



THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PRINCIPALS' LEADERSHIP PRACTICES AND EFFECTIVE ADMINISTRATION IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN DELTA STATE

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Abstract

The study examined principals' leadership practices and effective administration in public secondary schools in Delta State. The study was guided by three research questions and three hypotheses. It adopted a correlational design. The population comprised 493 principals in the four hundred and ninety-three (493) public secondary schools in Delta State. The sample used for the study was 246 principals using stratified sampling technique which represented 50% of the population. The instruments that were used for data collection in this study were two scales titled 'Principals' Leadership Practices Scale' (PLPS) and 'Effective Administration Scale' (EAS). Face and content validities of the instrument was validated by two experts and the reliability coefficient was obtained using Cronbach method, which yielded coefficients of 0.84, 0.77 and 0.79 for the three objectives and 0.81 for EAS (dependent variable). The research questions and hypothesis were both answered and tested using Pearson Product Moment correlation statistics. The findings revealed that principal's instructional leadership practices, principals' positive school climate building practices and principals' interpersonal relationship practices had a strong relationship with effective administration in Delta State. It was concluded that there is a strong and positive relationship between principal's instructional leadership practices, principals' positive school climate building practices, principals' interpersonal relationship practices and effective administration in public secondary schools in Delta State. Based on the findings of the study, the researcher recommended amongst others, that, principals of public secondary schools in Delta State should uphold instructional leadership in schools. Also, principals should ensure that the climate within the school is safe and positive, so as to enhance the effective administration of schools.

Keywords: Principals, Leadership Practices, Administration, Delta State

Introduction

Education is a life-long process that involves transmitting knowledge and culture from one generation to another. It fosters societal progress and ensures that citizens are self-dependent and sufficiently transformed. Kanife (2019) narrated that education is the greatest investment which any nation can make for the rapid development of its economic, social, political among others, a pre-requisite for a successful engineered national system. Education is the comprehensive process of acquiring knowledge, developing intellectual abilities, and shaping character through teaching and learning. It is the total process of human learning by which knowledge is impacted, faculties trained and skills developed (Okeke, Okaforcha & Ekwesianya, 2019). A society with educated individuals climbs fast and high in the ladder of development. It encompasses formal, non-formal, and informal settings, ranging from early childhood to higher education, and is considered a fundamental human right that transforms individuals and societies. Its importance is seen in personal development, social progress, and economic stability, as it provides skills for better jobs and fosters a more informed and civilized society. Okekeocha and Akpulue (2021) asserted that education is a tool for transforming an individual and a nation at large into a new scientific and technology world evidenced by a socio, political, cultural and economic stability. Education is vital for societal and national growth and development. It refers to the process that helps to develop the whole being, physically, mentally, morally, politically, socially and technologically to ensure that such individuals adapt favourably in any environment they find themselves (National Policy on Education [FRN], 2013).

The school system is dynamic and is one that upholds all operations that facilitates the teaching and learning process. The administration of schools is essential if teaching and learning is to be maintained accordingly. Administration entails coordinating both human and material resources together in order to achieve goals. When administration is applied in the school, it is termed educational or school administration. Amadi (2015) recounted that educational administration is the process of bringing men and materials together for functional and improved

teaching and learning in the educational system for the achievement of set educational goals. Effective school administration requires clear leadership, robust communication with stakeholders, and a positive, inclusive school culture. School administration encompasses the planning, organization, direction, and control of educational institutions to achieve specific goals. This process involves planning, organizing, and supervising human and material resources to achieve the school's goals and improve educational outcomes for students.

The concept of school administration is one that deals and includes the daily management, organization, planning, and oversight of a school's operations to ensure effective teaching and learning, and to support educational goals. Fundamentally, its functions include budget planning, facility management, curriculum oversight, personnel management, and fostering student development and community relations. The administration is led by professionals such as principals, assistant principals, and superintendents, who coordinate all aspects of the school to create a smooth, efficient, and positive learning environment for students, teachers, and staff.

