



ASSESSMENT OF MANAGERIAL COMPETENCIES OF PRINCIPALS' IN PROMOTING STUDENTS ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN ABAKALIKI EDUCATION ZONE OF EBONYI STATE, NIGERIA.

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Abstract

This study was carried out to examine the assessment of managerial competencies of principals in promoting students academic performance in secondary schools' in Abakaliki Education Zone of Ebonyi State, Nigeria. Four Research questions and four null hypotheses guided the study. A descriptive survey design was adopted. The sample of 329 respondents comprising 120 male Teachers and 209 female teachers were randomly selected using Taro Yamene formula. Self structured questionnaire was used as the instrument for data collection which consists of 28 items structured on four point Likert scale. The instrument was face and content validated by two experts; one from administration and planning and one expert from measurement and evaluation both from Faculty of Education, National Open University of Nigeria, Abakaliki Study Centre. The Cronbach Alpha statistics was used to establish the reliability coefficient of the data generated from the clustered questionnaire, which yielded, 0.82, 0.81, 0.67 and 0.73. Two research assistants were engaged by the researcher for easy distribution and collection of the instrument. Data collected were analyzed using mean and standard deviation while the hypotheses were tested using t-test at 0.05 Alpha level. However, the results of the data analyzed revealed that principals' in Abakaliki Education Zone faced various challenges in their efforts to promote students academic performance such as; teachers not attending classes effectively, inadequate number of trained and qualified teachers, lack of time for effective monitoring of teaching and learning. The paper recommends, employment of more qualified teachers, Principal should attend seminars and workshops to improve their managerial competencies.

Keywords: Managerial Ability, Academic Performance, Principal-Ship, Secondary Education.

Introduction

Secondary education is an important level that serves not only as a bridge between primary and tertiary education, but also as the backbone of the country's labour force. It is the education given to children between the ages of (12-18 years). Nigeria having realized the effectiveness of education as a powerful instrument for national development adjusted her secondary education system to encompass diversified curriculum that integrates academic with technical and vocational (trade) subject with a view of empowering the individual for self-employment and socio-economic emancipation (NPE, 2013). As a result, this type of education provides individuals with basic and literary skills. They then put those skills to use for themselves, in

industries and government establishments while working for a living. This level of education cannot achieve its goal without the principal, who is charged with taking care of the human and school plants in the school in order to promote students academic performance. As the person in control of every facet of school management, whether academic or administrative, the principal is the pivot around which many aspects of the secondary education spin. He or She is the secondary school's head, and appointed based on qualifications and seniority. By virtue of the appointment as the head of school, the Principal holds a high status position in secondary school. The viability of the school is based on a school principal who encourages teachers and students to collaborate in order to achieve the institution's



and individual's goals. As a result, the secondary school principal is the school's instructional leader, and his primary responsibility is to provide effective leadership to ensure continuous improvement of instruction. Owing to the fact that the principal serves as the school's manager, the success or failure of a lesson is determined by the principals' managerial abilities to harness those resources to achieve educational goals, promote teaching and learning, and improve students' academic performance. Principals' managerial skills are very important in determining the school's quality; this necessitates principals with adequate managerial competence" (ICREAM 2018). The success of the principals' leadership in managing school organizations is heavily dependent on the principals' managerial abilities. The managerial ability of the principal is an important variable for promoting educational standard; excellent schools have leaders who definitely influence their participants, resulting in high levels of student performance. Secondary school principal leadership qualities have a significant influence on the school, teachers' perceptions, attitudes, and behaviours.

However, it has been observed that a principal's leadership behavior and role as an instructional leader have a significant impact on creating more effective schools, resulting in higher levels of student performance. The principal, in his or her role as instructional leader, has a significant impact on the quality of teacher instruction, the level of student success, and the efficiency with which the school functions. Findley and Findley (1992) state that "If a school is to be an effective one, it will be because of the instructional leadership role of the principal". The principal is important in bringing effective schools. The activities principal engages on to promote students academic performance are; making sure that teachers prepare scheme of work and lesson notes, conducting routine checks on students' notes and assignment books, encouraging teachers to use a variety of teaching methods to meet the needs of students, motivating students to work hard by rewarding best performers at the end of the term, and recommending teachers for academic seminars, workshops, ICT training,

