

A Comparative Study of Principals' Administrative Effectiveness in Public and Private Secondary Schools in Ekiti State, Nigeria.

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Abstract

This paper presents the results of investigation into the level of administrative effectiveness of principals of public and private secondary schools. It makes a comparative analysis of administrative effectiveness in the two types of educational institutions. The population for the study consists of teachers in both public and private schools. A sample of 295 subjects were sampled, 191 subjects from public institutions, 104 subjects from private institutions. Data were gathered using a self-constructed questionnaire titled "Principals' administrative effectiveness in secondary schools (PAESS). The validity and reliability of instrument were ascertained. The result of the study revealed that there was moderate level of administrative effectiveness in public schools while there was high level of administrative effectiveness in private secondary schools. It also revealed that schools with high level of administrative effectiveness manifest high level of discipline. It was recommended that the principals of public schools should be more skillful in their administrative strategies to enhance the level of students' discipline. It was also recommended that private schools should show more interest in sporting activities.

Key words: Administrative effectiveness, students' discipline, public and private secondary schools.

1. Introduction

The establishment of private schools in Nigeria dated back to the era of missionary activities in Nigeria. Missionary schools were later taken over by government. Private secondary schools came into Nigerian educational system in the early 1930s (Ukeje, Akabogu and Ndu, 1992). A new set of private secondary schools came into existence in the educational system from the 1970s following the takeover of schools by the different state governments in Nigeria from the original owners. School takeover was necessary in order to create uniform standards, enhance fair distribution of educational facilities (Ukeje et al 1992). Another set of private secondary schools came on board from the 1990s. These are schools set up for the reason of providing better teaching/learning conditions than that obtained in the public secondary schools. These were very elitist schools which drew students from high income families (Etuk 2005).

Administrative effectiveness is the positive response to administrative efforts and actions with the intention to accomplish stated goal. The administrative performance in decision making, delegation of duties to subordinates, and setting good examples and motivating the teachers and students alike in an effort to create a conducive working environment to accomplish school goal and objective seem to enhance subordinate performance for school success. The administrative effectiveness of secondary school principal had been observed by Adegun (2002), as a factor inhibiting attainment of goals in secondary schools. Tess (2003), claimed that administrators must motivate staff to use their creativity and initiative as necessary in making inputs, towards the accomplishment of institutional goals.

The principals play important leadership roles in establishing school discipline, both by effective administration and by personal example. Principals of well-disciplined students are usually highly visible models. They engage in what Duke describes as "management by walking around," greeting students and teachers and informally monitoring possible problem areas. Effective principals are liked and respected, rather than feared, and communicate caring for students as well as willingness to impose punishment if necessary (NAESP 1983). Duckworth (1984) found that teachers' satisfaction with school discipline policy was related to their relationship with the principal. Esen (1980) views discipline as the maintenance of the quality of the atmosphere necessary for achievement of the school goals. Ezeocha(1985) argues that school discipline should recognize the inherent dignity and right of the individual, be devoted to humanitarian principles and ideals, offer self-direction and be founded on an understanding of acceptable behavior. Indiscipline behavior in both private and public secondary schools manifest itself in various ways ranging from stealing , fighting , loitering , bullying , trancy , unpunctuality , absenteeism , drug abuse, examination malpractices asault, disobedience, insubordination and cult activities. (Akpan, & Okey & Esirah 2005). Duke (1989), Wayson and Lasley (1984) intimated that in well-disciplined schools, the principals provide clear and broad based rules, delegate

disciplinary matters and ensure commitment on the part of teachers to establishing and maintaining appropriate students' behaviors.

Good communication and shared values are important elements in this relationship. Ideally, a principal should be able to create consensus among staff on rules and their enforcement. In practice, some principals create consensus by recruiting like-minded staff over the course of years (Duckworth 1984), or by arranging transfers for teachers whose views "don't fit in with goals and plans for their school" (NAESP 1983). Gottfredson and others (1989) in a study concluded that stable and supportive administrative leadership was the "overriding factor" determining whether a discipline programme was effective. Schools that successfully implemented a pilot programme experienced distinct improvements in discipline. Tabotndip (2005) opined that the quality and effectiveness of every education system anywhere in the world is dependent on the competences, effectiveness, efficiencies and devotion of the teaching force. Teachers are seen as the foundation upon which the growth and development of the society depends (Ejiogu 1997, Afe 1992, Fafunwa 1991, and Ezeh 2004).