Within the school system, those in the administration of schools are known as school administrators or school principals. The principal is the head and manager of schools. He or she leads, directs and coordinates all activities that go on within the school system. Principals are expected to monitor and supervise both human and material resources in schools in order to achieve predetermined goals and objectives. The role of school principals is crucial to a school's success, as their actions significantly influence teachers' practices, school quality, and students' behaviour and outcomes (Aravena & González, 2021). As the head of the school, principals are responsible for overseeing all school activities and performance, setting and monitoring educational goals, supporting teachers and students, managing daily operations, and delegating roles and responsibilities to all stakeholders within the school (Agasisti, 2020).

The principal, who is in charge of both the school's academic and administrative operations, has a major impact on the school's performance (Preetika & Priti, 2013). The school's principal is

like the center of the school administrative system. In order for teachers, students, and support staff to work effectively and finish their respective tasks, he maintains order and good working order throughout the entire school. Principals are leaders and therefore, they ensure that all staff and students within the school system and guided properly.

Leadership is defined as the power to facilitate, stimulate, and inspire followers via the useful and efficient provision of institutional resources to implement strategies and achieve shared objectives (Northouse, 2018). It refers to the process of directing and coordinating the actions of people. Also, leadership is conceptualized as how a leader influences a group to achieve communal goals (Jaques, 2017). The leadership styles adopted by the principals are diverse and derived from the foundation of locally cultural associations and the context of school settings (Miller, 2018). The leadership practices of principals ensure that they work towards the attainment of educational goals and students learning outcome. Efficient leadership that consistently aligns school missions and visions with actions is the cornerstone to build effective schools (Werang & Lena, 2014). Thus, given the achievement of national educational goals and improved organizational performance, it is imperative to nurture schools with effective leadership.

There are components of principals' leadership practices in schools which includes instructional leadership, building a positive school climate and fostering interpersonal relationships. Instructional leadership is a school leadership approach that focuses on improving teaching and learning. It involves the process of enhancing teaching and learning, with principals and other leaders working to enhance curriculum, foster a positive learning environment, support teacher professional development, and ensure that student learning is central to the school's goals. Instructional leadership is a form of school leadership that places teaching and learning at the forefront of school decision making. To operate the school process effectively, the instructional leader develops and implements a clear vision that further puts his efforts on the right direction (Ali, 2017). He/she ensures the fostering of teaching and learning by engaging in meaningful

deliberate actions in order to facilitate them. A positive school climate is a safe, supportive environment where students feel valued, respected, and engaged, leading to improved learning and achievement. Building a positive school climate is another element of leadership practices in schools and it entails ensuring that the climate within the school is safe and secured for teaching and learning to be facilitated. Huguet (2017) opined that each principal can impact trust within the school's culture at all levels. The principal demonstrates leadership by building trust among all participants in the school in order to promote cohesion and foster a conducive school climate.

Interpersonal relationships refer to the relationship that exists between all participants in schools. It is defined as a close association between individuals who share common interests & goals. In the educational sector, interpersonal relationship exists between principals, teachers, students, as well as other staff members. It explains the interaction and communication that goes on between all persons within the school system. In educational settings characterized by strong teacher-student relationships, learners frequently invest more time and effort in completing their academic tasks (Pianta, 2012). Interpersonal relations relate to the interactions and relationships between persons in an organization. These interactions can greatly effect job satisfaction, motivation, and overall productivity. In educational institutions, excellent interpersonal connections among staff members are vital for providing a supportive work environment that increases administrative efficiency (Adeyemi, 2010).

The onus lies on principals to implement and sustain their leadership practices as they relate with effective school administration. Principals in secondary schools use leadership practices like instructional supervision, and fostering a collaborative, professional environment to enhance administrative effectiveness. Their administrative responsibilities include managing resources, ensuring quality teaching and learning, promoting teacher professional development, and engaging the wider community. These practices lead to better student outcomes, increased teacher morale, and more efficient school operations. Effective school leadership practices

involve setting a clear vision, empowering staff, and fostering a positive culture, which directly contributes to administrative excellence and improved student outcomes. Vital leadership practices include adopting a transformational approach, providing instructional leadership, and managing school resources efficiently, as these are central to achieving school objectives and creating an environment of trust and innovation. These leadership practices are very important and essential in order for administration of schools to be adequately effective in public secondary schools in Delta State.

