

Setting Priorities and Managing Paper Works as Correlates of Principals' Administrative Effectiveness in Ekiti State Secondary Schools

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Abstract:

The study examined setting priorities and managing paper works as correlates of principals' administrative effectiveness in Ekiti State secondary schools. The descriptive survey research design was adopted in this study. The population of this study consisted of all principals in 203 public secondary schools in Ekiti State. The sample which consisted of 30 principals and 600 teachers were selected through multi-stage sampling procedure from 30 public secondary schools in Ekiti State. Setting Priorities and Managing Paper-works Questionnaire (SPMPQ) and Principal Administrative Effectiveness Questionnaire (PAEQ) were used to collect relevant data for the study. The face and content validity of the instruments (SPMPQ and PAEQ) were ascertained. The reliability of the instruments SPMPQ and PAEQ was determined through the test re-test method in two secondary schools outside the sampled area. A co-efficient value of 0.82 was obtained for SPMPQ while 0.79 was obtained for PAEQ. The research question was answered using descriptive statistics. Hypotheses 1 – 2 were tested using inferential statistics of Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) at 0.05 level of significance. The findings of the study revealed that the level of principal administrative effectiveness in Ekiti State secondary school was moderate. It was

EASIJ

Accepted 4 August 2020
Published 11 August 2020
DOI: 10.5281/zenodo.3979872

further revealed that setting priorities and managing paper works will positively improve administrative effectiveness of principals in secondary schools. It was recommended among others that school principals should set priorities in dealing with administrative issues. The more important ones should always be treated before the less important issues.

Keywords: Setting Priorities, Managing Paper Works, Principals, Administrative Effectiveness,

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Introduction

It is understandable that school principals play the important role in making school administration as effective as possible. Consequently, effective and successful principal must have a clear and timely vision that shows how all components of a school will work together. Correspondingly, work effectiveness of the school system needs an atmosphere of mutual trust and understanding between the school heads and their assistants in developing school goals, creating a unity of purpose, facilitating communication, and managing instruction (Biech, 2010).

In Nigeria today, there is an increasing public fear and complaints that the administrative effectiveness of the principals is endangering the goals of secondary school education. This need be proved afar public speculations through empirical studies. There are speculations and discoveries that lack of time management skills of many schools principals jeopardize the administrative effectiveness of the schools and teachers obligation in general. From the researcher's observation that some of the symptoms of administrative ineffectiveness are poor supervision of teaching-learning process, lack of discipline among the staffers and students, lack in leadership role, lack of good communication, poor decision making, lack of good performance appraisal and poor resource management among others.

The successful realization of goals needed by school appears to depend on principal ability to manage school time and other limited resources. Nevertheless, personal observation of the researcher revealed cases of inadequate coverage of scheme of work, and failure to meet school targets which may be due to principals' time wastage during meetings, unnecessary assembly activities, not setting of urgencies and poor management of paperwork among others in secondary schools in Ekiti State.

Setting priority is a way school principals can abide by time management and increase administrative effectiveness. Main concern involved in scheduling of time for various activities according to its importance. Activities take different forms and different amounts of time, so to appropriately use one's time, it is vital to estimate how long a task will take and allow that amount of time for the task. To get a more accurate estimate, an administrator needs to keep track of how he uses his time for a week. This will aid him on how to get a better idea of how much he wishes to spend on each activity, assignment and programme (Ekpenyong, 2016).

According to Ajayi (2007), he recommended personal time analysis charts for actual time scheduling when setting priorities. According to him, this will show the times in the day and the days in the week in which specific activities come up. Instituting urgencies, includes tasks such as devoting time every day to plan out the day, week, and month's jobs and prioritising them by preparing lists on urgency basis and setting deadlines. Setting urgencies involve having clear ideas about job's drives, making a daily priority list, sharing master list of all priorities to school personnel, assessing daily to-do list at the end of the day, and setting clear priorities to subordinates.

It seems that some secondary school principals fail to set precedence for themselves and for subordinates especially at the beginning of the term or session. This is the reason some of these schools regularly chain various activities together when the term or session is about to end and this harmfully affect administrative effectiveness.

Managing paperwork includes curtailing the volume of paper on the desk, responding quickly to letters, proposals, memos, faxes, reports, forms, and having an efficient filing system. Managing paperwork is of paramount value, this is because it is the basis through which effective and efficient school administration and time management can be achieved. According to (Khan, Khan, Din & Khan, 2016) speaking generally, managing paperwork deals with data documentation to its greatest update towards attaining any organizational objectives and in guaranteeing time is not wasted in replying most of these mails.

