

Management Of Principals' Social Skills As Correlates Of Effective School Organization In Public Secondary Schools In Enugu State, Nigeria

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Abstract

The study investigated the relationship between management of principals' social skills and effective school organization in public secondary school in Enugu State, Nigeria. Two research questions and two null hypotheses were answered and tested. The study adopted a correlation research with a population of 295 principals from 295 public secondary schools in Enugu State, Nigeria. The sample size of the study is 236 principals representing 80% of the population drawn from 236 schools. The simple random sampling technique was used to arrive at the sample. Two instruments titled Management of Principals' Social Skills Scale (MPSSS) and Effective School Organization Scale (ESOS) were used for data collection. The instruments were validated using confirmatory factor analysis. Internal consistency reliability coefficients of 0.76 and 0.71 were computed for MPSSS and ESOS respectively through Cronbach alpha. Simple regression was used to answer the research questions while t-test associated with simple regression was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. It was found that principals' conflict resolution, and interpersonal skills management are significant predictors of effective school administration. The researchers recommended that principals should develop self control in relating with other staff. Principals' should develop positive self relationship through the understanding their relationship strength and weakness. Finally, the principals' should have a positive interpersonal relationship with members of staff giving room for social activities one's in a week.

Keywords: Management, Social Skills (conflict resolution and interpersonal skills) and Effective School Organization

Introduction

The functional importance and significance of every formal and informal organization is predicated on the existing managerial strategies and competency. This places emphasis on the secondary level of education. School mostly at the secondary stage is very important in the

achievement of literacy, numeracy and effective communication skills. Secondary education is that level of education immediately after the passage of primary schools unto the entrance into tertiary education. Secondary education is important because it enables one to gain entrance into the tertiary educational level for professionalization. It is presupposed that effective management of the school system is borne out of strict adherence to the goals and objectives of secondary education. Secondary educational system has lofty and functional goals and objectives that are enshrined in their National Policy of Education. The goals of education according to Federal Republic of Nigeria (2014:3) are the:

- a. development of the individual into a morally sound, patriotic and effective citizens;
- b. total integration of the individual into the immediate community, the Nigerian society and the world;
- c. provision of equal access to qualitative educational opportunities for all citizens at all levels of education, within and outside the formal school system;
- d. inculcation of national consciousness, values and national unity; and
- e. development of appropriate skills, mental, physical and social abilities and competencies to empower the individual to live in and contribute positively to the society.

These goals of education cannot be fully implemented and achieved without being in specific terms. In specifics, the objectives of Post-Basic Education (secondary education) as enshrined in FRN, 2014: 17) are to:

- a. provide holders of the Basic Certificate and Junior Arabic and Islamic Studies Certificate with opportunity for education of higher level irrespective of gender, social status, religious or ethnic background;
- b. offer diversified curriculum to cater for the differences in talents, disposition, opportunities and future roles;
- c. provide trained manpower in the applied sciences, technology and commerce at sub-professional grade;
- d. provide entrepreneurial, technical and vocational job specific skills for self-reliance, and for agricultural, industrial, commercial and economic development;
- e. develop and promote Nigeria languages, art and culture in the context of world's cultural heritage;
- f. inspire students with desire for self-improvement and achievement of excellence;
- g. foster patriotism, national unity and security education with emphasis on the common ties in spite of our diversity; and
- h. raise morally upright and well-adjusted individuals who can think independently and rationally, respect the views and feelings of others and appreciate the dignity of labour.

The goals and objectives of education provide grounds for effective management of materials and human beings. Therefore, management can be as the act of organizing, coordinating, directing, supervising, inspecting, motivating and evaluating activities in line with stipulated goals and objectives. Furthermore, management is defined as a process of controlling human and material

resources for the attainment of organizational goals and objectives (Yagudah, 2018). It therefore implies that management is very indispensable in the existence of every organization as well as the school where the principals are the head administrators. In the management of materials, emphasis is laid on school facilities. These facilities range from residential, administrative and academic facilities. Management of residential facilities depicts the procurement, allocation and maintenance of hostel and its facilities in the school. Administrative facilities management cut across those facilities needed in the administrative blocks where non academic activities take place. On the other hand, academic facilities management is hinged on proper usage, supervision and inspection of teaching materials and facilities in the school. Management of human beings cut across recruitment, provision of welfare packages and development of skills which in most cases are carried out by the school principals.

