

Principals' Management Practices as Correlate of Teachers' Job Performance in Public Secondary Schools in Anambra State

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Abstract

This study determined the correlation between principals' management practices and teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State. Three research questions guided the study and three null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance. A correlational survey research design was adopted for the study. From a population of 12,080 teachers, a sample of 803 teachers was drawn using a multistage sampling procedure. Two researchers' developed instruments titled Principals Management Practices Questionnaire (PMPQ) and Teachers' Job Performance Scale (TJPS) which were validated by three experts from Faculty of Education, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka were used for data collection. Internal consistency of the instruments was ascertained using Cronbach's Alpha and this yielded reliability coefficients of 0.75, 0.77, 0.71 for the three parts of the PMSQ with overall reliability index of 0.74. The reliability index for the Teachers' Job Performance Questionnaire (TJPQ) was 0.84. Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient was used to answer research questions and test the hypotheses. The p-value was used to determine the significance of the correlation at 0.05 significant level. The result among others revealed a low positive relationship between principals' instructional leadership practices and teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State, a medium positive relationship existed between principals' communication practices and teachers' job performance in secondary schools in Anambra State. Based on the findings, the study recommended among others that Post Primary School Service Commission (PPSSC) should implement targeted professional development programs for principals to further enhance their instructional leadership skills. This can include workshops, mentoring, and coaching focused on effective instructional leadership. This could further enhance teachers' job performance in the state.

Key words: Management, Management practices, job performance, teachers' job performance.

Introduction

For nations to rise to a standard worthy enough to compete favourably in the league of Nations, they first of all, should have manpower in adequate quantity and quality. Teachers are responsible for the education of this manpower in line with the expectations of the society. Teachers, as stated by Obiekwe, Ogbo and Igbokwe (2020) are the pillars of the society who help students to grow and shoulder the responsibility of nation building. Teachers are indeed the nation's human capital, and every effort needs to be made to ensure they perform effectively.

Performance may be described as an act of accomplishing or executing a given task. It could also be described as the ability to combine skillfully the right behavior towards the achievement of goals and objectives. Teachers' job performance involves all the activities carried out by the teacher to achieve desired effects on students. It involves the extent to which the teacher participates in overall running of the school in order to achieve expected school objectives and goals. Uzoho (2021) viewed teachers' job performance as the level at which teachers in secondary schools perform their duties based on the level at which they are satisfied with their teaching job.

Several factors can influence teachers' level of performance in the school. One of such factors is principals' management practices. Management involves skillful organization and utilization of resources (human and material) for the achievement of goals. Ezeugbo and Emere (2017) sees management practices as involving the organization and utilization of human and material resources for the achievement of educational goals. This study will focus on the following principals' management practices: instructional leadership, decision making and communication. The reason being that these strategies appear to have direct influence on teachers' job performance.

Instructional leadership is associated with measures that a principal takes or delegates to others to enhance students' learning. It involves the decisions, strategies and tactics which principals employ to ensure instructional effectiveness in the classroom. In this respect, the principal should provide direction, resources and support to both the educators and the learners (Van Deventer and Kruger 2013). According to Ezeugbor and Emere (2017) principals' instructional leadership practices can be direct (focused on improving teaching) or indirect (focused on creating the conditions for optimal teaching and learning). Direct instructional leadership is focused on the quality of teacher practice itself, whereas indirect instructional leadership is particularly important for secondary school principals because much of the direct leadership is carried out by deputies and heads of departments.

Another important management practice which is of interest to this study is decision-making. It can be seen as the process of selecting the most preferred and workable action among other options or alternative courses of action available, either towards solving problems or the achievement of an objective (Izuehie, 2024). Decision-making is a sequential process ending in a single decision or series of decisions (choices) which stimulate or cause some actions. Teachers perform at utmost level in an enabling environment where the principal possesses a high level of imagination, initiative, vision, and techniques in making a decision.

Communication according to Ogbo, Obiekwe and Emere (2020) can be seen as an administrative tool employed by principals to influence school operations through human interactions. It serves

as the life wire of any effective school and successful administrators are trained and equipped to impact the whole school process through effective communication. Communication involves two or more persons sharing personal feelings, purposes and knowledge, and making concerted efforts to understand each other. Communication in school takes place between and among principals, teaching and non-teaching staff, students as well as other stakeholders. The goals of the school are shared by principal with relevant individuals within the school system through communication. Not only this, the management of human, material, time and information which are the main resources in schools cannot be effectively and efficiently utilized without effective communication.

