

Principals' Managerial Skills and Effective Instructional Supervision in Public Secondary Schools in Rivers State

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Abstract

This study investigated principals' managerial skills and effective instructional supervision in public secondary schools in Rivers State. Seven research questions and seven hypotheses guided the study. The design adopted for the study was the correlational survey design with a population of 3480 and a sample size of 348 derived by stratified proportionate random sampling technique. The instruments used for data collection were two questionnaires titled "Principals Managerial Skills Questionnaire" (PMSQ) and "Effective Instructional Supervision Questionnaire" (EISQ) which were constructed by the researcher and validated by three experts. The reliability coefficients of technical skills 0.79, human skills 0.82, conceptual skills 0.67, self-management skills 0.55, decision making skills 0.64, team management skills 0.82 and self-management skills 0.74 were obtained using Cronbach Alpha. Pearson Product Moment Correlation was used in answering the research questions while the hypotheses were tested with Z-test and ANOVA. The findings revealed that principals as school managers in Rivers State possess technical skills, human skills, decision making skills and team management skill which are positive and moderate in relationship and conceptual skills are at positively high relationship between principals' managerial skills and effective instructional supervision. Based on the findings, it was recommended that principals should strengthen their human skills for better results, do better planning, the government should provide opportunities for principals to get training and retraining programmes that would enhance their instructional supervision capacities etc.

Keywords: Managerial skills, instructional supervision, public secondary schools

Introduction

Supervision is all effort of the school and its designated persons in providing leadership to teachers in a school setting particularly to ensure better instructional delivery (Ismail, 2015). It encourages professional growth and development of teachers, enhances revision of school objectives, use of more and better materials for instructions, and methods of teaching and the evaluation of instruction. Some major elements of instructional supervision according to (UDE, 2005) are prioritization of teaching and learning, scientific based reading, that is, that school supervisors must be given to regular reading to be informed, must be able to align curriculum, instruction, assessment and standard, gather and analyze data to support what they are doing and must practice the culture of continuous learning. Ismail further disclosed that an effective supervision must put into consideration, the following for proper goal achievement: planning,

organizing, leadership, helping, evaluation or appraisal, motivation, communication and proper decision making. Harding University (2012) declared that effective supervision by principals should be based on rise in students' achievement and creative fundamental educational opportunities, clarity of supervision, needs, set time frame for supervision exercises, ensuring confidentiality etc. This enables the principals to display their managerial skills as they have to juggle through lots of duties.

Effective supervision has been described by Abidan, (2010) as that supervision that is able to produce optimum result with available resources. It is able to help the teacher deliver positive instructions that has the capacity to make the needed change in a classroom setting. The features of effective instructional supervision include: decision making, supportive teaching and learning environment, good guidance practices, encourages creativity in class, leads to significant development etc (UDE, 2015). These on the other hand could be referred to as managerial skills

Managerial skills are required if effectiveness would be observed in daily school transactions. The other issues worthy of mention for the need of principals was the fact that it became important for performance in teaching and learning to be measured each time a teacher enters or leaves the class, pupils relationship, academic achievements, manipulation and maintenance of facilities and even school community relationship was very important also, so it is quite obvious that a principal who does not have adequate managerial skills would mess-up these whole responsibilities of galvanizing the school and schooling process.

Managerial skills are tools in intangible forms that a manager needs to achieve set goals by an organization and also increase its productivity (Hartzel, 2018). Managerial skills are vital because they are the tools required for the accomplishment of organizational goals. Thus, for a principal, these tools are vital to him/her to allow for meeting the goals of the school. Managerial skills are competencies that a person develops from knowledge and experience, and would have to deploy accordingly, therefore, it means that it does not just happen to people (Sutevski, 2009). This implies that a new entrant in the profession cannot just come in and take over the responsibility of a principal which may be the reason that the highest in the hierarchical order among the teachers is usually chosen for the job or even though the new enterant may possess the knowledge required to do the job but lacking in experience which usually come with a number of years in the profession is not there, then there is definitely going to be some difficulty that running the school from day to day without experience could pose. Sutevski (2009) further explained that the said knowledge and abilities needed to fill the position demand some particular management skills for the task to be carried out. However, both the needed time to gain the knowledge and the time experience is acquired are normally not short periods, hence, managerial skills of principals develops to bloom over a period of time which is why the position is usually handed over to the oldest staff in a school environment who is usually assumed to have got all the skills needed to lead the school daily in the business of the school and to also be able to help supervise the instructional process as it goes on. These skills come in different forms as technical, human and/or conceptual skills, project management skills, time management skills, conflict management skills, stress management skills, decision-making skill, team management skill change management skills, office management skills, self-management skills etc. Several researches have been conducted in this area yet there is still much to be known. For instance, these below:

Principals' managerial skills and administrative effectiveness in secondary schools in Oyo state, Nigeria was carried out by Babatunde (2014). The study was done to examine the relationship between principals' managerial skills and administrative effectiveness in secondary schools in Oyo state. The correlation survey research design was adopted for the study. The findings of the study revealed that there was significant relationship between principals' managerial skills and administrative effectiveness.

