

PRINCIPALS' ADMINISTRATIVE PROBLEMS IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN DELTA STATE.

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Education is the stronghold and bedrock of any nation worth the salt, whether developed or developing nation, is sine qua non. In other words, it is a primary factor in the growth, development and life of a nation and her citizens. Education in a country is a major academic industry and an instrument for change towards national development. Hence, Covey (2002) asserted that the society wants education because it serves as instrument per excellence. Administration of education is fundamentally necessitated by the unprecedented growth in all facets of educational system. Administrative role on the other hand has to do with the method or technique or step-by-step by which an administrator directs and control the life of any organization in order to achieve the desired goals. It is a way of co-ordinating and controlling the scarce resources, manpower, finance and capital equipment so as to achieve the desired objectives (Ezeh, 2008). The attainment of goals has always been a topic of fundamental concern to various facets of human enterprise.

The central purpose of school administration is the enhancement of teaching and learning to effectively attain the goals of the institution and co-ordinates the efforts of members of the organization towards the achievement of its established purpose (Bunuyamani, 2003). In Nigeria today, education is no more a private enterprise but a huge government venture that has witnessed a progressive evaluation of government complete and dynamic intervention and active participation (Ezeh, 2008). It has become for this country an instrument per excellence for effecting national development (National policy on Education, 2004). Scholars of educational administration are in agreement on the cardinal and crucial role of the school administrator in the attainment of the defined educational objectives of Nigeria. According to Nakpodia (1998), the growth and development of any school and to

strive, the principal remains the focus. The achievement of educational objectives is solely dependent on the expertise of the school administrator (principal), in using both human and material resources within the educational system for the realization of the desired objectives.

The administration of secondary schools mainly consists of the management of resources namely: manpower, finance and capital equipment (Orsiew, 2001). If the aforementioned are appropriately harnessed in any educational system, the benefits accruing are better experienced than imagined. However, it is an open secret that there is an acute shortage of manpower, finance, capita equipment and myriad of other problems militating against the smooth administration of secondary schools. There seems to be some administrative problems facing principals in their administration of secondary schools (Ijegbulem, 2003). The number of public secondary schools increased in DeltaState. Due to this increase in number of public secondary schools, the formal organizational work became wide and executive performance of executive heads increased tremendously. These are due to lack of fund, facility, manpower and others.

At this point, it is necessary to conclude that expectations of principals' administrative problems in public secondary schools have become a sensitive and a topical issue, deserving critical and sustained attention of all and sundry.

Statement of the Problem

School administration is of great importance to any educational system, hence, the crucial role of the principals' of secondary schools in keeping our educational industry a float. This issue therefore demands constant appraisal in the interest of secondary education in Nigeria.

The involvement of government in the administration of secondary schools notwithstanding, there will exist myriad of problems confronting school administrators. Industrial actions recorded in the history of the nation in our educational industry left much to be desired and thus, lent a need for a critical investigation into principals' administrative problems of public secondary schools.

Most often, principals' and teachers' are alleged to be solely responsible for the fallen standard of education in Nigeria. However, the above statement at a closer look will be discovered to be untrue since other factors outside the school environment or programme implementation make great input into the anomaly.

The effects of poor performance of the staff in their task of imparting knowledge to the students are left for us to see in the poor performance in both internal and external examinations. Lack of preparedness of the students to seat for examinations compels students' to indulge in the unwholesome act of cheating popularly called "EXPO". This gives rise to the cancellation of results thereby frustrating even the innocent candidates. This situation has made a mess of our educational system and brought shame to the personnel involved. The aforementioned problems and a host of others have caused principals' a lot of concern.

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The unpatriotic attitudes of some of the principals' and teachers' further heighten the deterioration of the situation. This they do to achieve their selfish ends materially to enhance their poor financial standing. The entire affair has brought degradation to the educational industry of the country. Consequently, the situation is helplessly yearning for solution to remedy the degenerating condition. The present study was undertaken to administration of public secondary schools.

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance in order to provide answers to the problems raised in the study.

1. There is no significant difference between male and female principals' views on principals' administrative problems in public junior secondary schools.
2. There is no significant difference between experienced and less experienced principals' opinion on principals' administrative problems in public junior secondary schools.
3. There is no significant difference between principals' in urban and rural secondary schools on principals' administrative problems in public junior secondary schools.

Methodology

The study adopted the descriptive survey research design. The population for the study consisted of 38 principals in thirty-eight (38) government owned secondary schools in Ughelli-North Local Government Area of Delta State. The sample for the study consisted of 31 principals' using the stratified random sampling technique. The instrument for the study was the questionnaire. The instrument consisted of two sections, section 'A' and 'B'. Section 'A' contained personal information of the respondent. This was to find out the sex, school, experience and location of school, qualification and age. Section 'B' consisted of thirty (30) items. The items in this section were rated on a four point rating scale of Strongly Agreed (SA) 4, Agreed (A) 3, Strongly Disagreed (SD) 2 and Disagreed (D) 1. Test-retest method of establishing reliability was employed to determine the reliability of the instrument. Cronbach Alpha was used in analyzing it; it gave an alpha value of 0.72. The t-test was used to analyse the data collected.

