

PRINCIPALS' LEADERSHIP COMPETENCE AND ECONOMICS TEACHER'S ATTITUDE TO WORK IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN CALABAR SOUTH LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA, CROSS RIVER STATE

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Abstract

The study examined principals' leadership competence and economics teachers' attitude to work in public secondary schools in Calabar South Local Government Area of Cross River State. Four research questions were raised and four hypotheses were formulated to guide the study. The study adopted survey research design while the simple random sampling technique was used to draw the sample. A sample of 150 economics teachers were drawn from 7 public secondary schools in the study area. A questionnaire titled "Principals Leadership Competence and Economics Teachers Attitude to Work Questionnaire (PLCETAWQ)" was used for data collection. The hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance and 148 degree of freedom using Pearson product moment correlation coefficient. The findings of the study showed there is significant relationship between principals instructional supervision, decision making, motivation, conflict management and economics teachers attitude to work. Based on the findings, it was concluded that principals display of competence in carrying out administrative functions can enhance positive attitude to work among economics teachers. It was recommended among others that principals should always involve teachers in decision making as well as adopting various effective motivational strategies to motivate teachers. These will enhance teachers positive attitude to work.

Key words: Principals, Leadership, Competence, Economics and Teachers Attitude.

Introduction

Every school principal is faced with the challenge of managing and running a school efficiently and effectively for the one reason of goal attainment which is achievable through optimum utilization of resources (human and material). In a bid to attaining the school goals, the principal must display a competence role to ensure optimum performance. It is important for school principal to provide a conducive work environment that will enable teacher to effectively carry out their jobs. This calls for competent leadership on the part of the school principal.

Olugboye (2004), the principal monitors to ensure proper implementation of the curriculum, desirable increase in teachers' capabilities, improve the conceptual knowledge and teaching skills; support than in their work to facilitate better performance in their pedagogical practices and students' learning outcomes. All these are geared towards the attainment of goal. Pearson (2003) asserted that a principal is someone who is in charge of a school. principal-ship is a well established position for the chief executives in secondary schools who carries out leadership responsibilities by coordinating curricula, co-curricular activities in the school and is in charge of the general administration. Principal is also reviewed as the manager of the school and hence expected to be accountable and responsible for the day-to-day running of the school.

Leadership is an act concerning the initiation, organization, and direction of the actions of the members of a group in a specific situation towards the achievement of the objectives of the group (Nwankwo in Unachukwu, 2014). Similarly, Chike-Okoli (2008) view leadership as the ability of influencing people's behaviour so that they will work towards given objectives.

Nwana in Ekun (2013) noted that leadership competence of school principals can be judged by the way the plan and execute, their day-to-day schedules with minimal loss of time, every and resources. He further stated that competence administrator (principal) should be able to educate steer the teacher. This may serve as a path-way to effective performance. In other hands, leadership competence is leadership skills and behaviours that contribute to superior performance. It is also the combination of observable and measurable knowledge, skill, abilities and personal attributes of a leader that contributes to enhance employee performance and ultimately result in organization success (Society for Human Resources Management, (SHRM,2008).

On teacher job commitment and principal motivation strategies, Mbipom (2000) uphold that principal who take care of their teachers will not only win the work effectiveness of their teachers, but will improve upon quality of teacher and teaching. The school moral tone and interpersonal relationship will also improve if school heads display competence in maintenance of discipline in their school (Umoren, 2014).

In addition, Umoren assert that principal who are adjudged to have the tradition of encouraging their teachers, school principals are expected to show concern for the professional and personal problems of their teachers at all times. Even though, they may not have all the solution of the problems but teachers moral are likely to be boosted and they will be satisfied by this show of concern by their school principal. An advice from the principal may also ease the problem, hence resulting to increase in teachers productivity.

Nwachukwu (2008) noted that lack of competence on the part of principals could result to breakdown of the whole school system. This usually occurs when conflicts are not handled with care by the school principal. Conflicts in the school could manifest in different dimensions between teachers and school principals, teachers and students, or between school principals and students. The skill and ingenuity of the school principal in ameliorating conflict in their school is an indicator of their level of competent in discharging their leadership roles as school heads. Akintunde (2013) affirmed that the level of competence of school head will also determines over all school effectiveness through positive work attitude.

The concept of work referred to, in this study is the total activities of teachers in an organization (the school), from the citations of uniteres such as Ukeje et al., (1992), Adelabu (1996), Agbasimalo (2001), Oraemesi (2001) and Obi (2003), one can infer that there is poor work performance among teachers. The teachers, to some extent, is seen along this line as having no ambition, no responsibility, no initiative and no self-direction and self-control. The teacher is just there to be pushed around by his boss (principal) either through force or through threats of punishment or sanction (by applying autocratic leadership style). Edem (2006) reveled that instead of being flexible and possessing a sense of proportion in all leadership styles, some school administrators tend to display that in competence by sticking firmly to the uniform application of a particular leadership style. The reform, production is invariably low and can only be achieved through the application of bureaucracy (Adelabu, 1996).

