
DEMOGRAPHIC AND PERSONALITY VARIABLES AS PREDICTORS OF PRINCIPALS' PERFORMANCE IN ADHERENCE TO LEGAL PROVISIONS IN THE MANAGEMENT OF SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN SOUTH-SOUTH, NIGERIA

Ominini Brother Asako Walson & Frederick Amunabo Okwo
University of Nigeria, Nsukka

Abstract

The study examined the relationship between demographic and personality variables and principals' performance in adherence to legal provisions in the management of secondary schools in South-South, Nigeria. The study adopted the correlational survey design. Two research questions and one hypothesis which was tested at 0.05 level of probability guided the study. 1,860 teachers of government owned secondary schools were selected using proportionate stratified random sampling technique for fair representation to rate their principals on the extent they adhere to legal provisions in the management of secondary schools. The Principals' Performance Scale in Adherence to Legal Provisions (PPSALP) was the instrument used for data collection. This instrument was face validated by three experts. An internal consistency reliability co-efficient index of 0.72 considered high enough for the study was obtained through cronbach alpha method on trial testing the instrument. The data collected were analyzed using means, standard deviations, Pearson Product Moment Correlation Co-efficient, multiple regressions and associated t-tests. The findings revealed principals' performance was high in adherence to legal status. Leadership styles had substantial correlation coefficients with principals' performance in adherence to legal status. demographic and personality factors had joint significant relationship ($P < 0.05$) with principals' performance in adherence to legal status. These variables predicted 17.4% of the variance in adherence to legal provisions. Leadership style predicted the performance of principals in adherence to legal status. Based on these findings, it was recommended that training and re-training programmes should be given to principals with a view to helping them adopt more open leadership styles since leadership had significant and substantial relationship with principals' performance in adherence to legal provisions.

Introduction

Secondary education is a six-year form of education given to children after primary school and before tertiary education. The National Policy on Education (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2004), stated that the aim of secondary education is to prepare individuals for useful living within the society and for higher education. The Principal is the administrative head

of Secondary School and carries out various functions among which is ensuring that rules and regulations are complied with in the day to day management of secondary schools. Adhering to legal provisions is a responsibility of the principal in ensuring that rules and regulations are complied with for enhanced discipline while working towards achieving prescribed educational goals. Adherence to legal provisions is an important area of responsibility for school administrators. In contemporary times, people are becoming more aware of their rights within the school system. School administrators, in the discharge of their duties, are expected to work within the confines of the laws guiding school administration. This is because any act to the contrary will be ultra-vires and ignorance of the law is no excuse. Igwe (2003) observed that most school administrators and teachers are not aware of their rights, duties, obligations and responsibilities under the law and most especially the probable consequences or implications of their actions in their day-to-day activities in the school system. In this age of enlightenment, such ignorance, Obi (2010) noted, may no doubt be costly if not disastrous to the individual, the educational system, and others within the school environment. Proper understanding of their roles and codes of conduct as they impact on the rights and responsibilities of teachers, students, and other stakeholders in the school system affords them the opportunity to define the limits of individual behaviours, provide understanding, inject respectability and mutuality of interest for the smooth running of the school towards the achievement of educational goals (Kalagbor, 2004). An understanding of the rules guiding school administration enhances principals' performance in the management of secondary schools while neglect of such rules and regulations could cause more harm than good in the educational system (Peretomode, 2001).

School administrators in the discharge of their duties, according to Obi (2010), are expected to work within the confines of the laws regulating administration of secondary schools to avoid incidence of litigations in the school system. Obi noted further that in contemporary times, individuals are becoming more aware of their rights with respect to the roles and code of conduct as they impact on the responsibilities of teachers, students and other stakeholders in the school system. These rights ought to be respected. According to Ellah (2004), knowledge of the legal provisions of principals' rights and privileges, roles, and codes of conduct as they relate especially to the rights and obligations of teachers and students, should be of great concern not only to the school administrator but to all members of the society who are directly or indirectly involved in the educational system. This is important in order to define the limits of individual behaviours, provide understanding, inject respectability and mutuality of interest and induce co-operation for the smooth running of the school for the attainment of its goals. Any mistake made to the limits of their respective rights are very costly and in several instance; have resulted to series of litigation in the school system which may not augur well with the effective administration of schools (Kalagbor, 2004). This position is buttressed by Ozurumba (2007) who noted that:

