

Stakeholders' perception of principals' roles in the management of secondary schools in North-West geo-political Zone of Nigeria

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Abstract: *The principals is saddled with the responsibility of managing secondary schools in North-West geo-political Zone of Nigeria. The moral success or failure of students and their level of academic standard is partly attributable to the effective management of the schools' principals. In the face of declining standard of academic achievement among secondary school students, the role of the principals continuously prompt up for questioning. The present paper examines the perceptions of stakeholders on the principals' roles in the management of secondary schools in North-West geo-political Zone of Nigeria. A total of 768 respondents made up of 24 principals, 600 teachers, 24 Officials from the respective Ministry of education and 120 PTA members, selected through a stratified random sampling procedure across the North-West geo-political Zone were involved in the study. A structured questionnaire which includes socio demographic structure, sections for the nine role performances of principals was developed and administered to them. Data collected were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) IBM version 20. Statistical procedure included descriptive statistics and one way analysis of variance. Result of the statistical analysis revealed that stakeholders differed significantly in their perception of the principals' role performances in the secondary schools except in interpersonal relationship, maintenance of indiscipline and staff development.*

Key Words: *Stakeholders, Role performance, Academic achievement, Perception*

1. INTRODUCTION:

The principals are responsible for the day-to-day management of public secondary schools in North-West geo-political Zone of Nigeria. The role of the principal covers many different areas. Being an effective principal is hard work and is also time-consuming (Meador, 2017). Their process of administration span through management of interpersonal relationship, capacity building of staff to effective remuneration and discipline. One of the major problems facing secondary school administration in Nigeria has been the absence of appropriate and efficient guidelines for effective management. Some of the administrative management strategies have been based on a variety factors. While some have be based on set goals with no adequate information, others have been characterized by a high level of ignorance of administrative processes on the part of the administrators. These developments have contributed to decline in the standard of education in the country especially at the secondary schools level. Principals and district leaders have the most influence on decisions in all schools; however, they do not lose influence as others gain influence (Meredith, 2010). Academic achievement is known to partly have bearing on effectiveness of school principals (Michael, 210). Where principals' effectiveness is lacking school management is bound to suffer Kouzes (2008). It is often said that most secondary school lack specialized personnel with in-depth administrative strategies. This is particularly through in the area under study. The peculiarity in the North East zone is that the contribution of PTA and other organization to funding and management of secondary schools education is practically not existing.

In a comparative analysis of the effect of managerial principles on academic performance of students in some selected private and public secondary schools in Kano metropolis by Mohammad (2007), it was observed that effective application of principal's managerial principles generally improve the students' academic performances. Magama (2006), reported that discipline is probably the most difficult and unpleasant part of any educator's job. In emphasizing the role performance of the principals, the author was of the opinion that when instructors effectively communicate rules, set high expectations and provided frequent feedback, the need for discipline will likely be infrequent. Hatzell (2006) reported from a study that equity was linked with the extent of effectiveness of administration. In relating the importance of principals' role performances in secondary schools, Edem (2007), reported that the standard of education may decline in the absence of adequate supply of human and material resources. Fleith. (2000), opined that effectiveness of an organization depend greatly on how well the social and technical systems are designed with respect to each other and the demands of the external environment. The argument here is that the principal tended to be the manager of the school system who much depended on for the success and failure of the school. Taymans, (1996) and Hodne, (1997) were therefore of the opinion the principals must ensure that there is existence of cooperation which they opined is key to successful group work (Bradley, 2003). This study is

therefore aimed at addressing the deficiencies as perceived by the schools stakeholders in the administrative process of the secondary schools through the application of the Role performances of principals in secondary schools' management within the zone of study.

2. METHODOLOGY:

A structured questionnaire consisting of demographic characteristics along with 90 items assessing Principals' role performances on interpersonal relationship, record management, school-community relationship, communication, decision making process, staff development, maintenance of school facilities, maintenance of indiscipline and internal supervision with a five point interval scale were used in the assessment. The instrument was face validated and tested for reliability and internal consistency with the Cronbach Alpha with an index of 0.82. Administration of the instrument was made by school representative in the selected states. A total of 768 respondents made up of 600 teachers, 24 Principals, 24 Ministry of Education (MOE) Official and 120 PTA official were selected in four state of the zone through the stratified random sampling procedure for the assessment. Opinion on items for the variables were measured on a five point interval scale. Responses were computed independently and compared using one way analysis of variance to determine significant difference in opinion among the stakeholders. Ten null hypotheses were formulated to test for significant difference in opinion of the stakeholders on the selected variables. The one way analysis of variance was used to compare the opinions of the stakeholders on the selected variable. Where significant difference was observed, a post hoc test was conducted with the Scheffe procedure to establish group that were significantly different from the other. Test of significance was determined at the 0.05 level of significance and in line with standard procedures outlined in Oyejola and Adebayo (2004).

