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PRINCIPALS' ADMINISTRATIVE COMPETENCIES AND STUDENTS' ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN EBONYI STATE

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ABSTRACT

This study focused on Principals' Administrative Competencies and Students' Academic performance in public secondary schools in Ebonyi State. Two specific purposes with two corresponding research questions and twonull hypotheses guided the study. Related literature were reviewed to guide the research which gave insight into what has already been done by other researchers in the related areas of the study. Correlational survey research design was adopted for the study. The population for the study comprised one hundred thousand, six hundred (100,600) students and teachers in the 226 public secondary schools in Ebonyi State. The sample for the study was 398teachers and students. Instrument for data collection was structured questionnaire titled: Principals Administrative Competencies Questionnaire (PACQ) and Students Academic Performance Questionnaire (SAPQ). The instrument was validated by three experts, one expert in Measurement and Evaluation from Science Education Department and two experts from Educational Administration and Planning, Department of Educational Foundations, Ebonyi State University, Abakaliki. The reliability of the instrument was determined using Cronbach Alpha technique which yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.89 for principals administrative competency while reliability coefficient of 0.77 was obtain for students' academic performance. Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient statistical tool was used to answer the research questions while Linear Regression was used to test the hypotheses. The findings from the data analysis showed that: there was a very high positive relationship between principals' supervision competence and students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Ebonyi State while principals' competence on discipline maintenance has a high relationship with students' academic performance. The result of hypotheses revealed that there was significant relationship between principals' administrative competency on supervision, discipline and students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Ebonyi State. Based on the findings among others, the study recommended that the Government of Ebonyi State should from time to time organize capacity-building workshops for principals on administrative competency for enhancing their effectiveness in school management.

Keywords: Administration, Competencies, Administrative Competencies, Supervision, Discipline, Academic Performance, Secondary schools

Introduction

The success of any organization, be it educational institutions or production industry, largely depends on the ability to manage the organization efficiently. According to Anaekwe, (2012), administration is the process of coordinating, planning, organizing, leading, directing and controlling the efforts of members and the use of resources in order to achieve stated organizational goals. Thus principals work with students, teachers, parents and school stakeholders in setting up organizational structures and help develop other people in the school by delegating and very carefully monitoring the administrative functions in the school (Lunenburg 2010). Nwite (2014) saw administration as the process of directing human and physical resources in order to make profit in a social organization. Administration is concerned with the performance of executive functions, carrying out of policies, decisions to fulfill a purpose, and controlling the day-to-day running of an organization (Ogbonnaya, 2004).

Administrative competency is of particular importance in educational management because of the far-reaching effects on the accomplishment of school programmes, objectives and the attainment of educational goals (Asako, 2015). Competency is the ability of the principal to co-ordinate human and material resources for the realization of the objectives of the secondary school education. In Ebonyi State, principals of government secondary schools could be administrative competent to a very high extent through proper coordination and controlling of the affairs of the schools. This also involves demonstrating their abilities through efficient supervision of instruction in the classrooms, managing of human and material resources to achieve the mission and vision of Government secondary schools. Principals' knowledge and skills should be developed to match with their planned activities in an organization and their areas of competencies in carrying out their activities.

Administrative competencies are the knowledge, skills and attitudes that can be acquired through experience and training by the principals who are professionals in their different fields of study. The acquired level of competency inspires principals to function in an organization efficiently. The operational definition of managerial competencies is the ability of the manager to effectively employ necessary skills in management of human and material resources to achieve the stated goals of the institution (Mazur, 2009). Principals' competency in the management of secondary schools will be investigated to find out the extent to which such variables as supervision skills, discipline skills, facility maintenance skills, interpersonal management skills and motivation management skills relates to students' academic performance.

