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THE SETBACKS OF PRINCIPALS' LEADERSHIP IN THE STATE SECONDARY SCHOOLS

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ABSTRACT

The issues that leads to the setbacks of principals' leadership in the state secondary schools demand a serious investigation in order to bring out some modalities that can help the principals face some challenges that can bring out the solutions to their setbacks in the administration of the school. Therefore, this work ought to bring the out principals solution to the setbacks encountered in order to improve in their administrative functions. Two research questions and one hypothesis guided the work. A descriptive survey research design was used covering all the state secondary schools. The population was the entire 256 principals and 267 school staff of the board. All the entire principals were used because they are few. The validity and reliability was done by two experts in educational management and policy while two in research and statistics established the reliability using Cronbach Alpha. The co-efficient result was 0.79 which means that the instrument was reliable and could test what it intends to test. The data generated was analysed using mean and standard deviation while t-test was used in testing the hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance. The result of the data analysed showed that principals face some challenges which bring their setbacks in their administration functions such as ensuring teacher/student ratio of 1:35 in JSS and SSS classes, involvement of teachers in decisions that concern them etc. Therefore some recommendations were made e.g. training of both principals and teachers, regular sponsored seminars/workshops dual principalship, involving teachers in decisions-making, adequate motivation among others.

Keywords: Setback; Principal; Leadership; Secondary Schools.

Introduction

Effective leadership is one of the setbacks of administrators in schools and other establishments. Good leadership is the best in every organization. Therefore the issue of the setbacks in today's leadership, the principals not excluded seems to be a thing of interest to the administrators, social scientists, researchers etc. it has been observed by many researchers as a crucial factor in institutional effectiveness and efficiency. In fact it is the major factor in the success and progress of an establishment and for the development of a nation. It also determines the progress and growth of an educational system. The main elements of organization and administration are:

a. There will be a problem to be solved and purpose to achieve
b. There will be human and material organization to achieve the purpose.
c. Different individuals offered leadership by their suggestions, one commands while others follow in observation.
d. There will be planning based on the evaluation of needs.

e. There will be discussion and decision taken and communicated.
f. There will be cooperation and co-ordination of activities leading to the achievement of purpose. (Obi, 2003).

Leadership can be defined in two different ways, the restricted view of leadership and a liberal interpretation. The restricted view holds that only people in leadership position are leaders in other wards the status position of a person in the power elected determines whether the individual should be regarded as a leader or not. Thus in a secondary school, the principal is the leader, in a department of the school, the head of department is the leader. Leadership is here regarded as the attribute of a position. If the teacher in the classroom is leader, the principal of a school is in a position of greater leadership while the leadership position of the minister of education is greater than others (Omenyi, 2014). The leadership is institutionalized.

The liberal interpretation holds that every act of influence on a matter relevant in organizational or group functioning and survival is an act of leadership. Thus, if one helps a group to define and achieve goals or to maintain the group, he is exercising leadership. A person who helps a group to take decisions with regards to its purposes, goals and policies is helping to define goals. A person who influences others to execute policies is helping to achieve goals. A person who helps to reconcile conflicts and make people feel happy to belong to the group or organization is helping to maintain the group. All of these are acts of influence on matters of organizational relevance. All these definitions go to the principal as he is the one bestowed the power of leadership in a given secondary school (Ndu, Ocho, & Okeke, 1997).

Leadership has been described as the process of social influence in which one person can enlist the aid. Leadership according to Wikipedia 2011 is the process of social influence in which one person can enlist the aid and support of others in the accomplishment of a common task. Ogbonna (2011) stated that effective leadership is the ability to successfully integrate and maximize available resources within the internal and external environment for the attainment of organizational goals. Specifically, educational leadership is the process of enlisting and guiding the talents and energies of teachers, students and parents towards achieving a common educational goals. The principal is the school leader, however, as a school leader may also include other person who contribute towards the achievement of the aims of the school. These people need to be adequately equipped with the administrative tools to effectively run the schools (Nieboer, 2014). It has been observed that the educational system reforms cannot succeed without due consideration to the issues posing challenges or setbacks to educational leadership in the secondary schools. The educational leadership should be matched with the strategies, action plans geared towards the achievement of educational goals. Obviously, the strategic plans and actions should include reconstruction of the curriculum exciting to believe that we live in times that are so revolutionary that new and different abilities are expected from people in leadership (Uzor, 2014).

