

ANALYSIS OF TEACHERS' PERCEPTION ON PRINCIPALS' MANAGERIAL SKILLS IN PUBLIC SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN OGUN STATE

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Abstract

The responsibilities expected of principals require more than just everyday skill but sound managerial skills. While principals perceived themselves to possess these skills, the extent to which teachers perceive them (principal) to possess these skills remained doubtful. Thus, this study investigated teachers' perception of principals' managerial skills in Public Senior Secondary Schools in Ogun State. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The population comprises all teachers in Ogun East district with 320 teachers selected using stratified and purposive sampling technique. One research instrument with three sections that measured principals' instructional leadership skills, financial management skills and personnel management skills was adapted, validated (0.69) and used to obtain data from respondents. The result of the study from teachers' perception shows that principals possess low managerial skills in the three dimensions measured in the study. The study concluded that these managerial skills are essential for principals for the smooth administration of the school. The researcher recommended that government should provide on-the-job training to principals and vice principals who will eventually take over from the principals.

Keywords: Managerial Skill, instructional managerial skill, financial management skill personnel management skill and Principal

Introduction

Education has been regarded as instrument that aids development; hence the level of education of a nation is directly related to its level of development.

Education is the vehicle for economic, social-cultural and political development of nations and individual (Obayan, 2006). The school as a formal organization is the centre for all teaching-learning processes. Every organization comprises human and material resources, thus the school as micro organization comprises human and material resources. The human resources in schools are teaching, non teaching staff and students. The three are indispensable to in goal achievement of the school. The secondary school manager is the principal, that is, the principal is a major determinant of secondary education system (Lipham, 2016). The quality of the

school in terms of attaining educational objectives depends on the principals' managerial skills. Ogba and Igu, (2014) reiterated that the quality of training acquired by principals will sharpen their administrative visions and missions, while Adaegbe (2016) sees the principal as an administrative head, a manager, a community public relations man, a supervisor, an instructional leader, a curriculum innovator and a catalyst towards planned revolution.

Researchers have shown concern on the quality of education provided for Nigerian citizens which they claimed cannot bring about any significant desirable transformation (Babayemi, 2006; Eneasator, 2001; Ofojebe, 2008). Ill motivated teachers, poor funding, lack of support nor encouragement for research, inadequate budgetary allocations to education, diversion or misappropriation of educational funds, are problems that have over time, been observed to cause decline in educational growth (Ogunsagu, 2006; Oyedeki, & Fasasi, 2006). In recent time, there is an increased public outcry and complaints on the poor academic performance of students at the secondary school level. This has continued over time as seen in the annual external examinations, mostly the West African Senior Certificate Examination and National Examination Council (NECO). This poor performance has partly been dropped at the principals' door step as a result of lack effectiveness and poor managerial skills. Similarly the falling standard of education over the years may not be unconnected with the influence of increased enrolment on the students' academic performance which is one of the parameters for measuring principals' administrative effectiveness (Muraina, 2006). Okorie (2000) is of the view that leadership is the activity of influencing people to strive willingly for goal achievements which is the main function of principals leadership. For Ikediugwu (2006) students' performance, teachers' achievement and schools' effectiveness all depend on the quality of the principal in the school. Azubike (2009) posited that the school principal is at the helm of the implementation of the education policies in his school. He relates with the various education authority to ensure that desired educational goals are realized. He performs managerial functions such as planning, organizing, directing, coordinating, communication, motivation while Fagbamiye (2004) stated that the principal is essentially an organizer and implementer of plans, policies and programmes meant for specific educational objectives. His administrative tasks include directing the teachers and students in an environment conducive to the maximum development of the learners. This is to say that the principals as leaders have the responsibility of bringing out the best from students and teachers under their administration. However, this can only be possible if principals possess managerial skills expected of them, since leadership is getting the job done through people. Okoye (2007) defined managerial skills as the ability to plan, control, organize and direct the operations of an educational enterprise for the purpose of achieving the objective target set for the educational system as a whole. To Fullan (2005), managerial skills are the

competencies required for effective and efficient planning, staffing, organizing, coordinating, controlling and decision-making. The ability, knowledge and experience required to accomplish management tasks are known as managerial skills. School leaders, are supposedly to imbibe the abilities to create a healthy school culture for continued improvement in quality education; teamwork with others; communicate goals, policies, and procedure to staff; modify practice and school structures to accommodate new policy expectations; provide curriculum leadership opportunities; ensure good principal-staff relationship and guide specific initiatives to improve student achievement (Carr, 2005; Elmore, 2005; Lezotte, & McKee, 2006).

