



EDUCATIONAL ETHICS ON JOB PERFORMANCE OF TEACHERS FOR SUSTAINABLE NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract

The study examined educational ethics on job performance of teachers for sustainable national development. The study was guided by two objectives, two research questions and two hypotheses. The study adopted the prescriptive survey design. The population of this study comprises of 56 (principals) and 2634 (teachers) giving the total population of 2690 selected from 56 public senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Local Government Area in Rivers State. The sample size of this study is 397 drawn from 56 public senior secondary schools in Rivers State, using simple random technique and Taro Yamene. The instrument used for this study was a questionnaire. The test-re-test method was used to determine the reliability of the instrument. The data gathered were analyzed using mean and standard deviation for the research questions while the null hypotheses were tested using T-test statistical tool at 0.05 level of significance. Based on the findings, the study revealed that to a large extent staff honesty and staff confidentiality enhance job performance of staff. However, the researcher recommends that, government through ministry of education should organize awareness and orientation campaign for the teachers on the needs and importance of honesty in the educational sector, teachers should always be enlightened on their responsibilities as code of ethics and through seminars and teachers meetings, the teachers should be educated on the importance of confidentiality as educational ethics.

Key Words: educational ethics, sustainable, national, development, job performance.

Introduction

Ethics are interpreted as the discipline of dealing with good and bad with commitment and moral duty (Fisher, 2009). Ethics plays very important role in every field of study as well as education. Ethics is classified as unique values such as integrity, discipline, honesty amid others and applies them in daily routines. Udoka and Anyansi-Archibong (2013) observe that ethics impacts the behaviour and permit an individual to make the right option. The significance of ethics cannot be disregarded in any level of life. Comstock (2008), considering the prospect in ethics in education, ethics in education is important because they assist to run the system smoothly. The ethics sets the standards of what is acceptable and what is not, therefore, protecting the interest of both teachers and students in the school. Ethics in education has been offered a lot of significance over the years and institutions are creating courses that assist staff to understand these ethics to enhance their job performance. Ethics in education are accessible for both the educational officer, teachers and the students. In school, it is the duty of teachers to make the students aware of the ethics while the educational officer makes the teachers aware and observe the ethics.

Fisher (2009) asserts that ethics in education is appraised as the segment of the human right to education. The motive of ethics in education is not directly learning ethics for its purpose but to deploy this body of knowledge and to grow intellectual dimensions that will authorize people to recognize ethical dimensions of issues. The second purpose of ethics in education is to develop critical thinking skills, particularly the ability to reflect and the theoretical and practical effect of personal and collective human actions. Ethics has also become essential in education, as education is a fundamental method of human life. Ethics is the most essential and functioning branch of philosophy in today's world. Ethics is

an important part of the decision-making but teachers and students are not taught to think ethically. Ethics in education like; honesty, confidentiality, conflict of interest, responsibility, neatness in dressing, professional competence, etc. are board term for learning experience deliberate to help students and teachers grow ethically, whether in terms of expanded ethical awareness and understanding or greater motivation to act ethically in the whole world to enhance efficiency. It is against this background that the researcher seek to investigate the prospects and challenges of educational ethics on job performance of teachers in secondary schools in Rivers State.

Sustainable Development

Sustainable development is development concerned with meeting up the needs of the present generation without forsaking the needs of generations to come. This encompasses social, environmental, economic sustainability in different roles. University education is key in educating generations after generations in better understanding sustainability and upholding an upstanding society. Lampa, (2013) consider sustainable development to be a continuous search for improving our daily lives, while minimizing the negative impact brought about by humans on the environment. Sustainable development has been described as development that meets the needs of the present generation without compromising the needs of future generations to come (Ofor-Douglas, 2023). Strange and Bayley (2008) as cited in Okonta&Nwanokor (2021) posits that sustainable development means development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. UNESCO (2019) stipulates that by 2030, all learners should acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development.

