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ASSESSMENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE ROLE PERFORMANCES OF HEADMASTERS OF PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN EBONYI STATE SOUTH EAST, NIGERIA

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Abstract

This study was carried out to identify the administrative role performances of headmasters of primary schools in Ebonyi state, southeast Nigeria. The study also identified the challenges faced the headmasters in performing their roles and strategies for handling these challenges. Three research questions were developed in line with the purpose of the study. Three null hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance. The study adopted descriptive survey design. The population of the study is 1471 headmasters and 10,188 teachers, and the sample comprised 150 headmasters and 1000 primary school teachers from the area of study. This sample was drawn using multi-stage sampling technique. A-21 item instrument termed "Headmasters' Administrative Role Performance Assessment Questionnaire" (HARPAQ) was used by the researcher for data collection. The instrument was first validated by experts and reliability was determined using Cronbach Alpha Statistics and the reliability got was 0.85. The administration and retrieval of instrument were through direct contact and use of research assistants with the respondents. Data collected were analysed using mean and standard deviation for the research question while z-test statistics were used for testing the null hypotheses. The findings of the study revealed that all the 21 items were accepted by the respondents. Findings on the hypotheses tested revealed that there was no significant difference in the mean responses of headmasters and primary school teachers from Ebonyi state on the items presented.

Adequate funding, prudence and accountability in fund management, regular leadership training of headmasters, formation of formidable umbrella union for the headmasters to always interact with government on issues of school funding and management, involving the PTA and community in school management among others were recommended.

Introduction

Background of the Study

Quality education at all levels is desired by all Nigerians. At primary level quality education is absolutely necessary because it serves as the foundation for all levels of education. It provides the basic literacy for people to be self-employed if they cannot continue with secondary and tertiary levels of education. If that basic foundation is weak, it will lead to national catastrophe as progress in the society becomes very difficult. Hence, all concerned with primary school education should make their best input in order to ensure that a very solid foundation is laid. Some people may ask what comprises quality education at primary level. It is education for achieving the general primary goal and objectives listed in the National Policy on Education (NPE 2004). The goal of primary education shall be to prepare the individual for useful living within the society.

If the position of the headmaster is such an important one, he or she is expected to possess a number of qualities which will help in facilitating his or work school work. Ozizi (1977) stated that among other qualities, the following are expected of a headmaster; drive, energy, vision, common sense and mental alertness. Peter (1976) stated that the headmaster should be wise and capable of quality leadership. Obemeta (1984) in an extensive discussion of the qualities of a school head named the following characteristics as necessary: self-discipline, firmness and fairness, persuasiveness, flexibility, self-control and tactfulness. In addition, the headmaster should be academic and professionally competent. In fact Obemeta would like to see a situation where the headmaster as the head should shoulder above all the other teachers academically. With a clear understanding of who the headmaster is; the importance of the office, and the quality expected of any occupant of the office as well the objectives of primary education in Nigeria, it should be a lot easy to understand the high quality education in primary school.



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Researchers envisage that there should be some definite role expected of the headmaster that will help to bring about quality education in primary school. The role proposed is that of administrative-leader. This proposal implies that the headmaster should be both an administrator and a leader. This view was readily acceptable to Nwagwu (1978), who summarized the role of school headmaster as managerial leadership and instructional leadership. According to Ozizi (1977) a leader can be described as an individual who directs the affairs of an organization in such a way as to achieve its primary goals and objectives. The headmaster fits well into this description, and hence he or she is an administrator.

However, the headmaster's responsibilities are more than those of an administrator. They include those of a leader, as a good administrator may not necessarily possess the qualities of a leader. However, a headmaster needs those qualities in order to perform optimally like an administrator. The term leader can be defined in various ways. Shaw (1971) sees a leader as the member of a group who exert more positive influence over others, than they exert over him. The headmaster is expected to be a leader, thus he or she should possess the qualities of a leader which include the following: a high level of intelligence, dominance, aggressiveness, adjustment, emotional stability, active and non-conformity (Lindgrera1973). The listed qualities will be invaluable to the headmaster not only in administering but leading the school to tremendous heights. Thus, the role of a headmaster in bringing about high quality education in the primary school is that of an administrator. In playing this role, the headmaster directs tremendous energy towards the achievement of the school goals and objectives.

