
PRINCIPALS' WORK BEHAVIOUR AND TEACHERS' EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN ANAMBRA STATE

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Abstract

This study examined Principals' work behaviour and teachers' effective management in Public Secondary Schools in Anambra State. It beamed search light into the modus operandi of school Principals and how they effectively manage the senior secondary school system for optimal academic results. The study employed the descriptive survey design and analysis and sent out questionnaires to Principals and teachers in the six educational zones in Anambra State. The overall account is that Principals' performances are above average and teacher outputs are the same. Despite some challenges like on-the-job training, increment of remuneration, infrastructural needs including advanced qualifications of teachers, Anambra State in the last five years has recorded a top-three academic performance across the Federation in external Examinations like WAEC and NECO, among other competitions, thereby making it a top academic hub and destination. The study concludes and recommends that more is needed to be done to consolidate on the progress made so far in the educational sector, beginning with the Peter Obi's administration, among others. It behooves on the Soludo's administration to consolidate on this gains to continue to put Anambra State as a frontier State in Educational ranking in Nigeria.

Keywords: Principal, Work, Behaviour, Teachers, Effective Management, Schools

Introduction

Being a teacher comes with a lot of responsibilities. Among the head of the teachers in a school system is the school principal. If the academic output of the teachers is to yield best results, then, it is dependent on the principal's leadership qualities and how such are exerted in the system and the influence that follows.

A principal is a senior teacher that has risen through the rank. He or she is basically a director. While the teacher teaches and passes knowledge to the students, in the classroom and other means, the principal provides strategic direction in the school system. This direction enables the system to function adequately for optimal academic results. He or she is a manager of people (students and other teachers) and resources. They set priorities for academic optimization, listen adequately and act decisively while ensuring sustainable factors to educational growth and development.

The success of teachers' performance is dependent on the leadership of the principal as the Head Teacher. Work incentives, motivation, encouragements, on-the-job training are necessary to bolster quality performance from the teachers. Effective management system stems from quality assurance monitoring that improves classroom and teaching performance, while eliminating or reducing lapses.

This paper will focus on principal work's work behaviour and teacher effective management system. It will look at the qualities of a true principal and their roles in the school system; teachers' roles as well as how they can be effectively engaged and how Education in Anambra State can be improved upon to continue to make one of the top five states in academic performance and Education generally.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What makes for a principal's work behaviour?
2. Are there are streamlined modes or administrative pattern expected of a principal?
3. What are effective Management systems in teachers' optimal performances in Senior Secondary schools in Anambra State?
4. What are the challenges of Principals' work behaviour and effective Management of the school system, teachers, students inclusive, in the last five years leading to this study?

Before further discussion in this study, it is important to understand who a principal and teacher is.

Who Is A Principal?

It is important; one understand the etymology of the word principal. According to Vocabulary.com: "The word, principal, comes from the Latin *principalis* "first in importance" and is related to the title of prince. One can see the relation when you think about its meanings, the head of a school, the starring actor in a film, and the client of an agent" ("Principal," 2022). A Principal is also seen as an Educator who has executive authority for a school ("Principal," 2022). This second definition of the word principal is apt for our present study.

Secondary education occupies a strategic position in the national education system. The secondary school is an institution established for refining human beings in terms of skills,

behavior and all round excellence. A Principal is regarded as the leader and head of secondary school; he is responsible for all that happens in the school who administers the school with other teaching and non teaching staff, the principal is directly in every aspect of school operation and his primary aim is determining the school quality and character (“Edu Project,” n.d).

From the foregoing, one can see that the principal provides leadership and direction to the system. Leadership is also of particular importance in the education administration because of its far reaching effects on the accomplishment of school programmers, objectives and attainment of educational goals. There are certain qualities; a principal ought to possess in order to successfully carry out this Chief Executive function in the school system.

According to Mary Dowd, Effective school principals care deeply about student success and recognize that test scores are not the only measure of a quality education. By immersing themselves in all aspects of the school system, principals monitor daily activities, as well as emerging issues. No day is the same because of the varied responsibilities of the job (Dowd, 2018).

The role of a principal is to provide strategic direction in the school system. Principals develop standardized curricula, assess teaching methods, monitor student achievement, encourage parent involvement, revise policies and procedures, administer the budget, hire and evaluate staff and oversee facilities. Other important duties entail developing safety protocols and emergency response procedures (Dowd, 2018).

