



Principal Staff Management Strategies and Effective Administration in Public Secondary Schools in Rivers State

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ABSTRACT

The study examined principal staff management strategies and effective administration in public secondary schools in Rivers State. To achieve the purpose of the study, the researcher formulated three (3) objectives of the study, research questions and hypotheses that guided the study. The study made use of descriptive survey design for the research design. The population of the study consists of all the principals and vice principals in the 24 public secondary schools in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area with a population size of 72 principals and teachers. The study made use of multistage sampling technique for the sampling technique with a sample size of 72. The study made use of structured questionnaire for the instrument for data collection. The items were ranked or weighted as Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree and Strongly Disagree. The data gathered were analysed using mean and standard deviation while the null hypotheses were tested using t-test statistical tool at 0.05 level of significance. Based on the analysis, the findings of the study revealed that good principal staff management strategies enhance effective administration, improve in productivity, skill and knowledge are the benefits of principal staff management strategies and weak management system and decision-making are some of the challenges of principal staff management strategies. Above all, the study recommends that government should redress the issues in management staff in public secondary schools, government should organize orientation programme to enlighten the principals or staff on the benefits of effective administration and school management should provide adequate or good teaching and learning environment.

Keywords: Principal staff, management, strategies, effective, administration, secondary, school.

INTRODUCTION

In our modern societies today, there are increasing number and complexity of organizations, establishments, parastatals and learning institutions like secondary schools which generally require large number of persons with high level of technical, managerial and administrative expertise to play leadership roles. Attempts were made to determine if principals' staff management strategies could have any effect on the effective administration in public secondary schools (Ayeni, 2015). The school is an organization and the administration of secondary school rest upon the leadership of principal. This means that the effectiveness of the school system is dependent on how well and best the school principal or administrator blend the conceptual skills, human relation skills, management strategies as well as the technical schools effectively and efficiently in the realization of optimal educational results. Consequently, a principal plays an indispensable role in the process of teaching and learning. In other words, he is the change agent that harnesses other resources for production function. In support of this, Nwagwu (2018) emphasized that the concept of education by itself implies the existence of teaching and learning, hence the mention of the word school evokes automatically the picture of teachers and students in an interactive environment.

The efficiency of teacher management in Nigerian schools is being called to question both within and outside the profession. Many dedicated educationist will fully admit that the school teachers are being mismanaged and under-utilized simply because the schools lack or there is shortage of qualified personnel and management resources needed for the improvement of instructions. The goal of teacher management is to help educational institutions to meet strategic goals by attracting and maintaining teachers and also to manage them effectively. The basic premise of the academic theory of teacher management is that teachers are not machines; therefore we need to manage them properly.

The success of our education depends on trained staff. We cannot replace trained staff with any other type of instructional material (Hanif & Saba, 2012). This is because the quality of staff in any educational system determines to a great extent the quality of the system itself, and professional staff members in particular are crucial to the formulation and successful implementation of education policies and programmes in any country. Teacher management comprises of the effective use of human resources in the organisation through the management of people related activities. By implication, this definition means that organisations (public/private) must adapt to the needs of its employees as well as have the employees meet basic requirements of the organisation. One other aspect in teacher management is the training and development of staff. Training is not however a separate activity that can be limited to the training school. It must be closely connected with the work places of those that are to be trained.

Statement of the Problem

The quality of education is determined by the teacher, as he transmits the value of education to the student. Secondary school managers and administrators experience a lot of administrative difficulties in the management of teaching staff in terms of staff promotion, staff wages and salaries, staff training and development, good working condition of staff, security, staff motivation, provision of teaching facilities, staff welfare, etc. Proper management of teaching staff improves job performance of teachers. This also improves the quality of education and the achievement of set goals.

Therefore, what is bothering the researcher is the lack of effective management of teaching staff for effective administration in secondary schools in Rivers State. This study focused on how principal management strategies can improve effective administration strategies for managing teaching staff for effective administration, benefit of principal management in secondary schools and challenges of managing teachers in secondary schools.

