

Principals' Administrative Strategies and Teachers Job Performance in Public Secondary Schools in Anambra State, Nigeria

Abstract

The study investigated principals' administrative strategies and teachers job performance in public secondary schools in Onitsha North Local Government Area of Anambra State. Descriptive survey research design was adopted. The population of the study comprised 1002 public secondary school teachers from 10 schools in the study area. In this study, 120 respondents were sampled using multi-stage sampling procedure which involved simple random and accidental sampling techniques. Three research questions and three hypotheses guided the study. The instrument was a 23 item questionnaire validated with reliability index of 0.88 using Cronbach Alpha. Data obtained were analyzed through mean and t-test statistics of 0.05 level of significance. The findings revealed that principals administrative and communication strategies enhance teachers job performance. Gender of teachers has no significant effect on the administrative strategies adopted by principals. The study **recommended** among others that principals should eschew aggressive communication strategies which impinge on adequate secondary education administration and teachers job performance.

Keywords: Administrative strategies, teachers job performance, principals, secondary schools.

Introduction

Education is universally upheld as an investment geared towards transformation of human and material resources which ultimately contributes to a nation's development. The Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN, 2013) avers education as an instrument "par excellence" and the means of developing human intellect, technical skills, character and effective citizenship for self-reliance and effective national development. Being an instrument for the achievement of socio-economic and technological growth of any nation, there is an implicit need for requisite and credible education for a developing country like Nigeria. Thus, Akingbola (2009) affirms that "education is a social service that contributes greatly to national development and Nigerians need appropriate education that will transform her abundant natural and human resources into economic development, hence the need for finding to ensure the required quality education". This is in line with the earlier views of Akpotu (2006) that today's education has become the contemporary creed and about the surest root for a country wishing to attain economic growth and development.

By dint of the above assertions, the need for credible education is imminent and must be given an utmost priority in the yearnings of a formidable growth and development of any nation. In fact, the impart of education and its sustainability, Okebukola (2011) asserts that "education in the nation requires serious attention to save it from collapse". The formidable tools that will exonerate educational collapse in secondary schools hinge on the administrative strategies employed by the principals. Hence, Pandey (2017) elucidates that principals also need to apply supervisory techniques for improved performance of teachers in the classrooms, especially in secondary schools.

In Nigerian context, secondary schools are instituted for two major purposes:

- a. Preparing the recipient for higher education and
- b. Preparing the recipient for useful living within the society (FRN, 2004).

These two major aims position secondary education as a venture and milestone that pave the way for transformation of an individual. As such, in secondary schools, the child is given the opportunity for higher educational attainment and betterment for development in science and technology. However, the level of information and exposure of the child during secondary school activities matter a lot. Thus, FRN (2013) posits that “secondary education offers diversified curriculum to cater for the differences in talents, disposition, opportunities and future roles. It provides for trained manpower in applied sciences, technology and commercial at sub-professional grades, and provides entrepreneurial, technical and vocational job, specific skills for self reliance, and for agricultural, industrial, commercial and economic development. Amidst these beautiful postulations, it must be borne in mind that the vision cannot be realized except with good administrative strategies of the principals in secondary schools”.

Consequently, Chike – Okoli (2007) avers that “the principal controls the human and material resources of the school, an instructional leader responsible for matters concerning school curriculum implementation, occupies top administrative ladder in any secondary school, ensures the smooth running of the school for high productivity of staff in terms of teaching and learning, coordinates all school activities for achievement of task, provides teachers with sound instructional leadership, supportive staff-personnel services, supervision, effective communication, in decision making, planning and evaluation of instructional programmes. Adoption of these administrative strategies by the principal enhances realization of the school objectives. Furthermore, the principal makes sure that adequate administrative strategies for successful running of the secondary schools are employed, establishes a school climate that promotes excellence in education, gender fairness for staff, students, parents and community”.