In certain cases, the tables and offices of most of these principals are crowded with a lot of papers and vital records or documents are littered around in their offices. In this process, some documents and records are not easily reachable when needed as a whole day or more might be spent on finding the documents. Similarly, some mails which required urgent answer are not easily attended to because of poor management of paperwork. Due to poor management of paperwork of some school principals, administrative functions are affected thereby affecting administrative effectiveness.

The study therefore examined setting priorities and managing paper works as correlates of principals' administrative effectiveness in Ekiti State secondary schools. The study specifically examined:

- i. the level of principal administrative effectiveness in secondary schools;
- ii. the relationship between setting priorities and principal administrative effectiveness; and
- iii. the relationship between managing paper works and principal administrative effectiveness.

Research Question

This research question will be raised to guide the study:

1. What is the level of principal administrative effectiveness in secondary schools in Ekiti State?

Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated for this study:

1. There is no significant relationship between setting priorities and principal administrative effectiveness.
2. There is no significant relationship between managing paper works and principal administrative effectiveness.

Methodology

The descriptive survey research design was adopted in this study. A survey research studies a small sample from a large population from where inferences would be drawn about the characteristics of the defined population. The population of this study consisted of all principals in 203 public secondary schools in Ekiti State. The sample for the study consisted of 30 principals and 600 teachers from 30 public secondary schools in Ekiti State. The sample was selected using multistage sampling procedure.

In stage one, two Local Governments were selected from each of the three senatorial districts in Ekiti State using simple random sampling technique. In stage two, five public secondary schools were selected from each of the six local governments selected for the study using simple random sampling technique. In stage three, twenty teachers were selected from

each of the schools through random sampling technique. The administrative effectiveness of each of the principal was assessed by twenty teachers from each of the school. In stage four, the principals of each of the schools were selected using purposive sampling technique.

Setting Priorities and Managing Paper-works Questionnaire (SPMPQ) and Principal Administrative Effectiveness Questionnaire (PAEQ) were used to collect relevant data for the study. Both instruments (SPMPQ and PAEQ) were of two sections. Section A of SPMPQ sought for bio – data information of the respondents while section B consisted of 14 items. Seven items measured each of the 2 independent variables, namely: setting priorities and managing paper works. Section A of PAEQ also sought for bio – data information of the respondents while Section B consisted of 26 items to assess administrative effectiveness in the areas of supervision, maintenance of discipline, leadership role, communication role, decision-making role, performance appraisal, and resource management. Four items measure each of the areas of administrative effectiveness. Likert 4 point rating scale of preference was used for both instruments as follows: Strongly Disagree (SD), Disagree (D), Agree (A) and Strongly Agree (SA).

The face and content validity of the instruments (SPMPQ and PAEQ) were ascertained. Fourteen items constructed for SPMPQ and 26 items constructed for PAEQ were presented to experts in Educational Management and Tests & Measurements to scrutinize them in order to ascertain its face and content validity. Experts ensured that the items in the questionnaire contained and represented adequately the traits being measured.

The reliability of the instruments SPMPQ and PAEQ was determined through the test re-test method in two secondary schools outside the sampled area. The instrument (PAEQ) was administered on 30 teachers while the other instrument (SPMPQ) was administered on 12 Head of Departments, Vice Principals and principals. Within a period of two weeks, the instruments were re-administered on the same set of respondents. The two sets of responses were correlated using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation statistics. A co-efficient value of 0.82 was obtained for SPMPQ while 0.79 was obtained for PAEQ. Both co-efficient values obtained were considered statistically high to make the instruments reliable.

The data collected through the instruments were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. The research question was answered using frequency counts, percentage, mean, standard deviation and Bar chart. Hypotheses 1 – 2 were tested using inferential statistics of Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC). All hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance.

Results

Research Question 1: What is the level of principal administrative effectiveness in secondary schools in Ekiti State?

In analyzing the question, respondents' scores on principal administrative effectiveness were used. Frequency counts, percentages, mean and standard deviation score were used to illustrate the responses to items 1 – 26 in section B of Principal Administrative Effectiveness Questionnaire (PAEQ). To determine the level of principal administrative effectiveness (low, moderate and high), the mean score and standard deviation of the responses were used. The low level of principal administrative effectiveness was determined by subtracting the standard deviation from the mean score ($77.67 - 3.24 = 74.43$). The

moderate level of principal administrative effectiveness was determined by the mean score (77.67) while the high level of principal administrative effectiveness was determined by adding the mean score and standard deviation ($77.67 + 3.24 = 80.91$). Therefore, low level of principal administrative effectiveness starts from 26.00 to 74.43, the moderate level starts from 74.44 to 80.90 and the high level of principal administrative effectiveness is from 80.91 to 104.00. The level of principal administrative effectiveness in secondary schools is presented in table 1 and figure i.

