



Principals' Administrative Styles and Teachers' Performance in Public Senior Secondary Schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

The study investigated the relationship between principals' administrative styles and teachers' performance in public senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis Rivers State, Nigeria, using 2 research questions and 2 hypotheses. The research design adopted in the study was a correlational research design. The population of the study was six hundred and fifty-one (651) teachers from thirty-four (34) public senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State. The sample size of the study was 479 teachers from 17 Public Senior Secondary Schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis which represented 20% of the population using the simple random sampling technique. The instrument for the study was a self-designed questionnaire titled: "Principals' Administrative Styles and Teachers Performance Questionnaire (PASTPQ)" using a modified four point Likert rating scale. The content and face validity were ascertained by two experts in educational management and measurement and evaluation. A reliability index of 0.90 was achieved using the test-retest method of reliability. The research questions were answered using mean and standard deviation while the hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient. Findings showed that principals' autocratic and laissez faire administrative styles have positive significant relationship with Teachers' performance in public senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis. Some recommendations made were that school principals should adopt a combination of administrative styles in the administration of their schools in order to enhance better job performance among teachers, and the Rivers State Ministry of Education should organize regular inspection of schools to monitor the administrative styles used by principals to enhance better performance among teachers in order to achieve the objectives of public senior secondary education as entrenched in the National Policy of Education.

Keywords: Principal, Autocratic Administrative Style, Laissez-Faire Administrative Style, Teachers' Performance

INTRODUCTION

In Nigeria, secondary school management is the responsibility of the school administrator, otherwise referred to as the principal. The principal is usually an academic staff who grew through the ranks before his/her appointment. As a seasoned academic who must have performed some administrative tasks as class teacher, subject head, and student adviser, he/she is expected to exhibit good administrative traits that should attract good followership. Studies have proven that the principal dictates the tune of the school. The school activities revolve around him/her, and thus, he/she can make or mar a school (Abdulrasheed & Bello, 2015). It is therefore advocated that good administrative qualities will enable the principal achieve success in managing the school. There is the argument also that some secondary school

principals lack good administrative skills/styles. Aina (2011) opined that lack of administrative competency in some principal's result in low quality of instruction, indiscipline among staff and students which culminate in low quality instruction in secondary schools. Furthermore, the authors stressed that different styles of administration produce different outcome. The question then is which administrative style influence teachers' performance negatively or positively? Scholars have observed that an effective principal can demonstrate such administrative styles that will create confidence, inspire, others objectively, evaluate the qualities and contributions of staff and take difficult decisions. Therefore, there is no doubt that there are some styles of administration that can assist secondary school - principals to achieve success in the management of public secondary schools.

Administration is the act of influencing the activities of an organized group in an effort towards goal achievement. This entails a curious blending of leading and followership; where one person influences other members to voluntarily contribute towards achieving established tasks and goals. (Koko & Nwiyi, 2006). It is the ability to implement predetermined goals with affordable human, material, financial resources, methods and machines. Contrarily, Chandan (2004) defined administrative style as the ingredient of personality embodied in leaders that cause subordinates to follow them. It is a process through which a principal influences a teacher or other group in the attainment of educational goals (Adeyemi, 2010). It is an obvious fact that no two school administrators are the same, neither will they adopt the same methods or procedures in achieving results, thus management theorists have identified some administrative styles which can be applied in the administration of schools.

The administrative styles, among others include autocratic style and laissez-faire style. The autocratic style depicts a principal who superintends over a school as a sole administrator (Koko & Nwiyi, 2006). He/she arrogates absolute power to him or herself and controls all decision-making processes of the school. He/she hardly delegates authority but rather directs all subordinates to obey outlined instructions. Unfortunately, experience reveals that the use of this style of administration may stifle cooperation and self-motivation of subordinates as well as discourage them. However, Adeyemi (2011) in his study, was of the view that autocratic leadership style is the best style that enhances better job performance among teachers in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

Studies of scholars have shown the impact of administrative styles on organizational outcomes. An independent study conducted by Ochieng (2001) on the effect of administrative styles on teacher productivity in private secondary schools, revealed that autocratic leaders usually emphasize authority as a means of having the work done. According to the study school principals generally emphasize it, since it gives expected results very quickly as subordinates work under pressure to meet deadlines. This implies the creation of lacuna in the organizational structure, that may engender communication and workflow. The description of the laissez faire administrative style seems to project the belief that some administrators are not firm on the organizational structure especially in decision making. This style of administration when adopted by a principal, indicates a 'free-for-all affair'. The head invariably sits back and allow subordinates to work according to their desires. It is said that no direction is given to workers rather they make their own decisions either to work or not (Koko & Nwiyi, 2006).