Emphasizing the administrative roles, Omemu (2017) states that the principal maintains and improves services of the staff by satisfying their personal needs. In addition, Ogunu (2000) notes some administrative leadership roles of the principal to include among others, “providing overall leadership, coordination and continuing evaluation for improvement of educational programmes, seeing to the welfare of staff and students, accounting for the success, safety and development of students in the school, supervising both teachers’ and students activities...” The various administrative strategies employed by the principal will reposition the school’s effectiveness.

Suffice it to say, (Meziobi, 2006; Omemu, 2017) accentuate principals administrative strategies as the application of behavioural principle and discipline that are effective to bring about ideal academic system in the area of getting the right people to become teachers, developing them into effective instructors, for every child in order to achieve targeted objectives. Without mincing words, when the principal fails in adoption of the right administrative strategies, problems ensue and attainment of the educational objectives may appear a distant mirage. The outcome poses serious challenges to the teachers who may have difficulty in managing the students, learning experiences, resulting to poor output. At the same time, the principals ineffective administrative strategies will also impinge on teachers job performance. More so, the interaction between the principals, teachers and students is hindered due to variety of internal and external factors within the learning context. Therefore, to handle the administration of secondary schools effectively, Parkes and Thrift (2001) opine that “principals administrative strategies are a multi-faceted

construct that includes independent dimensions such as instructional management, people management and behavioural management encompassing monitoring students work, structuring daily routine and allocating materials”. Corroborating, (Adeyemi, 2008) posits that, the manners in which these tasks are managed contribute to the general school atmosphere and principals administrative strategies. The administrative strategies adopted by the principals are propelled by the teachers whose job performance cannot be over looked, hence their immense contributions to the progress and attainment of the educational goals and objectives.

A cursory look at the explanations depicts that the most important role of the principal is that of improving educational programmes by providing a climate of efficiency employing different strategies. It is to this regard that Udeozor (2004) elucidates that the principal in executing his duties must apply different strategies which are embedded in administrative activities such as: planning, staffing, directing, coordinating, controlling, reporting, communication and budget. Among the administrative strategies mentioned by various scholars, this study will investigate principals administrative, communication and personnel strategies for the research.

Lucidly speaking, it appears that the administrative strategies adopted by some principals in Onitsha North Local Government Area are inadequate and ineffective, hence secondary schools face diverse problems resulting from poor supervision, conflict among teachers, non-harmonious principal/staff relationship, rancour, aggressive communication, poor curriculum delivery in schools and these culminate to teachers poor job performance.

Teachers job performance is the outcome of set of behaviours, attitude, character and task executed by teaching staff in attainment of set objectives. Teachers job performance is the execution of teaching task and rendering of support services by teachers. This is aptly captured by Kahler (2006) who defined teachers job performance as the teaching task and rendering of expected teaching services by teachers. Such duties according to Ukeje (2010) include “teaching students in the assigned classes of various grades or years, taking part in the general life of students, teachers continuous obedience to constituted authority, regularity among other duties that enhance the growth of the school system”. Ijov, Hemen, Aloga and Akinyemi (2016) defined “teachers job performance as what staff get out of an activity for what they put in education. Furthermore, job performance takes into cognizance both the quality and quantity of the results achieved by the teacher. Job performance is dependent upon variety of factors, which include, motivation, communication, supervision and the likes which enhance teachers willingness to work”. “Ways to determine teachers job performance include their ability to make deliberate effort to enhance students academic attainment, display an in-depth knowledge of the subject matter, presenting lessons in a well organized manner, punctuality and regularity in school, discipline, motivation, counselling of students and compliance to teachers professional code of conduct among others” (Nnebedum and Akinfolarin, 2017). Teachers job performance could also be assessed through lesson presentation, participation in staff meetings, involvement and coordination of students co-curricular activities, timely preparation of students result sheets, behaviour and professional conducts and marking of school attendance register of students among others.

