
Influence of Professional Training on Administrative Effectiveness of Principals in Enugu State

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Abstract

This study aims at exploring the influence of professional training on administrative effectiveness of principal in Enugu state. Two research questions and two null hypotheses guided the study and were tested at 0.05 level of significance. Researcher developed questionnaire was used for data collection. The instrument was face validated by three experts from the Faculty of Education, University of Nigeria, Nsukka, after which the trial test was carried out. The population comprised 65 principals and 4800 teachers. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research question while t-test was used to test the null hypothesis. The study revealed that the extent to which professional training of principals enhance administrative effectiveness in instructional supervision of teachers includes: Principals lay emphasis on the school curriculum, teachers' lesson notes, diaries, class registers, progress registers; school objectives among others. They encourage electronic teaching and learning, and use of Strength, Weakness, Opportunity and Treat (SWOT) analysis in dealing with challenges; when principals seek opinions of teachers before taking decision or action on matters such as school fund, appointment, student admission, among others, decision making in the school is enhanced. The study further indicated that the extent to which principals professional training enhance decision making in the school include: that principals seek the opinion of teachers before taking action on matters concerning school funds, that vice-principals are involved in the process of taking major decisions, Teachers are consulted before major academic decision are taken, among others. Some of the recommendations made include, Principals should exhibit the professional training skills for effective decision making in the school, principals should ensure that opinion of teachers are considered before taking actions in the school.

Keywords: Professional training, administration, administrative effectiveness, principals.

Introduction

The 21st century school administrators face a lot of challenges in executing their administrative tasks due to globalization of the world. The task of school administrator include providing leadership for curriculum development and instructional improvement, creating conducive environment for the realization of human potentials, influencing the behaviour of staff, supervising instructional activities and controlling the financial management of the school.

Constant changes in educational policies coupled with educational and technological innovations greatly affect the speed of knowledge production and administration and these have rendered most school administrators inadequate in discharging their duties. The tasks and challenges facing school administrator have made it necessary for school administrators to embark on training that make them professionals on the job. This training can take different forms such as: seminars, symposia, workshops, conferences, exhibitions, mentoring, and colloquial. The duration of these training varies from hours, days, weeks, months and years (Chabra, 2005).

Professional training focuses on improving the conceptual skills- the intellectual abilities needed to handle complex situations and do a better job. Professional training however is geared towards improving upon principal's administrative effectiveness with the ultimate aim of achieving set educational goals.

The principal is the chief executive and the educational administrator of the school. The principal occupies a central position in ensuring administrative effectiveness in school. For administrative effectiveness of principals to be achieved, all hands must be on desk, as Oguntimehin (2001), obviously noted that, organization cannot be successful without well skilled and well trained administrators. Hence, the need for educational institutions to embark on principals' professional training and development has become obvious. Absence of these training according to Oribabor (2000) often manifest tripartite problems of competence, inefficiency and ineffectiveness in decision making. Isyaku (2000) postulates that professional training aims at developing competencies such as technical, human, conceptual and managerial for future growth and development of both the individual and the organization.

Every human organization need to be properly managed and administered for the achievement of stated objectives. In educational sector, principal's instructional supervision and decision making cannot be overemphasized. The principal is the head of the school. In supervision of instruction, the principal provides detailed information on the school curriculum, teacher's lesson notes, diaries, class registers, grade books and follow it up to ensure the attainment of the educational goals and objectives of the school. Decision making of the principal is the process of making a choice or deciding the activities of the school. According to common wealth secretariat (1993), there are general responsibilities of principals as well as their specific duties. In

the school, the decision making responsibilities of the principal include involve matters concerning school funds, appointments, students' admission, special occasions and involvement of the vice principals in taking decisions of the school.

Administration is the ability to make people, activities and things function so that objectives are achieved. This means that administration is the process of working with and through others to efficiently accomplish predetermined goals of an organization (Mgbodile, 2004). Administrative effectiveness involves achievement in many of the day to day management issues which are practical and are of paramount importance to the organization. In this case, the principal sees that the school environment maintains absolute quietness and good learning situation (Condy, 1998).

In order to achieve administrative effectiveness, many of the day to day management issues are very practical, but of critical importance. According to Gaynor (1994), which correlates with Condy (1998) and Halliday (1999), in most cases, working to reduce teacher absenteeism is a major priority. The principal ensures that the school environment portrays a learning situation. With this, the principal moves from administrative tasks to an effective leader who motivates and integrates the needs of teachers by harnessing their potentials through divisions of labour, hierarchy of authority and effective managerial behaviour in actualizing the organizational objectives.