Statement of Problem

Education is the pivot in which the wheel of national development revolves. It therefore requires careful planning in both individual and government levels. Statutory school administration and management through the activities of headmasters, teachers, parents and pupils show commitments to improvement by ensuring the right caliber of leadership. This is to ensure quality school management and administration to eliminate the falling standard of pupils' performances and hence achieve the goals of National Policy on Education. The headmaster's efforts toward achieving these goals meet with various constraints such as poor school funding, poor facilities both physical and material, problem of school manpower organization, disciplinary problems, school community relationship, staff development, curriculum development and instruction, guidance and counseling services and evaluation of school programs and activities.

Based on these, this study is to identify the extent to which the headmasters of primary schools in Ebonyi state, southeast Nigeria can identify their administrative roles, the challenges they face and strategies for handling the challenges.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to assess the administrative performances of headmaster of primary schools in Ebonyi state southeast Nigeria. In more specific terms the study sought to:

- i. Find out the extent to which the headmasters identify their administrative roles in primary schools in Ebonyi state, southeast Nigeria.
- ii. Find out the challenges the headmasters face in performing their administrative roles in primary schools in Ebonyi state, southeast Nigeria.
- iii. Identify the various strategies to be adopted by the headmasters in handling their administrative challenges.

Significance of the Study

The study will be of a great importance to the government, school administrators, teachers, PTA and pupils in primary schools in Ebonyi state southeast Nigeria. It will assist government in knowing what to expect of the headmasters in the primary school system. Government will know the necessary leadership and administrative trainings needed by the headmasters in order to perform efficiently.

The headmasters on the other hand will become more abreast with their expected administrative and leadership roles in their various schools. The teachers and PTA will be fully aware of the roles expected of the headmasters and how their relationships would help in effective performances of these roles.

Scope of the Study

This study will be conducted in primary schools in Ebonyi state, southeast of Nigeria. Both headmasters and teachers in the various primary schools in the state will be studied. The content scope includes identification of



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the basic roles of headmasters in school administration, determination of the challenges faced by these headmasters in their school administration and then the strategies adopted by these headmasters in handling these challenges.

Research Questions

The following research questions will guide the study:

- i. To what extent do headmasters and teachers of primary schools in Ebonyi state, southeast Nigeria identify the administrative role performances of the headmasters?
- ii. What are the challenges the headmasters face in performing their administrative roles in primary schools in Ebonyi state, southeast Nigeria?
- iii. What are the various strategies to be adopted by the headmasters of primary schools in Ebonyi state, southeast Nigeria in handling their administrative challenges?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated and guided this research work. They were tested at 0.05 level of significance;

Ho₁: There is no significance difference in the opinions of the headmasters and teachers on the basic roles of headmasters in school administration in Ebonyi state, southeast, Nigeria.

Ho₂: There is no significance difference in the opinions teachers and headmasters on the challenges the headmasters face in performing their administrative roles in primary schools in Ebonyi state, southeast Nigeria.

Ho₃: There is no significant difference in the opinions of teachers and headmasters on the various strategies to be adopted by the headmasters of primary schools in Ebonyi state, southeast Nigeria in handling their administrative challenges.

Review of related literature

Theoretical Framework

Administrative behaviour among headmasters can be explained using behaviorist theory. Behaviorists focus on the impacts of personality, environment and external factors on headmasters' activities. Behaviorist theory strongly believes that individual or external factors shape behavior of a headmaster through learning. The theory assumes that as a result of external environment or personal factors, people learn certain behaviours which influence their administrative ability. The fundamental assumptions of behaviourist perspective are that behaviours are learned, and not only that, reinforcement of the external forces enhances continuation of a particular behaviour. The key proponents of behaviourists theory includes Wan Pavlov, Edward Thorn Dike, B.F. Skinner and Albert Bandera. Skinner, (1980) states that most behaviours that we observed in people are maintained because they are reinforced by somebody. The reinforcement of a person's behavior may be positive reinforcements like money, food or praise. Skinner, (1980) also noted that any behaviour that is not reinforced will cease. This means that a person's behavior is maintained by certain reinforcement and its withdrawals can lead to extinction of such behaviour.