Instructional supervision has to do with what the principal does to promote or direct teaching and learning in the school. The school principals carried out a lot of functions in the areas of supervision. According to Nworie (2021) supervision involves the task of ensuring that protective equipment's are available and organized for effective teaching in the school system. This is done by the principal to see that meaningful and protective learning takes place in all classes and that teachers are teaching what they are supposed to teach and are undertaking the teaching in a manner that the students understand and enjoy their lessons. The essence of instructional supervision is to assist teachers with ideas and suggestions that will improve their instructional delivery, as well as identify their needs and problems. Haruna (2018) noted that supervision is the first and the most important responsibility of a school principal. No wonder Carter (2018) explained that the cardinal index of the performance evaluation of the school administrator rests on the leadership ability in instructional supervision. Similarly, Chika and Ebeke (2017) observed that among many factors that influence learning and achievement in secondary schools, principals' instructional management seem to be the most critical intervening factor.

Supervision of instruction is the ability of principals to adequately monitor the activities of the teachers in the classrooms, advising and stimulating the interest of teachers and students through checking the teachers' actual teachings, classroom tasks, management and the use of instructional materials (Ogakwa, 2003). This also involves the use of expert knowledge and experience to manage, evaluate and co-ordinate the process of improving teaching and learning activities in schools. The principal is also the chief planner of the school activities including curriculum. (Robbins and Judge, 2011). Principals could be competent in supervision of instruction by inspecting the teachers in the classrooms as they teach, inspecting their lesson plans and notes and providing instructional materials for effective teaching and learning to take place. Principals are to ensure that the teachers teach their lessons in line with the current trends. This is because the world is currently becoming global technology and students need to be current in the new developments. The school as a place where the individual develops different competencies, such as, the definition of self and others, development of friendships, and where group cohesion is nurtured, needs to utilize all available skills to ensure that students acquire the desired goals (Ogbonnaya, 2009). Principals need to employ good instructional supervision strategies for the overall success in management of secondary schools. This study will accordingly investigate the principals' competency in the management of secondary schools.

Secondary education is specifically concerned with preparing Nigerian citizens for useful living within the society. Secondary education occupies a strategic position in the national education system. It bridges the gap between the primary and tertiary levels of education in Nigeria. It absorbs the primary level and prepares students for the tertiary which is the manpower base of the nation. Secondary school is an institution or a human industry established for refining human beings in terms of skills, behavior and all round excellence. To achieve secondary educational objectives, an efficient and effective administrator must head such an institution.

Academic performance is a construct which refers to the level of measurable and observable behaviour in learners. According to Meenu (2016) students' academic performance especially at the secondary school level is not only a pointer to the effectiveness of the schools but a major determinant of the future of the pupils in particular and the nation at large. Virtually, all stakeholders in education place high premium on academic achievement, hence Osiki (2001) posited that excellent academic performance of students is often the expectation of parents. In the same vein, Adeyemo (2001) observed that the major goal of the school is to work towards attainment of academic excellence by students. Poor work attitude leads to poor performance of students in public examinations. This collaborates with principals' instructional supervision performance (Edem, 2016). The importance of principals in any educational institution cannot be overemphasized, this is because of the central role they play as implementers of the curriculum of the school. This explains that what principals do or do not do could directly or indirectly affect the attainment of instructional objectives. Consequently, researchers have often attributed students' learning outcome to certain principals and teacher attributes such as their educational qualification, years of experience, classroom behaviour, mode of supervision and even their performance among others (Egwu, 2016). Principals are the backbone of an educational activity on secondary schools. The success and failure of educational activities highly depends on their instructional supervision performance. Their performance is directly linked to process and product of education. Therefore, the performance of principals is emphatic for the improvement of education. According to Oluwatoyin,(2016), performance may be described as "an act of accomplishing or executing a given task". It could also be described as the ability to combine skillfully the right behaviour towards the achievement of organizational goals and objectives.

Performance of students in internal and external examinations seems to have some symbiotic relationships with principals' administrative competencies. In schools where resource management practices are not effectively carried out, principals'

administrative competency might be low resulting to poor students' performance in schools. The research therefore aims at studying the relationship between principals' administrative competencies and students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Ebonyi State.

