PRINCIPALS' ADMINISTRATIVE STRATEGIES IN THE MANAGEMENT OF SECONDARY EDUCATION FOR AN ENHANCED TEACHERS COMMITMENT IN THE POST COVID-19 ERA

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ABSTRACT

Lack of teachers' commitment to their duties in secondary schools necessitated this study on administrative strategies employed by principals of public secondary schools in the management of schools for an enhanced teachers' commitment in Nsukka education zone. Descriptive survey research was adopted for the study using a sample of 137 teachers. Principals' Administrative Strategies for Enhancing Teachers' Commitment Questionnaire was used as instrument for data collection. The instrument was properly face validated by three experts. The items of the instrument demonstrated an internal consistency reliability index of 0.73 obtained using Cronbach Alpha. The research questions were answered using mean and the hypotheses tested at 5% probability level using independent samples t-test. The findings among others revealed that the principals and teachers agreed that instructional supervision management strategies that promote teachers' commitment include; principals' observation of teaching and learning to ensure curriculum coverage, provision of immediate feedback for teachers' improvement, use of different supervisory techniques, and use of appropriate instructional materials. However, there was no significant difference in the mean ratings of principals and teachers on the instructional supervision management strategies that promote teachers' commitment. It was recommended that that principals should continually utilize appropriate instructional supervision strategies to ensure improved teaching and learning.

KEYWORDS: Administration, Administrative strategies, Principal, Secondary Education, Public Secondary School.

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INTRODUCTION

The major concern of policy makers, education administrators, and other stakeholders in education is the administration of educational institutions. (Hamadneh, 2014; Okpatka & Arar, 2016). This is due to the fact that education is an indispensable factor for national development (FRN, 2013). Administration of schools is one of the most important areas in administration, and its role goes beyond implementing educational policies and objectives (Hamadneh, 2014; Laila & Muhammad, 2016). School administration keeps direct contact with principals of public secondary schools. Public secondary schools in Nigeria are therefore those secondary schools established and managed by the different levels of government. According to the Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN, 2013), the major goal of secondary education is to inspire students with the desire for self-reliance and

achievement of excellence. The achievement of this lofty goal depends on administrative strategies adopted by principals.

The principal as the administrative head of a secondary school is responsible for developing and implementing the educational programmes, providing facilities and equipment, keeping school records including school funds as well as creating an atmosphere conducive to teaching and learning. They are faced with the tasks of performing administrative roles in order to ensure efficiency and effectiveness in the system (Ogbonnaya, 2010). The principal's role is essential in maintaining and raising the standard of education. This implies that, the principal is a major determinant of goals achievement in secondary educational system. Principal is an administrator, a problem solver and a facilitator of change by adequately planning ahead of time, ensure proper coordination, monitoring and supervision, provide staff and student personnel services as well as ensure prompt motivation of staff and students. According to Olubunmi, (2016), planning, coordinating, supervision of instruction, evaluation, among others are administrative strategies of the secondary school principals.

Principal's administrative strategies are important management functions concerned with obtaining, developing and motivating the human resources required by the institution to achieve its objectives. According to Awotungase and Ohadebere (2012), administrative strategies of principals ensure effective utilization of human resources in an organization. The principal's activities here must be encouraging to ensure teachers commitment and effective performance. Therefore, a principal serves as a reservoir of alternative solutions to problems that may arise from time to time due to peculiar situations. In order to meet up the standard as stipulated in the national goals and objectives of secondary education, it is imperative that teachers be given opportunities and encouraged to update their knowledge and skills through effective administrative strategies to be conversant with current development in their field (Ngeripaka, Nkporbu & Acheya, 2019). This study seeks to determine principals' administrative strategies for management of secondary schools through effective use of instructional supervision and staff personnel strategies for enhancing teachers' commitment in public secondary schools in Nsukka education zone of Enugu State Nigeria. In secondary schools all other resources will have meaning only with the proper application of principals' administrative strategies in the area of planning, instructional and infrastructural supervision, monitoring, adequate provision and maintenance of staff personnel and students' services in schools.