Purpose of the Study

The general purpose of this study was to find out the principal staff management strategies and effective administration in public secondary schools in Rivers State. The objectives of the study among others bordered on the need to:

1. identify how principal staff management strategies enhance effective administration in public secondary schools in Rivers State.
2. determine the benefits of principal staff management strategies and effective administration in public secondary schools in Rivers State.
3. ascertain the challenges of principal staff management strategies in public secondary schools in Rivers State

Research Questions

The following research questions were developed by the researcher to guide the conduct of the study:

1. To what extent do principal staff management strategies enhance effective administration in public secondary schools in Rivers State?
2. What are the benefits of principal staff management strategies in public secondary schools in Rivers State?
3. What are the challenges of principal staff management strategies in public secondary schools in Rivers State?

Hypotheses

The researcher formulated the following null hypotheses that guided the study:

- Ho₁: There is no significant difference in the opinions of the respondents between principal staff management strategies and effective administration in public secondary schools in Rivers State.
- Ho₂: There is no significant difference in the opinions of the respondents between benefits of principal staff management strategies and effective administration in public secondary schools in Rivers State.

Ho₃: There is no significant difference in the opinions of the respondents between challenges of principal staff management strategies and effective administration in public secondary schools in Rivers State.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Strategies of Managing Teachers for Effective

Adeniyi (2015) observed that teacher management is a work activity that can make a very significant contribution to the overall effectiveness and profitability of an educational organization. The effectiveness and success of an educational organization therefore lie on the people who Form and work within the institution. It follows therefore that for teachers to be able to perform their duties and make meaningful contributions to the success of the educational goals, there is need to acquire the relevant skills and knowledge. One useful aspect in Teacher Management is the training and development of staff (Nakpodia, 2010). Training is not however, a separate activity that can be limited to the training school, It must be closely connected with the work places of those that are to be trained. There are a number of advantages to drawing on outside sources for framing, as it provides a range of skills that very few organizations can maintain in-house and means that the training personnel needs only think of what is needed to provide good training. It also provides the opportunity of saving in costs.

Training provision by organizations is largely focused on the development of managerial talent (Nakpodia, 2010). Training and development have often been confused and therefore loosely used as meaning the same thing. From the teacher management perspective, training means an exploration of job-related skills, while development often denotes the broad scope of training. Thus, development is follow-up activity to training and is embarked upon at a higher level of management. In fact, training is a process of teaching a worker how to perform tasks (Ajeyalemi, 2015). It is a means of altering a worker's behaviour and attitudes in order to increase the opportunities for improved work performance. Training can also be seen as a 'earning process whereby people acquire skills, concepts, attitudes or knowledge to aid in the achievement of goals: It involves a systematic approach to the teaching of specific and immediate usable skills. The major goals of personnel training is the improvement of worker's performance over time. Effective training can increase productivity, lead to greater job satisfaction and lower turnover, it enables workers to develop better understanding of their work and provide the ability to cope with organizational, social work and provide the ability to cope with organizational, social and technological changes. Thus, effective training has been acknowledged as a sure investment in human resources of an organization with both immediate and long range. Teachers are expected to render a very high job performance, and the Ministry of Education is always curious regarding the job performance of its teachers. Also, the Ministry of Education demands a very high measure of loyalty, patriotism, dedication, hard work and commitment from its teachers (Ubom & Joshua, 2014). Similarly, the roles and contexts of educations' motivational methods and tools cannot be underemphasized because high motivation enhances productivity which is naturally in the interests of all educational systems (Ololube, 2014, 2015). The relevance of job satisfaction and motivation are very crucial to the long-term growth of any educational system around the world. They probably rank alongside professional knowledge and skills, center competencies, educational resources and strategies as the veritable determinants of educational success and performance. Professional knowledge, skills and center competencies' occur when one feels effective in one's behavior. In other words, professional knowledge, skills and competencies can be seen when one is taking on and mastering challenging tasks directed at educational success and performance (Filak & Sheldon, 2013).