Work attitude refer to what people like or dislike as well as act favourable unfavourably toward a job and a work place. Attitudes toward work can be reflected through various dimensions, such as job satisfaction, organizational commitment turnover intention, social value and psychological contract (Offem, 2021). According to Ugoji (2004) attitude may be generally defined as the sum total of man's inclinations and feelings, prejudices or bias, preconceived notions, ideas, fears, threats and convictions about any specific topic. It could be seen as an idea charged with emotions, which predisposes actions to the particular social situation. Robbins (2003) defined attitude as evaluative statements which can be either favourable or unfavourable concerning objects, people, or events. Therefore they reflect how one feels about something. The favourable statements may provide positive effects regarding the concerned object, people or event whereas unfavourable statement may provide negative effects.

An attitude can also be a positive or negative feeling or mental state of readiness, learned and organized through experience that exerts a specific influence on a person's response to people, objects and situations. Attitudes provide the emotional basis of one's interpersonal relations and identification with others. And fourth, attitudes are organized and are closed to the core of personality. Some attitudes are persistent and enduring; yet, like each of the psychological variables, attitudes are subject to change (Fishbein and Ajzen, in Offem, 2021). In line with Newstorm and Davis (1993), attitudes are reasonably good predictors or behaviours. They provide clues to an employee's behavioural intentions or inclinations to act in a certain way.

Positive work attitude help to predict constructive behaviours, negative work attitude help to predict undesirable behaviours. Attitude plays an important role according to Huang (2004) in employee behaviour and it cannot be observed directly because they are mental positions and managers must try to determine them through research measures. Attitudes to work are the feeling we have towards aspects of the work environment (Carpenter & Talyaand, 2009). According to Carpenter et al., (2009), there are some elements which influencing the attitude towards works,

namely personality, person-environment fit, job characteristics, psychological contract, organizational justice, work relationship and stress.

The value of work goes beyond merely earning a salary and extends to provide self-satisfaction and a sense of contributing to society. Success at work has important psychological consequences for both men and women whereas work failure can lead to depression, impotence, and a host of other psychological symptoms it is against this background that this study seeks to examine whether there is any relationship between principals' leadership competence and economics teacher's attitude to work in public secondary schools in Calabar South Local Government Area.

Purpose of the study

The main purpose of this study is establishes the relationship between principals leadership competence and economics teachers attitude to work.

Specifically, this study aims to find-out the relationship between;

1. Principals' instructional supervision competence and teachers' attitude to work
2. Principals' decision making competence and teachers' attitude to work.
3. Principals' motivation competence and teachers' attitude to work.
4. Principals' conflict management competence and teachers' attitude to work.

Statement of the problem

There is a decline in teachers' instructional task performance when principal leadership competence is not apply during job delivery which results to students' poor academic performance; this however, hampers the schools' effort towards goal attainment. When students are not well taught, formed and properly grided, the supposed skills, attitude and knowledge that would have been acquired will be eluded. Not only will the student not be useful in the society, the change of passing external examinations for higher education will be very slim. Today; we have much number of secondary school leavers who cannot contribute positively to the national economics development of Nigeria; neither can they complete a highly education when they management to gain admission. This however, has contributed to the high rate of crime in our society.

Research questions

The following research questions were formulated to guide the study.

1. How does principals' instructional supervision competences relates to teachers' attitude to work?
2. How does principals' decision making competence relates to teachers attitude to work?
3. How does principals' motivation competence relates to teacher attitude to work?
4. How does principals' conflict management competence relates to teachers attitude to work?

Hypotheses Testing

The following hypotheses were formulated to guide the study;

Ho₁: There is no significant relationship between principals' instructional supervision competence and teachers' attitude to work.

Ho₂: There is no significant relationship between principals' decision making competence and teachers' attitude to work.

Ho₃: There is no significant relationship between principals' motivation competence and teachers' attitude to work.

Ho₄: There is no significant relationship between principals' conflict management competence and teachers' attitude to work.

Presentation/Results

Ho₁: There is no significant relationship between principals' instructional supervision competence and economics teachers attitude to work.

TABLE 1

Pearson product moment correlation analysis of the relationship between principals' instructional supervision competence and economics teachers attitude to work

N=150

Variable	$\sum x$	$\sum x^2$	Df	r-cal
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	Σy	Σy^2	Σxy		
Instructional supervision competence	1510	2308	17890	148	.553*
Teachers attitude to work	2100	1988			

$P < .05$, critical r-value = 159.

The result as presented in Table 1 shows that at 148 degree of freedom and .05 level of significance, critical t-value of .159 is less than the calculated r-value of .553. This implies that there is a positive significant relationship between principal instructional supervision competence and economics teachers' attitude to work.

Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected competence and economics teachers' attitude to work. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected.

Ho₂: There is no significant relationship between principals' decision making competence and teachers' attitude to work.