Relating Skinner's behavioural theory to headmaster's administrative behaviour, it will be necessary to mention that every headmaster who administers a school learns certain acts of administration as a result of his or her interactions with the environment. It is also necessary to mention that those behaviours are reinforced by the external factors. For example if a headmaster is a person of integrity and is praised by people, this serves as reinforcement. The attitudes of hard work and dedication to duty will be reinforced in a given school setting if there is the provision of incentives, better remuneration, constant workshops, promotion and regular support by the society or government. On the other hand if all the reinforcements attached to a headmaster's leadership style are withdrawn, this may dampen the morale of the headmaster and the leadership may cease to make progress. Skinner believes that external factors, reward, punishment are critical in determining the continuity of any behaviour.

Headmasters and their roles

In Nigerian context, the headmaster is referred to as the executive head of a primary school. On this therefore, Udoh and Akpa (2004) said that the headmaster is considered to be a leader, counselor, guide, psychologist and a teacher of teachers. The headmaster ensures that the pupils receive good instructions and are properly cared for and that there is proper maintenance and utilization of school facilities. He coordinates the financial policy of the



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school and maintains good public relations with the parents and the community. Headmasters are expected to be loyal to their superior authorities to show example to the subordinates and to be of unquestionable character. They are expected to keep the trust bestowed on them and be efficient and resourceful, Okoli (2004).

Leadership in administration has to do with general managerial functions. According to Segiovami (2001) the functions the headmasters must be directed towards the achievement of efficient and quality educational performances, management of human and material resources, as well as maintenance of discipline. The roles of headmasters have been on the increase; they serve as supervisors, classroom teachers, community leaders and government representatives, Okoli (2004). In that case the headmasters are responsible for the school personnel management which involves making sure their employees are physically present and working to the best of their abilities. More so and as a matter of fact, headmasters should be accountable for academic achievements of the children.

Oke (2011) noted that the headmasters are indeed the most important people in our primary schools, as they have the potential for improving and maintaining quality education. Success or failure of our school programs depends on the individual headmaster's ability and skills to utilize school resources. Towards achievement of the set goals the headmasters perform the following major management functions: planning, funding management and accountability, record keeping, reporting and supervision.

Review of Empirical Studies

Ngithi (2013), in a research project submitted to the School of Education in the department of Educational Management, Policy and Curriculum Studies in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the Degree of Masters of Education of Kenyatta University studied the administrative challenges faced by primary school head teachers in management of pupils in Embakasi district, Nairobi county- Kenya.

The study was influenced by increased concern by the head teachers and other stakeholders of the increased myriad administrative challenges encountered in management of pupils following an enactment of Children Act 2001, which banned corporal punishment in all schools in 2001 and also the provision of Free Primary Education (FPE) in public primary schools in 2003. The study sought to establish the following study objectives; determine the challenges public primary school head teachers encounter in the management of pupils' welfare; assess whether there are adequate resources in schools to facilitate the proper learning, find out the strategies used by head teachers to overcome the challenges of indiscipline among pupils and examine the strategies used by head teachers to overcome challenges related to the lack of resources. A sample of ten public primary schools from a population of forty two schools was randomly selected for the study. The respondents were head teachers from the selected schools. The data collection was done by the use of questionnaires while data were analyzed using descriptive statistics. From the findings, the study concluded that majority of the head teachers had never attended any training on school administration. The head teachers faced administrative challenges in management of the pupils which included lack of parents' cooperation in provision of pupils' requirements for learning as parents believed that everything was catered for in the free primary education program, high school dropout rates, high teacher pupil ratio, high teaching load, inadequate textbooks and other learning resources, lack of adequate classrooms and furniture and poor sanitation. The study recommends that the government and other stakeholders should address the bottlenecks in the implementation of school policies like hiring of more teaching staff, building more schools which are major administrative challenges facing head teachers in pupils' management. Finally, the study recommends that the government and other stakeholders should offer continuous training to the head teachers on human and material management to keep them up-to date with skills that will assist them to run their schools effectively.