Chike – Okoli (2007), Akomolafe (2012), Abdulrahaman (2014), Omemu (2017), and Pandey (2017) enlist the “following as strategies necessary for teachers commitment as adopting varieties of instructional leadership strategies, teacher evaluation, monitoring and supervision

strategies, staff personnel strategies, student personnel strategies, organizing, planning, coordinating and budgeting strategies among others”. Going by the above, this study will hinge only on administrative, communication and personnel strategies adopted by secondary school principals in Onitsha North L.G.A, Anambra State. These are to be investigated as principals administrative strategies for teachers job performance.

Principals administrative strategies and teachers job performance are important variables in school effectiveness. The variables may be dependent on gender of teachers/principals of the school. Thus, a male principal in school may adopt administrative strategies different from that used by another female principal in different school. The type of administrative strategy used by different gender might negatively or positively affect the educational outcome and even teachers task performance. The use of adequate administrative strategies by the principal resonate credible educational outcome and improved teachers performance. Adopting the administrative strategies includes evaluation of teachers to ascertain their strength and weaknesses in instructional delivery and overall job performance. In-service training for advancement and full operation in a technological driven society among others. However, gaps in principals administrative strategies will no doubt cause serious setback in teachers job performance and efforts towards realizable goals and objectives of secondary schools in Onitsha North L.G.A of Anambra State.

Towing the same line, research carried out by Lydiah and Nasongo, (2009); Ayeni, (2012); Ayeni and Akinfolarin, (2014) reveal that principals administrative strategies and teachers job performance were affected by many challenges like poor administrative activities of the principals. Similarly, it appears that poor principals administrative strategies may have hindered the realization of secondary schools educational objectives in the study area.

The challenges may have emanated from teachers absenteeism, teachers non-completion of scheme of work, poor content delivery, non-cordial relationship, poor communication between principals and teachers exemplified in teachers poor job performance in various secondary schools in the study area. Against this backdrop, the researchers were motivated to investigate principals administrative strategies and teachers job performance in public secondary schools in Onitsha North L.G.A of Anambra State.

Statement of the Problem

Irrespective of the yearnings of parents, teachers and some stakeholders of education for credible and qualitative education, Nigerian education seems to be at the verge of collapse. It is the prerogative of secondary school principals to adopt effective administrative strategies that would enhance teachers job performance to ameliorate the daunting challenges facing the country’s education. However, observations and repeated visits to public secondary schools in Onitsha North L.G.A of Anambra State seem to portray poor principals administrative strategies which gave rise to teachers poor job performance. Manifestations of this assertion are exemplified through poor instructional supervision and content delivery, conflict among principals and teachers, non-cordial relationship among teachers and principal, aggressive communication and teachers absenteeism. Howbeit, it is evident that effective principals administrative strategies are ingredients that spur management functions devoid of teachers poor job performance.

There is no gainsaying the fact that realization of educational objectives cannot be possible when there is teachers poor job performance due to inadequate principals administrative strategies in secondary schools. Bearing in mind that the education industry cannot thrive devoid of its teachers performance, the propeller of teachers motivation for good job performance is hinged on the principals administrative strategies. Principals use of administrative strategies like supervision, monitoring, communication, cordial relationship would be panacea to enhancement of good teachers job performance. Anything on the contrary results to lack of commitment, absenteeism, teacher/principal conflict, aggressive communication and failure in educational set goals in Onitsha North L.G.A, Anambra State.

In view of the foregoing, the researchers were spurred to examine principals administrative strategies and teachers job performance in public secondary schools in Onitsha North L.G.A of Anambra State.