Work often includes attending school functions after hours, such as basketball games, concerts, plays, parent conferences and school board meetings. Having a visible presence shows interest and dedication to students. Often problems arise which need immediate attention, such as a student disciplinary issue or a call from a worried parent whose child is struggling in the classroom (Dowd, 2018).

Schools have not always had principals. Around the beginning of the twentieth century, as schools grew from one-room schoolhouses into schools with multiple grades and classrooms, the need arose for someone to manage these more complex organizations. This need was filled initially by teachers, who continued to teach while also dealing with their school's management needs. These teachers were called principal teachers. As schools continued to grow, principal teachers became full-time administrators in most schools. Most principals soon stopped teaching because of the many demands their management responsibilities placed on their time. As managers, principals were responsible for financial operations, building maintenance, student scheduling, personnel, public relations, school policy regarding discipline, coordination of the instructional program, and other overall school matters.

The management role included some curriculum and instruction supervision, but overall school management was the primary role principals played until the early 1980s. As the accountability movement gained momentum, the role of the principal changed from school manager to school instructional leader and then to the school reform leader. With this shift in role focus, principals retained their management roles. Principals currently play multiple roles: school manager, instructional leader, and the leader of school reform (Buckner Jr, 2022). With schools facing increased pressure to improve teaching and learning, the duties and responsibilities of principals expanded further to include the responsibility for leading school reform that would raise student achievement. Success in leading reforms to increase student achievement often hinged upon a principal's ability to create a shared vision within

the school community and success in implementing new organizational structures that engage teachers in shared decision-making. Principals have discovered that engaging the entire school staff in making decisions results in more commitment to school reform initiatives (Buckner Jr, 2022).

Principals are also responsible for facilitating their school's interactions with parents and others in the school community. This responsibility includes working with parents when disciplinary issues arise, when students are not succeeding academically, and when parents have concerns. Principals also interact with parents who serve on school advisory boards, parent/teacher organizations, and booster clubs (Buckner Jr, 2022).

Principals continue to be responsible for the management of their schools even though their primary responsibility has shifted. One major management responsibility is school safety. This responsibility includes ensuring that facilities and equipment are safe and in good working order, the development of overall school discipline policies and the enforcement of those policies, and the assignment of supervisory responsibilities among school personnel. At the elementary level, principals are cognizant of their responsibility to ensure constant supervision of the very young children in the school. As students advance into the higher grades, the needs for supervision changes as students mature. The responsibility for supervision remains high for older students who are handicapped; who are in areas where the potential for injury is greater such as labs, shops, and athletic facilities; and who are in situations (field trips, athletic events, etc.) where additional caution is required (Buckner, 2022).

The Role of Teachers in the Educational System

According to Cox (2020) the primary role of a teacher is to deliver classroom instruction that helps students learn. To accomplish this, teachers must prepare effective lessons, grade student work and offer feedback, manage classroom materials, productively navigate the curriculum, and collaborate with other staff.

Being a teacher involves much more than executing lesson plans. Teaching is a highly sophisticated profession that regularly extends beyond academics. In addition to ensuring that students experience academic success, teachers must also function as surrogate parents, mentors and counselors, and even almost-politicians. There is almost no limit to the roles a teacher may play (Cox, 2020).

A child's experiences in their formative years shape them into the person they will become and teachers help in no small way to discover who that will be. Because teachers are such a big part of their students' lives, many develop almost parental relationships with them (Cox, 2020). Due to the sheer amount of time that school is in session, teachers are tasked with being positive role models and mentors to their students every day. Students learn so much more than math, language arts, and social studies from their teachers—they learn social skills like how to be kind to others and make friends, when to ask for help or be independent, how to distinguish between right and wrong, and other life lessons that parents tend to echo. In many cases, students learn these things from teachers first (Cox, 2020).