Method

Design

The study adopted descriptive survey research design. Descriptive survey design according to Eze,(2005) and Nworgu (2006) is the one in which a group of people is studied by collecting and analyzing data from few people, considered to be representative of the entire group. It is used in preliminary and exploratory studies to allow researchers to gather information, summarize, present and interpret for the purpose of clarification. The author further stated that questionnaire, test or interview could be used to collect data in survey design. The design was



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considered appropriate for this study because questionnaire was used to obtain data from students of physics in the area of the study.

Area of the study

The study was carried out in Ebonyi State and the primary schools in the state. The state is situated in the south-eastern part of the country and shares boundaries with Benue in the north, Enugu to the northwest, Abia to the south-east and Cross River to the east. It has a total land area of 5,533square kilometers. Ebonyi state lies between 06°15'N,08°05'E and 06.25°N, 08°83'E. (www.ngex. com/nigeria 29\10\2019)

Population of the study

The population of the study consists of 1,471 headmasters and 10,188 primary school teachers in the thirteen local government areas in Ebonyi state, EBSUBEB (2019). The population covers the entire government-owned primary schools in the state.

Sampling and Sampling Technique

The sample size of the study is one thousand one hundred and fifty (1150) respondents comprising one hundred and fifty (150) headmasters, at least fifty (50) from each of the three (3) educational zones of the state and one thousand (1000) teachers, at least three hundred teachers (330) from each educational zones of the state. This total number represents about 10% of the population. The researcher purposively used the percentage to reduce the number of selection of the population.

Instrument for data collection

The researcher developed an instrument titled: "Headmasters' Administrative Role Performance Assessment Questionnaire" (HARPAQ) which was used to elicit information from the respondents. The rating scale of the questionnaire was divided into three clusters of 1, 2 and 3. Cluster 1 seeks information on the extent headmasters and teachers of primary schools in Ebonyi state, southeast Nigeria identify the administrative role performances of the headmasters. Cluster 2 is on the challenges the headmasters face in performing their administrative roles in primary schools while cluster 3 is on the various strategies adopted by the headmasters of primary schools in handling their administrative challenges The researcher used the following responding ratings: Strongly Agree, (SA) Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD). The points are rated 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively and the decision rule calculated thus; $\frac{4+3+2+1}{4} = 2.5$

Validation of the instrument

Copies of the rating scale were given to two experts in Measurement and Evaluation and one expert from Educational Foundations departments of Ebonyi State College of Education, Ikwo for validation. Hence the instruments received both content and face validity.

Reliability of the instrument

The reliability of the instrument was carried out using 20 headmasters and 50 teachers from some selected primary schools in Enugu metropolis of Enugu state. Cronbach Alpha tool was used to correlate the score and a correlation coefficient index of 0.85 was obtained.

Administration of the Instrument

The services of three research assistants were employed by the researcher for direct administration the questionnaire instruments to the respondents. The questionnaire instruments were administered to the respondents and subsequently collected and collated.

Method of Data Analysis

The data collected were presented in frequency tables according to the research questions. The researcher used mean scores of 2.50 decision point to answer the research questions while the hypotheses were tested using Z-test statistics at 0.05 level of significant. Decision rule was that any item that has a mean score of 2.50 and above is in agreement while a mean score below 2.50 is in disagreement.



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Presentation and analysis of data

Research Question One

To what extent do headmasters and teachers of primary schools in Ebonyi state, southeast Nigeria identify and agree to the administrative role performances of the headmasters.