Principal's management techniques and effective school community relations in Ahoada-East L.G.A of Rivers State Nigeria was done by Amadi (2013). The purpose of the study was to investigate the managerial techniques school principals use to be able to ensure harmony in the school working environment. The study used descriptive research design. The findings revealed that workshop and seminars organized regularly boost principals managerial skill techniques, with incentives to principals they are motivated to work better and that teachers' salary paid in time brings about better productivity among teachers. Though, these researchers have attempted studies in the above stated areas it has become imperative to specifically study the relationship between the various types of managerial skills and effective instructional supervision. Hence, this investigation, on principals' managerial skills and effective instructional supervision in public secondary schools in Rivers state.

This is coming on the back drop of the level of absentism displayed by teachers and the management of schools. It was even observed that some school principals even come to school once a week. Thus, making the teachers in such schools to take teaching and learning for granted as there is no proper instructional supervision done by school principals. A situation that could be suspected to be responsible for the students becoming corrupt at a very young age as they take on examination malpractice to be able to pass in examination both in internal or external examinations. Though, many researches have pointed out a lot of factors that could be responsible for this but it is vital to consider the role of principals managerial skills and effective instructional supervision in secondary schools in Rivers State.

Purpose of the Study

The aim of this study is to investigate the relationship between principals' managerial skills and effective instructional supervision in public secondary schools in Rivers State. Specifically, the study sought to achieve the following objectives:

1. Determine the relationship between principals' technical skills and instructional supervision in public secondary school in Rivers State.
2. Investigate the relationship between principals' human skills and instructional supervision in public secondary schools in Rivers State.
3. Examine the relationship between principals' conceptual skills and instructional supervision in public secondary schools in Rivers State.
4. Investigate the relationship between principals' decision making skills and instructional supervision in public secondary schools in Rivers State.
5. Determine the relationship between principals' team management skills and instructional supervision in public secondary schools in Rivers State.

1.2 Research Questions

The following research questions guided this study:

1. What is the relationship between principals' technical skills and effective instructional supervision in public secondary schools in Rivers State?
2. What is the relationship between principals' human skills and effective instructional supervision in public secondary schools in Rivers State?
3. What is the relationship between principals' conceptual skills and effective instructional supervision in public secondary school in Rivers State?
4. What is the relationship between principals' decision making skills and effective instructional supervision in public secondary schools in Rivers State?
5. What is the relationship between principals' team management skills and effective instructional supervision in public secondary schools in Rivers State?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated and tested .05 alpha level to guide this study.

1. There is no significant relationship between principals' technical skills and effective instructional supervision in public secondary schools in Rivers State.
2. There is no significant relationship between principals' human skills and effective instructional supervision in public secondary schools in Rivers State.
3. There is no significant relationship between principals' conceptual skills and effective instructional supervision in public secondary schools in Rivers State.
4. There is no significant relationship between principals' decision making skills and effective instructional supervision in public secondary schools in Rivers State.
5. There is no significant relationship between principals' team management skills and effective instructional supervision in public secondary schools in Rivers State.

Research Method

This study was carried out in Rivers State to investigate principals' managerial skills and effective instructional supervision in public secondary schools in Rivers State. Seven research questions and seven hypotheses guided the study. The design adopted for the study was the correlational survey design with a population of 3480 and a sample size of 348 derived by stratified proportionate random sampling technique. The instruments used for data collection were two questionnaires titled "Principals Managerial Skills Questionnaire" (PMSQ) and "Effective Instructional Supervision Questionnaire" (EISQ) which were constructed by the researcher. The instrument consisted of 75 items arranged in two sections (A and B). Section A sought demographic information while section B consisted of five subgroups on (technical skills, human skills, conceptual skills, decision making skills and team management skills). The questionnaires were built on modified four point Likert scale, namely: strongly agree, agree, disagree and strongly disagree and the levels of response was weighted as 4, 3, 2 and 1. The instrument was validated by three experts one a measurement and evaluation expert and the other two being educational management experts all of the faculty of education University of Port Harcourt, Rivers State. The suggestions given were used in producing the final copy of the instrument. The reliability coefficients of the instrument gave these: technical skills 0.79, human skills 0.82, conceptual skills 0.67, self-management skills 0.55, decision making skills 0.64 and team management skills 0.82 were obtained using Cronbach Alpha. The instrument was administered by the researcher and two research assistants, collected, collated and analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation for answering the research questions.

