PRINCIPALS' INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP AS A PREDICTOR OF TEACHERS' CLASSROOM PRACTICES IN SCHOOLS: POLICY IMPLICATION FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE

DR. DENIS CHUKWUJIEKWUAGBO (REV. FR)¹, DR. LAMBERT KENECHUKWUEJIONUEME (REV. FR)² & DR. VICTOR SUNDAY EZEMA (REV. FR)³

¹Queen of the Rosary Secondary School, Nsukka

^{2,3}Department of Educational Foundations, University of Nigeria, Nsukka

ABSTRACT

Literature abound on the lack of teachers' commitment to instructional duties in secondary schools in Nigeria. This ugly trend necessitated this research on the predictive power of principals' instructional leadership in teachers' classroom practices in secondary schools in South East, Nigeria. A correlational survey research design was adopted for the study using a sample of 794 teachers. Instructional leadership Questionnaire and Classroom Practices Questionnaire were used for data collection. The items of the instruments demonstrated good internal consistency reliability indices. Data collected were analysed using simple regression analysis to answer the research question and the corresponding hypothesis. The finding of the study revealed that principals' instructional leadership had a significant ($p < .05$) positive prediction of teachers' classroom practices of teacher. This finding has policy implication for early childhood care due to the fact that children will be better taken care of at an early stage by their teachers only when the instructional leadership of the head teacher is effective.

KEYWORDS: Classroom Practices, Prediction, Secondary Schools, Principals Instructional & Leadership

Received: Apr 01, 2021; **Accepted:** Apr 20, 2021; **Published:** May 08, 2021; **Paper Id.:** IJMPERDJUN202123

INTRODUCTION

The effectiveness of schools in educating students in knowledge, skills, values and attitude is mainly dependent upon the presence and nature of multilevel leadership within the school. This is because if the principal (leader) is not doing his job effectively, the staff will not perform effectively. A principal performs an enormous number of tasks each day, but if a school is to progress, the principal cannot allow daily duties to interfere with staff personnel management and the leadership role in curriculum, that is, instructional leadership.

It is observable that some principals do not seem to motivate teachers adequately for effectiveness and productivity; hence, many of them are probably not committed to their job because they seem not to derive satisfaction on the job. Some principals may not respond appropriately to the provision of instructional materials and seem not to encourage teachers to grow professionally. It is equally noticeable that most principals appear to treat provision of infrastructural facilities like conducive classrooms, comfortable staff rooms, libraries, laboratories and workshops with levity. This instructional leadership of the principals affects both the productivity of the teachers and the achievement of the students. The involvement of principals in the instructional activities of the school has direct implication on the learning outcomes of the students (Shafeeu, 2019). Moreover, pupils' attainment outcomes depend on strong instructional leadership of the school head. Studies have been conducted to

ascertain if the type of leadership provided by principals impact on students' attainment in the secondary school (Shafeeu, 2019). Thus, the researchers sought to explore the predictive power of principals' instructional leadership on classroom practices of teachers in secondary schools in South East, Nigeria.

Research across the globe have shown the nature of the relationship between principals' instructional leadership on classroom practices of teachers as well as students' outcomes in secondary schools. Principal's instructional leadership strongly relate with pupils' secondary school attainment (Shafeeu, 2019). Teaching performance of teachers significantly and positively depends on their total satisfaction and level of job satisfaction suggesting that principals' instructional supervisory style is an important determinant of how teachers perform (Mustaqim, 2021). Transformational leadership practice of school principals had significant direct relationship with teachers' classroom behavior (Polatcan et al., 2021). Headmasters' instructional leadership practices impact positively on the classroom practices of the teachers (Fred & Singh, 2021). Principals' leadership types were significantly and positively related to teachers' academic optimism (Börü & Bellibaş, 2021). Core leadership practices of school principals correlated positively with teachers' classroom practices in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (Alqahtani & Noman, 2021).

Teachers' expectations in schools significantly depend on the principal support and professional learning community (Park & Byun, 2021). Principals' leadership practices significantly relate to the school administration and management (Pereira et al., 2021). Instructional leadership had significant direct and positive relationship teacher efficacy (Ma & Marion, 2021). Principals' leadership emotions had significant relationship with teacher professionalism and collegial trust in the Chinese context (Cheng et al., 2021). Teacher's need for training in classroom management were the best predictors of perceived classroom practices (Lopes & Oliveira, 2021). Otara and Omolo (2021) revealed that school organization factors significantly predict students' academic performance. Principals' distributed leadership had very small but significant direct relationship with teacher professional learning (Polatcan, 2021). Principals' leadership behaviour had a low but significant positive relationship with sustainable teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Abia state (Obinna, 2021). Contrary to the above findings, principals' instructional leadership was not related to teacher learning (Bellibaş & Gümüş, 2021).