Mean responses of headmasters and teachers on the extent headmasters and teachers of primary schools in Ebonyi state, southeast Nigeria identify and agree on the administrative role performances of the headmasters in their various schools.

Table 1: Table 1 contains information on the mean responses of headmasters and teachers on the extent headmasters of primary schools in Ebonyi state, southeast Nigeria identify and agree on the administrative role performances of their various schools. The six (6) items presented on the table were all accepted by both the headmasters and the teachers with total average mean values of 3.07 and 3.13 respectively as the administrative roles of the headmasters.

S/N	RESPONSES	HEADMASTERS				TEACHERS			
		ΣFX	X	S.D	DECISION	ΣFX	X	SD	DECISION
1	Headmasters are responsible for different planning processes in the school which embraces all activities, curricular and co-curricular projects and community service.	495	3.3	0.96	A	3120	3.2	1.07	A
2	The headmasters are required to organize and administer various programs and projects in the schools.	480	3.2	0.97	A	2950	3.0	1.23	A
3	The headmasters supervise and guide the academic works, practical and outdoor works, welfare services and office works.	450	3.0	1.01	A	3069	3.1	1.16	A
4	Maintenance of discipline among the pupils and members of staff.	435	2.9	0.97	A	2998	3.0	0.99	A
5	Maintenance of inter-human relation among the members of staff, the parents and the community.	450	3.0	1.11	A	3280	3.3	1.12	A
6	Management and accounting for the school resources.	450	3.0	1.07	R	3120	3.2	1.04	A
	Average total value		3.07	1.025			3.13	1.102	

Research question two: What are the challenges the headmasters face in performing their administrative roles in primary schools in Ebonyi state, southeast Nigeria?

Table two: Mean responses of headmasters and teachers on the challenges the headmasters face in performing their administrative roles in primary schools in Ebonyi state, southeast Nigeria.

Table 2: Table 2 above contains the data on the challenges the headmasters face in performing their administrative roles in primary schools in Ebonyi state, southeast Nigeria. The respondents agreed and accepted all the items presented on the table as the challenges faced by the headmasters in performing their duties. This is evident on the total average mean values of 3.10 and 3.11 for headmasters and teachers respectively.



S/N	RESPONSES	STUDENTS			DECISION	PRINCIPAL			DECISION
		ΣFX	X	S.D		ΣFX	X	S.D	
	ITEMS STATEMENT								
7	Inadequacy of funds and other resources for running and maintaining the schools	510	3.4	1.05	A	3300	3.3	1.16	A
8	Lack of prudence and accountability in the management of the available resources	435	2.9	1.28	A	3003	3.1	1.12	A
9	Negative government policies and the attendant consequences inhibit headmasters' performances	465	3.1	0.98	A	3000	3.0	1.16	A
10	Shortages of teaching staff and teaching and learning materials	450	3.0	1.17	A	2998	3.0	0.97	A
11	Inadequate classroom and office accommodation and increasing pupils population	465	3.1	1.18	A	3190	3.2	1.06	A
12	Lack of regular leadership trainings for the headmasters resulting to unfavourable leadership style among them.	435	2.9	1.04	A	3098	3.1	1.03	A
13	Rising cases of indiscipline and insubordinate attitude among the pupils and staff	423	3.5	1.29	A	3360	3.4	0.94	A
14	Non-cooperating attitude of the parents and community	435	2.9	1.33	A	2740	2.8	0.95	A
	Total average value		3.10	1.165			3.11	1.044	

Research Question Three

What are the various strategies to be adopted by the headmasters of primary schools in Ebonyi state, southeast Nigeria in handling their administrative challenges?

Table 3: Mean responses of headmasters and teachers on the various strategies to be adopted by the headmasters of primary schools in Ebonyi state, southeast Nigeria in handling their administrative challenges.

