

PRINCIPALS' ADMINISTRATIVE TASK PERFORMANCE AND PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS' EFFECTIVENESS IN EDO STATE

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Abstract

The study investigated principals' administrative task performance and public secondary schools' effectiveness in Edo state. Three research questions were raised; two were answered, while one was formulated into hypotheses and tested at 0.05 level of significance. This study was a descriptive research of correlational type. The population of the study comprises of all the three hundred and nine (309) principals from the three hundred and nine (309) public senior secondary schools in Edo State. A multi-stage sampling technique was used to select a sample of two hundred and sixteen (216) principals using the stratified sampling technique in the first stage and the simple random sampling technique in the subsequent stages. A questionnaire titled: "Principals' Administrative Task Performance and Schools' Effectiveness Questionnaire (PATPSEQ)" validated with a reliability coefficient of 0.81 was used to collect data from the respondents. The research questions were analysed using mean and standard deviation while hypothesis was tested using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient at 0.05 level of significance. The findings from the analysis of the study revealed that the level of principals' administrative task performance and the level of public secondary schools' effectiveness in Edo State is moderate and there is a positive and significant relationship between principals' administrative task performance and public secondary schools' effectiveness in Edo State. Based on the findings, the study recommended that the principals in public secondary schools in Edo state should be proactive, timely and dynamic in performing their administrative tasks to improve the school's effectiveness in the state.

Keywords: Principals, Administrative Task, Performance, Schools' Effectiveness, Public secondary schools

Introduction

Secondary school education is essential for achieving the national educational objectives in Nigeria. It is the second level of education in Nigeria and serves as both the apex of Nigeria's basic education and as a bridge between primary and tertiary education in the Nigerian educational system (Ibukun, 2004). Stating the goals of secondary education in Nigeria, Owojori and Asaolu (2010) make it understandable that the potential of a nation depends on the quality of education it provides for its citizens. One of the ways of accomplishing this national educational objective of secondary schools is in the ways and manner in which the principal manages and coordinates the activities in the secondary school

The principal is a manager, an administrator, an exemplary leader, a counsellor, a public relations officer, a bridge builder, and even a messenger (Murphy, 2002). The nomenclature, principal, is also unisexual. It could refer to male or female. He/she is central in the administration of secondary school and a major determinant in the realization of the aims of secondary school education (Pounder, 2006). According to Akomolafe (2012), an effective principal boosts academic achievement for all students, increases the effectiveness of his/her teaching staff, and consistently takes administrative or leadership actions known to improve outcomes for students. Principals are the core of secondary school administration in Nigeria. They are the chief executives vested with the responsibility of the everyday running of secondary schools. The principals execute the educational programmes in secondary schools, keep records of school events, and provide a conducive teaching and learning environment in schools (Ogbonnaya, 2004). The growth rate of the school is dependent on how the principal carries out his administrative tasks in terms of performance

The administrator's tasks performance are the activities carried out by the principals. The educational administrative tasks and functions include policy implementation, programme planning, human resource management, pupil personnel management, facilities maintenance, procurement management, school plant management, finance management and records management. The administrative tasks of the principal also include directing the teachers and students in an environment conducive to the maximum development of the learners. Therefore, the principal being the administrator of the school is expected to work hard to achieve the goals with the use of his knowledge and wisdom. The role of the principal as the administrative head is crucial to his success as he is saddled with the responsibility to motivate, inspire, stimulate and influence the actions, reactions, behaviours, beliefs and attitudes of those he is leading to build staff and students in such a way that relationship among one person influences the behaviour or actions of others.

Another daunting administrative task of the principal is being the accounting officer responsible for all revenue and expenditure; they should be conversant with school accounting and bookkeeping procedures and practices. This helps them to supervise and control the work of the bursar or the accounts clerk while managing the school finances and accounts. Principals are also expected to manage and maintain pupil and personnel discipline and welfare. The principal maintains and improves the buildings and environment as well as the pupils' classrooms, therefore providing a conducive environment for learners to study. Akpakwu (2012) succinctly placed the administrative tasks of school heads under the broad categories of instructional supervision, student personnel, staff personnel, school-community relationship, and school plant management.