and entrepreneurial trainings among others. Yes, if teachers enhance their academic skills, they will be able to have a significant impact on students, and the outcome will be significant. Again, educational authorities all over the world are concerned about improving instruction supervision. Teachers, students, and administrators are all involved in the day-to-day learning activities in every school. There is a pressing need in Nigeria today to determine what to teach, how to teach it, and to whom to teach it. The individual to be taught are also believed to be full of unique talents and capabilities. According to Ugwu (2001) "the variations in teachers' talents and potentialities, learners' capabilities, teaching methods, societal needs and problems, call for supervision of instruction in school". There is no way that students will perform better academically in the absence of lesson notes, not following the scheme of work and syllabus. There is also no way students will perform better academically in the absence of adequate use of modern curriculum in teaching to meet up to academic standard of the nation, not monitoring teachers on the usage and syllabus coverage and principal not frequently visiting classroom to check on the students activities among others. More so, decision-making is very vital in the secondary school setting. There will be no academic performance records in the secondary school if the principal does not include teachers in decision making process. Principals that make judgments based solely on their own experience risk arriving at just partial solutions. This may lead to dissatisfaction or attrition among employees who are denied a say in the decision-making process Fawcett (2008). There is a high chance of students academic performance when the teachers are involved in taking any decision that pertains to teaching and learning in the school. The principal does so through these ways; by delegating the supervision of morning assembly to teachers, by involving teachers in the formation of school rules and the imposition of disciplinary measures on misbehaving students, by involving the teachers in selecting teaching and learning materials and by involving the teachers in preparing the school time tables. If they are put aside, there will be dissatisfaction, and when this happens, it will tell no good to



academic performance of the students.

An effective principal is committed to raising students' academic performance. He is in charge of planning the curriculum and instructional program. He creates distinct learning objectives for each class level and subject. The principal is regarded as a resource provider, instructional supervisor, and vision setter, without whom students' performance cannot be improved, let alone attained. As the school's leader, the principal is expected to continually facilitate student success and promote students academic performance. However, improper application of his managerial ability, particularly in instructional leadership activities, decision making and supervision of instructions, is impeding performance of secondary education objectives in Abakaliki Education Zone of Ebonyi State in which one of the goals is to prepare students to live effectively in our modern age of science and technology. If the principal fails to discharge his or her duties effectively and efficiently, it will have an impact on the students' academic performance.

Statement of the Problem

Education is an indispensable tool for personal and societal development as well as a key to a national development. This cannot be achieved in secondary education without a sound and a resourceful principal. At Abakaliki Education Zone of Ebonyi State, parents and the general public have expressed concern about the quality of education and academic performance of wards and children; with respect to the qualities of teachers and principals in their public schools. Quality and managerial ability of the principal is critical in providing effective promotion of students academic performance in school. It is important to note that a qualified principals and teachers produce quality students. Change in societal values pose serious challenge to the secondary school principals therefore, little attention is being paid to educational pursuit. Attention is more on acquisition of wealth. This situation has led to break down of law and order in secondary schools. Owing to the fact that principals play such an important role in schools as supervision of instruction, monitoring and

evaluation, their careful execution of these roles, as well as their ingenuity, influences the degree of teacher input and student academic progress. Since there are inadequate fund in the provision of instructional materials, in-effective classroom monitoring and evaluation, inadequate school plant and infrastructure, science equipments, technological materials, inadequate qualified teachers, training and re-training program for the teachers, teachers in the secondary school are not proportionate to the number of students on the ratio of 1:40 according to National Policy Of Education, (Federal Republic Of Nigeria 2013), etc, the principal could not afford to perform in isolation. These myriads of problems ignited the researcher's interest in studying the Effect of Principals' Managerial Ability in Promoting Students Academic Performance in Abakaliki Education Zone of Ebonyi State and proffer astute solutions to improve on the Principals' Managerial Ability in Promoting Students academic Performance.

Purpose of the Study:

This research work is focused on assessment of Managerial competencies of Principals in Promoting Students Academic Performance in Secondary schools' in Abakaliki Education Zone of Ebonyi State, Nigeria. Specifically, the study sought to:

- i. Examining the principals' instructional leadership competence in promoting student academic performance.
- ii. Finding out the extent to which the principal involves teachers in decision making in order to promote students' academic performance.
- iii. Identifying the methods used by principals to supervise instruction in order to promote students' academic performance.
- iv. Identifying problems that principals' face in their efforts to promote students' academic performance.

Scope of the Study:

The study covers the influence of Principals' Managerial Ability in Promoting Students Academic Performance in Secondary Schools in Abakaliki Educational Zone of Ebonyi State.



Such as Instructional supervision, decision making process and leadership activities of the principals. It was carried out in Secondary Schools within Abakaliki Educational Zone which is made up of Abakaliki Local Government Area, Izzi Local Government Area, Ebonyi Local Government Area and Ohaukwu Local Government Area.

Research Questions:

Based on this work, the following four Research Questions were formulated to guide the study. They are;

- i. What type of Instructional leadership competence do the principals' engage to promote students academic performance?
- ii. How do the principals' involve the teachers in decision making in order to promote students academic performance?
- iii. How does the principals' monitor instructions in order to promote students academic performance?
- iv. What are the principals' challenges in their efforts to promote students academic performance?

