education circle probably due to insufficient professional knowledge and skills of teachers toward the delivery of quality instructions in the classroom. One may wonder if TRCN professionalism standard which is expected to guide teachers in meeting the intellectual, ethical, physical, social, and academic needs of students is adequately adhered to. Thus, the level of compliance to the standards stipulated by TRCN has remained uncertain and this has continued to strengthen the debate on whether teaching is a profession or not. This is the concern of this study that prompted the investigation to teachers' compliance to membership obligation of teachers' registration council of Nigeria professionalism standards in public secondary schools in Anambra State.

Purpose of the Study

This study focused on Teachers' compliance to professional membership obligations standards of Teachers' Registration Council of Nigeria in public secondary schools in Anambra State.

Significance of the Study

The findings of this study would be useful to many individuals and groups. These include teachers, students, school administrators, ministry of education and future researchers. This study would serve as the basis for developing better policies such as yearly assessment of teachers as well as enlisting the benefits of becoming a registered and licensed teacher.

Research Questions

What is the extent of teachers' compliance to professional membership obligations standards of TRCN in public secondary schools in Anambra State?

Research Hypothesis

There is no significant difference in the mean scores of principals and teachers on the extent to which teachers comply to professional membership obligations standards of Teachers' Registration Council of Nigeria in public secondary schools in Anambra State.

METHOD

This study which was carried out in Anambra State, Nigeria, adopted a descriptive survey research design. The population of the study comprised 5,549 respondents made up of 263 principals and 5,286 teachers in the 263 public secondary schools in Anambra State. The sample size for this study comprised 557 respondents made of 29 principals and 528 teachers drawn using proportionate random sampling technique. A researcher-developed 8-itemed questionnaire titled ''Teachers' Registration Council of Nigeria Professional Membership Obligation Standards Questionnaire (TRCN-PMOSQ)'' was used for data collection. It was structured on five points rating scale of Very High Extent (VHE), High Extent (HE), Moderate Extent (ME), Low Extent (LE) and Very Low Extent (VLE) weighted 5, 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively. The instrument was subjected to face validation by three experts, while Cronbach alpha was used to obtain a reliability coefficient value of 0.78. Direct method of data administration was utilized by the researchers to distribute a total of 557 copies of questionnaire to the respondents. A total of 541 copies of questionnaire were properly filled and successfully retrieved and this indicates 97 percent return rate. Mean and standard deviation were used for answering the research question and t-test statistics was used to test the null hypothesis. The decision rules on the research question were based on mean limits that fall between: 4.00-3.50, 3.49-300, 2.99-250, 2.49-

1.50, and 1.49-below which were taken to indicate VHE, HE, ME, LE and VLE respectively. In testing the null hypothesis, where p-value is equal to or greater than 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis was accepted, but where p-value is less than 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis was rejected.

Results

Research Question: What is the extent of teachers' compliance to professional membership obligations standards of Teachers' Registration Council of Nigeria in public secondary schools in Anambra State?

Table 1: Mean Ratings and Standard Deviation Scores of Principals and Teachers on Teachers' Compliance to Professional Membership Obligations Standards of Teachers' Registration Council of Nigeria

S/N	ITEMS	Principals (n =29)			Teachers (n =512)			General (n=541)		
		Mean	SD	Decision	Mean	SD	Decision	Mean	SD	Decision
1	Get inducted into TRCN at the point of graduation	3.01	1.04	High Extent	3.08	1.07	High Extent	3.12	1.10	High Extent
2	Recertified every five years of practices	2.34	1.11	Low Extent	2.30	1.13	Low Extent	2.38	1.04	Low Extent
3	Pay annual dues to TRCN	2.36	1.04	Low Extent	2.40	.94	Low Extent	2.36	1.01	Low Extent
4	Display valid teaching license issued by TRCN that is renewable every three years	2.21	1.15	Low Extent	2.18	1.06	Low Extent	2.20	1.00	Low Extent
5	Embark on two years of internship programme supervised by TRCN	2.31	1.19	Low Extent	2.35	1.10	Low Extent	2.32	1.12	Low Extent
6	Embark on annual emulation of abilities using reports of PSNTC	2.24	1.00	Low Extent	2.29	1.04	Low Extent	2.33	1.09	Low Extent
7	Strive to meet the minimum number of credits stipulated by TRCN for renewal of teaching license	2.43	1.07	Low Extent	2.40	1.10	Low Extent	2.41	1.11	Low Extent
8	Show evidence of having attended TRCN self-development activities in the last one year	2.45	1.10	Low Extent	2.48	1.09	Low Extent	2.46	1.01	Low Extent
	Cluster Mean	**2.42**	**1.09**	**Low Extent**	**2.44**	**1.07**	**Low Extent**	**2.45**	**1.06**	**Low Extent**

