



Delegation Strategies of Principals and their Impact on Administrative Effectiveness in Public Secondary Schools in Imo State

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated principals' delegation of authority strategies and administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools in Imo State. Four research questions and corresponding hypotheses guided the study. The population consisted of all principals in the 311 public secondary schools across the 27 Local Government Areas of Imo State. The sample size was 202 principals, representing 69% of the population. A simple random sampling technique was used to draw the sample. The instrument for data collection had three sections: Section A covered respondent demographics, Section B was a 28-item questionnaire on principals' delegation of authority strategies (dependent variable), and Section C was a 10-item questionnaire on Administrative Effectiveness (independent variable). Cronbach alpha statistics were used to check the instrument's internal consistency, yielding an average reliability coefficient of 0.78. Sub-section reliability coefficients were: expertise (0.86), disposition (0.73), qualification (0.87), location (0.64), and Administrative Effectiveness Questionnaire (AEQ) (0.72). Pearson Product Moment Correlation statistics were used to answer the research questions, while z-ratio statistics at 0.05 Alpha level of significance tested the null hypotheses. The results revealed a positive high relationship between principals' consideration of teachers' expertise, disposition, and qualification (except location) in delegation strategies and administrative effectiveness. The joint relationship yielded an R2 value of 0.366 with an adjusted R2 value of 0.354. Since the p-value was less than 0.05, it implies a significant joint relationship between principals' consideration of teachers' expertise, disposition, qualification, and location with administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools in Imo State. It was recommended that school principals establish disciplinary measures to ensure adherence to responsibilities, rules, and regulations while administering school programs.

Keywords: Delegation, authority, administrative effectiveness, public secondary schools, principals' strategies.

Introduction

The most challenging situation for school administrators is not providing human resources, but rationally utilizing them to achieve organizational goals. Advances in science and technology require school managers to adopt modern management approaches to improve teaching quality. There is a direct relationship between the quality of human and material resources and the educational process, which determines school performance. School leadership involves inspiring and mobilizing others to achieve common goals using various techniques to control, direct, and motivate subordinates. Delegation of authority is essential for administrators to achieve desired results, influencing people to work willingly toward goals. Principals are responsible for managing teachers and students to achieve national educational objectives and must be innovative and creative to keep pace with current trends.

Teachers are pivotal to the success or failure of any school, acting as the roots of the educational system. Without healthy, effective teachers, the system withers. Owan (2012) and Arop, Akan, and Owan (2018) assert that for schools to run smoothly under delegated authority, the credibility of teachers—measured by experience, qualification, disposition, and competence—must be considered. There is a clear link between student performance, teacher effectiveness, and classroom atmosphere. Effective delegation by principals requires recognizing teacher expertise and talents. Ladd (2008) found that teachers with job expertise are more productive. Delegating duties based on expertise encourages teachers to excel and reveals their talents, as they often participate in forming school policies. Principals should consider teacher expertise when delegating responsibilities to ensure the right tasks are assigned to the right individuals. Teaching strategies, experience, motivation, and professional development are personal and dynamic for each teacher. A teacher's current abilities should dictate their responsibilities to produce expected results. Effective administration by principals also requires a conducive school environment with adequate facilities. The delegation of functional responsibilities to maintain these facilities is crucial.

Delegation involves distributing functions, powers, and authority among individuals working collaboratively to achieve objectives. It reallocates authority, responsibility, and resources among different levels to provide public services. Principals can enhance administrative effectiveness by integrating functional roles and ensuring accountability. When delegating, principals must consider teachers' dispositions, which include competency, morality, classroom management, and personality traits that influence learning (Carr, 2007). Dispositions are behavioral patterns under conscious control

aimed at broad goals, reflecting internal commitments and values, including teaching ethics. Key indicators of teachers' dispositions are learned qualities, caring attitudes, habits of mind, behavior, sensitivity to student differences, dedication, and commitment. Effective teachers are defined not only by tangible traits like qualifications and experience but also by intangible personality traits impacting student performance and achievement.

Pacis and Weegar (2011) argue that quality teachers possess intangible attributes of ethical behaviors, known as dispositions, such as kindness, caring, and high expectations for students and teachers. Principals should consider these dispositions when delegating authority, as they affect students' learning outcomes. Dispositions shape classroom approaches and help reduce reliance on ineffective traditional practices. Qualified teachers, crucial to educational systems, must be academically and professionally competent. Teachers' qualifications, including formal education, experience, subject matter knowledge, pedagogy studies, training duration, certification/licensing, and professional development, significantly impact student achievement. In essence, teachers' qualifications and dispositions are critical factors in improving student performance and effective classroom management.