Katz in Ifadiatu (2017) elaborated on globally accepted managerial skills as developed by Henri Fayol, which are; conceptual, human and technical skills.

1. *Conceptual Skill*: This skill enables the manager to coordinate all activities of the different parts of the organization. It is the ability to visualize or see the organization as a whole. It includes; analytical, creative and initiative skills. According to Katz in Ifadiatu (2017), conceptual skills are mostly required by the top-level management. This skill helps principals as top level management to solve the problems for the benefit of the entire school and also helps to fix goals for the whole organization and to plan for every situation that may arise from time to time.

2. *Human Skill*: This skill includes the ability to work with people, motivate and inspire them. This implies interpersonal relationship. It helps the managers to understand, communicate and work with others. It makes the manager a cohesive team leader who understands and listens to various members of the group. Since all managers have to interact and work with people, this skill is therefore very essential.

3. *Technical Skill*: This skill is the most needed at the top management level. In this skill more time are spent in planning, organizing and problem solving. It has to do with proficiency in activities such as managerial processes, procedures and strategization techniques. This skill is needed by managers to design and put into operation policies and plans. Technical skills help the managers to use different machines and tools effectively. While Kiddler (2015), McNamara (2016) and Okoye (2016) argued that communication skills, leadership skills and decision-making skills are essential for effective personnel management, Egwu (2016) and Heller (2012) agreed that managing funds is one of the major tasks of principals. Alia and Iwuoha (2014) stated

that the central purpose of the financial management is the raising of fund and ensuring that the funds so mobilized are utilized in the most effective and efficient manner. They further outline the following means through which schools could raise funds: school fees, old boys/ girls, non-governmental agencies, community

efforts, donation from individuals, charity organizations, endowment funds and proceeds from school activities

However, Okoye (2007) found that principals and teachers differ in their opinions of the managerial skills of supervision possessed by the principals. This finding may imply that many principals did not possess the managerial skills needed for achieving the goals of education for national transformation. The study further found that principals lacked communication managerial skills in terms of communicating goal, policies, procedures and programme to subordinates. This may have led to the submission of Familola in Osuji and Ndu (2002), that many teachers believed that they were not part of the school system because of the communication style adopted by their principals which lead to unsatisfactory individual teachers' performance and grievances. Also, Nnebedum and Egboka (2017) remarked that many human resource management strategies have not been adequately adopted by principals for secondary schools improvements while Miriti and Wangui (2014) submitted that financial management remained a challenge for secondary schools.

Statement of the Problem

Past studies have attributed part of students poor academic performance and decline in education to the leadership of secondary school education .Principals at the helm of management in secondary school lack managerial skills to ensure adequate output. While principals have rated their managerial skills high in past studies, it is not impossible to have another outcome when rated by teachers with whom they relate directly. This also becomes necessary because the success of a manager depends on his ability to discharge his managerial functions and make judicious use of his managerial skills.

Negative attitudes of the teachers and poor academic performance of the students in secondary schools is connected to poor managerial skills and competencies of the school principals. With these challenges at hand, the researcher finds it necessary to analyse principals' managerial skills as perceived by teachers using the major dimensions (instructional leadership skill, financial management skill, personnel management skill)

Research Questions

1. What is the teacher's perception of principal's instructional leadership skill in senior secondary schools?
2. What is teacher's perception of principal's financial management skill in senior secondary schools?
3. What is teacher's perception of principal's personnel management skill in senior secondary schools?

