

Nexus Between Subject Allocation Patterns and Teachers' Job Commitment in Public Secondary Schools in Anambra State Nigeria

¹ Gladys Nwakwelunu Enwereji ² Ifunanya Nkechi Ohamobi ³ Zita Chika Obi
⁴ Ndidi Gloria Onyilibe

¹ & ⁴ Department of Educational Foundations and Administration, Nwafor Orizu College of Education Nsugbe, Anambra State, Nigeria.

² & ³ Department of Educational Foundations Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University, Igbariam, Anambra State, Nigeria.

doi: <https://doi.org/10.37745/bje.2013/vol14n91725>

Published September 27, 2026

Citation: Enwereji G.N., Ohamobi I.N., Obi Z.C., Onyilibe N.G. (2026) Nexus Between Subject Allocation Patterns and Teachers' Job Commitment in Public Secondary Schools in Anambra State Nigeria, *British Journal of Education*, 14 (9),17-25

Abstract: Teachers pedagogical content knowledge facilitates teaching and improve learning outcome. Nevertheless, there is limited research on this important factor which is subject allocation patterns based on teachers' specialty or otherwise and the relationship with job commitment or productivity. This study examined the link between subject allocation patterns and teacher's job commitment in public secondary schools in Nigeria through selected secondary schools in Anambra State. The population of the study consists of 6,598 teachers in 267 public secondary schools in the six-education zone in Anambra State from which 819 teachers were drawn using proportionate stratified random sampling technique. Two sets of instruments titled "Teachers' Subject Allocation Patterns Questionnaire (TSAPQ) and Teachers Job Commitment questionnaire (TJCQ)" were used for data collection. The instrument was subjected to face and construct validity. The data collected from TSAPQ was analysed using Test Retest(correlational) and TJCQ were done using Cronbach Alpha technique. The research questions were answered using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMCC), test of significance of correlation was used to test hypotheses all at 0.05 level of significance. The findings of the study revealed that there is positive relationship between in-field subject allocation patterns and teachers job commitment in public secondary schools. Based on the findings, it was recommended that education ministries should establish subject allocation policies that ensure alignment with teachers' specializations to enhance job commitment and performance. This study as against other studies reviewed, contributed to knowledge by providing empirical evidence that in-field subject allocation patterns influence teachers' job commitment in public secondary schools in Nigeria.

Keywords: Subject Allocation Pattern; In-field; out-of-field subject allocation; Teachers Commitment and Productivity; Public Secondary Schools; Students Performance

JEL Classification: I20, L25

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the imperative is improving student outcomes which are also about improving the quality of the teaching workforce and their commitment. Teachers' job commitment is a crucial factor in the effectiveness of educational institutions, influencing student outcomes and overall

school performance. Teachers' Job commitment is the consciousness of the teacher to fully bring in his or her capacity skills, knowledge and even resources in the pursuit of the school set goals. In the classroom for instance, it is the willingness of teachers to work towards the academic accomplishment of students. Onukwu, (2020) opined that teachers' job commitment is the willingness and readiness of teachers to contribute to teaching and learning activities that can lead to an effective and successful course delivery, fulfilling their professional duties, and most importantly, producing positive learning outcomes for students. Shu (2022) defines teachers' job commitment as the emotional attachment to the school and the teacher's role as a profession working directly with students. Similarly, a committed teacher is a member of a school system who is dedicated to fulfilling their duties professionally.

