

Assessment of Principals' Administrative Strategies on the Management of Secondary Schools in Gombe Metropolis, Gombe State, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

This study assessed the Principal's Administrative Strategies on the Management of Secondary School in Gombe Metropolis, Gombe State Nigeria. To serve as a guide, two specific objectives, two research questions and two null hypotheses were formulated. Descriptive survey design was adopted for the study and the population of the study was 1021 comprises 17 principals and 1004 secondary school teachers in Gombe metropolis. A sample of 279 respondents was selected using proportionate random sampling techniques. Instrument used for the study was a structured questionnaire with a five-point Likert typed scale titled Impact of Principals' Administrative Strategies on Management of Secondary Schools Questionnaire (IPASMSSQ). The instrument was validated by two experts in the field of Educational Administration and Planning, Department of Educational Foundations and Curriculum, Faculty of Education, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. Pilot study was carried out and the data for the pilot study were analyzed using split halve method of reliability. Cronbach's Alpha was used to compute the reliability coefficient where 0.97 reliability coefficient was obtained. Descriptive statistics (mean score and standard deviation) was used to answer the research questions and t-test analysis was used to test the null hypotheses at 5% ($p < 0.05$) significant level. The findings revealed a significant difference in the opinion of principals and secondary school teachers on the Assessment of administrative strategies performed by principals on the management of secondary schools in Gombe metropolis, Gombe State, Nigeria. It was concluded that principal's budgeting and planning strategies aid teachers to be more effective in the teaching and learning activities thereby influencing smooth running and management of secondary schools. Based on the findings, it was recommended that budget monitoring team should be constituted in all the secondary schools in Gombe State to ensure effective implementation of school budget and also check any form of financial recklessness. It was also recommended that school administration through the principals should ensure full participation of teachers in the policy making and adequate planning of school activities for effective management of secondary schools. The study also recommended that Government and professional bodies in the education sector should organize periodic capacity development workshops for educational managers (Principals) on institutional management and instructional supervision to improve their administrative skills and quality of teaching and learning processes in secondary schools.

Keywords: Administrative Strategies, Management, Secondary School

INTRODUCTION

The importance of principals' administrative strategies in today's educational system cannot be overemphasized. There has been a consensus view that a lot of differences exist between the schools of the past and those of the present. This has been attributed to the explosion of students' population in schools and the level of commitment by the teachers. In the very past, the administrative activities of principals was little because schools were small in size (Ezedi, 1995, Shantz & Ward, 2000). With increased demand for education and consequent large enrolment of students particularly in the urban areas, secondary schools grew to have many teachers and many classrooms. The need then arose for someone to coordinate the activities of the schools by supervising the other teachers in an effort to improve teaching and learning and effective management of secondary schools.

The administrative strategy of principals especially in secondary schools involves the application of management principles in designing, developing and effecting resources towards achievement of educational goals. These principles include: planning, budgeting, organizing, directing, supervising and controlling. Today, the demand for effective management of schools is rapidly taking centre stage more than ever the world over (Okumber, 1999). This effectiveness is judged by the extent to which schools acquire the necessary instructional materials including teachers and how they provide a congenial organizational climate and generally meet the expectations of the society within which they are established for the purpose of achieving educational objectives (Orora, 2001)

There are number of administrative strategies that exist to assist the administrator in carrying out his day-to-day activities. An administrator who ignores these strategies is likely to encounter problems in the task of school management. Hence, administration is seen as a collection of processes dealing with the various ways in which human and material resources are utilized to achieve set goals in an organization. These processes or strategies include such elements as planning, decision making, organizing, coordinating, motivating, directing, evaluating, staffing, and budgeting. Ogbonnaya (2013) stressed that administrative strategies can therefore be regarded as the sum total of the various processes of planning, organizing, stimulating, coordinating, staffing,

budgeting, communication and evaluating, which aid administrators in the utilization of resources in the achievement of organizational goals.