Teachers perform diverse functions in secondary schools ranging from their primary assignment of classroom teaching and management, to duties assigned by the principal. Most often, teachers are delegated to perform some aspects of the principal's role particularly in decision making. When there is a cordial relationship between the principal and teachers, it becomes easy to harmonize the workforce. In line with these observations, Ibukun (2004) posited that a major task of the principal is to create a conducive atmosphere to enable teachers achieve desired performance. Thus, it can be argued that there is a close relationship between the principals' administrative style and teachers' performance. In fact, related studies have shown that teachers perform better under different administrative styles. An administrative style is the pattern of behaviours engaged by a leader when dealing with the employees (Yusuf, Muhammed & Kazeem, 2014). Based on the foregoing, the study ascertained the relationship between principals' administrative styles and teachers' performance in public senior secondary in Port Harcourt Metropolis, Rivers State.

The Concept of Administrative Style

One major index that is of utmost importance in every institution or organization is the administrator's style of managing human and material resources because of its far-reaching influence on the accomplishment of objectives and organizational growth. It is believed that effective functioning of a social system is largely dependent on the quality of administrative style adopted by administrators and managers. The administrative behavior and style of managers have been consistently associated with employee output which is a powerful predictor of an organization's effectiveness. Hence, people, often get excited about topics on administrative style as they want to know what makes a great administrator. Bennis and Nanus cited in Ghamrawi (2013), defined an administrator as one who commits people to action, converts followers into administrators and administrators into agents of change. From the afore statement we can deduce that administrative style entails the ability to influence individuals or groups to ensure achievement. In practice, this means ensuring that employee needs are met and agreed task performed so that team spirit and teamwork are established and maintained, for maximizing the resources of the organization. Organisations cannot only depend on good administrative style to achieve their intended purposes but also effective management. The term "management" and "administrative style" are often used interchangeably. Many view them as the same yet clear distinctions can be drawn between them. Kotter (2007), asserted that a combination of strong administrative style and weak management is not good rather a combination of strong administrative style and strong management enhance organizational boost. There is therefore no doubt that administrative styles have either positive or negative impact on employees or the organisation as a whole.

Autocratic Administrative Style and Teachers Performance

Autocratic administrative style gives full empowerment to the administrator with minimal participation from the followers. Bhargari and Yaseen (2016) asserted that the autocratic administrative style has a positive impact on organizational performance. It was also viewed as most suitable when projects are to be completed with provided deadlines. The autocratic administrator does not confer with members of the organization in the decision making processes. In the view of Pareck (2010), autocratic style of administration is effective if there is no need for others to contribute to decision making in the organization. He or she takes charge of decision making in the school system. An independent study carried out by Nadeem, Ghulam, Nareed, Muhammad and Faiz (2012) on impact of autocratic and democratic administrative styles on job satisfaction in private and public secondary schools revealed that autocratic leadership style had positive impact on job satisfaction of public secondary school teachers than private secondary school teachers. This type of administrative style can be used but with caution to ensure high productivity. Autocratic administrators create domineering atmosphere where subordinates who do not want to appreciate the significance of work are convincingly led to work. According to Astin and Astin (2001), autocratic administrators supervise subordinates very closely to ensure conformity and conclusion of work within a designated time. In agreement Ochieng (2001) opined that authoritarian administrators update their subordinates on what has to be done, how it has to be done and when to it has to be completed. Ocheing (2001) further reiterated that authoritarian administrative style is suitable in settings with a constant influx of new employees, limited decision-making time or resources in an organization. Recent researches also observed that performance is slightly higher under the authoritarian administration than the democratic administration. This is because the administrator makes most of the decisions, without the involvement or input of the employees. He/she ensures that employees conform to set rules, regulations, targets, task and responsibilities to achieve organizational goals.

