

Poor Secondary School Management by Principals on Students' Academic Performance in Ebonyi State: Assignment of Education Managers

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Abstract: This study investigated poor secondary school management by principals on students' academic performance in Ebonyi state secondary schools: Assignment of Education managers. The study adopted a descriptive survey design. The population of the study comprises all the 222 principals and 643 teachers in all the public secondary schools in Ebonyi state. Proportionate stratified simple random sampling techniques were used to select 350 respondents for the study. Poor Secondary School Management on Academic Performance Questionnaire (PSSMAPQ) was subjected to free validation by three experts, two from Administration and Planning (Educational Foundations) and one from Test and Measurement (Science Education department) all from Ebonyi State University, Abakaliki. The instrument was also tested for its reliability using test re-test method which yielded 0.86 using Cronbach Alpha internal consistency. This means that the instrument was reliable enough for the study. A total of 250 copies of the questionnaire were administered by the researcher personally to all the teachers in 222 public secondary schools in Ebonyi state. All the copies of the questionnaire distributed were collected and used for the study. Mean and standard deviations were used to answer the three research questions and t-test statistic was used to test the two null hypotheses on 0.05 levels of significances. Any mean score from 2.5 above is regarded strongly agreed and agreed, while those below 2.5 is regarded as disagree and strongly disagree. The study revealed that poor personnel management and poor management of school funds by the principals influence students' academic performance in Ebonyi.

Key words: Secondary • Management • Principals • Academic and Performance

INTRODUCTION

Secondary education is the education students receive after successful completion of primary education and before being admitted into the tertiary institution. The broad goals of secondary education are aimed at preparing the individual for useful living within the society and higher education [1]. Preparing the individual for useful living in the society means that after acquiring secondary education, he/she must be self-reliant, contribute meaningfully to the development of the society, be morally and culturally sound, be of good character and participate actively in decision making in matters affecting the entire society. Further, preparing the individual for higher education presupposes that

individual must have gained a lot of experience that can enable him/her to face the challenges of higher education.

The achievements of these broad objectives rest squarely on the school principals as the managers of the schools. The success of any system of education especially the secondary school level which prepare the individual for higher educational administrator [2, 3]. Accordingly, no educational system can rise above the quality of its administrator. The requirements of the various goals from school managers are centred on the advancement of teaching through the implementation of effective management, which is led by a management team, with the principal as the overall head [4]. Equally, the functions of the school administrator (Principal)

occupies a position which demands that he/she integrates roles, personnel and facilities in order to achieve the desired goals of the school [5]. The achievement of secondary school objectives presupposes proper, efficient and effective management of human material and financial resources available in the school.

Lending his voice on principal general responsibilities in the management of secondary schools, Creamers [6] opined that it involves bringing together individuals as a group that will organise, control coordinate and articulate activities to achieve tangible and holistic learning for the overall benefit of the society. Accordingly, Nnabuo *et al.* [7] noted that school management by principals is the totality of efforts that are brought to bear in the provision and delivery of education to ensure that both human and material resource allocated to education are used to the best advantage in the pursuit of educational objective and goals. The achievement of educational objectives depends to a large extent on the principal's ability to equip staff and knowledge and skills to respond to the ever-changing phenomenon of educational to meet the challenges of the society. To achieve this, there must be continuous and effective management of the school, otherwise teaching and learning will be impaired and student academic performance will be adversely affected [8]. Again, principals' inability to manage the school fund properly for the procurement of school facilities and provision of laboratory equipment where students gain practical experience after classroom experience also influence the academic performance of students negatively. The state of infrastructure decay in many secondary schools is a manifestation of poor management of school funds allocated to schools. According to Ahmed in Sambo [9] in most of the secondary schools, teaching and learning takes place under a most non-conducive environment, lacking the basic materials and thus hinder the fulfilment of educational objectives. The absence of these facilities in no small measure accounts for poor academic performance of students in secondary schools especially in Ebonyi state.