Methodology

This study adopted a descriptive research design while population for this study comprised all the secondary schools in Ogun East Senatorial District of Ogun State. Ogun East has nine Local Government. Proportional technique was used to select 50% of the local government. Proportional selection of one third (25%) of the schools in each of the selected Local Government Areas was also used. Purposive sampling technique was used to select three teachers from each school. Hence 320 teachers were selected. Teachers selected were teachers who have spent a minimum of two years in the school. Only teachers who have worked under the leadership of three principals were used. The reason for this is to have teachers who have experienced managerial leadership skills of different principals. One questionnaire which was sub-divided into three sections was used to collect data. The questionnaire was adopted from Ikegbusi (2016). The questionnaire is titled “Principals Managerial Skills Questionnaire” (PMSQ) This questionnaire contained four parts; part ‘A’ ‘B’ C and D. Part ‘A’ contained demographic information about the teacher and the principal to be rated by the teacher such as Sex, and year of teaching experience. Section B contains 10 items that measure Principals’ Instructional Leadership Skills, section C also contains 9 items measuring Principals’ Financial Management Skills and section D contains 10 items measuring Principals’ Personnel Management Skills. The instrument is valid and has reliability of 0.85 as reported by Ikegbusi (2016) using Pearson Product Moment Correlation. The research with the aid of 3 researcher assistants administered the questionnaire to the teachers who rated their principals’ managerial skills. Data obtained was analysed using descriptive statistics of mean, median and standard deviation.

Results

1. Research question 1: What is teacher’s perception of principal’s instructional leadership skill in senior secondary schools

Table 1: Teacher perceptive Analysis of principal instructional leadership skills

SN	ITEMS	Mean	SD	Remark
1	Principals in co-operation with their teachers define objectives for the school and each department and unit.	2.89	0.43	Agree
2	Principals jointly with teachers select learning experiences method and procedures to employ in achieving the objectives.	2.01	0.79	Disagree
3	Principals assign subjects and classes to teachers according to qualifications and competence	2.34	0.52	Disagree
4	Principals allocate time to subjects	2.88	0.50	Agree

5	Principals make available facilities accessible to all teachers	2.32	0.45	Disagree
6	Principals ensure that the staff in different units and work positions work co-operatively and not antagonistically for the common goals of the school	2.22	0.32	Disagree
7	Principals supervise the teachers' lesson plans	1.89	0.87	Disagree
8	Principals supervise teaching and learning activities in the class	1.98	0.88	Disagree
9	Principals evaluate the planning and implementation of curriculum programmes	2.45	0.66	Disagree
10	Principals assist teachers to try new research findings	1.00	0.43	Disagree

Table 1 shows that teachers disagreed on all the items that measure principals' instructional leadership skill except for items one and four. All the items below the mean show that principal do not possess such instructional leadership skills while item above the mean are the instructional leadership skills possessed by the principal. Item one recorded the highest mean while item ten recorded the lowest mean. This implies that principals lack instructional managerial skills as rated by teacher.

- 2 What is teacher's perception of principal's financial management skill in senior secondary schools?

Table 2 Teachers Perceptive Analysis Principal Financial Management Skills

S/N	ITEMS	Mean	SD	Remark
1	Principals jointly with the management staff and heads of departments and units, prepare budgets for the school	2.24	0.37	Disagree
2	Principals prioritize financial allocation according to needs	2.67	0.69	Agree
3	Principals plan and source for funds for school improvement	2.21	0.75	Disagree
4	. Principals ensure that budgets reflect agreed goals and objectives	2.25	0.82	Disagree
5	Principals delegate the mechanism of financial matters to capable staff	2.50	0.43	Agree
6	Principals keep close check on financial matters delegated to staff	2.90	0.54	Agree

7	Principals work within the constraints of the school budget	2.23	0.60	Disagree
8	Principals keep accurate financial information about the school	2.09	0.53	Disagree
9	Principals give true and fair view of the financial position of the school	2.43	0.49	Disagree

Table 2 shows that teachers disagree on six out of the nine items used to measure principals' financial management skills. All the items below the mean show that principal do not possess such financial management skills while item above the mean are the financial management skills possessed by principals. Item six recorded the highest mean while item eight recorded the lowest mean. Since the majority of the responses disagree, it implies that principals lack financial management skill as rated by teacher.