However, the situation in most secondary schools in Nigeria, Anambra State inclusive casts a shadow of doubt as to whether principals actually apply effective management practices in the system. This is because principals seem to be grappling with management challenges such as poor learning environment, lack of teamwork and effective communication, poor instructional supervision and poor mentoring (Mbanefo 2023). These management inefficiencies from principals are probably the reason most teachers display poor performance and commitment to the school, as could be observed in their poor attitude to work, absenteeism, lack of dedication to teaching and carrying out assignments, and unauthorized movement from their duty posts (Ebeim, 2023).

Furthermore, studies have also reported disciplinary cases in secondary schools in Anambra State (Obiekwe 2019; Mbanefo 2023). Indiscipline in school which is manifested in the forms of; lateness to school, bullying, insolence, failure to carry out assignments, insubordination, aggression, damage to school materials and facilities, failure to obey authorities, untidy dressing habits and other acts capable of disrupting school activities can be associated with teacher-related factors, such as teachers' level of performance. These problems which appear to have emanated from inefficiencies in principals management practices necessitated this study.

Statement of the Problem

Effective management practices by school principals are widely recognized as crucial factors influencing teachers' job performance and, consequently, student outcomes. In Anambra State, secondary schools face diverse challenges that can impact the quality of education provided. There are evidence of management challenges such as poor instructional leadership and supervision, lack of teamwork and effective communication in most secondary schools in the State.

Many a time, principals appear to focus so much on attention on administrative responsibilities and neglect critical issues of teaching and learning. Preliminary observations by the researcher suggest that variations in management practices among principals might contribute to differences in teachers' motivation, job satisfaction, and overall performance. However, there is limited research focusing on how these practices directly correlate with teachers' performance metrics in secondary schools in Anambra State. This gap in knowledge hinders the ability to develop targeted interventions that can enhance educational outcomes. Therefore, this study aims to determine the correlation between principals' management practices and teachers' job performance in secondary schools in Anambra State. By identifying key management practices that significantly impact

teachers' performance, the study seeks to provide evidence-based recommendations for improving school leadership and, ultimately, educational quality in the state.

Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study is to determine the correlation between principals' management practices and teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State. Specifically, this study determined:

1. The relationship between principals' instructional leadership practices and teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State.
2. The relationship between principals' decision making practices and teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State.
3. The relationship between principals' communication practices and teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What is the relationship between principals' instructional leadership practices and teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State?
2. What is the relationship between principals' decision making practices and teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State?
3. What is the relationship between principals' communication practices and teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance.

1. There is no significant relationship between principals' instructional leadership practices and teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State.
2. There is no significant relationship between principals' decision making practices and teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State.
3. There is no significant relationship between principals' communication practices and teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State.

Method

A correlational survey research design was adopted for the study which was carried out in public secondary schools in Anambra State, Nigeria. Three research questions guided the study and three hypotheses were tested at the 0.05 level of significance. From a population of 12,080 teachers, a sample of 803 teachers was drawn using a multistage sampling procedure. Two researchers' developed instrument titled Principals' Management Practices Questionnaire (PMPQ) and Teachers' Job Performance Scale (TJPS) which were validated by three experts was used for data collection. The instruments was structured on a four point scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A) Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagreed (SD) weighted 4, 3, 2 and 1. The internal consistency of the instrument was ascertained using Cronbach's Alpha and this yielded reliability coefficients of

0.75, 0.77, 0.71 for the three parts of the PMSQ with overall reliability index of 0.74. The reliability index for the Teachers' Job Performance Questionnaire (TJPQ) was 0.84. The instruments were considered reliable in line with Nworgu (2015), who stated that if the co-efficient obtained for an instrument is up to 0.70 and above, the instrument should be considered good enough to be used for a study. The direct administration and retrieval method was used for data collection. A total of 803 copies of the questionnaire were administered while 700 representing 87% were retrieved and was used for data analysis. Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient was used to answer research questions. The coefficient (r) and the size of the relationship were interpreted using the guide of a correlation coefficient by Nworgu, (2015) as follows;

Coefficient (r)	Relationship
.00 to .20	Very Low
.20 to .40	Low
.40 to 60	Medium
.60 to .80	High
.80 to 1.00	Very high

P-value was used to determine the significance of the correlation. Where the calculated p-value is less than the stipulated level of significance (0.05), the null hypothesis was rejected.