in Nigeria, there is the awareness of the increase in attention given to individuals' rights, especially those described as fundamental rights of the citizens. This state of affairs has led to more litigation in schools. Given the climate of the times, it appears not only discreet but also necessary for

educational administrators and teachers to understand their own rights and limitations, as well as the legal implications of what they do, particularly in dealing with students and parents in educational matters (P.34)

Knowledge of their rights and responsibilities to others and the legal implications of their actions and inactions through rules and regulations governing the administration of the system will probably enhance principals' effectiveness in their respective roles in the school system. As stipulated in the Nigerian Teachers' Service Manual cited in Igwe (2003), it is expected that principals shall continually seek to uphold the constitutional provisions and the various state education laws in order to protect their own rights and the rights of students. It is expected also that upholding the constitutional provisions will make principals effective professionals as administrators and academic heads in the management of secondary education.

Principals' performance in adhering to legal provisions is very paramount in the achievement of school goals by providing an enviable environment where peace flourishes. Principals' performance in adhering to legal status is how frequent principals adhere to and apply the rules and regulation in the day-to-day administration of secondary schools. It is believed the more principals observe the rules and regulations as they relate to schools activities, the better for effective management of schools. However, it has been observed that the level of indiscipline in secondary schools in contemporary times could be attributed to principals' laxity in adhering to legal provisions of rules and regulations in school management. In South-South Nigeria, the performance of principals in adherence to legal provisions in the management of secondary schools has remained questionable in contemporary times as there is public outcry on abuse of human rights and responsibilities. The school administrator in the discharge of the duties is expected to work within the confines of the laws guiding school administration. It is observed that most school administrators and teachers are not aware of their rights, duties, obligations and responsibilities under the law and most especially the probable consequences or implications of their actions in their day-to-day activities in the school system. This is evidenced in several illegal activities like examination malpractice, embezzlement of funds, and use of corporal punishment in secondary schools. This may not be unconnected with certain characteristics of the principal which could enhance their observance of the laws in the school management. The performance of principals in adhering to legal provisions in the management of secondary schools could be influenced by demographic and personality factors (Oredien, 2004 and Peretomode, 2001). Therefore, it could be possible that not selecting principals by considering demographic and personality variables must have led to the decrepitude in the state of public secondary schools.

Demographic Variables

Demographic variables are non cognitive, non personality factors such as age, gender, educational qualification, working experience and marital status that may impact on the performance of the principals in the management of secondary schools.

Age is the number of years a person has lived. Age may not be a determinant of a man's sense of good judgment. Feldman (1996) asserted that the general proposition is that

younger principals in their fifties exhibit better management capabilities than the older principals since individuals tend to gradually disengage from active work with age. It may as well be that older principals will be more effective than younger ones, due to vitality and innovativeness associated with being young. This means that the performance of principals in adherence to legal provisions in the management of secondary schools could depend on the age.