The emergence of mass establishment of private schools appears to be due to deplorable conditions in public schools. It was observed that many parents seem to prefer private schools because they thought they were more efficient and effective on their job. It was believed that personnel in private schools were more dedicated on their job. Many research findings have revealed that private schools were good enough for children education, Gregory (1992), and Kenshaw and Blank 1993 reported that private schools have lower incidences of negative school behaviour than public schools. Adiotomre and Ekwevugbe (2005) submitted that private schools were instructionally more effective than public schools when it comes to effective use of instructional materials, use of variety of teaching methods and student evaluation techniques. In Britain and in the USA there is high reputation for private schools. The first set of schools in Britain and USA were private schools. The British Government's involvement in education started in 1830s. Today, private schools gladly join their newer counterpart, the public schools in creating an educational system that is the envy of the world and the hope of the continued freedom of Americans (council for American private Education, 2004).

Private schools are independent schools, which are established by non- governmental agencies, for profit making venture while public schools were established schools, which are common goods, opened to all members of the society. According to Okafor (1984), private education is the type undertaken by any organization or agency besides the state. Gobir (2005) identified three categories of private schools, private school owners especially secondary schools, who could not afford quality schools, efficient staff and up to date laboratories and libraries. Another category of private school which intend to maintain more conducive environment for learning, and third category which are good private secondary schools that provide a challenging education.

Schlerens and Bosker (1984) reviewed studies of public and private secondary schools system in some developed countries, private schools appear to be more effective. They attributed this to the active roles of parents in private schools. Seattle (2005) argued that basically some private schools are better than public schools. Thus in Scotland achievement in private schools was found to be somewhat higher than in public schools (Mpherson and Williams 1986). Studies and literature revealed divergent views on public and private schools administrative performance. Coleman Hoffer and Kilgore (1981) have stated that private schools are superior in promoting students' achievement. Coleman et al (1981) confirmed that private schooling increased academic achievement. Gobir (2005) submitted that high performance in private schools is due largely to hard work. She further explained that private schools tend to achieve high result with less expenditure on teachers, which makes up the bulk of recurrent school expenditure than public schools. . Alt & Peter (2002) and Akpan et al (2005) revealed that Private Secondary school administrators are more effective in maintaining discipline than their counterparts in Public schools. Ubeku (1981) was of the view that poor attitude to work are found to be common in public sector than in private. He stressed further that it was due to master servant relationship coupled with rigid control and direction which typical the activities of leaders. However, Abiodun – Oyebanji (2004), and Akomolafe (2005) submitted in their studies that there was no significant difference in teachers' job performance in both private and public secondary schools in Ekiti state. Adegun (2005) also revealed that there was no difference in the administrative effectiveness of head teachers in public and private primary schools. Furthermore Bassey and Ekpoh (2005) revealed that there were similarities in the supervision of teachers and the assessment of the students of academic activity between the public and private school

Observations have shown that lot of people in our society prefer to send their children to private schools. It was believed that teachers in those schools show much dedication and appear to perform better on their job. It was being speculated that the principals in those private schools were effective on their job and they handle the staff effectively and make them to produce good result. It was observed that although public schools seem to have

more qualified teachers and relatively better facilities, nevertheless, they did not attract much patronage especially from the elite, rich and even the government workers. The study was to examine the level of administrative effectiveness in each of public and private schools and also the difference in their level of administrative effectiveness. It was also to examine if there is any relationship between administrative effectiveness and student's level of discipline. The secondary schools in Nigeria are witnessing students' indiscipline. It appears students' level of indiscipline is associated with low level of administrative effectiveness. Moreover, people believed that public schools condone lots of indiscipline students, and that excesses could be curtailed with effective administration.

2. Purpose of the study

The purpose of the study was to investigate the level of administrative effectiveness of principals in private and public secondary schools. It was also to find out the relationship between administrative effectiveness and students' discipline.

3. Research questions

Research questions were raised so as to find solution to the problem of the study:

1. What is the level of administrative effectiveness in public secondary school?
2. What is the level of administrative effectiveness in private secondary schools?