It is possible with evolving times that teachers and learners alike can uphold sustainable development. Lampa, Greculescu&Todorescu (2013) noted that education for sustainable development is a broad movement concerned with identifying and advancing the kind of education, teaching and learning policy and practice to ensure social, economic and ecological viability and welfare, now and into the long-term future. Ganira&Odundo (2018) argued that overriding theme of education for sustainable development is integration of values inherent in sustainable development into all aspects of curricula to encourage change in behavior that allows a just society for all.

Daly (2013) mentioned that sound principles should provide the basis for the first step toward operationally. The main principle is to limit the human scales to a level which is commensurate with the carrying capacity of the environment, for once the human activity exceeds the carrying capacity, and there will be a deviation from the path of sustainable development. Armstrong (2011) contends that skills associated with education for sustainable development are expansive and include collaboration and cooperation, conflict resolution, creativity, imagination, future mindedness, knowledge transfer, meaningful communication and civic engagement

Concept of Code of Ethics for Teachers

Each teacher, upon entering the teaching profession, assumes a number of obligations, one of which is to adhere to a set of principles which defines professional conduct. These principles are reflected in the following code of ethics, which sets forth to the education profession and the public it serves standards of professional conduct and procedures for implementation. This code shall apply to all persons licensed according to rules established by the Board of Teaching. The standards of professional conduct are as follows:

1. A teacher shall provide professional education services in a nondiscriminatory manner.
2. A teacher shall make reasonable effort to protect the student from conditions harmful to health and safety.
3. In accordance with state and federal laws, a teacher shall disclose confidential information about individuals only when a compelling professional purpose is served or when required by law.
4. A teacher shall take reasonable disciplinary action in exercising the authority to provide an atmosphere conducive to learning.



5. A teacher shall not use professional relationships with students, parents, and colleagues to private advantage.
6. A teacher shall delegate authority for teaching responsibilities only to licensed personnel.
7. A teacher shall not deliberately suppress or distort subject matter.

Professional Responsibility of a Teacher

The professional educator demonstrates responsibility to oneself as an ethical professional by:

1. Acknowledging that lack of awareness, knowledge, or understanding of the Code is not, in itself, a defense to a charge of unethical conduct;
2. Knowing and upholding the procedures, policies, laws and regulations relevant to professional practice regardless of personal views;
3. Holding oneself responsible for ethical conduct;
4. Monitoring and maintaining sound mental, physical, and emotional health necessary to perform duties and services of any professional assignment; and taking appropriate measures when personal or health-related issues may interfere with work-related duties;
5. Refraining from professional or personal activity that may lead to reducing one's effectiveness within the school community;
6. Avoiding the use of one's position for personal gain and avoiding the appearance of impropriety;
7. Taking responsibility and credit only for work actually performed or produced, and acknowledging the work and contributions made by others.
8. The professional educator fulfills the obligation to address and attempt to resolve ethical issues by:
9. Confronting and taking reasonable steps to resolve conflicts between the Code and the implicit or explicit demands of a person or organization;

The professional educator promotes and advances the profession within and beyond the school community by:

1. Influencing and supporting decisions and actions that positively impact teaching and learning, educational leadership and student services;
2. Engaging in respectful discourse regarding issues that impact the profession;
3. Enhancing one's professional effectiveness by staying current with ethical principles and decisions from relevant sources including professional organizations;
4. Actively participating in educational and professional organizations and associations; and
5. Advocating for adequate resources and facilities to ensure equitable opportunities for all students.

Responsibility for Professional Competence

The professional educator is committed to the highest levels of professional and ethical practice, including demonstration of the knowledge, skills and dispositions required for professional competence. The professional educator demonstrates commitment to high standards of practice through:

1. Incorporating into one's practice state and national standards, including those specific to one's discipline;
2. Using the Model Code of Educator Ethics and other ethics codes unique to one's discipline to guide and frame educational decision-making;
3. Advocating for equitable educational opportunities for all students;
4. Accepting the responsibilities, performing duties and providing services corresponding to the area of certification, licensure, and training of one's position;
5. Reflecting upon and assessing one's professional skills, content knowledge, and competency on an ongoing basis;
6. Committing to ongoing professional learning.