Research Hypotheses:

The following hypotheses were formulated which guided the study and was tested at 0.05 significant level.

Ho₁: There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of male and female teachers on principals' instructional leadership competence in promoting students academic performance.

Ho₂: There is no significant difference between the male and female teachers' mean ratings on principals' involvement of teachers in decision making for the promotion of students academic performance.

Ho₃: There is no significant difference between male and female teachers mean ratings on how the principal monitors instruction for the promotion of students' academic performance.

Ho₄: There is no significant difference between

the mean rating of male and female teachers on principals' challenges in their effort to promote students academic performance.

Review of Related Literature:

Conceptual framework

Managerial competence: Managerial competence entails the knowledge that a person in a managerial position needs to do certain management actions or tasks. Simply put, it refers to an individual's capacity to perform specific management activities or duties based on their knowledge and skills. This skill can be learnt or practiced. They can, however, be obtained through the practical application of needed activities and tasks. A manager you can improve each talent by studying and gaining experience. Then managerial abilities could be viewed as a manager's ability to keep his or her employees' day-to-day work responsibilities as efficient as possible, or as the knowledge or skills someone has to enable him or her fulfill some specific management activities or task.

Academic performance: According to Mwaniki (2012), Academic performance refers to the ability of students to study, remember facts and be able to communicate their knowledge verbally or through writing. In other words, academic performance refers to how students deal with their studies and how they cope with or accomplish different tasks given to them by their teachers. Academic performance, according to Ward, Stocker, and Murray-Ward in Erickson (2011), refers to the educational outcome; the amount to which a student, teacher, or institution has met their educational objectives. Academic performance can also be view as the ability to learn and remember things, as well as the ability to transmit one's knowledge verbally or in writing" (Answers, 2010). It refers to intellectual success in all disciplines, both in the classroom and in extracurricular activities.

Secondary education: Secondary education is an important level that serves as a bridge between primary and secondary education as well as the backbone of the country's workforce. Secondary education provides the beneficiaries both the



literary and basic skills which the individual can use for himself, for the industries and government establishment while performing a tasks for living. Nigeria's federal government acknowledged secondary school as an important institution that offered the majority of each worker's education. Higher manpower skills are offered at the secondary education level. It serves as a source of fuel and refueling for tertiary institutions and other secondary education stakeholders. As a result, the country's secondary schools are dependent on their availability. According to Maduekwe (2002), Nigeria's young democracy requires peace, wisdom, and sincerity of purpose, which all Nigerians possess. Indeed, peace wisdom and sincerity of intent can only be gained via experience and education, such as that provided by our secondary school system. The school principal is the school's head, and he or she is usually appointed based on qualifications and seniority. By virtue of his appointment as the head of school, the Principal holds a high status position in secondary school. The viability of the school is based on a school principal who encourages teachers and students to collaborate in order to achieve the institution's and individual's goals. As a result, the secondary school principal is the school's instructional leader, and his primary responsibility is to provide effective leadership to ensure that instruction is continually improved. Aside from that, the secondary school principal has other responsibilities. Interpreting policy, implementing curriculum, ensuring student welfare, equipment, physical facilities, and finances, inducting and retraining employees, and lastly maintaining effective school community connections among others are the primary responsibilities of the secondary school principal. The principal of a secondary school must be exemplary, efficient, and resourceful, being responsible for ensuring that the school promotes effective teaching and learning. The school principal has the responsibility of ensuring that his employer hires qualified and competent teachers for his school. The principal must be extremely knowledgeable and skilled in areas such as modern instructional techniques, human relations, delegation of responsibility, and communication. He is in charge of

delegating tasks and responsibilities to his staff. He or she must ensure that each person is doing their job satisfactorily through supervision. It is the principal's responsibility to orient new staff members to school life in general. In addition, the principal is responsible for planning, organizing, coordinating, motivating the staff and students and managing school plants and facilities.

Qualities of a Good Principal: Principal as the school administrator ought to possess certain leadership and managerial role skills such as:

- The principal as a technician must understand what the goals of schools are, as well as be aware of current educational concerns and trends. He must be knowledgeable, mature, and possess sound judgment, broad-mindedness, and the capacity to anticipate and investigate problems and propose acceptable solutions.
- The secondary school principal must be social, friendly, cheerful and firm in decision making. He/she must be interested in the welfare and problems of his staff and the students. In other words, the principal must be sociable and considerate for others.
- The principal in his conceptual quality must have clear vision for the schools. He or she must have clearly defined long-term goals and a strategy for accomplishing them. He or she must be capable of making decisions, solving problems, and thinking creatively.