Adelabu (2015) listed remuneration, teacher competence, working conditions, vocational intent, and career advancement as the key determinants of effective teaching performance. He also pointed supervision, continuous staff development and training, motivation such as payment of salaries, promotions and fringe benefits as the methods of managing teaching staff for effective job performance. Hence, teachers' performance management is the systematic process by which the school involves its academic staff, as individuals and members of a group, in improving organizational effectiveness in the accomplishment of the school mission and goals. Teacher performance management is a continuous process for identifying, evaluating and developing the work performance of teachers, so that the goals and objectives of the school are more effectively achieved,

while at the same time benefiting teachers in terms of recognition of performance, professional development career guidance.

Emphasizing the importance of teacher management in increasing effectiveness, it was argued that staff management facilitates personnel and professional development for individuals and groups, enabling them to achieve their potential and contribute to the provision of excellence in teaching. In contribution, Bell (2016) emphasizes the importance of staff management in the current changing education landscape. Schools should put in place appropriate staff management strategies to support all staff and encourage involvement in the development and implementation of wide policies and strategies, because effective staff management is essential to support new approaches to learning and teaching, and meeting changing needs of the school organizations. Hence, there is need to develop and use effective Education Management Information Systems (EMIS) at central, local and school levels to enable better planning and management in the training, recruitment, and deployment; encourage tile active participation and involvement of teachers in decision-making with clearly defined roles and responsibilities; and strengthen systems for the training, recruitment and deployment of teachers, including the provision of appropriate incentives for teachers working in hardship posts.

Benefits of Managing Teachers in Secondary Schools

Oguntimehin (2011) and Graig (2016) highlighted the usefulness and impact of teacher management; they include: increase productivity, improvement in the quality of work; improvement of skills, knowledge, understanding and attitude; enhance the use of tools and machine; reduces waste, accidents, turnover, lateness, absenteeism and other overhead costs, eliminates obsolesce in skills, technologies, methods, products, capital management etc. It brings incumbents to that level of performance which needs the performance for the job; enhance the implementation of new policies and regulations; prepares people for achievement, improves manpower development and ensures the survival and growth of the enterprise.

Managing teachers promote teacher performance, stronger management systems, better decision making and clearer roles and responsibilities. Ofojebe (2010) highlighted the relevance of strategic teacher management as: Developing the objectives of the school in line with new technologies; Creating objectives for achieving a life-long learning organization; Sustaining and motivating staff for continuous improvement in achieving school objectives; Providing supportive instructional supervision; Defining the core values and beliefs of education for sustainable development; Using research and “best practice” in resource management; Facilitating school innovations in line with secondary education reform goals; Building shared decision making, collegiality and peer support among staff, Unleashing the potential capacities that already exist in staff and students; Building team commitment for improvisation of teaching aids; Understanding student development and learning; Facilitating professional development of others; Solving complex problems and making decisions; Assessing school effectiveness in meeting its learning objectives; Building consensus and negotiating conflicts, Resolving complex management problems; Understanding measurements, evaluation and assessment strategies; Developing the vision and the mission of the school; Ensuring that action is taken on decisions made at the school; Developing information and data collection strategies for school records; Developing annual sports objectives and plan how to achieve objectives set; Designing, implementing, and evaluating attainment of curriculum objectives; Managing the organization and operational procedures involved in teacher appraisals; and Raising supplementary hinds for school in line with school priority needs.