Experiences has shown that one of the major problem facing secondary education in Ebonyi state and in Nigeria today is the persistent poor performance of students in internal and external examination. The rate at which students in Ebonyi state secondary school perform poorly in Senior School Certificate Examination (SSCE), Unified Tertiary Matriculation Examination (UTME) and examinations conducted by National Board for Technical Education is a source of worry to parents, government

and indeed other stakeholders in education. Supporting the above assertion, Nwabunwanne in Onuselogu [10] noted that the rate and degree of failure by secondary students at external examination conducted by the West African Examination Council (WAEC) indicate that the performance of students in Anambra State appear to be far below standards that can be acceptable. The mass failure of students in Ebonyi State secondary school in public examinations has made parents lost confidence in the ability of public schools to deliver quality products and therefore resorts to sending their children to private schools where higher fees are paid. Experience has shown that some of the products of secondary school's systems in Ebonyi state now can neither live usefully in the society nor gain admission into higher institution because of poor academic performance. This has also shown that the major goals of secondary education which are preparing the individual for useful living in the society and for higher education are not being achieved in Ebonyi state. Okafore *et al.* [11] observed with greatest dismay that most secondary schools in the state are in the verge of collapsing because of poor planning, misuse of facilities and human recourse, littered school compound with dilapidated structure, overcrowded classroom, instability of the school calendar and unqualified teachers. According to them this fallen standards are invariable influenced the students' performance in external examination.

The unsatisfactory performance often experienced in schools by students and educational programmes is always attributed to lack of effective school management by principals in terms of basic infrastructure, lack of adequate and accurate statistics, inadequate funding, embezzlement, bureaucratic bottleneck and attitude to work (Ukeje) in Onwuasoanya *et al.* [4]. Lamenting on the poor school management in the secondary school in Ebonyi state Okonkwo in Onwuasoanya *et al.* [4] noted that quality education and educational output which are supposed to be borne when managerial skills of educational functionaries enter play with the available of adequate educational resources were not so because of poor managerial skills.

The knowledge and acquisition of skills in applying the management functions by secondary school principals in the management of secondary schools is sine qua known in academic achievement of students. These management functions include the following; provision instructional materials, planning, directing, organising, coordinating and decision-making and execution of curriculum and policy received from Ministry of

Education. Failure by the school principal to apply any of these management functions effectively leads to ineffectiveness of staff which will culminate to poor academic performance by students.

However, in Ebonyi state, secondary schools are spread within Urban and rural areas with different principals having different management skills and knowledge. Cases abound where principals with requisite managerial acumen reject posting to the rural secondary schools as a result of inadequate basic amenities. In this case, officials from Secondary Education Board will have no option than to post inexperienced principals to rural secondary schools. It may be with speculating that principals with managerial skills for secondary school management may vary across the state.

Equally, in Ebonyi State Secondary Schools, there are both male and female principals that may not have equal management skills in the management of secondary schools. These male and female principals may differ in their possession of management skills because at times some female principals may be intimidated by the male teachers, thus, posing problems in the management of secondary schools. It is against this backdrop that the study sets to investigate the influence of poor secondary school management by principals on students' academic performance in Ebonyi state.

Statement of the Problem: The inability of secondary school principals in Ebonyi state to manage the school fund properly for the procurement of school facilities and provision of laboratory equipment's where students gain practical experience influences the academic performance of students negatively. The state of infrastructural decay in many secondary schools including Ebonyi schools is a manifestation of poor management of school funds allocated to schools. Teaching and learning which takes place under a most non-conducive environment, lack of basic materials in secondary schools nationwide hinders the fulfilment of education objectives. The absence of these facilities in no small measure accounts for poor academic performances of students in secondary schools across the nation.

Equally, the rate at which students perform poorly in Senior School Certificate Examinations (SSCE), Unified Tertiary Matriculation Examination (UTME) and examination conducted by National Board for Technical Education (NBTE) is a source of worry to all stakeholders in education. The mass failure of students in Public examination has also made parents to lose confidence in

the ability of public schools to deliver quality products and therefore resort to sending their children to private schools where higher fees are charged.