Instructional supervision is the process of overseeing, monitoring, guiding, checking, directing, and evaluating one or more aspects of a school to provide support services and improve activities of the teachers and other staff personnel in the school towards the achievement of educational objectives. According to Ada (2014), instructional supervision involves an internal mechanism adopted by the principal for self-evaluation, geared towards helping teachers and students to improve on their teaching and learning activities for the purpose of achieving educational objectives. Instructional supervision is aimed at improving teacher performance, instructional quality, and student outcomes.

It involves supervising and supporting teachers in their instructional practices, providing feedback, guidance, and resources to enhance their teaching skills.

Student personnel refer to services rendered to pupils and all the records of the various activities carried out by the pupil in the school. These include providing guidance and counselling services, instituting procedures for the orientation of pupils, establishing school attendance policy and procedures and maintaining a system of child accounting, establishing policies and procedures for dealing with pupils' irregularities (conduct problems), establishing policy and procedures regarding pupil safety in the building and school premises, developing and coordinating the extracurricular programme, handling disciplinary cases, developing systematic procedures for the continuous assessment and comprehensive reporting of student achievements., providing health services and providing for individual pupil inventory services.

Staff personnel refers to services rendered to staff and all the records of the various activities carried out by the staff in the school. These include helping to formulate staff personnel policies, recruiting staff personnel, selecting and assigning staff personnel, scheduling teachers' assignments, communicating the objectives of the school programme to the school, observing teachers in their classroom, diagnosing the strengths and weaknesses of teachers, assisting teachers in resolving classroom issues and evaluating their performance, improving the performance of teachers, coordinating the work of teachers, encouraging and creating opportunities for the professional development of staff members, maximising the different skills found in the school, developing 'esprit de corps among teachers and developing a system of staff personnel records amongst others.

School-community relations management deals with how the head teacher manages the relationships between the school and the community (Mgbodile, 2004). A school-community relationship is a series of pinned activities and media through which the schools seek to learn about the community, inform the community about and interpret, when necessary, the purposes, programmes, problems and evaluating school policies and progress (Bortner, 2019). It is a mutual interaction between the school and the community whereby they gain mutual help and understanding from each other as well as being fully aware of one another's activities, policies, plans, programmes, problems, progress and failures (Afolabi, 1998). School and community relationship refers to services rendered to parents of pupils and the community where a school is located and all the records of these various activities as carried out by the staff in the school. These include developing and administering policies and procedures for parents and community participation in school matters, conferring with parents, handling parental complaints, representing the school by participating in community organisations, cooperating with other community agencies, facilitating the ongoing review of acceptable plans and policies for community improvement, particularly concerning the services provided by schools, and aiding in the development and implementation of plans that enhance community life.

School plant management deals with how the school facilities namely: the school site, the buildings, the playground, the equipment and other material resources provided in the school are managed for effective teaching and learning. The school plant refers to the school site, the buildings, the

playground, the equipment and other material resources provided in the school for effective teaching and learning (Onuorah, 2004). Similarly, Mgbodile (2004) described the school plant as the space interpretation of the school curriculum. For Engman (2008) the school plants are basically educational facilities. Against this background, Osahn in Onwurah (2004) grouped the educational facilities (school plant) into various types. These are: School building, equipment and school records/books, among others. According to Obi (2004), Educational facilities are necessary tools in the school for effective teaching and learning. As noted by Mgbodile (2004), school plants are needed for developing the cognitive areas of knowledge, abilities and skills which are needed for academic achievement. In view of this, Ezugwu (2004) argued that properly designed and fully utilized school plant with wide array of teaching aids provide effective delivery of school's curriculum are positively related to academic achievement. School principals have the responsibility to ensure that school facilities are well maintained and serve their intended purpose.

Principals have targets to meet in exercising their administrative tasks to achieve effectiveness and efficiency in teaching and learning processes to produce dynamic, vibrant, knowledgeable, creative and skilled manpower that will be able to use the knowledge gained for service delivery within the society and the world at large. Hence principals ensure that subject teachers give the students assignments to do in their various classrooms during school hours and also give them a take-home assignment as a follow-up to the one carried out in the classrooms regularly. In addition to this, lesson notes, lesson plans as well as textbooks used by the teachers, subject diaries, and class registers, are thoroughly checked by the principal to ensure compliance by the teachers to avoid compromising the school standards and ultimately culminating in school effectiveness.