However, the benefits of managing teachers include creating a workforce that is respected, energized and enabled to achieve objectives; Leadership that has a vision; Active engagement in school management by staff, parents and community; Staff willingness to seek feedback of their own job effectiveness; Staff courage to admit where they are not behaving in the most effective way; Taking active steps by staff in supporting their own development; Staff and student adherence to school principles, which are manifest in all day-to-day activities; An organisation that has the potential of dealing excitingly with change; A greater chance of continuing success in students’ achievement; Genuine empowerment of staff to take decisions; Translation of school motto into practice; and Leader comes to recognise and value the contributions and support that staff offer.

Challenges of Managing Teachers in Secondary Schools

Mpokosa *et al.* (2018) presented the challenges to effective teacher management as Weak management systems and decision-making, Weak management systems for the recruitment and

deployment of teachers and administrators, tight fiscal management policies, insufficient or inappropriate management of workforce skills, poor or ineffective systems of development, supervision, monitoring and evaluation of workforce skills are in operation, Poor working conditions and salaries of teachers, and supporting roles of administrative staff, and Limited capacity and quality of instruction of teacher training institutions. Similarly, at school level, where teacher managers are poorly trained and prepared for management responsibilities, teaching staff will not be efficiently managed to ensure punctuality, good quality teaching and learning and the provision of an appropriate level of continuing professional development (CPD).

Balogun (2013) stated a number of factors that tend to influence the management of teaching staff for effective job performance as training and manpower development, employment policy and conditions, supervisory problems, management environment, external environmental factors, and recruitment policies and practices. Weak management systems and decision-making, tight fiscal management policies, and insufficient or inappropriate management of workforce skills constitute serious challenges to the alternative strategies of managing teachers. Giwa and Illo (2010) expressed the challenges of teacher management as shortage of manpower and quality of the personnel available for the work. According to them, in most African countries the roles of inspectors tend to be ineffective due to severe resources constraints. In the findings, they realized the number of inspectors and monitoring officers who are newly employed with no practical experience on the job are being posted to the inspectorate unit of the Ministry of Education. They stated that to inspect and supervise schools effectively requires regular school visits of well experienced officers with adequate provision of resources to forestall ineffectiveness in performing their duties. Nakpodia (2010) lists the challenges of teacher management as poor supervision and inspection, inadequate staff training and development programmes, poor motivation, irregular payment of salaries, and employment policy and conditions.

METHODOLOGY

This study made use of descriptive survey design. This design provides descriptive overview of the data elicited from the respondents concerning the principal staff management strategies and effective administration in public secondary schools. The population of the study consists of the principals (administrators) and vice principals in 24 senior secondary schools in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State with a population size of 72 principals and vice principals. The study made use of multistage sampling technique. The multistage is dividing the population into clusters or groups with a sample size of 72 principals and vice principals. This sample size was chosen because of the nature of the population size. The instrument used for this study is a structured questionnaire. The items were ranked and weighted as Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD). The data collected for this study were analysed using weighted mean and standard deviation for the research questions while the null hypotheses were tested using t-test statistical tool at 0.05 level of significance.

RESULTS

Research Question 1: *To what extent do principal staff management strategies enhance effective administration in public secondary schools in Rivers State?*

Table 1: Mean responses on the extent principal staff management strategies enhance effective administration in public secondary schools

S/N	Questionnaire Items	Responses				N	$\Sigma(\bar{X})$	Mean (\bar{X})	SD	Remarks
		SA	A	D	SD					
1.	Principal staff management strategies can contribute to the overall effectiveness and profitability of an educational organization.	35 (140)	30 (90)	5 (10)	2 (2)	72	242	3.36	1.83	Accepted
2.	Principal staff management strategies help in training and development of staff.	30 (120)	40 (120)	5 (10)	-	72	280	3.47	1.86	Accepted
3.	Principal staff management strategies bring good remuneration, teacher competence, good working conditions, vocational intent and career development.	25 (100)	40 (120)	4 (8)	3 (3)	72	231	3.21	1.79	Accepted

The analysis in Table 1 above shows that the respondents accepted the view that principal staff management strategies can contribute to the overall effectiveness and profitability of an educational system or organization. The table also reveals that the respondents accepted that principal staff management strategies help in training and development of staff. It was also observed from the table that the respondents accepted the point or view that principal staff management strategies bring good remuneration, teacher competence, good working condition, vocational intent and career development.