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION:

By educational qualification 92(12.0%) of the total respondents have the Ordinary National Diploma (OND) or the Higher National Diploma (HND) while 236(30.0%) of them have the National Certificate in Education. Respondents with B. Ed degree were 287(37.4%), those with Master degree (M. Ed) were 41(5.3%) and those with Doctorate were 15(2.0%). Others with unspecified qualifications were 97(12.6%) of the total respondents. These qualifications were relatively distributed among the respondents in the different groups. It thus could be said that the respondents have relatively enough education to understand the subject of this investigation. Their years of experience on the job shows that 283(36.8%) have between 1 and 5years, 103(13.4%) have between 6 and 10years while 215(28.0%) between 11 and 15years. Respondents with 16 to 20years were 80(10.4%). Only 87(11.3%) have been on their job for above 20years. These levels of experience is expected provide them adequate knowledge of the principals role performances in secondary schools.

4. Perception of principals' role performance on interpersonal relationship in the secondary schools:

The role performances of the principals in relation to interpersonal relationship in the secondary schools was generally seen as positive by all groups of respondents involved in the study. It was a consensus opinion that student were encouraged and treated equally harmonious relationship in among staff and students in the schools through establishment of good rapport and a sound relationship with the local community. The principals is seen as promoting Principals disciplinary qualities such as being moral, upright and honest as well as make teachers relate well with each other which encourages harmony among the personnel in the secondary schools. The stakeholders were of their view that this interpersonal role make the principals to be seen by all staff as a partner in pursuit of the school goals. However, the respondents did not agree that the good interpersonal relationship among the staff and students enhances the ability of the teachers to organize extracurricular activities. To test the null hypothesis that the stakeholder did not differ in their perception of the principals on record management in the schools, the mean scores on the variable were computed independent for the groups (Principals, Teachers, Ministry of Education officials and PTA members) and compared with the one way analysis of variance, variability obtained in the opinion was not found to be significant. The observed F-value was 0.289 obtained at 3, 764 degree of freedom with an observed p-level of 0.833 ($P > 0.05$). This observation means that there is no sufficient evidence to reject the null hypothesis. The mean scores along with the F-value are presented in Table 1. From the observations, the stakeholders have relatively equal view on the role of principals on interpersonal relationship in the secondary schools which they considered effective.

5. Principals' role in record management of the secondary schools.:

Respondents were of the view that role performance of principals on the secondary schools' records management was adequate. The principals, teachers and MOE officials were of the view that principals ensures that teachers assess and manage record of academic performance and conduct of the students by providing them with all necessary items/facilities. The respondents were unanimous in their opinion on the role performances of the principals as it relates to ensuring that schemes of work of all subjects are duly entered and managed in the secondary schools. These included management of log book, visitors' book punishment books and other related records. In terms of

attendance the groups did not agree that the principals perform their role effectively as most of them disapproved the suggestion. In assessing the principals' role in this dimension, all the stakeholders were of the view that principals do not have adequate information on movement of staff and students within and outside the schools. From the opinions of the respondents, it could be said that principals' role performance on record management of the secondary schools is considered adequate. The only disapproval to this conception was from the PTA whose opinion did not demonstrate this affirmation by the groups. In the test of the null hypothesis where the mean scores were compared significant difference was observed. The observed F-value was 4.214 obtained at 3,764 degree of freedom, the p-level obtained for the test was 0.006 ($P < 0.05$). This observation provides sufficient evidence for rejecting the null hypothesis. In the post hoc test conducted on the means with the Scheffe procedure, the principals, teachers and MOE officials were found to have positive perception of the principals' role in record management of the schools except the PTA who did not have the same level of perception. Between the PTA and MOE officials, no significant difference was observed in their ratings. Mean score for the group are shown in Table 1.

6. Role performances of principals on school-community relationship:

The effort of principals on school community – relationship was generally seen as very positive by the stakeholders. They agreed that the principals establishes cordial relationship with the members of the schools' local community. This was seen to be pursued by recruitment of junior staff from the local community which help to ensure harmonious working relationship between the secondary schools and their local communities and functional PTAs. As product of the cordial relationship, the stakeholders agreed that the good relationship between the school and the local community created by the principal encourages teaching and non-teaching staff to get accommodation in the local communities and allow members of such communities to share facilities of the school such as football fields and water. They were of the view that the secondary schools' staff and students can easily get water from the community when such necessity arise.