Statement of the Problem

The principals' administrative functions in secondary schools in Ebonyi State, cover many different areas which include interpersonal relationship, school community relationship, maintenance of school plants, supervisions, communication, discipline asa process of achieving objectives stated or determining what is to be done in the school system. They involve a number of decisions relating to the clarification of school objectives that are considered helpful in the realization of the goals.

The focus of this research is to provide a solution to the problems of supervisory task of the principals that is meant to ensure the attainment of the educational objectives which has largely been ignored. The negligence of supervisory function as in, checking class visitation, assessment of students' distances in class, attendance of teachers, lesson plans, lesson note, assessment of personal protective equipment and many others may be one of the fundamental reasons for poor performance of students and teachers in our secondary schools. Consequently, the effectiveness and efficiency of the schools system in achieving educational goals are affected. In the school system, there are records of poor academic performance among students because, academic activities were rushed to cover up. The issues of life devastation were the order of the day, as teachers were afraid including parents and students, which lead to students' poor academic performance. This research intends to find out the relationship between principals' administrative competencies and students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Ebonyi State

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study is to investigate the principals' administrative competencies and students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Ebonyi State. Specifically the study sought to**:**

1. Ascertain the relationship between principals' supervision competence and students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Ebonyi State
2. Identify the relationship between principals' discipline maintenance competence and students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Ebonyi State

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What is the relationship between principals' supervision competence and students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Ebonyi State?
2. What is the relationship between principals' discipline maintenance competence and students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Ebonyi State?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance.

1: There is no significant relationship between principals' supervision competence and students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Ebonyi State

2: There is no significant relationship between principals' discipline maintenance competence and students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Ebonyi State

Review of Related Literature

Supervision of Instruction Competence and Students Academic Performance

The performance of principals in supervision of instruction could made teachers teach effectively. Supervision of instruction is the process of ensuring that effective teaching and learning takes place in the school system. Instructional supervision is essential in the public secondary school to be able to enhance the teaching and learning process of th teachers and students respectively. According to Mgbodile (2004), supervision of instruction involves the school administrators' ability to effectively see that aspects of instructional delivery in the school system are properly carried out to enhance learning. Supervision is one of the indispensable task of an effective administrator in the operation of a good school system because in addition to arranging and organizing for effective teaching and learning to take place, the school head must undertake to supervise the instruction going on. It is the duty of the Principal to see that meaningful learning is taking place in all the classes and that the teachers are teaching what they are supposed to teach, and in a manner that the students understand and enjoy their lessons.

Instructional supervision also involves effort made by the principal to enhance effective teaching and learning. According to Igwe (2003), it includes all designated school efforts directed towards leadership to teachers and other educational workers in the improvement of instruction. It involves the stimulation of professional growth and development of teachers; the selection and revision of education objectives, material of instruction and methods of teaching, and the evaluation of instruction. Eferakeya cited in Igwe (2003) posited that the role of instructional supervision in educational

management and control may be viewed as that of monitoring different aspects of the school system in terms of resource utilization and relating them to the level of educational goal achievement. This role would embody establishing and clarifying role relationship; developing the curriculum - setting goal, planning learning experiences, allocating resources; supervision of programmes including procurement and allocation of instructional materials and equipment; evaluation of programmes – checking of notes of lesson, scheme of work, diaries, registers and financial records; provision and submission of all school records on demand to the inspectors for cross-checking.

Principals role in instructional supervision include curriculum development and evaluation. Curriculum development in instructional supervision suggest that teachers and principals need to work together to decide what the programme ought to be, how it should be implemented and how it is to be evaluated (Keoreng, 2009). The development of the curriculum is an aspect were the principal is expected to play a leading role in instructional development. The principal should play this role as a team leader by way of guiding teachers either directly or in conjunction with the heads of department in terms of helping to identify relevant goals to the community, planning and selecting relevant learning experiences, helping to implement programmes improvement and evaluating changes.

