

ADMINISTRATIVE VALUES ORIENTATION AND ADJUSTMENT TO OCCUPATIONAL STRESS AMONG POST PRIMARY SCHOOLS HEAD TEACHERS IN CROSS RIVER STATE

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Abstract

The focus of this study is to investigate the levels of Administrative Values Orientation and Adjustment to occupational stress among post primary schools head teachers by comparing professionally qualified and the professionally non-qualified head teachers. A total of 78 head teachers were selected for the study through the stratified random sampling. The break down shows 30 qualified and 48 non-qualified teachers. The Administrative Values Orientation and Stress Adjustment Scale (AVOASAS) were used in the collection of data for the study. Four hypotheses were tested using the population t-test statistical analysis for hypotheses one and two and the independent t-test statistical analysis for hypotheses three and four. All hypotheses were tested at .05 level of significance. The result reveals that qualified head teachers do not only show higher administrative oriented values, they also show higher administration to occupational stress than their professionally non-qualified colleagues.

Introduction

The effectiveness of every educational setting is influenced by its values. Nzewi (1986), gave a commendable definition of values as guides and determinants of social attitudes and ideologies on the one hand and of special behaviour on the other. He further contended that values are standards that guide and determine actions, attitudes, towards objects and situations. Rath, et al (1966), opined that values emanate from social experience and they are guides to behaviour. They (Rath and associates) see values as being constantly related to the experiences that shape and test them. One of such experiences is teaching. Edem and Afangidegeh (2007), stated that character formation and values education is the task of teaching the young about right and wrong, complemented with a learner friendly environment. Thus, certain things are treated as right, desirable or worthy. These become our values. In this regard, those who understand what the relationship is between them and society most often exhibit behaviour that is positive, purposeful, enthusiastic, proud and consistent on the one hand, and on the other hand, those who are confused exhibit tendencies to be apathetic, uncertain, inconsistent, drifting, over-conforming, over-dissenting and role-playing. This being the case, the proper orientation is highly desirable in every professional training in order to equip future practitioners of such professions with the required and necessary work skills and standard of behaviour that reflect the organizational norms.

In Nigeria as it is in the academic culture of other African countries, the values orientation of head teachers is towards coordinating the actions of their staff and students in a manner that will facilitate goal Attainment. They are also oriented towards providing a cognitive frame of reference for staff and students to interpret and judge their actions. Finally, head teachers strive to define and enhance the common identity of staff and students by sanctioning behaviours that do not conform to teaching/learning norms and rewarding behaviour that conform to norms.

Contextually, therefore, values orientation are behaviour modifications which head teachers acquire after their training in educational administration and management/planning as reflected in their level of adjustment to stress at work.

Adjustment to work stress as used here refers to harmony and satisfaction which head teachers experience at work and which result from administration/management values orientation acquired during their years of training in the university.

The word "No Stress" is a very common word among Nigerians. It is another way of saying "there is no problem". Thus, stress as a concept is understood by all when used in a general context but by few individuals when a more precise account of the word is required. Mechanic (1962), theorized that some factors determine whether or not a situation is stressful. These factors include the ability and capacity of an individual, skills and limitations produced by group practices and traditions,

the means that define where and how a person may utilize these means. Thus individuals experience discomfort when they feel unprepared to confront event and vice versa. More so, lack of suitable knowledge and skills, uncertainty of the situation, personal trait such as low opinion of self, may cause the feeling of unpreparedness, anxiety and tension within the individual.

House (1974), sees stress as a subjective response resulting from the interaction of social conditions and particular personal characteristics like abilities, needs and values. Social factors like working relationship, organizational climate, etc. may also determine the extent to which a potentially stressful situation really results in perceived stress. Gerow (1996), defines stress as a complex set of reactions made by persons under pressure to adapt. It is a response made to a perceived threat to one's well-being. For Crider, et al (1989), stress is a pattern of disruptive psychological and physiological functioning that occurs when an environmental effect is appraised as a threat to important personal goals and one's ability to cope. The authors identified over-load, conflict and uncontrollability as stressful events or situations the individual perceives as threatening.

