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PRINCIPAL'S MANAGERIAL PRACTICES AND TEACHER'S JOB ENGAGEMENT IN DELTA STATE, NIGERIA PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOLS

ABOH, Oghenero Shaguolo

Postgraduate Student

Delta State University Abraka, Department of Educational Management and Foundations

Asiyai, Romina Ifeoma

Professor

Delta State University Abraka, Department of Educational Management and Foundations

Introduction

The high school system is a very crucial level of educational system. It is a gateway to the tertiary education and a ripe age for developing learners' potentials. It is at this level of education that sound ethical and moral values, entrepreneurial and vocational skills of the learners are cultivated. The contribution of this level of education to tertiary education cannot be over emphasized. This is because suitable candidates for tertiary education are selected from the high schools. Hence, if the products of the high schools are well prepared, tertiary education will have a good raw material for the development of human resources, which is a prime function of the universities. In all these, the most important factor is the teacher. Teachers are more important than technique, method or curriculum because he/she translates all these into meaningful learning experiences for students (Asiyai, 2020). In order to ascertain whether or not the desired educational results have been accomplished, the teacher's role is highly significant. Teachers have important roles to play to adequately prepare the students for their roles in the society in order to achieve the set national objectives (Asiyai, 2021).

Teachers' job performance involves all the activities carried out by the teacher to achieve the desired effects on students. It involves the extent to which the teacher participates in the overall running of the school for the accomplishment of expected objective and goals of the school. In other words, performance is the accomplishment of school goals. Observation has however shown that the enthusiasm and devotion of teachers to their duty in schools are no longer the traits that characterized the teaching profession. Teachers have in recent times manifested unwholesome attitude toward discharging their duties. They go late to school, exhibit rudeness to school authority and trade at the expense of teaching. When they teach, they manifest poor knowledge of pedagogy and knowledge

of their subject areas, they do not provide regular assessments for students nor keep proper students' performance records, they show laxity to duties and cases of indiscipline has continually caused setbacks not only to the attainment of educational objectives, but also to the kind of education provided to the students.

The principal as the school manager is at the helm of implementation of education policies and curriculum. The principal is responsible for administering the school using the human and material resources at his disposal effectively to ensure the attainment of school's objectives (Ezeugbor & Emere, 2017; Asiyai, 2011). The principal is expected to provide instructional leadership as a key responsibility to attain quality education and better learning outcomes of students (Asiyai, 2020). The principal also performs managerial functions involving activities like planning, organizing, coordinating, directing, motivation coordinating, and communicating towards the realization of both instructional and educational objectives (Arop, Owan & Agunwa, 2019; Ezeugbor & Emere, 2017; Okorji & Unachukwu, 2014). This study examines principals' managerial practices and teachers' job performance in Delta State, Nigeria secondary schools

Statement of the Problem

Observation has shown a sad state of teachers' job engagement in public high schools, especially in Delta State. Oftentimes, most teachers are seen hawking wares during official school hours, some absent themselves from classes to the detriment of their students while some refuse to write their lesson notes as well as carrying out other assigned responsibilities. These are testimonies of the alarming rise of poor attitude to work which leads to poor job engagement. The situation is so bad that teachers write out just anything as lesson notes without adequate checking of the notes for positive pedagogical results, poor classroom instruction, poor evaluation of students' performance during and at the end of the term, inappropriate adoption of teaching methods, poor use of teaching aids, poor supervision of students' extracurricular activities among others. It is the belief of the researcher that these laxities could be as a result of the managerial practices of the school principals.

The issue concerning managerial practices in schools with its concomitant consequences on teachers' job engagement coupled with that of academic achievement of students has been a source of great worry to all stakeholders in the education sector. It has been observed that most school principals, particularly in Delta State, have estranged themselves from the actual instructional realities of the classroom and as a result, their activities as administrative heads seem to be of very little value to both teachers and students. In as much as it is important to appreciate the role of the state government in renovating and providing facilities for high schools in Delta State, there still exists evidences of teachers' failures and laxities in the discharge of their onerous responsibilities. It is therefore worrisome as to whether principals' managerial practices could be responsible for this. The problem of this study, therefore, is, to what extent can managerial practices predict teachers' job engagement in Delta State?