In some cases, principals without educational qualification as well as years of experience were appointed. It is worth knowing that if principals recruited do not have the experience and skills needed for administrative effectiveness, the aim of positive change will not come. Some of the appointed principals have no knowledge of information communication and technology, which is the trend in every dynamic and growing organization. The study is therefore to find out the extent to which professional training will enhance administrative effectiveness in secondary schools in Enugu state.

Statement of the Problem

A true profession is the one that offer individuals the opportunity for growth in their careers and in their lives. Presently, there appear to be problem in the secondary school administration. The challenges facing school administrator include; insufficient interest of the principals in arresting the loitering behaviour of the teachers and students, lack of social set-up among the staff of which the principal supposed to be part of it, the inability of the principal to make time, visit and communicate with members of his staff, principals not ready to listen to advice, improper supervision which requires the principal's watchful eye and constant presence, lack of organized orientation for young and inexperienced teachers, lack of division of labour and monopoly of power, constant repetition of lesson notes, use of a particular instructional materials year after year and poor coordination of the various departments in the school due to disobedience

of school rules and regulations. All these inefficiency in administration affects students' performance and achievement of the pre-determined objectives of the school.

Based on the above facts, it is clear that certain problems exist and it is of much concern to the researcher who is now poised to ask: are these administrative problems as a result of ignorance, unfortunate oversight or design on the part of the planners? In view of this, the present researcher embarks on the study to investigate into the influence of professional training on administrative effectiveness of principals in Enugu State.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of the study is to ascertain the extent of professional training of principals in order to determine their administrative effectiveness in Enugu state. Specifically, the study seeks to:

1. Determine the extent to which the professional training of principals enhance the administrative effectiveness in instructional supervision of teachers.
2. Determine the extent to which the professional training of principals enhance decision making in the schools.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study.

- (i) To what extent do principals professional training determine the effectiveness in instructional supervision of teachers?
- (ii) To what extent do professional training of principals enhance decision making in the school?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses formulated guided the study and were tested at 0.05 level of significance.

Ho¹: There is no significant difference between the mean rating of principals and teachers on the extent to which principals' professional training determines the effectiveness in instructional supervision of teachers.

Ho²: There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of principals and teachers on the extent to which principals' professional training determines the effectiveness in decision making in the schools.

Research Method

The research design employed in carrying out this study was descriptive survey research design. According to Nworgu (2006:72), this is "one in which a group of people or items is studied by collecting and analyzing data from only a few people or items considered to be representative of the entire group". This design is considered appropriate because the design offers the researcher the opportunity of sampling the opinions of significant large number of principals

and teachers from the population of study. Descriptive Survey research design was used so as to make generalization with the responses obtained.

The area of study was Nsukka education zone which include Igbo-Etiti, Nsukka central and Uzo-Uwani Local Government Area. The choice of the area was based on the facts that it appears there was a continuously neglected secondary school principals' professional training scheme in these areas, which made the choice of the area an ideal one for the study.

The population comprised 65 principals and 4800 teachers in Nsukka Education zone. Teachers were involved because they provide authentic information as regards to the general administration carried out by the principal in the school. (**Source:** Post-Primary School Management Board, Nsukka, 2014)

A sample of 243 respondents was used in this study which is 5% of the total population. The rationale for the selection was in line with Ali (2006, 129) which states that "if the population is large, only a small size of 5% of it that the researcher can manage well ought to be sampled". Eighty one (81) subjects were randomly selected each from Igbo- Etiti, Uzo-Uwani and Nsukka central. This comprises of 18 principals and 63 teachers.

The instrument for data collection was researcher developed questionnaire titled: Professional Training and Administrative Effectiveness of Principals Questionnaire (PTAEPQ). The questionnaire was organized into sections A, which contains the personal data of the respondents and section B, which contains 24 items on administrative effectiveness based on supervision of teachers' instruction and on administrative effectiveness in decision making in the school. Section A elicited information on the personal data of the respondents while section B was put into two clusters. Cluster 1 elicited information on administrative effectiveness based on supervision of teachers' instruction while cluster 2 elicited information on principals' administrative effectiveness in decision making in the school. These items had four point rating scale of very great extent (VGE) 4 points, great extent (GE) 3 points, little extent (LE) 2 points and very little extent (VLE) 1 point for clusters 1 and 2 respectively. The same questionnaire was used to collect data from both principals and teachers. The reason is that teachers will provide accurate responses as regards to the administrative effectiveness of principals and for the credibility of the results.