Ifedili, (2015) identified instructional supervisory strategies to be employed by principals as follows: helping teachers for professional growth, imparting cooperative spirit for teamwork, good use of instructional materials, improving teacher's appraisal of their standards and plan for curriculum improvement. This calls for regular evaluation and supervision of instructions carried out in line with set standards that bring about improvement in teaching and learning. Nzoka and Orodho (2010) opined that principals should be more serious with their responsibility as quality assurance officers in their schools. Teachers must be well informed, supervised and motivated in order to sustain their interest, dedication and commitment as well as wiliness, enthusiastic and aspiration (Swaleha, 2013). Consequently, principals need to be goal oriented and optimally maximize human and material resources to enhance effective task performance on teachers for the achievement of education set goals (Umo, 2010).

The task of enhancing the welfare of the staff personnel falls within the preview of the principal who is in charge of the secondary school (Mutiso & Kilika (2017). The principal is expected to get qualified personnel, who will provide instructional services, various studies show that staff that are taken proper care of, or motivated, could be highly productive and innovative (Okoro & Abraham, 2019). Staff welfare services include promotion, capacity building, development

opportunities and appropriate health and safety incentives (Onuma, 2015). The management of educational institutions such as secondary schools should look for ways of managing the complex characters and behaviors of staff, because, the way and manner they are managed affects the success of educational institutions which are the personnel functions of the principals. This is done through establishment of conducive school climate that promote excellence in education, gender fairness for staff, students, parents and the community (Obasi, 2018).

As the world becomes increasingly interconnected so do the risk we face due to COVID-19 pandemic, people regardless of nationality, level of education, income or gender have been affected (UNESCO, 2020). Its consequences hinted the most vulnerable hardest. Education is no exception, students from privilege background, supported by their parents, and able to learn, could find their way past closed school doors to alternative learning opportunities. Those from the disadvantaged backgrounds often remained shut out when their school shut down. The lockdowns in response to COVID 19 have interrupted conventional schooling with nationwide school closures for almost six to seven months. Principals, teacher and all education stake holders need to work harder to ensure that our education system will regain some kind of normalcy in its functioning for the achievement of school goals. The secondary schools administrators need to adequately provide sanitation and waste management facilities to maintain clean environment, ensuring that the policy of regular hand washing with soap and safe running water is practiced, as well as limiting large group of people and advocate for the provision of more classrooms to promote social distancing. They should ensure that national health and educational guidelines are followed.

Statement of the Problem

In spite of societal demand for quality performance in education, there is a growing concern about the realization of the objectives of secondary education, mainly due to doubts about effective instructional supervision and monitoring of students' learning by the principals. It has also been observed that many principals especially in Nsukka education zone give little or no attention to the provisions of teaching and learning materials, no established system of incentives and motivation for the staff is on ground. On the other hand teachers these days indulge in all forms of indiscipline act, such as lateness to school, absenteeism, trading during school hours, teaching without lesson plan, improper record keeping. They lack ICT skills and knowledge as well as the opportunities for training and re-training of teachers. There appears to be an unhealthy relationship between teachers and principal. Consequently, the researcher was quick to ponder, thus: could it be that principal's administrative strategies are not appropriate or not being adequately employed by the principals for promoting teachers' commitment. In view of the above facts, the problem of this study therefore, determined the administrative strategies employed by public secondary school principals for enhancing teachers' commitment in Nsukka education zone, in post COVID 19 era.

Purpose of the study

This study examined the administrative strategies adopted by secondary school principals for an enhanced teachers' commitment in Nsukka education zone of Enugu State, Nigeria. Specifically, the study sought to:

- Examine the instructional supervision strategies employed by principals of public secondary schools in Nsukka education zone for an enhanced teachers' commitment.
- Determine staff personnel strategies adopted by public secondary school principals for an enhanced teachers' commitment.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following research questions were answered in the study

- What are the instructional supervision strategies employed by principals in public secondary schools for an enhanced teacher's commitment.
- What are the staff personnel strategies adopted by public secondary school principals for an enhanced teachers' commitment.

Hypotheses

Ho₁: There is no significant difference in the mean responses of principals and teachers of public secondary schools in Nsukka education zone, in the area of instructional supervision for an enhanced teachers' commitment.

Ho₂: There is no significance difference between the mean ratings of principals and teachers on the area of staff personnel strategies for an enhanced teachers' commitment.