Contextually, therefore, stress is taken to mean the manifestation of pathological symptoms in a head teacher in response to perceived occupational demands made upon him in his role as the administrative head.

Statement of the Problem

The training of a school administrator is not a one day affair. It is an educational process that is seriously planned and implemented with a determined focus of turning out seasoned and efficient personnel for leadership roles in our educational

setting. The period of training is usually 4 years for bachelor's degree 2-3years for a master's degree and 3-5 additional years for a doctorate degree depending on the financial status and interest of the individual.

The values orientation of these years of training are assumed to have equipped school administrators with skills for making positive adjustment to administrative demands and responsibilities. Such demands and responsibilities include prudent school management, conflict management, positive decision-making, maintaining of values and standards among staff and students, dedication to head work, emotional stability and good sense of maturity, honesty, maintaining of reasonable occupational authority, strengthening of ties with colleagues and adapting to social pressure and stress.

However, heads of school are exposed to a lot of stressful factors or conditions in their occupational environment. These factors have been identified as militating against their efficiency, general health and happiness. For instance, job-related factors like work over-load, work under-load, role conflicts, role uncertainty, work pressure, responsibility for people and materials, performance, evaluation, monitoring measures, career development, time management, financial management, and other related factors can be every distressful to heads of schools.

It is against this backdrop that this study seeks to find out whether educational administration/management values orientation have provided heads of school with the right insight into the appropriateness of school's management situations to make for efficient adjustment by comparing the extent to which post primary school head teachers with degrees in educational management and those whose degrees are not in educational management differ in their levels of administrative values orientation and adjust to occupational stress.

Hypotheses

This study addresses the following two hypotheses: H₀₁: There is no significant difference in the level of administrative oriented values between head teachers with qualification in educational administration and those without. H₀₂: There is no significant difference in the level of adjustment to occupational stress between post primary schools head teachers with degrees in educational management and those whose degrees are not in educational management.

Method

The design of this study is the descriptive survey. The subjects were drawn from the head teachers of post primary schools in Cross River State, Nigeria through the stratified random sampling process. In this regard, the researchers first stratified the state into three zones. From each zone, twenty-six schools, were randomly selected, thereby bringing the total number of schools used in the study to seventy-eight. The sample therefore comprised 78 head teachers. A breakdown of the sample in terms of gender shows 42 males and 36 females. In terms of professional qualification, 30 of the subjects were holders of degrees, in education management while 48 of them were holders of degrees outside educational management. For the purpose of this study, these two categories of head teachers are respectively referred to as Professionally Qualified Head Teachers (PQHT) and Professionally Non-Qualified Head Teachers (PNQHT).

Instrument

The instrument used in the collection of data for the study was designed by the researchers and referred to as the Administrative Values Orientation and Stress Adjustment Scale (AVOASAS). The AVOASAS was designed for both the PQHT and PNQHT and consists of three parts. The first seeks to tap demographic information such as sex, age, marital status and qualification. The second part of the AVOASA consists of 25 items on administrative values orientation. These items are divided into five sub-variables with five items each. These sub-variables include: i. Leadership Orientated Values (LOV) ii. Conflict Management Oriented Values (CMOV) . iii. Performance Evaluation Oriented Values (PEOV) iv. Management Oriented Values (MOV) v. Security Oriented Values (SOV).

Subjects were required to rate the degree to which these items are sources of positive living or encouragement by responding on a 5 point Likert scale as follows:

1. Never (N)
2. Rarely (R)
3. Sometime (S)
4. Often (O) and
5. Always (A)

The third part of the AVOASAS also consist of 25 items on sources of occupational stress. These items are divided into five sub-variables (with five items each)

viz:

- i) Intrinsic Job Factor (IJF) Role in
- ii) Organization (RIO) Career Development
- iii) (CD) Relationship at Work (RAW)
- iv) Organizational Structure and Climate (OSC).
- v)

Subjects were required to rate their extent of adjustment to these items by indicating how stressful these items are, had been or would have been to them by responding on a 5 point Likert scale as follows:

- 1) Not at all Stressful (NAS)
- 2) Mildly Stressful (MS)
- 3) Stressful (S)
- 4) Very Stressful (VS) and
- 5) Extremely Stressful (ES).