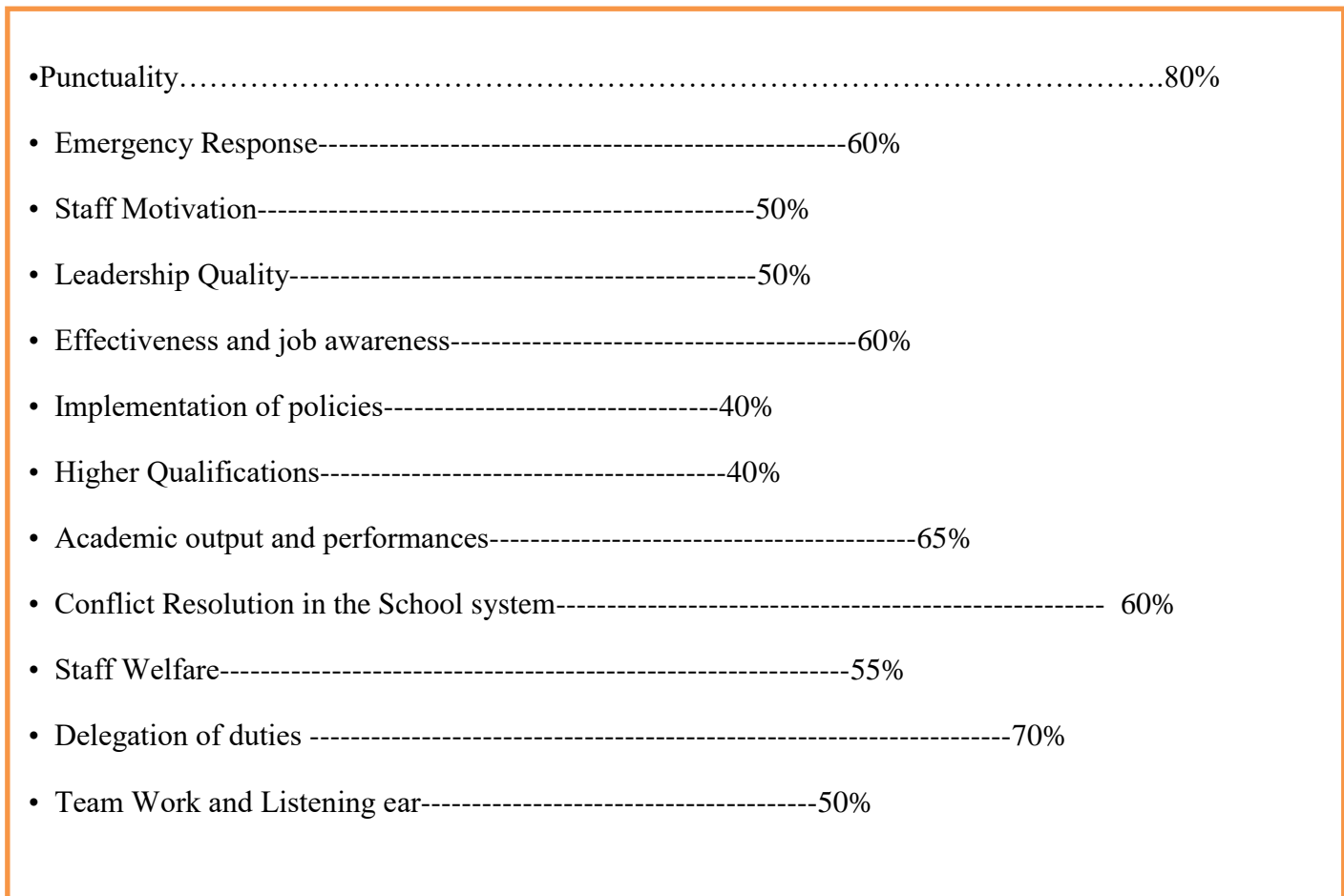
Methodology

The study employed and adopted the descriptive survey design and analysis. Six principals were interviewed across six educational zones in Anambra State. The study was guided by three research questions arose and 5 questionnaire items. The instruments were administered

by the six principals by the researcher with the help of two assistants. Teachers were interviewed and given questionnaire items to answer on the performances of the Principals in the schools covered in the State. These collected samples were analyzed in tables, showing their percentages and implications of findings for this study under review.

PRINCIPALS' WORK BEHAVIOR IN ANAMBRA STATE

- Box 1 shows the percentage of Principals' work behaviour in Anambra State. The percentage is over 100%. Six Educational zones in the State were covered in this regard.