7. The professional demonstrates responsible use of data, materials, research and assessment by:
8. Appropriately recognizing others' work by citing data or materials from published, unpublished, or electronic sources when disseminating information;
9. Using developmentally appropriate assessments for the purposes for which they are intended and for which they have been validated to guide educational decisions;

The professional educator acts in the best interest of all students by:

1. Increasing students' access to the curriculum, activities, and resources in order to provide a quality and equitable educational experience.
2. Working to engage the school community to close achievement, opportunity, and attainment gaps; and
3. Protecting students from any practice that harms or has the potential to harm students.

Responsibility to Students

The professional educator has a primary obligation to treat students with dignity and respect. The professional educator promotes the health, safety and wellbeing of students by establishing and maintaining appropriate verbal, physical, emotional and social boundaries. The professional educator respects the rights and dignity of students by:

1. Respecting students by taking into account their age, gender, culture, setting and socioeconomic context;
2. Interacting with students with transparency and in appropriate settings;
3. Communicating with students in a clear, respectful, and culturally sensitive manner;
4. Taking into account how appearance and dress can affect one's interactions and relationships with students;
5. Considering the implication of accepting gifts from or giving gifts to students;

The professional educator demonstrates an ethic of care through:

1. Seeking to understand students' educational, academic, personal and social needs as well as students' values, beliefs, and cultural background;
2. Respecting the dignity, worth, and uniqueness of each individual student including, but not limited to, actual and perceived gender, gender expression, gender identity, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race, ethnicity, socio-economic status, and culture; and
3. Establishing and maintaining an environment that promotes the emotional, intellectual, physical, and sexual safety of all students.

The professional educator maintains student trust and confidentiality when interacting with students in a developmentally appropriate manner and within appropriate limits by:

1. Respecting the privacy of students and the need to hold in confidence certain forms of student communication, documents, or information obtained in the course of professional practice;
2. Upholding parents'/guardians' legal rights, as well as any legal requirements to reveal information related to legitimate concerns for the well-being of a student; and
3. Protecting the confidentiality of student records and releasing personal data in accordance with prescribed state and federal laws and local policies.

The professional educator promotes effective and appropriate relationships with colleagues by:

1. Respecting colleagues as fellow professionals and maintaining civility when differences arise;
2. Resolving conflicts, whenever possible, privately and respectfully and in accordance with district policy;



3. Keeping student safety, education, and health paramount by maintaining and sharing educational records appropriately and objectively in accordance with local policies and state and federal laws;
4. Collaborating with colleagues in a manner that supports academic achievement and related goals that promote the best interests of students;
5. Enhancing the professional growth and development of new educators by supporting effective field experiences, mentoring or induction activities across the career continuum;

The professional educator promotes effective and appropriate relationships with the community and other stakeholders by:

1. Advocating for policies and laws that the educator supports as promoting the education and wellbeing of students and families;
2. Collaborating with community agencies, organizations, and individuals in order to advance students' best interests without regard to personal reward or remuneration; and
3. Maintaining the highest professional standards of accuracy, honesty, and appropriate disclosure of information when representing the school or district within the community and in public communications.

The professional educator maintains confidentiality in the use of technology by:

1. Taking appropriate and reasonable measures to maintain confidentiality of student information and educational records stored or transmitted through the use of electronic or computer technology;
2. Understanding the intent of Federal Educational Rights to Privacy Act (FERPA) and how it applies to sharing electronic student records; and
3. Ensuring that the rights of third parties, including the right of privacy, are not violated via the use of technologies.