Teachers' qualifications encompass more than just holding certificates. It includes various academic degrees such as Nigeria Certificate in Education (N.C.E.), Bachelor's, Master's, and Doctorate degrees, with only degree holders qualified to teach in senior secondary schools in Nigeria. Certification, combining subject matter knowledge with teaching skills, indicates that teachers have graduated from accredited programs (Darling-Hammond, as cited in Ojekudo, 2017). Effective delegation of responsibilities requires considering teachers' qualifications and their proximity to work, ensuring tasks are performed efficiently.

Statement of the Problem

Principals are responsible for managing and administering schools. However, ineffective delegation to teachers in areas like student enrollment, financial matters, board meetings, and record preparation due to trust issues has led to poor teacher performance. Principals struggle with matching responsibilities to teachers' abilities, leading to administrative challenges. Teachers, as main curriculum implementers, sometimes act against school standards, causing issues like lateness, disrespect, and poor time management. In Imo State, this has weakened principal-teacher relationships, teacher-student interactions, and school-community ties. Problems include improper responsibility assignment, inadequate facilities, poor supervision, and weak leadership vision. These issues lead to poor curriculum delivery and student performance, extreme misbehaviour, and school disruptions. It is against this backdrop that the study intends to investigate these delegation and administrative effectiveness issues.

Aim and Objectives of the Study

The study investigated the relationship between the delegation of authority strategies of principals and administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools in Imo State. Specifically, the study will focus on achieving the following objectives:

1. Examine the relationship between principals' consideration of teachers' expertise in the delegation of authority strategy and administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools in Imo State.
2. Examine the relationship between principals' consideration of teachers' disposition in the delegation of authority strategies and administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools in Imo State.
3. Establish the relationship between principals' consideration of teachers' qualifications in the delegation of authority strategies and administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools in Imo State.
4. Find out the relationship between principals' consideration of teachers' location in the delegation of authority strategies and administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools in Imo State.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided this study:

1. What is the relationship between principals' consideration of teachers' expertise in the delegation of authority strategies and administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools in Imo State?
2. What is the relationship between principals' consideration of teachers' disposition in the delegation of authority strategy and administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools in Imo State?
3. What is the relationship between principals' consideration of teachers' qualifications in the delegation of authority strategy and administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools in Imo State?
4. What is the relationship between principals' consideration of teachers' location in the delegation of authority strategy and administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools in Imo State?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were tested in the study at a 0.05 level of significance:

1. There is no significant relationship between principals' consideration of teachers' expertise in the delegation of authority strategy and administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools in Imo State.
2. There is no significant relationship between principals' consideration of teachers' disposition in the delegation of authority strategy and administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools in Imo State.
3. There is no significant relationship between principals' consideration of teachers' qualifications in the delegation of authority strategy and administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools in Imo State.
4. There is no significant relationship between principals' consideration of teachers' location in the delegation of authority strategy and administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools in Imo State.

Methodology

The study employed a correlational research design. The population of this study consisted of all the three hundred and eleven (311) public secondary schools in the 27 Local Government Areas of Imo State. The total number of respondents includes all the 311 principals in these public secondary schools in Imo State. The sample size for the study consisted of 202 principals. This sample which represents 69% of the population served as respondents. Taro Yamane formula was used to determine the minimum sample size required which is 175, then the simple random sampling technique was used to draw a sample of 202 principals for the study. In doing this, the researcher designed cards labeled YES or NO through balloting without replacement and only those that picked YES and schools that were picked were represented in the sample for the study. This means that the sample size of 202 was a good representation of the population. Two instruments titled: Principals' Delegation of Authority Strategies in Public Secondary Schools Questionnaire (PDASPSSQ) and Administrative Effectiveness Questionnaire (AEQ) were used for data collection. The instruments were structured on a 4-point-modified Likert rating scale of (Strongly Agree (SA) = 4 points; Agree (A) = 3 points; Disagree (D) = 2 points; and Strongly Disagree (SD) = 1 point). The instruments were validated by three experts. To obtain the reliability coefficient of the instruments, Cronbach alpha statistics was used to check the internal consistency of the instruments to guarantee the use of the instrument for the study with a sample of 30 principals who were not included in the sample for the study. The average reliability coefficient of the Principals' Delegation of Authority Strategies in Public Secondary Schools Questionnaire (PDASPSSQ) was 0.78. But in the sub-sections, principals' consideration of teachers' expertise has a reliability coefficient of 0.86, disposition has a reliability coefficient of 0.73, qualification has a reliability coefficient of 0.87, location has a reliability coefficient of 0.64 and Administrative Effectiveness Questionnaire (AEQ) was 0.72. This indicates that the reliability coefficients of the instruments were high enough for this study. Copies of the questionnaires were administered by the researcher and three trained research assistants to the respondents. Direct delivery and retrieval methods were used to administer the instruments. Data gathered from this exercise was collated and statistically analyzed. Pearson Product Moment Correlation statistics were used to answer research questions while the null hypotheses were tested using z-ratio statistics at 0.05 Alpha level of significance.