Statement of the Problem

The school system is central to the teaching and learning process, hence, the need to enhance administration. The administration of schools is essential if the vision and mission of the schools are to be met. The principal is the leader of every secondary school and directs the day to day activities that go on. For effective administration of schools, they are expected to implement leadership practices accordingly. But this is not the case in most public secondary schools in Delta State. It appears that in most public secondary schools in Delta State, many principals do not practice instructional practices well, as many of them do not put in much effort in ensuring the efficacy of teaching and learning. Many of them do not put in efforts to enhance the curriculum and are not able to adequately enforce instructional procedures.

Also, it appears that many schools in the state do not have safe school climate and this has negatively affected educational activities. The school principals, it appears, have failed to properly manage the schools and ensure that they are conducive and safe for teaching and learning to take place. Furthermore, it appears that principals have failed in establishing a cordial and interpersonal relationship in schools. This leadership practice has not been fully felt in many of these schools, as there are conflicts and issues which have not been addressed by the principals. This problem is a continuous trend and bothers the researcher, hence, the need for this study.

Aim and Objectives of the Study

The aim of this study was to examine the

relationship between principals' leadership practices and effective administration in public secondary schools in Delta State. The objectives in specific terms, sought to

1. find out the relationship between principals' instructional leadership practices and effective administration in public secondary schools in Delta State
2. ascertain the relationship between principals' positive school climate building practices and effective administration in public secondary schools in Delta State
3. determine the relationship between principals' interpersonal relationship practices and effective administration in public secondary schools in Delta State

Research Questions

The study was guided by the following research questions

1. What is the relationship between principals' instructional leadership practices and effective administration in public secondary schools in Delta State?
2. What is the relationship between principals' positive school climate building practices and effective administration in public secondary schools in Delta State?
3. What is the relationship between principals' interpersonal relationship practices and effective administration in public secondary schools in Delta State?

Hypotheses

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

1. There is no significant relationship between principals' instructional leadership practices and effective administration in public secondary schools in Delta State.
2. There is no significant relationship between principals' positive school climate building practices and effective administration in public secondary schools in Delta State.
3. There is no significant relationship between principals' interpersonal relationship practices and effective administration in public secondary schools in Delta State

Methodology

Correlational research design was adopted for the

study. The population of the study comprised of 493 principals in the four hundred and ninety-three (493) public secondary schools in the 25 Local Government Areas of Delta State. A sample of 246 principals was selected using stratified sampling technique, which represented 50% of the population. The instruments that were used for data collection in this study were two scales titled 'Principals' Leadership Practices Scale' (PLPS) and 'Effective Administration Scale' (EAS) developed by the researcher. The scales were

validated by two experts in the Department of Test and Measurement, Faculty of Education, University of Port Harcourt. The reliability index of the instruments was determined using Cronbach Alpha statistics which yielded coefficients of 0.84, 0.77 and 0.79 for the three objectives and 0.81 for EAS (dependent variable). The retrieval rate was 93.4% (230). Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) statistics were used to answer the research questions and test the hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance.

Results

Research Question 1: What is the relationship between principals' instructional leadership practices and effective administration in public secondary schools in Delta State?

Table 1: Summary of Pearson Product Moment Correlation Co-efficient Analysis on the Relationship between Principals' Instructional Leadership Practices and Effective Administration in Public Secondary Schools in Delta State

Variables	N	df	r	Result
Principals' instructional leadership practices	230	228	0.577	Strong relationship
Effective Administration				

Decision Rule: 0.00 – 0.25 = Very Weak, 0.26 – 0.50 = Weak, 0.51 – 0.75 = Strong, 0.76 – 1.00 = Very Strong

Table 1 revealed that with 230 respondents and at 228 degrees of freedom, the r. value stood at 0.577 (57.7), which falls between 0.51-0.75, showing a strong relationship between the two variables being compared. Based on the foregoing, the

researcher established that strong relationship existed between the two variables, principals' instructional leadership practices and effective administration in public secondary schools in Delta State.

Research Question 2: What is the relationship between principals' positive school climate building practices and effective administration in public secondary schools in Delta State?