Types of Ethics and Job Performance of teachers

Ethics is an Abstraction about Moral Values and Rules. There are three Principles of Ethics in Education:

1) Honesty

Honesty is a very important trait to have in Education. Honesty means being loyal, truthful, trustworthy, sincere, and fair. It is admirable in several cultures and religions. In-School, good student- teacher bond come from mutual trust and respect. To be successful, we must have the morality that complements our education knowledge. Amid all the attributed, honesty is one of the vital assets that are essential for all. Honesty does not come naturally but it is an incarnated method of adopting it through a broad overview. "Honesty is considered the best policy." So, the education system should make sure to comprise some important practices and routine in the school system.

2) Confidentiality

Confidentiality is one of the other ethics that is essential in Education. Confidentiality refers to your commitment not to disclose or transmit information to the unauthorized people. It extends to information about either people or organizations. When faced with challenges or crises, students seek help from teachers or students affairs professionals. Students frequently share personal information in-depth with the expectation that Confidentiality will be maintained. But there may be a risk to share the information with others.

3) Conflict of Interest

Conflict of Interest ethic in Education is a condition in which teacher's responsibility to a student is negotiated by engaging priorities. Conflicts of Interest can display in a variety of contexts and for several reasons. The conflict of Interest emerges when the best Interest of one person is not in the best

interest of another individual or organization to which that person incurs loyalty. Conflicts of Interest can extent from mistakenly permitting another priority to affect one's judgment, to deliberately infract school policies for personal benefit.

Challenges of Ethics

To educate the mind without the morals is to educate a menace to the society"-President Theodore Roosevelt. Ethics and ethical behavior are defined as application of moral values and professional codes of conduct by individuals and organizations. Who determines what is ethical and what is not is an ongoing question? How do Individuals acquire morals and also how can one measure or assess morality? As President Roosevelt mentioned in the opening quote, moral education is critical for the health and development of the society and thus the need to continue the discussions on ethics education and increase the effort to find a common ground to the diverse interpretations and of the ethics conception and its implications. Current challenges in responsible professional practices tend to increase with the growing number of personnel who joined the profession with limited qualification and little or no ethics training. This situation makes ethics training more complex as it introduces a cross-cultural issue. However, there is limited funding to train and educate these professional (teachers). It is difficult to determine the critical point when ethics education and training materials becomes appropriate and effective. There is an increasing trend in cheating among secondary school students and although many school systems offer curriculum in character education while colleges and universities teach courses in ethics at all disciplines, studies indicate that these programs, including the current Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR) training and education, may be at best, inadequate and ineffective (Fisher, 2009; Comstock 2008). The National Science foundation's (NSF) ethical concerns with a focus on responsible professional services' compliance with rules and regulations, peer review rules, mentor/mentee responsibilities, human subject and animal welfare regulations, collaborative research practices, publication/authorship practices, resource management and many more has failed to impact research ethical conduct. In this era of Nano science, nontechnology, telecommunication, data transmission/sharing/acquisition/management and ownership, the complexity of ethical concerns, at both the micro and macro levels have increased the need for a more innovative training materials and procedures (Udoka&Anyansi-Archibong, 2013; 2010). Ethical teachers need to reflect on commonly accepted practices and make individual decisions about responsible teaching behaviors, such as honoring individual differences.

Statement of the Problem

Ethics is concerned with the study of morals that deals with the distinction between right and wrong based on the tradition, culture, religion, profession and so on (Oke, 2009). The role of ethics in education is inestimable and can never be overemphasized. The educational system contain teachers that are controlled with codes of ethics. Each teacher upon entering the teaching profession, assumes a number of obligations, one of which is to adhere to a set of principles which defines professional conducts. Educators or teachers are now neglecting the ethics of education like honesty, confidentiality, conflict of interest, responsibility and neatness in dressing. These problems have necessitated the researcher to investigate the prospects and challenges of educational ethics on teacher's job performance in secondary schools in Rivers State.

Purpose of the Study

The following objectives guided this study.

1. Find out the extent to which teacher's honesty enhances job performance of teachers in Secondary Schools in Rivers State.
2. Investigate the extent to which teacher's confidentiality enhances job performance of teachers in Secondary Schools in Rivers State.