Results

Research Question One: What is the relationship between principals' consideration of teachers' expertise in the delegation of authority strategies and administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools in Imo State?

Hypothesis One: There is no significant relationship between principals' consideration of teachers' expertise in the delegation of authority strategy and administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools in Imo State.

For answering research question one, the respondents' data in the section on consideration of teachers' expertise in the delegation of authority strategy was correlated with their rating of administrative effectiveness using Pearson Product Moment Correlation. For testing the null hypothesis, a z-test associated with P Pearson Product Moment Correlation was used and the obtained result is displayed in Table 1.

Table 1: Pearson correlation of teachers' expertise and administrative effectiveness

Variable	N	R	p	α	Decision
Teachers Expertise	202	0.615	0.0005	0.05	H ₀ ¹
Administrative Effectiveness					Significant

From the result shown in Table 1, the relationship between principals' consideration of teachers' expertise in the delegation of authority strategies and administrative effectiveness showed that a correlational coefficient of 0.615 was obtained which indicated that there is a positive strong relationship between principals' consideration of teachers' expertise in the delegation of authority strategies and administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools in Imo State. Furthermore, the result from the testing of the corresponding null hypotheses showed that a p-value of 0.0005 was obtained which was less than the chosen alpha of 0.05. This result therefore indicates that there is a significant relationship between principals' consideration of teachers' expertise in the delegation of authority strategies and administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools in Imo State. The null hypothesis was therefore rejected.

Research Question Two: What is the relationship between principals' consideration of teachers' disposition in the delegation of authority strategy and administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools in Imo State?

Hypothesis Two: There is no significant relationship between principals' consideration of teachers' disposition in the delegation of authority strategy and administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools in Imo State.

Table 2: Pearson correlation of teachers' disposition and administrative effectiveness

Variable	N	R	P	α	Decision
Teachers' disposition	202	0.769	0.0005	0.05	H ₀₂ Significant
Administrative Effectiveness					

From the result shown in Table 2, the relationship between principals' consideration of teachers' disposition in the delegation of authority strategies and administrative effectiveness showed that a correlational coefficient of 0.769 was obtained which indicated that there is a positive strong relationship between principals' consideration of teachers' disposition in the delegation of authority strategies and administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools in Imo State. Furthermore, the result from the testing of the corresponding null hypotheses showed that a p-value of 0.0005 was obtained which was lesser than the chosen alpha of 0.05. This result therefore indicates that there is a significant relationship between principals' consideration of teachers' disposition in the delegation of authority strategies and administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools in Imo State. The null hypothesis was therefore rejected.

Research Question Three: What is the relationship between principals' consideration of teachers' qualifications in the delegation of authority strategy and administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools in Imo State?

Hypothesis Three: There is no significant relationship between principals' consideration of teachers' qualifications in the delegation of authority strategy and administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools in Imo State.

Table 3: Pearson correlation of teachers' qualification and administrative effectiveness

Variable	N	R	P	α	Decision
Teachers' qualification	202	0.682	0.0005	0.05	H ₀₃ Significant
Administrative Effectiveness					

From the result shown in Table 3, the relationship between principals' consideration of teachers' qualification in the delegation of authority strategies and administrative effectiveness showed that a correlational coefficient of 0.682 was obtained which indicated that there is a positive strong relationship between principals' consideration of teachers' qualification in the delegation of authority strategies and administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools in Imo State. Furthermore, the result from the testing of the corresponding null hypotheses showed that a p-value of 0.0005 was obtained which was lesser than the chosen alpha of 0.05. This result therefore indicated that there is a significant relationship between principals' consideration of teachers' qualifications in the delegation of authority strategies and administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools in Imo State. The null hypothesis was therefore rejected.

Research Question Four: What is the relationship between principals' consideration of teachers' location in the delegation of authority strategy and administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools in Imo State?