Theoretical Framework

This work was supported by two theories; Human capital theory and Transformational Leadership theory. Human capita theory postulates that people are paid according to their production, and that educated workers are more productive than those who are uneducated or illiterate. Education has been associated with the key to existence in Nigeria. Nigerians feel that obtaining a decent education ensures a better future. This future is envisioned as admittance to a good secondary school, followed by enrollment in a prestigious course at a good university, and lastly, formal employment. The type of



secondary school a student attends has an impact on their future chances. Most parents choose private schools or high-performing secondary schools because this influences the type of career a student will pursue in universities and even the type of college they will attend. While Transformational leadership is a relatively new approach to leadership that focuses on how leaders can create valuable and positive change in their followers. James MacGregor Burns first introduced the concepts of transformational leadership when studying political leaders, but this term is now used when studying organizations as well. Transformational leaders focus on “transforming” others to support each other and the organization as a whole. The assumption there is that Followers of a transformational leader respond by feeling trust, admiration, loyalty, and respect for the leader and are more willing to work harder than originally expected. The principal according to Burns (1996), has to change the behaviour and beliefs of all Stakeholders in the school setup and unite them behind a new vision of the school's future. The principal as a transformational leader inspires, motivates and supports all role-players to understand and accept educational changes in order to promote academic performance. He/she does this by paying special attention to their developmental needs, involving them in decision making, delegating duties and responsibilities to them. Davidoff and Lazarus (2002) maintain that principals need to possess technical skills in relation to students' academic performance; human relations skills, conceptual skills, time management abilities and infrastructure management skills. In addition the following are highlight:

Principal instructional leadership activities in promoting students academic performance:

It has been reported that the leadership behaviour of a principal and his/her role as an instructional leader has a significant impact on creating more effective schools leading to higher levels of student performances” Quirin, Gold (2002). The principal, in his or her role as instructional leader, has a significant impact on the quality of teacher instruction, the level of student success, and the efficiency with which the school functions.

Principals' monitoring of instruction in order to promote students academic performance:

Educational authorities all over the world are concerned about improving instruction supervision/monitoring. Teachers, students, and administrators are all involved in the day-to-day learning activities in every school. There is a pressing need in Nigeria today to determine what to teach, how to teach it, and to whom to teach it. The individual to be taught are also believed to be full of unique talents and capabilities. According to Ugwu (2001) “he said that the variations in teachers' talents and potentialities, learners' capabilities, teaching methods, societal needs and problems, call for supervision of instruction in school”. There is no way that students will perform better academically in the absence of lesson notes, not following the scheme of work and syllabus. There is also no way students will perform better academically in the absence of modern curriculum to meet up to academic standard of the nation. It is the principal who is saddles with the responsibility of Chief Executive to see that the teachers teach with lesson notes, have scheme of works and teach according to the syllabus and the modern curriculum for better academic performance of the students.

Effective instructional supervision is regarded as critical to the success of a school. According to Yunas (2013), "supervision is one of the principals' tasks, which is focused with improving instructional effectiveness." This means that the principal must oversee the process of effective teaching and learning in the school. The principals' job, he says, is defined by frequent classroom observations, supervision, appropriate feedback to teachers, and staff participation in school-based activities. The principal plays a critical role in ensuring that the school's curriculum is implemented successfully. The instructional supervision also considers the timely execution of curriculum, program enhancement, and monitoring of the school's planned objectives.

Khan (2009), “asserts that as instructional leader the principal is the pivotal point within the school who affects the quality of individual teacher



instruction, the height of student performance, and the degree of efficiency in school functioning. He makes frequent observations of classroom instructional programme, teachers' involvement in decision making regarding instructional programme, active participation in planning and evaluating the instructional programme". "Through a purposeful emphasis on strategies and means of embedding excellence in the quality of instruction, supervision promotes teaching and learning. Teachers are guided and influenced to aim for the intended educational goals and objectives through supervision".

Charles et al (2012), "suggests that Principals must supervise teachers by ensuring that lessons are planned ahead of time; lessons are structured with an interesting beginning; revision of previous knowledge and teachers' use of voice variation and summary of major points at the end; teachers use backups/teaching aids properly; teachers have a good relationship with their students, and teachers strictly follow the curriculum."

It's worth emphasizing that the principals' function in an effective classroom and for effective academic performance is dependent on supervision. The principals' supervisory procedures are based on class visits and lesson observation. This clearly implies that supervision is focused on increasing professional performance in order to provide the school's desired results, which include improved academic performance for pupils. To conclude, the principal ensures teachers effective plan and administration of their lessons, ensures frequent check on teachers methods of teaching, ensures adequate use of modern curriculum in teaching, guides teachers on curriculum usage and current teaching methods and monitors teachers on usage and syllabus coverage . All of these are examples of how principals monitors instruction to improve students academic performance. Principals' involvement of teachers in decision making in order to promote students academic performance.