Research Questions

The following research questions were formulated to guide the study:

1. What are principals administrative strategies in public secondary schools in Onitsha North L.G.A?
2. What are principals communication strategies in public secondary schools in Onitsha North L.G.A?
3. What are principals personnel strategies in public secondary schools in Onitsha North L.G.A?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance:

- H₀ 1: There is no significant difference in the mean scores of male and female principals administrative strategies for teachers job performance in Onitsha North L.G.A.
- H₀ 2: Mean scores of male and female teachers on principals communication strategies for teachers job performance in Onitsha North L.G.A did not differ significantly.
- H₀ 3 Mean scores of male and female teachers on principals personnel strategies in public secondary schools in Onitsha L.G.A did not differ.

Method

Descriptive survey was adopted for the study. The population of the study comprised 1002 secondary school teachers from 10 public secondary schools in Onitsha North Local Government Area of Anambra State. 120 respondents were sampled using multi-stage sampling technique which involved simple random and accidental sampling for the representation of public secondary schools and teachers respectively who were found eligible for the study. The instrument was a 23 item questionnaire validated by three experts, one from Measurement and Evaluation Unit of Educational Foundations Department and two experts from Educational Management and Policy Department, all in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. Both descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyze the data. Mean and t-test were used to answer the research questions and in testing the null hypotheses.

Results

Research Question 1: What are principals administrative strategies for teachers job performance in public secondary schools in Onitsha North L.G.A?

Table 1: Respondents mean ratings of principals administrative strategies in public secondary schools.

S/N	Principals Administrative Strategies	\bar{X}	Decision
1	Principal delegates mechanism of financial matters to capable staff.	3.21	Agree
2	Principal enhances teachers' morale for productivity	2.67	Agree
3	Constant classroom visitations to observe the teaching methodologies.	2.54	Agree
4	Improves regular and intensive clinical supervision in the school.	2.69	Agree
5	Improves teachers services to promote their job commitment.	2.78	Agree
6	Financial assistance rendered to teachers to satisfy their personal needs.	2.87	Agree
7	Motivation of teachers through tangible rewards.	2.91	Agree
8	Principal manages conflict effectively in school.	2.69	Agree
9	Principal ensures adequate facilities to enhance instruction.	3.01	Agree
Grand Mean		2.81	Agree

Table 1 shows all the nine items on principals administrative strategies in public secondary school in Onitsha North Local Government Area of Anambra State, with the mean ratings above the cut off mean of 2.50 and a cluster mean of 2.81. This shows that respondents agreed on administrative strategies adopted by principals in public secondary schools in Onitsha North L.G.A.

Research Question 2: What are principals' communication strategies in public secondary schools in Onitsha North L.G.A?

Table 2: Respondents mean ratings of principals communication strategies in public secondary schools.

S/N	Principals Administrative Strategies	\bar{X}	Decision
10	Inclusive communication strategies.	2.88	Agree
11	Constant use of effective communication channels.	3.25	Agree
12	Ineffective communication strategies that hinder teachers easy access during problem solving.	2.87	Agree
13	Avoid aggressive communication strategies.	2.31	Disagree
14	Inadequate communication strategies.	2.68	Agree
15	Assertive communication strategies.	2.71	Agree
Grand Mean		2.78	Agree

Table 2 shows five out of the six items on principals communication strategies in public secondary schools for teachers job performance with mean ratings above the cut off mean of 2.50 and a cluster mean of 2.78. Only item 13 has mean score of 2.31. This shows that respondents

agreed that principals' communication strategies enhance teachers' job performance in discharging their assigned duties in schools.

Research Question 3: What are principals' personnel strategies in public secondary schools in Onitsha North L.G.A?

Table 3: Respondents mean ratings of principals' personnel strategies in public secondary schools.

