
**PRACTICAL EFFECTIVE PRINCIPALS' LEADERSHIP BEHAVIOURS AND
TODAY'S TEACHER TASK PERFORMANCE IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN
ANAMBRA STATE**

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ABSTRACT

This study determined practical effective principals' leadership behaviours and today's teacher task performance in secondary schools in Anambra State. Guided by one research question and one null hypothesis tested at the 0.05 level of significance, the correlational survey research design was adopted in this study. Population of the study comprised all the 263 principals and 5,249 secondary school teachers in all the public secondary schools in the six education zones of the state. Using multistage sampling procedure, a sample of 350 respondents was drawn. Data was collected using two researchers' developed questionnaires titled, "Practical Effective Principals' Leadership Behaviours Questionnaire" (PEPLBQ) and "Today's Teacher Task Performance Questionnaire" (TTPQ). The two questionnaires were structured on a four-point response scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD), weighted 4, 3, 2, and 1 respectively. The instruments were validated by four experts. The internal consistency of the questionnaires was determined using Cronbach's Alpha method and it yielded reliability coefficients of 0.78 and 0.76 for PEPLBQ and TTPQ respectively. The research question was answered using Pearson's Product Moment Correlation, while p-value was used to determine the significance of the correlation at the 0.05 level of significance. The result of the study showed that there is a very high positive and significant relationship between practical principals' leadership behaviours and today's teacher task performance in secondary schools in Anambra State. Based on the findings, it was recommended that capacity building workshop on practical effective

principals' leadership behaviours should be organized for the principals to remind and encourage them to consistently exhibit such practical and effective leadership behaviours for improved today's teacher job performance and consequently, quality secondary education in the state.

Key words: effective principal, principal leadership behaviour, teacher task performance

Introduction

In the Nigeria education system, secondary education, whose administrator/chief executive is known as a principal, is a very big business that requires effective principal leadership behaviours to succeed. The chief executive is in a unique position to shape and influence the way the secondary teachers carry out their duties; positively or negatively. Success in achieving secondary educational objectives and goals does not just happen. It results from combinations of factors among which are styles/behaviours of the leader and the freedom of power at the leader's disposal as he exercises such authority and power. This is very paramount because the success of any secondary school directly depends on the effectiveness of the principal's leadership, his competence and his managerial skills as seen in the principals' office management, curriculum management, staff development, and motivation and in keeping with innovations and good relationships with the school community.

Every effective principal's focus of attention is to make a difference, which positively impacts on quality education. Highly effective principals are skilled in leadership, relation-building, organization, communication and goal-setting. The principal is charged with the responsibility of harnessing the available human and material resources within the school in such a way that the desired goals are achieved. The basic requirement for effective teacher performance and student achievement is inherent in the ability of the principal to positively influence teachers, students and other stakeholders in the realization of educational goals. The principal is responsible for leading the planning, implementing, supporting, advocating and monitoring of teaching and learning process in order to enhance teacher performance for improved student achievement. Thus, he guarantees productivity, which also means graduating students that the society can be proud of. He works relentlessly to improve achievement by focusing on the quality of instruction. He helps define and promote high expectations: they connect directly with the teachers and the classroom (University of Washington Researchers, 2023). An effective principal has a special responsibility to be sensitive to the group's functional needs and to see that they are carried out. As problems

arise in the school, he generates ideas along with the teachers towards solving the problem. The principals are seen to be the critical actors in improving teaching and learning conditions in the schools (Liebowitz & Lorna, 2019).

Principals, as the leader of the teaching staff in secondary schools are saddled with wide range of task and responsibilities. As they plan, organize, staff, direct, coordinate, supervise/control, budget, report and evaluate, there are certain leadership behaviours they are expected to exhibit in order to create and accommodate goal-oriented teaching-learning environment. However, today's principal has been characterized as being weak in managerial competence and several past literature studies have attributed the weakness to the principal experience and qualification (Usbein, 2023); the relationship between the principals and the teachers (Okoli, 2020); the assignment structure and how the principal solves problems in the school (Musa, 2012).