Research Questions

The following three research questions guided the study:

What is the extent of principals' managerial practices in Delta State public high schools?

What is the level of teachers' job engagement in Delta State public high schools?

What is the correlation between principals' managerial practices and teachers' job engagement in Delta State public high schools?

Hypothesis

1. Principals' managerial practices and teachers' job engagement will not significantly correlate in high schools in Delta State.

Literature Review

Proper management of staff especially teachers is critical to effective and efficient job engagement toward quality attainment. Teachers welfare packages must be properly managed as this could motivate them to actively engage in school activities for quality attainment as expected. Akubue (2002) sees management practices as having to do with provision of teachers' welfare, counseling services, professional growth, supportive supervision, and giving rewards. Jefferson (2004) averred the principals' managerial practices to teachers entails giving supportive instructional supervision, provision of facility adequate welfare, motivation, effective record keeping, and opportunity for professional development through in-service education. Ukaigwe and Nwabueze (2015) reveal that good service conditions such as: welfare packages, recognition/praise, improved salary structures, work-life balance, regular payment of salaries, regular promotion/job enrichment, effective job security, and adequate payment of allowances/work leave positively increase staff interest to work effectively for improved productivity. Kigenyi (2017) revealed that welfare is positively associated with teachers' performance in public primary schools. This implies that housing, meals, medical care, allowances and the school environment have a statistically significant effect on teachers' engagement in public primary schools. Another important practice that may be employed by the principals to enhance the engagement of teachers is the adequate provision of instructional facilities to improve teachers' teaching in schools. Ajaegbo (2000) posits that in the school system, effective managerial practices involve skilful organization and utilization of resources (human and material) for the achievement of goals. Cheng and Tui (2012) also observes that, teacher job performance and effectiveness in curriculum implementation rests on adequate motivation and availability of instructional materials in schools.

Research Method

This is a descriptive survey research design that employed correlational approach in hypothesis testing. The study population comprised high schools in Delta State, Nigeria totalling 465 and 12,755 teachers. The sample consists of 60 principals and 475 teachers from high schools in 10 out of 25 local government areas of Delta State. Simple random sampling technique was used to select the principals and teachers. The researcher used questionnaire to collect data. The questionnaire contains three sections. Section A of the questionnaire represents the demographic data of the respondents. Section B contains Principals' Managerial Practices Rating Scale (PMPRS) while section C contains Teachers' Job Engagement Rating Scale. (TJERS) The PMPS was responded to by the teachers while TJERS was responded to by the principals. The researchers structured the items on section B on a four-point scale, ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (4).

In order to establish the validity of the instrument, the researcher took some steps. For instance, experts in the field in educational management determined the face and content validities of the instrument. The researcher after generating the items, produced and handed over the questionnaire to the experts. The researcher requested the experts to examine the items that make up the various scales, to see if they were in line with the behaviour that the instrument expected to measure. The researcher considered all suggestions that the experts made before producing for pilot study. Two experts who are professors of educational administration ascertained the face validity of the instrument. Having read through each item of the instrument, they provided comment, suggestion which were used to modify the instrument before the final copies were printed.

Cronbach alpha reliability coefficient of the instrument yielded 0.82 for principals management practices scale and 0.86 for teachers' job engagement rating scale. This showed high internal consistency and hence justified the use of the instrument. The researchers recruited and briefed three research assistants, who helped with the administration. For ethical reason, the researchers obtained the permission of the school principals. They also assured the respondents that the process is voluntary and that they are free to accept or decline to participate in the study. The researchers ensured that the respondents properly filled and returned the questionnaire in good condition. A total of 40 and 400 questionnaires were administered to principals and teachers respectively but 40 (100%) copies for principals and 388 (97%) copies for teachers were returned valid and used for analysis of data. Mean and standard deviation and coefficient of determination were used to answer the research questions. The hypothesis was tested using Pearson product moment correlation statistics at 0.05 alpha level.