Table 3: Table 3 above contains the data on the mean responses of headmasters and teachers on the various strategies to be adopted by the headmasters of primary schools in Ebonyi state, southeast Nigeria in handling their administrative challenges. The respondents were in agreement and accepted that all the items presented on the table are the strategies to be adopted by headmasters in handling their administrative challenges. This is shown by the total average scores of 2.91 and 3.00 for headmasters and teachers respectively.

S/N	RESPONSES	STUDENTS			DECISION	PRINCIPAL			DECISION
		ΣFX	X	S.D		ΣFX	X	S.D	
15	Establishment of a functional Parents-Teachers Association (PTA) in the school.	424	3.0	1.05	A	3250	3.3	1.11	A
16	Sourcing for funding from the PTA, non-governmental bodies and private individuals.	435	2.9	1.58	A	3004	3.1	1.07	A
17	Adopting high level of prudence and accountability in resource management	450	3.0	0.97	A	2998	3.0	1.16	A
18	The use of PTA employed and volunteer teachers.	450	3.0	1.16	A	3360	3.4	0.67	A



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19	Formation of a formidable association of the headmasters which will positively influence government policies.	420	2.8	1.08	R	2700	2.7	0.96	R
20	Organising regular leadership trainings for the headmasters to enhance their leadership style.	435	2.9	0.84	A	3460	2.8	1.23	A
21	Task distribution among the teachers and appropriate pupils and staff welfare supervision	423	2.8	1.09	R	2700	2.7	1.04	A
Total average value			2.91	1.110			3.00	1.030	

Testing of Hypotheses

H0₁: There is no significant difference in the mean responses of headmasters and teachers on the extent headmasters of primary schools in Ebonyi state, southeast Nigeria identify and agree on the administrative role performances of the headmasters in their various schools

Table 4: Z-test on the differences in the responses of headmasters and teachers on the extent headmasters of primary schools in Ebonyi state, southeast Nigeria identify and agree on the administrative role performances of the headmasters in their various schools.

Group	N	X	SD	DF	P	z-cal	z-tab	Remarks
Headmasters	150	3.07	1.025	1149	P>0.05	0.86	1.96	Accept Ho
Teachers	1000	3.13	1.101					

The Z-test hypothesis table indicates total average mean score of 3.07 for headmasters and 3.13 for teachers while the total average standard deviation for headmasters is 1.025 and 1.101 for teachers. With a Z calculated value of 0.86 and tabulated value of 1.96 at 0.05 level of significance, it indicates that the Z-cal of 0.86 is less than Z-tab of 1.96. Hence, the null hypothesis shows that there is no significant difference between the mean responses of headmasters and teachers on the first research question.

H0₂: There is no significant difference in the mean scores of headmasters and teachers on the challenges the headmasters face in performing their administrative roles in primary schools in Ebonyi state, southeast Nigeria.

Table 5: Z-test on the differences in the mean response scores of headmasters and teachers on the challenges the headmasters face in performing their administrative roles in primary schools in Ebonyi state, southeast Nigeria.

Group	N	X	SD	DF	P	z-cal	z-tab	Remarks
Headmasters	150	3.10	1.165	1149	P>0.05	1.02	1.96	Accept Ho
Teachers	1000	3.11	1.044					

The Z-test hypothesis table indicates total average mean score of 3.10 for headmasters and 3.11 for teachers while the average standard deviation of 1.165 for headmasters and 1.044 for teachers. With a Z calculated value of 1.02 which is less than the tabulated value of 1.96 at 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis shows that there is no significant difference between the mean score values for the two respondents and hence the hypothesis is upheld.

H0₃: There is no significant difference in mean responses of headmasters and teachers on the various strategies to be adopted by the headmasters of primary schools in Ebonyi state, southeast Nigeria in handling their administrative challenges.

Table 6: Z-test on the difference in the mean responses of headmasters and teachers on the various strategies to be adopted by the headmasters of primary schools in Ebonyi state, southeast Nigeria in handling their administrative challenges



Group	N	X	SD	DF	P	z-cal	z-tab	Remarks
Headmasters	150	2.91	1.110	1149	P>0.05	1.02	1.96	Accept Ho
Teachers	1000	3.00	1.030					

The Z-test hypothesis table indicates total average mean score of 2.91 for headmasters and 3.00 for teachers while the total average standard deviation of 1.110 for headmasters and 1.030 for teachers. With a Z calculated value of 1.02 which is less than the tabulated value of 1.96 at 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis shows that there is no significant difference in mean responses of headmasters and teachers to third research question.