Table 2: Summary of Pearson Product Moment Correlation Co-efficient Analysis on the Relationship between Principals' Positive School Climate Building Practices and Effective Administration in Public Secondary Schools in Delta State

Variables	N	df	r	Result
Principals' positive school climate building practices	230	228	0.742	Strong relationship
Effective Administration				

Decision Rule: 0.00 – 0.25 = Very Weak, 0.26 – 0.50 = Weak, 0.51 – 0.75 = Strong, 0.76 – 1.00 = Very Strong

Table 2 revealed that with 230 respondents and at 228 degrees of freedom, the r. value stood at 0.742 (74.2), which falls between 0.51-0.75, showing a

strong relationship between the two variables being compared. Based on the foregoing, the researcher established that strong relationship

existed between the two variables, principals' effective administration in public secondary positive school climate building practices and schools in Delta State.

Research Question 3: What is the relationship between principals' interpersonal relationship practices and effective administration in public secondary schools in Delta State?

Table 3: Summary of Pearson Product Moment Correlation Co-efficient Analysis on the Relationship between Principals' Interpersonal Relationship Practices and Effective Administration in Public Secondary Schools in Delta State

Variables	N	df	r	Result
Principals' interpersonal relationship practices	230	228	0.696	Strong relationship
Effective Administration				

Decision Rule: 0.00 – 0.25 = Very Weak, 0.26 – 0.50 = Weak, 0.51 – 0.75 = Strong, 0.76 – 1.00 = Very Strong

Table 3 revealed that with 230 respondents and at 228 degrees of freedom, the r. value stood at 0.696 (69.6), which falls between 0.51-0.75, showing a strong relationship between the two variables being compared. Based on the foregoing, the

researcher established that strong relationship existed between the two variables, principals' interpersonal relationship practices and effective administration in public secondary schools in Delta State.

Test of Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant relationship between principals' instructional leadership practices and effective administration in public secondary schools in Delta State.

Table 4: Summary of Pearson Product Moment Correlation Co-efficient Analysis on the Significant Relationship between Principals' Instructional Leadership Practices and Effective Administration in Public Secondary Schools in Delta State

Variables	N	df	R	Sig	P. Value	Decision
Principals' instructional leadership practices	230	228	0.577	0.000	0.05	Significant (reject)
Effective Administration						

From Table 4, with the total number of respondents as 230, using 228 degree of freedom, r. value was 0.577, at 0.000 significant value and a p. value of 0.05. At 0.05 p. value, 0.000 significant value, the r. value of 0.577 is rejected because the significant value of 0.000 is less than the p. value

of 0.05. Based on the foregoing, the researcher rejected the null hypothesis in favour of the alternative that, there is a significant relationship between principals' instructional leadership practices and effective administration in public secondary schools in Delta State.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant relationship between principals' positive school climate building practices and effective administration in public secondary schools in Delta State.

Table 5: Summary of Pearson Product Moment Correlation Co-efficient Analysis on the Significant Relationship between Principals' Positive School Climate Building Practices and Effective Administration in Public Secondary Schools in Delta State.

Variables	N	df	R	Sig	P. Value	Decision
Principals' positive school climate building practices	230	228	0.742	0.000	0.05	Significant (reject)
Effective Administration						

From Table 5, with the total number of respondents as 230, using 228 degree of freedom, r. value was 0.742, at 0.000 significant value and a p. value of 0.05. At 0.05 p. value, 0.000 significant value, the r. value of 0.742 is rejected because the significant value of 0.000 is less than the p. value

of 0.05. Based on the foregoing, the researcher rejected the null hypothesis in favour of the alternative that, there is a significant relationship between principals' positive school climate building practices and effective administration in public secondary schools in Delta State.

Hypothesis 3: There is no significant relationship between principals' interpersonal relationship practices and effective administration in public secondary schools in Delta State.