Results

Research Question 1: What is the relationship between principals’ technical skill and instructional supervision in public secondary schools in Rivers State?

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant relationship between principals’ technical skill and instructional supervision in public secondary schools in Rivers State.

Table 4.1: Pearson Product Moment correlation of the relationship between principals’ technical skills and instructional supervision

Variables	N	R	df	p-val	Alpha Level	Decision
Technical skills Effective instructional supervision	348	.61	346	0.00	0.05	Significant positive moderate relationship

Table 4.1 showed that Pearson Product Moment Correlation coefficient is given as 0.61 which implied that there is a moderate relationship between the independent variable (technical skills) and the dependent variable (effective instructional supervision). Therefore, an increase in the independent variable (technical skills) leads to a moderate positive increase in the dependent variable (effective instructional supervision). With a degree of freedom of 346, the probability value of .00 is less than the alpha level of .05; therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. By implication, there is a significant positive moderate relationship between principals’ technical skill and effective instructional supervision in public secondary schools in Rivers State.

Research Question 2: What is the relationship between principals’ human skill and effective instructional supervision in public secondary schools in Rivers State?

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant relationship between principals’ human skill and effective instructional supervision in public secondary schools in Rivers State.

Table 4.2: Pearson Product Moment correlationprobability value of the relationship between principals’ human skills and instructional supervision

Variables	N	R	df	p-val	Alpha Level	Decision
Human skills Effective instructional supervision	348	.62	346	0.00	0.05	Significant positive moderate relationship

supervision

Table 4.2 showed that Pearson Product Moment Correlation coefficient (r) is given as 0.62 which implied that there is a moderate relationship between the independent variable (human skills) and the dependent variable (effective instructional supervision). Therefore, an increase in the independent variable (human skills) leads to a moderate positive increase in the dependent variable (effective instructional supervision). With a degree of freedom of 346, the probability value of .00 is less than the alpha level of .05, therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. By implication, there is a significant positive moderate relationship between principals' human skills and effective instructional supervision in public secondary schools in Rivers State.

Research Question 3: What is the relationship between principals' conceptual skills and effective instructional supervision in public secondary school in Rivers State?

Hypothesis 3: There is no significant relationship between principals' conceptual skills and effective instructional supervision in public secondary schools in Rivers State.

Table 4.3: Pearson Product Moment correlation probability value of the relationship between principals' conceptual skills and instructional supervision

Variables	N	R	df	p-val	Alpha Level	Decision
conceptual skills						Significant Positive high relationship
Effective instructional supervision	348	.86	346	.00	.05	

Table 4.3 showed that Pearson Product Moment Correlation coefficient (r) is given as 0.86 which implied that there is a high positive relationship between the independent variable (conceptual skills) and the dependent variable (effective instructional supervision). Therefore, an increase in the independent variable (conceptual skills) leads to a high positive increase in the dependent variable (effective instructional supervision). With a degree of freedom of 346, the probability value of .00 is less than the alpha level of .05, therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. By implication, there is a significant positive high relationship between principals' conceptual skills and effective instructional supervision in public secondary schools in Rivers State.

Research Question 4: What is the relationship between principals' decision making skill and effective instructional supervision in public secondary schools in Rivers State?

Hypothesis 4: There is no significant relationship between principals' decision making skills and effective instructional supervision in public secondary schools in Rivers State.

Table 4.4: Pearson Product Moment correlation probability value of the relationship between principals’ decision making skills and instructional supervision

Variables	N	R	df	p-val	Alpha Level	Decision
Decision making skills	348	.58	346	.00	.05	Significant positive moderate relationship
Effective instructional supervision						

Table 4.4 showed that Pearson Product Moment Correlation coefficient (r) is given as 0.58 which implied that there is a moderate positive relationship between the independent variable (decision making skills) and the dependent variable (effective instructional supervision). Therefore, an increase in the independent variable (decision making skills) leads to a moderate positive increase in the dependent variable (effective instructional supervision). With a degree of freedom of 346, the probability value of .00 is less than the alpha level of .05, therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. By implication, there is a significant positive moderate relationship between principals’ decision making skills and effective instructional supervision in public secondary schools in Rivers State.