TABLE 2

Pearson product moment correlation analysis of the relationship between decision making competence and economics teachers attitude to work

N=150

Variable	Σx Σy	Σx^2 Σy^2	Σxy	Df	r-cal
Decision making competence	1410	2718	19800	148	.229*
Teachers attitude to work	2100	1988			

$P < .05$, critical r-value = 159.

The result as presented in Table 2 shows that at 148 degree of freedom and .05 level of significance, critical t-value of .159 is less than the calculated r-value of .229. this implies that there is a positive significant relationship between principal's decision making.

Ho₃: There is no significant relationship between principals' motivation competence and teachers' attitude to work.

TABLE 3
Pearson product moment correlation analysis of the relationship between principals' motivation competence and economics teachers attitude to work

N=150					
Variable	$\sum x$ $\sum y$	$\sum x^2$ $\sum y^2$	$\sum xy$	Df	r-cal
Motivation competence	1110	2001	10890	148	.413*
Teachers attitude to work	2100	1988			

P<.05, critical r-value = .159.

Table 3 result shows that at 148 degree of freedom and .05 level of significance, critical t-value of .159 is less than the calculation r-value of .413. This implies that there is a positive significant relationship between principals' motivational competence and economics teachers' attitude to work. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected.

Ho₄: There is no significant relationship between principals' conflict management competence and teachers' attitude to work.

TABLE 4
Pearson product moment correlation analysis of the relationship between principals' conflict management competence and economics teachers attitude to work

N=150					
Variable	$\sum x$ $\sum y$	$\sum x^2$ $\sum y^2$	$\sum xy$	Df	r-cal
Conflict management competence	1010	1908	11109	148	.513*
Teachers attitude to work	2100	1988			

P<.05, critical r-value = .159.

The result as presented in Table 4 shows that at 148 degree of freedom and .05 level of significance, critical t-value of .159 is less than the calculation r-value of .513. This means that there is a positive significant relationship between principals' conflict management competence and economics teachers' attitude to work. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected.

Discussion of finding

The findings of the study revealed that there is significant relationship between principal's instructional supervision competence and economics teacher's attitude to work. Being that the relationship between principals' instructional supervision and economics teachers' job performance indicate that teachers tended to be more communities to their duties if their principals' supervised them effectively and regularly. The findings further, indicate that in school where principals' rarely carried out instructional supervisions, teachers' commitment to duties was low. This finding is in line with the study of Adetula in Akeke, Mbon and Osim (2018) that instructional supervision provides a vehicle and structure which allows schools, departments, as well as individuals (teachers and students) with them to respond effectively to curriculum and instruction in order to achieve the stated educational objectives. It is obvious that lack of supervision can lead to deviation from the lead down curriculum. The possibility of teachers going to their areas of interest is wide thereby allowing the learners so suffer afterwards. Duze (2012) supported that secondary school auditors are called principals who are strictly involved in instructional management, school plant management and financial management.

The hypothesis two testing revealed that there is significant relationship between principals' decision making competence and teachers' attitude tow work. This finding in constant with the study of Adaralegbe (2001) who asserted that decision skills of the administrators is vital in enhancing teachers' positive attitude to their job. Where the teacher feels secured by decision taken in the work environment, they tend to be committed to the ensuring that the goals of the schools are achieved. Duze (2011) affirmed that teachers' participation in decision making in secondary schools and the consequent impact on their attitude to school work and school internal discipline in Nigeria. Also

Sallies (2007) found that workers participation in decision making will leads to higher productivity and satisfaction among them.

Findings from hypothesis three showed that there is significant relationship between principals 'motivational competence and teachers' attitude to work. The result is in line with the findings of Akpan (2013) that teachers who are motivated teach effectively in classroom than those teachers that were not motivated at all. This indicates that adopting good motivational practices by school administrators is vital for increasing teacher's performance. In the same vein, Isangedighi (2000) who noted that teacher's motivation in the school environment will stimulate their commitment towards ensuring that school goals and objectives are achieved.

Findings from hypothesis four indicated that there is significant relationship between principals' conflict management competence and teachers' attitude to work. This findings is in line with that of Ekpiken (2009) and Okotoni (2003) who posited that for teachers to be committed to their job, peace is ultimate and internal factors and grievances among them must be rightly settled. Also there is a relationship between poor staff welfare and the occurrence of conflict in secondary school administration. This implies that since school in an entity which composes of different people, the school administrator must5 identify the best strategy for eliminating conflict.

Conclusion

School principals should always display competence in the course of their duties to enhance teachers positive attitude to work, knowing that teachers optimum input result to high academic achievement of economic students which is the best indicator of teachers positive attitude to work.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were made:

1. Adequate supervisory mechanisms/strategies should be put in place that will enhance teachers' positive disposition tow work.
2. Principals should allow the teachers to contribute in the management of the school through active participation in decision making process.
3. Principals should motivate their teachers through regular attendance of conference, workshops, seminar and in-service training to prevent conflicts and promote effective discharge of teachers' functions to boost their productivity.

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