Teachers' Perceptions of Principals' Leadership Practices: Implications for Secondary School Goals Achievement

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Abstract
This study was designed to examine teachers' perception of principals' leadership practices: Implications for secondary school goals attainment in Calabar Municipality of Cross River State. Three research questions were formulated to guide the study. Snowball sampling technique was used in selecting a sample of 495 teachers from the population of 989 teachers in public secondary schools in the study area. The instrument for data collection was a rating scale developed by the researchers and was titled, Teachers' Perception of Principals Leadership Practices for Secondary School Goal Achievement Questionnaire (TPPLPSSGAQ). Content and face validity of the instrument were ensured by experts in Educational Management and Measurement and Evaluation respectively. The reliability of the instrument was determined using Cronbach Alpha reliability. The reliability index was 0.78. Descriptive statistics (Mean and Standard Deviation) were the statistical tools used for data analysis. The study showed the following results: Teachers' were positive in their perception of the Principals' leadership practices for secondary school goals achievement. Teachers rated instructional supervision as the most important principals' leadership practices for the achievement of secondary school education goals. This was followed by human relations, development of teachers, evaluation of teachers, assigning of responsibilities according to areas of specialization and recognition of teachers' views. Teachers also responded with agreement on the qualities of leadership that principals should possess for effective leadership practices towards achievement of secondary school goals. From the findings of this study, it was recommended that secondary school principals should be allowed and encouraged by the appropriate authorities in educational system to effectively display leadership practices since these practices have been found as prerequisites for secondary school goals attainment.

Keyword: Goal achievement, Implications, Leadership practices, Principals, Secondary School and Teachers' perception

Introduction
Achievement of educational goal is an important end in educational organization. This informs why resources (human, materials and financial) in the school organization are always directed towards goal achievement. Achievement of educational goals has had and is still having qualitative implications for the economic growth and development of a country. That is why it becomes pertinent to ensure that those factors that enhance school goal achievement are not taken for granted. One of the prerequisites factors that facilitate achievement of educational goals has been the school leadership. Leadership therefore entails the process of

leading (showing the way) and influencing educational human resources (teachers) to inspire and motivate them to ensure that educational goals are achieved.

Leadership is the major focus in this modern era of accountability and school restructuring (Okon, 2016). Leadership According to Akpan (2015) is the dynamic force that motivates and coordinates an organization to attainment its goals. Rieley (cited in Tahsildari, Hashim & Wan, 2014) opined that achievement of organizational goals requires an environment with successful leadership that is interested in the goal achievement. Unachukwu (2014) identifies the leader, the follower and the situation as the three basic features of leadership. The must be someone (the leader) who directs the process of work towards achieving organizational goals. According to Lucy (2005) leadership in an organization includes the fact that the leader exerts influence within the working group in order that the group may achieve tasks or objectives. To Chike-Okoli (2008) leadership is the ability of influencing people's behaviour so that they will work towards achievement of objectives. Mullins (2010) views leadership as essentially a relationship through which one person influences the behaviour and actions of other people. From the point of view of Onuma (2013) leadership is a process of social influence where leaders induce followers to use their energies and resources towards achievement of collective goals.

After primary level of education, the next level of education that follows is secondary education. This means that a child must successfully complete primary education before he or she moves to secondary education which is divided into junior and senior levels. At the junior level, children should be developed to be morally upright, think independently and well equipped in the areas of basic knowledge and skills for entrepreneurship to enable them make meaningful contributions to socio-economic development (FRN, 2008). The same source averred that the goals of senior secondary education which is part of Post-Basic education include; to ensure that every student at this level is   prepared for the next higher level of education, its curriculum should be such that different needs of the students are addressed, manpower are trained to suit the different areas of the economy, to ensure that every student is inspired to have the desire for individual improvement to mention a few.

Achievement of the above stated goals in educational organization depends upon the leader's capacity to obtain the commitment of the organizational members towards achievement of such goals. Therefore, a secondary school principal is a leader who is capable of leading the school organizational members towards achievement of secondary educational goals. Okwori & Ede (2012) confirmed that the success of any organization depends largely on sound leadership. The authors in addition opined that policies and decisions which can help in directing the activities of educational organization to success have to be executed by qualitative and by appropriate leadership. To a great extent, leadership determines how people in an organization interact, communicate and carry out their assigned responsibilities. The role of effective leadership practices for the achievement of educational goals at secondary school cannot be overemphasized. Leadership practices in the school system abound. As captured in this study, these practices include but not limited to; instructional supervision, human relations, development of teachers, evaluating of teachers, assigning of responsibilities according to areas of specialization and recognition of teachers' view.