The principals being instructional leaders are in good position to supervise, monitor assess, evaluate and disseminate current information on educational issues and modern teaching techniques to teachers for effective management of secondary school. The overall management of secondary schools rests within the principal, working with and through the teachers to maximize their capabilities in the profession and achieve the desired educational goals. In Gombe State for instance, principals have made efforts and they are still making efforts to improving teaching and learning through effective administrative strategies. It is on this background that the researcher intends assessed the principals' administrative strategies on management of secondary schools in an era of dwindling economy in secondary schools in Gombe metropolis, Gombe State, Nigeria.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Administration is a social process concerned with identifying, maintaining, motivating, controlling and unifying formally and informally organized human and material resources within an integrated system designed specifically to achieve predetermined objectives. Administration has to do with getting things done with the accomplishment of defined objectives (Teddy, 2004). On a broader perspective believed administration could be seen as an integral part of any organization. It is crucial for maintaining and expanding the relevance, effectiveness and productivity of complex institutions. Such as Government Department, Prisons, School Systems, Universities among others (Udoh and Akpa, 2001). For example, the survival of all the organization, like the School and other institutions is dependent largely on the quality of administrative services available. Administration therefore influences the results to be achieved, the direction to be pursued, and the priorities to be recognized within the organization. Administration, according to Enaohwo and Eferakeya (2009) is the process by which goals are achieved through collective and cooperative human effort in a suitable environment. This definition specifies four important points: First, Administration is a process, which involves the manipulation of certain operations. Second, Administration is goal oriented. Thirdly, a collective

and cooperative human effort is required in administration, and fourthly, of a suitable environment, where participants can maximize performance.

Educational administration on the other hand, is a means of achieving the goals of Education through effective and efficient manipulation of available inputs. Aderonmu and Ehametalor (2005) defined Educational Administration as "essentially a service, activity or tool, through which the fundamental objectives of the educational process may be more fully and efficiently realized". Educational Administration is therefore concerned with the utilization of adequate resources and the harmonization of relationships and interactions in a suitable environment, in order to foster the attainment of the goals of teaching and learning. Educational Administration involves prudent management of resources and high degree of accountability on the part of organizational members. Educational administration broadly means running of educational institutions, which involves guidance, leadership, and controlling of the efforts of individuals in the achievement of the goals of the institution (Ayanniyi, 2000).

The ultimate goal of educational administration at all levels is to develop all inclusive and quality education that is accessible and relevant for self reliance. This is guided by the understanding that good education contributes significantly to economic growth, improvement of employment prospects and income generating opportunities for sustainable development. For qualitative education to be achieved in a nation, the teacher (human resources) financial and instructional facilities (material resources) must be co-operatively organized. In other words, the teacher in secondary school must be well trained and supervised (assisted), by principal through effective administrative strategies.

Administrative strategy is a concerned with shaping an organization in the right part towards the achievement of its goal. Some of the administrative process strategies of the principals include planning strategy, organizing strategy, staff personnel strategy, coordinating strategy and budgeting strategy. These administrative strategies are pertinent in the effective management of secondary schools. Management of secondary school is a process of ensuring effective resource input, control, refining the processes and raising the standard

of output in order to meet the set goals. Peretomode, (2001) opined that management in education is the efficient monitoring, evaluation and reviews of the resource inputs and transformation process (teaching and learning) to produce a quality output (students) that meets set standards and expectations of the society.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The related and relevant theory applied in this study is the Human Relation Theory. The Human Relations Theory states that in addition to finding the best technological strategies to improve output, it was beneficial for administration to consider the human elements in the organization. The human relations theory was propounded by Mary Packer Follet (1868-1933). The theory was concerned with the human problems encountered in organizations such as welfare, motivation, retirement benefits among others and therefore concluded that such problems can only be minimized when there is cooperation among workers. Based on this, she developed four organizational principles, all of which centred on co-ordination: coordination by direct contact with the people concerned, coordination in the early stages, coordination as the reciprocal relation of all the factors in a situation, and coordination as a continuing process. The human relations theory has its central idea that the human factor is very important in the achievement of organizational goals. The proponent of this theory holds the view that workers will achieve better if their personal welfare was taken into consideration. However, Human Relations Theory is very relevant to this study because it buttress the fact that the administrative arm of any organization especially the school should consider the welfare of the employees as utmost importance. Therefore, for effective secondary school administration in Gombe State to be actualized, the interest of teachers and other employees should be a priority.