Scoring of parts 2 and 3 of the AVOASAS was done in an increasing order of magnitude of items that were positively worded while those that were negatively worded were scored in a decreasing order of magnitude. Since each variable was 25 items, the minimum score for each was 25 points while the maximum score for each was 125 points. Thus the higher the scores the more influence was recognized from the variable on administrative values and occupational stress, while the lower the scores the less influence was recognized from the two variables.

All the items in the research instrument were scrutinized by measurement and evaluation experts of Department of Educational Foundations, Cross River University of Technology, Akanikpa Campus before being adopted. This ascertains the face validity of the research instrument. The reliability of the AVQASAS was determined through a test-retest approach given three weeks interval. The reliability co-efficient (r) ranged between 0.72 and 0.87. These values were recognized as high and adequate for instrument to be use for this study.

Data Analysis

The steps in data analysis were guided by the two null-hypotheses postulated for the study.

Results

The study examined two null-hypotheses

Hypothesis One

"There is no significant difference in the level of administrative oriented values between Post Primary Schools head teachers with qualification in educational administration and those without in Cross River State.

The dependent variable in this hypothesis is "the level of administrative oriented values". The independent variables are two namely: head teachers with qualification in Educational Administration/Management (i.e Qualified head teacher) and their counterparts without qualification in Educational Administration/Management but in other areas in education (i.e non-qualified head teacher). Independent t-test statistical analysis was used to tested this hypothesis. The hypothesis was tested on each of the components of Administrative value. The results of the analysis are presented in Table 1.

Table 1

Results of Independent t-test Analysis of the Difference in the level of Administrative Oriented values between qualified and Non Qualified Post Primary Schools Head Teachers

| Qualified (n=30) | | Non Qualified (n=48) | | | |
|------------------|---------------------------------------|----------------------|------|------|------|
| S/N | Administrative Values | X | SD | | t |
| 1. | Leadership Orientation Value | 24.26 | | 3.83 | n |
| 2. | 1.92 | | | 2.00 | t |
| 3. | Conflict Management Oriented Value | 22.36 | 1.81 | Ma | e |
| 4. | Performance Evaluation Oriented Value | | | nag | d |
| 5. | | | | eme | |
| | | | | nt | V |
| | | | | 2 | Orie |
| | | | | | a |

lue 22.10 1.99

| Security Oriented Value | 23.42 | 1.94 | X | SD | t-value |
|-------------------------|-------|------|---|----|-------------------|
| | 20.70 | 2.02 | | | 7.74* |
| | 18.56 | 2.15 | | | |
| | 20.05 | 1.88 | | | 0.76 [£] |
| | 20.66 | 2.21 | | | 3.00" |
| | 23.40 | 2.05 | | | 0.04 ^a |

'Significant at .05 level, df = 76; critical t = ! .98 "Not significant at .05 level, df = 76; critical t = 1.9K

The results of the data analysis as present in Table 1 show that of all the five variables, only two are the difference between the two groups not significant (and therefore the null hypothesis is not rejected). These are performance evaluation oriented values with a non-significant calculated t-value of 0.76, and security oriented value with a non-significant calculated t-value of 0.04. In all others, (i.e leadership conflict management and management oriented values). The calculated t-values are greater influence was recognized from the variable on administrative values and occupational stress, while the lower the scores the less influence was recognized from the two variables.

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S/N **Administrative Values** X SD

| | | | | X | SD | t-value |
|----|---------------------------------------|-------|------|-------|------|-------------------|
| 1. | Leadership Orientation Value | 24.26 | | | | |
| 2. | | 1.92 | | | | |
| 3. | Conflict Management Oriented Value | 22.36 | 1.81 | 20.70 | 2.02 | 7.74* |
| 4. | Performance Evaluation Oriented Value | | | 18.56 | 2.15 | |
| 5. | | 3.83 | 2.00 | 20.05 | 1.88 | 0.76 [£] |
| | Management Oriented Value | 22.10 | 1.99 | 20.66 | 2.21 | 3.00" |
| | Security Oriented Value | 23.42 | 1.94 | 23.40 | 2.05 | 0.04 ^a |

[£]Significant at .05 level, df = 76; critical t = 1.98 ["]Not significant at .05 level, df = 76; critical t = 1.98

The results of the data analysis as present in Table 1 show that of all the five variables, only two are the difference between the two groups not significant (and therefore the null hypothesis is not rejected). These are performance evaluation oriented values with a non-significant calculated t-value of 0.76, and security oriented value with a non-significant calculated t-value of 0.04. In all others, (i.e leadership conflict management and management oriented values). The calculated t-values are greater than the critical t-values of 1.98 at .05 level with 76 degrees of freedom, in these cases, the null hypothesis is rejected.