Results

Table 1: Pearson r on the relationship between principals' instructional leadership practices and teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State

Source of Variation	N	r	Remark
Instructional Leadership Teachers' Job Performance	700	0.39	Low Positive Relationship

Table 1 shows that there is a low positive relationship between principals' instructional leadership practices and teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State. This is evident by the size of Pearson's Correlation Coefficient r, which is 0.39.

Table 2: Pearson r on the relationship between principals' decision making practices and teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State

Source of Variation	N	r	Remark
Decision Making Teachers' Job Performance	700	0.42	Medium Positive Relationship

Analysis in Table 2 shows that the Pearson's r=0.42, indicating that there is a medium positive relationship between principals' decision making practices and teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State.

Table 3: Pearson r on the relationship between principals' communication practices and teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State

Source of Variation	N	r	Remark
Communication Teachers' Job Performance	700	0.56	Medium Positive Relationship

Analysis in Table 3 shows that there is a medium positive relationship between principals' communication practices and teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State. This is shown by the size of Pearson's Correlation Coefficient r, which is 0.56.

Table 4: Test of significance of relationship between principals' instructional leadership practices and teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Anambra state.

Source of Variation	N	r	p-value	Remark
Instructional Leadership Teachers' Job Performance	700	0.39	0.00	Sig

Analysis in Table 4 shows that there is a significant relationship between principals' instructional leadership practices and teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State. The calculated r (0.39) had *P*.value <0.05. The 1st null hypothesis was therefore rejected.

Table 5: Test of significance of relationship between principals' decision making practices and teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Anambra state.

Source of Variation	N	r	p-value	Remark
Decision Making Teachers' Job Performance	700	0.42	0.00	Sig

Analysis in Table 5 shows that there is a significant relationship between principals' decision making practices and teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State. The calculated r (0.42) had *P*.value <0.05. The 2nd null hypothesis was therefore rejected.

Table 6: Test of significance of relationship between principals' communication practices and teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Anambra state.

Source of Variation	N	r	p-value	Remark
Communication Teachers' Job Performance	700	0.56	0.00	Sig

Table 6 shows that there is a significant relationship between principals' communication practices and teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State. The calculated r (0.56) had *P*.value <0.05. The 3rd null hypothesis was therefore rejected.

Discussion of Findings

Relationship between principals' instructional leadership practices and teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State.

Findings of the study showed that there is a low positive relationship between principals' instructional leadership practices and teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State. This finding suggests that while principals' leadership practices have some influence on teachers' performance, the impact is relatively low. Instructional leadership refers to the actions and behaviors of principals that are focused on improving teaching and learning processes within schools. This includes setting clear instructional goals, providing support for teachers, and monitoring and evaluating instructional practices. Effective instructional leadership is widely recognized as crucial for enhancing educational outcomes and teacher effectiveness (Wang, Hall, and Rahimi, 2015).

The low positive relationship identified in this study suggests that while there is a correlation between principals' instructional leadership practices and teachers' job performance, it is not pronounced. Recent research supports the notion that instructional leadership positively affects teachers' job performance but acknowledges that this relationship can be influenced by various contextual factors (Leithwood et al., 2022). For example, instructional leadership practices may have a more pronounced impact in schools where additional factors, such as professional development opportunities or school culture, are also addressed (Day, 2021). Scholars such as Ali, Elmi and Mohammed (2013) and Abwalla (2014) also found a positive relationship between leadership behaviour as regards to their involvement in instructional practices and teachers' performance in secondary schools. This is in support of earlier scholars like, Kadyschuk (1997) that principals' instructional leadership support is a critical ingredient of the structure of teacher

performance in the school. McHenry (2009) also discovered a positive relationship between leadership behaviour, in terms of their support during instructional delivery and teacher performance.

The finding of the corresponding hypotheses shows that there is a significant relationship between principals' instructional leadership practices and teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State. This finding supports that of Rouzbahani, Soleimanian, Rezai and Hemati (2013) who found a significant relationship between principals' instructional leadership practices and teachers' organizational performance.

Relationship between principals' decision making practices and teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State.

