

PRINCIPALS' ADMINISTRATIVE EFFECTIVENESS IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF QUALITY ASSURANCE STANDARDS IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN EDO AND DELTA STATES

UMEMETU MOMOH

NKECHI OBIWELUOZOR

Department of Educational Management, University of Benin, Nigeria.

Abstract

This study examined principals' administrative effectiveness in the implementation of quality assurance standards in public secondary schools in Edo and Delta States. To guide the study, three hypotheses were raised. The study adopted the descriptive research design. The population of the study comprised all the principals and teachers in the public secondary schools in Edo and Delta States, Nigeria. Simple random sampling technique was used to select 240 principals and 720 teachers from the schools. Data was collected using 'Administrative Effectiveness and Implementation of Quality Assurance Standards Questionnaire (AEIQASQ)' to find out principals' level of administrative effectiveness in the implementation of quality assurance standards using the Normative mean of 62.5 which was established from the instrument as the benchmark for effectiveness. The findings revealed that principals' administrative effectiveness was high in the public secondary schools in Edo and Delta States. There was also a significant relationship between administrative effectiveness and implementation of quality assurance standards in the States based on principals' gender and experience. It was therefore recommended that since principals in public schools are effective, Government should provide them with adequate funds and all necessary support to ensure that quality assurance standards are fully implemented in the schools. Also, experience and gender should be considered in appointing principals among other criteria as experienced female principals were found to be more effective.

Key words: Administrative Effectiveness, Implementation and Quality Assurance Standards

Introduction

The success of any organization depends on effective administration. Administration has been defined as the careful and systematic arrangement and use of resources (human and material), situations and opportunities for the achievement of the specific objectives of a given organisation (Nwagwu, 2005). Administrators are implementers of policies and decisions through coordinated activities and so must have the capability of planning, organizing and controlling available resources to achieve results (Peretomode, 2001). They are responsible for the achievement of results through the specialized efforts of other people whether individually or collectively in an organization.

Effectiveness means to bring about or to accomplish; thus before an action, or an institution or an individual is regarded as effective, there must be an accomplishment. An organization therefore may be termed effective if it accomplishes specific goals. Consequently, administrative effectiveness is the positive response to administrative efforts and actions with the intention to accomplish stated goals. These include administrative performance in decision making, delegation of duties and setting of examples. Supporting this definition is McCrimmon (2007)'s findings that effective administration entails efficiency, getting things done with least cost. Administrative effectiveness in organizations follow some principles;

not just about getting results, the “how” is also critical as it entails efficiency which means reaching a destination with minimal cost. An effective administrator is an asset to an organization or institution providing the link between organizations’ various parts and ensures the smooth communication and transmission of information from one part to the other.

Jenkins (2010) posited that the work of school administrators is complex and demanding; they should know and understand their schools and communities, exert leadership to achieve positive educational outcomes and continue to develop and grow in their professional expertise. A good school administrator must have knowledge of how students learn, and the leadership and management actions necessary to support students’ learning.

The following are the criteria for determining administrative effectiveness: ensuring

- Purposeful leadership of the staff by the head
- Involvement of the heads of departments
- Structured lesson
- Intellectually challenging teaching
- Maximum communication between teachers and pupils
- Efficient and accurate record keeping
- Parental and community involvement
- Positive school climate
- Productive division of labour among teachers

The principal has been recognized as the educational leader of his school and immediate community and thus head of the school management who is responsible for supervision of instruction as well as for the execution of administrative functions (Ijaiya, 2004). It is the responsibility of the principals to implement policies of government on education in accordance with set standards. Accordingly, he possesses leadership skills with clear vision of what must be accomplished. These skills come from the principals’ knowledge of the school and what is needed to be done to improve education for all students. As an administrator, the principal has a unique opportunity to lead several groups including communities. Therefore, he must provide leadership in developing liaisons with community members as school volunteers and in maintaining students’ discipline.

Adegun (2002) observed that administrative ineffectiveness of principals is a factor inhibiting attainment of secondary school goals. Supporting this observation is Timilehin (2010) who opined that school administrators must motivate staff to use their creativity and initiative as necessary inputs, towards the accomplishment of school goals. In this light, effective school principals are liked and respected, rather than feared. They communicate, care for students and are willing to impose punishment if necessary.

