

# **SUGGESTED REMEDY FOR CHALLENGES FACED BY SCHOOL ADMINISTRATOR IN HIS JOB PERFORMANCE**

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## **Abstract**

A school principal is the image-maker of the school organization. He is responsible for what happens in the school. However, he tends to encounter some challenges in the management of human and material resources. Some of the challenges are the management of students' personnel, management of infrastructural facilities and management of school finance. The probable remedy is his ability to communicate effectively with his subordinates. When he communicates frequently, he may find it easy to interact with his teachers. He alone cannot effectively handle the management of school human and material resources therefore, he must relate with his teachers for the improvement of school programme.

## **Introduction**

The school administrator is the head of the school organization. According to Akahomen (2005), he is accountable for what happens in the school. The administrator or principal as usually used interchangeably is also responsible for fostering a high quality staff development programme and a positive school climate. An effective school administrator blends knowledge, skills, and beliefs with educational philosophy to shape his decisions regarding the school's goals and objectives.

Other important functions for the administrator include being an instructional leader. The principal often visits classrooms to work with teachers or attend academic meetings for the development of effective teaching and learning techniques. As Akahomen (2008) point out, administrator stands out to be the pillar upon which the school success is built. He acts as public relations to the school-community, students and the teacher. This includes administrative and discipline tasks.

The school administrator burdened with the task of nurturing future leaders (students), teaching and non-teaching staff. It is therefore the duty of the head to create a conducive atmosphere for every stakeholder to do his bits. Teacher's job performance to assist the principal is highly required. Sometimes the teachers are not able to bring about appreciable performance for maximum productivity. It is obvious that school headship and the involvement of the teachers through communication in many ways improve the performance of the teacher (Oseni, 2008)

**Some challenges for the school administrator include:**

1. Students personnel management
2. Management of infrastructural facilities
3. Finance management

**Students' Personnel Management**

One of the challenges the school administrator encounters is the control and management of student's welfare. It is the primary assignment of the school head to direct the students. Akahomen (2005) perceived that the responsibility for the overall management of the students remains the thrust of school administrator. A principal with self-discipline and firmness has the potential to control his students. Invariably, he had the character that will lead to democratic atmosphere with two-way communication between students and the principal.

In conjunction with humanistic pupil-control ideology, which considers student's social climate and self-image for the students, Ezeocha (1995) indicated that students need to be treated with respects and politeness. In spite of these attentions, there are grouse indiscipline among the students; thus: thee are cases of cultism, bully, lateness to school, absenteeism, examination malpractices and the likes, are common among students. This is the situation where the older students bully on eh younger ones. Truancy is another disheartening problem, where such students are neither in school nor at home, of course, these are not far from getting involved in cultism. A student who does not stay in class to learn cannot produce good result and in order to cover up or to prevent failure goes for examination malpractices. These kinds of acts bring shame and embarrassment to the school, parents and entire society. Such candidates cannot represent and defend his country intelligently.

However, Nwaogu (1994) suggested that it is the responsibility of the administrator (principal) to see to it that the students are at the center of the educational process and all the activities in the school should aim at developing their total personality to the fullest. That is to say that school programmes are students-centered. They need to be systematically observed and studied as an individual by the principal. Eh should pay attention to the record to the students needs, such as guidance services, student's welfare services, sanitation services, health services and exceptional child services.

The principal should understand students' behaviour at a giving moment. This can only be done through the help of the teachers. Principals who through the help of the teachers, has to deal with both background factors affecting all students and school management, try to avoid, if possible, minimize same, so as to encourage democratic relationship between the principal and the students. It will crate a congenial atmosphere for teaching and learning.

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With the assist of the teachers, principals should negotiate with students to establish rules of behaviour thus finding solutions to problems such as personal, emotional, social and civic needs of the students. To achieve this, there must be flow of communication by consensus efforts to both parties.

In order to have a standing and to achieve the objectives of the schools and the society, principal with the collaboration of teachers, must be form, fair and friendly. They should be kept busy to avoid unrulling behaviour. Similarly, the principal needs to have a grip of their temper and have knowledge of their subjects matter.

#### **Infrastructural Facilities**

One of the challenges the school administrator faces is the maintenance of the school facilities. Principal's performance in organizing the maintenance of the school facilities is very important to the growth and development of the organization. The proper maintenance and utilization of these facilities is vital for the effective administration. The facilities among others include buildings, transport, water and energy resources and administrative equipment.

It is the responsibility of the principal to see that the facilities are designed to suit the goals and objectives of the school. He should ensure that the libraries, laboratories, classrooms, administrative block, the dormitories as the case maybe are located for easy access to both staff and students. In schools where there are some handicap students, their problems should be considered for without necessary school materials, teaching and learning cannot go on smoothly and this makes administration problematic for school administrator. In facilitating the individualized learning process, principal as the coordinator of the facilities, should ensure that infrastructures are well maintained by teachers and students. Of course where they require major financial involvement, it is the duty of the principal to inform and solicit with the government for provision.