Instructional supervision according to (Marks & Printy, 2003 and Hansen, 2016) has been identified as one of such key areas of school leadership practices. Instructional supervision such as classroom visitation/inspection, checking teachers' lesson notes/plan, inspection of teachers' record keeping and checking of students' note books correlated with

teachers' performance and students' academic achievement. Again, Edet and Asuquo (2019) stressed that instructional supervision is a tool that ensures that appropriate norms, values, attitudes, numeracy and communicative skills are instilled in the students. Donkoh & Dwamena (2014) found out that teachers perceived instructional supervision as having impact on development of teachers' experience, methods of teaching, classroom management, classroom assessment among other. Instructional supervision improves all elements and conditions surrounding teaching and learning (Eziuzo, 2014). In another study, Asuquo, Ekpoh & Eton (2018) found a correlation between instructional supervisory technique and secondary school goal attainment. The authors further stressed that instructional supervisory technique of principals determined secondary school goals attainment to a large extent. DiPaola & Hoy cited in Hansen (2016) opined that classroom instructional supervision and observations are the methods for principals to gain insight into the instructional program within their schools

Other leadership practices as highlighted by (Hansen, 2016) include; teachers' development and teachers' evaluation. Musa (2016) asserted that teachers' development helps teachers in the school organization to acquire new skills, knowledge, increase levels of competence, and grow professionally. The result of a research conducted by Grissom, Loeb, and Master (as cited in Hansen, 2016) showed that the time principals expended in coaching teachers had a positive correlation with students' achievement and the general school improvement. In observing the crucial role teachers' development plays in educational goal achievement, Musa (2016) emphasized that teachers development programme helps teachers in the school system to acquire new skills, knowledge, increase levels of competence, and grow professionally. Evaluation of teachers as principals' leadership practices in this context is the ability to systematically or strategically assess/appraise, select, deploy, retain and re-assign teacher (s) within the school system for the smooth running of the teaching and learning. DiPaola & Hoy as cited in Hansen (2016) reported that evaluation ensures that teachers' performances are documented so as to subsequently draw the attention of those teachers who performs below expected standard.

Human relations as another leadership practice entail principals' ability to accommodate individual differences of each staff member and students and how principals and staff co-exist with the students to achieve educational goals (Aja-Okorie, 2014). The contribution of human relations practices in educational goal attainment is obvious because teachers are not only motivated by economic incentives alone but also by psychological and social factors neither do school relations only based on formal structure and authorities (Onele, 2014). Evidence abound in literature that assigning of responsibilities to teachers based on areas of specialization is a crucial leadership practice directed towards attainment of educational goals. Staats & Gino (2012) in a study on specialization and variety in repetitive tasks found that specialization correlated with workers' productivity for organizational goal attainment. Again, new methods to improve performance for organizational goals attainment were also identified through the effective allocation of work.

The literature review in this work shows that leadership practice have a far reaching effect on the achievement of the goals of education. However, the previous studies on leadership practices were not structured to capture teachers' perceptions of principals' leadership practices (instructional supervision, human relations, development of teachers, evaluating of teachers, assigning of responsibilities according to areas of specialization and recognition of teachers' view). Again, none of the literature of the previous studies discussed

it results in relation to implications for secondary school goal attainment. The gap found in literature justifies the need for the present work to be conducted.

Statement of the problem

Secondary education like other levels of education is established to achieve stipulated goals. These goals are the expected end results in the form attributes found in the secondary school graduates. In order to ensure that secondary school education goals are not far from being achieved, the government continues to ensure that teachers are employed as at when due to provide the needed human resources for the development and sustainability of teaching and learning processes. Besides, the government is not relenting in its effort in renovating old classrooms blocks, building of new classroom blocks, staff rooms as well as building of new schools, providing facilities in a bid to achieve the goals of secondary education.

Irrespective of the aforementioned in place, the researchers observed with concern that many secondary school students are not well equipped with the necessary entrepreneurship skills. Majority of secondary school graduates are not able to gain admission into tertiary education level independently. This set of graduates is also observed by the researchers of this article as not being upright and well adjusted to think rationally. All these among others seem to indicate that the goals of secondary school are still not being fully achieved. Based on this observation, the researchers were motivated to examine teachers' perceptions of principals' leadership practices with implications for secondary school goal attainment

Research questions

This study was guided by the following research questions.

1. What are the perceptions of teachers about principals' leadership practices for the achievement of secondary school goals?