The essence of instructional supervision seems not to be achieved in most schools. Ezeocha (1990) noted that effective supervision of instruction is lacking in most Nigerian secondary schools hence the perceived decrepitude in the standard of education. He emphasized that Nigerian society demands qualitative education to give the youth functional education, which cannot be achieved without effective supervision of instruction to check if learning content in the curriculum is taught the students. Therefore, without adequate commitment to the performance of the school administrators in their instructional role, categorized as supervision and curriculum development and innovation, and other aspects of school management, the goals of educational programs will continue to be shattered. The extent some factors will relate with principals performance of the task of supervision will be examined in this study. Effective instructional supervision is enhanced by communicating specific issues through advice, direction and discussion to teachers and students by the principals as supervisors.

Principals Administrative Competence on Maintenance of School Discipline

School discipline represents the rules that inform learners on what is right and what is wrong in order to avoid negative consequences (Unachukwu and Okorji (2016). Unachukwu et al further state that, discipline is the sum of all educative efforts in child by the teaching process, the process of character shaping, the

facing and settling of conflicts and the development of trust between educators and learners. By this, discipline is the readiness or ability to respect authority and observe conventional or established laws of society or any organization. Operationally, discipline exists in a situation where individuals are submissive to established rules and regulations governing organizations like the school otherwise, it may lead to an act of indiscipline.

In secondary schools, various types of indiscipline-related behaviours may be student, teacher or principal-related. According to Unachukwu et al (2016), student-related indiscipline or descriptive behaviours are disobedience, stealing, dishonesty, sex offences, truancy, drug offences, assault and insult, among others. All these behaviours disrupt school activities and the principal is expected to devise a means of managing disciplinary problems to enhance the academic performance of the students. According to Madumee-Obike and Abraham in Nzokurum and Iremeka (2017), the general causes of school disciplinary problems are inadequate facilities/equipment to affect teaching and learning, sudden change in educational policy, principals' leadership style, principal-staff relationship, and lack of cooperation by those concerned in the school. All these factors trigger- off indisciplinary attitudes by the students and measures are expected to be put in place by the principal for its management due to its devastating effect in school.

Disciplinary management styles refer to the techniques adopted by the head of organization, such as the school to control disciplinary problems among the students. Umaru, Sambo and Musa (2017) observe that, school discipline is important because it sets a congenial atmosphere needed for teaching and learning. By so doing, it is expedient that principals of Unity schools in Nigeria devise means of dousing the tension created in schools due to disciplinary problems. Umaru et al. (2017) further observe that, some of the strategies or styles of handling incidents of disciplinary problems in Unity Schools in Nigeria include the use of corporal punishment, corrective approach, teacher effective training, detention, supervision, expulsion, deprivation of privilege, moral method, motivational, force and laissez-fare styles, among others.

Corporal punishment is one of the oldest measures or styles of handing disciplinary problems in schools. It involves the use of physical strength to exert punishment to students in school when they contravene the school rules and regulations. According to Vomberg in Maru, (2009), corporal punishment refers to the inflicting of suffering to the students in form of birch, cane, paddle, or slap if they did something wrong. The principals can opt for this in order to maintain discipline in school. The use of corporal punishment however, is no longer in vogue as it tends to inflict physical injury on the students souls and as such, successive governments

have banned its use as a corrective measure to restore discipline in schools.

Disciplinary problems can also be minimized with adequate training given to the teachers and principals in schools. Sensitization programmes such as workshops, in-service training, conferences and seminars for principals on the concept, causes, and styles for coping with disciplinary problems organized as they arise the in schools. This will go a long way to inform the principals on the best style of handling disciplinary problems in schools. By this, the principals of Unity Schools would be able to stem down the tide of misbehaviours by students.

