

PRINCIPALS' ADMINISTRATIVE EFFECTIVENESS AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR MANAGEMENT OF SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN FEDERAL CAPITAL TERRITORY (FCT) ABUJA, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

The study examined administrative effectiveness of principals in secondary schools in Federal Capital Territory (FCT) Abuja, Nigeria. The study also sought to discuss the implications for managing secondary schools in the FCT, Abuja. The study adopted the survey research design. The population of the study consisted of all the 231 principals and vice principals in the 77 public senior secondary schools in the six council areas of Abuja. The entire population of 231 covering 77 principals, 77 vice principals (administration), 77 vice principals (academics) representing 100 percent of the population was used for the study. Administrative Effectiveness Survey Questionnaire was used as the instrument for data collection. The reliability of the instruments was determined using Guttman Split-half reliability method. Research Question 1 was answered using percentage (%), mean (\bar{X}) and Standard Deviation (SD). Findings showed that the overall mean score on level of principals' administrative effective was 3.51 (above 2.50 benchmark mean score) which indicated that the level of effectiveness of principals in discharging of their administrative functions on instructional management, financial management, staff/personnel management and school physical resources management was high in secondary schools in the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja. It is therefore recommended that the government through the periodic supervision and provision of incentives should encourage principals and vice principals of schools to be more committed in the performance of their administrative functions for the overall growth and development of secondary schools.

Keywords: Principals, Administrative Effectiveness, Secondary Schools, Abuja.

1. INTRODUCTION

Secondary education typically takes place after six years of primary education and is followed by higher education, vocational education or employment. In most countries, secondary education is compulsory, at least until the age of 16. Children typically enter the lower secondary phase around age 11. While teachers have a vital role to play in the delivery of class instruction to achieve secondary school goals, the responsibility of coordinating instructions and administrative processes on a day to day basis in secondary schools rests on the shoulders of the principal who is sometimes acknowledged as the director, leader, instructional supervisor, curriculum director, chief executive officer and administrative head of the school.

As the administrative head of secondary schools, principals carry out administrative functions, which among others include regular supervision of instruction to enable teachers translate the curriculum into workable lessons for students. Aside these, principals are also charged with the responsibility of providing instructional academic leadership responsibilities to staff and students through the management of school resources, school-community relations and keeping of

various school records. The success of the principals in this regard depends on their administrative effectiveness.

Effectiveness on any given endeavor can be based on what everyone does. For principals and vice principals (academics and administration) who are known to be involved in management of both statutory and non-statutory records, effectiveness or level of effectiveness in records management practices can be either effective (good) or ineffective (poor). Due to the important role of records in planning and management of various school resources for decision making purposes; principals effectiveness in records management practices could be a necessity in matters of school administration and planning. Oluwadare (2011) also submitted that records management practice is a non-negotiable requirement for effective administration of any school.

Effectiveness in administration or administrative effectiveness can be measured simply by assessing administrators such as school principal and vice principals based on their managerial tasks. Olorisade (2011) posited that administrative effectiveness can be measured in relation to ability of an individual to manage various resources including: student time, finances, human resources, school utilities and other school resources such as library resources, classroom resources, student resources, school aesthetics, school landscape, laboratory resources parental relation and school-community relations among others.

This implies that four (4) fundamental resources-instructional management, financial management, staff/personnel management and school physical resources management are relatively of great importance within any institution of learning. These four (4) administrative domains by which one could assess a principals' effectiveness are thereby considered in the study. The foregoing shows that the level of administrative effectiveness of an officer such as a principal and vice principal for instance can be either effective or ineffective - good or poor, based on their ability to manage instructions, school finances, staff/personnel and school physical resources at their disposal.