Also, lack of effective school management by principals in terms of basic infrastructure, lack of adequate and accurate statistics, inadequate funding, embezzlement, bureaucratic bottle necks and poor attitude to work, equally negatively influence the academic performance of students in Nigerian secondary schools in general and Ebonyi state secondary schools in particular. The problem of this study put in a question is what is the influence of poor secondary school management by principals on student academic performance in Ebonyi state? To address these problems the following three research questions and two null hypotheses guided the study.

- How does principal's poor management of personnel influence student academic performance in Ebonyi State?
- How does principal's poor management of school funds influence student academic performances in Ebonyi state?
- What are the management practices that could adopt by the principals in the management of secondary schools to improve student academic performance in Ebonyi state?

Hypotheses:

- H_{01} : There is no significant difference between the mean rating of urban and rural secondary school teachers on how poor management influences academic performance of students in Ebonyi state.
- H_{02} : There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female teachers on how principal's poor secondary school management influence academic performance of students in Ebonyi state.

Conceptual Framework of Secondary School Management:

The aim of establishment of all formal (Secondary education inclusive) is to achieve predetermined objectives such as objectives or goals can only be attained when people's effort in an organisation is properly and efficiently coordinated and controlled. The task of getting result through other people's effort is known as management. Thus, educational management is the process of planning, organising, directing and controlling the activities of an organisation by utilizing human and material resources so as to effectively and efficiently accomplish the aim of teaching and learning.

Also, according to Obi [12] school management is the process of achieving educational objectives through efficient utilization of available human resources.

It is believed that educational management focuses on development and formulation of policies guiding the provision of education to the society. These policies are geared towards social, economic, political and cultural developments of the society [13]. According to them the best possible way to achieve this development is through human resource development in education. Therefore in essence, the field of secondary education must make its curriculum relevant to the needs and problems of a changing society. Thus, the knowledge of educational management helps in achieving the following:

- Its theories principles, techniques and skills when properly applied to education will about effective and well-functioning of educational institutions.
- Empirical and systematic management secondary school system will bring about quality and purposeful changes in the educational system.
- Secondary education management is required to create effective institutions so that the products of the school can benefit adequately from the specialized training offered.
- Secondary education management is required for effective and efficient utilization of available scarce resource.
- It will formulate teachers with the skills and strategies required to run educational institutions professionally.
- It helps in decision making and problem solving, communication and managing information as well as building effective work teams.
- It helps in teams of how to plan co-curricular activities academics programmes and the preparation of the school time table among others.

Nikam [14] also identifies the various functions of secondary education management to included:

- Ensuring that sound policies, goals and objectives formulated in a given school and that methods are determined for the achievement of these objectives.
- It ensures that necessary resources are procured for the achievement of the goals.
- It organises and co-ordinates the activities of the school with the aim of achieving objectives of the secondary school system with maximum efficiency and effectiveness.

- To influence and stimulate the human resources available.
- To integrate the school activities into the set-up of the society.
- To evaluate the school activities in accordance with plans made.

In Nigerian society secondary education management suffers a lot of set back as a result of the following factors:

- Unfocused curriculum and instructional programmes.
- Poor training of manpower to effectively manage the operations of secondary school activities.
- Students are not provided with inventories, or properly organise and place them in classes as well as poor provision of guidance and counselling services to enable the students tackle career choice and maladjustment problems.
- Inadequate provision of physical facilities.
- Poor revenue generation.

Again, educational management according to Olagboye [15] is the process of planning, organising, influencing and controlling the efforts of the operators of the educational system to achieve the stated goals of education. He summarised educational management to mean a process primarily concerned with the overall formulation of plans, programmes and policies of the education enterprise. Aghanta [16] corroborated the view of Olagboye [15] that educational management is the process of getting things done in educational institutions with particular reference to the processes of planning, organising, learning, staffing and evaluating human and material resources towards accomplishment of educational programmes with a view to achieving the education objectives of the institution. Adiotomre *et al.* [17] viewed educational management as the proper planning, effective implementation and monitoring of the educational system to achieve the goals of the system. Hence, an adequately managed educational system according to literature would bring about the production of efficient and effective workforce which will ultimately transform into a vibrant economy that is the product of adequately prepared personnel. Obi [12] asserted that educational management refers to the process of achieving educational objectives through efficient and effective utilization of available, but scarce material resources. Again, management according to him [12] is the process by which a cooperative group directs actions towards common goals. It is a process