Table 6: Summary of Pearson Product Moment Correlation Co-efficient Analysis on the Significant Relationship between Principals' Interpersonal Relationship Practices and Effective Administration in Public Secondary Schools in Delta State

Variables	N	df	R	Sig	P. Value	Decision
Principals' interpersonal relationship practices	230	228	0.696	0.001	0.05	Significant (reject)
Effective Administration						

From Table 6, with the total number of respondents as 230, using 228 degree of freedom, r. value was 0.696, at 0.001 significant value and a p. value of 0.05. At 0.05 p. value, 0.000 significant value, the r. value of 0.742 is rejected because the significant value of 0.001 is less than the p. value of 0.05. Based on the foregoing, the researcher rejected the null hypothesis in favour of the alternative that, there is a significant relationship between principals' interpersonal relationship practices and effective administration in public secondary schools in Delta State.

Discussion of findings

Results from the finding revealed that there is a strong relationship between principals' instructional leadership practices and effective administration in public secondary schools in Delta State. Also, it revealed that there is a significant relationship between principals' instructional leadership practices and effective administration in public secondary schools in Delta State. The respondents agreed and believed that instructional leadership correlates with effective administration of schools and that the relationship is a strong relationship public

secondary schools in Delta State. This is in agreement with Ali (2017) who discovered that instructional leaders manage instructional programs by involving the community and focusing on school effectiveness, which enhances school administration. Instructional leadership is leadership at schools or colleges that emphasizes improving the quality of teaching and learning. This leadership is not attached only to the principal because the success of education is achieved jointly by a number of people in various roles in the school. Principals should apply the instructional leadership to improve the school quality by establishing high expectations for all children, maintaining the school environment, implementing periodic evaluations, and focusing on academic activities. Instructional leaders should advance and develop their school as a professional learning organization or community to achieve school learning goals for their students.

The second finding showed that there is a strong relationship between principals' positive school climate building practices and effective administration in public secondary schools in Delta State. Also, it revealed that there is a significant relationship between principals' positive school climate building practices and effective administration in public secondary schools in Delta State. For a positive school culture to exist, shared visions and goals must be communicated among staff members, creating a sense of motivation and commitment toward a school's objectives. Without a cultural identity, an organization will not grow, and for a school, effective leadership plays a crucial role in shaping, supporting, and reinforcing a positive culture. This corroborates with Huguet (2017) who found and recognized school leadership as an essential component that influences the development and growth of a positive school environment. The school principal has the most predominant role in developing a positive school culture, directly and indirectly. When there is a positive and safe school climate, administration becomes easy and school principals and administrators will not find it hard carrying out their functions. This leads to effective administration in secondary schools, as the environment and climate within the school is safe.

Results from the third finding showed that there is a strong relationship between principals'

interpersonal relationship practices and effective administration in public secondary schools in Delta State. Also, the result revealed a significant relationship between principals' interpersonal relationship practices and effective administration in public secondary schools in Delta State. This is in agreement with the findings of Pianta (2012) who narrated that the scope of the rapport between principals, teachers and learners is essential in the mastery of student engagement, which helps sustain the management and administration of schools. School principals' interpersonal relationship practice involves using effective communication, empathy, and emotional intelligence to foster a supportive and collaborative school culture. Key practices include building rapport with staff, listening actively, showing fairness and respect, and sharing decision-making. These skills are vital for increasing teacher commitment, improving teacher and student motivation, and ultimately achieving educational goals.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, it was concluded that there is a strong and positive relationship between principal's instructional leadership practices, principals' positive school climate building practices, principals' interpersonal relationship practices and effective administration in public senior secondary schools in Delta State. Also, there is a significant relationship between principal's instructional leadership practices, principals' positive school climate building practices, principals' interpersonal relationship practices and effective administration in public senior secondary schools in Delta State.

Recommendations Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Principals of public secondary schools in Delta State should uphold instructional leadership in schools by focusing mainly on how to enhance the curriculum and facilitating teaching and learning.
2. Principals should ensure that the climate within the school is safe and positive. They can ensure this by creating and enabling atmosphere for students and teachers to feel

safe, as well as fostering cordial interpersonal relationships, so as to enhance effective administration.

3. Principals in public secondary schools in Delta State should ensure that they establish and maintain cordial and interpersonal relationship in schools. They should encourage both teachers and students to cooperate with each other, communicate effectively and relate well in order to enhance the effective administration of schools.

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