



Influence of Selected Management Factors on Academic Performance of Secondary School Students in Rivers State

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ABSTRACT

The study investigated the influence of selected management factors on academic performance of secondary school students in Rivers State. Three research questions and three hypotheses guided the study. The study adopted descriptive survey research design. Population of the study was 7, 619 teachers in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. Sample size for the study was 2, 286 teachers representing 30% of the population which was selected using simple random sampling technique. However, out of the 2,286 respondents, only 2,172 properly filled and returned the instruments which were used for data analysis. Questionnaire on Influence of Management Factors on Academic Performance of Secondary School Students (QIMFAPSSS) was used to collect data. The instrument was validated by two experts in educational management and measurement and evaluation respectively, while the Cronbach Alpha formula was used to obtain 0.80 reliability coefficient for the instrument. Research questions were analyzed with mean and standard deviation, while hypotheses were tested with z-test statistic at 0.05 level of significance. Results showed that all the management factors: staff motivation, staff supervision and staff development programmes influence academic performance of secondary school students in Rivers State to a high extent. Results also showed that there is no significant difference in the opinions of the respondents on the influence of staff motivation, staff supervision and staff development programmes on academic performance of secondary school students in Rivers State. It was recommended among others that: the staff of secondary schools should be adequately motivated in terms of regular promotion, and staff should be provided with development programmes that can enhance their delivery capacity for better academic performance of students.

Keywords: Management, Staff Motivation, Staff Supervision, Staff Development Programmes, Academic Performance.

INTRODUCTION

There is virtually no school organization or system that can effectively operate and achieve its objective (s) without a person or group of persons managing it. Management has been defined by Onuka (2004) as a process of initiating, planning, organizing, implementing, monitoring, regulating, supervising and evaluating a project. Management is the act of getting things done using people and material resources (Onuka & Durowoju, 2012). School Management can also be seen as the task of overseeing school affairs by the school managers such as principals, vice principals and classroom teachers in order to enable the school achieve high academic performance among the students. Educational management in secondary schools involves the application of management principles in designing, developing and effecting resources towards achievement of educational goals (Okumbe, 2001). Oandah (2008) observed that the debate about the role of school management in contributing to a school's academic performance has been

in the public domain for some time now. This shows how critical the issue of management at the secondary school level is as regards attainment of high academic performance among the students.

Academic performance could be referred to as the grade or scores which students obtain at the end of an instruction, task or after completion of a learning experience. Academic performance can also be viewed as the behaviours exhibited by an individual (student) which is noticeable after undergoing a programme in a secondary school or a school (Babatunde, 2015). However, observations and studies over the years have shown that the academic performance of secondary school students especially in final/external examinations such as the West African Senior School Certificate Examination (WASSCE) and Senior School certificate Examinations (SSCE) conducted by the National Examinations Council (NECO) in Nigeria generally have been poor. Gbadeyan (2009) revealed in her study that more than 50% of candidates that sat WASSCE examinations in 2000 failed and a few of the students passed at credit level from 2000 to 2007. While the WAEC Chief Examiner's (2008) report revealed a decline in academic performance of students, WAEC result statistics for WASSCE 2014 and 2018 respectively showed that only 31.29% and 49.98% of the candidates obtained credit passes in five subjects including English Language and Mathematics, which is poor for our educational development.

However, there is a growing body of literature from researchers and educationists which have made an attempt to examine the relationship between education management and students academic performance (United Nations, 2013; Orodho, 2014; Waweru & Orodho, 2013), but the results reveal rather spurious relationship (Waweru & Orodho, 2014). As observed by Carnoy (2006), the academic performance of students can be influenced by a number of management factors mainly the availability and quality of human resource, on-site school supervision and professional staff development. Unfortunately, there seems to be scanty empirical studies on staff motivation, staff supervision, staff development programmes and academic performance of secondary school students in Rivers State, especially in recent times as to ascertain the extent to which management factors can influence academic performance of secondary school students in Rivers State, the need for this study. According to Tella (2007), off all the personal and psychological variables that have attracted researchers in the area of educational achievement, motivation seems to have gained more popularity and leading other variables. Motivation explains why one individual dodges work, another height normally satisfactorily enough to reach the height, while yet others resort to illegal and unconventional means such as stealing, cheating and political recognition (Onuka & Durowoju, 2008). Kadzamira (2006) observed that teachers are highly dissatisfied with their remuneration and other conditions of service like poor incentives and conditions of service which have resulted to low morale and thus poor performance. Staff motivation in school or education is very important because it has to do with stimulating the staff, especially the teachers to put in their possible best in teaching- learning and improvement of students/ school performance.