With regards to the level of principals' administrative effectiveness on instructional management, a principal could be assessed by his/her ability to perform one or more of the following functions: organizing or ensuring regular class attendance by teacher, ensuring optimum coverage of the course content, supervising time for teaching and learning, students' results compilation, monitoring scope of the scheme of work among others. For financial resources management, principals' effectiveness in administration may require the documentation of receipts for all payments such as development dues, tuition fee, accountability on weekly and monthly income/expenditure of the school, planning of the project financing for the school term, minimization of recurrent expenses on utilities and debt avoidance through proper financial budgeting. Ugwoke, Onu, Agangan and Ugwuanyi (2015) had noted that proper management of instruction and finances may be very challenging for principals that hardly keep to time schedules on the class register and the weekly /monthly budget plans for the school respectively. They added that this saying is also true for management of other school resources – staff/personnel and physical school resources.

In the same vein, managing staff/personnel of a school covers basically the academic staff which comprises head teachers and various subject teachers and the non-academic/support staff which includes school guidance counsellors, medical personnel in the sickbay, drivers, typist, library and laboratory attendance, technical experts for the computer and Information Technology services, among others. They need to be properly supervised, encouraged, trained, compensated,

rewarded and punished (if need be) to ensure compliance with school rules for attainment of predetermined goals. Furthermore, school physical

Research Questions

This research was guided by the following research questions:

- 1) What is the effectiveness of principals in discharging of their administrative functions on instructional management, financial management, staff/personnel management and school physical resources management in secondary schools in the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja?
- 2) What are the implications of findings on effective management and administration of secondary schools in the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja?

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

In a related study Emanghe and Udedeh (2018) investigated how principals' personal variables influence their administrative effectiveness in secondary schools in Akwa Ibom State of Nigeria. The study adopted an ex-post facto research design. A census sampling technique was used to select a total of two hundred and forty two (242) principals in the area of study. The instruments used for data collection were questionnaires. The questionnaire was validated and the reliability established using Cronbach alpha reliability estimate with coefficient of 0.87 for continuous variable sub-scale in PPVQ and coefficient ranging from 0.77 to 0.90 for sub-questionnaires in MSRQ. The sub scales were high for the instruments to be considered dependable and consistent. The test statistics used for data analysis were one way analysis of variance (ANOVA) and independent t-test. These statistical tools were selected based on the nature of the hypothesis and how they were measured in the instruments. The result showed that principals' administrative effectiveness in schools was low in secondary schools in Akwa Ibom State of Nigeria

In a related study Nzoka and Orodho (2014) analyzed the level of administrative effectiveness to improve school administrators in schools under free day secondary school education in Embu District, Embu County, Kenya. The study was guided by the Capital School Effectiveness and Improvement Theory based on various interrelated variables such as outcomes, leverage, intellectual capital and social capital. The descriptive survey research design was adopted in the study. A combination of purposive and stratified random sampling techniques were utilized to draw 54 members of the Board of Management (BoM), 45 heads of departments and 36 members of Parents Teachers Association (PTAs) yielding to a sample size of 135 subjects to participate in the study. Mixed methods were used to collect quantitative data from teachers using questionnaires and qualitative data from heads of departments and members of PTA using interviews. The result shows that the level of administrative effectiveness among school administrators is high.

Furthermore, Aigboje (2013) investigated the level of administrative effectiveness in the assessment of school administrators in Nigeria. The study adopted a descriptive survey design. Out of the six Geo-political zones in Nigeria, the researcher used one Geo-political zone which is South-South Geo-political Zone. All the school administrators comprising of fifteen were used. Eight thousand two hundred and ninety seven (8297) members of academic staff were in the zone. The results of investigation revealed that administrators were generally very effective in their managerial functions. However, specifically, administrators were most effective in academic

(curriculum/instructional) management functions, and least effective in communication management function. The result further showed that administrative effectiveness among school administrators' in Nigeria was high.

In a related study, Nwangwa & Omotere (2013) investigated the level of administrative effectiveness of school administrators and members of the school management team in the management of academic programme in schools in Abia State. Empirical research was conducted in four randomly selected schools in Abia State. Questionnaire was constructed to gather data from members of SMTs on the challenges facing school administrators and SMTs in the management of school academic programmes. The result showed that the level of administrative effectiveness was low among academic programme in schools in Abia State.