As shown in Table 1, principals, teachers and their combined mean scores for all items with exception of item 1 fell within the range of 2.49-1.50 and this indicated low extent of teachers' compliance to professional membership obligations standards of teachers' registration council for the items. The pooled standard deviation scores for principals and teachers which stand at 1.09 and 1.07 respectively indicate convergence of their responses implying that their responses are homogenous. Generally, the cluster mean of 2.42 for principals and 2.44 for teachers falls within the range 2.49-1.50 indicating that teachers' compliance to professional membership obligations standards of Teachers' Registration Council of Nigeria in public secondary schools in Anambra State is to a low extent.

Hypothesis: There is no significant difference in the mean scores of principals and teachers on the extent to which teachers comply to professional membership obligation standards of Teachers' Registration Council of Nigeria in public secondary schools in Anambra State.

Table 2: The t-test summary of no Significant Difference between the Mean Scores of Principals and Teachers on the Extent Teachers Comply to Professional Membership Obligations Standards of Teachers' Registration Council of Nigeria

Respondents	N	$\bar{x}$	SD	p-value	Df	∞	Remark
Principals	29	2.42	1.09	0.09	539	0.05	Not Significant
Teachers	512	2.44	1.07				

Data presented on Table 2 revealed that the p-value of 0.09 is greater than 0.05 level of significance. Thus, the null hypothesis is accepted. Therefore, there is no significant difference in the mean scores of principals and teachers on the extent to which teachers' comply to professional membership obligations standards of Teachers' Registration Council of Nigeria in public secondary schools in Anambra State.

Summary of Major findings

The findings of the study are summarized as follows:

1. Teachers' compliance to professional membership obligation standards of Teachers' Registration Council of Nigeria in public secondary schools in Anambra State is to a low extent.
2. There is no significant difference in the mean scores of principals and teachers on the extent to which teachers' comply to professional membership obligations standards of Teachers' Registration Council of Nigeria in public secondary schools in Anambra State.

Discussion

Compliance to TRCN Professional Membership Obligations Standards

It was found out that teachers' compliance to professional membership obligations standards of teachers' registration council of Nigeria in public secondary schools in Anambra State is to a low extent. This is in disagreement with the finding of Asep (2019) which showed that teachers to high extent carry out their professional obligations. The disagreement with the finding could be explained by difference in time span and geographical locations of the two studies. The teachers to a low extent comply to professional membership obligations standards of Teachers' Registration Council of Nigeria with regard to recertifying every five years of practices, paying annual dues to TRCN, display valid teaching license issued by TRCN that is renewable every three years, embarking on annual emulation of abilities using reports of PSNTC, striving to meet the minimum number of credits stipulated by TRCN for renewal of teaching license and showing evidence of having attended TRCN self-development activities in the last one year.

Furthermore, the result of the study shows that there was no significant difference in the mean scores of principals and teachers on the extent to which teachers comply to professional membership obligation standards of Teachers' Registration Council of Nigeria in public secondary schools in Anambra State. This agreed with the finding of Sani (2018) which indicated that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of principals and teachers on teachers' legal obligations. The two studies were conducted in the same country where membership obligations of teachers are similar and this may account for the agreement with the finding. The cost associated with teachers' compliance to TRCN membership obligations in terms of paying dues, acquiring and renewing their teaching license in the light of meagre salaries might have account for this finding.

Conclusion

Based on the findings, it was concluded that teachers partially comply to Teachers' Registration Council of Nigeria professionalism standards with respect to membership obligation in public secondary schools in Anambra State. Although, teachers possessed the requisite professional skills and knowledge to effectively deliver instruction to students in public secondary schools in Anambra State, however, they fail to fulfill their professional membership requirements. The partial compliance to teachers' registration council of Nigeria professionalism standards has fairly restored the integrity and sanity of the teaching profession. This calls for prompt action by TRCN to enforce the professional membership obligation on teachers iaii over the nation.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, it was recommended among others that

1. Officials of TRCN in conjunction with Government should periodically demand that teachers present evidence of payment of dues, teaching license and recertification as requirement for promotion in order to facilitate enforcement of TRCN professional membership obligations.

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