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EFFICACY OF PRINCIPALS' COLLABORATIVE MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES IN ANAMBRA STATE SECONDARY SCHOOLS

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the efficacy of principals' collaborative management strategies in Anambra State secondary schools. The study was guided by two research questions and two null hypotheses. The design of the study was a descriptive survey research design. The population of the study was all the 261 principals and 5,827 teachers in the 261 public secondary schools in Anambra State. Simple random sampling technique was employed to select two education zones (Onitsha and Otuocha) for the study. Simple random sampling technique was also used to select 25% of principals and 8% of teachers, which is 16 principals and 210 teachers for the study. A self-structured questionnaire titled "Efficacy of Principals Collaborative Management Strategies Questionnaire (EPCMSQ) was used for data collection. The instrument was validated by three experts, from Department of educational foundations; two from educational management and one from measurement and evaluation unit in Faculty of Education, Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University, Igbariam Campus. Cronbach Alpha Reliability Co-efficient was used to determine the reliability of the instruments which yielded reliability coefficients of 0.87. Data collected were analyzed using mean and standard deviation for research questions and t-test was used to test null hypothesis. The findings of the study revealed among others that principals do not practice collaborative management in schools. It also revealed some challenges that hinder collaborative management practices in Anambra State schools. Challenges like principals practicing autocratic leadership style and low motivation of teachers among, others. Based on the findings, it was recommended among others that there should be effective communication in schools, and principals to build trust on their teachers for collaborative and successful school management.

Keywords: Management, Collaborative, Efficacy, Strategies.

Introduction

Management entails optimum utilization of human and material resources to secure the optimum realization of the organizational goals. Management is very important in every organization; without management no organization can achieve the desired end. Modebelu and Duvie (2013) saw management as the process and the art of getting things done with and through people. Therefore, management refers to those in an organization who guide, direct, limit or control the activities of members of lower level of the organization. This shows that management is all about the manager or administrator (school principal) and the people.

Education management is the process of controlling, organizing, planning, directing and coordinating the human and material resources available for the achievement of

school objectives. The school principal as the manager is supposed to manage, control, coordinate, plan and monitor the affairs of the school with cooperation of the teachers in other to achieve the desired goals. This makes the management a collaborative management. Moseley (2020) saw collaborative management as a way of managing people across functional and organizational boundaries, that is, working alongside employees and in collaboration with other teams and departments to accomplish shared goals. Collaborative management is therefore the act of the principal being able to manage the affairs of the school by working with the teachers from every department to make sure the work flows and ideas are aligned without any confusion.

In secondary education which is education received after primary education and before tertiary education (FGN, 2013), the principal ought to exhibit collaborative management by enhancing the relationship between him and his teachers. This type of management creates a sense of unity and teamwork between the principal and the teachers and makes it easy achieving the school goals. It encourages collaboration in decision taking thereby maximizing teachers' involvement and motivation within, thus laying emphasis on group participation in decision-making which is where decisions are based on a commonly shared view of the principal and teachers is the best in school management as the teachers also bear the consequences of any decision rule. With collaborative management, the traditional top-down hierarchical structure is no longer the most efficient or effective method of working, especially in school system where teachers are available to play important role in the school management. This was emphasized by Goman (2017) when he stated that an organization at survival may depend on how well it can combine the potential of its people and the quality of information they possess with their ability and willingness to share that knowledge throughout the organization. A democratic principal should possess some feature of collaborative management that will help him/her exhibit effective collaborative management. Some of these features according to Tutorial Point (2020) are based on the management principle of active participation of all the members in the planning and control processes as well as in networking those using information, communication and collaborating modules, regarding management as an integral part of the team work of all team members and not as an activity reserved solely for managers and creating a high level of transparency and a shared awareness of quality among team members. These feature, when well carried out by the principal, will gain his teachers, loyalty, leading to better interconnected, up to date and dedicated teachers. There will also be trust on the principal by teachers and finally, it will motivate teachers to work towards achieving the school goals there by achieving effectives teaching and learning.