Studies on the relationship that exist between principals' behaviour and teachers' work performance in secondary schools revealed that there is a significant relationship between principals' organizational behaviour in term of motivation, communication, decision making and teachers' work performance. In fostering achievement of the secondary school aims and objectives, the teacher and school head have vital roles to play. While the principal provides effective leadership roles, the teacher provides the indispensable and critical teaching professional services. However, the teachers' ability and effectiveness in discharging these services could be influenced by a lot of factors, such as leadership strategies adopted by the principal (Kwamsah, 2021). They went further to state that principals' management strategies include the administrative style of the principal, personnel policies and procedures, motivation, communication working conditions, involvement in decision making, all of which help teachers to develop a sense of belonging and high morale for effective work performance. If teachers are unhappy, frustrated, uninspired, and ill-motivated then the nation's educational system is doomed, for without them, educational objectives cannot be realized. The extent, to which teachers are willing to cooperate and work effectively with their school heads, depends to a large extent on their administrative behaviour of the school administrator. Principals should therefore, encourage effective performance of their teachers by identifying their need and trying to meeting them. ObuIa (2021) pointed out that any organization that failed to make effective use of the creative ability of its employees should expect the display of negative initiatives and imagination, which would contradict the goals and objectives of such an organization. In secondary schools, such actions could lead to inefficiency and ineffectiveness in teaching work by teachers, as well as uncooperative attitude, protest and strike actions.

A leader is a person who can influence other people, while leadership connotes followership and prestige position. Leadership is a dynamic phenomenon. Under the group approach to leadership, a leader is not a personal authority. His chief purpose is to develop group power that will enable the staff to accomplish the organizational goals. He does not conceive of his power as something apart from the group, thus he has the opportunity to lead. He is concerned with developing the kind of working relationship that will give him power “with” the group. The power “with” principal begins by assisting the teachers to plan together. This makes the principal to be able build group loyalty; a sense of personal responsibility for the accomplishment of the school goals and a unity of effort that are impossible under the power “over” concept because a principal in a power “over” situation wants teachers to give unquestioning support and respect to his policy. To question is to challenge, and the challenger must be subdued.

Leadership behaviour is a combination of specific characteristics that leaders have and the actions they take. It is the leader’s approach to providing direction, implementing plan, and motivating people. Leadership behaviour is different from management behaviours in that the goal is to motivate and inspire others toward an aspiration vision (Axe, 2023). Strong leadership behaviours make someone an effective leader, who can motivate his followers to give their best and achieve their highest goals no matter what condition. Negative leadership behaviour can undermine their credibility and make them less convincing, effective, and inspiring. Leadership behaviour varies among group members according to the demands of the situation, the expectations of the followers, and the competence and esteem of the group members. Based on the development of leadership theory, it is known that the trait theory views effectiveness of leadership as largely determined by traits such as self-esteem, initiative, intelligence, language fluency and creativity, including the physical characteristics possessed by the person as a leader.

A great number of studies were conducted to explore the relationship between certain principal leadership behaviours/styles and teachers’ performance, school climate, and student achievement. Principals’ leadership behaviour could be authoritarian (autocratic), participative (democratic), and laissez-faire. However, the principal leadership behaviour defined as democratic indirect, initiating structure and consideration is more likely to be associated with higher quality teacher performance and students’ achievement. However, principals’ leadership behaviours have led to different approach to the study of leadership. Hence, the following conclusions that; leadership is a group role; it depends upon the frequency of interaction; leadership is wide spread and diffused; leadership qualities and followership qualities are interchangeable and can shift from situation to situation.

Principal leadership is, therefore, the principal's effort to influence, encourage, guide and direct teachers to work toward achieving set goals. To instill this role, the principal must show a persuasive and exemplary behaviour. The principal as a leader has to realize that the success of the school's life for which he is responsible is very much determined by his behaviour. This is in line with Hendarman in Pardosi and Utari (2020) who believed that leadership behaviour plays an important role in improving the performance of subordinates and argues that to build an effective school there requires strong leadership, clear attention to learning outcomes, high appreciation for students, a good environment and supervision at the level of achievement.

Specifically, it has been noted that there are some basic and helpful leadership behaviours, which principal exhibits that improve teacher performance. They include having self-confidence. This implies having adequate self concept that goes a long way to determine his leadership behaviour quality in the school. If a principal has adequate self concept, it means he has confidence in himself and his abilities. This also implies that he has confidence in his abilities to develop confidence in others, grow and to develop professionally and help others solve problems, cope with challenges and situations. Glanz (2005) noted that excellence of a school depends on the positive influence of its leadership. If the principal is incompetent, the result will be negative.