Gender is described as the behavioural characteristics distinguishing between males and females in any society. Gender according to Onyeonoru (2005), refers to the differentiation in roles between men and women construed by society through socialization. Sex is the biological differentiation between the roles of men and women. Thus, while sex is biological and fixed, gender is varied in space and time and is culturally determined. Scholars have given contrasting views about gender differences in performance effectiveness among school administrators. Daresh and Male (2000), reported that female principals are more effective and efficient in school administration because they extend their motherhood roles to the school environment. Uko (2002) noted male superiority over females as male principals usually apply their influential capabilities to achieve the school goals. The assumption according to Ezeh (1997) is that males are superior to females in most things that count. Females are assumed to be dependent on males for taking initiatives and for leadership. Since principalship involves exercising the role of a leader or administrator in secondary schools, one is not sure whether the socio-cultural influences that expose males to different problem solving situations and place females in subordinate position would affect the performance of the different genders in school administration like adherence to legal provisions. These suggest that there could be fundamental differences in the leadership, beliefs and practices of male and female leaders. Ezeh further stated that it has been frequently claimed that female leaders are more collaborative and relational. This means that female principals are more friendly with teachers and students as well as the community where the school situates. There are indications that these assumptions may not be true always. Recent gender discourse, according to Fadekemi and Isaac (2011), reveals growing skepticism with the validity of gender typecast of men as instrumental, bureaucratic and competitive and women as nurturing, relational and collaborative. To this extent, the performance of principals in adherence to legal provisions in the management of secondary schools could depend on gender.

Professional qualification is the requisite knowledge and skills a person has acquired from training to enable him work proficiently in his occupation. Akpan (2007) described professional qualification as the knowledge and skills acquired after a period of training and instruction by seasoned experts. Professional training could expose one to knowledge, skills, and values needed for effective job performance. However, there are contrasting views on the influence of principals' professional qualification on their performance in the management of secondary schools. Professional qualification could be an obstacle to innovation. It could also bring about ingenuity in the performance of duties. This means that the performance of principals in adherence to legal provisions in the management of secondary schools could depend on professional qualification.

Experience is viewed by Sturman (2000) as the culmination of context based events that a person perceives. It is the professional growth as a result of a period of continued work, training and retraining on the job and other related processes. Sturman further noted that experience has some level of influence on principals' job performance. It has been suggested by Nwangwu (2006) that experience assists in developing the required social and intellectual skills, in learning how to work closely with other people, and in finding out about individual interests and differences. However, Achunine (1998) opined that the length of time one stays on a job does not necessarily make one efficient; and argued that professional training is a more important factor than on-the-job experience in an administrator's job performance. These propositions indicate that experience may be related to performance. The performance of principals in adherence to legal provisions in the management of secondary schools could be influenced by their working experience.

Marital status is the state of being married or not married by a man or a woman (Anyanwu, 2009). It has been suggested by Erukoha (1999) that marital status influences teachers and administrators motivation, commitment to duty and task performance; and that married school administrators and teachers were more satisfied than the single ones. This implies a significant positive relationship between marital status and task performance. However, Okpalogu (2008) found an insignificant relationship between marital status and students' achievement in schools administered by married and single principals. It is therefore necessary to explore further how the performance of principals in adherence to legal provisions in the management of secondary schools could be influenced by marital status.

Personality Factors

Personality factors refer to the attributes of a person which provide mental and emotional dimensions to the person's activities. Osuku (2003) described personality factors as those individual factors which can spur a leader towards achieving prescribed goals. Osuku noted that the effect of these factors in enhancing performance vary depending on individuals. The factors include self concept, honesty, realism, drive, and tenacity or motivation, psychological openness, leadership styles, ambition, emotional stability and conscientiousness. Charan (2007) stated that leadership styles and motivation are personality factors that distinguish people who can perform from those who cannot.

Leadership styles are the behavioural approaches adopted by leaders to influence their subjects. Principals in the discharge of their duties could also adopt different leadership styles to influence staff, students and other stakeholders towards the achievement of school goals. Several leadership styles have been advocated, such as democratic, autocratic, laissez-faire, eclectic, transactional, and transformational. Most scholars in the areas of leadership studies, according to Pieters (2008), now agree that neither a set of personality trait approach nor the search for the 'best' leadership style or behaviour is adequate to deal with the complexities of the underlying process in the management of organizations.