Statement of the Problem

Ideally, principals administrative strategies are expected to promote effective management of secondary schools for national development. It is the expectation of the government, parents and even students that quality education is received by students in Nigeria secondary schools through the adoption of appropriate administrative strategies by the principals. However, observations have shown that there seems to be poor principals' administrative

strategies which have led to poor management of secondary schools in Gombe State. This can be seen in the areas of poor instructional supervision, conflict among teachers, poor planning of school activities, poor decision making and delegation of authority, poor maintenance of school facilities among others. These situations seem to have led to poor principal teacher relationship, poor teaching and learning and poor academic achievement among the secondary school students. The above situation should not be allowed to continue; hence it is based on this that the researcher intends to assess the principals' administrative strategies on management of secondary schools in Gombe metropolis, Gombe State, Nigeria.

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of the study was to assess the principal's administrative strategies on management of secondary schools in Gombe metropolis, Gombe State. Specifically, the objectives were to:

1. Assess the principal's budgeting strategies on management of secondary schools in Gombe metropolis.
2. Assess the principal's planning strategies on management of secondary schools in Gombe metropolis.

Research Questions

The research questions below was formulated to serve as a guide to the researcher

1. What budgeting strategies performed by the principals on management of secondary schools in Gombe metropolis?
2. What planning strategies performed by the principals on management of secondary schools in Gombe metropolis?

Null Hypotheses

The research hypotheses below was formulated to guide the researcher and tested at 5% ($p < 0.05$) level of significance using t-test statistics

- H₁: There is no significant difference in the opinions of principals and teachers on the budgeting strategies performed by principals on management of secondary schools in Gombe metropolis.

H₂: There is no significant difference in the opinions of principals and teachers on the planning strategies performed by principals on management of secondary schools in Gombe metropolis.

METHODOLOGY

Descriptive survey design was adopted for the study and the population of the study is one thousand and twenty one (1021) which comprises seventeen (17) principals and all one thousand and four (1004) secondary school teachers drawn from seventeen (17) public secondary schools in Gombe metropolis. A sample of two hundred and seventy nine (279) respondents was used for the study. That is, 17 principals and 262 teachers. The selection of this sample size is based on the recommendation of Research Advisors, (2006). The entire 17 principals were used for the study. Two hundred and sixty two (262) teachers were selected using proportionate random sampling. A structured questionnaire with a five-point Likert typed scale titled "Impact of Principals' Administrative Strategies on Management of Secondary Schools Questionnaire" (IPASMSSQ) was used for data collection. The instrument was validated by professionals in the department of educational foundations and curriculum, faculty of education, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. Pilot study was carried out in Gombe South Senatorial District with thirty (30) secondary school teachers and six (6) Secondary schools principals. The data for the pilot study were analyzed using split halve method of reliability and Cronbach's Alpha was used to compute the reliability coefficient where 0.97 reliability coefficient was obtained. The instrument was personally administered on the respondents by the researchers which facilitated prompt response from the respondents. Descriptive statistics (mean score and standard deviation) was used to answer the research questions while t-test analysis was used to test the null hypothesis at 5% ($p < 0.05$) significant level.

RESULTS

Research Question One:

What budgeting strategies performed by principals on management of secondary schools in Gombe metropolis?

Table 1: Mean Ratings and Standard Deviation of the Responders' Opinion on the Budgeting Strategies Performed by Principals on the Management of Secondary Schools in Gombe Metropolis, Gombe State Nigeria

S/N	Item Statement	Category of Respondent	Opinion of Respondents						Mean	SD	Decision
			A		UD		DA				
			Frq	%	Frq	%	Frq	%			
1	Principals ensure various departmental needs are forwarded by heads of department or subject coordinator for inclusion in the school budget.	Principals	17	100	00	00	00	00	4.00	.000	Agree
		Teacher	257	98.1	01	0.4	04	1.5	3.95	.373	Agree
2	Involvement of experts like the school bursar or accountant in the preparation of school budget may help to reduce financial recklessness	Principals	17	100	00	00	00	00	4.00	.000	Agree
		Teachers	243	92.7	10	3.8	08	3.1	3.85	.559	Agree
3	Seeking the input/advice of teachers on the most needed capital project(s) to be included in the school budget may help the principals in effective management of the school	Principals	17	100	00	00	00	00	4.00	.000	Agree
		Teachers	234	88.5	22	8.4	07	2.7	3.82	.596	Agree
4	Sourcing for funds from PTA/private sectors for budget implementation may help principals in effective management of schools	Principals	13	76.5	01	5.9	03	17.6	4.41	1.176	Agree
		Teachers	206	77.1	23	8.8	36	13.7	3.48	1.060	Agree
5	Preparing a supplementary budget when the need arises may help to reduce financial recklessness	Principals	09	52.9	01	5.9	07	41.2	3.12	1.265	Agree
		Teachers	172	65.6	28	10.7	58	22.1	3.17	1.287	Agree