designed to ensure the cooperation, participation, intervention and involvement in the effective achievement of a given objective. He concluded by saying that management involves strategy, innovation, initiating about change, creative problem solving and decision making, activity seeking out alternatives and opportunities, reformulating goals and priorities, the deploying resources, negotiating, resolving conflicts, dynamic or active leadership, diplomacy, statesmanship and a high degree of risk taking and entrepreneurship. All the processes of decision making, planning, organising, communicating, co-ordinating, controlling and evaluation of both human and scarce material resources for the attainment of educational objectives is educational management [18].

Equally, Omenyi [19] noted that management is the process of allocating and organisational input (Human and scarce material resources) by planning, organising, directing, controlling, communicating, co-ordinating and evaluating purpose of producing outputs (Goods and services) desired by its customers so that organisational objectives are accomplished. Nakpodia and Okiemute [20] is of the view that educational management is planning, organising, staffing, co-ordinating, reporting and budgeting so that the dream of an institution lives economically and effectively. Nwankwo [21] asserted that educational management is the arrangement of human and material resources and programmes available for education and carefully using them to avoid wastage for the attainment of educational objectives. According to him, it involves a variety of activities such as planning, organising, co-ordinating, supervising and provision of educational support services, budgeting and personnel selection.

According to Babalola [22] educational management is being able to handle (Careful and wasteful) what goes on the process of educating people so that nothing goes out of hand. He advanced further that educational management is a concept that goes along with quest to put the formal education system under control, regulating or supervision in its attempts to use careful (That is to manage) available scarce resources through co-operative efforts when establishing institution of learning, controlling learners, attracting best staff, conducting teaching, learning and research as well as graduating learning at all levels of education in an effective and efficient manner.

From the foregoing discussions, educational management therefore, is the process by which stakeholders in education sector are able to plan, co-

ordinate, control, organise, communicate, supervise, communicate and staff effectively and efficiently human and scarce material resources for the attainment of predetermined educational goals. Components of Educational Management

The major components of areas covered by educational management are:

Educational Administration

Educational Planning

Economic of Education

Educational Administration: Educational administration, according to Olagboye [15] is the process of skilfully arranging the human and materials resources and programmes available for education carefully and systematically, using them for the achievement of educational objectives. It is an aspect of educational management chiefly concerned with the implementation of management plans, programmes and policies. Jaiyeoba [23] observed that administration is the process of mobilizing group efforts towards the achievement of stated goals. It is a process of guild, leading and controlling efforts of a group of individuals towards some common objectives and creating interaction of human and material resources. It is the capacity to co-ordinate many and often conflicting, social energies in a single organisation so adroitly that they shall operate as a unit. He is also, of the view that educational administration is the process of integrating the efforts of personnel and of utilizing appropriate materials in such a way as to promote effectively the development of human qualities.

From the above definitions educational administration is the ability or ingenuity of educational administrators to combine materials resources with the efforts of human resources and in a systematic and efficient manner in all educational Institutions for effective implementation of educational policies and programmes.

Educational Planning: Planning itself is arranging things for further purposes. It is carefully and judiciously arranging human and materials for use in the future. Faludi [24] defined planning as a process of determining appropriate future actions through a sequence of choice. Educational planning therefore, according to Beeby [25] and Coombs [26] is the applications of rational, systematic analysis to the process educational development with the aim of making education more effective and efficient in responding to the need of its students and society. They further observed that planning is a process that is

ominous, involving where one is, where one wants to get and the most effective strategy for getting there. They asserted that to determine the above variables as policy stipulations on goods and manoeuvres for reaching goals, social needs for goals, means necessary for reaching goals including education, nature of students, their goals, prospects, knowledge level in operations, technology and the ability of the school system for self-appraisal are all considered. Olagboye [15] noted that educational planning is the exercise of foresight in determining the policy, priorities and cost of an educational system, having due regard for economic and political realities, for the system's potential for growth and for the needs of the country and the pupils served by the system.