A school principal is a primary leader in a school building (Okoro, 2018). He is saddled with the responsibility of school management (Ibokwe, 2018), organization workshops for teaching and non-teaching staff (Asuquo, 2019) and procurement of school facilities (Nwajuba, 2019). The school principals appoint a replacement for a teacher that is sick, those in leave of absence as well as teachers that did not come to school without obvious reasons (Yusuf, 2020). In the same vein, the principals take care of the school community relation with emphasis on security networking (Ikenga, 2020). These role explanations are in the quest to actualization the lofty goals and objectives of secondary education.

The actualization of these goals and objectives could be linked to effective school organization through the instrumentalities of material and human resources. By extrapolation, school principals in their roles of achieving effective school organization combine relevant human and material resources available towards the achievement of educational programmes and activities (Abarakwe, 2019). Therefore, effective school organization according to Renner (2019) connotes all the duties of the principals in keeping the school running. More so, effective school organization refers to how schools arrange the resources of time, space and personnel for maximum output (Arun, 2017). In the same vein, school organization is solely the actual putting of organizational resources, events, personnel of a school in the right working condition (Rajendran, 2017). Different people are assigned duties and made responsible for the same.

On the other hand, it is disheartening to note that most of the schools are not performing as a result their principals' incompetence leading to ineffective school organization. It is reported that most of the public schools in Nigeria suffer from poor human and material organization (Onyeizu, 2018). Most of the principals do not know how to persuade their teachers towards the completion of task without resorting to aggression (Anayo, 2015). It is also worrisome that most of the principals too stringent in their dealings with their subordinates in the school. The complexities in the job schedule of the principals as enumerated above in ensuring effective school organization may be handled effectively and efficiently through social skills acquisition.

Social skills are very important in the establishment of relationship among people. It is a set of learned abilities that enable an individual to interact competently and appropriately in a given social context (APA, 2022). Social skills are those techniques and competences that regulate human relationship. They are those skills needed by a principal to compliment the teaching methodology. In this study, social skills are the learned skills and abilities that can enable the principals to establish quality relationship between self and others in the school environment.

Apart from the enormous importance attached to the emotional disposition of an individual, the social aspect of such individual is very important and sacrosanct. Human beings are social animals and require great skill in the association with others in order to reduce or eliminate rankles, chaos and disputes that may pose devastating dangers in the school and in the teaching process. The importance of skills acquisition in managing issues of life is of essence. Lack of social skills may inhibit collaboration, knowledge synergy and team work in the school. National Association of School Psychologist (NASP) (2002) stated that social skills manifest in the areas of interpersonal skills, problem-solving skills and conflict resolution skills respectively.

Interpersonal skills are the techniques a person uses to associate with others in an effective manner. In the same vein, interpersonal skills are the abilities to initiate and maintain a good working relationship others (Wordu, 2019). A person's interpersonal skills are the collection of abilities that they have in order to socialize, communicate and interact with others, in order to record efficiency (Gonzalez & Danahy, 2021). Interpersonal skills management is the ability to harmonize, relate and associate with friends and colleagues with little or no rankle (Joel, 2018). Furthermore, interpersonal skills are the set of skills needed for interaction and communication with others (Peterson, 2022). This is the skill used in interaction and communication with others in the workplace (Uzonna, 2020). Principals may find good human relationship development and management to be effective and efficient in the discharge of their statutory activities in the school.

Interpersonal skills as goal oriented manners, including communication and relationship-building competencies necessary for workplace relationship (Udoka, 2019). Interpersonal skill is the ability of people in the workplace or school environment to manage their emotion as well as others towards building a strong relationship that can lead to the achievement of stipulated goals (Adepoju, 2019). He further explained that interpersonal skill is not only the ability to communicate with one another but, rooted in the organization of individuals personality, emotions and other elements of positive behaviors in the workplace for organizational growth.

Principals with good interpersonal skills are more likely to improve their ability to determine appropriate self-behaviour, cope with undesirable behaviour, absorb stress, deal with ambiguity, structure social interaction, share responsibility positively, and interact more easily with others towards the achievement of stated school goals and objectives (Nleremchi, 2018). The social skills have the qualities of making the principal a team player, collaborator good manager of diverse personalities towards works that require good interpersonal skills (Ewurum, 2020).

Interpersonal skills can help the principals build a positive attitude, communication ability, coping ability, emotional control ability and interaction ability. Principals with poor interpersonal skills may not manage the subordinates expectedly. Okon (2019) found that most of the school principals struggle with interpersonal skills which frequently cause them leadership crises. It was also reported that principals' lack of interpersonal skills repels teachers from providing relevant information for the best possible ways of running the school where necessary (Nwaorie, 2017). If interpersonal are properly acquired by the principals, it may become very difficult for them to handle conflicts in the school.

