

EFFECTIVE ADMINISTRATION OF PRINCIPALS IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN DELTA CENTRAL SENATORIAL DISTRICT OF DELTA STATE: THE ROLE OF HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PRACTICE

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Abstract

The effectiveness of secondary school administration largely depends on the quality of leadership exhibited by school principals and the human resource management practices adopted within the school system. In recent years, concerns have emerged regarding declining educational standards, teacher absenteeism, inadequate staff motivation, poor supervision, and low student academic achievement in many secondary schools across Nigeria. These challenges underscore the need for effective administration by principals through strategic human resource management practices. This position paper examines the role of human resource management practices in enhancing the administrative effectiveness of principals in secondary schools in Delta Central Senatorial District of Delta State. The paper discusses key human resource management practices such as staff recruitment and selection, training and development, performance appraisal, motivation, compensation, staff welfare, communication, and participatory decision-making. The paper argues that effective utilization of these practices enhances teacher commitment, productivity, instructional delivery, and overall school performance. It concludes that principals who effectively apply human resource management practices are more likely to achieve educational goals and recommends continuous professional development, improved welfare packages, and strengthened supervision mechanisms.

Keywords

Administrative Effectiveness,

Principals,

Human Resource Management

Practices,

Secondary Schools,

Delta Central Senatorial District.

1. Introduction

Education remains one of the most important instruments for national development. The attainment of educational objectives depends largely on the quality of school administration and leadership provided by principals (Arop, Owan & Agunwa, 2022). Secondary schools occupy a strategic position in Nigeria's educational system because they serve as a bridge between primary and tertiary education. Consequently, effective administration of secondary schools is essential for achieving educational goals and producing competent graduates.

The principal is the chief executive officer of the secondary school and is responsible for planning, organizing, coordinating, supervising, and evaluating school activities (Adu, Akinloye & Olaoye, 2023). The effectiveness of principals in performing these functions significantly influences students' academic achievement, teacher productivity, discipline, and school development. Human Resource Management (HRM) practices have become increasingly important in educational institutions due to their role in enhancing employee performance and organizational effectiveness (Armstrong, 2023). In the school context, human resource management practices involve activities designed to attract, develop, motivate, and retain competent teachers and non-teaching staff. Principals who effectively manage human resources are more likely to achieve institutional objectives and foster a conducive learning environment.

In Delta Central Senatorial District, concerns have been raised regarding teacher shortages, poor motivation, inadequate professional development opportunities, and declining educational outcomes. These challenges necessitate an examination of how human resource management practices can enhance the administrative effectiveness of principals.

2. Conceptual Clarifications

Administrative Effectiveness

Administrative effectiveness refers to the ability of school administrators to achieve institutional goals through efficient utilization of available resources (Okeke & Nwosu, 2022). It encompasses planning, organizing, coordinating, staffing, directing, and evaluating educational activities to ensure optimal performance.

Administrative effectiveness among principals is often measured through:

Goal attainment

Effective supervision

Staff management

Resource utilization

Maintenance of discipline

Academic performance of students

Community relations

Human Resource Management Practices

Human resource management practices refer to organizational strategies and activities aimed at managing employees effectively to achieve institutional objectives (Armstrong, 2023). In educational institutions, HRM practices include:

Recruitment and selection

Staff training and development

Performance appraisal

Compensation and rewards

Staff welfare

Employee relations

Motivation

Career development

Secondary School Principals

Principals are educational leaders responsible for the overall administration of secondary schools. They coordinate teaching and learning activities, supervise staff, manage resources, and ensure the achievement of educational objectives (Bush, 2022).

3. Theoretical Framework

Human Capital Theory

Human Capital Theory, propounded by Schultz (1961) and expanded by Becker (1993), emphasizes investment in employees through education, training, and development. The theory suggests that organizations achieve higher productivity when they invest in the development of their workforce.

The theory is relevant because principals who invest in teacher development through training and capacity building enhance instructional effectiveness and school performance.