The backdrop has shown the empirical evidence on the relationship between instructional leadership of principals and the teachers' classroom practices. It was, however, found that most of the studies were on the nature of the relationships between the variables without considering the predictive power of the independent variable (principals' instructional leadership) and the dependent variable (teachers' classroom practices). Hence, the need for this study in the predictive power of principals' instructional leadership on classroom practices of teachers in secondary schools in South East, Nigeria. It was hypothesized that there is no significant ($p > .05$) predictive power of principals' instructional leadership on teachers' classroom practices.

METHOD

A correlational survey research design was adopted by the researchers for this study. Recently, Ugwuanyi et al. (2020a, b, c, d), Ezema et al. (2019), Okenyi et al. (2019), Achagh et al. (2020), Ugwuanyi and Okeke (2020), Gana et al. (2019), Eya et al. (2020) have adopted this design in similar studies. The study participants comprised of 794 teachers sampled from a population of teachers in Ebonyi and Enugu states. This sample was drawn using proportionate stratified random sampling technique. The instruments for data collection are Instructional leadership Questionnaire (PLQ) and Classroom Practices

Questionnaire (CPQ). The PLQ20 items were structured on a 4-point response options which elicited information from the respondents on principals' instructional leadership. The Classroom Practices questionnaire had 28 items structured on a 4-point scale as well. The internal consistency reliability indices of the items of the instruments were estimated to be 0.81 and 0.75 respectively using Cronbach Alpha method.

The copies of the instruments were administered to the participants in their respective schools for them to fill and return accordingly. Both the administration and retrieval were done on a particular visit to each of the schools. Research assistants numbering nine (9) assisted the researchers in administering the copies of the instruments. Data collected were analysed using linear regression analysis to answer the research question and test the hypothesis at $p < 0.05$.

RESULTS

Table 1: Regression Analysis of Predictive Power of Principals' Instructional Leadership on Teachers' Classroom Practices

Model	R	R-square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.609 ^a	.371	.380	.57703

Predictors: (Constant), Instructional leadership

Table 1 shows that instructional leadership of principals relates positively to teachers' classroom practices, $r = 0.609$, $r^2 = 0.371$. This showed that the predictive power of principals' instructional leadership in teachers' classroom practices is 0.371 implying that 37% variation in teachers' classroom practices is attributed to instructional leadership.

Table 2: T-Test of the Predictive Power of Instructional Leadership of Principals and Teachers' Classroom Practices

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients	Standardized Coefficients	Beta	t	Sig
	B	Std. Error			
1. (Constant) instructional leadership.	2.645	.184		14.38	.000
	.484	.062	.609	8.96	.000

a. Dependent variable: Teachers Classroom Practices

H₀: There is no significant ($p > .05$) predictive power of principals' instructional leadership in teachers' classroom practices.

Table 2 shows that principals' instructional leadership significantly predict classroom practices of teachers, $t = 8.96$, $p = .000$. Thus, the null hypothesis was rejected ($p < .05$).

DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

The finding of this study revealed that principals' instructional leadership is a significant predictor of teachers' classroom practices. This implies that the effectiveness of teachers' classroom practices depends on the instructional leadership adopted by the principals in secondary schools. In agreement with the finding of this study are the previous findings below. Principals' leadership emotions had significant relationship with teachers' professionalism and collegial trust in the Chinese context (Cheng et al., 2021). Teacher's need for training in classroom management were the best predictors of perceived classroom practices (Lopes & Oliveira, 2021). Otara and Omolo (2021) revealed that school organization factors significantly predict students' academic performance. Principals' distributed leadership had a very small but significant direct relationship with teacher professional learning (Polatcan, 2021). Principals' leadership behaviour had a low but significant positive relationship with sustainable teachers' job performance (Obinna, 2021). Contrary to the above findings, principals' instructional leadership had no significant relationship with teachers' classroom teaching and learning (Bellibaş

& Gümüş, 2021).

Principal's instructional leadership strongly relate with pupils' secondary school attainment (Shafeeu, 2019). Teaching performance of teachers, significantly and positively, depends on their total satisfaction and level of job satisfaction suggesting that principals' instructional supervisory style is an important determinant of how teachers perform (Mustaqim, 2021). Transformational leadership practice of school principals had significant direct relationship with teachers' classroom behavior (Polatcan et al., 2021). Headmasters' instructional leadership practices impact positively on the classroom practices of the teachers (Fred & Singh, 2021). Principals' leadership types were significantly and positively correlated with teachers' academic success (Börü & Bellibaş, 2021).