The interpretation is that; there is a significant difference in the level of leadership oriented value, conflict management oriented value and management oriented value between Qualified and Non qualified head teachers of post primary school,, in Cross River State.

A closer look at the mean scores of the two groups reveals that in all the five values, the mean scores of qualified head teachers are greater than those of Their non-qualified counterparts. This is an indication that the level of Administrative Oriented Values of qualified head teachers are higher than those of their non-qualified counterparts.

Hypothesis Two

"There is no significant difference in the level of adjustment to occupational stress between qualified and non-qualified head-teachers of post primary schools in Cross River State. The dependent variable in this hypothesis is occupational stress. The independent variables are two viz: qualified and non qualified head teachers. Independent t-test statistical analysis was used to test this hypothesis. The hypothesis was tested on each of the five components of occupational stress. The results of analysis are presented in Table 2.

Table 2
Results of Independent t-test Analysis of the Difference in the level of Adjustment to Occupational Stress between Qualified and non Qualified fiend Teachers

| | Qualified (n=30) | Non Qualified (n=48) | | Organizational Structure and Climate |
|-----|------------------------------|----------------------|--------------|--------------------------------------|
| S/N | Administrative Values | | | |
| | | | | at .05 |
| | | | | level, |
| | | | 18.91 | df = 76; |
| | | | 2.44 | critical |
| | | | 'Significant | |

I = 1.98

| X | SD | t-value |
|-------|------|---------|
| 23.09 | 1.82 | 10.57* |
| 22.56 | 1.28 | 7.22" |
| 21.83 | 2.07 | 7.39* |
| 21.38 | 1.58 | 4.45* |
| 22.05 | 2.00 | 5.92* |

The result in Table 2 shows that the calculated t-values of all the components of occupational stress are greater than the critical t-values of 1.98 at .05 level of significance and 76 degrees of freedom. The null hypothesis is therefore rejected for all the cases.

This means that there is a significant difference in the level of adjustment to occupational stress between qualified and non-qualified head teachers of post-primary schools in Cross River State.

Judging from their mean score difference, Table 2 reveals that non-qualified head teachers have higher mean scores in all the 5 components of occupational stress than their qualified counterparts.

This is a strong indication that qualified head teachers are better adjusted to occupational stress than their non-qualified counterparts.

Discussion

The finding of the first hypothesis reveals that the level of administrative oriented values of professionally qualified head teachers are higher than those of their non-professionally qualified counterparts. This finding is a testimony to the fact that the training process of school administrators provides them with the right set of administrative values than the training process of a non school administrator, especially in the areas of leadership, conflict management and management of people and resource. This argument is consistent with the views of Ralhs et. al (1966) that values are constantly related to the experience; that shape and test them.

Finally, the finding of the second hypothesis which reveals that qualified head teachers are better adjusted to occupational stress than their non-qualified counterparts could be explained the fact that the Administrative Values Orientation of professionally head teacher have equipped them with insight and skills for coping with the demands and responsibilities of school administration.

Conclusion

From the findings of this study, it is clear that professionally qualified head teachers of post-primary schools do not only possess high level of Administrative Oriented Values than their colleagues who are professionally non-qualified, they are also comparatively better adjusted to occupational stress than their professionally non-qualified colleagues. For these reasons, the study recommends that a re-training programme should be provided for head teachers (especially the professionally non-qualified heads) in the state.

Regular participation in workshops and seminars by head teachers especially in the areas of values reorientation and stress management should be encouraged in the state. This will enable head teachers acquire new administrative skills and values as well as insights for coping with their occupational demands.

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