Negotiation can also be used by the principal to manage students' behaviour in the school. To this end, the principal emphasizes a high degree of empathy and supportive attributes in approaching disciplinary problems in school. Negotiation is a concern and attempt to maximize the goals of principal and teachers toward the controlling of disruptive behaviour of students in schools. Ayo (2013) observes that, the management of disciplinary problems in school is seen to be so hard rather than a war path between the two parties. The principal and the students place emphasis on the 'we approach' to issues concerning students' misbehaviour in school rather than war on one part versus the other. Onyebuchi (2013) explains that, the negotiation style in emphasizing interactive and integrative agreement gives way for accommodative behaviours by the students in school. Thus, attributes of behaviours are directed toward an increase of trust and acceptance rather than an escalation of hostility and suspicion. The *win-win* approach to handling behaviour problems requires a high degree of patience and skill in human relations, problem solving and the principals of Unity Schools in Nigeria can opt for negotiation behaviour management style due to its democratic nature as the students and the principal work as team to end behavioural problems in school to accelerate the academic achievement of the students in school.

Research Method

This study adopted a correlational survey research design. The design entailed using two set of questionnaires to gather information from respondent by conducting a field investigation and draw inferences in order to determine the principals administrative competency and students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Ebonyi State. This type of design according to Nworgu (2015), seeks to establish the relationship that exists between two or more variables, such as principals administrative competency and students' academic performance. The area of study is Ebonyi State which is located at the South-East Geo Political Zone of Nigeria. Ebonyi State was created in 1st October, 1996 out of Abia and Enugu States, with her capital located in Abakaliki. The State is known as the 'Salt of the Nation', named after its extensive, huge salt deposits located at the Okposi and Uburu Salt Lakes (Federal

Republic of Nigeria, 2015). Ebonyi State comprises 13 local government areas, with three (3) Education Zones, namely Abakaliki, Afikpo and Onueke. The residents of Ebonyi State are mostly civil and public servants, farmers, traders, businessmen and women, clergy men and women and medical practitioners. Ebonyi State operates formal, informal and non-formal education systems especially at the secondary education level. The system of schools' administration in Ebonyi State furthermore operates as public secondary schools with different administrative task that influence students' performance. The sample for the study was 398respondents which comprised 382 students and 16 teachers. This sample size was arrived by using Taro Yamane formular for finite population. Two questionnaire which were developed by the researcher were used for data collection from the respondents. Both questionnaires designed for teachers and students as the respondents, was constructed in line with the purpose of the study and research questions. The first one was titled "Principals Administrative Competencies Questionnaire (PACQ)" containing 30 items. The instrument was used to determine Competencies of Principals in Ebonyi State. PACQ has two sections of A and B. Section A contained the personal data of the respondents and elicited such information as the status of the respondents. Section B of the PACQ was arranged and organized into 2 clusters. The second questionnaire titled "Students Academic Performance Questionnaire (SAPQ)" was designed to gather information on students' performance, which has 10 items. The response items in the two questionnaires were organized on a 4 point scale with response options and numerical values assign. Three draft copies of the two sets of questionnaires were submitted to three experts, one from Measurement and Evaluation option in Science and Computer Education Department and two from Educational Administration and Planning option in Educational Foundations all in Ebonyi State University, Abakaliki. The experts were requested to examined the content of the two instruments in line with the purpose of the study, in terms of their content relevance, items clarity, design, as well as ascertain if the items were related to the purpose of the study, research questions and hypotheses. The reliability index gave an overall internal consistency and reliability coefficient 'r' value of 0.892 for the PAEQ and the for the second instrument - SPQ with only 10 items on students' performance, an internal consistency and reliability coefficient 'r' value of 0.772 was obtained.

The research questions were answered using Pearson Products Moment Correlation Statistics. The null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 alpha levels using Linear Regression tool. This was used to determine the degree of relationship between the variables under study. In answering the research questions Pearson Product Moment Correlation was used. The decision rule was that any coefficient between 0.80 to 1 was described as very

high or near perfect positive correlation while any coefficient between 0.60 to 0.79 was described as high positive relationship. Coefficient between 0.40 to 0.59 was described as moderate positive relationship. After applying the Linear Regressions tool, the researcher rejected the null hypotheses when the P value was less than the alpha value and did not reject the null hypotheses when the P value was greater than the alpha value.