Staff supervision as a management factor could positively or negatively influence the academic performance of secondary school students. Supervision has been defined by scholars (e.g. Babalola, Ayeni, Adedeji, Suleiman & Arikewuyo (2006) as interaction between at least two persons for the improvement of activity. Supervision can also be seen as the process which involved guiding and directing subordinates towards achieving success (Bormman, 2015). Ayeni (2012) who investigated the relationship between supervision and academic achievement reported that supervision is necessary in the school to achieve school objectives. He further noted that the implementation of the school programmes rests in the hand of the school principal. If the staff in the school is not supervised adequately, there will be inimical effects on the students' output and the educational objectives may not be achieved, consequently various instructional supervisory techniques should be employed to ensure qualitative and quantitative service delivery by the teachers (Usman, 2015). This indicates that, supervision remains an essential function to actualize the aims and objectives in which the school sets to achieve (Onuman, 2015).

The ability of the management to initiate staff development programmes or encourage the staff to attend such programmes such as in-service training, seminars and workshops matters a lot in education industry because such development programmes are geared towards enhancing the knowledge, job delivery skills and abilities and qualifications of the staff, particularly the teachers for their optimum classroom job

performance, and improvement of academic performance among the students. There are some studies on aspects of staff development programmes and academic performance of studies. For instance, Jaja (2014) revealed that the factor that sets quality teachers apart from other teachers is usually their training in teaching methods and in child and adolescent development, in addition to content knowledge. In-service training, seminars, workshops and conferences enable employees to bridge the gap between the skills learnt and the one they are expected to perform (Usoro, 2010). Nghonoli (2017) observed that effective professional development provides an on-going support over a long period of time and enables teachers to try out new ideas and then refine them. Nghonoli further explained that effective professional development is likely to improve motivation which, in turn, provides the basis for teachers' retention and at least the potential for enhanced performance.

The above background shows that management factors play critical roles in students' academic performance in schools. However, it seems that not much empirical studies have been done in recent times on the influence of staff motivation, supervision and staff development programmes on academic performance among students in secondary schools in Rivers State, hence the need for this study.

Statement of the Problem

Studies and reports have shown that students' academic performance in external examinations such as WASSCE and NECO (SSCE) in Nigeria generally which Rivers State is not an exemption has been poor over the years. More than 50% of candidates that sat WASSCE examinations in 2000 failed and a few of the students passed at credit level from 2000 to 2007 (Gbadeyan, 2009). The WAEC result statistics for May/ June, 2014 and 2018 WASSCE indicates that only 31.29% and 49.98% of the candidates who sat for the examinations obtained credits in five subjects including English Language and Mathematics, and this is below expectations. There is a growing body of literature from researchers and educationists which have made an attempt to examine the relationship between education management and students academic performance (Orodho, 2014; Waweru & Orodho, 2013), but the results reveal rather spurious relationship (Waweru & Orodho, 2014). However, there seems to be scanty empirical studies on the influence of staff motivation, supervision and staff development programmes as management factors on students' academic performance in secondary schools, especially in Rivers State of Nigeria, and it is this gap that this study sought to fill in literature.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to investigate the influence of selected management factors on academic performance of secondary school students in Rivers State. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. Ascertain the extent of influence of staff motivation on academic performance of secondary school students in Rivers State.
2. Ascertain the extent of influence of staff supervision on academic performance of secondary school students in Rivers State.
3. Determine the extent of influence of staff development programmes on academic performance of secondary school students in Rivers State.