Table 1: Level of Principal Administrative Effectiveness in Secondary Schools in Ekiti State

Levels of principal administrative effectiveness	No of Respondents	Percentage
Low (26.00 – 74.43)	3	10.0
Moderate (74.44 – 80.90)	19	63.3
High (80.91 – 104.00)	8	26.7
Total	30	100

Table 1 revealed the level of principal administrative effectiveness in secondary schools in Ekiti State. The result showed that out of 30 principals, 3 principals representing 10 percent had low level of administrative effectiveness. The number of principals whose administrative effectiveness is at moderate level were 19 principals representing 63.3 percent while 8 principals representing 26.7 percent had high level of administrative effectiveness. This showed that the level of principal administrative effectiveness in secondary schools was moderate. Figure i further revealed the level of principal administrative effectiveness.

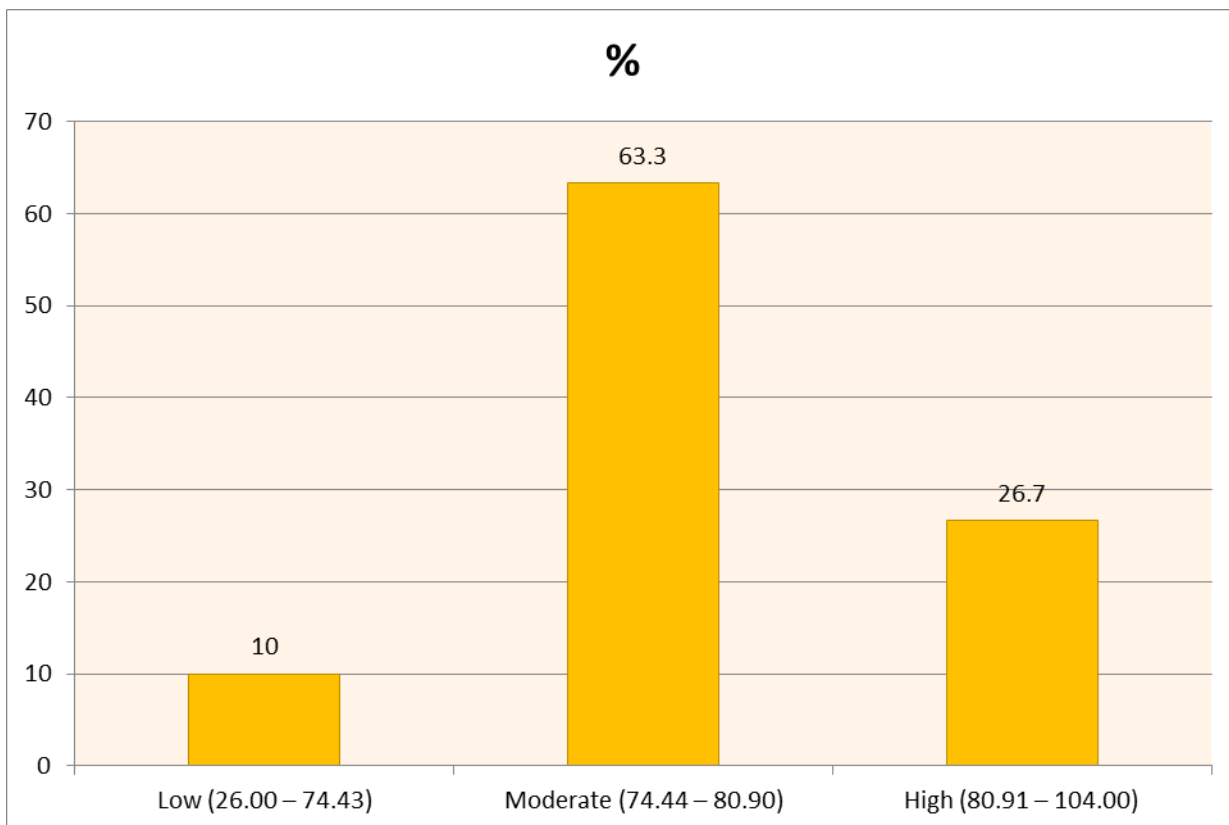


Figure i: Bar Chart Showing Level of Principal Administrative Effectiveness in Secondary Schools in Ekiti State

Testing of Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant relationship between setting priorities and principal administrative effectiveness.