The instrument was face validated by three experts from the Faculty of Education, University of Nigeria, Nsukka. Two of the experts were from Department of Educational Foundations (Educational Administration and Planning unit), the third expert was from Measurement and Evaluation unit of Science Education Department. The instrument was validated based on the purpose of the study, research questions and the hypothesis. The experts were asked to check the language used in constructing the questionnaire, the clarity, the adequacy of the questionnaire items and the relevance of the instrument to

the topic of study. The corrections were effected in accordance with the directives from the validation in the modified version of the instrument.

To establish the reliability of the instrument, the validated instrument was trial tested using 20 respondents (comprising four principals and sixteen teachers) in Obollo Education zone which is outside the area of study. Data collected were analyzed using Cronbach alpha to determine the internal consistency of the items. This gave the reliability co-efficient values of 0.93 and 0.90 for clusters 1 and 2 respectively and overall reliability value of 0.90 was obtained. The result indicated that the instrument was reliable and therefore considered appropriate for the study.

The instrument were administered on the respondents and retrieved by the researcher with the aid of three (3) research assistants who were instructed by the researcher. The data were collected when the school was in session to enable the researcher get an accurate feedback from respondents.

Research questions were answered using mean and standard deviation while the hypotheses were tested using t-test at 0.05 level of significance. Any mean score above 2.50 was regarded as positive response while any mean score below 2.50 was regarded as negative response.

Results:

The results were analysed according to the research questions and hypotheses that guided the study.

Research question 1: To what extent do principals professional training determine the effectiveness in instructional supervision of teachers?

Table 1: Mean Rating of Principals and Teachers on the Principals’ Professional Training which Determine the Effectiveness in Supervision of Teachers’ Instruction.

S/N	Professional training enhances Supervision of teachers’ instruction ITEM DESCRIPTION	PRINCIPAL n = 20			TEACHERS n =223		
		\bar{x}	SD	Dec	\bar{x}	SD	Dec
1	Principals place emphasis on the school curriculum	2.60	0.81	A	2.92	0.88	A
2	Teachers’ lesson notes, diary, and class register are checked regularly	3.09	0.60	A	3.15	0.83	A
3	Principals define the school mission and vision	3.15	0.81	A	3.23	0.72	
4	Principals place emphasis on the attainment of educational goals and objectives.	2.92	0.60	A	3.16	0.89	A
5	Principals motivate teachers based on their effectiveness.	2.88	0.50	A	3.10	0.88	A
6	Principal assess school records such as teachers grade book, progress register, continuous and assessment register.	2.75	0.52	A	3.06	0.84	A
7	Principals supervise teaching methods used by teachers	2.64	0.71	A	3.06	0.91	A
8	Principals supervise teaching materials used by teachers	2.75	0.78	A	3.23	0.82	A
9	Principal provide instructional material needed for teachers to carryout effective	2.68	0.79	A	3.03	0.91	A

	teaching and learning.							
10	Principals carry out regular supervision all through the line of responsibilities.	2.80	0.82	A	3.13	0.91	A	
11	Principals encourage electronic teaching and learning.	2.71	0.78	A	3.09	0.89	A	
12	The principal discourages constant repetition of lesson notes year after year.	2.63	0.78	A	3.20	0.85	A	
13	The principal discourages constant use of a particular instructional material year after year.	2.75	0.75	A	3.01	0.81	A	
14	The principal uses SWOT analysis in dealing with challenges.	2.70	0.81	A	2.96	0.96	A	
15	Principals rank and motivate teachers based on their effectiveness.	2.67	0.79	A	3.15	0.95	A	
16	Principals use students' report to assess teachers' effectiveness.	2.85	0.78	A	3.21	0.77	A	
	Overall	2.78	0.73		3.11	0.86		