The desire to ensure quality control through regular and continuous supervision of instructional and other educational services (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2004:56), led to the institutionalisation of a viable quality assurance approach that would be functional and be able to meet global standards. The World Education Forum in Dakar in 2000 did not only

emphasize the achievement of 'Education For All (EFA)' but also noticed the need to improve the quality of education, especially in literacy, numeracy and acquisition of life skills. There can be no quality without quality assurance which is a continuous process of ensuring improvements aimed at meeting set standards. Quality assurance provides for an all-inclusive education involving all stakeholders in decision-making including students who are empowered to take responsibility for their own learning. It is the concern of the Inspectorate Service of the Federal Ministry of Education (FME) which is charged with the responsibility for ensuring that standards are maintained in learning activities. Quality assurance can also be used to determine the number of classrooms and laboratory or studio facilities for quality instruction and laboratory practical. Other areas where quality assurance can enhance quality in secondary schools include: determining the availability and level of the use of instructional resources; ensuring high quality of students' academic performance.

Focusing on standards in secondary schools is timely and an attempt at giving direction to the nation in determining if it is on course. When we get it right in the secondary school level, there is the livelihood that we would get it right at the tertiary level of education. However, it has been observed that over the years, the mode of school inspection has tended to be encumbered by its narrow focus and absence of synergy with other stakeholders, that its emphasis has been largely diagnostic rather than remedial and lacking in scope and the law to apply appropriate sanctions on erring proprietors and school administrators. Principals as administrative leaders and implementers of education policies in secondary schools must continually strive to satisfy recipients of the system to ensure that quality is attained in all its' ramifications. This can be achieved by harnessing efforts of all stakeholders; teachers, students, parents and the school community towards attaining quality assurance standards. These standards are based on benchmarks that should guide the performance of the educational system including goals or targets to which learners, teachers, staff and school managers should aspire to attain such that what is implemented meets standards.

This study is hinged on Joseph Juran's 'Quality Trilogy' theory, propounded in 1986; it is a management philosophy for continuously improving the quality of products and processes. 'Quality Trilogy' is made up of 'Quality Control' to detect sporadic problems and take immediate action, 'Quality Improvement' requiring the use of different processes to resolve problems identified and 'Quality Planning' to prevent problems that have been traced to inadequate planning processes. Each of these processes is carried out by an unvarying sequence of interrelated activities. The relevance of this theory to this study is enormous as it translates quality management to the classroom with teachers, parents, community members and students serving as the customers. Top management must therefore be convinced of the need for quality and must clearly communicate it to the entire organization by written policy which would state what each person is expected to perform according to the requirement or in line with the stated goals.

A study carried out by Omoike and Idogho (2011) on administrative effectiveness between male and female heads of departments in Nigerian universities, showed that there was no significant difference in male and female leaders. Similarly, Hemphill, Griffiths and Fredrickson (1992) found in their study of 'Administrative Performance and Personality' in New York that male principals didn't demonstrate superior performance than their female

counterparts. Barter (2001) in a survey of group of teachers rated male and female principals as equal in ability and personal qualities. On the other hand, Ibrahim and Al-Tanaji (2012) in a study they carried out in Dubai schools on principals' leadership style and school performance found out that principals' level of effectiveness differed according to gender; female principals were more effective than their male counterparts, that schools with female principals had better performance than schools with male principals. Adigwu (2004), in a comparative analysis of administrative performance of male and female principals in selected schools in Nigeria, discovered that female principals had above average performance in their supervisory roles.

Experience also constitutes another major factor in principals' effectiveness as attested to by Blanchard (1997). From his findings in a study of the leadership effectiveness of Wisconsin elementary schools, he concluded that some schools experience more conflicts than others due to the principals' level of leadership effectiveness as a result of experience on the job. Okolo (2001) in a study carried out on the performance of primary school headmasters in Nigeria discovered that there was a significant difference in the performance between primary school head teachers with 4-11 years experience and those with 20 years and above. Findings from the work also demonstrate that principals with experience and skills are found to be more effective. It can thus be inferred that experience significantly contribute to their performance.

Problem of the Study

Standards have been set and though it is the role of school principals to implement these standards in the schools, it appears that the system is faced with poor administrative leadership. Therefore, the pertinent questions that arise are: what could be responsible for the growing trend of poor output in external examination results despite the set standard for quality education delivery in secondary schools? Are the principals as administrative leaders empowered to implement these standards? This study was anchored on this premise.