School effectiveness refers to the degree to which schools carry out their primary assignments of teaching and learning successfully without disruption and how such schools can attain their short- and long-term objectives. Schools' effectiveness can be seen as the extent to which the set goals and objectives of the school programs are actualized. A school is considered effective if there is a level of consistency of recorded progress among the students over a period of time. School effectiveness includes the time, opportunity to learn and a structured approach to teaching that involves frequent monitoring of student's progress in the classroom and supportive educational leadership. Adewale (2004) highlighted the indices of school effectiveness as instructional leadership provided by the principal, curriculum learning objectives, learning activities and achievement measures. These indices could be succinctly discussed as quality leadership, efficiency, accountability and productivity.

Leadership plays a crucial role in the effectiveness of schools and serves as a key indicator of their overall success and performance. In this context, leadership refers to a school leader's ability to influence and guide teachers and students in achieving established educational goals. Teachers tend to perform better when supported by strong leadership, as it motivates and equips them to fulfil their responsibilities. Similarly, students thrive when their principal and school board members demonstrate effective leadership. Key aspects of effective school leadership include establishing a clear and compelling vision and mission for the school, setting specific, measurable, achievable,

relevant, and time-bound (SMART) goals, prioritizing instructional leadership and valuing staff input, fostering a positive school culture and managing resources efficiently. Effective leaders also build partnerships with parents and the community, make informed decisions, and demonstrate accountability by leading by example.

Efficiency refers to the ability of a school to achieve its educational goals through the most effective and economical use of its resources. Efficiency in a school setting encompasses the ability of an institution to successfully achieve its educational objectives through the most optimal and prudent use of its available resources. This concept is not just a measure of how well a school operates but also reflects a commitment to fostering an enriching educational experience for every student. To assess school efficiency, we can examine a variety of indicators. For instance, students' achievements serve as a critical benchmark, showcasing how effectively the school supports learning and growth. Resource allocation is another vital aspect; schools must carefully distribute their funding, materials, and staff to meet the diverse needs of students. Class size also plays a significant role—smaller classes often allow for more personalized attention and support. Additionally, tracking repetition rates can provide insight into how well students grasp their coursework, while dropout rates highlight the need for engaging and supportive learning environments. Finally, the condition and availability of teaching facilities and infrastructure—such as classrooms, libraries, and technology—directly impact the learning experience. Overall, prioritizing efficiency in schools ensures that limited resources are put to their best use, ultimately striving to create the most effective educational landscape for all students.

Accountability refers to the responsibility given to educational institutions to provide high-quality education to their students and meet certain educational expectations. It is a means by which policymakers at the state and district levels, parents and taxpayers monitor the performance of students and schools. Accountability involves administrators, teachers and students taking account of their progress. Accountability brings about school effectiveness through the following ways: monitoring and examining students' achievements, high attendance and graduation rates, focus on teacher quality and positive learning environment, parent and community involvement, good management of resources and overall improvement.

Productivity in education is often taken to mean using the inputs and processes of schooling in ways that increase desired outcomes. It is a measure of how efficiently a school makes use of its resources to achieve desired educational goals. A school is said to be productive when the communication between students, teachers, and the principal is very clear. A productive school will have high levels of student achievement measured by standardised tests, promotion, and graduation rates. Such a school is said to be effective, while a school with a low student achievement rate is said to be ineffective.

It must therefore be pointed out that the effectiveness of secondary schools is crucial in the realization of secondary school goals and objectives as stipulated in the National Policy on Education. A nation can fulfill its diverse educational goals only when the aims of secondary education are achieved,

which consequently relies on how effectively principals perform their administrative duties within the secondary education framework. It is on this premise that this study was carried out to investigate the influence of principals' administrative task performance on schools' effectiveness in public secondary schools in Edo State

Statement of the Problem

The administration of secondary schools in Nigeria has become increasingly more complex as a result of an increase in student enrolment, the advent of modern technology, expanded curriculum, insecurity, and global health challenges, among others. In Edo State, this has evoked public concern about the performance of secondary school principals in discharging their administrative tasks. It has also been observed in recent times that most secondary schools in Edo state are characterized by poor attitude of teachers to work, high rate of teachers' absenteeism, truancy, indiscipline among teachers and students and lateness to school by both the staff and students in secondary school which suggest poor administrative task performance by the principals.