Core leadership practices of school principals correlated positively with teachers' classroom practices (Alqahtani & Noman, 2021). Teachers' expectations significantly depend on principal support and professional learning community (Park & Byun, 2021). Principals' leadership practices significantly relate to the school administration and management (Pereira et al., 2021). Instructional leadership had significant direct and positive relationship teacher efficacy (Ma & Marion, 2021). This finding has policy implication for childhood development in that there should be the need to establish a policy that will guide the use of effective instructional leadership by the head of school at early childhood care stage. Implementation of such policy will lead to effective classroom practices of the preschool practitioners.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study has shown that instructional leadership of principals in secondary schools is a major determinant of the teachers' classroom practices. Based on the findings of the study, the researchers concluded that principals in Southeast Nigeria should make efforts to identify the staffs' needs of their schools, set standard for each teacher's job, and provide the necessary resources needed for effective classroom interactions.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The researchers acknowledge the efforts of the participants used for the conduct of this research. Besides, **Dr. Lambert Kenechukwu Ejionueme (Rev. Fr)** (lambert.ejionueme@unn.edu.ng) for serving as the corresponding Author for this research.

REFERENCES

1. Alqahtani, A. S., & Noman, M. (2021). Core leadership practices of school principals in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. 49(2), 321–335. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1741143220901857>
2. Achagh, W. I., Ezema, Victor S., Ogundele, B. B., Ekele, C. B., Badamasi, A. E., Ashefor, H. A., Okondugba, A. C., Okenyi, E. C., Ibiam, J. U., Otta, F. E., Ifelunni, C. O., Ugwu, G. C., Orji, J. C. & Ugwuanyi, C. S. (2020). Parental Demographic Variables as Determinants of Knowledge of Nutritional Needs of Preschoolers in North Central Zone, Nigeria. *Global Journal of Health Science*, 12(5).
3. Bellibaş, M. Ş., & Gümüş, S. (2021). Professional Development in Education The Effect of Learning-Centred Leadership and Teacher Trust on Teacher Professional Learning: Evidence from a Centralised Education System The Effect of Learning-Centred Leadership and Teacher Trust on Teacher Profes. *Professional Development in Education*, 00(00), 1–13. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19415257.2021.1879234>
4. Börü, N., & Bellibaş, M. Ş. (2021). Comparing the relationships between school principals' leadership types and teachers' academic optimism. *International Journal of Leadership in Education*, 00(00), 1–19.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/13603124.2021.1889035>

5. Cheng, T., Chen, J., & Bryant, D. A. (2021). *Teacher Leaders Emotions Mirror Teacher Professionalism via Collegial Trust. The Asia-Pacific Education Researcher*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40299-021-00551-3>
6. Eya, M. N., Attah, F. O., Nwoji, I. H., Ugwuanyi, C. S., Okeke, C. I. O. & Ekwueme, U. H. (2020). *SocioPsychological Factors as Correlates of Students' Performance in Chemistry: Implication for Science and Engineering Education. International Journal of Mechanical and Production Engineering Research and Development (IJMPERD)*, 10(4), 239–248. <https://doi.org/10.24247/ijmperdaug202021>.
7. Ezema, V. S., Ejiofor, J. N., Orji, J. C., Okenyi, E. C., Achagh, W. I., Ibiam, J. I., Ugwuanyi, C. S., Ilechukwu, L. C., & Nnadi, E. M. (2019). *Estimation of the predictive powers of teachers' pedagogical skills on pupils' academic achievement in Christian Religious Studies in South-East, Nigeria. Global Journal of Health Science*, 11(14), 30-36.
8. Fred, A., & Singh, G. S. B. (2021). *Instructional Leadership Practices in Under-Enrolled Rural Schools in Miri, Sarawak*.
9. Lopes, J. A., & Oliveira, C. (2021). *Teacher and school determinants of perceived classroom discipline: a multilevel analysis of TALIS 2013. Learning Environments Research*, 0123456789. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10984-021-09348-z>
10. Ma, X., & Marion, R. (2021). *Exploring how instructional leadership affects teacher efficacy: A multilevel analysis. Educational Management Administration and Leadership*, 49(1), 188–207. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1741143219888742>
11. Obinna, W. (2021). *Perceived Influence of Organizational Culture on Teachers' Job Performance in Public Secondary School in Abia State*. 9(1), 72–80.
12. Okenyi, E. C., Ngwoke, A. N., Ugwu, G. C., Aneke, A. O., Ifelunni, C. O., Ebizie, E. N., Orji, J. C., Ejiofor, J. N., Njoku, O. C., Ezema, V. S., Achagh, W. I., Ibiam, J. U. & Ugwuanyi, C. S. (2019). *Estimate of the predictive power of parental support and domestic violence on child abuse among primary school pupils in South-East, Nigeria. Global Journal of Health Science*, 11(14), 23-28.
13. Otara, A., & Omolo, H. (2021). *School organizational factors as predictors of student achievement : Principals' perspective*. 3(1), 24–36.
14. Park, J., & Byun, S. (2021). *Principal support, professional learning community, and group-level teacher expectations*. May 2020. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09243453.2020.1764061>
15. Pereira, H., Rodrigues, C., & Lima, J. Á. De. (2021). *Instructional leadership and student achievement: school leaders' perspectives. International Journal of Leadership in Education*, 00(00), 1–25. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13603124.2020.1869312>
16. Polatcan, M. (2021). *Professional Development in Education An exploration of the relationship between distributed leadership, teacher agency, and professional learning in Turkey. Professional Development in Education*, 00(00), 1–15. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19415257.2021.1905050>
17. Polatcan, M., Arslan, P., & Balci, A. (2021). *The mediating effect of teacher self- efficacy regarding the relationship between transformational school leadership and teacher agency. Educational Studies*, 00(00), 1–19. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03055698.2021.1894549>
18. Shafeeu, I. (2019). *Instructional leadership : does it make a difference ? Evidence from the Maldives . International Journal of Leadership in Education*, 00(00), 1–23. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13603124.2019.1690697>
19. Mustaqim. (2021). *The Effect of a Principal's Instructional Supervisory Practice on Teacher Satisfaction in the Religious Ministry Schools of Semarang, Indonesia Mustaqim 1*. 12(1), 194–215.