In testing this hypothesis, data on setting priorities were collected from the responses of the respondents to items under Section B of SPMPQ (item 1 – 7) in the questionnaire. Data on administrative effectiveness were collected from the responses of the respondents to items under Section B of PAEQ (item 1 – 26) in the questionnaire. Both were compared for statistical significance using Pearson Product Moment Correlation at 0.05 levels. The result is presented in table 2.

Table 2: Relationship between setting priorities and principal administrative effectiveness

Variables	No of Schools	Mean	Stand Dev	r-cal	r-tab
Setting Priorities	30	22.73	1.48	0.855*	0.361
Administrative Effectiveness	30	77.67	3.24		

*P<0.05



Table 2 showed that the r-cal value of 0.855 is greater than r-table (0.361) at 0.05 level of significance. The null hypothesis is rejected. This implies that there is significant relationship between setting priorities and principal administrative effectiveness in Ekiti State.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant relationship between managing paper works and administrative effectiveness.

In testing this hypothesis, data on managing paper works sub-variable of principals' time management were collected from the responses of the respondents to items under Section B of SPMPQ (item 8 – 14) in the questionnaire. Data on administrative effectiveness were collected from the responses of the respondents to items under Section B of PAEQ (item 1 – 26) in the questionnaire. Both were compared for statistical significance using Pearson Product Moment Correlation at 0.05 levels. The result is presented in table 3

Table 3: Relationship between managing paper works and principal administrative effectiveness

Variables	No of Schools	Mean	Stand Dev	r-cal	r-tab
Managing Paper Works	30	21.03	1.35	0.743*	0.361
Administrative Effectiveness	30	77.67	3.24		

*P<0.05

Table 3 showed that the r-cal value of 0.743 is greater than r-table (0.361) at 0.05 level of significance. The null hypothesis is rejected. This implies that there is significant relationship between managing paper works and principal administrative effectiveness in Ekiti State.

Discussion

The study revealed that the level of principal administrative effectiveness in Ekiti State secondary school is moderate. The probable reason for this finding might be due to principal's time management which is above average. This finding is in consonance with findings of Akinfolarin (2017) who found out that principal administrative effectiveness has not reached the best level expected but still at the average level.

The study also revealed that there was significant relationship between setting priorities and principal administrative effectiveness. The reason for this finding might be because of the importance of setting priorities in school administration. This finding is in tandem with Fernandez (2011), Caputo and Rastelli (2014) and Omemu (2015) who found significant relationship between setting priorities and principal administrative effectiveness. However, Terpstra and Rozell (2004) in their study found no positive relationship between priority setting and administrative effectiveness. It could be inferred that when a principal set priorities, it will help in making adjustment where necessary and this will lead to efficiency and effectiveness in school administration.

The study further revealed that there was significant relationship between managing paper works and principal administrative effectiveness. The reason for this finding might be because managing paperwork in educational management is very vital to the continual

existence of the school as an organization. Managing paperwork is of paramount value, this is because it is the basis through which effective and efficient school administration can be achieved. This finding supports the contention of Uzoho (2006), Khan, Khan, Din and Khan (2016) and Peter (2017) as they all concluded that a significant relationship existed between managing paper works and administrative effectiveness. The implication of this finding is that proper management of paperwork can lead to efficiency in school administration thereby leading to administrative effectiveness.

Conclusion

The study concluded that the level of principal administrative effectiveness in Ekiti State secondary school is moderate. It is further concluded that setting priorities and managing paper works will positively improve administrative effectiveness of principals in secondary schools.

Recommendations

Based on the conclusion, it was recommended that school principals should set priorities in dealing with administrative issues. The more important ones should always be treated before the less important issues. The principals should always give priorities to core administrative duties while allocating time. In addition, the school administrators should change their attitude from the traditional to innovative methods of managing paper works which involves the use of electronic means to manage paper works so that they can be more effective on their job.

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Cite this article:

Author(s), AKINYEMI, Tolulope Francisca, (2020). “Setting Priorities and Managing Paper Works as Correlates of Principals’ Administrative Effectiveness in Ekiti State Secondary Schools”, **Name of the Journal:** Euro Afro Studies International Journal, (EASIJ.COM), P, 1 – 10. DOI: [www.doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.3979872](https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.3979872) , Special Issue, Issue: 2, Vol.: 2, Article: 1, Month: August, Year: 2020. Retrieved from <https://www.easij.com/all-issues/>

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