Results

The results of data analysis is presented in Tables

Research Question 1: What is the extent of principals' managerial practices in Delta State public high schools?

Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation Scores on the Extent of Principals' Managerial Practices in Delta State

S/N	Principals' Managerial Practices	Mean	SD	Remark
1	Ensuring smooth curriculum planning and coordination	2.99	1.00	HE
2	Proper keeping of records academic activities in the school	2.84	0.90	HE
3	Ensures accurate keeping of records of teachers school attendance	2.80	0.89	HE
4	Ensures accurate record keeping of students' school attendance	3.00	0.88	HE
5	Keeps records of teachers' movement during school hours	2.40	0.77	LE
6	Regular monitoring of teaching and learning	2.70	0.69	HE
7	Regular supervision of instruction	2.76	1.00	HE
8	Conducts collaborative decision making with teachers	2.78	0.96	HE
9	Leads staff meetings in a collegial manners	3.10	0.86	HE
10	Shows concern for staff welfare	2.33	1.16	LE
11	Pays attention to teachers' requests	2.42	1.20	LE
12	Motivates teachers for job well done	2.46	1.14	LE
13	Provision of conducive school climate	2.56	0.69	ME
14	Ensures prompt budget preparation	2.88	0.82	HE
15	Ensures timely resolution of conflict	2.72	0.92	HE
16	Leads by showing good examples	2.96	0.94	HE
	Weighted Mean	2.73	0.92	HE

KEY: 2.50 is taken as the benchmark score. Mean cores 2.49 downwards is taken as Low Extent (LE). Mean score from 2.50 to 2.69 is taken as Moderate Extent (ME). Mean scores from 2.70 and above are taken as High Extent (HE).

Data in Table 1 indicates that items 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 13, 14, 15 and 16 have mean scores above 2.50 the bench mark score. Items 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 14, 15 and 16 have mean scores from 2.70 and above. These items represent high extent of principals' managerial practices in Delta State public secondary schools. Item 13 have mean score of 2.56 and thus represent moderate extent of principals' managerial practices in Delta State public secondary schools. That is provision of conducive school climate. These items are: ensures smooth curriculum

planning and coordination, proper keeping records of academic activities, accurate keeping of records of teachers and students school attendance, regular monitoring of teaching and learning, regular supervision of instruction, leading meeting in a collegial manner, ensuring collaborative decision making, prompt budget preparation, ensuring timely resolution of conflict and provision of conducive school climate. Items 10, 11 and 12 have mean scores below 2.50. These items are: motivation of teachers for job well done, paying attention to teachers' requests and showing concern for their welfare. They represent low extent of principals' managerial practices. The weighted mean score of 2.73 suggest that the extent of principals' managerial practices in Delta State is high.

Research Question 2: What is the level of teachers' job engagement in Delta State high schools?

Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation Scores on the Level of Teachers' Engagement in High Schools