Research Questions

The following research questions were answered in this study:

1. To what extent does staff motivation influence academic performance of secondary school students in Rivers State?
2. To what extent does staff supervision influence academic performance of secondary school students in Rivers State?
3. To what extent does staff development programmes influence academic performance of secondary school students in Rivers State?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were tested in the study at 0.05 level of significance:

1. There is no significant difference in the opinions of male and female teachers on the influence of staff motivation on academic performance of secondary school students in Rivers State.
2. There is no significant difference in the opinions of male and female teachers on the influence of staff supervision on academic performance of secondary school students in Rivers State.

3. There is no significant difference in the opinions of male and female teachers on the influence of staff development programmes on academic performance of secondary school students in Rivers State.

METHODS

Research Design

The study adopted the descriptive survey research design. According to Dike (2017), a survey research design is an attempt to gather and interpret data about a social institution, an event, a group or an area. The survey research design was considered suitable for the study because the study investigated the extent to which selected management factors influences academic performance of secondary school students in Rivers State. In addition, the researcher does not have any direct control over the independent variables as their manifestations have already occurred.

Population of the Study

The population of the study consists of all the 7,619 academic staff (teachers) in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State, which is made up of 3,926 male and 3,693 female academic staff (teachers) in all the 268 public senior secondary schools in Rivers State (Source: Rivers State Senior Secondary Schools Board, Port Harcourt, 2018).

Sample and Sampling Techniques

The sample size for the study was 2,286 representing 30% of the total population. The respondents were made up of 1,207 male and 1,079 female teachers (respondents). Simple random sampling technique was used to select the 1,207 male and 1,079 female teachers from 79 randomly selected public senior secondary schools in all the 23 Local Government Areas in Rivers State. In all, thirty percent (30%) of the total population of schools and 30% of male and female teachers were selected for the study using the simple random sampling technique.

Instrumentation

A self-structured instrument titled: Questionnaire on Influence of Management Factors on Academic Performance of Secondary School Students (QIMFAPSSS) was used for data collection. The questionnaire consisted of sections A and B. Section A centered on the bio-data of the respondents, while section B elicits information on management factors and academic performance of secondary school students in Rivers State. Section B contains 24 items in all (8 items for each factor or variable). Section B was prepared on a four response scale of Very Low Extent (1 point), Low Extent (2 points), High Extent (3 points) and Very High Extent (4 points). The face and content validities of the questionnaire were determined by two experts in educational management, and measurement and evaluation respectively in Rivers State University, Port Harcourt, while the Cronbach Alpha formula was used to obtain 0.80 reliability coefficient for the instrument. Two teachers were used as research assistants to help with the questionnaire administration and retrieval. However, out of the 2,286 copies of questionnaire distributed to the respondents, only 2,172 (95%) copies were retrieved in good condition and used for data analysis.

Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation) were used to analyze the research questions, while the inferential statistics (z-test statistic) was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

RESULTS

Research Question 1: *To what extent does staff motivation influence academic performance of secondary school students in Rivers State?*

Data for answering this research question is presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation of the Extent to which Staff Motivation Influence Academic Performance of Secondary School Students in Rivers State

S/No.	Items	Male Teachers (n = 1,150)			Female Teachers (n = 1,022)		
		\bar{X}	SD	Remarks	\bar{X}	SD	Remarks
1.	Teachers are likely to be more committed to Extent improving students' academic performance when they are financially motivated	2.68	0.97	High Extent	2.56	0.86	High
2.	Good conditions of service can make a staff Extent to go the extra mile in helping the students to do well academically	2.75	1.02	High Extent	2.72	0.95	High
3.	Additional allowance can make teachers to Extent ensure that basic instructional materials that are not available in the school are improvised for enhanced academic performance among the students	2.89	0.99	High Extent	2.99	0.86	High
4.	Financial motivation of teachers can have Extent positive influence on students' academic performance	2.82	0.96	High Extent	2.56	0.89	High
5.	Increment of staff salary can motivate the High Extent staff to put in their best in order to ensure that students' academic performance improves	2.77	0.91	High Extent	2.62	0.79	
6.	Motivation of staff leads to improvement of Extent students' academic performance generally	2.94	0.95	High Extent	2.71	0.82	High
7.	Praising and appreciating teachers for their Extent contributions in the school can increase the teachers' commitment to improving the students' academic performance	2.82	0.88	High Extent	2.96	0.97	High
8.	Providing teachers with opportunities for Extent professional growth can result to improvement in students' academic performance	2.58	0.86	High Extent	2.65	0.95	High
Grand Mean and Standard Deviation		2.76	0.92		2.71	0.81	