In a similar study, Ayeni (2012) perceived the level of administrative effectiveness of the school administrators in among school administrators in schools in Ondo State. The study employed the descriptive survey design. The target population comprised school administrators and teachers in secondary schools in Ondo State. The sample consisted of 60 school administrators and 540 teachers randomly selected from 60 secondary schools. Three research questions were resolved based on percentage and mean scores. The results showed that most subject and departmental heads accorded desired attention to monitoring of teachers' attendance, preparation of lesson notes and adequacy of diaries of work while tasks such as the provision of instructional materials, reference books were ignored. The result showed that the level of administrative effectiveness of school administrators in schools was moderate in schools in Ondo State

In a related study, Oluwadare (2011) investigated the level of administrative effectiveness for effective school administrators in schools in South West Geo - Political Zone of Nigeria. The study adopted a survey design. 100 secondary schools were selected by stratified random sampling from all the Junior Secondary Schools located in the six states in South West Geo- Political Zone of Nigeria. The principals in the 100 schools were the sample used for this study. A researcher-developed questionnaire called "Principal Administrative Skills Survey Questionnaire (PASSQ)" served as the main instrument for data collection. The reliability test was calculated using the person product moment correlation. A correlation coefficient of 0.88 was obtained. Descriptive statistics involving the use of mean and Standard deviation was used to answer the research questions. The findings from the study showed that school heads were not effective in the school administration of new academic programmes or subjects introduced into the school curriculum. The result further shows that the level of administrative effectiveness among school administrators was low in schools in South West Geo - Political Zone of Nigeria.

Similarly, Kolawole (2009) investigated the level of administrative effectiveness among school administrators of secondary school and inspectors of the Ministry of Education in Lagos State. A total of 20 principals and 20 inspectors were randomly selected. A descriptive research of the survey design was adopted for the study. Two sets of questionnaire were used to gather information from the sample chosen for the study. The validity of the instruments was ascertained the internal consistency of the instruments was established through test-retest method which produced a coefficient of 0.76 and 0.78 respectively. Two hypotheses were generated and tested at 0.05 level of significance. The data collected were analyzed using Pearson product moment correlation coefficient to test the relationship. The findings revealed that the size of the school affected principals in the discharge of their duties in terms of monitoring and evaluation. The result further shows that the level of administrative effectiveness among school administrators was low in the Ministry of Education in Lagos State.

Furthermore, Omoike (2006) find out the level of administrative effectiveness of school administrators in tertiary institutions in Nigeria, one thousand three hundred and twenty six (1,326) respondents assessed the three hundred and sixty two (362) Heads of Departments. From the result analysed, it was found out that the Heads of Departments had a rating of high rating (71%) on administrative effectiveness. Effectiveness rating of respondents on instructional programme was higher than the minimum level. This implied that Heads of Departments were effective in management of academic programmes. The result showed that school administrators have a high level of administrative effectiveness in tertiary institutions in Nigeria.

In addition, Wakarindi (2013) investigated the level of head teachers' administrative on school administrators in Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE). Four research questions were formulated to guide the study. The objectives were- to determine how the administrative effectiveness in ensuring adequate staffing levels influences school administrators in KCSE; establish the extent of administrative effectiveness on provision of teaching learning resources on school administrators in KCSE. The study employed descriptive survey design. The sample comprised of 8 principals and 85 teachers. This study used questionnaires to collect data from principals and teachers. The data were analysed by using qualitative and quantitative techniques. The result showed that school administrators have a low level of administrative effectiveness in Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education.

Relatedly, Nwaka (2010) investigated secondary school administration in Anambra State today: challenges and the way forward. A descriptive survey research design was used to identify the challenges that impede secondary school administration in Anambra State. The population of the study was all the 259 public secondary school principals in the state. Two research questions and two null hypotheses guided the study. A 20-item questionnaire was used for data collection. Analysis was done using mean scores and t-test. The data analysis revealed that principals' school administrative effectiveness was low due to various challenges that hindered their effectiveness in secondary schools in Anambra State such as low funds, short staffing and inadequate school resources.