Secondary education in Nigeria is in serious need of committed teachers for the implementation of the curriculum. No Educational system can rise above the quality of its teachers (Federal Republic of Nigeria [FRN], 2014). The teachers through their classroom activities facilitates the attainment of educational objectives. Their roles in the academic growth of students and general academic standard of the school cannot be over emphasized. The achievement of educational goals and objectives may be impossible without committed teachers who are main facilitators of teaching and learning. Taking practical steps at improving teachers' commitment by both government and principals is crucial because teachers who are highly committed are likely to stay longer on the job, perform better and get actively involved at work and school programmes and put more effort to ensure that the school achieves its set aims and objectives. The question that now bothers everyone is whether teachers in the present-day secondary schools in Anambra State are living up to their mission given the frequency of non-commitment which manifest in persistent lateness to school, inadequate coverage of scheme of work, excessive absences and other noticeable negative behaviour. Teachers' commitment as a topical issue seems to be the reason the quality of education has reduced. From observation, it shows that teachers have low commitment to work as a result of misalignment of subject to teachers. If this ugly trend will be left unrectified it will influence students' academic achievement and performance thereby jeopardizing the future of our society. Studies have shown that in-field subject allocation pattern is one of the factors that influence teachers' job commitment.

In many public secondary schools in Nigeria, due to recent influx of graduate into the teaching profession following government employment initiatives, teachers are often allocated to teach subjects for which they may not have specialized training or experience. For instance, out of field where teachers are allocated to teach subjects which they are not qualified to teach and combination where teachers were allocated subjects in both the area, they are qualified and area they are not qualified. This mismatch between teachers' qualifications and subject allocation can lead to feelings of dissatisfaction, frustration, and reduced job commitment among educators (Asikhia & Okorodudu, 2016) Allocating teaching responsibilities among teachers without considering their areas of expertise or qualifications in view of Aina and Olanipekun 2015 can result in ineffective instruction, reduced student engagement, and lower academic achievement. When teachers are allocated to teach subjects outside their areas of expertise, they may feel ill-prepared and unsupported, which may lead to decreased in job commitment and morale. This lack of confidence can negatively impact teacher effectiveness and ultimately affect student outcomes. The practice of allocating teachers to teach subjects for which they are not qualified may compromise the quality of education provided to students. Teachers may struggle to deliver accurate and comprehensive instruction, leading to gaps in students' knowledge and understanding of the curriculum. Also, the arbitrary allocation of teaching responsibilities without

considering teachers' expertise can contribute to a lack of continuity and coherence in instruction. Teachers may struggle to align their teaching with curriculum standards and objectives, resulting in disjointed and fragmented learning experiences for students.

Presently, Nigerian education, including the secondary school sub-sector, is faced with major issues one of which is the teacher element. Many of its teachers have been questioned about their commitment to their work. Non-commitment of teacher to their job manifests in persistent lateness to work, excessive absences, low productivity and turnover rates, abandonment of delegated task and engagement in private businesses. (Mbonu, Obineme & Azuji 2023). Some criticize the government for this problem and stressed that the government did not do enough to develop, encourage and support teachers professionally, to lead them to a greater commitment. Ironkwe et al. (2023) observed that some teachers set their mind to taking the role of ordinary teachers who just come to school, sign the attendance register and just engage students in class and go away. If this attitude and mindset persist, their students' education and future will be highly compromised, and consequently, state's economy and future will be jeopardized or even ruined.

This study adds to the body of knowledge of previous studies on subject allocation pattern as correlates of teachers' job commitment and job satisfaction. This study is important because teachers are more likely to possess adequate subject knowledge and pedagogical skills, thereby encouraging commitment to the school and teaching profession. This pattern also ensures that students receive high quality instruction tailored to their educational needs.

Therefore, the study sought to examine the relationship between subject allocation patterns and teachers' job commitment in Nigeria through selected public secondary schools in Anambra State. In order to achieve this objective, the remainder of the paper is organised as follows: Section 2 provides a clear statement of the problem, specific objectives of the study, research questions and hypotheses development. Section 3 reviewed the concepts and provides empirical review on subject allocation pattern and teachers' job commitment. Section 4 describes methodology adopted in sourcing and analysing data. Section 5 discussed the findings. Section 6 provides conclusion with educational implications of the study. Section 7 proffer recommendations based on the outcome of the study.

Statement of the Problem, Specific Objective of the Study and Hypotheses Development.