Results

There is no significant difference between male and female principals' views on principals' administrative problems.

Table 1: Summary of t-test analysis of the view of male and female principals' on principals' administrative problems.

Respondents	X	SD	N	df	T-Cal	T-Crit
Male	67	9.41	10	30	0.90	2.04
Female	66	9.92	21			

From the result in table 1 shows no significant difference between male and female views on principals' administrative problems. This is because the calculated value of t-calculated (0.90) is less than the t-critical (2.04). This implies that there is no significant difference between male and female principals' on principals' administrative problems, therefore the null hypothesis is accepted.

Hypothesis 2

There is no significant difference between less experienced and experienced principals' opinion on principals' administrative problems.

Table 2: Summary of t-test analysis of the view of less experienced and experienced principals' opinion on principals' administrative problems.

Respondents	\bar{X}	SD	N	Df	T-Cal	T-Crit
Less Experienced	73.5	9.2	23	30	0.36	2.04
Experienced	73.1	6.5	8			

Result in table 2 shows that there is no significant difference between experienced and less experienced principals perception of principals administrative problems in secondary schools. This is because the t-test calculated value of 0.36 is less than the t-critical value of 2.04; the hypothesis therefore is accepted. This is an indication that there is no significant difference between less experienced and experienced on principals' administrative problems in public secondary schools.

Hypothesis 3

There is no significant difference between rural and urban principals' views on administrative problems in public secondary schools.

Table 3: Summary of t-test analysis of the view of urban and rural principals' view on principals' administrative problems.

Principals	X	SD	N	df	T-Cal.	T-Crit.
Principals in Rural secondary schools	74	9.7	20	30	1.65	2.04
Principals in Urban secondary schools	72	6.1	11			

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From the presented result in table 3, the null hypothesis of no significant difference between rural and urban principals' views on principals' administrative problems in public secondary schools is accepted. This is because t-calculated value of 1.65 is less than the t-critical of 2.04. This implies that there is no significant difference between principals in rural and urban secondary schools on principals' administrative problems in public secondary schools.

Discussion of Results

The result of hypothesis one which states that there is no significant difference between male and female principals' views on principals' administrative problems in public secondary schools apparently showed no significant difference, hence the hypothesis was accepted and retained. The result showed that gender did not influence principals' perceptions of administrative problems in public secondary schools. The finding of this study is in agreement with Ezeh (2005), Ijebulem (2003) and Atalor (2003) who reported that there seems to be some administrative problems facing principals' in their administration of secondary schools. Problems such as lack of fund, inadequate manpower, facilities and restriction of power of principals' are not peculiar to a gender only but to all. Thus, with these problems being a general one, gender differences cannot bring any change in their opinions on principals' administrative problems in public secondary schools.

The result of hypothesis two revealed that there is no significant difference in the way less experienced and experienced principals' perceived principals' administrative problems in public secondary schools. This finding corroborates those of Okah (2001), Hallinger (2002), Akumah (2004) Adegoke (2005) and Ekkarin (2007) who reported no significant difference between less experienced and experienced principals' view on principals' administrative problems. No organisation can work or function effectively when the factors needed for its smooth running are not available or are inadequate. Principals' whether less experienced and experienced are directly in a vintage position to feel the impact of the non-availability or shortage of these factors on administration of their schools. The role of effective and problem free administration of secondary schools is very important because it enable the administrator achieve the desired goals. Administrative problems militating against the smooth administration of secondary schools do not affect less experienced principals' only neither does it impact on only experienced principals'. Principal experience therefore will not influence their views on administrative problems faced by principals' in secondary schools.

The result of hypothesis three revealed that there is no significant difference between urban and rural principals' views on principals' administrative problems in secondary schools. This is supported by Leithwood (2002), Omorogie (2002), Bunuyamani (2003), Wong (2004), Adegoke (2005) and Ekkarin (2007) that reported no significant difference in views on principals' administrative problems in secondary schools based on location. Lack of funds, manpower, facilities, equipment,

restriction of principals', unpaid salaries and benefits, etc. which militate against smooth and effective administration affects secondary schools both in rural and urban settlements. Administrative problems in public junior secondary schools are enormous and have far-reaching effects on the educational system and location difference will not affect significantly.

Conclusion

The results in this study provide empirical evidence that principals' view on principals' administrative problems in public secondary schools is not affected by gender, experience and location. The achievement of educational objectives is solely dependent on the expertise of the school administrator (principal), in using both human and material resources within the educational system for the realization of the desired objectives, it can therefore be concluded that gender of principals' whether male or female, experience and school location does not seem to have any influence on the principals' view on principals' administrative problems.

Recommendations

1. There should be a commitment to manpower planning so as to improve the quality of personnel in the school system.
2. In-service training for principals' by the government through lectures, leadership workshops, seminars and discussions should be encouraged.
3. There should be adequate provision of capital equipment; finance and manpower to secondary schools to enable the principals' maintain effective administration and that way improve the quality of instruction imparted on the students.
4. Staff quarters should be built for each secondary school, to serve as incentive for teachers and principals' to stay on their job rather than seek for greener pastures elsewhere thereby making their job uninteresting.

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