Laissez Faire Administrative Style and Teachers Performance

The Cambridge dictionary defines laissez-faire as willingness to get involved in or influence other people's activities (dictionary Cambridge.org...). Laissez faire administrative style therefore entails freely delegating tasks and responsibilities to a competent, skilled and knowledgeable work force that is most likely to succeed in organizational operations. According to Pareck (2010), laissez faire leaders have minimum involvement in decision making. School administrators who entrust special projects to

particular teachers are certain of their ingenuity and capability of delivering desirable outcomes. Hackman and Johnson (2009) in giving credence, posited that laissez faire administrative style is the most effective administrative style, especially where followers are mature and highly motivated. Some characteristics of laissez administration are: very little guidance from leaders; complete freedom for followers to make decision; leaders provide tools and resources needed, group members are expected to solve problems on their own and power is handed to followers (www.verywellmind.com). In spite of the setbacks of this form of administrative style, some benefits that accrue from this process include; creativity, ingenuity, working in motivated teams, knowledge sharing and knowledge utilization.

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted the correlation research design. The population of the study comprised of 617 teachers in the 34 public secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis. The simple random sampling technique was utilized to select a sample of 455 teachers and 17 public senior secondary schools. A self structured 12-item questionnaire titled, “Principals’ Administrative Style and Teachers Performance Questionnaire (PASTPQ)” was developed by the researchers, to elicit responses from teachers, in public senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt and Obio-Akpor Local Government Areas of Rivers State. The instrument had two sections, A and B. Section A comprised of demographic data of the respondents; while Section B consisted of twenty four items based on postulated research questions and hypotheses. The response scale was structured according to the modified 4-point Likert scale of Very High Extent (VHE) = 4; High Extent (HE = 3); Low Extent (LE = 2) and Very Low Extent (VLE = 1). The face and content validity of the instrument was determined by three experts in Educational Management and Measurement and Evaluation. To ascertain the consistency of the instrument, the test-retest reliability method was adopted. The instrument was administered on 20 teachers outside the study area. After a period of two weeks interval, the same instrument was re-administered to the same group. The reliability coefficient of the two scores was established using Cronbach alpha which gave a reliability index of 0.70. Copies of the questionnaire which were administered by the researchers and two research assistants were retrieved on the spot to avoid high attrition rate. The research questions were answered using mean and standard deviation. A mean of 2.50 and above indicated that respondents to a high extent agreed with a questionnaire item; while a mean of 2.49 and below indicated that the respondents to a high extent disagreed with a questionnaire item. The null hypotheses were tested using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient at $p=0.05$.

RESULTS

Research Question 1: *To what extent does autocratic administrative style influence teachers’ performance in senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State?*

Table 1: Mean Score Ratings of Respondents on Autocratic Administrative Style in Public Senior Secondary Schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State

S/N	Questionnaire Items	N	Sum	\bar{X}	S.D	Var.	Remark
1	Decisions regarding teachers’ commitment to their jobs are made solely by the principal.	455	1271	2.79	0.92	0.847	HE
2	The principal gives directives and expect conformance without fail.	455	1281	2.82	0.84	0.693	HE
3	The principal orders teachers around in school.	455	1263	2.78	0.82	0.663	HE
4	Principal’s classroom supervision is more of witch-hunting and bullying.	455	1240	2.73	0.78	0.596	HE
5	Teachers detest the principal’s style of administration because he/she claims he/she knows it all.	455	1274	2.80	0.84	0.693	HE
6	Teachers work performance is high under a principal whose directives are sacrosanct.	455	1250	2.75	0.89	0.780	HE
Grand Mean, Standard Deviation and Variance			2.78		0.84	0.712	

Source: Field Survey (2018)

The result on table 1 showed that the respondents to a high extent agreed to all the questionnaire items on principals' autocratic administrative style in public senior secondary Schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers state, with mean scores greater than 2.50. Questionnaire items 1-6 had mean scores of 2.79; 2.82; 2.78; 2.73; 2.80; and 2.75 respectively. The result further showed that the opinions of respondents were very strong as the standard statistical tool for measuring level of dispersion were close for all the questionnaire items with standard deviation of 0.92, 0.84, 0.82, 0.78, 0.84 and 0.89; and variance of 0.847, 0.693, 0.663, 0.596, 0.693 and 0.780 respectively.