The data analysis for research question 1 as presented on Table 1 above revealed the extent to which staff motivation influence academic performance of secondary school students in Rivers State. From the results on Table 1, it can be observed that the mean ratings of both male and female teachers on all the items (items 1 – 8) are all higher than the mean cut-off mark of 2.50, with the mean scores ranging from \bar{X} = 2.58 – 2.94 for male teachers and \bar{X} = 2.56 – 2.99 for female teachers. This shows that staff motivation influence academic performance of secondary school students in Rivers State to a high extent. The Standard Deviation (SD) of the items ranged from 0.86 – 1.02 for male teachers and 0.82 – 0.95 for female teachers signifying that the respondents are close in their responses.

Research Question 2: *To what extent does staff supervision influence academic performance of secondary school students in Rivers State?*

Data for answering this research question is presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation of the Extent to which Staff Supervision Influence Academic Performance of Secondary School Students in Rivers State

S/No.	Items	Male Teachers (n = 1,150)			Female Teachers (n =1,022)		
		\bar{X}	SD	Remarks	\bar{X}	SD	Remarks
9.	My principal ensures that both teachers and students are effective in the teaching and learning activities	2.97	0.84	High Extent	3.03	0.93	High Extent
10.	Supervision will enhance teachers' classroom effectiveness and result to improvement in students' academic performance	3.14	0.99	High Extent	2.68	1.03	High Extent
11.	Regularly, my principal visits the classrooms to check the students' note and active participation in class	2.36	0.56	Low Extent	2.43	0.65	Low Extent
12.	Teachers ensure that students are actively involved in class activities for better learning outcomes	3.22	0.97	High Extent	3.06	0.74	High Extent
13.	Supervision of students' activities in class can improve the students' academic performance	3.16	0.94	High Extent	3.16	0.90	High Extent
14.	Staff supervision improves staff effectiveness and contribute to high students' academic performance	3.10	1.01	High Extent	2.97	0.98	High Extent
15.	Staff supervision is necessary for better academic performance among the students	3.06	0.96	High Extent	2.90	0.82	High Extent
16.	Generally, supervision may not be necessary in the improvement in student academic performance	2.91	0.90	High Extent	2.99	0.96	High Extent
Grand Mean and Standard Deviation		2.96	0.93		2.91	0.88	

The results for research question 2 as shown in Table 2 above revealed that the mean ratings of respondents on seven items (9, 10, 12, 13, 14, 15 and 16) are higher than the mean cut-off mark of 2.50, while only one item (item 11) is lower than the mean cut-off mark. With the grand mean of 2.96 and 2.91 for the male and female teachers respectively which are higher than the mean cut-off mark (2.50), it can be concluded that the extent to which staff supervision influence academic performance of secondary

school students in Rivers State is high. The Standard Deviation (SD) of the items ranged from 0.56 – 1.01 for male teachers and 0.65 – 1.03 for female teachers signifying that the respondents are close in their responses.