Decision-Making is very vital in the school

setting. Decision making, according to Ogunsaju (2006), is the process of making a choice between two or more possibilities in order to define the future condition of things. Also Olubadewo (1992) says that it is the process of thought and deliberation that leads to a decision. According to him, decision is not only a part of people's daily routine, but also an intrinsic requirement for the viability of an organization. School like all formal organizations is basically a decision-making structure. There will be no academic performance records in the school if the head teacher or the principal does not include teachers in decision making process. In the effort for better schools, a participatory approach to decision-making has been recognized as critical (Blasé, 2010). Effective teacher participation in decision-making in schools can be a way to practice participatory management. According to Mueller and Gorkturk (2010), teachers who commit to becoming active participants in the decision-making process can have a greater impact on the school's overall success. Allowing teachers to take ownership of what they do to an extent yields better results. Teachers, according to Kiproop and Kandie (2012), are crucial characters in implementing the curriculum, which includes decisions on what to teach, how to teach it, and who to educate at the school level. This is in agreement with Mualako, ; Mukasa, ; and Achoka, (2009), who asserts that among other groups, teachers who are custodians of instruction, implementers of school policies, and co-organizers for school activities, as well as head teachers, are very important to involve in making decisions in schools. Furthermore, they are affected by decisions made in schools, and as experts and specialists in various subject areas, they are better qualified to make the appropriate decisions while keeping in mind what is expected of them as teachers".

Principals that make judgments based solely on their own experience risk arriving at just partial solutions. This may lead to dissatisfaction or attrition among employees who are denied a say in the decision-making process Fawcett (2008). Teachers can participate in and influence decision-making processes when they use participatory decision-making. According to



Gorton, Alston, and Snowden. (2007), if members are allowed to participate, they will be self-motivated to do so because the ultimate decision may have a major impact on them. They may feel deprived if they are excluded from the decision-making process, and dissatisfaction with the administrator or the conclusion is likely to emerge. And when there is dissatisfaction, it will tell negative to the academic performance of the students.

There is a high chance of students' academic performance when the teachers are involved in taking any decision that pertains to teaching and learning in the school. The principal does so through these ways; by delegating the supervision of morning assembly to teachers, by involving the teachers in the formation of school rules and the imposition of disciplinary measures on misbehaving students, by involving the teachers in the selection of teaching and learning resources and by involving the teachers in preparing the school time tables. If they are left aside, there will be dissatisfaction, and when this happens, it will tell no good to academic performance of the students.

Principals' challenges in their efforts to promote students academic performance:

It is difficult for the principal to improve the academic performance of students. It may be affected by several of factors that the principal must address. Some of the factors that have a negative effect on students academic performance include; teachers not attending classes effectively, inadequate number of trained and qualified teachers, teachers inability to completion of syllabus/scheme of work, lack of time for effective monitoring of teaching and learning, inadequate science laboratory equipments, insufficient time to examine teachers lesson plans and notes.

Empirical studies

In their research, Amukowa and Karue (2012) discovered comparable characteristics that contribute to poor academic performance in secondary schools. Inadequate reading materials, chronic absence due to a lack of payment of fees in the school, admittance of

weak students, inadequate instructional materials, and infrastructural facilities were among the causes they discovered. They also claim that the sort of leadership supplied by principals varies, which has an impact on students performance.

Many studies the researchers reviewed focused only on role performance of principals in secondary schools in Nigeria, managerial roles of principals in promoting teaching and learning, managerial skills of principal in private secondary school but there is no established researches done that assess effects of principals' managerial ability in promoting students academic performance.

One of the benefits derived from this review is the wide coverage of concept, by the previous researchers. For instance, the studies conducted by Ifeyinwa Vivian(2019) which was on “the roles of principals in promoting teaching and learning in selected secondary schools in Enugu state”. The purpose was to investigate the roles of principals in promoting teaching and learning in selected secondary schools in Enugu state. The study adopted a Survey research design, the sample consist of 768 respondents. The instruments used were questionnaires which consist of 25 items on 4 points Likert Scale. Mean and Standard Deviation were used to analyze the data. The correlation co-efficient of Cronbach Alpha 0.945 and 0.951 were obtained from the teachers and principals. The findings show that principals roles to promote students academic performance include; Interpersonal relationship, record keeping, school –community relations, staff development, internal supervision among other things.

Methodology

This study uses a qualitative approach with descriptive research design. Researcher uses qualitative research methods because he wants to explore information in depth about the Effect of Principals' Managerial Ability in Promoting Students Academic Performance in Abakaliki Education Zone of Ebonyi State. Population of 1838 Teachers and sample of 329 respondents comprising 120 male Teachers and 209 Female



Teachers were selected using Taro Yamene formula. Self structured questionnaire titled Principals Managerial Ability in Promoting Students Academic Performance Questionnaire (PMAPSAPQ) was used as the instrument for data collection which consists of 28 items on four Likert scale. The instrument was face and content validated by two experts; one from Administration and Planning and one expert from measurement and evaluation both from faculty of Education, National Open University of Nigeria, Abakaliki Study Centre. The instrument was found reliable using Cronbach Alpha technique with 0.82, 0.81, 0.67 and 0.73.