Research Question 2: *To what extent does laissez faire administrative style influence teachers' performance in senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State?*

Table 2: Mean Score Ratings of Respondents on Laissez-faire Administrative Style in Public Senior Secondary Schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State.

S/N	Option	N	Sum	\bar{X}	S.D.	Var.	Remark
7	The level of freedom and liberty given to teachers by the principal for job performance is high in my school.	455	1291	2.84	0.78	0.573	HE
8	Teachers are allowed to take decision on any issue in the school all the time.	455	1375	3.02	0.76	0.907	HE
9	The principal does not detect the actions and inactions of the teachers in order to make them perform maximally.	455	1350	2.97	0.74	0.539	HE
10	The freedom given to teachers by the principal to take action and decisions independently helped them to perform their job professionally.	455	1382	3.04	0.89	0.803	HE
11	The principal allows teachers to work according to their desire without supervision and this improves work performance.	455	1293	2.84	0.87	0.733	HE
12	Do you believe that the improvement in teachers' performance is because of the principals' style of administration.	455	1388	3.05	0.82	0.674	HE
Grand Mean, Standard Deviation and Variance				2.96	0.81	0.704	

Source: Field Survey (2018)

The result on table 2 showed the mean ratings of respondents on principals' laissez-faire administrative style in public senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State. Questionnaire items 8, 9, 10, 11 and 12 indicated mean scores of 2.84, 3.02, 2.97, 2.04, 2.84 and 3.05. The result further showed that the opinions of respondents were of a high extent and very strong as the standard statistical tool for measuring level of dispersion were close for all the questionnaire items with standard deviation of 0.78, 0.76, 0.74, 0.89, 0.87, and 0.82; and variance of .573, .907, .539, .803, .733, .674 and .704 respectively. This indicates that laissez-faire administrative style is perceived by respondents to a high extent to enhance teacher's performance in public senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State.

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant relationship between principal's autocratic administrative style and teachers' performance in senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State.

Table 3: Summary of Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMCC) on the Relationship between Principals Autocratic Administrative (AAS) Style and Teachers Performance (TP) in Public Senior Secondary Schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State.

	AAS	TP
AAS	Pearson Correlation	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.403
	N	455
TP	Pearson Correlation	.403**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	455

Source: Field Survey (2018)

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The result on table 3 above showed a moderate significant relationship between principals' autocratic administrative style and teacher's performance. This moderate positive significant relationship was observed with a PPMCC value of .403**, P-value of 0.000 at 0.05 level of significance and a Degree of freedom of 454. This result implies that when principals adopted the autocratic administrative style, teachers' performance was moderate. Therefore, the null hypothesis which states that, there is no significant relationship between Principals' autocratic administrative style and teachers performance in public senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State was rejected and the alternative upheld which states that there is a significant relationship between principals autocratic administrative style and teachers performance in public senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant relationship between principals' laissez-faire administrative style and teachers' performance in public senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State.

Table 4: Summary of Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient on the Relationship between Principals Laissez faire Administrative Styles (LFAS) and Teachers Performance (TP) in Public Senior Secondary Schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State

		LFAS	TP
LFAS	Pearson Correlation	1	.401**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	455	455
TP	Pearson Correlation	.403**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	455	455

Source: Field Survey (2018) ** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The result on table 4 above showed a moderate significant relationship between principals' laissez-faire administrative style and teachers' performance. This moderate positive significant relationship was induced with a PPMCC value of .401**, P –value of 0.000 at 0.05 level of significance and at a degree of freedom of 454. This result implies that when principals adopted the laissez-faire administrative style, teachers' performance was moderate. By this result, the null hypothesis which states that, there is no significant relationship between principals' laissez-faire administrative style and teachers performance in public senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers state was rejected and the alternative upheld which states that there is a significant relationship between principals laissez-faire administrative style and teachers performance in public senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The result on autocratic administrative style and teachers' performance showed that the respondents to a high extent agreed to all the questionnaire items on principals' autocratic administrative style and teacher's performance in public senior Secondary Schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State, with an aggregate mean of 2.78 which was above the criterion mean of 2.50. The result further showed that these agreement among the respondents were very strong as the standard deviation and variance statistical tools for measuring level of dispersion were close for all the questionnaire items with an aggregate standard deviation and variance of 0.84 and 0.712 respectively. This result indicates that majority of the respondents to a high extent opined that autocratic administrative style influence teachers' performance in public senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State.