Statement of the Problem

Over the years, teacher's job commitment has prompted educational researchers to steadily make relentless efforts at identifying mitigating factors that might account for the observed poor commitment of teachers. It is quite worrisome that teachers in Nigeria have been questioned about their work commitment. Lack of sufficient commitment hampers the students' academic work, and consequently their career development and their future. Teacher non-commitment manifests itself in excessive absences, low productivity, lateness to school, abandonment of delegated duties and turnover rates. Some teachers set their mindset to be like ordinary teachers who just come to school, sign the attendance register and just engage students in the class and go away to their private business. If this attitude and mindset persist, their students' education and future will be highly compromised which will result in poor social and economy development of the state and the nation.

A number of factors such as subject allocation patterns was believed to be important factor of teachers' job commitment or non-commitment, yet little or no research attention has been directed on these areas. By addressing these issues, policymakers, school administrators, and education stakeholders can develop targeted strategies to enhance teacher commitment, improve instructional quality, and promote positive outcomes for both educators and students in public schools across Anambra State.

Specific Objectives of the Study

The main purpose of the study was to examine the relationship between subject allocation patterns and teachers' job commitment in public secondary schools in Nigeria. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. examine the relationship between in-field subject allocation pattern and teachers' job commitment in public secondary schools in Nigeria.
2. verify the relationship between out-of-field subject allocation pattern and teachers' job commitment in public secondary schools in Nigeria.

Research Questions

1. What is the relationship between in-field subject allocation patterns and teachers' job commitment in public secondary schools in Nigeria?
2. What is the relationship between out-of-field subject allocation patterns and teachers' job commitment in public secondary schools in Nigeria?

Hypotheses

The null hypothesis was formulated and would be tested at 0.05 level of significance:

1. There is no significant relationship between In-field subject allocation patterns and teachers' job commitment in public secondary schools in Nigeria.
2. There will be no significant relationship between out-of-field subject allocation patterns and teachers' job commitment in public secondary schools in Nigeria.

Conceptual and Empirical Review

Subject Allocation Patterns - Subject Allocation Patterns is defined as a means through which principals match teachers with what subject to teach. Richard (2019) defined subject allocation to teachers as a process of allotting subject to teachers according to their credentials which has a license issued by the state that gives teachers a legal right to be hired as teacher in the public schools. The credential list has classes and subjects a teacher may teach which school administrators have no power to ignore. Ingersoll and Merrill (2020). describe subject allocation patterns as the systematic distribution of teaching subjects among teachers based on experts, qualifications, and availability, emphasizing that mismatches negatively affect teacher performance. Operationally, in-field subject allocation patterns are the structured way of assigning subjects to teachers according to their area of qualifications and capability, it has link with teacher effectiveness and job commitment.

Subject allocation pattern refers to the allocation of teaching responsibilities among teachers based on their areas of specializations. There are different patterns of teacher subject allocation. Teachers could be allocated subject based on; their related subject specialization (in-field), unrelated subject (out-of-field), subject combination (in-field and out-of-field), preferences/choice, subject knowledge and expertise, and based on school management/principal

preferences (Aina & Olanipekun 2015). Although there are many patterns of teacher allocation, this study will focus on in-field (based on subject specialization and expertise) and out-of-field (allocated outside field of specialization) subject allocation pattern.

In-field Subject Allocation Pattern - In-field subject allocation pattern is allocation of subject based on teachers' area of specialization and expertise. In this pattern teachers are usually allocated subjects base on their academic background, certificates, and specialized training. For instance, a teacher with a degree in mathematics will likely teach mathematics. This pattern ensures that students receive high quality instruction tailored to their educational needs since a teacher's knowledge of the subject matter is at the heart of his or her teaching career (Breen & Espen, 2018).

Out-field Subject Allocation Pattern – This subject allocation pattern negates specialization. A teacher is randomly assigned subject(s) to teach based on the principals or head teachers discretion. Out-of-field subject allocation pattern is a system of allocation where a teacher is allocated a subject to teach outside his or her field of qualifications, expertise or specialization (Nixon et al. 2017). This is perceived as a huge problem globally since it impacts on quality education (Tucker, 2022). This is possible because the out-of-field teachers experience anxiety and are less confident about their teaching practices due to lack of pedagogical content knowledge (Du Plessis, Oates & Caldis 2019). Furthermore, Du Plessis (2017) found that out-of-field teaching is widespread which affects teaching efficacy, and that out-of-field teachers tend to have low self-esteem on job commitment.