3. METHODS

The researcher adopted the survey research design for the study. The population of this study consisted 231 principals, vice principals (administration) and vice principals (academic) in secondary schools in Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Abuja. The breakdown of the population is as follows: 77 principals, 77 vice principals (administration) and 77 vice principals (academic). The record is as obtained from the Department of Planning, Research and statistics of FCT Secondary Education Board (SEB) based on 2022 records. The sample for this study is 231 principals and vice principals. The entire 231 principals, vice principal (administration) and vice principal (academic) in secondary schools in Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Abuja representing 100 percent of the population was used for the study.

One instrument was used for the study: The instrument was adapted from the work of Isabu (2017) titled: Assessment of the Administrative Effectiveness of Heads of Department in Colleges of Education in Edo and Delta States. The original instrument contained 30-items measuring administrative effectiveness of Heads of Department based on task performance (Isabu, 2017). The task performance covered five (5) aspects of managerial responsibilities or duties of HODs namely: Management of Academic Programmes (items 1-6), Management of Finances (items 7-12), Management of Facilities (items 13-16), Management of External Relations (items 17- 22)

and Management of Time (items 23-28). In the course of adaptation, some modifications were made on the instrument of Isabu. First, the instrument was renamed. Since the researcher intended to determine administrative effectiveness of principals, the instrument was modified for teachers and to appraise administrative effectiveness of principals. Third, administrative effectiveness of principals was adapted from the original instrument by changing: “Management of Academic Programmes” to “Instructional management”, changing “Management of Finances” to “Financial management”; Management of External Relations was replaced with “staff/personnel management” while “Management of Facilities” was changed to “School physical resources Management”. Lastly, ‘management of time’ was completely removed as some of the item statements under ‘management of time’ were related with management of instructional as it borders on time duration of instruction and other class activities. In addition, all modifications were done on the instrument to substitute ‘Heads of Department’ for ‘principals’ to feature secondary school context.

The adapted questionnaire (PAEQ) contained Sections A and B. Section A was used to collect data on demographic profile such as name of schools. Section B of PAEQ containing 24-items measured administrative effectiveness of principal on four (4) areas only - Instructional management (items 1-6), Financial management (items 7-12), Staff/personnel management (items 13-18) and School physical resources Management (items 19-24). To assess effectiveness of principals on the foregoing resources, each item was rated on a four scale type of: Very Effective-4, Effective -3, Ineffective -2 and Very Ineffective -1.

The instruments were subjected to construct validity by two experts in Educational Management. The drafted questionnaires were corrected and necessary suggestions were made to improve the validity of the instrument. Their corrections and suggestions were integrated into the final draft of the instrument. This was undertaken to ensure that items contained in the instruments were precise, unambiguous and relevant. The reliability of the instrument was determined using Guttman Split-half reliability method. This was done by administering copies of the instrument to a group of thirty (30) persons (15 principals and 15 teachers) of secondary schools outside the Federal Capital Territory (FCT). The choice of local government outside the study area was informed by the need to select participants who would not be part of the study. After two weeks, the copies of instruments were administered to the same Vice Principals in a second administration. The responses from the first and second administration were correlated using the Pearson’s Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) coefficient. After analysis, a reliability coefficient of 0.72 was obtained on the first and second instruments to show that they were satisfactory to be considered for use.

Descriptive and inferential statistics were used for analysis. Research Question 1 was analyzed using percentage (%), mean (\bar{X}) and Standard Deviation (SD). A bench mark of 2.50 was used to rate level of records management practices of principals in each of the 77 target schools as well as the effectiveness of principals in the discharge of their administrative functions. This was obtained by adding up the scores for the response options (Very High -4, High - 3, Low - 2 and Very Low - 1 as well as Very effective-4, Effective-3, Ineffective-2, and very Ineffective-1) and dividing the sum of the scales (10) by the total number of scales (4) to give 2.50. Hence, a score of 2.50 or higher was considered high or effective; and below 2.50 was considered low or ineffective. Similarly, any score of 50% and above would be high or effective while below 50% would be low or ineffective.

4. RESULTS

Research Question: What is the effectiveness of principals in discharging of their administrative functions on instructional management, financial management, staff/personnel management and school physical resources management in secondary schools in the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja?