Educational planning is the rational scientific process by which a given society consciously directs its future actions in education with a view to optimizing available resources use in the pursuit of desirable educational goals [15]. He concluded by positing that the above definition has answered the basic planning questions of what needs to be done (Pursuit of desirable educational objectives) how it is to be done (Rationally and scientifically) when it is to be done (Future) who to do it (Society) and with what (Available resources).

Economics of Education: From the world go, there many and varied educational wants of the society in fortunately, the means of satisfying them are limited. Consequent upon this, decision makers have to make choices among the alternative educational wants with respect to the scarce resources available to the education industry. This is the crux of Economic of Education. Ajayi (2006) in Salami and Edo-Olotu [27] opined that Economic of Education is the process of choice making concerning the use of the scarce resources devoted to education with a view to satisfying the unlimited educational wants of the society. He further pointed out that it is a branch of Economics which uses economic tools and principles to solve educational problems. He concluded by saying that Economics of Education involves the systematic application of economic terms, principles, theories and practices in the process of producing and distributing educational services so that the educational system can respond effectively and efficiently to the unlimited educational wants of man.

According to Adeogun [28] Economics of Education is a process of dealing with the production and distribution of knowledge, skills, mind and character by the process of formal schooling. To him, it concerns itself mainly with the process of educational production, the

distribution of educational services among groups and individuals, how much to spend on education and types of education to produce and the efficiency of educational system, among others. He summarized by noting that the major objectives of Economics of Education is to achieve efficient allocation of resources in the educational process pointing out that this is important because resources devoted to education are limited. Therefore, the society must decide on what share of the nation's resources that should go into the education sector and how these should be distributed among the levels and types of education. In view of this, an economic analysis of education can equally help in ensuring the efficiency of the system, to control the cost of education and to achieve rational allocation of resources.

Theoretical Framework

Application of System Theory on the Management of Secondary Schools: The system approach to management sees organisation as a social system made up of interrelated parts acting together as a unitary whole which enables inputs to be converted into outputs. In view of the above, Olagboye [15] noted that the system theory stressed the interrelationship between the different parts of an organisation. According to him, when system theory is applied to the school as one of the social systems, inputs refer to people, materials, information and finance which are organised and activated such that human skills and raw material are converted into products, services and other related outputs which are discharged into the environment. The inputs comprise human, material and symbolic components. The human components include students, materials, as well as non- instructional staff while the process dimensions include teaching, learning, planning, organising, influencing, controlling, evaluating as well as accreditation. On the other hand, output includes graduates, academic achievement, certificate and diplomas, skills and competences, beliefs, attitude, behaviour changes and impact on society.

Research Method: The research adopted a descriptive survey design for the study. The population of the study consist of 643 teachers in 222 secondary schools principals' in Ebonyi state. Proportionate stratified simple random sampling techniques were used to select 250 teachers and 100 principals as the sample. This gave a total sample of 350 respondents. The instrument for the study is entitled "Influences of Poor Secondary School Management on Academic Performance Questionnaire scale (IPSSMAPQS). The instrument has two parts, "A"

and “B”. Part “A” contains the bio-data of the respondents, while part “B” dealt with 15 items of questionnaire. The instruments which have three sections adopted four point scales of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD) is weighted 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively. The instrument for data collection was validated by three experts, two from Administration and Planning and one from Test and Measurement (Science Education), all from Ebonyi State University, Abakaliki. Using the test-retest method and applying the Person Product Moment correlation coefficient analysis, the reliability of the instrument was established at 0.86 using schools in Enugu state. A total of 250 copies of the questionnaires were administered by the researcher personally to all the teachers in 222 public secondary schools in Ebonyi state. All the copies of the questionnaire distributed were collected and used for the study. Data collected were analysed using mean and standard deviations, while t-test was used to test the two null hypotheses at 0.05 alpha level of significant. Any mean score of 2.5 and above were considered as agreement while those below 2.5 were adjudged as disagreement.

RESULTS

Research Question 1: How do principals’ poor of personnel influences student academic performance in Ebonyi state secondary schools.