Teachers' job commitment/Productivity

Teachers' job commitment in school is the consciousness of an employee to fully bring in his/her capacity, skills, knowledge and even resources in the pursuit of the school set goals. In the classroom for instance, it is the willingness of teachers to work towards the academic accomplishment of students. Commitment refers to behavior or psychological state explaining the employee-employer relationship which ultimately affects their tendency to stay or quit the organization (Ajayi, 2017). Teachers' job commitment is defined as the extent to which teachers identify themselves as part of the employer organization and are involved in accomplishing organizational mission and goals. Job commitment is also referred to as workplace commitment or organizational commitment. teachers who are committed to their job are happy and positive at their workplace and show high levels of productivity. They are eager to help others, share knowledge and experience, and have good relationships with colleagues, management, students, and any other involved activities. Commitment to work is the willingness to dedicate oneself to organizational values and goals. It is the ability to voluntarily put in extra effort in the work process.

Empirical Review

Efforts towards improving teacher's commitment have attracted great deal of research from both within and outside Nigeria. However, most of them examined the isolated individual effects of teacher or organizational characteristics on teacher commitment. For instance, Sadoughi and Ebrahimi (2015), explored the relationship between self-efficacy and organizational commitment among staff. Similarly, Ajayi (2017) examined the influence of job satisfaction on teachers' commitment in Nigerian public secondary schools. A study by Brown and Johnson (2019) investigated the impact of professional development opportunities on teacher commitment in rural school districts. Other scholars examined only the impact of teacher-subject matter

knowledge such as the study by Moller, Slento and Botte (2017) which investigated the impact of subject-matter expertise on principal's support for teacher effectiveness. However, in the context of public secondary schools in Anambra State, the extent to which subject allocation patterns influence teachers' job commitment remains under explored. Therefore, this study aims to contribute to existing knowledge by investigating the relationship between subject allocation patterns and teachers' job commitment in Public Secondary Schools in Nigeria through selected public secondary schools in Anambra State.

METHODOLOGY

Correlational Research Design was adopted for this study. The study was carried out in Nigeria through public secondary schools in Anambra State. The population of the study consists of 6,598 teachers in 267 public secondary schools in the six-education zone in Anambra State. The sample of 819 teachers was used for the study. Multistage sampling procedure comprising proportionate stratified and simple random sampling technique were used for the study. Two instruments titled "Subject Allocation Patterns Questionnaire (SAPQ), and Teachers Job Commitment questionnaire (TJCQ)" were used for data collection. The face and construct validity of the instrument was established by three experts. Two experts in Educational Management, one expert in Measurement and Evaluation all from Department of Educational Foundations, Faculty of Education, Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University Igbariam Campus. The instruments were trial tested in a simple administration on a representative sample of Government Secondary School, Enugu State. The data collected from SAPQ was analysed using Test Retest(correlational) and TJCQ were done using Cronbach alpha reliability coefficient. They yielded a coefficient value of 0.80 for teachers' subject allocation pattern, and 0.87 for teachers' job commitment. The researcher with the help of six research assistants who are secondary school teachers in Anambra State administered copies of the questionnaire to the respondents through direct approach. Thus, out of 819 copies of the instruments administered, 601 copies representing 74% of the instruments were correctly completed and returned, while 40(5%) were not properly completed. Pearson Product moment correlation coefficient was used to answer the research question and test hypotheses

Results: Research Question

what is the relationship between subject allocation patterns and teachers' job commitment in public secondary schools in Nigeria

Table 1.

Point Biserial Correlation Between Subject Allocation Pattern and Teacher Job Commitment in Public Secondary Schools in Nigeria.