However, the principals are faced with some setbacks which hinder effective leadership such as increased enrolments from year to year. At times beyond the carrying capacity of the school, which results to overpopulation, crowded classrooms, high teacher/student ratio and number of professional quality of the teaching personnel in the school. All these hamper effective leadership in education and subsequently effective administration of secondary schools especially now. The issue of non-provision of adequate resources, adequate facilities that will help in the functioning of the school will hinder good leadership. These neglected facilities in the secondary schools hampers effective teaching and learning and the quality of students output. This is a great setback in educational leadership, the principal is faced with diverse functions and tasks among which

are pupil/staff personnel administration, supervision of instruction, equipment and physical facilities, finance management, among others. These numerous tasks made principals face lots of setbacks in their managerial functions (Ikediugwu, 2007). Other scholars like Onuorah (2018), Okalo (2012 and Ubah (2019) also reported the prevalence of conflicts, disagreements, confrontations and tensions between the principals and teachers in so many schools. The scholars also discovered that poor administration by principals such as not involving teachers in the decisions making and their rigid control lead to teacher indiscipline, students' indiscipline. Communication gap, closed organizational climate, staff truancy, low staff morale and individual rivalry among staff. These readily suggest that some leaders do not appropriately employ leadership variables in the day to day running of the school hence, conflict, anarchy and poor staff performance characterize most schools. Also Iwuno (2016) opined that teachers are not adequately motivated so that they can work effectively and efficiently in the impartation of knowledge. She went further to say that motivating teachers involves acknowledging that staff development continues throughout working life, through induction of training and appraisal. The provision of in-service training, provision of access to varieties of learning experience, seminars, workshops, conferences among others. This is important because the teacher is the initiator of learning sequence, the assessor of the learning efficiency and indeed the pivotal element in the entire educational development.

Examination malpractice among students has also affect the leadership of principals because it brings loss of confidence and integrity of the heads. Also, where are some acts of indiscipline existing among students such as rioting, sexual abuse, alcoholism, distortion of both school and public properties, lying, stealing etc. it was believed that there is no rules and regulations existing in the school therefore the principals is blamed and this brings a serious setback to the principals leadership. The federal government of Nigeria has stated out some policies that are laudable for achieving the goals and objectives of the secondary education. These well-articulated and amiable goals may not be achieved if what brings the principals setbacks are not duly considered. These threats pose threats to effective educational leadership in Nigeria. Also, education of now, places a lot of demands on educational administrators, teachers and students in the current global educational pursuits. It seems that strategic plans and actions are not being considered by the educational leadership of secondary schools in order to tackle the setbacks in education. This is worrisome because schools cannot succeed if the factors necessary for its survival are not addressed and subsequently tackled, for a good leader to be critical reflected, intuitive connected, ethical responsible, intellectual capable, professional committed, managerial competent, strategies, ready and emotional matured. Dulgnan (2016). Therefore, the problem of this work, is to identify those that constitute problems to the leadership of principals and to provide solutions to them.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study.

1) What are the setbacks that principals have?
2) What are the solutions of the setbacks the principals have?

Hypotheses

(1) There is no significance different between the mean rating of principals and the senior staff on things.
(2) The setbacks leadership in public secondary school

Research Method

Descriptive survey research design was used. There was two sets of population comprising of 257 senior staff and 256 principals of public secondary schools in Anambra State altogether there were 515 target