Research Questions

The researcher formulated the following research questions that guided the study.

1. To what extent does teacher's honesty enhances job performance of teachers in Secondary Schools in Rivers State.
2. To what extent does teacher's confidentiality enhances job performance of teachers in Secondary Schools in Rivers State.

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were developed to guide the study.

1. There is no significance difference in the mean rating of principals and teachers responses between teacher's honesty and job performance of teachers in Secondary Schools in Rivers State.
2. There is no significance difference in the mean rating of principals and teachers responses between teacher's confidentiality and job performance of teachers in Secondary Schools in Rivers State.

Methods and materials

The study adopted the descriptive survey design. The population of this study comprises of 56 (principals) and 2634 (teachers) giving the total population of 2690 selected from 56 public senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Local Government Area in Rivers State. The sample size of this study comprises 397 drawn from 56 public senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Local Government Area in Rivers State. Simple random technique was used and Taro Yamene. A four point modified rating scale was used. To ensure the validity of the instrument, one expert in the Department of Educational Management and two experts in Measurement and Evaluation were consulted for proper scrutiny. The test-re-test method was used to determine the reliability of the instrument. Mean scores were used to analyze the research questions. The criterion decision rule is that any mean score that was from 2.50 and above were accepted, while the mean score that were less than 2.50 was rejected. The null hypotheses were tested using z-test statistical tool at 0.05 level of significance.

Results

Research Question I: To what extent does teacher's honesty enhances job performance of teachers in Secondary Schools in Rivers State.

Table 1: Mean and Standard deviation analysis on the extent teacher's honesty enhances job performance of teachers in Secondary Schools in Rivers State.

S/ N	Questionnaire Items	Principals				Teachers			
			N	SD	Remarks		N	SD	Remarks
			$\bar{X}$				$\bar{X}$		
1.	Good teacher relationship is partially bridged in secondary schools.	3.35	49	0.72	Agreed	3.28	348	0.72	Agreed
2.	Truthful, trustworthy and sincere are vital assets that are essential for all the teachers.	3.20	49	0.84	Agreed	3.27	348	0.67	Agreed

3.	Honesty in education brings best and good compliments for the teachers and the society at large.	3.06	49	0.71	Agreed	3.38	348	0.67	Agreed
	Grand Mean	3.20		0.75		3.31		0.68	

Source: Field Survey, 2025.

The analysis on table 1 above revealed that the respondents accepted the view that good teacher relationship is partially bridge in secondary schools. It was also observed from the analysis that truthful, trustworthy and sincere are vital assets that are essential for all the teachers. The analysis still showed that the respondents accepted the fact that honesty in education brings good and best compliments for the teachers and the society at large.

Research Question 2: To what extent does teacher's confidentiality enhances job performance of teachers in Secondary Schools in Rivers State. .

Table 2: Mean and Standard deviation analysis on the extent teacher's confidentiality enhances job performance of teachers in Secondary Schools in Rivers State.

S/N	Questionnaire Items	Principals			Remarks	Teachers			Remarks
		$\bar{X}$	N	SD		$\bar{X}$	N	SD	
4.	Some teachers and school counsellors disclose or transmit personal information of teachers to unauthorized people	3.39	49	0.81	Agreed	3.25	348	0.97	Agreed
5.	In times of challenges or crises, teachers or educators are not permitted to reveal their issues to the third party.	3.22	49	0.84	Agreed	3.20	348	0.97	Agreed
6.	Teachers frequently share their personal information with the expectation that confidentiality will be maintained.	3.12	49	0.87	Agreed	3.33	348	0.96	Agreed
	Grand Mean	3.24		0.84		3.26		0.97	

Source: Field Survey, 2025.