Research Questions

To guide this study, the following Research questions were raised

- i. What is the level of principals' administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools in Edo and Delta States?
- ii. Is there a relationship between principals' gender and administrative effectiveness in the implementation of quality assurance standards in Edo and Delta States?
- iii. Is there a relationship between principals' experience and administrative effectiveness in the implementation of quality assurance standards in Edo and Delta States?

Hypotheses

H₀₁: The level of Principals' administrative effectiveness is not significantly high in public secondary schools in Edo and Delta States.

- Ho₂: There is no significant relationship between principals’ gender and administrative effectiveness in the implementation of quality assurance standards in Edo and Delta States.
- Ho₃: There is no significant relationship between principals’ experience and administrative effectiveness in the implementation of quality assurance standards in Edo and Delta States.

Objectives of the Study

This Study sought to investigate

- i. The level of principals’ administrative effectiveness in the implementation of quality assurance standards in public schools.
- ii. If there is a relationship between principals’ gender and experience and administrative effectiveness in the implementation of quality assurance standards.

Method of study

The study adopted a descriptive research design with a population of all the principals and teachers in the public secondary schools in Edo and Delta States. Simple random sampling technique was used to select 240 principals and 720 teachers. Though principals were studied, on the other hand, the teachers in the school were used to study the principals. The instrument used to collect data was the ‘Administrative Effectiveness and Implementation of Quality Assurance Standards Questionnaire (AEIQASQ)’. The Normative mean of 62.5 was established from the instrument as the benchmark for effectiveness. The content validity of the instruments was determined by expert judgment. The Test-retest method was used to establish the reliability of the questionnaire; the r value of 0.78 was obtained. Data collected were analysed using the mean, percentage, Pearson’s Product Moment Correlation (r), Zero Differentiation Hypothesis and Fisher Z statistical tools.

- H₀₁: The level of Principals’ administrative effectiveness is not significantly high in public secondary schools in Edo and Delta States.

Table 1: Zero Differentiation Analysis of Principals Administrative Effectiveness in Public Secondary Schools in Edo and Delta States

N	WEIGHTED \bar{X}	Diff	SD	Calculated Z	Critical Z	Remark
720	Calculated 63.52 Normative 62.5	719	17.86	2.20	± 1.96	Significant

The data in table 1 shows that from the perception of 720 teachers, the calculated mean of principals’ administrative effectiveness was 63.52 and the normative mean was 62.5. The result of the analysis is significant since the calculated Z of 2.20 was greater than the critical Z of ± 1.96 and less than the normative mean of 62.5. It therefore implies that the hypothesis

that principals' administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools in Edo and Delta States was not significantly high is rejected.

H₀₂: There is no significant relationship between principals' gender and administrative effectiveness in the implementation of quality assurance standards in Edo and Delta States.

Table 2: Summary of Pearson R Correlation Coefficient of Principals' Gender and Administrative Effectiveness in the Implementation of Quality Assurance Standards

Principals' Gender	Principals' Effectiveness
Male Principals' Effectiveness (N=315) Quality Assurance Standards	1 .258 *
Female Principals' Effectiveness (N=405) Quality Assurance Standards	.315*

*Significant at $P < 0.05$

Table 2 above shows that there is a significant relationship between male principal and administrative effectiveness in the implementation of quality assurance standards. There is also a significant relationship between the female principals' and administrative effectiveness in the implementation of quality assurance standards. The relationship is positive for both the male and female principals. However, from the analysis, the degree of relationship as higher among female principals than male principals, Fisher Z test was thus carried out to ascertain if this difference is significant. This is presented in the table 3.

Table 3: Summary of Fisher Z Analysis for Comparing Correlation Coefficient for Male and Female principals

Principals' Gender	N	Pearson r	Z-score Observed	Z-score Critical	Decision
Male	315	.258	-2.03	-1.96	Significant
Female	405	.315			

From the data in Table 3 above, there is a small strength of correlation of Pearson r value of .258 between male principals and administrative effectiveness. It also revealed a moderate strength of correlation Pearson r value of .315 between female principals and administrative effectiveness. Since there were two groups, the Pearson r correlations of the two categories of gender were transformed to Z-scores for testing of the hypothesis. The result indicates that the Z-score is significant because -1.96 is less than Z observed of -2.03 and less than 1.96. The hypothesis that there is no significant relationship between principals' gender and administrative effectiveness in the implementation of quality assurance standards is therefore rejected.

H₀₃: There is no significant relationship between principals’ experience and administrative effectiveness in the implementation of quality assurance standards in Edo and Delta States.