S/N	Principals Administrative Strategies	\bar{X}	Decision
16	Opportunities to attend in-service courses in school administration.	2.61	Agree
17	Seminars or workshops are politically oriented rather than academic oriented.	3.27	Agree
18	Routine appraisal of delegated duties.	2.71	Agree
19	Staff orientation or induction.	3.44	Agree
20	Staff monitoring.	2.51	Agree
21	Sponsors teachers for ICT proficiency up-date for advancement in teaching and learning.	2.69	Agree
22	Identifies specific areas for re-training of teachers.	2.51	Agree
23	Promotion of personnel based on academic qualification.	3.22	Agree
Grand Mean		2.87	Agree

Table 3 shows all eight items on principals' personnel strategies on teachers job performance in public secondary schools, which have the mean ratings above the cut mean of 2.50 with a cluster mean of 2.87. This shows that respondents agreed that principals' personnel strategies enhance teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Onitsha North L.G.A.

Testing of Hypotheses

H₀₁: There is no significant difference in the mean response of male and female teachers on Principals' administrative strategies for teachers job performance in public secondary schools.

Table 4a: Group statistics for mean scores of teachers on Principals' administrative strategies for teachers job performance in public secondary schools.

	GENDER	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Administrative Strategies	Male	18	2.8025	.96380	.22717
	Female	102	2.8203	.90227	.08934

Table 4b: Independent sample t-test statistics for mean scores of teachers on Principals administrative strategies for teachers job performance in public secondary schools.

		Independent Samples Test								
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Administrative Strategies	Equal variances assumed	.465	.497	-.076	118	.939	-.01779	.23300	-.47920	.44361
	Equal variances not assumed			-.073	22.574	.943	-.01779	.24411	-.52329	.48771

The results on Table 4b reveal that there was no significant difference in responses on the Principals administrative strategies for teachers job performance in public secondary schools by male and female teachers, $t(118) = 0.497$, $p = 0.939$. That is, the average response score of females ($f = 2.8203$, $SD = 0.90227$) was not significantly different from that of males ($m = 2.8025$, $SD = 0.96380$), indicating that the null hypothesis is accepted.

Ho2: There is no significant difference in the mean response of male and female teachers on Principals' communication strategies in public secondary schools.

Table 5a: Group statistics for mean scores of teachers on Principals' communication strategies in public secondary schools.

Group Statistics					
	GENDER	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Communication Strategies	Male	18	2.7500	1.00692	.23733
	Female	102	2.7859	.85480	.08464

Table 5b: Independent sample t-test statistics for mean scores of teachers on Principals' communication strategies in public secondary schools.

		Independent Samples Test								
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Communication Strategies	Equal variances assumed	1.975	.163	-.160	118	.873	-.03595	.22455	-.48062	.40873
	Equal variances not assumed			-.143	21.540	.888	-.03595	.25197	-.55916	.48726

The results on Table 5b indicate that there was no significant difference in the responses on Principals' communication strategies in public secondary schools by male and female teachers, $t(118) = 0.163$, $p = 0.873$. That is, the average response score of females ($f = 2.7859$, $SD = 0.85480$) was not significantly different from that of males ($m = 2.7500$, $SD = 1.00692$), indicating that the null hypothesis is accepted.

Ho3: Mean scores of male and female teachers on Principals' personnel strategies in public secondary schools do not differ.

Table 6a: Group statistics for mean scores of teachers on Principals' personnel strategies in public secondary schools.

	GENDER	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Personnel Strategies	Male	18	2.8750	.93640	.22071
	Female	102	2.8676	.89429	.08855

Table 6b: Independent sample t-test statistics for mean scores of teachers on Principals' personnel strategies in public secondary schools.

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Personnel Strategies	Equal variances assumed	.057	.811	.032	118	.975	.00735	.23021	-.44853	.46324
	Equal variances not assumed			.031	22.814	.976	.00735	.23781	-.48482	.49952

The results on Table 6b show that there was no significant difference in the responses on Principals' personnel strategies in public secondary schools by male and female teachers, $t(118) = 0.811$, $p = 0.975$. That is, the average response score of females ($f = 2.8676$, $SD = 0.89429$) was not significantly different from that of males ($m = 2.8750$, $SD = 0.93640$), indicating that the null hypothesis is accepted.