METHOD

The study examined the administrative strategies employed by principals of public secondary school in the management of schools for enhancing teachers' commitment in Nsukka education zone. The design of the study was descriptive survey. Similarly, Eze et al. (2020), Okeke et al. (2020a, b), Ugwuanyi et al. (2020), Okenyi et al. (2021), Ezema et al. (2021), Ezeaku et al. (2021) have adopted this kind of design. The population comprised of 59 public secondary schools and 1,833 teachers from Nsukka education zone. Simple random sampling technique was used to sample 30 schools from population of schools from the study area. From the sampled schools, all the 30 principals sampled were used for the study, while 137 teachers were randomly sampled from the 30 schools using simple random sampling technique. The instrument used for data collection was questionnaire titled "Principals' Administrative Strategies for Enhancing Teachers' Commitment Questionnaire"(PASETCQ) which was developed by the researchers and was face validated by three experts from Faculty of Education University of Nigeria, Nsukka. A pilot test with 15 principals and 15 teachers from 10 schools outside the study area was carried out. The scores obtained were collated and analysed using the Cronbach Alpha method and the reliability yielded an index of 0.73. Mean was used to answer the research questions and independent samples t-test was used to test the null hypotheses at 5% probability level.

RESULTS

Research Question One: What are the instructional supervision strategies adopted by principals in public secondary schools for an enhanced teachers' commitment?

Table 1: Mean Analysis of the Ratings of Principals and Teachers on the Instructional Supervision Strategies Employed by Public Secondary School Principals for an Enhanced Teachers' Commitment

S/N	Principals' Administrative Strategies in the area of Instructional Supervision	Principals (30)		Teachers (137)	
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD
1	Monitors lessons to ensure active participation of students and proper classroom control.	3.09	.29	2.98	1.27
2	Encourages teachers to be innovative and ensure they use variety of teaching methods during lesson delivery.	3.09	.48	2.68	.99
3	Making sure teachers use specific objectives to assess students at the end of the lesson.	3.09	.29	3.09	.29

4	Intensify internal supervision of instruction to maintain quality/standard.	3.02	.55	2.92	1.08
5	Observation of teaching and learning to ensure curriculum content coverage.	3.09	.29	3.41	.49
6	Provision of immediate feedback to teachers particularly after lesson observation.	2.71	.90	2.90	1.03
7	Helps teachers to solve instructional problems.	3.09	.29	3.02	.29
8	Directs teachers in the selection of appropriate instructional materials.	2.88	.85	3.76	.42
9	Different supervisory techniques are constantly used to promote teachers' commitment in their daily teaching tasks.	3.09	.29	3.09	.29
10	Identifies the areas of strength and weaknesses and provides feedback.	2.94	.61	2.73	.84
	Overall Mean	3.01	.89	3.05	.67

Table 1 shows the mean ratings of principals and teachers on items 1 to 10 which are statements on the instructional supervision strategies employed by public secondary school principals in Nsukka education zone for enhancing teachers' commitment. It shows that their mean ratings are more than the 2.50 criterion mean. Thus, statements of items 1 to 10 are the instructional supervision strategies employed by public secondary school principals in Nsukka education zone for an enhanced teachers' commitment. However, the overall mean ratings of 3.01 and 3.05 for the principals and teachers respectively indicate that the teachers had higher mean rating than the principals.

H₀₁: There is no significance difference in the mean ratings of principals and teachers on the instructional supervision strategies employed by public secondary school principals for an enhanced teachers' commitment.

Table 2:t-test Analysis of the Difference in the Mean Ratings of Principals and Teachers on the Instructional Supervision Strategies Employed by Public Secondary School Principals for an Enhanced Teachers' Commitment

Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	df	t	p
Principals	30	3.01	.89	165	-.106	.834
Teachers	137	3.05	.67			

Table 2 reveals that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of principals and teachers on the instructional supervision strategies employed by public secondary school principals for an enhanced teachers' commitment, $t(165) = -.106, p = .834$.

Research Question Two: What are the staff personnel strategies adopted by public secondary school principals for an enhanced teachers' commitment?