Consequently, contingency leadership approach has been advocated. This approach suggests that leadership effectiveness depends upon the fit between personality, task, power, attitudes

and perception. It is obvious that most effective school administrators are neither authoritative nor democratic but flexible to select a style that is not only comfortable to them but also appropriate for the situation they are handling. Within the contingency leadership approach, a principal may be more open or close in their leadership style. An open leadership style is one which has the tendencies of democratic and transformational principles, such as collaborative decision making, delegation of authority, concern for people, and creating communication networks. A close leadership style has the tendencies of autocratic and transactional principles such as imposition of task, denial of group members' respect and concern, and use of reward and punishment. A principal may be more open or close depending on the situation, and this reflects the personality of the principal. The open-close leadership style is a continuum, in which a principal may exhibit more frequently an open or close leadership style. The frequency principals exhibit open or close leadership styles may influence their performance in adherence to legal provisions in the management of secondary schools.

Motivation is the process of stimulating and directing human behaviour towards achieving desirable goals. Motivation is a very important concept in school organization and management. It is very essential in achieving effective teaching and learning. Chukwuemeka (2008) argued that while knowledge and skills possessed by the employee are important in determining his job performance, these factors alone are not sufficient. An understanding of what motivates the individual is needed to reveal how abilities and skills are activated and their personal potentials realized. The managerial function and responsibility for eliciting this desired organizational behaviour is referred to as 'Motivation' (Ekere, 2010). Motivation, in this context, is the process of stimulating principals to action in order to achieve desirable educational objectives. Motivation is what people need to perform better. However, the same things motivate individuals differently. Where one gets motivated, obtains satisfaction, and consequently performs better by getting additional responsibility assigned, another may feel much better valued and encouraged to higher productivity if he or she is merely being listened to, or given some flexibility in his or her work schedule. This implies that individual differences mediate motivation and performance effectiveness.

The principal as an administrative head, manager, public relations officer, a supervisor, an instructional leader, a curriculum innovator and a catalyst towards the achievement of educational goals in secondary schools (Adenuga, 2008), is expected to be motivated to demonstrate effectiveness in the performance of the duties. Leithwood and Jantzi cited in Udachukwu (2003) noted that school principals who have succeeded in their role performance are properly motivated by way of a range of mechanisms like promotion, recognition, and advancement. The performance of a principal could be effective when the job description of the principal is challenging, and interesting which requires their initiatives and contributions to decision making concerning their schools. Besides, being commended for doing well, with freedom of exercising job roles without restrictions could serve as motivation. In an environment where cordial relationship exists with opportunity for promotion and professional growth and self actualization could lead to strong motivation, satisfaction, and subsequently performance effectiveness. It is therefore necessary to explore

further how the performance of principals in adherence to legal provisions in the management of secondary schools could be influenced by motivation.

The presumed relationship between these demographic and personality factors is founded on the belief that individual differences based on these factors would influence performance. However, the extent to which these demographic and personality variables relate with principals' performance in adhering to legal provisions in the management of secondary schools in South-South, Nigeria has not been determined. It appears that lack of empirical evidence has limited the consideration of demographic and personality variables in the appointment of principals from the pool of teachers in spite of the presumed connection between these variables and performance. The possible consequences of not selecting principals by considering these variables must have led to the decrepitude in the state of public secondary schools.

Although studies have been done on the relationship between these variables and performance, no study to the knowledge of the researcher related these variables to principals' performance in adhering to legal provisions in the management of secondary schools in South-South, Nigeria. There is need therefore to examine the relationship between demographic and personality variables and principals performance in adherence to legal provisions in the management of secondary schools. The problem of the study put in question form is: To what extent do demographic (age, gender, qualification, experience, marital status) and personality (leadership styles, motivation) variables relate with or predict principals' performance in adherence to legal provisions in the management of secondary schools in South-South, Nigeria?

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of the study was to determine the relationships between demographic and personality factors, and the performance of principals in adherence to legal provisions in the management of secondary schools in South-South, Nigeria. Specifically the study sought to ascertain the:

1. The mean performance scores of principals in adherence to legal provisions in the management of secondary schools, and
2. Demographic and personality factors that predict principals' performance in adherence to legal provisions in the management of secondary schools.

Research Questions

The following research questions are posed to guide the study.