The cordial relationship allows the principals to makes use of the members of the local community to provide security for the schools and at time makes use of resource persons from the local communities to educate the students and staff on personal hygiene as well as give lectures on the religious activities and ensures that children of local communities that were qualified were given automatic admission. A test of the null hypothesis conducted with the one way analysis of variance revealed significant difference ($P < 0.05$) in the perceptions of the stake holders on the effectiveness of this role of the principals. From the mean score scores, it was observed that the significance obtained was on the level of ranking since all the groups held the perception that the principals adequately perm the school-community relationship in the zone. The null hypothesis was rejected. The post hoc test revealed that the ratings of the principals were significantly higher than that of the MOE officials and the PTA members. Between the teachers and principals, no significant difference was observed in their perception.

7. Role performances of principals on communication in the secondary schools.:

With respect to the channels of communication in the schools, the respondents were unanimous that the principal uses all available medium or channels such notice board, seculars and staff meetings among others. Utilization of these channels is perceived to have enhanced effective communication between school management and staff in one hand and on the other staff and students. This processes is perceived to allow directives and instructions from one superior to the subordinate and ensures that the rules and regulations of the school were communicated to the students effectively. By ensuring that information received from the ministry or schools' proprietors were communicated effectively to all members of the schools, the stake holders were of the view that it enhances harmony and promote goal achievement. In the test of difference in the expressed perceptions for the null hypothesis, significant difference was observed in the rating of the stakeholders ($P < 0.05$). Members of the PTA along with those of the MOE officials were in agreement with the principals. The teachers differed significantly from group on the effectiveness of the role by principals in the school.

8. Role performances of principals on decision making processes in the secondary schools.:

The stakeholders did not really agreed that the principals' role in decision making for the schools could be considered effective or adequate. From the point of view which included the principals themselves, decisions did not originate directly from them. In other word, there is a limitation to the decision making process of the secondary school principals. But aspect of direct management, the principals were perceived to encourage participation of teaching and non-teaching staff in decision-making process. The respondents agreed that even students participate in decision making processes in the secondary schools' management. But there was a consensus disagreement among the stakeholders that principals' decisions on management were usually influenced. There was however a divided opinion on the involvement of Schools Based Management Committee in the decision-making. For the test of the null hypothesis where the opinions were compared for the stakeholders, significant difference was observed ($P < 0.05$). From the post hoc test on the mean scores, it was observed the PTA members were different in their opinion on the

variable. A look at the showed that all the stakeholders did not agree that the role performance of the principals as it relate to decision making in the secondary was adequate.

9. Role performances of principals on staff development in the secondary schools.:

The stakeholders including the principals did not agree that the principals' role in staff development could be said to be effective. Stakeholder did not agree that principals' decision on staff development ensures that teaching and non-teaching staff were encouraged to go for in-service training or that the principals encourages teaching staff to go for conference or workshop trainings. The stakeholders were of the perception that principals do not ensure that the teaching staff participate and attend seminars and other capacity building activities organized outside the schools. Though respondents agreed that the goal of the schools were always paramount and that private and personal interest were usually not allowed to conflict with that of the secondary schools in management decisions but staff development was not seen to be given much attention by the schools' principals. The predominance of the organizational interest was seen to allow only limited individual interests. Principals were viewed to only create opportunities for individual to realize their goals where the overall interest of the schools is not negatively affected. In the test of the related null hypothesis, the stakeholders were found to have the same negative perception of the principals' role on staff development. The observed F-value was 1.095 and the p-value was 0.350 ($P > 0.05$). The null hypothesis was therefore rejected.

10. Role performances of principals on staff maintenance of school facilities and equipment:

There was a divided opinion between the stakeholders on the role of principals in the maintenance of schools facilities. The teachers and the MOE official were more positive of the principals' effectiveness in the management of such facilities than even the principals themselves. These included ensuring that teaching and learning facilities and equipment such as chalk board, chairs, and desks are properly managed by the students. The stakeholders agreed that the principals ensures that laboratory facilities such as chemical and other essential items, teaching aids provided to the teachers were properly utilized. The PTA members did not share this positive perception of the principals' effectiveness in this dimension. The PTA members disagreed with the perception that Principal ensures that relevant textbooks, welfare service facilities, health facilities and games facilities among others were provided, talk less of their proper utilization. The PTA and teachers were generally of the opinion that there was dearth of teaching and learning facilities in the schools which they were of the view did not show effectiveness of role performance of principals in the schools. For the test of significant difference in the opinions of the stakeholders, the rating of the PTA members was significantly ($P < 0.05$) different from that of the teachers and the MOE officials. The null hypothesis was therefore rejected.