3 What is teacher's perception of principal's on Personnel Management skills in senior secondary schools?

Table 3 Teachers Perceptive Analysis of Principals' Personnel Management

Skills

S/N	Items	Mean	SD	Remarks
1	Principals model the behaviours they expect from others	.226	0.87	Disagree
2	Principals identify what motivates their staff	2.08	0.73	Disagree
3	Principals communicate effectively with their staff	2.49	0.65	Disagree
4	Principals recognize the efforts of their staff	2.30	0.64	Disagree
5	Principals delegate duties and authorities to capable staff	2.55	0.70	Agree
6	Principals involve staff in decision-making and matters concerning them	2.59	0.64	Agree
7	Principals praise in public and criticize in private	1.89	0.49	Disagree
8	Principals motive, encourage and persuade their staff	2.43	0.70	
9	Principals encourage and enable appropriate professional development of staff	2.07	0.54	Disagree
10	Principals do not take sides in conflict resolutions	2.48	0.68	Disagree

Table 3 shows that teachers disagree on seven out of the ten items used to measure principals' personnel management skills. All the items below the mean show that principals do not possess such personnel management skills while the items above the mean are the personnel management skills possessed by principals. Since the

majority of the responses disagreed, it implies that principals lack financial management skill as rated by teacher. Item six recorded the highest mean while item eight recorded the lowest mean.

Discussion of findings

The result of research question 1 shows that principals lack instructional leadership managerial skills. This is suggesting that principals in secondary schools may not be good examples in terms of leadership skills. The absence of this skill implies that principals may have been found wanting in their duty since leadership skill is an essential skill expected of a principal. Lack of these core instructional leadership skills would make the principals ineffective in achieving the goals and objectives of secondary schools. This finding disagrees with Okoye's (2016) report that for effective secondary school administration, the administrators must possess basic skills in management and leadership. The finding is also at variance with the report of Mgbodile, (2003) that for effective schools' administration, school administrators must possess and employ planning and decision-making skills, leadership competencies, supervisory skills and skills school climate management. Result of research question 2 also shows that principals lack financial management skills. Principals as head of the school are also saddled with financial management, however, according to the finding of this study, principals do not possess this skill. Principals' inability to demonstrate financial management skills implies that schools may be found wanting in the areas of effective in planning, sourcing and utilization of school funds. These findings are in line with the views of Alia and Iwuoha (2014) who agree that any school administrator must know how to manage his or her finance effectively. Keller (2012) and Lipham (2016) similarly confirmed that financial management skills are needed by the school principals to make them effective in planning, sourcing and in utilization of school funds.

Result of research question 3 similarly shows that principals lack personnel management skills. This is also a skill which principals need to possess, since principals cannot achieve school objectives in isolation without the assistance of the teachers. The extent to which a leader can manage people under him/her determines his achievement. A leader should be ready to manage different people with different characteristics under his administration. However, the absence of this skill among principals according to this study suggests that principals requires training in this area. These findings are at variance with Ibukun (2003) who affirmed that there is no amount of capital injection into Educational System without a change of altitude, better skill acquisition and overt commitment on the part of the teaching force that can produce the much-desired change in school performance. Also Ngoka, (2000) reported those behaviours that demonstrate leadership competency and conflict management skills which include among others: sets expectations, models. behaviours expected from others, impartiality or

fairness, negotiates to achieve resolutions while timely resolution of conflicts brings harmony, cooperation, unity, job satisfaction and good job performance.

Conclusion

The study was carried out to access teachers' perception of principals' managerial skills. It remains incontestable that school leaders must possess certain inherent skills for good administration of schools. However, there are conflicting reports as to whether or not principals possess these skills. This study has found that as important as these skills are to the smooth running of schools, principals are lacking behind in these major skills. Teachers as a major stake-holder within the school system were used to rate principals' possession of three key managerial skills (instructional leadership skills, financial leadership skills and personnel management skills). However, the study reported that principals are lacking in these major skills that could have enhanced their duties.

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