Asabor (1999) suggested that classes need to be congested for easy maintenance of the facilities. According to UNESCO educational planning tam, student-teacher ratio should be 35:1 as the standard class size.

A conference was organized by the federal ministry of education in 1998 by Vienna association with Austria institute for school and sports facilities. The topic was educational facilities and their maintenance, the paper presented by Gerhor was titled the influence the "built environment" has upon the performance and behaviour of students and the school. In his studies he found that there was a relationship between the age of educational facilities and the student reading and arithmetic achievement scores. That achievement scores increased to 7.63 percentile ranks once students had moved to a new and better facility. The study also revealed that our entire sensory system is involved in the

perception of any built environment. Man responds to colours and shapes by liking them.

Looking at different coloured school facilities may change the heat process of the body surface, thus influencing the way in which individuals perceive certain spaces to be warm or cold. The conclusion was that school design must keep abreast with time, to be playful and friendly. Thus, the administrator should make sure that he shapes and colours are varied, stimulating senses of freedom and do not inhibit the users. If they are very pronounced, they will result in a kind of visual battle of the individual against such a deigned feature. Although the individual may not be aware of it but has the feeling of being confronted by a hostile architecture. Similarly, more facilities could be introduced such as computer to improve their knowledge. The parents, government and spirited individual can be involved in the maintenance of school facilities.

### **Financial Management**

In every organization, finance is one of the vital resources for full establishment and without it there will be crisis. It is the live wire of classroom instruction. All other resources are dependent on it; hence Nwaogu (1994) and Akahomen (2005) itemized those areas that need the services of finance (money). Such areas are accommodation for instructional purposes, salaries and allowances for teachers and others like books, tables, desk, chairs, laboratory equipments, library services and so on.

Juwah (1991) regretted that most persistent problem of school principal's administration is the inadequate financial support on education by various stakeholders. However, finance determines the content and methods of education, the quality of the teaching force and equipment, the quality of the learning environment and the conditions of services for the staff.

To operate any school system or a project without adequate finance is quite a difficult task for the administrator. This could lead to wither non-accomplishment of task or frustration on the job. If the school is unable to keep strictly to the votes in their budgets and school bank accounts will run into problems due to accumulated bank overdraft. Therefore the principal is rendered ineffective due to poor funding of school. He finds himself in embarrassing situation in an attempt o implement school policy. From all indications, one may say that as a result of inadequate finance in the education sector, most, if not all stats in Nigeria experience poor school results and examination malpractices. The inability to fund these educational programmes constitutes problems, which serves as a challenge and a barrier to principal's effectiveness.

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I must say that, these should be massive funding of schools. There should be a prescribed minimum standard for all schools in the areas of facilities and provisions for their maintenance – all these require finance. Without adequate provision of finance to facilitate educational system, there will be a large turn-out of school drop-out. According to Akahomen (2005), education could be funded in these forms by: Taxing the citizens, local property and federal government aids. This is notwithstanding, the school principal should have it in mind that school money is a public fund and therefore, it ought to be use wisely.

#### **The Remedy – Principal and Teachers’ Communicative Ability**

What is communication? It touches every aspect of human endeavours. It manifest in form of symbols ascribed meaning and interprets messages that elevate man above the status of the lower animals. Communication serves as an instrument of social interaction. It helps to understand ourselves to keep in touch with other people, understand and predict their response towards situations. It is the medium through which relationships are established and maintained. It provides a means by which people in various organizations such as the schools can interact, exchange information, ideas, develop plans, proposals and policies (Graig, 1999).

According to Ivancenich, Kenopaske and Matteson, (2005) communication is the ‘transition of information and understanding through the common symbols from one person or group to another’. The symbols could be verbal or non-verbal. Ijeoma and Nwagwu (2004) stated that communications is the ‘transfer of information’. While Deflear, Kerney and Plax (1993) said that communication occurs when one organism (the source) encodes information into a signal and passes to another organism (the receiver) decodes the signal and is capable of responding appropriately.

Pearson, Nelson, Tilsworths and Harter (2003) explained that communication as a word comes from the Latin word "communicare" meaning "to make common" or "to share" this means to share understanding of the message. As Afariogun (2008) communication is the means by which each of us develop an individual pattern of beliefs, attitude and values which are the personal attributes that bring us to understand, misunderstand, accept or reject others who are like or unlike ourselves. Communicating well or poorly can therefore spent the difference between success and failure in human relationships in principal’s / school goals. Principals who understand the impact of communication on goals achievement are better equipped than those who do not (Afariogun 2008). A principal achieves success in his administrative tasks when he uses his communicative ability in relating with his subordinates He went further to say that principal and teachers' communicative ability encourages and guides the development of problem-solving skills and independent thinking in students. It also makes use of the available technological materials and resources effectively too engage teachers in varied teaching experience. Communication

provides opportunities for guided practice and hands on technology application. Therefore, it can help to eradicate examination malpractice amongst the students. Communication requires efficiency on the part of the sender (principal) of the message and the receiver of the message (teacher), for proper management of human and material resources of the school if there is break in principal/teacher relationship, the teacher as the receiver may not function as expected. Effective principal in schools use a variety of strategies to share information among teachers and students. Teachers! administrators must work with others to develop a dear vision for the school to ensure the vision is communicated school-wide to an constitutes. Principal must also disseminate information about the school activities and students performance to the school community.