Table 1 shows the analysis of items statements 1-5 used to answer the research question on the budgeting strategies performed by the principals on management of secondary schools in Gombe metropolis. The table revealed that, both the teachers and principals agreed to the statement that, principal's budgeting strategy influences management of secondary schools in the study area. As presented on the table, all the 5 items were agreed by both the principals and secondary school teachers, and item number one attracted the highest mean score of 4.00 for the principals and 3.95 for secondary school

teachers, with details showing 17 (100%) of secondary school principals agreed with the item. For the secondary school teachers, 257 (98.1%) agreed with the item, while only 1 (1.5%) disagreed with the item. The standard deviation recorded for the item statement was .000 for the principals and .373 for the secondary school teachers. All the 5 items have the mean score of 3.00 and above indicating that they were all agreed by the respondents.

Research Question Two:

What planning strategies performed by principals on management of secondary schools in Gombe metropolis?

Table 2: Mean Ratings and Standard Deviation of the Responders' Opinion on the Planning Strategies Performed by Principals on the Management of Secondary Schools in Gombe Metropolis, Gombe State Nigeria

S/N	Item statement	Category of Respondents	Opinion of Respondents						Mean	SD	Decision
			AG		UD		DA				
			F	%	F	%	F	%			
6.	Planning programs like debate and quiz competition at least once in a term may help principals to manage their schools effectively.	Principals	14	82.4	00	00	03	17.6	3.57	1.179	Agree
		Teachers	222	84.7	19	7.3	19	7.3	3.69	.865	Agree
7.	Make proper arrangements prior to any external examination may assist in principals in smooth running of their schools	Principals	13	76.5	00	00	04	23.5	3.29	1.312	Agree
		Teachers	223	85.1	17	6.5	22	8.4	3.68	.850	Agree
8.	Making sure that materials needed for conducting internal examination are made available to the exam committee at the right time will help principals to manage their schools effectively	Principals	14	82.4	01	5.9	02	11.8	3.43	1.089	Agree
		Teachers	204	77.9	33	12.6	25	9.5	3.59	.904	Agree
9.	Introducing innovations that will bring about improvement in academic standard of the school may help principals to manage their schools effectively	Principals	14	82.4	00	00	03	17.6	3.47	1.181	Agree
		Teachers	186	71.0	32	12.2	43	16.4	3.37	1.126	Agree
10.	Preparation of school time table on time helps in the management of school	Principals	14	82.4	00	00	03	17.6	3.47	1.181	Agree

Table 2 shows the analysis of items statements 5-10 used to answer the research question on the planning strategies performed by principals on management of secondary schools in Gombe metropolis. The table revealed that, both the teachers and principals agreed to the statement that, principal's planning strategy promote effective management of secondary schools in the study area. As presented on the table, all the 5 items were agreed by both the principals and secondary school teachers, and item number six attracted the highest mean score of 3.57 for the principals and 3.69 for secondary school teachers, with details showing 14 (82.4%) of secondary school principals agreed with the item while only 3 (17.6%) disagree with the item. For the secondary school teachers, 222 (84.7%) agreed with the item, while only 40 (15.3%) disagreed with the item. The standard deviation recorded for the item statement was 1.179 for the principals and .865 for the secondary school teachers. All the 5 items have the mean score of 3.00 and above indicating that they were all agreed by the respondents.

TEST OF NULL HYPOTHESES

Hypothesis One:

Hypothesis one states that there is no significant difference in the opinions of principals and teachers on the budgeting strategies performed by principals on management of secondary schools in Gombe metropolis.