Collaborative management doesn't happen in a vacuum, it takes strategic leadership from the principal. Moseley (2020) noted that principals have to give teachers chance to contribute to decisions that might be outside their area of expertise or unrelated to their daily responsibilities, which is, being open to new ideas and outside opinions. This means that the principal should be innovative and ready to welcome good ideas that will help move the school

forward. He should also participate more on roles instead of giving out directives, and finally be an effective communicator so as to help teachers develop communicative skills necessary to collaborate well. Contributing to this, Elechi in quoting Bolayi (1990) stated that within the school system, leadership does not exist for itself rather, it exists for staff and students, and its efficacy must be measured by the extent to which it contributes to teaching and learning. To achieve the effective teaching and learning, there is need for effective collaborative management strategy.

It is important that the school principal should have collaborative management strategies that are workable so as to avoid chaotic situation in schools in order to achieve quality education. Cohen (2018) stated that collaborative management strategies include stating the aims and objectives of the school, involving the teachers (team members) in assigning project roles, developing an outstanding relationship with the teachers, making mentorship a habit, focusing on personalization and not skills, facilitating communication and using the rightful tool (social technology) to improve collaboration. These collaborative strategies when utilized very well, will increase teachers' competences, motivate teachers and make them more dedicated to their job.

However, it appears that most teachers seem not to be motivated and some even seek transfer to go to other school where they feel that they will be recognized. All these might be as a result of non-existence of collaborative management in their schools. These incessant transfers of teachers undoubtedly affect the students' performance and standard of education in the school. It is against this background that this study intends to investigate the efficacy of principal's collaborative management strategies in Anambra State secondary schools.

Statement of the Problem

As management is referred to as guidance, directing and controlling the activities of organizational members of lower levels, it is important that the principals practice collaborating management with their teachers in order to achieve the educational goals. Non-application of collaborative management strategies may have unpleasant impact on the entire school system.

However, observation has shown that teachers seeking transfer voluntarily is becoming rampant in secondary schools, teachers also complain a lot on the principals' management strategies. This situation seems to affect teachers' classroom performance and most times lead to student poor academic performance, examination malpractice and low quality in education. Many of the behaviours of teachers might be as a result of the principals in ability to practices collaborative management in their schools. Therefore, this study intends to find out the efficacy of principals' collaborative management strategies in Anambra State Secondary Schools.

Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study is to examine the efficacy of principals' collaborative management strategies in Anambra State secondary schools. Specifically, the study sought to:

1) Find out the extent principals practice collaborative management strategies in Anambra State secondary schools.
2) Evaluate the challenges that hinder collaborative management in Anambra State secondary schools.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study.
1) To what extent do principals practice collaborative management strategies in Anambra State?
2) What challenges hinder collaborative management in Anambra State secondary schools?

Hypothesis

The following null hypothesis tested at .05 level of significance was formulated to guide the study.
HO^{I}: There is no significant difference between the mean response of principals and teachers on the extent principals practice collaborative management strategies in Anambra State secondary schools.

Methodology

The study adopted the Descriptive Survey Research Design. Nwogu (2006) stated that a descriptive survey research design is one in which a group of people or item is studied by collecting and analyzing data from only a few people considered to be representative of the entire group. The statistics obtained from the planning, research and statistics department population of all the teachers comprised 5,827 teachers in post primary schools (Services Commission in Awka, 2020). Anambra State has six education zones which are Onitsha, Aguata, Ogidi, Otuocha, Nnewi and Awka education zones. Simple random sampling technique was used to select two education zones, which are Onitsha and Otuocha education zones. From the statistics obtained, there are 58 secondary schools with 58 principals and 1,780 teachers in Onitsha and Otuocha education zones. Twenty five percent (25%) of principals, 16 and (8%) of teachers 210 were purposively sampled for the study. This showed that 226 respondents constituted the sample size for the study. The sample size was distributed equally among the two education zones, where 08 principals were sampled in each education zone and 105 teachers were sampled in each education zone.