Research Question 2: *What are the benefits of principal staff management strategies effective administration in public secondary schools in Rivers State?*

Table 2: Mean responses on the benefits of principal staff management strategies effective administration in public secondary schools in Rivers State

S/N	Questionnaire Items	Responses				N	$\Sigma(\bar{X})$	Mean (\bar{X})	SD	Remarks
		SA	A	D	SD					
4.	Increase in productivity in teaching and learning is one of the benefits of principal staff management strategies in secondary schools.	30 (120)	30 (90)	8 (16)	4 (4)	722	230	3.19	1.79	Accepted
5.	Effective principal staff management strategies bring improvement in skill and knowledge in secondary schools	32 (128)	30 (90)	6 (12)	4 (4)	72	234	3.25	1.80	Accepted
6.	Improvement in the quality of teaching and learning (work) is a benefit of effective principal staff management strategies.	27 (108)	22 (96)	10 (20)	3 (3)	72	227	3.15	1.77	Accepted

The analysis in Table 2 above indicates that the respondents accepted the view that increase in productivity in teaching and learning is one of the benefits of principal staff management strategies in secondary schools. It was also observed from the table that the respondents accepted the fact that effective principal staff management strategies bring improvement in skill and knowledge in secondary schools. Also noticed from the table that the respondents accepted the fact that improvement in the quality of teaching and learning (work) is a benefit of effective principal staff management.

Research Question 3: *What are the challenges of principal staff management strategies in public secondary schools in Rivers State?*

Table 3: Mean responses on the challenges of principal staff management strategies in public secondary schools in Rivers State

S/N	Questionnaire Items	Responses				N	$\Sigma(\bar{X})$	Mean (\bar{X})	SD	Remarks
		SA	A	D	SD					
7.	Weak management systems and decision-making are challenges of principal staff management strategies.	32 (128)	26 (78)	8 (16)	6 (6)	72	228	3.17	1.78	Accepted
8.	Weak management systems for the recruitment and deployment of staff and administrators also affect principal staff management strategies.	37 (148)	28 (84)	5 (10)	2 (2)	72	244	3.39	1.84	Accepted
9.	Insufficient or inappropriate management of workforce skills is also a challenge of principal staff management strategies.	35 (140)	30 (90)	4 (8)	3 (3)	72	241	3.35	1.83	Accepted

The analysis in Table 3 reveals that the respondents accepted the view that weak management systems and decision-making are challenges of principal staff management strategies. It was also noticed from the table that the respondents accepted that weak management systems for the recruitment and deployment of staff and administrators also affect principal staff and administrators also affect principal staff management strategies. It was still observed from the table that the respondent accepted the point that insufficient or inappropriate management of work force skills is also a challenge of principal staff management strategies.

Test of Hypotheses

Ho₁: There is no significant difference in the opinions of the respondents between principal staff management strategies and effective administration in public secondary schools in Rivers State.

Table 4: T-test analysis of significant difference in the opinions of the respondents between principal staff management and effective administration in public secondary schools

Variables/Status	N	\bar{X}	SD	df	t-cal	t-crit	Level	Decision
Principal staff management strategies	28	3.35	1.83	70	1.32	1.96	0.05	Accepted
Effective administration	44	3.47	1.86					

The result shows that there is no significant difference in the opinions of the respondents between principal staff management strategies and effective administration in public secondary schools. This is evidenced from the fact that the t-calculated value of 1.32 is less than the t-critical value of 1.96 at 0.05 alpha significant level. Hence, the null hypothesis 1 is accepted. Therefore, there is no

significant difference in the opinions of the respondents between principal staff management strategies and effective administration in public secondary schools.