Two research assistants were engaged by the researcher for easy distribution and collection of the instrument. Data collected were analyzed using mean and standard deviation while hypotheses were tested using t-test statistics at 0.05 level of significance. Mean of 2.5 and above were accepted while below 2.5 were rejected.

Results.

Research Question One:

What type of instructional leadership competence do principals engage in to promote students academic performance?

Table1: Mean response of Male and Female Teachers on the type of instructional leadership competence principals engage in to promote students academic performance in Abakaliki Education zone in Ebonyi State.

S/N	Type on Instructional activities principal engages in to promote students academic performance	Male teachers (120)			Female Teachers(209)		
		Mean	SD	Decision	Mean	SD	Decision
1	The principal recommends appropriate textbooks for usage to the students.	3.48	0.72	Agreed	3.33	0.80	Agreed
2	The principal guides teachers in teaching materials to use for effective teaching and learning.	3.40	0.99	Agreed	3.50	0.86	Agreed
3	The principal ensures that teachers prepare scheme of work and lesson notes.	3.28	0.87	Agreed	3.54	0.83	Agreed
4	The principal engages on routine check on students note and assignment books.	2.75	1.09	Agreed	3.05	1.05	Agreed
5	The principal encourages teachers to employ a variety of instructional strategies to meet the needs of individual students.	3.39	0.80	Agreed	3.22	0.84	Agreed
6	The principal encourages students to study hard by rewarding best performers at the end of term	2.92	1.02	Agreed	3.08	0.98	Agreed
7	The principal recommends teacher for academic seminars, workshops, eg Better Education Service Delivery for All (BESDA) programme, training on ICT, entrepreneurial trainings.	2.89	1.01	Agreed	3.04	0.96	Agreed
	GRAND \bar{X} and SD	3.15	0.92	Agreed	3.25	0.90	Agreed



Table 1: The data in table one above show the mean ratings of male and female teachers on the type of instructional leadership activities principals engage in to promote students academic performance in Abakaliki Education zone of Ebonyi State. All the male teachers responded in affirmation to all the factors listed in the table with mean ranging from 2.75 to 3.48 and the grand Mean of 3.15 and standard

deviation of 0.92. While the female teachers also responded in agreement to the items listed with the mean responses ranging between 3.04 to 3.54 and grand mean at 3.25 with standard deviation of 0.90.

Research Question Two:

How does the principal involve the teachers in decision making in order to promote students academic performance?

Table2: Mean response of Male and Female Teachers on how the Principal involve the Teachers in decision making in order to Promote Students Academic Performance in Abakaliki Education zone in Ebonyi State.

SNO	How do the principals' involve the teachers in decision making in order to promote students academic performance	Male teachers (120)			Female Teachers(209)		
		Mean	SD	Decision	Mean	SD	Decision
8	The principal delegates the supervision of morning assembly to teachers.	3.83	0.38	Agreed	3.93	0.34	Agreed
9	The principal involve the teachers in preparing the school time table	2.67	0.99	Agreed	2.96	0.95	Agreed
10	The principal involve the teachers in formation of school rules and the imposition of disciplinary measures on misbehaving students.	2.79	1.00	Agreed	2.86	1.04	Agreed
11	Teachers are involved by the principals in the selection of teaching and learning resources.	3.28	0.87	Agreed	3.11	0.98	Agreed
12	The principal delegates teachers to coach/train students during extra-curricular activities.	3.47	0.82	Agreed	2.96	0.89	Agreed
13	Teachers are involved in the interview panel to admit new students.	2.97	0.93	Agreed	2.89	1.03	Agreed
14	The Principal involve the teachers in making decisions regarding students' improvement measures.	2.29	1.10	Agreed	2.10	0.97	Agreed
	GRAND X and SD	3.04	0.87	Agreed	2.97	0.88	Agreed



Table 2: From the data in table two above, it is observed that the mean ratings of both male and female teachers on how the principal involve the teachers in decision making in order to promote students academic performance in Abakaliki Education zone are above bench mark except item 14 which is below 2.5. This implies that both male and female teachers agreed with all the factors listed as how the principal involve the teachers in decision making except item 14. The male teachers' responses range from 2.29 to 3.83 with the grand mean of 3.04 and standard

deviation of 0.87. For the female teachers their mean responses range from 2.10 to 3.93 with the grand mean of 2.97 and standard deviation of 0.88. The data are in agreement with the items listed as how the principal involve the teachers in decision making except item 14 which both disagreed on the item.