Variables	N	Subject Allocation Pattern	Teachers' Job Commitment	Remark
Subject Allocation Patterns	601	1	0.33	positive relationship
Teachers' Job Commitment	601	0.33	1	

The result displayed in Table shows the Point Biserial correlation between teacher allocation pattern and teachers' job commitment was $r_{pb} = 0.33$. This indicates a positive relationship. It implies that a shift from out-of-field teacher subject allocation pattern to in-field teacher subject allocation pattern leads to an increase in teacher job commitment. However, this relationship is low.

Test of Hypotheses

There is no significant relationship between subject allocation patterns and teachers' job commitment in public secondary schools in Anambra state.

Table 2

Significance of Point Biserial Correlation Between Subject Allocation Pattern and Teacher Job Commitment in Public Secondary Schools in Nigeria.

Variables	N	Subject Allocation Pattern	Teachers' Job Commitment	p-value	Remark
subject Allocation Patterns	601	1	0.33	0.000	Significant
Teachers' Job Commitment	601	0.33	1		

The Pearson's correlation displayed in Table 2, shows that there was a significant positive relationship between subject allocation pattern and teachers' job commitment in public secondary schools in Anambra State, $r_{pb} = 0.33$, $p\text{-value} = 0.000$. Since the $p\text{-value}$ was less than 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis was rejected.

DISCUSSION OF FINDING

Relationship between Subject Allocation Patterns and Teachers' Job Commitment in Public Secondary Schools in Nigeria

The research question examined the relationship between subject allocation patterns and teachers' job commitment in public secondary schools in Nigeria. The finding indicates a low but positive relationship between subject allocation patterns and job commitment, with a Point Biserial correlation result of $r_{pb} = 0.33$. This suggests that replacing out-of-field subject allocation with in-field subject allocation leads to increased teacher commitment, while reliance on out-of-field patterns diminishes it.

This finding aligns with the Person-Environment Fit Theory (Edwards et al., 1998), which posits that workers are more productive when their qualifications and abilities align with their assigned roles. A suitable match between a teacher's expertise and their assigned subjects enhances their effectiveness in the school environment, whereas a mismatch can lead to maladjustment. This is corroborated by Annalene et al. (2021), who found that science teachers in the Nagtipunan district of the Philippines faced challenges and exhibited negligence when assigned subjects outside their specialization.

CONCLUSION AND EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATION OF THE STUDY

Conclusion

The study concludes that there is a low positive relationship between subject allocation patterns and teachers' job commitment in public secondary schools in Nigeria. Also, poor teacher commitment is primarily due to the assignment of subjects outside their specialization.

Educational Implications of the Study:

Alignment of Subject Allocation with Teacher Specialization: The low positive relationship between subject allocation patterns and teachers' job commitment highlights the critical need to assign teachers to subjects that align with their area of specialization.

Educational Practice Implication: Schools and administrators should prioritize subject allocation policies that ensure teachers are matched to their fields of expertise. Doing so improves instructional quality, teacher morale, and commitment, ultimately leading to better student outcomes. Misaligned subject allocations may result in teacher dissatisfaction, reduced performance, and lower student achievement.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, it was recommended that Education ministries should establish subject allocation policies that ensure alignment with teachers' specializations and principals in secondary schools should comply and adhered to the policies while allocating subject to teachers both in rural and urban schools to enhance job satisfaction and commitment. Also, Education Policy Makers should ensure clear guidelines for fair and specialization-based subject allocation should be developed, considering both technical expertise and teachers' emotional needs.