1. What are the principals' mean performance scores in adherence to legal status in the management in the management of secondary schools in South-South, Nigeria?
2. What are the correlation coefficients between demographic and personality variables and principals' performance in adherence to legal status in the management of secondary schools in South-South, Nigeria?

Hypothesis

The following null hypothesis will be tested at 0.05 level of probability.

1. Demographic and personality variables do not significantly predict principals' performance in adherence to legal provisions in the management of secondary schools in the South-South, Nigeria.

Methodology

The study was carried in South-South Nigeria which comprises of six states namely: Akwa-Ibom, Bayelsa, Cross River, Delta, Edo, and Rivers State. To conduct this study, a correlational survey design was employed. The population comprised all teachers of government owned secondary schools in South-South Nigeria. 1,860 teachers of government owned secondary schools were selected using proportionate stratified random sampling technique for fair representation to rate their principals on the extent they adhere to legal provisions in the management of secondary schools. The Principals' Performance Scale in Adherence to Legal Provisions (PPSALP) was used for data collection. This instrument was face validated by experts. The overall internal consistency reliability co-efficient index obtained through cronbach alpha method was 0.72. The PPSALP has two sections, A and B. Section A elicited demographic information of the respondents. Section B contain question items based on the objectives of the study with a 4-point rating scale attached where respondents are requested to check the applicable responses categorized into Very frequently (VF); Frequently (F); Occasionally (O); and Never (N). Teachers who responded to the questionnaire were required to indicate the extent of agreement on their principals' adherence to the listed behaviors. Using real limits for decisions on the mean performance score, on PPSALP, 0.5-1.49 correspond to Never; 1.50 – 2.49 correspond to occasionally; 2.50 – 3.49 correspond to frequently; and 3.50 - 4.49 correspond to Very frequently. A cluster mean less than 2.5 indicates low performance, while 2.5 and above indicates high performance. Data were collected through direct delivery method by the researcher and seven research assistants. Means, standard deviations, and Pearson Product Moment Correlation Co-efficient were used to answer the research questions while multiple regressions and associated t-tests were used to test the hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance.

Results

The results were presented in line with the research questions and null hypothesis that guided the study as showed in the tables below:

Research Question One: What are the principals' mean performance scores in adherence to legal provisions in the management of secondary schools in the South-South, Nigeria?

The results of data analysis relating to the research question were presented in tables 1

Table 1: Mean ratings of teachers' responses on the extent of principals' performance in adhering to legal provisions

S/N	Questionnaire items (adhering to legal provisions)	\bar{X}	SD	D
1	My Principal emphasizes proper understanding of the rights, limitations and legal implications of teachers actions in dealing with students and parents in educational matters	2.91	.86	F

2	maintains the confidentiality of official matters	3.15	.87	F
3	ensures mutual understanding through obedience and preservation of school rules and regulations	3.14	.77	F
4	ensures strict control over teachers and prefects whose powers and limitations are clearly defined	2.96	.86	F
5	makes school rules and regulations available to teacher and students to regulate their conduct	2.98	.92	F
Cluster		3.03	.61	F

F= Frequently, DEC= Decision

Data in table 1 showed that all the items from 1-5 had high mean scores of 2.91, 3.15, 3.14, 2.98, and 2.96 with standard deviations of .86, .87, .77, .86, and .92 respectively. Item 1 has a mean score of 2.91 and standard deviation of .86. It shows that respondents were of the view that in the management of secondary schools, principals frequently emphasizes proper understanding of the rights, limitations and legal implications of teachers' actions in dealing with students and parents in educational matters. Item 2 has a mean score of 3.15 and standard deviation of .87. It shows that respondents were of the view that principals maintained confidentiality of official matters. Item 3 has a mean score of 3.14 and standard deviation of .77. It shows that respondents were of the view that principals ensured mutual understanding through obedience and preservation of school rules and regulations. Item 4 has a mean score of 2.96 and standard deviation of .86. It shows that respondents were of the view that in the management of secondary schools, principals ensured strict control over teachers and prefects whose powers and limitations were clearly defined. Item 5 has a mean score of 2.98 and standard deviation of .92. It shows that respondents were of the view that in the management of secondary schools, principals made school rules and regulations available to teacher and students to regulate their conduct. The cluster mean of 3.03 and standard deviation of .61 showed that principals frequently adhere to legal provisions in the management of secondary schools. This indicated that principals' performance in adherence to legal status in the management of secondary schools in South-South Nigeria was to a high extent.