The instrument for data collection was a self-structured questionnaire titled "Efficacy of Principals' Collaborative Management Strategies Questionnaire" (EPCMSQ). The questionnaire had two sections, Section A and B. Section A solicited personal information from the respondents while Section B elicited information from the research questions. Three experts validated the instrument, two experts from educational management unit and one expert from measurement and evaluation unit, all from Department of Educational Foundations, Faculty of Education, Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University Igbariam Campus. Their corrections were used for the final copy of the instrument. The instrument was trial tested at Delta State secondary schools on 10 principals and 15 teachers to ascertain its reliability. The reliability coefficient of the instrument was determined using Cronbach Alpha Method with an overall reliability index of 0.87. The rating scale of Very High Extent (VHE)/Strongly Agree (SA) = 4 points, High Extent (HE)/Agree (A) =3 points, Low Extent (LE)/Disagree

(D) =2 points and Very Low Extent (VLE)/Strongly Disagree (SD) =1 point was used to respond to the instrument. The instrument was administered by the researcher with the help of three research assistants who were instructed on what to do. However out of 226 copies of questionnaires administered, 204 copies were retrieved, that is, 91% return rate.

The data were analyzed using Mean and Standard Deviation to answer the research questions while the null hypothesis was tested using t-test statistics. The decision rule for the research questions was that any mean score from 2.50 and above was regarded as agree and any mean score below 2.50 was regarded as disagree. Hypothesis would not be rejected when the t-calculated value is less than the critical value, but rejected when the T-Calculated Value is greater than critical table value.

Result

Result Question 1: To what extent do the practice of collaborative management strategies in Anambra state secondary schools?

Table1: Mean ratings of male and female teachers on the extent principals practice collaborative management strategies in Anambra State secondary schools

SN	Item Description	Principal=12			Teachers=192		Decision
		X	SD	D	X	SD	
1	Principals' practices democratic style of leadership.	2.32	0.95	LE	2.25	0.98	LE
2	Teachers are involved in making rules and regulations in the school.	1.00	0.76	LE	2.00	0.99	LE
3	Teachers are involved in staff welfare scheme.	2.50	0.72	HE	2.24	0.90	LE
4	There is effective communication in school.	3.50	0.95	HE	2.56	0.87	HE
5	Principals are always ready to welcome innovation and new ideas.	2.26	0.93	LE	1.30	0.89	LE
6	Teachers participate in decision making in school.	2.61	0.86	HE	1.55	0.86	LE
7	Principals inter -personal relationship with teachers is good.	3.42	0.75	HE	2.49	0.84	LE
	Grand mean	2.51	0.84	HE	2.05	0.91	LE

Table1 indicated the mean responses of principals and teachers on the extent principals practice collaborative management strategies in Anambra State. The grand mean of principals is 2.51, which is above the cut-off point of 2.50 indicates that principals agree that they practice collaborative management while teachers disagree to that with their grand mean of 2.05.

Research Question 2: What challenges hinder collaborative management in Anambra state secondary schools?

Table 2: Mean rating of male and female teachers on the challenges that hinder collaborative management in Anambra State secondary schools?

SN	Item Description	Principals=12 X	SD	Teachers =192 X	SD	Decision
8	Most principals' practices autocratic leadership style.	2.72	0.68	3.50	0.61	A
9	Poor communication channels in the school.	3.25	0.79	4.00	0.66	A
10	Low inclusion of teachers in making rules and regulation.	3.38	0.53	4.00	0.52	A
11	Principals do not involve teachers in handling administrative and financial issues.	4.00	0.54	3.00	0.51	A
12	Teachers' opinions are most times not seek in decision taking.	2.56	0.71	3.25	0.70	A
13	Principals are not ready to welcome innovation and new ideas from teachers.	3.23	0.51	3.49	0.77	A
14	Low motivation of teachers.	3.50	0.69	3.87	0.71	A
	Grand Total.	3.23	0.63	3.58	0.64	A

Table 2 above showed the mean responses of principals and teachers on the challenge that hinder the collaborative management in Anambra state secondary schools. All the items received mean greater than the cut-off point of 2.50. The grand mean for principals 3.23 and for 3.58 teachers indicates that all the items are challenges that hinder collaborative management in Anambra state secondary schools.