Hypothesis Four: There is no significant relationship between principals' consideration of teachers' location in the delegation of authority strategy and administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools in Imo State.

Table 4: Pearson correlation of teachers' location and administrative effectiveness

Variable	N	R	P	α	Decision
Teachers' location	202	0.159	0.061	0.05	H ₀₄
Administrative Effectiveness					Non-Significant

From the result shown in Table 4, the relationship between principals' consideration of teachers' location in the delegation of authority strategies and administrative effectiveness showed that a correlational coefficient of 0.159 was obtained which indicated that there is a weak relationship between principals' consideration of teachers' location in the delegation of authority strategies and administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools in Imo State. Furthermore, the result from the testing of the corresponding null hypotheses showed that a p-value of 0.061 was obtained which was greater than the chosen alpha of 0.05. This result therefore indicated that there is no significant relationship between principals' consideration of teachers' location in the delegation of authority strategies and administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools in Imo State. The null hypothesis was therefore retained.

Discussion of Findings

The study found a strong positive relationship between principals' consideration of teachers' expertise in delegation strategies and administrative effectiveness in Imo State's public secondary schools. As principals increasingly consider teachers' expertise when delegating, administrative effectiveness also rises. This finding aligns with Morake, Monobe, and Mbulawa (2014), who noted that administrators delegating tasks help identify individual staff strengths. Alimi, Alabi, and Ehinola (2011) found that effective principals encourage professional learning and discuss instructional strategies with teachers. Odike (2018) confirmed that principals effectively achieve organizational goals by delegating responsibilities to suitable individuals.

The study found a strong positive relationship between principals' consideration of teachers' dispositions in delegating authority and administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools in Imo State. As principals increasingly consider teachers' dispositions when delegating, administrative effectiveness also improves. This finding aligns with Pacis and Weegar (2011), who noted that quality teachers possess ethical behaviors such as kindness, caring, and high expectations. Similarly, Owede and Yusuf (2014) identified indicators of disposition, including caring attitudes, habits of mind, sensitivity to student differences, dedication, and commitment, which effective teachers should possess beyond their tangible qualifications.

The study found a strong positive relationship between principals' consideration of teachers' qualifications when delegating authority and administrative effectiveness in Imo State public secondary schools. As principals increasingly consider teachers' qualifications in their delegation strategies, administrative effectiveness also improves. This aligns with Prezi (2014) and Anastasia (2016), who found that teachers' qualifications significantly impact students' academic achievement. Akinsolu (2011) also noted that appropriately utilizing qualified teachers enhances student performance and organizational productivity. However, Hamilton-Ekeke (2013) pointed out that qualifications encompass more than certificates; they include the practical application of skills that the certificates represent.

The study found a positive but weak relationship between principals' consideration of teachers' location in delegating authority and administrative effectiveness in Imo State public secondary schools. Principals tend to assign responsibilities based on teachers' credibility rather than their location, which can impact administrative effectiveness, especially with punctuality issues. This aligns with Raheem (2010), who identified home-school distance as a factor in low duty responsiveness and poor student performance. Akbar and Allvar (2010) found that long commutes for administrators can delay administrative tasks. However, Hamil (2007) found no significant relationship between job location and job satisfaction among teachers. Sargent and Hannum, (2005) suggested that teachers overseeing pre- or post-school activities should live nearby for effective management. The school's setup should also support teachers' responsibilities.

Conclusion

In light of the findings of this study, it was concluded that principals' expertise effectively and diligently influences individual and collective efforts to achieve the specified goals of the organization by delegating responsibilities to individuals most suitable for each task, in line with expected outcomes. In this context, it is necessary to consider the location, expertise, disposition, and qualifications of staff before assigning responsibilities. Furthermore, school administrators have the responsibility to ensure that teachers' dispositions and qualifications are appropriately utilized when assigning functional responsibilities, in a manner that is justifiable and understandable.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions of the study, the following recommendations are proffered. 1. To ensure teachers are productive in their functional responsibilities, school principals should consistently exercise their expertise in delegating responsibilities to foster effective administration in public secondary schools.

2. School principals should continuously consider the location of teachers in relation to their professional competence before delegating responsibilities that are related to specific issues and punctuality.

3. School principals should establish disciplinary measures that compel adherence to responsibilities, rules, and regulations to ensure the effective administration of school programs.

4. School principals should create an appealing atmosphere that allows teachers to fully engage in their designated responsibilities, thereby assisting administrators in efficiently running school activities following the terms and conditions of employment.

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