Research Question 3: *To what extent does staff development programmes influence academic performance of secondary school students in Rivers State?*

Data for answering this research question is presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Mean and Standard Deviation of the Extent to which Staff Development Programmes Influence Academic Performance of Secondary School Students in Rivers State

S/No.	Items	Male Teachers (n = 1,150)			Female Teachers (n = 1,022)		
		\bar{X}	SD	Remarks	\bar{X}	SD	Remarks
17.	Staff development programmes are necessary for effective teaching-learning, and enhancement of students' academic performance	3.16	1.02	High Extent	3.20	0.99	High Extent
18.	Not all school managements encourage their staff to attend workshops, seminars which could have impact on students' academic performance	3.07	0.98	High Extent	3.17	1.02	High Extent
19.	Development programmes are vital for the enhancement of staff quality and improvement in academic performance of students	3.04	0.98	High Extent	2.92	0.95	High Extent
20.	Schools that supports the development of their staff tend to record good academic performance among the students	3.03	0.99	High Extent	3.13	1.05	High Extent
21.	Lack of staff development programmes could affect academic performance of students in the school	3.17	1.01	High Extent	2.90	0.95	High Extent
22.	Encouragement of staff development in terms of qualification upgrading through in-service programmes could result to high academic performance among the students	3.14	0.98	High Extent	3.02	0.92	High Extent
23.	Schools that encourage the staff to attend seminars and workshops tend to have teachers with better experience, skills which can result to general improvement in academic performance among the students	3.00	0.95	High Extent	2.92	0.91	High Extent
24.	Generally, staff development programmes are likely to enhance teachers' classroom effectiveness which could result to improvement in students' academic performance	2.95	0.93	High Extent	2.79	0.87	High Extent
Grand Mean and Standard Deviation		3.06	0.98		3.00	0.94	

From the results on Table 3 above, it can be observed that the mean ratings of the respondents on all the items (items 17 – 24) concerning the influence of staff development programmes on academic performance of secondary school students in Rivers State ranges from \bar{X} = 2.95 - 3.17 for male teachers

and $\bar{X} = 2.79 - 3.20$ for female teachers respectively and are all higher than the mean cut-off mark of 2.50. With the grand mean of 3.06 for male teachers and 3.00 for female teachers which are higher than the mean cut-off mark, it can be concluded that staff development programmes influence academic performance of secondary school students in Rivers State to a high extent. The Standard Deviation (SD) of the items ranged from 0.93 – 1.02 for male teachers and 0.87 – 1.05 for female teachers signifying that the respondents are close in their responses.

Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant difference in the opinions of male and female teachers on the influence of staff motivation on academic performance of secondary school students in Rivers State.

Table 4: Z-test Analysis on the Influence of Staff Motivation on Academic Performance of Secondary School Students in Rivers State

Respondents	N	\bar{X}	SD	df	Z-Cal	Z-Crit	α	Remark
Male Teachers	1150	2.76	0.92	2170	1.385	1.96	0.05	NS
Female Teachers	1022	2.71	0.81					

NS = Not Significant at 0.05 Significance Level

From the results in Table 4 above, it can be observed that at 0.05 level of significance and 2170 degree of freedom, z-calculated value = 1.385 and z-critical value = 1.96. Since the z-calculated value of 1.385 < z-critical value of 1.96, the null hypothesis is therefore accepted. This implies that there is no significant difference in the opinions of male and female teachers on the influence of staff motivation on academic performance of secondary school students in Rivers State.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant difference in the opinions of male and female teachers on the influence of staff supervision on academic performance of secondary school students in Rivers State.

Table 5: Z-test Analysis on the Influence of Staff Supervision on Academic Performance of Secondary School Students in Rivers State

Respondents	N	\bar{X}	SD	df	Z-Cal	Z-Crit	α	Remark
Male Teachers	1150	2.96	0.93	2170	1.292	1.96	0.05	NS
Female Teachers	1022	2.91	0.86					

NS = Not Significant at 0.05 Significance Level

The results in Table 5 above shows that at 0.05 level of significance and 2170 degree of freedom, the z-calculated value = 1.292 and z-critical value = 1.96. Since the z-calculated value of 1.292 < z-critical value of 1.96, the null hypothesis is therefore accepted. This implies that there is no significant difference in the opinions of male and female teachers on the influence of staff supervision on academic performance of secondary school students in Rivers State.