A principal that has confidence in himself is always sure of himself; he is not self-centered nor possesses the habit of belittling or running down others. He does not deliberately hurt others in order to boost his ego nor have to constantly need that teachers tell him how valuable, worthy or important he is. He does not have a feeling of insecurity and so constantly on guard or have to build up a feeling of superiority or that he is better than others. He is not afraid that somebody is after his job. If a principal can eliminate all these negative feelings, his effectiveness will increase. As the principal's confidence increases, he also helps to increase the self-confidence of the teachers. He relates with the teachers as colleagues and as partners in progress and not as a boss. Hence, he thinks, consults, and decides with them on what the teachers should teach and how it should be taught. This behaviour of the principal creates a good rapport between the principal and the teachers on the one hand and a friendly working environment on the other hand as well as increase the teacher performance and, consequently student achievement.

Some principals operate under false assumption which clearly indicate that such principal have low self concept. One of these assumptions is for a principal to think that he knows more than the teachers. Obviously this is impossible, and the principal goes along to establish authoritative or

dictatorial behaviour system which, creates tension, hostility, and undermines the quality of teacher performance.

The behaviour of a principal should revolve around a high level of strategy, always considering the expected goals of the secondary education. Thus, he keeps the overall vision of the school close to his heart, while planning out every step toward goal achievement. He does this by promoting innovation, such that he does not assume that the way things are is the way things ought to be. He encourages innovative thinking from every teacher, asks for feedback, suggestions, and ideas, seeks learning opportunities, develops new skills to help him develop, analyze and refine progress, set ambitious goals that will make them stretch to achieve them. Effective principal creates a situation which can foster creativity and provide opportunities for teachers to be creative in order to produce something new. In other words, the principal encourages teachers to take and manage risks and prevent the wrong circumstances. This motivates teachers to be always improving the quality of experiences presented to the students.

Another leadership behaviour that improves teacher performance is to stimulate teachers to engage in activities related to the school innovation, and encouraging them to actively participate in seminars, workshops and institutional coaching activities. Thus, he invites teachers to share knowledge; provide facility support and monitor innovations as well as provide reward. Also he models his innovative behaviour to teachers by frequently modifying student activities to make them more interesting from the previous year. Pay attention to teacher performance by creating activities which enable the teacher to be active in developing and supporting their activities.

One of the main duties of principals is to help to create a healthy working environment whereby teachers collaborate and identify with the school's mission and goals. This he does by inspiring and motivating the teachers to create new methods of teaching and learning, through reforms, towards achieving the expected educational goals. He serves as a motivator whose effectiveness in the school requires focus and commitment. Getting things done in a manner that produce desired results. He ensures that both the teachers and the students are well guided. He seeks a compact and intelligent teamwork, fosters solidarity so as to create and maintains enabling environment; ensuring accountability and transparency as well as influencing decision making that guarantees certainty of successful school output.

Effective principal is visionary. Great leaders are great visionaries. Thus, he has a goal to set the vision first, then unite teachers around him as a team and help them clearly articulate the school vision and goals and define a plan/path for improvement/achievement by explaining the school

development plan to the teachers so that they may understand and follow it. He leads the teachers by delegating agreed responsibilities among them and inquires why teachers are not doing well and offer professional advice.

He leads teaching and learning by ensuring effective lesson preparation and presentation (sharing good teaching methods and materials) through effective supervision and observation; as well as providing feedback to teachers. Conduct regular meetings with the teachers in order to review teaching styles as well as lead self/teachers evaluation process. Contribute to the effort to develop and improve the performance of teachers through education and training both formally and informally

Effective principals lead by good example, thus, teachers tend to take their cues from him. A principal that dodges responsibility; comes late to work/meetings etc. is likely to have teachers with similar traits. No wonder Dominion (2023) suggested that principals should have positive attitude to work, show respect for the decision-makers even if you disagree with the decision, be empathetic with colleagues, treat workers with sensitivity, among others. Successful leaders adopt right habits that lead to action. Always tries to give directives and guidance in accordance with the purpose of the school mission and vision. True leadership comes from being a servant to those you lead. The principal ensures student achievement is in tandem with the rapid development of the era, thus demanding changes from various sectors to compete along with the existing global flow.