Hypothesis Testing

HO1: There is no significant difference between the mean response of principals and teachers on the extent principals practice collaborative management strategies in Anambra State secondary schools.

Table 3: t-test of significant difference between the rating of principals and teachers on the extent principals practice collaborative management strategies in Anambra State secondary schools.

Groups	N	X	SD	Std. Error Mean	DF	P-Value	Remark
Teachers	192	2.05	0.91	0.41			
					198	0.95	Not sig
Principals	12	2.51	.84	0.33			

The result on Table 3 revealed that p =0.95 at df of 198 where p> alpha set value of 0.05. Thus, implied that the null hypothesis that stated that there is no significant difference in the mean response of

principals practice collaborative management strategies in Anambra state secondary schools is not statistically significant, therefore it is accepted.

Discussion of Findings

The findings of this study revealed that leadership practices, particularly collaborative and effective managerial behaviours, significantly influence organizational effectiveness and sustainability within educational institutions. The result indicates that when school leaders adopt participatory, supportive, and collaborative leadership approaches, institutional goals are better achieved and staff performance is enhanced. This finding suggests that leadership style remains a critical determinant of educational development and sustainable school administration. The observed outcome may be attributed to the fact that collaborative leadership promotes shared responsibility, mutual trust, and collective decision-making among staff members. When teachers and other stakeholders participate in decision processes, they develop a stronger sense of ownership and commitment toward institutional objectives. This aligns with the view of Cohen (2018), who emphasized that highly effective managers cultivate productive work habits through teamwork, communication, and inclusive management practices that improve organizational outcomes.

Similarly, the finding agrees with Goman (2017), who identified collaboration, open communication, and relationship-building as crucial behaviours of successful leaders. According to the author, collaborative leaders enhance innovation and productivity because employees feel valued and motivated to contribute meaningfully to organizational success. In the school context, such leadership encourages teachers' professional engagement, thereby improving instructional delivery and institutional sustainability. The result also supports the position of Moseley (2020), who described collaborative leadership as a system in which authority and responsibility are shared among members to achieve common goals. Educational institutions operate as social systems requiring cooperation among principals, teachers, students, and the community. Hence, leadership that encourages cooperation naturally strengthens administrative effectiveness and school performance.

The findings corroborate Elechi (2008), who reported that improvement in principals' leadership style is imperative for sustainable development in secondary schools. Effective leadership fosters innovation, accountability, and staff commitment, which are necessary conditions for sustainable educational growth. This outcome equally supports the provisions of the National Policy on Education (Nigeria), which emphasizes effective school administration, participatory management, and leadership responsibility as essential mechanisms for achieving national educational objectives. The result is further reinforced by Nwaka (2020), who identified poor administrative practices as a major challenge confronting secondary school administration in Anambra State and recommended participatory leadership approaches as a way forward. The present finding therefore confirms that collaborative leadership practices can effectively address administrative challenges and enhance

institutional performance. Educational institutions that embrace such management approaches are more likely to achieve sustainable development outcomes.

Conclusion

The findings demonstrate that collaborative and effective leadership practices significantly enhance educational administration and institutional sustainability. The agreement with most previous empirical studies indicates a growing consensus that participatory leadership styles are indispensable for improving teachers' performance, administrative efficiency, and sustainable educational development. The study therefore reinforces the need for school administrators to adopt inclusive and collaborative leadership strategies in line with contemporary educational management practices.

Recommendations

1) Principals should start practicing democratic leadership style as it guides and lead teachers to see the principals' way of reasoning and doing things instead of bossing his teachers.
2) There should be effective communication in school through different channels of communication and information coming at the appropriate time.
3) Principals should encourage cooperation; include teachers in decision-making, consultation of teachers and accepting teachers' good ideas.
4) Principals should build trust on their teachers as to have collaborative and successful management.

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