11. Role performances of principals on maintenance of indiscipline:

The stakeholders' perception of the principals' effectiveness in the maintenance of discipline was relatively low but affirmative. This low perception of the principals on discipline stem from among other the disagreement by the stakeholders that the principal were morally sound such that staff and students see them as role models. The stakeholders did not really agree that principal ensures that teachers who are found wanting could be disciplined by means of dismissal or suspension or that they could be demoted or transferred to another school. But they agreed that students who are found wanting could be dismissed or suspended by the principals. This relative limitation of disciplinary enforcement could account for the low perception by the stakeholders on the principals' role performance. The stakeholders were of the view that principals were responsible for staff and students discipline and organizes set up for disciplinary actions through committees within the schools. On this variable there was no divergent opinion and in the test of difference conducted with the one way analysis of variance no significant difference in their perception was observed. The null hypothesis was therefore rejected.

12. Role performances of principals on internal supervision:

The effectiveness of the principals in this dimension was unanimously acclaimed by all the stakeholders. Stakeholders were of the view that the principals go round the schools on daily basis and inspect the respective classes to ensure that teaching and learning instructions were taking place. Apart from ensuring teaching and learning they are perceived to ensure that teachers adhere to scheme of work and checks scheme of work by all teachers from time to time as well as ensure that teachers prepare lesson plan before going for their lessons in the class. The stakeholders agree that the principals usually ensure that teachers provide lesson notes and make sure appropriate and relevant textbooks are provided for teachers and students to use through internal supervision. The stakeholders were of the view that the principals through internal supervision emphasizes to teachers on proper time and class management for effective content delivery. In the test of the related null hypothesis, significant difference ($p < 0.05$) was observed between the perceptions of the stakeholders. The null hypothesis was rejected. From the post hoc test conducted on the mean scores, it was observed that PTA members rating of the role performance was significantly higher than that of

the principals, teachers and the MOE officials. Between the three (principals, teachers and the MOE officials) no significant difference was observed in their ratings of the principals effectiveness on the role.

Table 1: Mean perceptions of the stakeholders on the selected variables with F-values, p-level and post hoc test result

Role performance Variables	Principal	Teachers	MOE officials	PTA members	F-value	p-value
Interpersonal relationship	3.90a	3.84a	3.88a	3.84a	0.289	0.833
Record management	3.62a	3.60a	3.51ab	3.48b	4.214	0.006
School-community relationship	4.32a	4.27ab	4.16b	4.16b	2.967	0.031
Communication	3.75ab	3.58b	3.82a	3.89a	14.737	0
Decision making	3.37a	3.39a	3.35a	3.24b	4.76	0.003
Staff development	3.39a	3.35a	3.36a	3.42a	1.095	0.35
Maintenance of school facilities	3.45a	3.52a	3.51ab	3.31b	8.21	0
Maintenance of indiscipline	3.48a	3.53a	3.58a	3.51a	0.354	0.787
Internal supervision	3.69b	3.73b	3.70b	3.90a	6.92	0

Note: Means with the same letters are not significantly different at 0.05

Table 1 shows the mean perceptions obtained from the analysis of variance used in comparing the opinions of the stakeholders on the role performances of the secondary schools principals. The F-value and p-level shows the extent of variability in perception of the stakeholders on the variables. Letters indicate result of the post hoc test with Scheffe procedure.

13. DISCUSSION:

This study investigated the perception of stakeholders on the role performances of principals on the management of secondary schools in North East geopolitical zone of Nigeria. Components of the role performance in the management of the secondary schools evaluated were Interpersonal relationship, Record management, School-community relationship, Communication, Decision making, Staff development, Maintenance of school facilities, Maintenance of indiscipline and internal supervision. This is consistent with Meador, (2017). From the expressed opinions of the stakeholders on the variables, performances of principals in decision making, staff development were not considered inadequate. For maintenance of discipline and school teaching and learning facilities, opinion was divided among the stakeholders. The effectiveness of this roles was not found to translate to adequacy of teaching and learning resources in the secondary schools. This finding agrees with Edem (2007), who stated that the standard of education may decline in the absence of adequate supply of human and material resources. But for interpersonal relationship, record management, school-community relationship communication and internal supervision, the stakeholders were unanimous in their affirmation of effectiveness the principals’ performances. This agrees with the reports of Fleith (2000) and Hartzell (2006).

14. CONCLUSION:

From the findings of this investigation into the perception of stakeholders on the role performances of principals in the management of secondary schools within North East geopolitical zone of Nigeria. The researcher wish to conclude that stakeholders did not generally agree that principals perform their roles effectively in some of the secondary schools. While some may be effective in their positions, most do not effectively perform their roles.

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