The finding was in agreement with the works of Nedeem, Ghulam, Naveed, Muhammad, and Faiz (2012), who found that autocratic administrative style has a positive impact on job satisfaction and engenders job satisfaction of teachers in public senior secondary schools.

The result for hypothesis 1 showed a moderate significant relationship between autocratic administrative style and teachers' performance in senior public secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State with a PPMCC value of .403***, P-value of 0.000 at 0.05 level of significance, and a degree of freedom of 455. This result implies that when principals adopted the autocratic administrative style,

teachers' performance was moderate. Hence, the null hypothesis which states that, there is no significant relationship between principals autocratic administrative styles and teachers performance in public senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State was rejected and the alternative upheld which states that there is a significant relationship between principals autocratic administrative style and teachers performance in public senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State.

The finding was in agreement with Bhargari and Yaseen (2016) who unequivocally stated that autocratic administrative style has a positive impact on organizational performance and that it is most suitable when projects are to be completed with provided deadlines. Autocratic administrators are also found to supervise subordinates very closely to ensure conformity and conclusion of work within the designated time. Similarly, Ochieng (2001) opined that authoritarian leaders update their subordinates on what must be done, how it has to be done and when to complete it.

Laissez-faire Administrative Style and Teachers' Performance in Public Senior Secondary Schools of Rivers State

In answer to research question 2, table 2 showed the mean ratings of respondents on principals' laissez-faire administrative style in public senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State. The result showed that the respondents to a high extent agreed to all the questionnaire items on principals' laissez-faire administrative style and teachers' performance in public senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State, with an aggregate mean of 2.96 which was greater than the criterion mean of 2.50. The opinions of the respondents were very strong as the standard deviation and variance for measuring levels of dispersion were close for all the questionnaire items with an aggregate standard deviation and variance of 0.81 and 0.704 respectively. This result implies that majority of the respondents to a high extent opined that laissez-faire administrative style has a high relationship with teachers performance in public senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State.

The result on hypothesis 2 showed a moderate significant relationship between laissez-faire administrative style and teachers' performance in public senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State with a PPMCC value of .401**, P-value of 0.000 at 0.05 level of significance and a degree of freedom of 455. This result implies that when principals adopted the laissez-faire administrative style, teachers' performance was moderate. Hence, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between principals' laissez-faire administrative style and teachers performance in public senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State was rejected and the alternative upheld which states that there is a significant relationship between Principals laissez-faire administrative styles and teachers performance in public senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State.

The finding was in agreement with Pareck, (2010), who found that laissez-faire administrative style is the most effective administrative style especially where followers are mature and highly motivated.

CONCLUSION

School principals can only be said to be effective when predetermined secondary school goals are achieved. As a policy implementer he/she implements the national policy on education through available human and material resources. The cardinal human resources who are the teaching staff must be coordinated properly using effective administrative styles such as autocratic and laissez-faire administrative styles to ensure the attainment of predetermined educational goals; as these styles have been found to have a positive relationship with teachers' performance in public senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations were made, based on the findings of the study and they include:

1. The Rivers State Government through the Ministry of Education should organize capacity development programmes for principals especially on the use of administrative styles in secondary schools so that teachers performance can be enhanced in public senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State.

2. School principals should adopt a combination of administrative styles in the administration of schools in order to foster better job performance among teachers.
3. The Rivers State Ministry of Education should organize regular inspection of schools to monitor and proffer solution to the administrative styles that should be adopted by principals in order to enhance better performance among teachers.
4. Autocratic and laissez faire administrative styles should be used sometimes by the principals because they support teachers performance to a great extent.

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