population. The entire population was used because they are not much and are controllable and workable. The study was carried out in Anambra State of Nigeria. This twenty one Local Government Area and five educational zones with a total of 256 principals in government owned secondary schools in the state. The population for the study was 256 principals and 257 senior staff selected using proportionate stratified random sampling techniques in all the educational zones in the state. A structured form of question was used for collection of data. The instrument was validated by experts in department of educational management and policy and two experts in research and statistics. It was divided into two sections, section A comparisons of the personal information of the respondent and section B while part B comprises of an item questionnaire built into two clusters. Cluster one deals with the setbacks of leadership in education while cluster two deals with the practical solutions to the setbacks. Numerical values were assigned to the instrument on a 4-point rating of very high extent (4 points), High extent (3 points), low extent (2 points), and very low extent (1 point). The face and construct validity was done by two experts in educational management and policy and an expert in measurement and evaluation at Unizik Awka. The connections and recommendation were made by these experts are reflected in the final draft of the questionnaire. The instrument through the use of Cronbach Alpha technique has reliability of 0.08 and 0.79 for Section A and B respectively. These indicate positive and high correlation that showed that the instrument was valid and reliable. The researchers used direct approach in administering copies of the questionnaires. In doing this, the research along with 5 researcher's assistants who are teachers that are degrees holders from sample schools administered the copies of the questionnaire for the respondents for the purpose of the study and to avoid any missing. The researcher used direct approach in administering and collection. The data was analysed using statistical tools. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions. The range of the scores for the 4 points scale is as follows 4.00 and 2.50 is regarded as agreed to a high extent and high extent and very low extent while t-test was used to test the null hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance.

Presentation of Results

Table 1: Man and standard deviation of principals and the senior staff of the board on the setbacks of principals' leadership in public secondary schools.

S/n	Items	Principals			Senior Staff		
		$\overline{X}$	SD	Decision	$\overline{X}$	SD	Decision
1.	Giving adequate incentive for teachers and other workers.	3.08	1.75	High Extent	3.46	1.66	High Extent
2.	Involving teachers in decision making	2.89	1.70	High Extent	3.46	1.66	High Extent
3.	Associating capacity training for teachers skill update.	3.08	1.75	High Extent	1.73	1.32	Very low Extent
4.	Ensuring teacher pupil ratio of 1.35 in both JSS and SSS classes.	2.62	1.77	High Extent	2.62	1.37	High Extent
5.	Disarticulation of J.S.S. and S.S.S. as separate schools.	3.54	1.88	Very High Extent	3.62	1.00	Very High Extent
6.	Achieving the right type of assessment tools.	2.81	1.68	High Extent	2.81	1.68	High Extent
7.	Eradication of examination malpractice.	2.71	1.51	High Extent	3.21	1.51	High Extent
8.	Providing adequate school infrastructures.	1.62	1.27	Low Extent	1.62	1.27	Low Extent
9.	Rigidity of administrators to teacher problem.	2.82	1.67	High Extent	2.82	1.62	High Extent

10.	Tacking staff lateness to school.	2.68	1.64	High Extent	2.99	1.73	High Extent
11.	Over hauling the students' lateness to school.	3.23	1.29	High Extent	2.68	1.64	High Extent
12.	Combating the laissez faire attitude of teachers in attending classes.	3.53	1.88	Very High Extent	2.99	1.73	High Extent
13.	Recognition of importance of guidance counselors in students' career choices.	2.99	1.73	High Extent	3.42	1.86	High Extent
14.	Ensuring safety and discipline in schools through eradication of stealing, truancy, vandalism, drug abuse.	3.19	1.79	High Extent	2.68	1.64	High Extent
15.	Maintaining proper accountant of the school funds.	3.08	1.75	High Extent	3.46	1.86	High Extent

Table 1 revealed that the grand mean rating of all the items are above 2.50 and 3.50 and within the range of 2.89 and 3.53. This simply indicates that both the principals and the senior staff of the school management boards agreed to a high extent that these items are the factors that cause setbacks to the principals in educational leadership in public secondary schools in Anambra State.