Table 1: Analysis on administrative effectiveness of principals in secondary schools in FCT, Abuja (n=231)

S/N	Items	X	SD	Proportion (%)	Remarks
Instructional Management					
1	Ensuring everything instructions are delivered within the time allotted	3.50	0.50	88	Effective
2	Ensuring students assignments are assessed by teachers	3.50	0.50	87	Effective
3	Ensuring all teachers keep to time on their lesson period	3.50	0.50	88	Effective
4	Ensuring all teachers compile the results of their students as at when required	3.70	0.47	92	Effective
5	Ensuring the right instructional materials are used for teaching by teachers	3.50	0.50	88	Effective
6	Ensure teachers lesson notes are prepared before instruction in class	3.50	0.50	87	Effective
Mean Score = 3.53					
Financial Management					
7	Ensuring all payments are duly receipted for	3.50	0.50	88	Effective
8	Exploring sources to raise funds for the development of the school	3.30	0.47	83	Effective
9	Giving periodic reports of the school's income/expenditure to appropriate body	3.30	0.47	83	Effective
10	Making plans on financial school projects	3.50	0.50	88	Effective
11	Minimizing recurrent expenses in day-to-day activities of the school	3.50	0.50	87	Effective
12	Avoiding debt through financial budgeting	3.50	0.50	88	Effective
Mean Score = 3.44					
Staff/Personnel Management					
13	Informing teachers of career development opportunities that could be helpful to them	3.50	0.50	88	Effective
14	Resolving grievances among teachers in the school	3.50	0.50	87	Effective
15	Providing teachers with guidelines on how to undertake their duties	3.50	0.50	88	Effective
16	Communicating effectively with teachers on vital issue the students	3.70	0.47	92	Effective

17	Promoting good relationship among the teaching staff and the host community	3.70	0.47	92	Effective
18	Motivating teachers and existing staff	3.50	0.50	88	Effective
Mean Score = 3.56					
School Physical Resources Management					
19	Ensuring the classrooms are cleaned regularly	3.50	0.50	88	Effective
20	Ensuring textbooks of the schools are properly kept	3.50	0.50	87	Effective
21	Ensuring the writing materials such as markers/chalk given are not teachers are not mismanaged	3.50	0.50	88	Effective
22	Imbibing in teachers a good maintenance culture for school materials	3.50	0.50	88	Effective
23	Replacing any classroom chairs and desk that is beyond repair	3.50	0.50	87	Effective
24	Ensuring laboratory resources are properly handled by teachers and students	3.50	0.50	88	Effective
Mean Score = 3.50					
Level of principals' administrative effectiveness					
Overall mean score = 3.51					Effective
Overall percentage = 88					

Results in Table 1 shows that principals were effective on items 1 to 6 on instructional management and with an aggregate mean score of 3.53. The findings also revealed that the principals were effective on items 7 to 12 on financial management, with an aggregate mean score of 3.44. The mean score of items 13 to 18 were higher than the threshold of 2.50 which showed that the principals were effective in staff/personnel management, with an aggregate mean score of 3.56. Lastly, the results also showed that principals were effective on items 19 to 24 on school physical resources management with an aggregate mean score of 3.50 which was higher than the threshold of 2.50. In the same vein, the proportion analysis showed that all the items were above 50%. The average proportion was 88% which was more than the benchmark. The overall mean score of level of principals' administrative effective was 3.51 and proportion was 88% which indicated that the level of administrative effectiveness of principals in secondary schools in the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja was high.