Table 3: Mean Analysis of the Ratings of Principals and Teachers on the Staff Personnel Strategies Employed by Public Secondary School Principals for an Enhanced Teachers' Commitment

S/N	Principals' Administrative Strategies in the area of Staff Personnel Services	Principals (30)		Teachers (137)	
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD
1	Taking regular attendance of staff members.	3.09	.29	3.09	.29
2	Inducting newly employed teachers to be acquainted with the environment.	3.03	1.06	2.87	.77
3	Assigning duties to staff based on their area of specialization and expertise.	3.09	.29	3.09	.29
4	Motivation of staff to achieve good performance and attain job satisfaction.	3.03	1.09	2.94	.73
5	Encouraging staff professional growth through on the job training such as seminars and workshops.	3.09	.29	3.09	.29
6	Increase positive behavioral pattern of teachers' teaching and learning.	2.93	.84	3.02	.68
7	Establishing and maintaining a supportive and orderly environment.	3.09	.29	3.09	.29
8	Proffer opportunities to evaluate and motivate the performance of the staff.	2.94	1.00	2.87	.77
9	Providing efficient staff welfare services to motivate teachers.	3.09	.29	3.09	.293
10	Involving staff in crucial decision making for improvement and development.	2.95	.92	3.18	1.08
	Overall Mean	3.03	.29	3.02	.68

Table 3 shows the mean ratings of principals and teachers on items 1 to 10 which are statements on the staff personnel strategies employed by public secondary school principals for an enhanced teachers' commitment. It shows that their mean ratings are more than the 2.50 criterion mean. Thus, statements of items 1 to 10 are the staff personnel strategies employed by public secondary school principals for an enhanced teachers' commitment. However, the overall mean ratings of 3.03 and 3.02 for the principals and teachers respectively indicate that the principals had higher mean rating than the teachers.

H₀₂: There is no significance difference in the mean ratings of principals and teachers on the staff personnel strategies employed by public secondary school principals for an enhanced teachers' commitment.

Table 4: t-test Analysis of the Difference in the Mean Ratings of Principals and Teachers on the Staff Personnel Strategies Employed by Public Secondary School Principals for an Enhanced Teachers' Commitment

Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	df	t	p
Principals	30	3.03	.29	165	.089	.918
Teachers	137	3.02	.68			

Table 4 reveals that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of principals and teachers on the staff personnel strategies employed by public secondary school principals for an enhanced teachers' commitment, $t(165) = .089, p = .918$.

DISCUSSION

The result of research question one indicated that principals' instructional supervisory strategies are monitoring of lessons to ensure active participation of students and adequate classroom control, ensuring curriculum content coverage, teachers'

usage of specific objectives during evaluation as well as provision of immediate feedback after lesson observation among others. Hypothesis one revealed that there is no significance difference in the mean responses of principals and teachers on how the use of instructional supervision strategies enhance teachers' commitment to their academic duties. These findings are in line with Umo (2010), Ifedili (2015), Nzoka and Orodho (2010), these researchers emphasized that teacher's efficiency reflects on the interactive skills and knowledge adopted in the process of teaching and learning. This is also supported by the opinions of Ngeripaka, Nkporbu and Acheya (2019).

The findings of research question two inferred that principals' staff personnel strategies that enhance teachers commitment are regular monitoring of teachers attendance, providing efficient staff welfare services to motivate teachers, assigning duty to staff based on their area of specialization, creating opportunities to evaluate and motivate teachers performance, as well as encouraging teachers professional growth among others. This is in line with findings of Onuma (2015), Ahmed and Rahman (2017); Obasi (2018) these researchers have in their perceptions and opinions agreed that principals' use of appropriate staff personnel strategies in management, promote teachers' commitment. Hypothetically, the study found no significance difference in the mean responses of principals and teachers on how staff personnel strategies enhance teacher's commitment. This result agrees with the opinions of Onuma (2015); Oko and Abraham (2019) that identified motivation and provision of efficient staff welfare services as key factors that had been shown to promote teachers' commitment.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings, of the study, and the discussions, it is concluded that the instructional supervision and staff personnel strategies adopted by public secondary school principals are strong variables for an enhanced teachers' commitment.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the conclusions of the study, it is recommended as follows:

- Principals of secondary schools should continuously utilize appropriate instructional supervision strategies to enhance teachers' commitment.
- Principals of public secondary schools should always employ appropriate staff personnel strategies to establish and maintain a supportive and orderly environment for effective relationships for enhanced teachers' commitment.

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