Table 4: Summary of Pearson r Correlation Coefficient of Principals’ Experience and Administrative Effectiveness in the Implementation of Quality Assurance Standards

Principals’ Experience	Principals’ Effectiveness
0-10Years Principals’ Effectiveness (N=312) Quality Assurance Standards	1 .366 *
Above 10Years Principals’ Effectiveness (N=408) Quality Assurance Standards	.225*

*Significant at P< 0.05

Table 4 above shows that there is a significant relationship between principals’ experience and administrative effectiveness. The relationship for both principals is positive. From the analysis, the degree of relationship was found to be higher among experienced principals than inexperienced principals, Fisher Z test was therefore carried out to find out if this difference is significant. This is presented in table 5.

Table 5: Summary of Fisher Z Analysis for Comparing Correlation Coefficient for Inexperienced and Experienced Principals

Principals’ Years of Experience	N	Pearson	Z-score Observed	Z-score Critical	Decision
0-10Years	312	.366	2.17	±1.96	Significant
Above 10Years	408	.225			

Table 5 above indicates that there is a moderate strength of correlation of Pearson r value of .366 between principals with 0-10years and administrative effectiveness. The data also showed a low strength of Pearson r correlation of .225 between principals with over 10years experience and administrative effectiveness. The Pearson r correlation of the two categories of experiences was transformed to Z-scores for testing of the hypothesis since they were two groups. The result indicates a significant relationship because 1.96 is less than Z observed of 2.17 and greater than ±1.96. The null hypothesis that there is no significant relationship between Principals’ experience and administrative effectiveness in the implementation of quality assurance standard is rejected.

Summary of Findings

H₀₁: The level of Principals’ administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools in Edo and Delta States was found to be high.

- H₀₂: There is a significant relationship between principals' gender and administrative effectiveness in the implementation of quality assurance standards in Edo and Delta States.
- H₀₃: There is a significant relationship between principals' experience and administrative effectiveness in the implementation of quality assurance standards in Edo and Delta States.

Discussion of Result

The concern of this study was to investigate the level of principals' administrative effectiveness in the implementation of quality assurance standards in public secondary schools in Edo and Delta States of Nigeria, and, if principals' gender and experience had any relationship with their administrative effectiveness. The findings revealed that the level of principals' administrative effectiveness was high. Considering the reformation efforts of Edo and Delta State Governments' efforts at restructuring and revamping the educational system, this finding did not come as a surprise. The result of this study also aligned with that of Blanchard (1997) and Okolo (2001) who revealed in their studies that experience prepares the principals for any administrative challenges. The present researchers, study revealed that there was a significant relationship between principals' gender and administrative effectiveness. This is however not in tandem with the findings of Hamphill, Griffiths and Fredrikson (1992) and Omoike and Idogho (2011) who found out in their studies that, men did not demonstrate superior performance neither were they superior to women in leadership. Rather, the findings aligned with Wiles, Grobaman and Hiries (1996) and Ibrahim and Al-Taneiji (2012)'s opinion that men ranked significantly ahead of women as leaders and that principals' level of effectiveness differed according to gender. These studies indicated that gender was significant in administrative effectiveness.

Implication for Educational Administration

Since the level of principals' administrative effectiveness in Edo and Delta States public secondary schools was found to be high, they should be supported by providing adequate finance to implement all the quality assurance standards as they have the capability but can only operate within the limits of available resources, as opined by Nwagwu (2005), that one of the reasons why the products of an education system are generally weak is due to inadequate funding. The implication of principals' experience and gender that was found significant in the implementation of quality assurance standards imply that experienced teachers with the prerequisite administrative skills should be appointed principals and, while not being biased, gender should be considered in such appointment.

Conclusion

The study revealed that the level of principals' administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools in Edo and Delta States was high. It also established a significant relationship between principals' gender and experience and administrative effectiveness in the implementation of quality assurance standards in the schools.

Recommendations

1. Since the level of administrative effectiveness of principals in public schools was found to be high, Government should provide them with adequate funds and all necessary support to ensure that quality assurance standards are fully implemented in the schools.
2. Experience of teachers should be considered before appointing them as principals as the study revealed that experienced principals are more effective than the inexperienced one in the implementation of quality assurance standards.
3. The study revealed that female principals are more effective than their male counterparts. This should also be considered in appointing principals among other criteria.

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