The foregoing textbox, based on the Principals interviewed and the questionnaires collated from teachers in the schools covered. The box showed that the Principals work behaviour and ethics include that 80% punctuality was recorded for them. Meaning most of the times, they come to work early. Emergency response include how the Principals respond to emergency issues such sickness of students, crisis, need, those in boarding schools, shortage of water, fixing of generator, among others was at 60%. This means it was lesser than their being regular and punctual. There is a strong indication of the Nigerian factor in emergency response to issues. Staff motivation stood at 50%, which is a factor in the Nigerian society. Heads of Organizations, units and systems hardly motivate those under them, which kills morale and lower the incentive to work. Leadership Quality was equally affected because when the emergency response is not so high and staff motivation is average, the leadership is called to question. Generally, Principals work behaviour in Anambra State is above average and the effect and implication on academic performance of students are above 50%.

However, there are challenges facing Principals' work behaviour and effective teachers management in Anambra State. Corroborating this, Ikegbusi and Iheanacho (2016) highlighted some of these challenges as thus: a. inadequate infrastructure b. Inadequate staffing c. Finance d. Indiscipline e. Over-population f. Head teacher-community relations g. Supervision (pp.215-218). Some of these problems started pre and post-Peter Obi's administration. This is because of the standard that came with educational rebirth under Peter Obi's administration and reduced most of the deficiencies but after he stepped down, some challenges emerged. This is not to say that the Obiano's administration did not contribute to educational growth in Anambra State.

It did but Obi's educational model was a legacy of sorts. Although, during Peter Obi's tenure as Governor, Education witnessed a new lift in Anambra State. Apart from investments in capital projects for the schools, the Obi administration donated buses, laboratory equipment, transformers and power generators, dispensary consumables, sports gear, computers and other ICT tools. With admirable dynamism and foresight, the administration procured and distributed personal computers to post-primary schools in the State, along with professional ICT teachers, power generators and Internet connectivity. Included in the package was the setting-up of Microsoft Academies in designated secondary schools-the first State in Nigeria to embark on such a project. With the provision of decently-equipped laboratories in public post-primary schools of Anambra State, many students from those institutions began to excel in national and international science competitions -as was witnessed in the most recent feat of the Regina Pacis girls (Vanguard, 2018).

Invariably, Peter Obi's new deal for education started yielding dividends even during his tenure as Governor. Consecutively, in the last three years of his administration, Anambra State leaped from its previous 26th position among the 36 States of the Federation to 1st place in results of the NECO and WAEC examinations! In 2012, an Anambra student emerged the Best Overall Candidate in both the NECO and SSCE examinations. Shortly after, Loretto Special Science School, Adazi-Nnukwu won the award of the Best Improved Secondary School in Nigeria. Furthermore, the State was adjudged the best in improved school infrastructure in the country (Vanguard, 2018).

Despite these laudable achievements which put Anambra State Education on an enviable path, in recent years, the system has faced some challenges and shortage of teachers, leading to the recent and ongoing teacher's recruitment exercise by the Soludo's administration. No fewer than 1000 PTA teachers were sacked in order to bring about proper qualification of teachers who teach in the State. The administration of Soludo said they want only qualified teachers who can deliver on the job (Information Nigeria, 2022).

Teachers' performances and output in Secondary school system in the last five to six years were presented by the Principals both incumbent and retired interviewed and data collected from them through the questionnaires given. The information is shown below:

Teacher's Effective Management Data Analysis in Public Senior Secondary Schools in Anambra State.

S/N	Items Covered	Rating/Remark	Percentage
1	Teachers' motivation	Very good	65%
2	Ability to imprint policies and rules leading to docility and effectiveness	Good	60%
3	Execution of delegated duties	Very good	65%
4	Acceptance of Headship	Good	60%
5	Up to date Lesson Notes	Good	60%
6	Regularity and Punctuality	Good	60%
7	Commitment	Good	60%
8	Ability to teach and impact	Very good	65%
9	Academic performances of students in external examinations like WAEC and NECO	Very good	65%
10	Fresher course and on the job trainings	Fair	50%
11	Qualified Teachers	Good	60%
12	Higher Qualifications aside a Bachelor's degree in Education or equivalent.	Fair	50%

Summary of Findings

The study shows that Senior Secondary School Education in Anambra State is in good shape but needs to be improved upon. Principals' work behavior as attested by the teachers in the schools in the educational zones covered indicated a good performance which can be leveraged to improve and bring about an excellent work ethics. On the part of the teachers as attested by the Principals interviewed, their performances are all good leading to the above average performances of students in external examinations in the last five years.