Importantly, effective principals praise/reward those teachers who work diligently to increase student achievement. One of the simplest and most effective behaviours that motivate teachers is by praising them. Others include; award of certificate of merit, bonus or a raise in salary, Getting compliments for their valuable contribution is bound to make them feel powerful (Varthana, 2022).

Teacher performance is the observable outcomes in the classroom as a result of teacher's training and development or lack of it. It is also seen as the set of actions, attitudes, and behaviours in the teaching-learning environment that results in achieving educational goals. Teacher performance is affected positively and significantly by effective leadership behaviour, organizational culture and teacher competence. School performance is determined by the performance of teachers; a performance by teachers in carrying out duties as educators. The quality of teacher performance determines the quality of education because the teacher is the one who mostly interact with the students in the learning process. He prepares the teaching materials and creates pleasant learning process and environment. Hence, the teachers' job performance can also be described as the ability of teachers to combine relevant input for the enhancement of teaching and learning processes and

is measured by reports of his/her activities in terms of performance in teaching, lesson preparation, lesson presentation, mastery of subject matter, competence, teacher commitment to job and extra-curricular activities. Other areas of assessment include effective leadership, effective supervision, effective monitoring of students' work, effective motivation, class control and disciplinary ability of the teacher. How the school head can help the teacher to perform these virtues is the aim of this research.

Statement of the problem

It is no more news that the role of a principal as a leader in any secondary school is the lifeblood for the development and survival of that school. Good administration of secondary schools places large responsibility in the hands of the principals and nothing can be more demanding than effective leadership behaviour, which is required to accomplish task and achieve positive results. The main task of the principal include interpretation of policy, executing curriculum program, seeing to the students' and the staff welfare, provision and maintenance of equipment, physical facilities and finances, inducting and retraining staff members and finally maintaining effective school-community relations (Musa, 2012). The principal thus has the duty to ensure quality and timely delivery of these educational services. Successful realization of secondary school goals to Armstrong (2023) depends on principal ability to manage his behaviour and other limited resources in other to improve the teacher performance. In other words, practical application of effective principal leadership behaviour is vital for any secondary education goals and objectives achievement. However, it still appears unknown the relationship between practical principal leadership behaviours and the today's teacher performance. This study therefore sought to determine the relationship between practical effective principal leadership behaviours and today's teacher task performance in secondary schools in Anambra State.

Research question

What the relationship between practical effective principal leadership behaviours and today's teacher task performance in secondary schools in Anambra State?

Null Hypothesis

Ho1: There is no significant relationship between the practical effective principals' leadership behaviours and today's teacher performance in secondary schools in Anambra State.

Method

Co-relational survey research design was adopted to carry out this study in the 263 public secondary schools in Anambra State, guided by one research question and one null hypothesis, tested at the 0.05 level of significance.

Population of the study comprised all the 263 principals and 5,249 secondary school teachers in all the public secondary schools in the six education zones of the state. Using multistage sampling procedure, a sample of 350 respondents was drawn.

Data was collected using two researchers' developed questionnaires titled, "Practical Effective Principals' Leadership Behaviours Questionnaire" (PEPLBQ) and "Today's Teacher Task Performance Questionnaire" (TTPQ). The two questionnaires were structured on a four-point response scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD), weighted 4, 3, 2, and 1 respectively. The instruments were validated by four experts. Two from measurement and Evaluation Department, University of Nigeria, Nsukka (UNN) and two from the Department of Educational Planning and Administration, UNN. The internal consistency of the questionnaires was determined using Cronbach's Alpha method and it yielded reliability coefficients of 0.78 and 0.76 for PEPLBQ and TTPQ respectively.

Data was collected using the face to face method. Using six trained research-assistants, the questionnaire copies were administered on the respondents and after filling were collected on the spot. A 100% return of the copies of the questionnaire fully completed was obtained

The research question was answered using Pearson's Product Moment Correlation, while p-value was used to determine the significance of the correlation at the 0.05 level of significance. The results are presented on the following tables.

Results

Table 1: Pearson r on the Practical Effective Principals’ Leadership Behaviours and “Today’s Teacher Task Performance in secondary schools in Anambra State

Source of Variation	N	r	Remarks
Principals’ Leadership Behaviours			
355	0.85	Very High Positive Relationship	
Today’s Teacher Task Performance			

Table 1 presents that the Pearson’s $r = 0.85$. This is an indication that there is a high positive relationship between principals’ practical effective leadership behaviours and today’s teacher task performance in secondary schools in Anambra State.