S/N	level of teachers engagement	Mean	SD	Remark
	Teachers in this school			
1	Apart from teaching, they fulfil other responsibilities very nicely	2.58	0.99	+
2	Apart from teaching the teachers try to solve any problem of the students	2.44	1.12	-
3	For the betterment of their students, teachers contact their parents	2.36	1.16	-
4	If any student ask question the teachers try to satisfy him at every level	2.34	1.11	-
5	Come to school regularly.	3.08	0.70	+
6	Come well prepared for teaching in class	2.86	0.92	+
7	Complete their syllabus on time.	2.45	1.11	-
8	Consult their colleagues in solving of their class problems	2.64	0.91	+
9	Co-operate with their colleagues in solving school problems	2.68	0.88	+
10	Are committed to school mission and vision	2.73	0.66	+
11	Do not let their domestic affairs to interfere in their duties	2.52	0.89	+
12	Enjoy good relations with their colleagues.	2.80	0.57	+
13	They fulfil their assigned activities on time	2.88	0.68	+
14	Help the head in solving the problems of the school	2.48	0.97	-
15	Maintain discipline in their class	2.90	0.49	+
16	Motivate their students to take part in co-curricular activities	2.87	0.81	+
17	Teach every student according to his abilities	2.22	1.20	-
18	Use different methods of teaching.	2.46	0.99	-
19	Attend their class on time	2.74	0.75	+
20	Write their less plan regularly	2.96	0.77	+
21	Prepare adequately for their lessons	2.55	0.84	+
22	Give students assignment after each lesson	2.30	1.18	-
23	Show great concern for all learners	2.82	0.79	+
24	Praise students when they answer questions correctly during lesson	2.98	1.00	+
	Weighted mean	2.65	0.80	+

KEY: Benchmark = 2.50, + = Agree, - = Disagree

Table 2 shows mean score and standard deviation on level of teachers' job engagement in Delta State. Result in the Table revealed that respondents (principals) agreed that high school teachers in Delta State come to school regularly (3.08), praise students when they answer questions correctly during lesson (2.98), write lesson plan regularly (2.96), maintain discipline (2.90), show great concern for all learners (2.82), they fulfill assigned academic activities timely (2.88), they motivate students to partake in school extra-curricular activities (2.87), they enjoy good relationship with their colleagues (2.80), they consult their colleagues when solving school problems

(2.64) and do not allow their personal affairs to interfere with their job (2.52). The weighted mean score of 2.65 suggests that teachers' level of job engagement is moderate.

Research Question 3: What is the relationship between principals' managerial practices and teachers' job engagement in Delta State high schools?

Table 3: Coefficient of determination showing correlation between principals' managerial practices and teachers' engagement

Variables	Mean	SD	N	R	r ²	r ² %	Decision
Principals' Managerial Practices	2.73	0.92	112	0.80	0.40	40	Positive correlation
Teachers Engagement	2.65	0.80	1320				

For research question 3, the r² value of 0.40 indicates that 40% of variance in teachers' job performance is accounted for principals managerial practices. There is a positive relationship between principals' managerial practices and teachers' engagement in public high schools

Hypothesis 1: Principals' managerial practices and teachers' engagement will not significantly correlate in high school in Delta State.

Table 4: Relationship between principals' managerial practices and teachers' job engagement in high schools

Variables	Mean	SD	N	R	P	Decision
Principals' Managerial Practices	2.73	0.92	112	0.382	0.000	Significant
Teachers' Engagement	2.65	0.80	1320			

Data in Table 4 shows a correlation analysis of the relationship between principals' managerial practices and teachers' job performance in Delta State public secondary schools. The result shows r value is 0.382 at p 0.05 level of significance. The null hypothesis is not accepted. Hence there is a significant correlation between principals' managerial practices and teachers' job engagement in high schools in Delta State.

Discussion

Extent of principals' managerial practices in high schools

The findings in this regards reveals that the extent of principals managerial practices is high in many areas such as: ensures smooth curriculum planning and coordination, proper keeping of records of academic activities, accurate keeping of records of teachers and students school attendance, regular monitoring of teaching and learning, regular supervision of instruction, leading meeting in a collegial manner, ensuring collaborative decision making, prompt budget preparation, ensuring timely resolution of conflict and provision of conducive school climate. The findings are in tandem with Wakili, Unung and Ukpata (2019) who found that principals' management practices in record keeping helped in effective monitoring of teachers and performance of their responsibilities. However, the principals were rated low (2.40) on keeping records of teachers' movement, not motivating teachers who do well (2.45) and paying attention to teachers' request (2.42). The findings also agreed with Igoni (2020) that principals'

involvement of teachers in decision making and accepting their suggestions significantly correlated with their job performance.