In summary, the data generated from the three research questions and presented in tables 1, 2 and 3 indicate that there is no significant difference in the mean score ratings of both the headmasters and teachers. The three null hypotheses were therefore upheld.

Discussion, conclusion and recommendations

Discussion of Results

The findings revealed that the following are the administrative role performances of headmasters of primary schools:

- (i) Headmasters are responsible for different planning processes in the school which embraces all activities, curricular and co-curricular projects and community service.
- (ii) The headmasters organize and administer various programs and projects in the schools.
- (iii) The headmasters supervise and guide the academic works, practical and outdoor works, welfare services and office works.
- (iv) The headmasters ensure the maintenance of discipline among the pupils and members of staff.
- (v) The headmaster ensures the maintenance of inter-human relation among the members of staff, the parents and the community.
- (vi) The headmaster manages and accounts for the school financial and material resources.

These are in agreement with the findings of Segiovami (2001), Udo and Akpa (2004), Okoli (2004), and Oke (2011). These researchers worked on the various roles of headmasters in primary schools.

Secondly, the findings show the challenges faced by the headmasters in performing their administrative roles to include:

- (i) Inadequacy of funds and other resources for running and maintaining the schools
- (ii) Lack of prudence and accountability in the management of the available resources
- (iii) Negative government policies and the attendant consequences inhibit headmasters' performances
- (iv) Shortages of teaching staff and teaching and learning materials
- (v) Inadequate classroom and office accommodation and increasing pupils population
- (vi) Lack of regular leadership trainings for the headmasters resulting to unfavourable leadership style among them.
- (vii) Rising cases of indiscipline and insubordinate attitude among the pupils and staff.
- (viii) Non-cooperating attitude of the parents and community.

The findings are in agreement with Ngithi (2013), who in a related research project on the administrative challenges faced by primary school head teachers in management of pupils in Embakasi district, Nairobi county-Kenya.

Thirdly, the findings identified various strategies to be adopted by the headmasters of primary schools in Ebonyi state, southeast Nigeria in handling their administrative challenges to include:

- (i) Establishment of a functional Parents-Teachers Association (PTA) in the school.
- (ii) Sourcing for funding from the PTA, non-governmental bodies and private individuals.
- (iii) Adopting high level of prudence and accountability in resource management
- (iv) The use of PTA employed and volunteer teachers.



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- (v) Formation of a formidable association of the headmasters which will positively influence government policies.
- (vi) Organising regular leadership trainings for the headmasters to enhance their leadership style.
- (vii) Task distribution among the teachers and appropriate pupils and staff welfare supervision.

These findings are also in agreement with the findings of Ngithi (2013).

Educational Implications

The findings of this research work have far reaching implications for the headmasters of our primary schools and in the enhancement of their management skills. In the application of the various strategies identified the headmasters should be able to reposition their schools and win the support and admiration of the pupils and the members of staff. Both the administration and supervisory functions of the headmasters could be greatly enhanced when they adopt favourable leadership styles which ensure wider participation of their subordinates.

The implication of this will be a more conducive teaching and learning environment and judicious utilization of the available financial and material resources.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are made:

- (i) Every primary school in Ebonyi state southeast Nigeria should as a matter of importance establish of a functional Parents-Teachers Association (PTA). This association will help in sourcing for extra funding through levies and donations from non-governmental bodies and private individuals.
- (ii) There should be regular leadership trainings for the headmasters to enhance their leadership styles especially as it involves adopting high level of prudence and accountability in resource management and task distribution among the teachers and appropriate pupils and staff welfare supervision.
- (iii) Formation of a formidable association of the headmasters which will positively influence government policies.

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