The analysis on table 2 above showed that the respondents accepted the point that some teachers and school counsellors disclose or transmit personal information of teachers to unauthorized people. It was also observed from the analysis that the respondents agree the view that in times of challenges or teachers crises, teachers or educators are not permitted to reveal or share their issues to the third party. The analysis still indicated that the respondents accepted the fact that teachers frequently share their personal information with the expectation that confidentiality will be maintained.

Test of Hypotheses

Ho1: There is no significance difference in the mean rating of the principals and teachers responses between honesty and job performance of teachers in Secondary Schools in Rivers State.

Table 3: Z-test Analysis of significant difference in the mean rating of the principals and teachers responses between staff honesty and job performance of teachers in Secondary Schools in Rivers State.

Respondents	N	$\bar{X}$	SD	Df	z-cal	z-crit	Level of sign.	Decision
Principals	49	3.20	0.75	395	0.35	1.96	0.05	Accepted
Teachers	348	3.31	0.68					

The analysis on Table 3 reveals that the z-cal of 0.35 is less than the z-crit of 1.96. Therefore, the calculated t-ratio is not statistically significant at a 0.05 level of significance since it is smaller than the given critical value of z-ratio. So, the hypothesis 1 is thus accepted and the conclusion is that there is no significant difference in the mean rating of the principals and teacher's responses between staff honesty and job performance of teaches in secondary schools in rivers state.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significance difference in the mean rating of the principals and teachers responses between staff confidentiality and job performance of teachers in secondary schools in Rivers State

Table 4: Z-test Analysis of significant difference in the mean rating of the male and female responses between staff confidentiality and job performance of teachers in secondary schools in Rivers State.

Respondents	N	$\bar{X}$	SD	Df	Level of sign.	z-cal	z-crit	Decision
Principals	49	3.24	0.84	395	0.05	1.29	1.96	Accepted
Teachers	348	3.26	0.97					

The analysis on table 4 shows that the z-cal of 1.29 is less than the z-crit of 1.96. Therefore, the calculated t-ratio is not statistically significant at a 0.05 level of significance since it is greater than the given critical value of z-ratio. Therefore, the hypothesis 3 is thus accepted and the conclusion is that there is no significant difference in the mean rating of principals and teachers responses between staff confidentiality and job performance of teachers in secondary schools in Rivers State.

Discussion of Findings

Based on the analysis of the data, the findings of the study revealed that to a large extent, teachers' honesty enhances job performance of staff. This finding is in collaboration with Fisher (2009), who observed that honesty is a very important trait to have in education. And nothing that honesty entails being loyal, truthful, trustworthy, and sincere and fair which bring good and best compliments in the society. Also, in the same vein, the null hypotheses 1 was accepted and it was concluded that there is no significant difference that exist in the mean rating of principals and teachers responses between staff honesty and job performance of teachers in secondary schools in Rivers State.

The study also indicated that to a great extent, staff confidentiality enhances job performance of teachers. This finding is in the same line with Udoka (2013), who admits that confidentiality is your commitment not to disclose or transmit information to the unauthorized people and when facing any number of stress, challenges or crises students seek out students' affairs professionals. Also, in the same vein, the null hypotheses was accepted and the conclusion was that no significant difference exists in the mean rating of the principals and teachers responses between staff confidentiality and job performance of teachers in secondary schools in Rivers State.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, the researcher concludes that ethics sets the standards of what is acceptable and what is not, it has to do with what is good or not good, what is acceptable or not acceptable. Ethics has to do with guideline or rules that guides us (Asinya, 2012). Therefore, the study still deduced that ethics in education is a board term for learning experience deliberate to help teachers grow ethically and help to enhance their job performance in the education sector. The study still concludes that teachers' rights and dignity must be observed and respected no matter what.

Recommendations

1. Government through the ministry of education should organize awareness and orientation campaign for the educators or teachers on the needs and importance of honesty in the educational system hence it truthfulness, trustworthy and sincerity enhance job performance
2. Through seminars, teachers meeting, and orientation the teachers should be educated on the importance of confidentiality, hence it may lead to bridge of trust and very big gap between the educators or teachers.

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