Research Question 5: What is the relationship between principals’ team management skill and effective instructional supervision in public secondary schools in Rivers State?

Hypothesis 5: There is no significant relationship between principals’ team management skills and effective instructional supervision in public sooner schools in Rivers State.

Table 4.5: Pearson Product Moment correlation probability value of the relationship between principals’ team management skills and instructional supervision

Variables	N	R	df	p-val	Alpha Level	Decision
Team management skills	348	.60	346	.00	.05	Significant positive moderate relationship
Effective instructional supervision						

Table 4.5 showed that Pearson Product Moment Correlation coefficient (r) is given as 0.60 which implied that there is a moderate positive relationship between the independent variable (team management skills) and the dependent variable (effective instructional supervision). Therefore,

an increase in the independent variable (team management skills) leads to a moderate positive increase in the dependent variable (effective instructional supervision). With a degree of freedom of 346, the probability value of .00 is less than the alpha level of .05, therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. By implication, there is a significant positive moderate relationship between principals' team management skills and effective instructional supervision in public secondary schools in Rivers State.

Discussion of Findings

The result of research question 1 indicated that technical skill as one of the principals' managerial skills required for instructional supervision as opined by the respondents showed that the items had moderate positive relationship on the principals' technical skill and instructional supervision in secondary schools in Rivers State. From the results, the principals' technical skill at analyzing data was the highest while the least was on the principals' technical skill at writing, a factor that is indicative of the relevance of technical skills in enhancing teachers' job performance, thus the need for improvement on it. This confirmed the study that was done by David-West and Kaegon (2017) which found that principals' instructional supervisory techniques usually correlates with teachers' service delivery, in other words the extent of input by the principals determine the extent of out-put.

The results of research question 2 showed that the human relation skill of the principals was good except for the fact that the principals needed to do better in the area of leadership initiation competencies and in being able to maintain the ability to do enquiry that would sustain the good human sense of togetherness among the members of staff leading to collective motivation. This findings agrees with the fact that principals' supervisory role has influence on teachers motivation to do their job well as found by (Oyewole&Alonge, 2013).

Next the result of research question 3 showed that the respondents rated their principals high in the area of conceptual skill, an indication that the principals are intellectually sound, thus, they have the capacity to work on a lot of variables with less or no difficulty. However, it was observed from the result that the principals seem to be struggling with driving every solution to a logical conclusion hence, there is need for improvement. More importantly it should be stated here that such level of conceptual competence possessed by the principals would help the teachers' job performance particularly in lesson preparation and delivery. Again this confirmed the findings of Babatunde (2014) which revealed that principals' managerial skills do have relationship with teachers' effectiveness at work.

Furthermore, the results of research question 4 showed that decision making as a skill was not a challenge to principals in secondary schools in Rivers State as all the items were rated at average level. It is clear here that decision making is part of the daily activities of the principals' transaction, therefore, they may have mastered the extent they did of its application through experience. This concurs with the findings of the study by Obakpolo and Osakwe (2015) who found that experience enhances principals' supervisory functions in any instructional process.

Again, the next result indicated that principals' managerial skills had relevance for effective instructional supervision particularly in team management processes. Though there is an indications for moderate performance by the school heads but there are so many areas of team

management skill that they need to learn more on like setting objectives, mentoring the teachers, ensuring outsiders are shut out of the schools information and for them to always give constructive feedback in order to enable the teachers perform their job better. This agrees with what Ogbuvbu (2011) found in a research study that a decent environment and delegation of duties builds team members. Thus the need to work harder for effectiveness and result oriented output.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, principals' managerial skills in public secondary schools in Rivers State has shown how possession of technical skill, human skill, conceptual skill, decision making skill, team management skill and self-management enhance and has help in effective instructional supervision.

Recommendations

The following are the recommendation made based on the findings from the study:

1. Public secondary school principals should ensure effective supervision of instruction through better human skill competencies such that would encourage harmonious working relationship among members of staff.
2. Public secondary school principals should learn to pursue proper planning practices.
3. It is recommended that the state government through the ministry of education should encourage training and retraining programmes for public secondary school principals the type that would enhance their ability to plan properly for better school operation.
4. Teachers should not make the job that public secondary school principals too difficult for them but flexible by following their leadership initiative for better productivity in the school system.
5. Education stakeholders should support the government's effort at providing for the empowerment of public secondary school principals in any areas that would enable them achieve set goals and objectives.

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