S/n	Items	Principals			Senior Staff		
		$\overline{X}$	SD	Decision	$\overline{X}$	SD	Decision
16.	Adequate funding of school to accommodate all expenditures.	3.69	0.93	Very High Extent	3.61	0.65	High Extent
17.	Organizing conferences and seminars to better equip educational administrators.	2.91	0.83	High Extent	2.80	1.00	High Extent
18.	Engagement of schools heads and teachers in online training and retraining for acquisition of better skills and leadership.	2.88	1.12	High Extent	3.14	1.24	High Extent
19.	Adequate motivation of teachers through prompt payment of salary and other incentives for effective performance of their duties.	2.53	0.91	High Extent	2.81	0.81	High Extent
20.	Establishing counseling commission and clear definition of the counselors' roles in schools.	2.89	0.90	High Extent	2.87	0.89	High Extent
21.	Maintaining adequate teacher – student ratio through provision of adequate number of teachers and facilities.	3.53	0.92	High Extent	3.60	0.88	High Extent
22.	Teaching of leadership skills to all categories of students in all levels of education.	2.28	1.08	Low Extent	2.25	1.27	Low Extent
23.	Launching of examination ethnics for all students and serious punishment of defaulters in exam experience.	2.91	0.83	High Extent	2.80	1.00	High Extent
24.	Active involvement of all staff in the school settling in maintaining law, discipline and orders.	3.95	0.93	Very high Extent	3.09	1.01	High Extent
25.	Gemmating appropriate and adequate items for assessment of students.	3.70	0.94	Very high Extent	3.60	0.89	Very high Extent
26.	Active involvement of teachers in decision making.	3.53	0.82	Very high Extent	3.18	0.79	High Extent
27.	Adoption of JSS and SSS as separate schools with different heads.	2.89	0.93	High Extent	2.56	0.90	High Extent
28.	Abolition of the rigidity of the principals towards teachers' problems.	2.60	0.90	High Extent	2.70	1.12	High Extent
29.	Maintaining serious punishment for lateness school to both staff and students	2.70	0.90	High Extent	3.77	0.17	Very high Extent

30.	Provision of adequate infrastructural facilities.	2.57	0.90	High Extent	3.77	0.66	High Extent

Table 2 shows that both the principals and senior staff agreed to the items that can enhance effective and efficient leadership except item 7 which was agreed to a low extent by both the principal and the senior staff which means that leadership skills should not be taught to all categories of students in all levels of education.

Table 3: T-test of the mean rating of principals and senior staff on the practical solutions to the setbacks to leadership in public secondary schools.

Group	N	$\overline{X}$	SD	DF	T-Cal	T-Crit	Decision
Principals	256	2.85	1.68	1.75	1.86	3.57	Rejected
Senior Staff	257	2.07	1.43				

Using the T-test, there was no significance difference between the principals and the senior staff on the practical solution to the setbacks of principal's leadership in the public schools. Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted.

Discussion of Findings

From the study, it was find out that inadequate finding, involvement of teachers in decisions especially the ones that concern them, examination mal-practice, indiscipline among students, organizing conference and seminar regularly, adequate motion for all staff, providing adequate teachers, maintenance of teacher- student ratio among orders are the setbacks that principals encounter in their work as leaders. Also the researcher observed during the course of the research that teachers form cliques among themselves thereby tackling the principal's leadership. All there constitute to the challenges encountered by the school heads. These are in line with what Omenyi (2016) stated that indiscipline, cliques among teachers, poor infrastructure etc. Example the principals' leadership in secondary school in Anambra state.

On the hand the null hypothesis was accepted that there is no significant difference between the principals and the senior staff in the practical solution on the setbacks encountered by principals in course of their leadership. Also the solutions to these setbacks accepted by both the principal and the senior staff of the board are adequate funding of the school, motivation of all staff, provision of regular seminar, workshops and conferences, provision of adequate infrastructural among others. These were believed by the respondents to enhance effective and efficient leadership.

Recommendations:-

1. The government should provide enough funds in secondary schools in order to assist the principals in providing basic things required by both teachers and student to enhance teaching and learning.
2. Obedience is very importance for works to move on in the school. Teachers should not form cliques against the principals in order not to make work difficult for him/her.
3. The government should introduce dual principal ship in Anambra state. The junior secondary and the senior secondary schools should be separated. This will also curb indiscipline in the schools.
4. The work of counselors should not be neglected in schools.

5. There should be enough classes and teacher/students ratio should be recognized in the school.
6. Necessary infrastructure should be provided by the government e.g. pipe borne water, fencing the school to avoid robbers etc.
7. The issue of examination mal-practice should be tackled with all seriousness by all the stakeholders of education. The defaulter should be punished appropriately.

In conclusion, the school principals should properly equip themselves with tools leadership skills that will make them effective and efficient leaders. Attending of workshops, conference etc. on leadership will better make them better leaders in order to attain the goals and objectives of the school system.

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