REFERENCES

- Aina, J. K. & Olanipekun, S. S (2015). A review of teacher self-efficacy, pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) and out-of-field teaching. Focusing on Nigeria teachers. *International journal of elementary education*, 4(3), 80-85, <https://doi.org/10.11648/j.ijeedu>.
- Ajayi (2017). Teachers' commitment and learners' performance. *International Multidisciplinary Journal of Research for Innovation, Sustainability and Excellence*, 1(6), 308-316
- Annalene G. E. Co, C. R. G. &Abella, F. S. (2021). Teaching Outside Specialization from the Perspective of Science. *Teachers*.<httpss://www.scrip.org/journal/articles>.
- Asikhaia & Okorodudu (2016). Overwhelmed' and 'underprepared': the realities of out-of-field teaching in geography during a time of transition into the teaching profession. *Geography Bulletin*, 54(2).
- Breen, A. F. and Espen, E. (2018). Challenges new science teachers face. *Review of Educational Research*, 76(4), 607-651.Hjermen og.historien .
- Brown & Johnson (2019). Literature review Quality in Teachers' continuing professional development. *European Commission*, 2-20.
- Du Plessis (2017). National summit on teaching out-of-field: Synthesis and recommendations for policy, practice and research. Ooftas collective.squarespace.com/s/TOOF- *National-Summit-Report.doc*.

- Du Plessis, AE, Oates, G, Caldis, S, (2019). National summit on teaching out-of-field: Synthesis and recommendations for policy, practice and research. oofas-collective.squarespace.com/s/TOOF-National-Summit-Report.doc.
- Edwards, J.R., Caplan, R.D. & Harrison R. V. (1998). Person-environment fit theory: conceptual foundations, empirical evidence and directions for future research. I C. L. Cooper (Ed), *Theories of organizational stress*.<https://doi.org/10.1093/oso/9780198522799003.0003>
- Federal Republic of Nigeria. (2014). National policy on education (6th ed.) Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC).
- Ingersoll, R. M., & Merrill, E. (2020). The status of teaching as a pro- fession. In J. Ballantine, & J. Spade (Eds.), *Schools and society: A sociological approach to education* (4) 185-189.
- Ingersoll, R. 2019. "The Problem of Underqualified Teachers in American Secondary Schools." *Educational Researcher* 28 (2):26–37. doi: <https://doi.org/10.3102/0013189X028002026>
- Ironkwe, A. C., Okechukwu, J. N., Obiekwe, K. K., Eziamaka, C. N., & Mokwe, N. F. (2025). School organizational culture and justice as predictors of teachers' job commitment in public secondary schools in Anambra State, Nigeria. *British International Journal of Business and Marketing Research*, 8(2), 1–21.
- Mbonu V. C., Obineme P. O., & Azuji I. M (2023). Teachers' job satisfaction and commitment. *International Journal of Education and Professional Studies*, 6(1), 90 – 99.
- Moller, Slento & Botte (2017). Elements for the personal and professional development of teachers. *Creative Education*. doi:<http://dx.doi.org/10.4236/ce.2016.710150>.
- Nixon, R. S. Luft, J A. & Ross, R. J. (2017). Prevalence and predictors of out-of-field teaching in the first five years. *Journal of Research in Science Teaching*, 54(9),1197–1218. <https://doi.org/10.1002/tea.21402> <https://doi.org/10.11594/ijmaber.04.02.19>.
- Onukwu, J. (2020). Understanding job commitment in schools. AMBIK PRESS, Educational Management Digest, 286-295.
- Richard, L, P. (2019). Transitioning into the profession with an out-of-field teaching load. In: Hobbs, L, Porsch, R, (eds) *Out-of-field teaching across teaching disciplines and contexts*. Springer, Singapore. doi.org/10.1007/978-981-16-9328-1_13
- Sadoughi, F. & Ebrahimi, K. (2015). Impact on Teachers' Self-Efficacy and organizational commitment. *International Journal of Multidisciplinary: Applied Business and Education Research*, 4(2), 519-533
- Shu, K. (2022). Teachers' commitment and self-efficacy as predictors of engagement and well-being. *Frontier in psychology*. <https://doi/10.3389/fpsyg.2022.850204>.
- Tucker (2022). Teacher Professional Development to Increase Teacher Commitment in the Era of the Asean Economic Community. Paper presented at the 2nd *Early Childhood and Primary Childhood Education (ECPE 2020)*: doi:<https://dx.doi.org/10.2991/assehr.k.201112.059>