2. What is the ranking order of the principals' leadership practices by the teachers for the achievement of secondary school goals?

3. What leadership qualities do teachers' perceive that principals should possess for effective leadership in order to achieve secondary school goals?

Methodology

The design used in this study was descriptive survey research design. The choice of this design is because it involves the collection of data to provide an account and to describe individuals groups or situation (Asim, Idaka, & Eni, 2017). The population of this study was nine hundred and eighty-nine teachers (989) in Public Secondary Schools in Calabar Municioality of Cross River State. As at when this study was conducted in 2020, Calabar Municipality had a total of sixteen (16) Public Secondary Schools.

The sample of the study was four hundred and ninety-five (495) teachers. This sample was selected using Snowball sampling technique. This sampling was considered appropriate since teachers were not readily available in schools due to COVID-19 pandemic and the lockdown. According to Asim, Idaka, & Eni (2017) snowball is useful to sample a population where access is difficult. To select the sample for this study, the researchers and the research assistants started the sampling process with a few known public secondary

school teachers who further directed the researchers and research assistants on how to contact more public secondary school teachers in the study area. The process continues until the sample size of 495 teachers was selected as respondents for the study.

Teachers' Perception of Principals Leadership Practices and Secondary School Goal Achievement Questionnaire (TPPLPSSGAQ) was the instrument used for data collection. Face validity of the instrument was done by consulting Educational Management experts and other experts in Measurement and Evaluation. The instrument was divided into sections A, B and C. Section A of the instrument collected data in respect of the demographic variables of the respondents (teachers). Section B was designed with six items (6) on a four-point rating-scale of Strongly Agree (AS). Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD) to collect data regarding teachers' perception of the principals' leadership practices for the achievement of secondary school goals. Section C with the eleven (11) items was used to gather data in respect of those leadership qualities that teachers perceived principals should possess for effective leadership in order to achieve secondary school goals. The response items were also based on a four-point scale of Strongly Agree (AS). Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD). The reliability of the instrument was determined using Cronbach Alpha reliability. The reliability index was 0.78 which made the instrument to be considered appropriate instrument for data collection. As the researchers and the research assistants contacted the respondents, after being informed about the reason for filling the questionnaire, copies of the questionnaire were administered instantly. This accounted for the completed 495 copies of questionnaire being retrieved. Mean and standard deviation were the statistical tools used for data analysis.

Results

Research Question 1: What are the perceptions of teachers about principals' leadership practices for the achievement of secondary school goals?

Table 1: Teachers' perceptions of principals' leadership practices for the achievement of secondary school goals

S/N	Principals' leadership practices	$\bar{X}$	SD	Decision
1.	Human relations	3.30	1.08	Agreed
2.	Recognition of teachers' view	2.80	0.70	Agreed
3.	Evaluation of teachers	2.92	0.82	Agreed
4.	Instructional supervision	3.32	1.15	Agreed
5.	Development of teachers	2.98	0.92	Agreed
6.	Assigning of responsibilities according to areas of specialization	2.86	0.76	Agreed
	Average	**3.03**		

In Table 1 above, the analysis indicate the agreement of teachers (respondents) with regards to item 1-6 as principals' leadership practices for the achievement of secondary school goals. This result is accepted the way it is because all the mean ($\bar{X}$) responses are greater than the cut-off point of 2.50. Their agreement proves that they have positive perception that principals' leadership practices in term of human relations ($\bar{X}$=3.30), recognition of teachers' view ($\bar{X}$ = 2.80), evaluation of teachers ($\bar{X}$ =2.92), instructional

supervision ($\bar{X}$ =3.32), development of teachers ($\bar{X}$ =2.98) and assigning of responsibilities according to areas of specialization ($\bar{X}$ =2.86) are the prerequisites for the achievement of secondary school goals

Research Question 2: What is the ranking order of the principals' leadership practices by the teachers for the achievement of secondary school goals?