Other visible challenges appear to be improper handling of parental complaints and lack of cooperation with other community agencies, inability to keep the school office running smoothly, improper accounting of school finances, and inadequate maintenance of the school's plants through the repairs and replacement of school facilities or new construction as the need arises. These absurd abnormalities in the school system could impede on principal's leadership, efficiency, accountability, and productivity. Therefore, could it be that principals are inundated with the numerous administrative tasks to be performed daily? Could this also hurt school effectiveness? Therefore, this study seeks to investigate the relationship between principals' administrative task performance and public secondary school effectiveness in Edo State.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to investigate principals' administrative task performance and public secondary schools' effectiveness in Edo State. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. Find out the level of principals' administrative task performance in public secondary schools in Edo State;
2. Determine the level of public secondary schools' effectiveness in Edo State;
3. Find out if there is a significant relationship between principals' administrative task performance and public secondary schools' effectiveness in Edo State.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided this study

1. What is the level of principals' administrative task performance in public secondary schools in Edo State?
2. What is the level of public secondary schools' effectiveness in Edo State?
3. Is there a significant relationship between principals' administrative task performance and public secondary schools' effectiveness in Edo State?

Research Hypotheses

HO₁: There is no significant relationship between principals' administrative task performance and public secondary schools' effectiveness in Edo State.

Methodology

This study is a descriptive research of correlational type. The design was chosen because the sample of the population was collected as it exists without manipulation. The design was deemed suitable for this study because its aim was to determine if principals' administrative task performance influenced public secondary schools' effectiveness in Edo State. "The population of this study comprises all three hundred and nine (309) principals and three hundred and nine (309) public senior secondary schools in Edo State. The sample size of the study was 216 principals and 216 public secondary schools, which is approximately 70% of the population. This was done to have adequate representation of the schools in the three senatorial districts of Edo State using the multi-stage sampling procedure. In stage 1, the State was stratified into three (3) Senatorial Districts using the Stratified Sampling Technique. In stage 2, from each of the Senatorial Districts, approximately seventy percent (70%) of public secondary schools was randomly selected using the simple random sampling technique which was ninety-four (94) public secondary schools from Edo South Senatorial District, seventy-four (74) public secondary schools from Edo North senatorial District and forty-eight (48) public secondary schools from Edo Central senatorial district of Edo State. In Stage 3, from each of the sampled schools in each Senatorial District, seventy percent (70%) of the principals was selected using the Simple Random Sampling Technique which was ninety-four (94) principals in Edo South Senatorial District, seventy-four (74) principals from Edo North Senatorial District and forty-eight (48) principals from Edo Central senatorial District. Thus, 216 principals were selected from the sampled public senior secondary schools in Edo State. The instrument for data collection was the structured questionnaire titled "Principals' Administrative Task Performance and Schools' Effectiveness questionnaire (PATPSEQ)". The instrument consists of two (2) sections. Section A and section B. Section A contains 25 items which elicited information on Principals' administrative task performance while section B contains 20 items which elicited information on school effectiveness. The instrument was based on the modified four-point Likert scale of Strongly Agree (4 points), Agree (3 points), Disagree (2 points), and Strongly Disagree (1 point). To ensure the reliability of the instruments, the Cronbach's alpha statistics was utilized to establish the consistency of the research instrument that was administered. To do this, 20 questionnaires were administered to staff of selected public senior secondary schools in Delta State which were not part of the study and the result of the reliability test was 0.81." The questionnaire was administered to the respondents by the researchers in their various schools. The data collected were subjected to analysis through the application of mean and standard deviation for research questions 1 and 2. The hypothesis was tested utilizing Pearson's product-moment correlation, with a significance level set at 0.05. A mean value of 2.50, indicative of the arithmetic mean of the 4-point Likert scale, was established as the criterion for the acceptance of the research questions.

Presentation of Results

Research Question 1: What is the level of principals' administrative task performance in public secondary schools in Edo State?