Research Question Two: What are the correlation coefficients between demographic and personality variables and principals' performance in adherence to legal status in the management of secondary schools in South-South, Nigeria?

Table 2: Correlation Coefficients between principals' demographic and personality variables

and performance in adherence to legal provisions. (N = 310)

Variables			r ²	Percentage
Age	Pearson Correlation	-.003	0.000009	0.001
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.959		
Gender	Pearson Correlation	-.007	0.000049	0.01

	Sig. (2-tailed)	.900		
Educational Qualification	Pearson Correlation	-.018	0.000324	0.03
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.750		
Area of Specialty	Pearson Correlation	-.063	0.003969	0.4
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.271		
Experience as Principal	Pearson Correlation	-.054	0.002916	0.3
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.345		
Experience as VP	Pearson Correlation	.040	0.0016	0.16
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.483		
Marital Status	Pearson Correlation	-.035	0.001225	0.12
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.535		
State	Pearson Correlation	-.033	0.001089	0.11
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.560		
Location	Pearson Correlation	-.023	0.000529	0.05
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.684		
Leadership Style	Pearson Correlation	.401**	0.1608	16.08
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		
Motivation	Pearson Correlation	.036	0.001296	0.13
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.527		

The correlation coefficient between leadership styles of principals and their adherence to legal provisions (.401) was substantial. Principals that exhibited open leadership style were more effective in adherence to legal provisions than principals that exhibited close leadership style. Leadership style accounted for 16.08% of the variance in principals' performance in adherence to legal status. There was no substantial relationship between age (-.003), gender (-.007), educational qualification (-.018), area of specialty (-.063), experience as principal (-.054), experience as vice principal (.040), marital status (-.035), state of origin (-.033), location (-.023), motivation (.036), and principals performance in adherence to legal status.

Hypothesis (H₀₁)

Demographic and personality variables do not significantly predict principals' performance in adherence to legal provisions in the management of secondary schools in the South-South, Nigeria.

Table 3: Analysis of Variance of Regression on Adherence to Legal provisions

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	114.482	11	10.407	5.707	.000
Residual	543.467	298	1.824		
Total	657.948	309			

Predictors: (Constant), Age, Gender, Educational Qualification, Area of Specialty, Years of experience as Principal, Years of experience as Vice Principal, Marital Status, State, Location, Leadership style, and Motivation.

Table 3 showed that F-value of 5.707 was significant at 0.000. It showed that there was a significant relationship between demographic and personality variables of principals and their performance in adherence to legal provisions. Therefore, the null hypothesis of no significant relationship between demographic and personality factors and principals performance in adherence to legal provisions was rejected.

Table 4: Model Summary for adherence to legal provisions

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
	.417 ^a	.174	.144	1.35045

The coefficient of determination (R^2) is 0.174. This indicates that 17.4% of the variance in adherence to legal status is caused by variations in the predictor variables. Therefore, 17.4% of the variance in adherence to legal provisions is predicted by demographic and personality variables.