Discussion of Findings

Based on research questions, there is no stipulated pattern of work behaviour on the part of Principals other than the expectations that come with the job. Once saddled with this role, it is expected one naturally plays the role with all attendant expectations. However, from interactions and interviews with teachers in the six educational zones in Anambra State, it is discovered that some Principals are high-handed. They are too strict and not sociable and thus creating a tensed atmosphere, whereby they do not have cordial relationship with most members of staff under their watch. They often times, employ the services of sycophants, who help them to witch-hunt others and thus, creating conflict of interests. Most times, they favour their cronies in the promotion exercise in the civil service. This led to dissatisfaction and resentments among some teachers towards their principals. Their leadership and the direction they chart for their respective schools were called to question. In terms of rising through the rank to the level of a director, most apart from reading Education and obtaining a Postgraduate diploma in Education, most could not proceed for Master's and PhD. Among the teachers who managed to further, most left for the universities and polytechnics.

On the part of the principals, in relation to effective management of teachers, they lamented the absence of certain factors that could improve the class performance of teachers and students' academic output. The reason being that some government teachers runs side hustles and most times, not regular to school under the guise of ill-health or nursing of child and

other emergencies. However, secret investigations show not all cases were true in exactitude (of reason for absence from school). Remuneration of teachers despite the effort of Peter Obi and Obiano's administration to ensure that teachers earn regular salaries remains a teething problem as many resign for other greener pasture without adequate recruitment leading to shortages in key subjects and hence, the Soludo's administration commenced the teachers 'recruitment exercise to fill in the gap. Also, apart from fact of civil service promotions, most teachers do not go for Postgraduate studies in attaining a Master's and possibly doctorate. Governments donot provide enough incentive as well for professional training of teachers or optimal performances.

However, not withstanding Anambra State has recorded huge success in external examinations like WAEC and NECO in the last 10 years, beginning with the Peter Obi's administration, with it's integrated development strategy, that rubbed off on Education .The overall rating, based on the questionnaires and interviews the conducted by the research on Principals ' work behaviour and effective management of teachers in Anambra State stood at over 50 percent, an indication of the educational upturn in the State, in the last decade. This makes Anambra State among the top five Educational advanced states in the country, the observable challenges notwithstanding.

Conclusion

This study focused on Principal's work behaviour and effective management of teachers in Anambra State Senior Secondary School system. The study attempted to know if the work ethic of principals were negative and had negative impact on the overall management of the system. However, despite some observable challenges ranging from infrastructural additions and needs, staff welfare, increment of remuneration, promotions and professional trainings for teachers while on the job, the role of Principals in Anambra State Secondary School system was encouraging and above average. It is an indication that the State is educationally advanced and upward. The academic performance of students in the last five years leading to this research, especially in external examinations has been encouraging and among the best. According to Igbere TV (2018), Anambra has come top three in the last five years and only slightly bettered by Abia State within this period under review. The role of Principals in Public Schools and their work behavior which has impact on teachers' effective management and the overall Performance of students in the school system is a key factor in this remarkable trend. Based on the reality on ground, this study forecasts an improved outcome under Soludo' s Administration in the education system in Anambra State.

Recommendations

Based on the issues the study raised, we recommend the following:

1. Further infrastructures should be made available in Secondary schools in Anambra State, to enable principals have a competitive edge in molding students who can excel anywhere in Nigeria and beyond.
2. Teachers should be promoted as and when due and their salaries increased to bring about greater efficiency and total commitment to the education system.
3. Principals' deserve more allowances for their role in the school system (housing, clothing, a personal assistant), among others to improve their work behaviour and effective management of the school system.
4. Teachers should be encouraged to acquire more degrees (Postgraduate degrees) and professional certifications, to make the teaching enterprise worth the name and to give them a competitive edge.

5. For Anambra State to remain educationally advanced, teacher's welfare and training must be a key agenda in the Soludo's administration.

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