20. Pagán-Castaño, E., Sánchez-García, J., Garrigos-Simon, F. J., & Guijarro-García, M. (2021). The Influence of Management on Teacher Well-Being and the Development of Sustainable Schools. *Sustainability*, 13(5), 2909. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su13052909>
21. Simón, C., Muñoz-Martínez, Y., & Porter, G. L. (2021). Classroom instruction and practices that reach all learners. *Cambridge Journal of Education*, 00(00), 1–19. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0305764x.2021.1891205>
22. Thien, L. M., & Adams, D. (2021). Distributed leadership and teachers' affective commitment to change in Malaysian primary schools: the contextual influence of gender and teaching experience. *Educational Studies*, 47(2), 179–199. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03055698.2019.1680349>
23. Toropova, A., Myrberg, E., & Johansson, S. (2021). Teacher job satisfaction: the importance of school working conditions and teacher characteristics. *Educational Review*, 73(1), 71–97. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00131911.2019.1705247>
24. Tuytens, M., Vekeman, E., & Devos, G. (2021). Strategic human resource management in primary and secondary schools. An explorative study in Flanders (Belgium). *Educational Management Administration and Leadership*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1741143221998706>
25. Ugwuanyi, C. S. & Okeke, C. I. O. (2020). Determinants of University students' interest in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics Education in Nigeria: A case of a structural equation modelling. *International Journal of Mechanical and Production Engineering Research and Development*, 10(3): 6209–6218. <http://dx.doi.org/10.24247/ijmperdjun2020590>
26. Ugwuanyi, C. S., Okeke C. O., & Ageda T. A., (2020a). Psychological predictors of physics learners' achievement: The moderating influence of gender. *Cypriot Journal of Educational Science*. 15(4), 834-842. DOI: 10.18844/cjes.v%vi%i.4635. URL: <file:///C:/Users/2019875836/Downloads/4635-Article%20Text-21136-3-10-20200831.pdf>
27. Ugwuanyi, C. S., Okeke, C. I. O. & Njeze, K. C. (2020b). Parenting Style and Parental Support on Learners' Academic Achievement. *Journal of Sociology and Social Anthropology*, 11(3-4): 198-205. <https://doi.org/10.31901/24566764.2020/11.3-4.352> URL: <http://krepublishers.com/02-Journals/JSSA/JSSA-11-0-000-20-Web/JSSA-11-0-000-20-Contents/JSSA-11-0-000-20-Contents.htm>
28. Ugwuanyi, C. S., Okeke, C. I. O., & Ageda, T. A. (2020c). Motivation and Self-efficacy as Predictors of Learners' Academic Achievement. *Journal of Sociology and Social Anthropology*, 11(3-4): 215-222. <https://doi.org/10.31901/24566764.2020/11.3-4.351> URL: <http://krepublishers.com/02-Journals/JSSA/JSSA-11-0-000-20-Web/JSSA-11-0-000-20-Contents/JSSA-11-0-000-20-Contents.htm>
29. Ugwuanyi, C. S., Okeke, C. I. O. & Asomugha, C. G., (2020d). Prediction of learners' mathematics performance by their emotional intelligence, self-esteem, and self-efficacy. *Cypriot Journal of Educational Sciences*. 15(3), 492- 501. <https://doi.org/10.18844/cjes.v%vi%i.4916>