Conflict resolution skills are skills to manage conflicts in the workplace. Conflict resolution as the name implies is the settlement of issues of great worry among workers that can result to face-off (Iyang, 2016). Conflict resolution is the process used to settle dispute between two or more parties in order to work harmoniously (Doyle, 2022). Conflict is inevitable in a work environment where two or more people are. Most of the times, conflict arises as a result of poor interpersonal relationship. The acquisition, management and usability conflict resolution skills in secondary schools can be helpful mostly because of constitution of people from diverse ethnic background, religious affiliation and different life experience and expositions.

Conflict resolution skills are very important for the principals as the administrative head in order not to be confused and devastated. Conflict resolution skills determines the extent the principals would control the subordinates their job assignments (Adams, 2017). Teachers who develop little or no problem-solving skills are easily discouraged and as such lack concentration and composure in the classroom (Idowu, 2017).

It has been argued that social skills are associated with school organization. It is not yet certain whether social skills can predict principals' effective school organization in Enugu State, Nigeria. This study therefore, investigated the management of principals' social skills as correlates of effective school organization in public secondary schools in Enugu State, Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

Lack of teachers' social acquisition and management may have made work environment unfriendly for productivity. There sharp increase in the level of hostility, chaos, anarchy, acrimony and social interaction problems in public schools most those in Enugu state. This ugly development inadvertently discourages collaboration, teamwork, synergy and research enterprise in these schools. More so, lack of social skills may lead to stress and burnout which are inimical to arduous academic activities. It is suggestive that without proper social skills management in the areas of interpersonal and problem, it may be impossible for the principals to record success in school activities owing to the individual differences in the school. Hence the researchers are bothered and investigated the management of principals' social skills as correlates of effective school organization in public secondary schools in Enugu State, Nigeria

Aim and Objectives of the Study

The study was aimed at investigating the management of principals' social skills as correlates of effective school organization in public secondary schools in Enugu State, Nigeria. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. ascertain the prediction of principals' interpersonal skills management on effective school organization in public secondary schools in Enugu State, Nigeria.
2. establish the prediction of principals' conflict resolution skills management on effective school organization in public secondary schools in Enugu State, Nigeria.

Research Questions

The following research questions were answered.

1. What is the prediction of principals' interpersonal skills management on effective school organization in public secondary schools in Enugu State, Nigeria?
2. What is the prediction of principals' conflict resolution skills management on effective school organization in public secondary schools in Enugu State, Nigeria?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance.

1. Principals' interpersonal skills management does not significantly predict effective school organization in public secondary schools in Enugu State, Nigeria.
2. Principals' conflict resolution skills management does not significantly effective school organization in public secondary schools in Enugu State, Nigeria.

Methodology

The study adopted a correlation research design. In similar studies, Ugochukwu et al. (2022), Okenyi et al. (2019), Achagh et al. (2020), Eya et al. (2020), Ezema et al. (2019), Gana et al. (2019), Ugwuanyi and Okeke (2020), Ugwuanyi, Okeke et al. (2020), Ugwuanyi, Okeke and Njeze (2020), Ugwuanyi, Okeke and Ageda (2020), Ugwuanyi, Okeke and Asomugha (2020) have adopted this design. The population of the study comprised 295 principals from 295 public secondary schools in Enugu State, Nigeria. The sample size of the study is 236 principals representing 80% of the population drawn from 236 schools. The simple random sampling technique was used to arrive at the sample. Two instruments titled Management of Principals' Social Skills Scale (MPSSS) and Effective School Organization Scale (ESOS) were used for data collection. The instruments were validated using confirmatory factor analysis. Internal consistency reliability coefficients of 0.76 and 0.71 were computed for MPSSS and ESOS respectively through Cronbach alpha. Simple regression was used to answer the research questions while t-test associated with simple regression was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

Results

Research question 1: What is the prediction of principals' interpersonal skills management on effective school organization in public secondary schools in Enugu State, Nigeria?

Table 1: Simple regression of principals' interpersonal skills management on effective school organization in public secondary schools in Enugu State, Nigeria

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square
1	.654 ^a	.428	.427

Table 1 revealed that the regression coefficients and regression square values are 0.654 and 0.428. The prediction is determined by multiplying the R² value by 100%. Therefore, principals' interpersonal skills management predicts effective school organization in public secondary schools in Enugu State by 42.8% (0.428×100). This implied that principals' interpersonal skills management contributes 42.8% of effective school organization.

Research question 2: What is the prediction of principals' conflict resolution skills management on effective school organization in public secondary schools in Enugu State, Nigeria?