Table 2: Ranking order of the principals' leadership practices by the teachers for the achievement of secondary school goals

S/N	Principals' leadership practices	$\bar{X}$	SD	Rank order
1.	Instructional supervision	3.32	1.15	1st
2.	Human relations	3.30	1.08	2nd
3.	Development of teachers	2.98	0.92	3rd
4.	Evaluation of teachers	2.92	0.82	4th
5.	Assigning of responsibilities according to areas of specialization	2.86	0.76	5th
6.	Recognition of teachers' view	2.80	0.70	6th
	Average	3.03	0.91	

The analysis in Table 2 indicates the ranking order of principals' leadership practices for the achievement of secondary school goals. The results indicate instructional supervision ($\bar{X}$ =3.32) as the first and most importance leadership practice for the achievement of secondary education goals. The second is human relation practice ($\bar{X}$ =3.30) the followed by development of teachers ($\bar{X}$ =2.98), evaluation of teachers ($\bar{X}$ =2.92), assigning of responsibilities according to areas of specialization ($\bar{X}$ =2.86) and recognition of teachers' views ($\bar{X}$ =2.80)

Research Question 3: What leadership qualities do teachers' perceive that principals should possess for effective leadership in order to achieve secondary school goals?

Table 3: Leadership qualities teachers' perceived that principals should possess for effective leadership in order to achieve secondary school goals

S/N	Leadership qualities	$\bar{X}$	SD	Decision
1.	Integrity	3.24	0.89	Accepted
2.	Innovativeness	3.50	0.90	Accepted
3.	Honesty	3.00	0.85	Accepted
4.	Active listening	2.87	0.76	Accepted
5.	Self-confidence	3.52	0.93	Accepted
6.	Visionary	2.97	0.83	Accepted
7.	Fair attitude	2.76	0.72	Accepted
8.	Inquisitiveness	3.16	0.87	Accepted
9.	Humility	2.93	0.80	Accepted
10.	Self discipline	3.59	0.99	Accepted
11.	Intelligence	3.03	0.86	Accepted
	Average	**3.14**		

The analysis in Table 3 shows that item 1-11 are all the leadership qualities that principals should possess for effective leadership in order to achieve secondary school goals. These qualities are considered to be necessary qualities for leadership practices as all their corresponding mean($\overline{X}$) scores are greater than that cut-off point of 2.50.

Discussion of Findings
The perceptions of teachers about principals' leadership practices for the achievement of secondary school goals

From the research question 1, it was found that human relations, recognition of teachers' view, evaluation of teachers, instructional supervision, developing of teachers and assigning of responsibilities according to areas of specialization are the leadership practices for the achievement of secondary school goals. These findings are in line with other empirical works and the positions of previous scholars. For instance, human relations enhance principals' ability to accommodate individual differences of staff and students to achieve educational goals (Aja-Okorie, 2014). Teachers are not only motivated to work toward educational goal attainment by economic incentives alone but also by such none economic incentives such affection, sense of belonging, acceptance, friendship, recognition and attention. The possible explanations why the result came out the way it did is that teachers need the social aspects of motivation (human relations) which is part and parcel of contributory factors to maximum performance towards the achievement of educational goals. Human relations practice which is staff oriented gives room for teachers' recognition, sense of belonging, love and acceptance by others, friendship with colleagues, to mention a few.

Recognition of teachers' view as another leadership practice of a principal entails soliciting inputs from the teachers in decision making process. This practice ensures that every teacher is involved in decision-making such that majority views are considered tomake final choice. Recognition of teachers' view gives teachers opportunity to freely express themselves, exchange ideas and criticize without fear of punishment. With this practice principal maintains an open door policy and allows communication to flow as a two way process of downward upward communication in the school system. The practice solicits inputs from the teachers in decision making process in the school system. Besides, this practice ensures that every teacher is involved in decision-making such that majority view is considered as the final choice. This leadership practice has the advantage of ensuring that the views and contributions of teachers are given priority since two heads are better than one.

In addition to recognition of teachers' view as principals' leadership practice is evaluation of teacher. Evaluation of teachers ensures that the performance of teachers is documented so as to subsequently draw the attention of those teachers who performed below expected standard (DiPaola & Hoy as cited in Hansen, 2016). This evaluation serves as a feedback that is used in ensuring that there is correction wherever there was a deviation from the set standard (the best practice) or benchmark.

The ranking order of the principals' leadership practices by the teachers for the achievement of secondary school goals

The result in this regard is in tandem with the position of Edet and Asuquo (2019) who stressed that instructional supervision is a tool that facilitates inculcation of appropriate norms, values, attitudes, numeracy and communicative skills in the students. The result also supports the findings of Asuquo, Ekpoh & Eton (2018) whose work established a correlation

between instructional supervisory technique and secondary school goal attainment. The finding is also in line with Donkoh & Dwamena (2014) who found out that teachers perceived instructional supervision as having impact on development of their experience, methods of teaching, classroom management, classroom assessment among other. By implication, this finding is an indication that instructional leadership practice is a crucial practice directed to ensure that expectations of students in terms of acquisition of the necessary skills and knowledge are not compromised. Instructional supervision promotes and enhances the best and innovative teaching methods in the school system.