Table 5: t-Values of the demographic and Personality Variables on Adherence to Legal provisions

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	6.828	2.183		3.128	.002
Age	.013	.025	.030	.528	.598
Gender	-.032	.171	-.010	-.187	.852
Educational Qualification	.090	.168	.030	.537	.592
Area of Specialty	-.182	.201	-.051	-.903	.367
Experience as Principal	-.002	.016	-.008	-.146	.884
Experience as VP	.014	.017	.045	.798	.426
Marital Status	-.374	.244	-.085	-1.532	.127
State	-.008	.047	-.010	-.176	.860
Location	-.058	.162	-.020	-.360	.719
Leadership Style	.192	.025	.408	7.626	.000**
Motivation	.009	.010	.045	.837	.403

(** Sig. at $P < 0.05$)

To determine which of the variables were significantly related to principals' performance in adherence to legal provisions, the t-values of each variable were presented in table 5. The t-values were age (.528, $P < 0.598$), Gender (-.187, $P < 0.852$), Educational qualification (.537, $P < 0.592$), Area of specialty (-.903, $P < 0.367$), Experience as principal (-.146, $P < 0.884$), Experience as Vice-principal (.798, $P < 0.426$), Marital status (-1.532, $P < 0.127$), State of origin (-.176, $P < 0.860$), Location (-.360, $P < 0.719$), leadership style (7.626, $P < 0.000$) and motivation (.837, $P < 0.403$). Out of the demographic and personality variables, only leadership style had significant relationship ($P < 0.05$) with and predicted principals' performance in adherence to legal provisions.

Principals that exhibited a more open leadership style were more effective in adherence to legal status than those that exhibited close leadership style.

Discussion of Findings

The Extent of Principals' Performance in Adherence to Legal Provisions in the Management of Secondary Schools

The results revealed that principals' performance in adherence to legal provisions in the management of secondary schools was high. This was based on the respondents opinion that the principals frequently emphasized on the proper understanding of the rights, limitations and legal implications of teachers actions in dealing with students and parents' in educational matters, maintained confidentiality of official matters and ensured mutual understanding through obedience and preservation of school rules and regulations. The principals also ensured strict control over teachers and prefects whose powers and limitations are clearly defined, and frequently made rules and regulations available to teachers and students to regulate their conduct in the school against any violation. The adherence to legal provision of the law as it relates to school management by the principals agreed with the assertions of Ellah (2004), that knowledge of the legal provisions of principals rights and privileges, roles and codes of conduct as they relate especially to the rights and obligations of teachers and students is of great concern not only to the school administrator but to all members of the society who are directly or indirectly involved in the educational system. Adhering to legal provisions in the school system not only enhances good conduct but also promotes discipline and avert all forms of litigations for breach of rights of persons directly or indirectly related to the school system.

Demographic and Personality Variables as Correlates of Principals' Performance in Adherence to Legal Provisions in the Management of Secondary Schools

The findings showed that there was substantial relationship between some demographic and personality variables and principals performance in some task areas of management of secondary schools. Leadership styles related with principals performance in adherence to legal status. Okorie (2010) noted that leadership is an essential factor that propels the management of all internal and external aspects of an organization and attributes largely to the achievement of goals. The leader exerts much influence on how people interact, communicate and conduct the activities of the organization through motivation and delegation of duties. The authors were of the view that principals' effective leadership enhances free communication which removes rift among members in the school and promote cooperation for the achievement of intended goals. Hallinger and Heck (2009) asserted that effective leadership enables staff to be part of the planning and problem solving process, helps in staff development, motivates staff who are part of the decision making process, and gives them personal interest in seeing that the plan succeed. Gurgan (2010) identified leadership effectiveness as essential to motivate teams and inspire personnel to higher performance. Thompson (2007) explained that effective leadership correlates with financial management. Linjuan (2011) found that leadership effectiveness builds a favorable internal reputation, which in turn generates external intangible assets for the organization. The findings of a positive correlation between leadership and human resource development agreed with that of Hallinger and Heck (2009).

The findings of the study also agreed with that of Nwaeze (2003) that democratic leadership behaviour and initiating structure have positive correlation with organizational climate. Similarly, the findings of the study corroborated with that of Shaman (2006) on a study on the attributes of school principals leadership style and capacities for secondary schools. The results showed a strong positive correlation between perception of teachers on principals' leadership styles and effectiveness in their duties.