Presentation of Results

Research Question 1: What is the relationship between principals' supervision competence and students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Ebonyi State?

Table 1: Relationship between Principals' Supervision Competence and Students' Academic Performance

	Supervision Competence	Academic Performance
Supervision Competence	1.0000	.900
	(380)	(380)
Academic Performance	.900	1.0000
	(380)	(380)

r=0.900 **r^2=0.81**

The results in Table 1 show a correlation coefficient(r) of 0.900 which indicates a very high positive relationship. This signifies that there is a very high relationship between principals' supervision competence and students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Ebonyi State. However, the coefficient of determination (r^2) is 0.81 which when converted to percentage is 81%. This value explains the variation in students' academic performance as explained by principals in public secondary schools.

Research Question 2: What is the relationship between principals' discipline maintenance competence and students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Ebonyi State?

Table 2: Relationship between Principals' Discipline Maintenance Competence and Students' Academic performance

Discipline Maintenance Competence		Academic Performance	
Discipline Maintenance Competence	1.0000	.652	
	(380)		(380)
Academic Performance	.652	1.0000	
	(380)		(380)

r=0.65 **r^2=0.43**

The results in table 2 show correlation coefficient of 0.65. This signifies that there is a high positive relationship between principals' discipline maintenance competence and students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Ebonyi State. However, the coefficient of determination (r^2) is 43%, which explains the variation in students' academic performance as indicated by principals.

Test of Hypotheses

HO_1: There is no significant relationship between principals' supervision competence and students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Ebonyi State.

Table 3: Significant Relationship between Principals' Supervision Competence and Students' Academic Performance

Computed r (r)	r-Squared	Adjusted r-Square	Standard error	Beta	t-cal	P-Value	Dec.
.900	.809	.809	2.07830	.900	18.634	.0000	Sig.

From Table 3, r represents the coefficient of correlation which established on relationship between principals' supervision competence and students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Ebonyi State. The coefficient of determination (r^2) for computed r value is 0.900. This value explains respondents' opinion on principals' supervision competence determines students' academic performance in secondary schools. On the test of significance of the hypothesis as indicated in table 3, the calculated 't' value is 18.634 while the p-value is 0.0000. This indicates a significant result between the p-value (0.000) is less than the level of significance (0.05). Therefore, the hypothesis that there is no significant

relationship between principals' supervision competence and students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Ebonyi State was rejected.

HO_2: There is no significant relationship between principals' discipline maintenance competence and students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Ebonyi State

Table 4: Significant relationship between Principals' Discipline Maintenance Competence and Students' Academic Performance

Computed r (r)	r-Squared	Adjusted r-Square	Standard error	Beta	t-cal	P-Value	Dec.
.652	.425	.423	4.46948	.652	9.651	.0000	Sig.

From Table 4, r represents the coefficient of correlation which is established on relationship between the two variables. The coefficient of determination (r^2) for computed r value is 0.652 which is 43%. This value explains principals' opinion on adoption of discipline maintenance competence determines students' academic performance in secondary schools. On the test of significance of the hypothesis as indicated in table 4, the calculated 't' value is 9.651 while the p-value is 0.0000. This indicates a significant result between the p-value (0.000) is less than the level of significance (0.05). Therefore the hypothesis that there is no significant relationship between principals' discipline maintenance competence and students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Ebonyi State was rejected

Discussion of Findings

The finding of the study shows that there was a very high positive relationship between principals' supervision competence and students' academic performance in public secondary schools based on the computed r in line with the co-efficient of determination (r^2) implying that, effective supervision competence of secondary school principals enhance students' academic performance in secondary schools. Hypothesis 1 on table 3 concluded that there was significant relationship between principals' supervision competence and students' academic performance in secondary schools, since the t. test of significance of r at an alpha level of 0.05 was greater, and significance of t (probability value) was low. So, the study concluded that there is significant relationship between principals' supervision competence and

students' academic performance in secondary schools.