Table 1: Mean and standard deviation scores on the level of principals' administrative task performance in public secondary schools in Edo State

| S/N | Item | N | Mean | SD | Remarks |
|-----|-------------------------------|-----|-------------|-------------|------------|
| 1 | Instructional Supervision | 216 | 2.62 | 0.76 | 'Moderate' |
| 2 | Pupils Personnel | 216 | 2.59 | 0.57 | 'Moderate' |
| 3 | 'Staff Personnel' | 216 | 2.70 | 0.64 | 'Moderate' |
| 4 | School-Community Relationship | 216 | 2.69 | 0.40 | 'Moderate' |
| 5 | School Plant Management | 216 | 2.71 | 0.72 | 'Moderate' |
| | Grand Mean | | 2.67 | 0.62 | 'Moderate' |

$N=216$, \bar{x} score < 2.50 = low, 2.50 to 2.99 = moderate, while \bar{x} score ≥ 3.00 = high.

Table 1 outlines the mean and standard deviation of five indices related to the administrative task performance of principals in public secondary schools in Edo State. The mean values range from 2.59 to 2.71, while the standard deviations vary from 0.40 to 0.76. Notably, the overall grand mean for all items is 2.67, which exceeds the theoretical mean of 2.5. This indicates that the level of principals' administrative task performance in public secondary schools in Edo State is moderate.

Research Question 2: What is the level of public secondary schools' effectiveness in Edo State?

Table 2: Mean and standard deviation scores on the level of public secondary schools' effectiveness in Edo State

| S/N | Item | N | Mean | SD | Remarks |
|-----|-------------------|-----|-------------|-------------|------------|
| 1 | Leadership | 216 | 2.67 | 0.71 | 'Moderate' |
| 2 | Efficiency | 216 | 2.86 | 0.68 | 'Moderate' |
| 3 | Accountability | 216 | 2.64 | 0.72 | 'Moderate' |
| 4 | Productivity | 216 | 2.55 | 0.66 | 'Moderate' |
| | Grand Mean | | 2.68 | 0.69 | 'Moderate' |

$N=216$, \bar{x} score < 2.50 = low, 2.50 to 2.99 = moderate, while \bar{x} score ≥ 3.00 = high.

Table 2 illustrates the mean and standard deviation for four indices measuring the effectiveness of public secondary schools in Edo State. The mean values range from 2.55 to 2.86, while the standard deviations fall between 0.66 and 0.72. Notably, the computed grand mean for all indices is 2.68, which exceeds the theoretical mean of 2.5. This indicates that the effectiveness level of public secondary schools in Edo State is moderate.

Hypothesis one

There is no significant relationship between principals' administrative task performance and public secondary schools' effectiveness in Edo State.

Table 3: Principals' Administrative Task Performance and Public Secondary Schools' Effectiveness in Edo State

| Variables | N | Pearson's | Sig/2-Tailed |
|---|-----|-----------|--------------|
| Principals' administrative task performance | 216 | 0.174 | 0.011 |
| Schools' effectiveness | | | |

Significant at $p < 0.05$

Table 3 reveals a Pearson correlation coefficient (r) of 0.174 and a p-value of 0.011, tested at an alpha level of 0.05. Since the p-value is less than the alpha level, we reject the null hypothesis, which states that "there is no significant relationship between principals' administrative task performance and the effectiveness of public secondary schools in Edo State." This indicates that there is a positive and significant relationship between the administrative task performance of principals and the effectiveness of public secondary schools in Edo State.

Discussion of Findings

The findings from research question one revealed that the level of principals' administrative task performance in public secondary schools in Edo State is moderate. This might be the multiplying effect of the introduction of Edo's best educational programmes by the immediate past government of Edo state, which made it compulsory for teachers to be trained on the use of digital teaching facilities in the teaching-learning in public secondary schools in Edo state. The findings of this study are in agreement with the findings of Akpan (2016), who found that the level of principals' administrative task performance in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom State of Nigeria is moderate. In contrast, this study's findings differ from those of Louis-Omiyi and Igenegbai (2021), who found that principals' administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools in Edo State is high.