4. Research hypotheses

1. There is no significant difference between principals' administrative effectiveness in public and private secondary schools.
2. There is no significant relationship between administrative effectiveness and students' discipline in secondary schools.

5. Research Method

This study employed a descriptive survey design. This study covered public and private secondary schools in Ekiti State, Nigeria. Descriptive research design was adopted for the study. Using a multi-stage sampling technique, 295 subjects were selected, 191 subjects were selected from public institutions, while 104 subjects were selected from private institutions. The subjects of the study consisted of teachers in both public and private secondary schools. Data collection were carried out with the use of a self-constructed questionnaire titled "Principals' administrative effectiveness in secondary schools (PAESS). The face and content validity of the instrument were ascertained by experts and administrators. The reliability of the instrument was ensured using test-retest method. It has reliability coefficient of 0.71 which was significant at 0.05 level of significance. In descriptive analysis, the mean score obtainable on each item was 4.00. The mean rating below 2.00 was rated low, while mean rating from 2.00 to less than 2.49 as moderate, and mean rating from 2.50 to above 3.00 was rated high.

6. Results.

6.1 Research question one: What is the level of administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools?

Table 1: Level of Principals' administrative effectiveness in public and private secondary schools.

S/n	Items	Public N-191		Private N-104	
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD
1.	High support for decision taking.	2.65	0.895	3.02	.924
2.	High level of teachers' job performance.	2.35	0.65	2.55	.736
3.	Adequate preparation for instruction delivery.	2.18	0.65	2.39	.841
4.	Teachers manifest high level of self discipline.	2.07	0.64	2.77	.781
5.	Delegated duties are adequately performed.	2.06	0.48	2.59	.684
6.	There is adequate management of time by the teachers on duties.	2.06	0.74	2.20	.907
7.	Teachers are highly motivated to attend to their teaching and other assignment.	2.39	0.78	2.32	.873
8.	Assignments given to teachers are accomplished within time limit.	2.05	0.81	2.82	.779
9.	There is adequate maintenance of facilities.	2.05	0.72	2.12	.917

10.	School records are adequately and regularly kept by officers assigned.	2.18	0.88	2.55	.963
11.	School has good record of academics performance in external examination.	1.95	0.78	2.00	.881
12.	Students perform well in sporting activities .	1.94	0.67	1.96	.869
13.	Show interest in students' discipline.	2.16	0.74	2.55	.822
14.	Attend to school co-curricular activities promptly.	2.73	0.85	2.53	.881
15.	Students perform well in C/A.	2.25	0.81	2.28	.788

Table one's analysis indicates that there was high support for decision making in public schools. There was moderate level of teachers' job performance, preparation for instruction delivery was adequate and also teachers' manifestation of level of self- discipline was moderate in public schools. The result further revealed that there was moderate level of teachers' time management, teachers were moderately motivated to attend their teaching and other assignment. Teachers' accomplishment of their assignment within a time frame was moderate. There was adequate maintenance of facilities, schools records were adequate and regularly kept by assigned officers. Teachers' interest in students' discipline was moderate, attending to school co-curricular activities promptly was also high. Effectiveness on students, performance in sporting activities was low. It was concluded that the level of effectiveness was moderate.

6.2 Research question two: What is the level of administrative effectiveness in private secondary schools?

Table one also revealed the level of administrative effectiveness of principals in the private secondary schools. The table revealed high level of effectiveness in support for decision making, and teachers' manifestation of self-discipline. The results further showed that there was high level of administrative effectiveness in performance of delegated duties by teachers on duties, assignments given to teachers were accomplished within time limit. The analysis in the table also indicated that school records were adequately kept, high level of students performance in continuous assessment, high level of interest in students discipline and attending to schools co-curricular was high. However there was low level of administrative effectiveness in students performance in sporting activities, school records, good records of academic performance in external examination. It was concluded that the level of administrative effectiveness in private secondary school was high.

6.3 Research hypothesis one: There is no significant difference in administrative effectiveness in public and private secondary school.

Table 2: Difference in administrative effectiveness in public and private secondary schools.