From the data shown in table 2 above, all the respondents (principals and teachers) who responded to the questionnaire items agreed on the principals' professional training which determine the effectiveness in supervision of teachers' instruction. This agreement of both the principals and teachers is expressed by the mean values and standard deviation of each item and then, the overall mean of 2.78 and 3.11 and the overall standard deviation of 0.73 and 0.86 respectively. This proved that when professional training is properly adopted for the principals, there will be effective supervision of teachers' instructions. Where the training is neglected, it will negatively affect supervision of teachers' instructions. Hence, the mean ratings and standard deviation of the principals and teachers who responded to the sixteen item questionnaire on the matter indicated this. In the table, mean ratings of principals range from 2.60 to 3.15 and standard deviation of 0.50 to 0.82 while that of teachers range from 2.72 to 3.23 and standard deviation of 0.72 to 0.96 while the overall mean are 2.78 and 3.11 and overall standard deviation are 0.73 and 0.86 respectively. Both are on the high values and mean ratings are greater than 2.50 being the criterion value.

Research question 2: To what extent do professional training of principals enhance decision making in the school?

Table 2: Mean Ratings of Principals and Teachers on Principals' Professional Training that Enhances Decision Making in Secondary School.

S/N	Professional training enhances Effective decision making ITEM DESCRIPTION	PRINCIPALS			TEACHERS		
		\bar{x}	SD	Dec	\bar{x}	SD	Dec
17	Principals seek the opinion of teachers before taking action on matters concerning school funds.	2.78	0.70	A	3.20	0.85	A
18	The vice principals are involved in the process of taking major decisions.	2.84	0.71	A	3.30	0.78	A
19	Principals seek the opinion of teachers before taking action on matters concerning appointments in the school.	2.78	0.78	A	3.29	0.80	A

20	Principals stimulate well ordered and conducive climates to reaching group decisions.	2.70	0.76	A	3.29	0.74	A
21	Teachers are informed before the principal invites a resource person to the school.	2.68	0.75	A	3.16	0.78	A
22	Teachers are consulted before major academic decisions are taken.	2.76	0.82	A	3.13	0.84	A
23	Principals involve teachers in taking decisions concerning special occasions that take place in the school.	2.74	0.77	A	3.01	0.81	A
24	Principals seek the opinion of teachers before taking action on matters concerning students' admission.	3.01	0.64	A	3.23	0.82	A
	Over all	2.78	0.74	A	3.20	0.80	

From the data presented in the table above, all the principals and teachers who responded to the questionnaire items agreed that principals' professional training enhances decision making in the school. This agreement of the respondents is demonstrated by the mean values and standard deviation of each item and then, the overall mean of 2.78 and 3.11, also, the overall standard deviation of 0.73 and 0.86 respectively. This indicated that when principals maintain progress in professional training, there will be enhancement in the area of decision making in the school. Where the professional training is neglected, negatively, it affects decision making in the school. Therefore, the mean ratings and standard deviation of the principals and teachers who responded proved this. In the table above, mean ratings of principals and teachers range from 2.68 to 3.01 and standard deviation of 0.64 to 0.82 while that of teachers range 3.20 to 3.30 and standard deviation of 0.74 to 0.85 with the overall mean of 2.78 and 3.20 and the overall standard deviation of 0.74 and 0.80 respectively. Each of the item rating is greater than 2.50 which is the criterion value.

Hypothesis one: There is no significant difference between the mean rating of principals and teachers on the extent to which principals' professional training availability determines the effectiveness in instructional supervision of teachers.

Table 3: t- test Analysis of Principals and Teachers 'on the Extent which Principals' Professional Training Availability Determine the Effectiveness in Instructional Supervision of Teachers.

Group	n	\bar{x}	S.D	Df	t-cal	t-crit	Level of sig.
Principals	20	2.95	.32	241	2.11	1.98	.05
Teachers	223	3.27	.25				

The analysis above shows that the calculated value of $t = 2.11$. Since the calculated value of $t = 2.11$ is greater than critical value of 1.98 at 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis is not accepted. This implies that there is great significant difference in the mean ratings of principals and teachers with regards to the extent to which principals' professional training determines the effectiveness in instructional supervision of teachers.

Hypothesis two: There is no significant difference between the mean rating of principals and teachers on the extent to which principals' professional training availability determines the effectiveness in decision making in the schools.

Table 4: t- test Analysis of Principals and Teachers Responses of the Extent which Principals' Professional Training Availability Determines the Effectiveness in decision Making in the Schools.