The findings from research question two revealed that the level of public secondary schools' effectiveness in Edo State is moderate. Several factors may contribute to this, including inadequate infrastructure and resources, high student-to-teacher ratios, and low student motivation. Additionally, administrative and management challenges, socioeconomic issues such as poverty and limited access to healthcare, outdated curricula and assessment methods, a negative school culture and climate, insufficient community and parental involvement, along with inadequate funding and poor resource allocation, ultimately affecting the overall effectiveness of the school. This study agrees with the findings of Osasuyi and Iduozee (2024), who found that the level of public secondary schools' effectiveness in Edo State is moderate. Conversely, this study presents a different conclusion from

the research of Umar, Kenayathulla, and Hoque (2021), who reported that secondary schools in Niger State, Nigeria, exhibited a high level of effectiveness.

Finally, the study found a positive and significant relationship between principals' administrative task performance and public secondary schools' effectiveness in Edo State. This might be because when principals carry out their administrative responsibilities effectively, it leads to enhanced school management, increased teacher motivation and job satisfaction, improved student discipline and behaviour, strengthened community involvement and support, and a greater emphasis on accountability and transparency. These factors collectively contribute to the overall success of the educational environment. Also, principals who excel in administrative tasks provide effective leadership, which is critical to the success of a school. They set clear goals, prioritize tasks, and allocate resources efficiently, ultimately enhancing school effectiveness. This finding agrees with the findings of Normakoh (2019) who found that there is a positive relationship between principals' administrative and supervisory strategies and performance of public secondary schools in Obio/Akpor LGA of Rivers State. The finding of this study were also in agreement with the study of Kanyip and Ogon (2022), who found that there is a significant relationship between the principal's role in instructional supervision, planning, motivation, evaluation, and teacher effectiveness and school effectiveness in Public Secondary Schools in Akwa Ibom State. The findings of this study align with those of Nwankwo, Ezeanolue, Nnorom, and Cimezie (2021), who discovered a significant relationship between principals' administrative styles and teachers' job performance as well as secondary school effectiveness in the Ehime Mbano local government area of Imo State.

Implications of the Findings for Educational Management

Secondary education is crucial for achieving Nigeria's national educational objectives. To meet the goals of secondary education, school principals, as the administrative leaders of these institutions, must be efficient and effective in carrying out their administrative responsibilities. It is therefore important that school administrators should be proactive, competent, and up to date in performing their administrative tasks so that the goals and objectives of secondary education can be achieved.

Teacher quality is also a critical factor in school effectiveness. Educational managers should prioritize teacher training and development programs to enhance teacher capacity and improve student outcomes. Also, community engagement and partnerships are essential for school improvement. Educational managers should explore opportunities for collaboration with local communities, businesses, and organizations to support school improvement. Educational managers should also advocate for policy changes that support school improvement, such as reforms to teacher recruitment, curriculum development, and resource allocation.

Furthermore, principals' moderate performance may indicate a need for enhanced supervision and monitoring. Educational authorities should establish robust supervision and monitoring systems to support principals in improving their administrative task performance. This may involve regular visits to schools, performance evaluations, and feedback sessions to help principals identify areas for improvement. Also, principals may need to delegate tasks more effectively to other school

administrators. This can help to improve administrative efficiency and reduce the workload on principals. Educational authorities should provide training and support to help principals develop their delegation skills and empower other school administrators to take on more responsibilities. Additionally, establishing accountability mechanisms can help to improve principals' administrative task performance. Educational authorities should establish clear performance indicators and consequences for underperformance. This can help to motivate principals to improve their administrative task performance and provide a sense of accountability for their actions.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, it was observed that the level of principals' administrative task performance in public secondary schools in Edo State is moderate; the level of public secondary schools' effectiveness in Edo State is moderate and there is a positive and significant relationship between principals' administrative task performance and public secondary schools' effectiveness in Edo State

Recommendations

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

1. The principals in public secondary schools in Edo state should be proactive and dynamic in performing their administrative tasks to improve the school effectiveness in the state
2. Principals should always evaluate the outcome of their administrative tasks performance in secondary schools to know if they are effective or not in their school effectiveness
3. Since findings revealed a significant relationship between principals' administrative task performance and public secondary schools' effectiveness in Edo State, principals are encouraged to be more active and timely in performing their administrative tasks so that their schools can be more effective

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