Innovation and new ideas and programs surface for progressive learning. As principal communicate with his subordinates the various departmental goals are harmonized to fan in line with the organizational goals. The group ought to work as a team to implement the program and use the available resources A situation where infrastructural facilities and adequate finance prove problematic, effective communication will alleviate those challenges. For example, students' attention span may last longer with new technological tools than with older teaching aids. This may also serve as an advantage for principal in that it leaves more time for productive work and requires less time disciplining.

Technological influence on early interaction of teachers and students is a very necessary one, such helpful technology aspects is the interaction of teachers by using communication preference such as communication programmes and have the overall goal of increasing the school readiness of young children. Similarly, one of the possible guidelines for a principal to be effective in his administration borders on teacher's welfare. He has to provide a guide for staff development and to improve the incompetent teachers, to access the tone of the school and identify some of their most urgent needs.

Communication brings about understanding among parties. The principal tends to understand his subordinates at work. Thus, one of the instruments that could used to stir them up is motivation. Hence, Kogha (1999) maintained that motivation implies the force or condition that impairs workers within an organisation to act willingly for the progress of the establishment, therefore, a principal endeavour to stimulate teachers energies skins and interest.

### **Importance of Communication in Principals' Administrative Job Performance**

Communication is vital to the actualisation of school objectives. It serves a number of purposes such as production and regulation, innovation and individual socialization and maintenance (Myers and Myers 1982).

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- (a) Production and regulation aims at doing the primary work of the school such as teaching and learning in schools. Through communication skill, goals and standards are set for the students This requires transmitting facts and information. The principal is able to lead and influence other in the system.
- (b) Innovation-New ideas and programs surface for progressive learning. As principal communicate with his subordinates the various departmental goals are harmonized to fall in line with the organizational goals
- (c) Socialization and maintenance through communication: The participants develop self-esteem, interpersonal relationship and motivation, thus they integrate their individual goals as both the administrator and the subordinates take decision.
- (d) Evaluation: communication also helps the principals to evaluate curricular materials for accuracy and teachers performance. This of course, provides the teachers with materials and source that are appropriate and challenging for their work.
- (e) It promote high level of shared undemanding which brings about delegated authorities and responsibilities to the teachers.

### **Recommendations**

Having seen the importance of communication in principal administrative job performance a number of issues need to be addressed.

1. Principal need to plan and know how to pass information regularly to his teachers and should be innovative in his ideas
2. He should develop listening skills. Teachers should be allowed to express themselves when there is problem.
3. Follow up- as an administrator, there must be follow up of message passed whether it was misunderstood or not.
4. Feed back- Teachers ought to be encouraged to send a feedback as they have received information as a prove that the message was understood.
5. Principals should sometime accept teacher's useful suggestion Principal's humility is needed for his ideas to be accepted.
6. The group ought to work as a team to implement the program and use the available resource. A situation where infrastructural facilities and adequate finance prove problematic, effective communication win alleviate those challenges. With shared understanding, everyone would try to cope.
7. Clarify what he wants the teachers to accomplish and try as much as possible to pass the information directly.
8. Do not talk down to anyone otherwise, your subordinates will dishonour you.
9. Talk about one issue at a time rather than skipping from one topic to another and have confident in himself.
10. Make sure that vital points are highlighted for clearance and comprehension.

11. Try to focus on his audience (listeners) and guide his speech in order to avoid expressions that attacks.
12. An necessary materials-stationeries and teaching aids are ready for prompt take off.
13. He may instruct teachers with the use of a variety of media communication since this is the era of technology. This is for currency and innovative ideas.
14. His channels of communication must link every member of the school.
15. Be concerned about his teachers private life when required

Humans live by communication and many of the practices that we think, define us as human are a direct out growth of the ways in which we communicate; our language, our reasoning, our morality and our social organization (Wayne an Cecil 2001).

Communication reveals as well as help to solve climate problems It can surface conflicts in values among teacher's students and administrators that may otherwise go unnoticed (Katz and Kahn, 1978), It evokes action and serves several functions in school, Therefore, whatever challenges the administrator may have, In regards to the management of students, infrastructure and finance, liase with your teachers through various communicative skills to achieve the school goals.

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