Table 2: Simple regression of principals' conflict resolution skills management on effective school organization in public secondary schools in Enugu State, Nigeria

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square
1	.970 ^a	.940	.940

Table 2 revealed that the regression coefficients and regression square values are 0.970 and 0.940. The prediction is determined by multiplying the R² value by 100%. Therefore, principals' conflict resolution skills management predicts effective school organization in public secondary schools in Enugu State by 94.0% (0.940×100). This implied that principals' conflict resolution skills management contributes 94.0% of effective school organization.

Hypothesis 1: Principals' interpersonal skills management does not significantly predict effective school organization in public secondary schools in Enugu State, Nigeria.

Table 3: t-test associated with simple regression of principals' interpersonal skills management on effective school organization in public secondary schools in Enugu State, Nigeria

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients	Standardized Coefficient	t	Sig.

		B	Std. Error	Beta		
	(Constant)	17.955	.902		19.900	.000
1	Principals' interpersonal skills management	.502	.026	.654	19.130	.000

a. Dependent Variable: school organization

Data on table 3 revealed that the t-test value associated with simple regression is 19.130 which is significant because the probability value of 0.000 is less than alpha level of 0.05. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. This implies that Principals' interpersonal skills management significantly predicts effective school organization in public secondary schools in Enugu State, Nigeria.

Hypothesis 2: Principals' conflict resolution skills management does not significantly effective school organization in public secondary schools in Enugu State, Nigeria.

Table 4: t-test associated with simple regression of principals' conflict resolution skills management on effective school organization in public secondary schools in Enugu State, Nigeria

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error			
	(Constant)	1.152	.389		2.963	.003
1	Principals' conflict resolution skills management	.967	.011	.970	87.688	.000

a. Dependent Variable: effective school organization

Data on table 4 revealed that the t-test value associated with simple regression is 87.688 which is significant because the probability value of 0.000 is less than alpha level of 0.05. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. This implies that principals' conflict resolution skills management significantly predicts effective school organization in public secondary schools in Enugu State, Nigeria.

Discussion of Findings

The study revealed that principals' interpersonal skills management is a significant predictor of effective school organization in Enugu State, Nigeria. The finding is supported by the report that interpersonal skills management enables the teachers to harmonize, relate and associate with friends and colleagues with little or no rankle in the workplace (Joel, 2018). More so, the study is corroborated by Wu (2008) who reported that social skills successfully predict organizational belongingness and job performance. Furthermore, interpersonal skills are as collection of abilities

makes one to socialize, communicate and interact with others, in order to record efficiency (Gonzalez & Danahy, 2021). In the same vein, it was found that interpersonal skills are needed for interaction and communication with others for organizational performance (Peterson, 2022). Also, it is the skill used in interaction and communication with others in the workplace (Uzonna, 2020). Buttressing this finding is the report that principals with good interpersonal skills improve their ability to determine appropriate self-behaviour, cope with undesirable behaviour, absorb stress, deal with ambiguity, structure social interaction, share responsibility positively, and interact more easily with others towards the achievement of stated school goals and objectives (Nleremchi, 2018). Therefore, proper management of interpersonal is inevitable in the actualization of effective public school organization in Enugu State.

Also, the study revealed that principals' conflict resolution skills management is a significant predictor of effective school organization in Enugu State, Nigeria. The finding is in line with the report that conflict resolution is expedient in the settlement of issues of great worry among workers that can result to face-off (Ajibola, 2016). Corroboratively, conflict resolution is an effective measure to settlement of issues of great worry among workers that can result to face-off (Iyang, 2016). Conflict resolution is the process used to settle dispute between two or more parties in order to work harmoniously (Doyle, 2022). Conflict resolution skills determine the extent the principals would control the subordinates their job assignments (Adams, 2017). Conflict resolution skills are strong determinants of work harmony (Idowu, 2017). Conflict resolution is needful in the workplace because conflict is inevitable in a work environment where two or more people are. The acquisition, management and usability of conflict resolution skills in secondary schools can be helpful mostly because of constitution of people from diverse ethnic background, religious affiliation and different life experience and expositions. Conflict resolution skills are very important for the principals as the administrative head in order not to be confused and devastated. Conflict resolution skills are types of skills that should be managed and desired in secondary schools where their teachers from different ethnic background, religious affiliation and different life experience and expositions.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, it was concluded that proper management of principals' social skills in the areas of interpersonal skills and conflict resolution skills can inevitably but significantly predict effective public school organization in Enugu State, Nigeria.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were made in this study.

1. The principals should develop self control in relating with other staff.
2. Principals' should develop positive self relationship management through the understanding their relationship strength and weakness.

3. The principals' should have a positive interpersonal relationship with members of staff by giving room for social activities one's in a week.

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