Level of teachers' job engagement in high schools in Delta State

The findings revealed that public secondary school teachers in Delta State level of job engagement was moderate in many aspects including : they come to school regularly, praise students when they answer questions correctly during lesson, write lesson plan regularly, maintain discipline, show great concern for all learners, they fulfill assigned academic activities timely, they motivate students to partake in school extra-curricular activities, they enjoy good relationship with their colleagues, they consult their colleagues when solving school problems and do not allow their personal affairs to interfere with their job. This finding is consistent with Nnebedum and Akinfolarin (2017) who found that teachers regularity and punctuality in school as well as participation in school curricular activities enhanced students academic achievement and principals effective management of school. Furthermore, the finding has the support of Ezeugbor, Onyali and Okoye (2018) who found that teachers' job performance in areas of lesson preparation, attendance at class to teach students and their discharge of any assigned duties are factors that enhanced principals' effective administration of schools. Teachers coming to school regularly, writing of lesson plan, contributing in the maintenance of school discipline, showing concern for all learners and motivating students to take part in co-curricular activities are good virtues for building an effective school and maximum school improvement. The finding further showed that teachers use praise to encourage students who answer questions correctly during class. Students like praise and would continue to exhibit good behaviours when they are praised.

Correlation between principals' managerial practices and teachers' job engagement in high schools

The findings showed that the correlation between principals' managerial practices and teachers' job engagement in public high schools in Delta State was positive. They include: principals' instructional leadership and teachers' job engagement, principals' supervisory practices and teachers' job performance, and principals' human resource management and teachers' job engagement. This positive correlation between the two variables implies that as principals' managerial practices improves, teachers' job engagement improves. In the same manner, as principals' principals' instructional leadership, supervisory practices and human resource management improves, teachers' job engagement also improves. Thus, principals' managerial practices are a critical factor for boosting teachers' job engagement. This finding lends credence with Oyewole, Ola-Ogundele and Bamikole (2020) who found that principals' management practices by supporting teachers with supervision and in-service education positively improved their job performance. In addition, the finding concurs with Bianome, Sonhadji and Purnomo (2016) who found that principals' management practices significantly contributed towards the professionalism of productive teachers in Kupang city.

Findings based on hypotheses testing: Correlation between principals' managerial practices and teachers' job engagement

The finding for the hypothesis showed a significant relationship between principals' managerial practices and teachers' job performance. This finding showed that principals' managerial practices are capable of boosting teachers' job engagement. Thus, if principals continue to perform their managerial responsibilities effectively and efficiently, teachers will reciprocate the actions of their principals by showing more dedication and commitment to pursuing school goals and objectives. Teachers under this condition will likely shun negative behaviours and direct their attention to effective engagement of their job. The above finding is consistent with Giami and Obiechina (2019) and Oyewole, Ola-Ogundele and Bamikole (2020) they found a significant relationship between principals' management practices and teachers' job performance in Rivers State and Ekiti State public secondary schools respectively.

Conclusion

The study concludes that managerial practices of secondary school principals in Delta State are high in many areas of their responsibilities. Teachers' level of job performance is good and commendable, as the teachers carry out most of their responsibilities towards the achievement of school goals and objectives. Thus, there is a statistically significant relationship between principals' managerial practices and teachers' job performance in Delta State secondary schools

Recommendations

The study recommends as follows based on the findings and conclusion:

1. Delta State Ministry of basic and secondary education should embark on capacity building of principals through organising workshops and conferences on motivation strategies which principals can adopt for boosting teachers' commitment and job performance.
2. Principals should encourage teachers by ensuring that they listen and pay attention to their requests as this will help to get them more actively involved and committed to the pursuit of school mission and vision.
3. Principals should improve by showing concern for their teachers' welfare.

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