The above finding in line with some works of other scholars like Mgbodile (2004), supervision of instruction involves the school administrators' ability to effectively see that aspects of instructional delivery in the school system are properly carried out to enhance learning. Supervision is one of the indispensable task of an effective administrator in the operation of a good school system because in addition to arranging and organizing for effective teaching and learning to take place, the school head must undertake to supervise the instruction going on. It is the duty of the Principal to see that meaningful learning is taking place in all the classes and that the teachers are teaching what they are supposed to teach, and in a manner that the students understand and enjoy their lessons. Enyi (2012) noted that principal also inspect teacher's notes of lesson before hand to ensure that they were well written and set in line with the scheme of work to enhance effective teaching. The Principal will also have to observe the teacher in class during class delivery to get an insight into the teacher's mastery of the content, method of lesson delivery, the use of instructional materials, classroom control, technique of asking questions and manner of involving students in active learning as well as his evaluation techniques to ensure that student understand and enjoy their lessons (Agbo, 2013). On the other hand, students' evaluation is also necessary as a measure of their progress. Through the evaluation of the students orally, written or practical examination, the extent to which they understand the curriculum content is ascertained. Through evaluation of students, the principal will be able to determine the capability of his teachers and determine whether the pupils are learning.

The finding of the study shows that there was a high positive relationship between principals' discipline maintenance competence and students' academic performance in public secondary schools based on the computed r, in line with the co-efficient of determination (r^2) which ratings implying that, principals discipline maintenance competence attributed secondary schools students' academic performance. Also hypothesis 2 on table 4 concluded that there is significant relationship between principals' discipline maintenance competence and students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Ebonyi State, since the t. test of significance of r, at an alpha level of 0.05 was greater than the significance of t (probability value). It indicated that there was significant relationship between principals' discipline maintenance competence and students' academic
performance in secondary schools.

The above finding in line with Unachukwu and Okorji (2016) asserted that discipline is the sum of all educative efforts in child by the teaching process, the process of character shaping, the

facing and settling of conflicts and the development of trust between educators and learners. By this, discipline is the readiness or ability to respect authority and observe conventional or established laws of society or any organization. In secondary schools, various types of indiscipline-related behaviours may be student, teacher or principal-related. Unachukwu et al (2016), student-related indiscipline or descriptive behaviours are disobedience, stealing, dishonesty, sex offences, truancy, drug offences, assault and insult, among others. All these behaviours disrupt school activities and the principal is expected to devise a means of managing disciplinary problems to enhance the academic performance of the students. In addition, Madumee-Obike and Abraham in Nzokurum and Iremeka (2017), the general causes of school disciplinary problems are inadequate facilities/equipment to affect teaching and learning, sudden change in educational policy, principals' leadership style, principal-staff relationship, and lack of cooperation by those concerned in the school. All these factors trigger- off in disciplinary attitudes by the students and measures are expected to be put in place by the principal for its management due to its devastating effect in school.

Conclusion

The study focused mainly on Principals Administrative Competencies and Students' Academic performance in public secondary schools in Ebonyi State. Based on the findings, the following conclusions were made: There is a very high positive relationship between principals' supervision competence, discipline maintenance competence and students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Ebonyi State has a high relationship which is an indication that principals administrative competence attributed to students' academic performance in secondary schools.

Recommendations

From the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. As regards the relationship between principals' supervision competence and students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Ebonyi State, Government of Ebonyi State should from time to time organize capacity-building workshops for principals on supervision techniques especially in the area of school administration to enhance their effectiveness in school management.
2. In case of the relationship between principals' discipline maintenance competence and students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Ebonyi State, Secondary Education Board should always reviewed the education acts to principals on modality of administering discipline to students.

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