Human Resource Management Practices and Administrative Effectiveness

Recruitment and Selection

Effective recruitment and selection ensure that competent teachers are employed to perform educational tasks. According to Dessler (2023), organizations achieve greater effectiveness when qualified personnel are recruited based on merit and competence.

Principals who participate in the recruitment process contribute to improved staff quality, resulting in enhanced instructional delivery and school effectiveness.

Training and Development

Continuous professional development equips teachers with current pedagogical skills and knowledge. Training improves teacher competence, confidence, and productivity (Noe, 2023). Principals who encourage workshops, seminars, conferences, and in-service training create opportunities for professional growth, leading to improved educational outcomes.

Staff Motivation

Motivation influences employee commitment and productivity. Motivated teachers are more likely to exhibit dedication, punctuality, and creativity in teaching (Robbins & Judge, 2023).

Principals can motivate staff through recognition, promotion opportunities, supportive leadership, and positive working conditions.

Performance Appraisal

Performance appraisal provides feedback on employee performance and identifies areas requiring improvement. Effective appraisal systems promote accountability and professional development (Aguinis, 2023).

Regular appraisal enables principals to monitor teacher effectiveness and implement corrective measures where necessary.

Compensation and Reward Systems

Adequate compensation enhances employee satisfaction and commitment. Teachers who receive fair remuneration demonstrate greater productivity and organizational loyalty (Armstrong, 2023).

Principals who advocate improved welfare and reward systems contribute to staff retention and effectiveness.

Staff Welfare Services

Staff welfare includes healthcare services, safe working conditions, housing assistance, and social support programmes. Welfare initiatives improve employee morale and organizational commitment (Mullins, 2022).

Communication and Interpersonal Relations

Effective communication facilitates information flow and reduces conflicts within schools. Principals who maintain open communication channels promote trust and collaboration among staff members (Hoy & Miskel, 2022).

Participatory Decision-Making

Participatory decision-making involves teachers in school governance processes. Such involvement promotes ownership, commitment, and cooperation (Yukl, 2023).

Teachers who participate in decision-making tend to support school policies and contribute positively to institutional development.

Challenges Affecting Effective Human Resource Management in Secondary Schools

Several factors hinder effective HRM practices in secondary schools:

Inadequate funding.

Teacher shortages.

Poor remuneration.

Political interference.

Limited professional development opportunities.

Inadequate infrastructure.

Weak supervision systems.

Resistance to change.

These challenges often reduce principals' capacity to manage human resources effectively.

Implications for Secondary Schools in Delta Central Senatorial District

The application of effective HRM practices can significantly improve school administration in Delta Central Senatorial District. Principals who prioritize staff development, motivation, communication, and performance management are likely to experience:

Improved teacher commitment.

Enhanced instructional effectiveness.

Better student academic achievement.

Reduced staff turnover.

Improved school discipline.

Greater stakeholder satisfaction.

Position paper

This paper maintains that effective administration of secondary schools cannot be achieved without sound human resource management practices. Principals serve as strategic leaders whose effectiveness depends largely on their ability to manage teachers and other school personnel. Therefore, the adoption of modern human resource management practices should be prioritized in secondary schools across Delta Central Senatorial District.

4. Conclusion

The success of secondary school administration depends substantially on the effectiveness of principals and the human resource management practices they employ. Effective recruitment, training, motivation, communication, staff welfare, performance appraisal, and participatory decision-making contribute significantly to administrative effectiveness. Principals who adopt these practices are better positioned to achieve educational

objectives and improve school performance. Consequently, educational stakeholders should support principals through policies and resources that enhance human resource management capabilities.

5. Recommendations

Government should organize regular leadership and management training for principals.

Adequate funding should be provided for staff development programmes.

Teacher welfare packages should be improved.

Principals should adopt participatory leadership approaches.

Effective performance appraisal systems should be implemented.

Schools should establish strong communication channels.

Continuous monitoring and supervision should be encouraged.

Educational authorities should ensure merit-based recruitment and promotion.

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