Research Question Three:

How does the principal monitor instructions in order to promote students academic performance?

Table3: Mean response of Male and Female Teachers on What the principal does to supervise instruction in order to promote students academic performance in Abakaliki Education zone in Ebonyi State.

SNO	How do the principals' monitor instructions in order to promote students academic performance?	Male teachers (120)			Female Teachers(209)		
		Mean	SD	Decision	Mean	SD	Decision
15	The principal ensures effective plan and administration of their lessons.	3.03	0.99	Agreed	2.96	0.89	Agreed
16	The principal ensures frequent check on teachers method of teaching	3.24	0.94	Agreed	2.85	1.03	Agreed
17	Principal guides the teachers on curriculum and current teaching methods.	2.92	0.95	Agreed	2.86	1.04	Agreed
18	The principal advices teachers on matters related to curriculum and current teaching methods	2.76	1.09	Agreed	3.00	1.02	Agreed
19	The principal instructs class prefects to keep attendance of teachers who attend lessons.	2.73	1.08	Agreed	2.99	1.02	Agreed
20	The principal monitors teachers on usage and syllabus coverage.	2.68	1.03	Agreed	2.98	1.01	Agreed
21	The principal frequently visits classroom to check on the students activities.	2.92	1.02	Agreed	3.08	0.98	Agreed
	GRAND \bar{X} and SD	2.89	1.01	Agreed	2.96	1.00	Agreed

Table 3: The data in table three above show the mean ratings of male and female teachers on how the principal monitors instruction in order to promote students academic performance in Abakaliki Education zone. The male responded

in agreement to all the factors listed in the table with mean ranging from 2.68 to 3.24, and the grand mean of 2.89 and standard deviation of 1.01. While the female teachers responded in affirmation to the items listed, with the mean



response ranging from 2.85 to 3.08, with grand mean of 2.96 and standard deviation of 1.00. Both male and female teachers mean response are above the bench mark of 2.5, which indicate an acceptance of the items.

Research Question Four:

What problems do principals face in their efforts to promote students academic performance?

Table4: Mean response of Male and Female Teachers on What challenges principals' encounter in their effort to promote students academic performance in Abakaliki Education zone in Ebonyi State.

SNO	What problems do principals' face in their efforts to promote students academic performance	Male teachers (120)			Female Teachers(209)		
		Mean	SD	Decision	Mean	SD	Decision
22	Teachers not attending lesson/classes effectively	3.43	0.80	Agreed	3.11	0.99	Agreed
23	Inadequate number of trained and qualified teachers	3.73	0.48	Agreed	3.28	0.79	Agreed
24	Teachers inability to completion of syllabus/scheme of work	3.46	0.82	Agreed	3.36	0.62	Agreed
25	Incessant striking of workers	3.52	0.76	Agreed	3.36	0.79	Agreed
26	Inadequate science laboratory equipments	3.37	0.79	Agreed	3.44	0.61	Agreed
27	insufficient time to examine teachers lesson plans and notes.	3.51	0.62	Agreed	3.56	0.63	Agreed
28	Lack of time for effective monitoring of teaching and learning.	2.92	1.02	Agreed	2.88	0.97	Agreed
	GRAND \bar{X} and SD	3.42	0.75	Agreed	3.28	0.77	Agreed

Table 4: The data in table four above show the mean ratings of male and female teachers on problems principals' face in their effort to promote students academic performance in Abakaliki Education zone. The male responded in agreement to all the factors listed in the table with mean ranging from 2.92 to 3.73, and the grand mean of 3.42 and standard deviation of 0.75. While the female teachers responded in affirmation to the items listed, with the mean response ranging from 2.88 to 3.56, with grand

mean of 3.28 and standard deviation of 0.77. Both male and female teachers mean response are above the bench mark of 2.5, which indicate an acceptance of the items.

Test of hypotheses

Ho: There is no significant difference between the mean rating of male and female teachers on principals instructional leadership competence in promoting students academic performance.

Table 5: The T-test analysis was computed and the result shown below

Respondent	\bar{X}	SD	N	d.f	t- cal value	Lev.of.sig	t-crit value	Decision
Male	3.15	0.92	120					
				327	0.95	0.05	1.96	Accepted
Female	3.25	0.90	209					



From the table 5 above, it was observed that the t-cal value was 0.95 at the degree of freedom of 327 at 0.05 level of significance. The null hypothesis is accepted because the t-cal value of 0.95 is less than the t-crit value of 1.96, which state that, there is no significant difference between the mean rating of male and female teachers on principals instructional leadership

competence in promoting students academic performance

Ho₂: There is no significant difference between the male and female teachers mean ratings on involvement of teachers in decision making for promotion of students academic performance.