Discussion

Findings on table 1 show that principals adopt the needed administrative strategies for teachers job performance. However, the outcome of secondary education in the study area still portrays low achievement/attainment of the desirable educational aims and objectives. This lacuna may have resulted from imbalance between accomplishment of personnel roles and defective provisions especially funding of the education sector by the government. It is worrisome that Nigerian government has not met the UNESCO's Incheon Declaration recommendation of 15 percent to 20 percent for every nation's annual budget to education. Adoption of the postulation remains a panacea to standard of education decline in Nigeria. Unfortunately, the Nigeria's 2021 budget share for education by the incumbent government has been adjudged the lowest in 10 years. Consequently, even if the school principals were trained to adopt the best administrative

strategies for teacher's job performance in underfunded educational institutions, the academic outcome will remain poor. Thus, realization of educational goals and objectives becomes an impossible venture. The finding corroborated with the views of Okebukola (2011) who opined that education in the nation requires serious attention to save it from collapse. By dint of this, one wonders how effective administrative strategies for teachers job performance were adopted without recognizable educational outcome. More so, the findings raise a difficult question because if there is dearth of the needed government provisions in secondary schools, there is no magic about assured academic attainment.

Among the many findings in Table 2 on factors that engender principals communication strategies for teachers job performance, the research revealed that principals adopt inclusive communication strategies, assertive communication among others. However, non-avoidance of aggressive communication strategies impinge on teachers job performance. Without mincing words, unconducive academic atmosphere, dearth of needed provisions in secondary schools, poor funding may trigger misplaced aggression of the principals exemplified in aggressive communication. Aggression exhibited in principals communication imparts the entire school climate negatively and may even result to teachers attrition and the like.

In another development, improved level of enabling environment by the government in secondary schools is advocated for. Else, operating in a school atmosphere where there is principal's aggressive communication to teachers and expectation of quality academic attainment would appear illusive.

Table 3 revealed that principals adopt personnel strategies for teachers job performance in the study area. However, academic decline may not have emanated from the adoption of personnel strategies instead lack of qualified teachers in some secondary schools in the study area. Consequently, dearth of personnel when juxtaposed with the provisions of Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN, 2004), on the postulation that teacher student ratio for secondary schools is 1:40 portrays a seeming challenge impairing credible education outcome. Some schools over-shoot their students population, hardly are there classrooms with the stipulated standard.

In spite of the fact that the research found principals adoption of personnel strategies, overpopulated classrooms go with attendant challenges. A cursory look at the overpopulated schools vis a vis adoption of principals' personnel strategies in some parts of the study area leaves some doubts in the mind of the researchers whether the content of section 5 no. 27 of the National Policy on Education (FRN, 2004) is practicable in Nigeria.

Table 4 revealed that principals administrative strategies for teachers job performance in the study area are not gender based, as male and female teachers concurred that effective administrative strategies are employed by principals. Furthermore, Table 5 and 6 showed that male and female respondents do not differ significantly in their opinions that principals adopt personnel and communication strategies for teachers job performance in the area of study except for non-avoidance of aggressive communication strategies.

Conclusion

Principals adoption of administrative, communication and personnel strategies enhance teachers job performance in public secondary schools in Onitsha North L.G.A. Amongst different

communications strategies, principals engage in aggressive communication strategies which hinder effective teachers job performance. Gender of the teachers do not significantly affect principals administrative, communication and personnel strategies employed in secondary schools for teachers job performance.

Consent

As per international standard or university standard, respondents' written consent has been collected and preserved by the author(s).

Recommendations

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

1. Secondary school principals should intensify administrative, communication and personnel strategies to enhance teachers job performance geared toward realizable educational objectives.
2. Principals should eschew the use of aggressive communication strategies which impair adequate secondary school administration and teachers job performance.
3. Government should provide the needed educational facilities that would engender adequate principals administrative strategies for teachers job performance in secondary schools.

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