Teachers' development practices in such areas as coaching, mentoring and assigning of responsibilities to teachers by principals helps teachers in the school organization to acquire new skills, knowledge, increase levels of competence, and grow professionally. This supports Grissom, Loeb, and Master (as cited in Hansen, 2016) whose study showed that the time principals expended in coaching teachers had a positive correlation with students' achievement and the general school improvement. Teachers' skills, knowledge and competence are prerequisite in curriculum implementation which directed towards school goals achievement. Assigning of responsibilities also becomes outstanding principals' leadership practices that is prerequisite in the achievement of secondary education goals. This is in tandem with Staats & Gino (2012) whose study on specialization and variety in repetitive tasks found that specialization correlated with workers' productivity for organizational goal attainment. This implies that assigning of responsibilities to teachers based on area of specialization is a crucial leadership practice that facilitates school goals attainment.

Leadership qualities do teachers' perceive that principals should possess for effective leadership in order to achieve secondary school goals

The result of the research question 3 is an indication that; integrity, innovativeness, honesty, active listening, self-confidence, visionary, fair attitude, inquisitiveness, humility, self discipline and intelligence are among the qualities that principals should possess as these qualities constitute the sure ways to secondary school goals achievement. All the results of this study are not surprising because if leadership practices are effectively displayed and leadership qualities exhibited by the school principals, achievement of educational goals would be feasible. Conversely, when there is ineffectiveness in principals' leadership practices, achievement of the goals of secondary educational would be a mirage.

Implications of the research findings for secondary school goal achievement

The implications of the results of this study is that effective leadership practices by the school principals would improve and sustain the quality of teaching, learning and the general school administration in the school system. With effective leadership practices, opportunities for further training and development programmes for teachers will be encouraged by the principals. Teachers are also exposed to varieties of situations in school system through a strong mentor-mentee relationship. This relationship allows teachers to learn administrative skills by working with, relating and observing the school principals. Such skills (human, technical and conceptual skills) prepare teachers for future leadership competence to pilot affairs of the school in such areas as students' personnel management, staff personnel management, school community-relations, instruction/curriculum

development, school business management, school plant administration as well as other general responsibilities in the school.

Principals who display effective leadership practices of human relations, recognition of teachers' view, evaluating of teachers, instructional supervision, developing teachers and assigning of responsibilities according to areas of specialization will have the competence of influencing both teachers and students in a bid to achieving the set goals of secondary school education. Achievement of these goals would be observed as being feasible when every student must have acquired diverse basic knowledge and skills for technology, applied science commerce, agriculture and entrepreneurship for self-reliance and for educational advancement as well as industrial and the general economic growth and development. The goals will also be said to have been achieved when values and morally upright propensity to be able to think independently by every student in the performance of civic responsibilities are manifested.

The overall finding of this study is a guideline or road map meant for secondary school principals and all school administrators in their leadership practices to achieve secondary education goals.

Conclusion

Evidence from this study indicated that teachers were positive in their perception of principals' leadership practices for the achievement of secondary school goals. They perceived leadership practices as means of ensuring that students are provided with basic knowledge and skills for entrepreneurship and educational advancement, equipped to contribute to social development and in the performance of their civic responsibilities, inspired for desire for self-improvement and achievement of excellence, trained in the applied science, technology and commerce at sub-professional grades and raising to be morally upright and well adjusted individuals who can think independently and rationally, respect the views and feelings of others and appreciate the dignity of labour. Teachers perceived and rated instructional supervision, human relations, development of teachers, evaluation of teachers, assigning of responsibilities according to areas of specialization and recognition of teachers' view as principals' leadership practices for secondary school goals achievement.

Recommendations

It was recommended that:

1. There is need for secondary school principals to be trained on the importance of leadership practices in such areas as human relations, recognition of teachers' view, instructional supervision and assigning of responsibilities according to areas of specialization. This is because all these practices contribute towards achievement of secondary school goals.

2. In a bid to achieving secondary school goals, secondary school principals should give priority attention to instructional supervision, human relations, teachers' development programmes, evaluation of teachers, assigning of responsibilities according and recognition of staff view.

3. Principals should ensure that there is sustainable improvement in their leadership qualities. Such qualities as integrity, innovativeness, honesty, active listening, self-confidence, visionary, fair attitude, inquisitiveness, humility, self discipline, intelligence among others are required of them in their daily administrative duties directed towards achievement of secondary school goals.

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