Group	n	\bar{x}	S.D	Df	t-cal	t-crit	Level of sig.
Principals	20	3.14	.07	241			
Teachers	223	2.86	.20		4.19	1.98	.05

The analysis shows that the calculated value of $t = 4.19$. Since the calculated value of $t = 4.19$ is greater than the table value = 1.98 at 0.05 level of significance, therefore the null hypothesis is not accepted. This proves that there is significant difference in the mean ratings of principals and teachers with regards to the extent to which principals' professional training determines the effectiveness in decision making in the schools.

Discussion

Based on the findings made on research question one of the study, the respondents were of the view that these professional training to a great extent determine the administrative effectiveness in supervision of teachers' instruction. Specifically, they agreed that to a very great extent, principals lay emphasis on the school curriculum, teachers' lesson notes, diaries, achievement of the school objectives among others, and all these enhances administrative effectiveness in supervision of teachers' instructions. The respondents were of the view that when instructional materials are provided for the teachers, this helps in achievement of the school objectives. Similarly, to a great extent, the respondents agreed that principals use Strength, Weakness, Opportunity and Treat (SWOT) analysis in dealing with challenges and as well, make use of students' report to assess teachers' effectiveness and all these contribute to administrative effectiveness.

In the light of the above findings, it is clear that principals' professional training actually determine the effectiveness in supervision of teachers' instructions. This verification is in line with Oboegbulem(2007), who maintained that professional training increases knowledge and improves skills and competencies capable of helping principals to attain effectiveness in instructional supervision of teachers. These skills include: placing emphasis on

the school curriculum, teachers' lesson notes and diaries. The school principal who adheres to sound professional training is likely to achieve effectiveness in instructional supervision of teachers. The result of the test of the first hypothesis further buttressed these findings because there was significant difference between the opinion of principals and teachers with regards to the extent to which professional training determines the administrative effectiveness in instructional supervision of teachers' instruction. This suggests that both the principals and teachers were of the view that the professional training enhances administrative effectiveness in supervision of teachers' instruction.

As regards to the second research question, the respondents overwhelmingly accepted to a great extent that principals' professional training enhance decision making in the school. The respondents were of the view that when principals seek the opinion of teachers before carrying out action on matters concerning school fund, appointment, among others greatly enhance the decision making process in the school. Both principals and teachers agreed to a very great extent that teachers are informed before the principal invites a resource person(s) to the school. This also strengthens the tempo of decision making in the school. Other finding is that teachers are consulted by the principal before serious academic decisions such as students' admission are taken.

From the above findings, it can be seen that professional training of principals enhances decision making in the school. It is clear that where principals fail to adopt sound professional training, there will always be conflict and constant disagreement in dealing with other school personnel. When principals adhere to involve teachers in the school activities, the high level of healthy decision making process will be attained in the school administration. This is in line with Hughes (1997) who stated that professionals in education (school administrators) should constantly involve teachers in all the school activities to ensure sound and healthy decision making process in the school. The result of the test of the second hypothesis however, did not support this finding, this is because, there is significant difference between the opinion of principals and teachers with regards to the professional training of principals which enhances decision making in the school. Thus, the null hypothesis was rejected.

Recommendation

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. School principals should be exposed to the different forms of professional training such as; seminars, conferences, workshops, symposia, exhibitions, mentoring and colloquial.
2. Principals should ensure that: teachers' complaints are listened to and advice is given where necessary.
3. Principals should assign task carefully to trained teachers.
4. The vice principals should be informed before taking major decisions.

5. Teachers should also be consulted before taking major academic decisions and should be involved in decision making concerning some special events in the school.

Conclusion

From the findings obtained from this study and observation of the researcher, the following conclusions were made:

The availability of professional training programme enhances greatly the administrative effectiveness of principals in the school. In most cases, the principals' professional training contributes greatly to the healthy interpersonal relationship in the school. Principals' professional training programmes are very essential in school administration. In other words, principals must deem it necessary to make use of their professional skills in the pursuit and accomplishment of school aims and objectives. In situations where principals fail to adhere to acceptable professional training skills and knowledge, achievement of school goals especially in the areas of interpersonal relationship and decision making in the school will be very difficult. Also, ignoring professional training skills by the school principals implies neglecting the source of achieving the school target. Some of the cases of mismanagement of school funds and poor communication between the school heads and other school personnel are connected with poor implementation of professional training programmes.

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