Table 3: T-test Summary on the Budgeting Strategies Performed by Principals on the Management of Secondary Schools in Gombe Metropolis, Gombe State, Nigeria

Variables	N	Mean	Std.	Df	t-cal	t-crit.	Sig.	Decision
Principals	17	3.4	.76029	277	2.160	1.96	.872	Rejected
Teachers	262	3.3	.54142					

Table 3 shows the t-test analysis of difference in the opinions of principals and teachers on the budgeting strategies performed by principals on management of secondary schools in Gombe metropolis. Results on the table indicated that, t-calculated value (2.160) at 277 degree of freedom and at 0.05 is greater than the t-critical (1.96). The observed P=.872 is greater than 0.05 level of significance indicating that there is difference in the opinions of principals and teachers on

budgeting strategies performed by principals on management of secondary schools in Gombe metropolis. Therefore, the null hypothesis one was rejected.

Hypothesis two:

Hypothesis two states that there is no significant difference in the opinions of principals and teachers on the planning strategies performed by principals on management of secondary schools in Gombe metropolis, Gombe State, Nigeria.

Table 4: T-test Summary on the Planning Strategies Performed by Principals on the Management of Secondary Schools in Gombe Metropolis, Gombe State Nigeria

Variables	N	Mean	Std.	Df	t-cal	t-crit.	Sig.	Decision
Principals	17	3.5	.80523	277	2.516	1.96	.078	Rejected
Teachers	262	3.4	.64311					

Table 4 shows the t-test analysis of difference in the opinions of principals and Teachers on the planning strategies performed by principals on management of secondary schools in Gombe metropolis. Results on the table revealed that calculated t-value (2.516) at 277 degree of freedom and at 5% level of significance is greater than t-critical value (1.96). The observed P=.078 is greater than 0.05 level of significance indicating that there is difference in the opinions of principals and teachers on the planning strategies performed by the principals on management of secondary schools in Gombe metropolis. Therefore, the null hypothesis one was rejected.

DISCUSSION OF MAJOR FINDINGS

The first finding of this study revealed that principal’s budgeting strategy promotes effective management of secondary schools in Gombe metropolis. This finding was presented on table 1 by answers to research question one where both principals and teachers all agreed that principal’s budgeting strategies improve management of secondary schools. T-test analysis used to test null hypothesis 1 as presented on Table 3 revealed that, there is no significant difference in the opinions of principals and teachers on the budgeting strategies performed by principals on management of secondary schools in Gombe metropolis. The finding is in line with the views of

Abdulrahman, (2014) who stated that the principal's budgeting strategies in secondary schools include making sure that various departmental needs are forwarded by heads of department or subject coordinator for inclusion in the school budget thereby significantly influence the effective management of secondary schools.

The second findings of the study shows that, principal's planning strategy enhance effective management of secondary schools in Gombe metropolis. This finding is in line with Oboegbulem (2011) who stated that principal's planning strategy is the process of deciding in advance, the methods and procedures which an individual, group or organization intends to follow in order to accomplish its outlined objectives. This is also in line with the assertion of Rosemary (2004) who stated that the important thing in planning strategy in secondary school is to decide in advance the objectives to be achieved and how to utilize the available resources in achieving the educational objectives. In other words, to plan is to decide in advance what is to be done and how to do it. The scarcity of resources makes the need more necessary, since the little available resources have to be evenly spread to reach every competing segment.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of this study, it was concluded that principals' budgeting strategy improves accountability and transparency in secondary schools and reduce embezzlement and any form of financial recklessness. Planning strategies of principal on the other hand, aid teachers to be more effective in the teaching and learning activities thereby influencing smooth running and management of secondary school in Gombe metropolis, Gombe state Nigeria.

RECOMMENDATION

Based on the findings of this study, the researcher recommends the following:

1. School administration through the principal should ensure full participation of teachers in the policy making and adequate planning of school activities for effective management of secondary schools.
2. Budget monitoring team should be constituted in all the secondary schools in Gombe State to ensure effective implementation of school budget and also check any form of financial recklessness.

3. Secondary school principals should adopt and implement the administrative process strategies illustrated in this study to achieve effective management of human and material resources in their various schools.
4. Government and professional bodies in the education sector should organize periodic capacity development workshops for educational managers (Principals) on institutional management and instructional supervision to improve the quality of teaching and learning processes in secondary schools.

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