Hypothesis 3: There is no significant difference in the opinions of male and female teachers on the influence of staff development programmes on academic performance of secondary school students in Rivers State.

Table 6: Z-test Analysis on the Influence of Staff Development Programmes on Academic Performance of Secondary School Students in Rivers State

Respondents	N	\bar{X}	SD	df	Z-Cal	Z-Crit	α	Remark
Male Teachers	1150	3.06	0.98	2170	1.456	1.96	0.05	NS
Female Teachers	1022	3.00	0.94					

NS = Not Significant at 0.05 Significance Level

The results in Table 6 above shows that at 0.05 level of significance and 2170 degree of freedom, the z-calculated value = 1.456 and z-critical value = 1.96. Since the z-calculated value of 1.456 < z-critical value of 1.96, the null hypothesis is therefore accepted. This implies that there is no significant difference in the opinions of male and female teachers on the influence of staff development programmes on academic performance of secondary school students in Rivers State.

DISCUSSION

From the results of research question 1 as shown in Table 1, it can be observed that staff motivation influences academic performance of secondary school students in Rivers State to a high extent. The results of hypothesis 1 further indicate that there is no significant difference in the opinions of male and female teachers on the influence of staff motivation on academic performance of secondary school students in Rivers State. This finding clearly indicates that motivation is very necessary in the life of every human being, especially when good results are been expected from an individual. This finding tend to corroborate Okoye in Onuka and Durowoju (2008) who observed that motivation explains why one individual dodges work, another height normally satisfactorily enough to reach the height, while yet others resort to illegal and unconventional means such as stealing, cheating and political recognition. With conducive working condition in schools, teachers would be motivated to perform better hence good students' performance in the examinations (Gitonga, 2012).

Results in Table 2 revealed that staff supervision influence academic performance of secondary school students in Rivers State to a high extent. Furthermore, data on Table 5 for hypothesis 2 showed that there is no significant difference in the opinions of male and female teachers on the influence of staff supervision on academic performance of secondary school students in Rivers State. This finding corroborates the earlier observations by Ayeni (2012) that supervision is necessary in the school to achieve school objectives. If schools are not supervised adequately, it will have inimical effects on the students' output and the educational objectives may not be achieved, consequently various instructional supervisory techniques should be employed to ensure qualitative and quantitative service delivery by the teachers (Usman, 2015).

From the results for research question 3 as shown on Table 3, staff development programmes were found to have high influence on academic performance of secondary school students in Rivers State. It was also observed from the results of hypothesis 3 as presented on Table 6 that there is no significant difference in the opinions of male and female teachers on the influence of staff development programmes on academic performance of secondary school students in Rivers State. This finding agrees with Carnoy (2006) who revealed that the academic performance of students can be influence by a number of management factors, which are mainly the availability and quality of human resource, on-site school supervision and professional staff development. The finding of the study has also buttressed the reason for which the Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN, 2013) through her National Policy on Education reiterated the need to accord teacher education a prominent place in educational planning. Jaja (2014) noted that the factor that sets qualified teachers apart from other teachers is usually their training in teaching methods and in child and adolescent development, in addition to content knowledge.

CONCLUSION

From the findings of the study, it can be observed that all the management factors considered in this study such as staff motivation, staff supervision and staff development programmes influence academic performance of secondary school students in Rivers State to a high extent. Hence, it was concluded that academic performances of students both in internal and external examinations are partly determined by management factors, such as staff motivation, staff supervision and staff development programmes. The more the school management support and encourage staff motivation, staff supervision and staff development programmes, the better the academic performance of the students both in school and external examinations.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study and conclusion, the following recommendations are made:

1. The staff of secondary schools should be adequately motivated in terms of regular promotion and provision of opportunities for their professional growth.
2. There is need for regular staff supervision, internally and externally as to ensure that the staff are effective and perform optimally for the improvement of students' academic performance.
3. The staff should be provided with development programmes that can enhance their delivery capacity for better academic performance of students.

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