Table 2: Test of Significance of Pearson Correlation between Practical Effective Principals’ Leadership Behaviours and Today’s Teacher Performance in Secondary Schools in Anambra State

Source of Variation	N	r	p -value	Remarks
Principals’ Leadership Behaviours				
355	0.85	0.00	Ho Significant	
Today’s Teacher Task Performance				

Analysis in Table 2 presents that there is a significant positive correlation between principals' practical effective leadership behaviours and today's teacher task performance in secondary schools in Anambra State. The calculated r (0.85) had p -value <0.05 . The null hypothesis was therefore rejected.

Discussion of Result

This study investigated the relationship between practical effective principal leadership behaviours and today's teacher task performance in secondary schools in Anambra State. As presented on Tables 1 and 2, data obtained, analyzed, and summarized revealed that there is a very high positive relationship between principals' practical effective leadership behaviours and today's teacher task performance in secondary schools in Anambra State. In other words, principals are encouraged to show a persuasive and exemplary attitude. The principal as a leader has to realize that the success of the school's life for which he is responsible is very much determined by his behaviour. This finding is in line with Kailola in Utari (2022) and Hendarman in Pardosi and Utari (2020) who believed that leadership behaviour plays an important role in improving the performance of subordinates and argues that to build an effective school there requires strong leadership, clear attention to learning outcomes, high appreciation for students, a good environment and supervision at the level of achievement. Experience at the school show a tendency for principal, who is less able to apply leadership behaviour acceptable to teachers to slightly affect teacher performance in terms of quality of work in the classroom management, teaching aids not developed enough, with little initiative. No wonder Dominion (2023) suggested that principals should have positive attitude to work, show respect for the decision-makers even if you disagree with the decision, be empathetic with colleagues, treat workers with sensitivity, among others. Successful leaders adopt the right habits and behaviours that lead to action. They always try to give directives and guidance in accordance with the purpose of the school mission and vision. Successful realization of secondary school goals to Armstrong (2023) depends on principal ability to manage his behaviour and other limited resources in other to improve the teacher performance.

In other words, practical application of effective principal leadership behaviours such as exhibiting self-confidence, thinking strategically, engaging teachers in stimulating activities, motivating and inspiring teachers, articulating the school vision and providing direction, while implementing plans, ensuring a good school environment and not conceiving of his power as something apart from the group, leading teaching and learning, leading teachers by example and following strong moral habits, praising and rewarding teachers' good works and contributions have positive

influence on teachers' job performance. Effective principals praise/reward those teachers who work diligently to increase student achievement. One of the simplest and most effective behaviours that motivate teachers is by praising them. Others include; award of certificate of merit, bonus or a raise in salary, getting compliments for their valuable contribution is bound to make them feel powerful (Varthana, 2022). A principal with high morale and satisfactory leadership behaviour influences a positive school climate that engenders effective teacher task performance.

Conclusion

Effective leadership behaviours are no doubt very important if any educational institution should thrive successfully. They help school organizations to function smoothly and improve teacher performance and student achievement. Such behaviours make teachers feel inspired, motivated, driven and even proud of the duties they perform. Practical application of effective principal leadership behaviour is vital for secondary education goals and objectives achievement. Teachers' performance and the learners' achievement can be realized in a conducive atmosphere. The principals are seen to be the critical actors in improving teaching and learning conditions in the schools. Although principals do not have direct improvement on the students but their mediation influence on teachers (such as coordinating efforts to improve the quality of learning and improvement for the teacher performance); curriculum and instruction form the basis and conditions for the students' achievement in the schools. The principal is assigned to lead the school where the learning process is organized (that is the interaction between the teacher giving the lesson and the student receiving the lesson). Thus, effective principals' leadership behaviours are beneficial for the efforts to improve the quality of education and so, principals are expected to continue improving in their leadership behaviours to ensure improved teacher job performance.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made:

Capacity building workshop on practical effective principals' leadership behaviours should be organized for the principals to remind and encourage them to consistently exhibit such practical and effective leadership behaviours for improved today's teacher job performance and consequently, quality secondary education in the

Government and other secondary education stakeholders should encourage and motivate principals that exhibit effective leadership behaviours in schools.

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