Table 6: The T-test analysis was computed and the result shown below

Respondent	\bar{X}	SD	N	d.f	t- cal value	Lev.of.sig	t-crit value	Decision
Male	3.04	0.87	120					
				327	0.69	0.05	1.96	Accepted
Female	2.97	0.88	209					

From the table 6 above, it is observed that the t-cal value was 0.69 at 327 degree of freedom and 0.05 level of significance. Since the t-cal value of 0.69 is less than the t-crit value of 1.96, null hypothesis was accepted, which state that, there is no significant difference between the mean rating of male and female teachers on

involvement of teachers in decision making for promotion of students academic performance.

Ho₃: There is no significant difference between male and female teachers mean ratings on how the principal monitors instruction for promotion of students' academic performance.

Table 7: The T-test analysis was computed and the result shown below

Respondent	\bar{X}	SD	N	d.f	t- cal value	Lev.of.sig	t-crit value	Decision
Male	2.89	1.01	120					
				327	0.60	0.05	1.96	Accepted
Female	2.96	1.00	209					

The data analysis in table 7, observed that the t-cal value was 0.60 with degree of freedom of 327 at 0.05 level of significance. Since the t-cal value of 0.60 is less than the t-crit value of 1.96, the null hypothesis is accepted which states that, there is no significant difference between male and female teachers mean ratings on how the

principal monitors instruction for promotion of students' academic performance.

Ho₄: There is no significant difference between the mean rating of male and female teachers on the problems principals' do face in their effort to promote students academic performance.

Table 8: The T-test analysis was computed and the result shown below

Respondent	\bar{X}	SD	N	d.f	t- cal value	Lev.of.sig	t-crit value	Decision
Male	3.42	0.75	120					
				327	1.61	0.05	1.96	Accepted
Female	3.28	0.77	209					

From the table 8 analysis, it was observed that the t-cal value was 1.61 at 327 degree of freedom and 0.05 level of significance. Hence the t-cal value

of 1.61 is less than the t-crit value of 1.96, the null hypothesis is accepted which states that there is no significant difference between the mean



rating of male that and female teachers on the principals' challenges to promote students academic performance.

Discussion

The results revealed that principals encourages teachers to employ a variety of instructional strategies to meet the needs of individual students, principals making sure that teachers plan their scheme of work and lesson notes, the principal recommends teachers for academic seminars, workshops, training on ICT, and principal encouraging students to work hard by rewarding top performers at the end of term as those instructional leadership activities principal engages to promotes students academic performance in secondary schools in Abakaliki Education zone of Ebonyi State. These findings are in agreement with Khan (2009), who asserts that the secondary school principal is the school's instructional leader, and his primary responsibility is to provide effective leadership to ensure that instruction is continually improved. Aside from that, the secondary school principal has other responsibilities. Interpreting policy, implementing curriculum, ensuring student welfare, equipment, physical facilities, and finances, inducting and retraining employees, and lastly maintaining effective school community connections among others are the primary responsibilities of the secondary school principal. The principal of a secondary school must be exemplary, efficient, and resourceful, being responsible for ensuring that the school promotes effective teaching and learning. The school principal has the responsibility of ensuring that his employer hires qualified and competent teachers for his school. The principal must be extremely knowledgeable and skilled in areas such as modern instructional techniques, human relations, delegation of responsibility, and communication (Quirin, &Gold 2002). The principals also delegates supervision of morning assembly, involves the teachers in preparing school time table, delegates teachers to coach and train students during extra-curricular activities, involves the teachers in the

formation of school rules and imposition of disciplinary measures on misbehaving students and involves the teachers in selecting teaching and learning materials as part of decision making ability of the principal.

The findings are also in consonant with Ugwu(2001), that the principals ensures teachers effective plan and administration of their lesson notes, the principal ensures frequent check on teachers method of teaching, he guides teachers on curriculum and current teaching methods.

Conclusion

The researcher came to the following conclusion about the assessment of managerial competencies of principals in promoting students academic performance in secondary schools' in Abakaliki Education Zone of Ebonyi State, Nigeria. All the principals in charge of secondary schools in Abakaliki Education zone are to some extent good instructional leaders. They gave vital information on how the school activities should be carried out. Failure and success of schools are in the hands of the principals. They give instructions and also join hands in making sure that academic performance of students is improved. Also, the principals employ a variety of approaches to supervise the teaching and learning processes, which include; ensuring teachers effective planning and administration of their lessons, frequent check on teachers method of teaching, adequate use of modern curriculum in teaching, guiding teachers on curriculum and effective teaching methods and frequent visit to classroom to check on the students' activities, among others.

Recommendations

Government and relevant agencies should retrain the principals in the management and supervision of teaching and learning, Classrooms' instructions, syllabus/scheme of work. Also in maintenance of science laboratory equipments, staff welfare and effective monitoring of general school programme.



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