Ho₂: There is no significant difference in the opinions of the respondents between the benefits of principal staff management strategies and effective administration in public secondary schools in Rivers State.

Table 5: T-test analysis of significant difference in the opinions of the respondents between benefits of principal staff management and effective administration in public secondary schools

Variables/Status	N	\bar{X}	SD	df	t-cal	t-crit	Level	Decision
Benefits of principals staff management strategies	28	3.20	1.79	70	1.32	1.96	0.05	Accepted
Effective administration	44	3.25	1.80					

The result reveals that there is no significant difference in the opinions of the respondents between the benefits of principal staff management strategies and effective administration in public secondary schools. This is evidenced from the fact that the t-calculated value of 1.32 is less than the critical value of 1.96 at 0.05 alpha significant level. Hence, the null hypothesis 2 is thus accepted. So, there is no significant difference in the opinions of the respondents between the benefits of principal staff management strategies and effective administration in public secondary schools in Rivers State.

Ho₃: There is no significant difference in the opinions of the respondents between challenges of principal staff management strategies and effective administration in public secondary schools in Rivers State.

Table 6: T-test analysis of significant difference in the opinions of the respondents between challenges of principal staff management and effective administration in public secondary schools

Variables/Status	N	\bar{X}	SD	df	t-cal	t-crit	Level	Decision
Challenges of principal staff management strategies	28	3.30	1.82	70	1.32	1.96	0.05	Accepted
Effective administration	44	3.39	1.84					

The result indicates that there is no significant difference in the opinions of the respondents between challenges of principal staff management strategies and effective administration in public secondary schools in Rivers State. This is drawn from the view that the t-calculated value of 1.32 is less than the t-critical value of 1.96 at 0.05 alpha significant level. Hence, there is no significant difference in the opinions of the respondents between challenges of principal staff management strategies and effective administration in public secondary schools in Rivers State.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Based on the analysis in research question 1; To what extent does principal staff management strategies enhance effective administration in public secondary schools in Rivers State reveals that good principal staff management strategies enhance effective administration in public secondary schools. This view is in collaboration with Adeniyi (2015) who observed that one useful aspect in principal staff management strategies is the training and development of staff. The study also shows in research question 2; What are the benefits of principal staff management strategies in public secondary schools in Rivers State indicates that there are some benefits of principal staff management strategies. This is in line with Oguntimehin (2011). She highlighted the usefulness and benefits of principal staff management strategies. They include; increase productivity in teaching and learning, improvement in the quality of work, improvement of skills, knowledge, understanding and attitude. The findings also indicate in research question 3; What are the challenges of principal staff management strategies reveals that there are some challenges confronting principal staff management strategies. This view is in collaboration with Balogun (2013). He outlines weak management systems

and decision-making, weak management systems for the recruitment and deployment of teachers and administrators, insufficient or inappropriate management of workforce skills, poor or ineffective systems of development supervision, monitoring etc. are the challenges of principal staff management strategies.

CONCLUSION

Based on this study, the following conclusions were drawn: The findings of this study had really shown that proper principal staff management strategy leads to educational improvement and also maintains the quality for which educational institutions are established. The influence of principal staff management strategy on effective administration includes knowledge updated, teacher motivation and effective teaching performance. Challenges of principal staff management strategies for effective administration in public secondary schools are; poor working conditions, poor salaries of staff, inadequate staff training, weak principal staff management, supervisory problems, irregular payment of workers' salaries and inadequate teaching facilities.

RECOMMENDATIONS

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

1. Government should redress the issues in management staff of public secondary schools for effective administration.
2. Government should organize awareness campaign to enlighten the principals on the benefits of principal staff management strategies.
3. More funds should be released to the school principals to tackle or handle the challenges of principal staff management strategies.
4. Government through the school management should provide adequate teaching materials for effective teaching and learning.

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