Implications for Educational Management

Results from this study have implications for Educational Management in the following ways:

- The results showed that principals are effective in instructional, financial, staff/personnel and school physical resource management. The implication of this result is that ability of principals to equip themselves with the relevant skills needed for effective administration may positively impact on their day to day operations in the schools. Hence, the attainment of school goals may not be jeopardized or hindered.
- The results showed that principals are abreast with instructional, financial, staff/personnel and school physical resource management. The implication of this is that most principals engage in staff/personnel in their school because they are key players in decision-making, resource allocation, and overall administration of the school learning process. Consequently, proper record keeping provides accurate data on students, staff, and resources, allowing school administrators to make informed decisions. However, continuous data collection and analysis from records provide insights into areas that require improvement and this data-driven approach can lead to better educational outcomes over time. In summary, effective staff/personnel record keeping is crucial for ensuring smooth, transparent, and efficient management of school operations, enhancing both educational and administrative outcomes.
- The result showed that principals are effective in school physical resources for effective day to day school administration. The implication of this is that most schools in Federal capital territory, Abuja may be archiving records which have lost their intrinsic value in contribution to any meaningful decision making process in the schools system. Consequently, a lot of burden may not rest on the shoulders of principals in terms of increased search time for record retrieval, increased cost of storage and archival and this may not cost the school a lot of valuable storage space and resources. Hence, it behooves on the principal as the chief administrative officer of the school, to evaluate the potency and value of archived records in his possession from time to time to determine records that are meant to be disposed as a result of value intrinsic value loss.

5. DISCUSSION

The result showed that the level of administrative effectiveness of principals in secondary schools in the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja was high. The result on the effectiveness of the principals as was seen in this study could be attributed to the experience principals might have gained through training, seminars, and conferences over the years. The result could also be due to the fact that the principals' work according to the vision of the school and make proactive efforts towards ensuring that teachers attend classes regularly and cover their syllabus. Furthermore, principals' are generally considered the role models, administrative leaders and chief executives in charge of administration in the school. Hence, the encouragement, through periodic meeting, with teachers within the school could have raised teachers' interest and enthusiasm towards pursuing predetermined goals and objectives of the school. However, the efforts made by the principals at managing the staff and finance of the school could be yielding the desired fruits as the instructional management was high because every activity in the school centres on teaching and learning.

The result is in agreement with that of Ogundele & Afolabi (2015) who found that the level of administrative effectiveness of Kwara State owned tertiary institutions was high. The result also

agrees with Ogundele & Afolabi (2015) who found that the level of administrator's effectiveness was revealed to be high among administrators. Also, it agrees with Adebayo & Omojola (2012) who found that administrative effectiveness was high in higher institution in Ekiti-State, Nigeria. The result agrees with that of Ekwueme, Abraham & Nwogu (2022) who found that administrative effectiveness among head teachers and principals was high in Kano State.

However, the result contradicts that of Adebayo (2015) who found low level of administrative effectiveness in Ekiti State tertiary institutions. The result disagrees with that of Akomolafe and Oluwatimehin (2013) who found that administrative effectiveness was below average. The result also disagrees with that of Akpan (2012) who found that level of administrative effectiveness among university lecturers in the South – South zone of Nigeria was low. Similarly the result is not in line with that of Njagi and Malel (2012) who found that administrative effectiveness was low. In the same vein, the result disagrees with that of Irtwange & Orsaah (2010) who found that administrative effectiveness in University of Agriculture, Makurdi, Benue State was low. The result is not in consonance with that of Akomolafe (2012) who opined that administrative effectiveness in public and private secondary schools in the University of Ado-Ekiti, Ekiti State, Nigeria was low.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the results, the following recommendations were made:

- a) Principals and vice principals should be more committed in the performance of their administrative functions for the overall growth and development of the school.
- b) Ministry of Education and other education agencies should provide staff development and in-service training opportunities to principals to attend training programmes such as seminars, workshops, conferences and symposia to enhance their technical skills on how to manage technical resources for record keeping practices. This can be done by sponsoring administrators on mandatory capacity development programmes.
- c) Principals should learn the proper way of archiving school records especially using ICT for durability and visibility of the records. This will ensure school information are easily accessed by necessary stakeholders of the education system.
- d) Stationery and equipment committee should be set-up by the school where principals, teachers will submit their material requests for processing.
- e) Stakeholders such as alumni, philanthropists and Non-Governmental Agencies should assist in providing needed infrastructure and equipment for management of school records. This is important because government alone may not be able to do everything, and, it is paramount that schools have infrastructural facilities that would enable proper records creation, maintenance, use and disposition of school records

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