School type	N	df	Table value	Mean	SD	Std Error	t-table	Sig
Public	191	293	1.96	33.77	6.211	.449		0.36
Private	104	194.908		43.24	6.841	.671	4.45	

The hypothesis was tested using t-test statistical method. The calculated r- value was 4.445 which was greater than the t-table of 1.96. The result was significant at 0.05 and therefore was rejected. Therefore there was significant difference in administrative effectiveness in public and private secondary schools. The mean for the private school was higher than the public schools, therefore the level of administrative effectiveness in private schools was higher than that of public schools.

6.4 Research hypothesis two: There is no significant relationship between administrative effectiveness and students' discipline in secondary schools.

Table 3: Relationship between administrative effectiveness and students' discipline in secondary schools.

	Mean	SD	N	r-cal
Administrative effectiveness.	37.11	7.864	295	.238
Students discipline	26.32	4.193	295	

The hypothesis was tested using Pearson correlation method. The r-calculated of .238 was greater than the table value of .195, which was significant at 0.05 level of significance. The hypothesis was therefore rejected. The result is that there was significant relationship between administrative effectiveness and students' discipline. The result was that the level of administrative effectiveness has a positive relationship with student's discipline.

The mean of administrative effectiveness was higher than that of student's discipline. Therefore high level of administrative effective enhances students level of discipline in secondary schools.

7. Discussion

The study revealed a moderate level of administrative effectiveness in public secondary school. It is my conviction that, public schools desire more effective administration, with the backdrop that public schools are staffed with qualified teaching staff, in which administrator are appointed to administer the schools. Odigbo (2005) revealed that public schools were better staffed than private schools. She also submitted that public schools have better qualified teachers than private schools.

The level of administrative effectiveness was high in private secondary schools. This study established that there was high support for decision taking. Private schools also manifested higher level in: teachers' job performance; adequate preparation for instruction; teachers' self discipline; teachers' adequate management of time; and that teachers accomplish given assignment within time limit. In support of this result, Adiotomre and Ekwevugbe (2005) submitted that private schools were instructionally more effective than public schools, in the use of instructional materials. Gobir (2005) also supported the view that high performance in private schools was due largely to hard work. There was a significant difference in administrative effectiveness in public and private schools. The level of administrative effectiveness was higher in private than in public schools. The finding of Bassey, Udom and Ekpoh (2005) was contrary to this result, they said, there were similarities in the supervision of teachers and the assessment of the students' academic activities between the public and private schools.

This study also showed that there was a significant relationship between administrative effectiveness and students' level of discipline. In other words a school with high level of administrative effectiveness would manifest high level of discipline among students. It could be deduced from this study that high level of administrative effectiveness might have made the level of discipline in private school to be high. Gottfredson and others (1989) in their study was in support of this finding, they concluded that stable and supportive administrative leadership was the "overriding factor" determining whether a discipline programme was effective. This finding was also supported by Gregory (1992), and Kenshaw and Blank 1993 that private schools have lower incidences of negative school behaviour than public schools, which might be due to high level of administrative effectiveness in private schools.

8. Conclusion

Administrative effectiveness is the extent to which the principal is skillful in discharging his duties to meet the goal of the school. Administrative effectiveness is a major factor that determines school success. This study revealed the variables that made a manifestation of the extent of principals' administrative effectiveness to include: support for decision making, adequate preparation for instruction delivery, self- discipline, adequate performance of delegated duties, adequate management of teachers' time, motivated to attend to their teaching and other assignments, showing interest in students' discipline and sporting activities. It was concluded from the findings of this study that, there was high level of administrative effectiveness in private secondary schools but moderate level in public schools. Therefore, the level of administrative effectiveness was higher in private than in public schools. The study also revealed a significant relationship between administrative effectiveness and students' discipline. The extent to which administrative effectiveness could enhance students' discipline cannot be over emphasized. Administrative effectiveness was therefore an important factor in raising the level of students' discipline. It is worthy of note, that administrative effectiveness of principals is a prerequisite to school discipline and success.

9. Recommendations

Based on the results of this study the following recommendations were made.

- 1 Principals of public schools should look inward and ensure that their staff are motivated, improved on their skills of time management and ensure supervision of assignments given to their teachers.
- 2 Principals of public should be skillful in their administrative strategies to raise the level of students' discipline.
- 3 The private school should develop records keeping especially in external examination results. They should develop attitude of keeping results records, whether the results are woeful or not.
- 4 The private school should show more interest in sporting activities, and that encouragement should be given to students not only in academic activities.

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