The study reveals a medium positive relationship between principals' decision-making practices and teachers' job performance in secondary schools in Anambra State. This finding underscores the importance of effective decision-making by principals in enhancing educational outcomes. This implies that when principals adopt appropriate practices towards selecting a course of action among available alternatives, either towards solving problems or the achievement of an objective, teachers' performance will be moderately improved. Teachers perform at utmost level in an enabling environment where the principal possesses a high level of making a decision skills.

Decision-making practices of principals involve the processes and strategies employed to make choices that impact various aspects of school management, including resource allocation, policy implementation, and instructional leadership. According to Bennis (2009), effective decision-making is crucial for school leaders as it directly influences the operational efficiency and overall effectiveness of educational institutions. Principals who engage in participatory decision-making and consider input from teachers and other stakeholders are more likely to foster a supportive and collaborative school environment (Fullan, 2014). Teachers' job performance, which encompasses instructional effectiveness, engagement, and overall productivity, can be significantly influenced by the decision-making practices of principals. Studies have shown that when principals employ inclusive and transparent decision-making practices, teachers feel more valued and motivated, leading to improved job performance (Leithwood and Jantzi, 2005). The positive relationship found in this study aligns with these findings, suggesting that principals' decision-making practices in Anambra State are conducive to enhancing teachers' performance and effectiveness in their roles.

The findings of this study is also supported by several theoretical frameworks. For instance, the Transformational Leadership Theory posits that leaders who engage in effective decision-making inspire and motivate their followers, resulting in higher levels of performance and job satisfaction (Bass and Avolio, 1994). Furthermore, the Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1991) highlights how decision-making processes, when perceived as fair and inclusive, can positively influence individuals' attitudes and behaviors, which in this case, relates to teachers' job performance.

Relationship between principals' communication practices and teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State.

The study reveals a medium positive relationship between principals' communication practices and teachers' job performance in secondary schools in Anambra State. This finding underscores the significant role that effective communication plays in educational settings. Effective communication practices by principals, which include clarity in directives, openness in feedback, and engagement in regular dialogue, have been identified as crucial factors in enhancing teachers' performance.

Recent literatures for example, Adedoyin, Oyedokun, and Alabi (2022) found that principal communication practices, including regular feedback and transparent decision-making, were positively associated with teachers' job satisfaction and performance. Other scholars like Ensley (2014), Crawford-Patterson (2008), Arlestig, (2008) and Kline, (2000) highlighting how communication practices can impact various aspects of job performance among teachers. For instance, effective communication from school leaders helps in creating a supportive work environment, clarifying job expectations, and fostering professional development. These elements contribute to improved job performance by aligning teachers' efforts with school goals and providing them with the necessary support and feedback.

The finding of the hypothesis shows a significant relationship between principals' communication practices and teachers' job performance in secondary schools in Anambra State. This finding concurs with Abwalla (2014) whose study found that principals' style of communication had significant effects on teachers' performance.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, the researchers conclude that there is a low positive and significant relationship between principals' instructional leadership practices and teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State. A medium positive and significant relationship exist between principals', decision making, instructional supervision and communication practices and teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State.

Recommendations

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

1. Post Primary School Service Commission (PPSSC) should implement targeted professional development programs for principals to further enhance their instructional leadership skills. This can include workshops, mentoring, and coaching focused on effective instructional leadership. This could further enhance teachers' job performance in the state.
2. Principals should establish regular feedback systems or framework where teachers can provide input on the instructional leadership practices of their principals. This feedback can help principals understand teachers' needs and adjust their practices accordingly for improved job performance.

3. The study also recommends that principals should be encourage to involve teachers in decision-making processes. When teachers have a voice in decisions that affect their work, it can lead to greater job satisfaction and a sense of ownership. Principals should also ensure transparency in how decisions are made and communicated. They are to make teachers understand the rationale behind decisions and how they align with the school's goals.
4. The State Post Primary School Service Commission (PPSSC) should organize professional development training for principals focused on effective instructional supervision. This should cover techniques for constructive feedback, observation strategies, and ways to support and motivate teachers. Principals should also ensure that instructional supervision is perceived as supportive rather than evaluative and that the feedback received is used to help teachers improve rather than just assess their performance.
5. Principals should always establish and maintain clear, open channels of communication between them and the teachers. This can include regular meetings, newsletters, and digital platforms where information can be shared effectively. They should also encourage a two-way communication process where teachers feel comfortable sharing their concerns, feedback, and suggestions. This could help in providing needed interaction and feedback necessary for improved job performance.

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