Demographic and Personality Variables as Predictors of Principals' Performance in Adherence to Legal Provisions in the Management of Secondary Schools

The findings of this study showed that the demographic and personality variables (age, gender, educational qualification, experience, marital status, location, state motivation and leadership style) jointly had significant relationship with principals' performance in adherence to legal provisions. The findings further showed significant relationship between some ideographic and personality variables with principals performance adherence to legal status. For instance, there was significant relationship between leadership style and principals' performance in adherence to legal provisions. Principals that exhibited a more open leadership style were more effective than those that exhibited close leadership styles in adherence to legal provisions. The findings of the study agreed with that of Koh (2006) and Phillip (2010) that the most effective administrators were those that exhibited openness by communicating more information to their subordinates, being more helpful and sympathetic. These are features of democratic behaviour which support all social activities and give strength to the feelings of personal dignity and self-expression, creativity, group interaction and effective performance. It further revealed that of all the demographic and personality variables only leadership style had a significant relationship with all the task areas of principals' performance except school plant management. These findings are not surprising because principals whose relationships with others are characterized with mutual respect and warmth, with open channels of communication, articulated goals, and optimizing the use of resources for the achievement of school goals should perform well.

These findings agreed with those of earlier studies. Nwaeze (2003) reported that leadership styles had significant relationship with administrative effectiveness. Effective leadership exerts positive relationships, and the ability to deal with complex issues and manage change. Kolawole and Fashina (2009) also reported that there was a significant relationship between principals leadership style and job performance. Studies by Jack (2012), Omeke and Onah (2012), and Duze (2012) reported that there was significant relationship between principals' leadership style and secondary school teachers job satisfaction. Secondary school teachers agreed that only democratic leadership exerts a positive influence on their job satisfaction. The teachers were satisfied with democratic leadership because their opinions, comments and suggestions were needed for decision-making. It was also observed that the democratic leadership style was up ahead of laissez-faire, and autocratic as having a more significant positive relationship with teachers' job performance. A study by Nwankwo, Loyce and Obiorah (2011) showed that leadership styles significantly related with principals administrative effectiveness. Their findings further showed that democratic leadership style is the most effective of all types of leadership as principals use case studies and collaborative approach in finding solutions to discipline problems. The findings further

agreed with that of Napodia (2010) who observed that leadership style significantly influenced principals' administrative effectiveness of secondary schools.

However, these findings were contrary to earlier studies. For instance, Truman (2007) reported that there was no significant difference influence of head teachers' style of administration on the various categories of school activities. Adegbesan (2013) showed that there was no significant relationship between the principal's leadership style and teaching/learning atmosphere. Sawati, Anwar, and Majoka (2011) also reported that there is no significant influence of any particular management style of high school administrators and schools' academic results.

Conclusion

The following conclusions were drawn based on the research findings.

Principals exhibited open leadership styles which made them to improve their performance in adherence to legal provisions in the management of secondary schools. Principals' performance was high in adherence to legal provisions. This task area is the usual concern of the principals in their day-to-day management of their schools to ensure that rules and regulations are adhered to.

Educational Implications

The findings of the study revealed that leadership style had significant and positive relationship with principals' performance in adherence to legal provisions. The leadership behaviours exhibited by the principals from the findings of the study such as accessibility; communicating openly to staff about school activities; encouraging teachers self expression, creativity and interaction; showing concern and respect for staff; and delegating duties to them enhanced teachers' co-corporation, discipline and commitment to duty. These dispositions are in line with laws regulating school management and impacted positively on principals' performance in adherence to legal status. Principals open leadership styles predicted their performance in adherence to legal provisions in the management of secondary schools.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study and the various implications which have been highlighted, the following recommendations were made:

1. Leadership should be considered in the appointment of principals since it had significant relationship with principals' performance in adherence to legal status in the management of secondary schools.
2. Training and re-training programmes should be given to principals with a view to helping them adopt more open leadership styles for the proper dispensation of justice with school rules and regulations in the day-to-day management of schools.

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