Result on Table 1 showed that all the items listed were agreed by the respondents that they are ways by which personnel are poorly managed by secondary school principals which influence the academic performance of students.

Research Question 2: How does principals’ poor management of school fund influences student academic performance in Ebonyi state secondary school?

Result on Table 2 equal revealed that item listed are responsible for principals poor management of school which influence negatively on the academic performance of secondary school students in Ebonyi state.

Research Question 3: What are the management practices that could be adopted by the principals in the management of secondary schools to improve student academic performance?

Table 1: Mean response on how principals’ poor management of personnel influences students’ academic performance in Ebonyi state secondary schools.

S/N	Item statement	Mean	SD	Decision
1.	Principals do not motivate staff properly.	3.1	0.8	Strongly Agree
2.	Principals poor leadership style influences academic performance of students.	3.2	0.9	Strongly Agree
3.	Principals inability to supervise teacher classroom instruction influences student academic performance.	3.9	0.9	Strongly Agree
4.	Inability of principals to settle staff dispute influences student academic performance.	2.9	0.7	Agree
5.	Poor principals channel of communication influences student academic performance.	2.8	0.7	Agree
	Grand Mean	3.2	1.09	

Strongly Agree

Table 2: Mean responses of how principals’ poor management school funds influences student academic performance in Ebonyi state.

S/N	Item statement	Mean	SD	Decision
1	Embezzlement of school fund by principals meant for procurement of school facilities.	3.2	0.9	Strongly Agree
2	Embezzlement of school fund by principals meant for motivation of staff.	3.3	1.0	Strongly Agree
3	Embezzlement of school fund by principals meant for provision of instructional materials.	2.8	0.7	Agree
4	Embezzlement of school fund by principals meant for staff salaries.	2.6	1.8	Agree
5	Principals inability to use school fund to purchase food items for students.	3.0	1.0	Strongly Agree
	Grand Mean	3.2	0.9	Strongly Agree

Strongly Agree

Table 3: Mean response on the management practices that could be adopted by the principals in the management of secondary school in Ebonyi state for students’ academic performance improvement.

S/N	Item statement	X	SD	Decision
1	Provision of instructional material.	3.2	0.8	Strongly Agree
2	Proper and efficient planning of instructions.	3.2	0.8	Strongly Agree
3	execution of policies received from Ministry of Education.	3.2	0.8	Strongly Agree
4	Adequate co-ordination of all the activities of both teaching and non-teaching staff.	3.3	0.9	Strongly Agree
5	Wisdom organisation of both human and material resources for effective teaching and learning.	3.1	0.7	Strongly Agree
	Grand Mean	3.2	0.8	Strongly Agree

Strongly Agree

Table 4: T-test difference in the mean rating of urban and rural secondary schools teachers in Ebonyi state on how principals' for poor management of secondary schools influence student academic performances.

Group	Mean	SD	N	DF	t-calculated	t-critical	Decision
Urban teachers	3.2	0.8	150	248	0.76	1.96	Accept
Rural teachers	3.1	0.7	100				

$P > 0.05$, $DF = 248$

Table 5: T-test difference in the mean rating of male and female teachers on how poor secondary school management by principals influence the academic performance of students in Ebonyi state.

Group	Mean	SD	N	DF	t-calculated	t-critical	Decision
Male Teachers	2.8	0.7	90	248	1.65	1.96	Accept
Female Teachers	2.9	0.9	160				

$P > 0.05$, $DF = 248$

Results on Table 3 showed that all the items are agreed by respondents that they are management practices that principals could be adopted by the principals in the management of secondary school in Ebonyi state for student academic performances.

Result on Table 4 show that the calculated t-value of 0.76 is less than critical t-value of 1.96 ($0.76 < 1.96$) needed for significance at 0.5 and 248 degree of freedom. This is an indication that the null hypothesis is accepted. This showed that there is no significant difference in the mean rating of urban and rural secondary school principals on how their poor management of personnel influence student academic performances in Ebonyi state.

Result on Table 5 showed that the calculated t-value of 1.65 is less than critical t-value of 1.96 ($1.65 < 1.96$) level of significance and 248 degrees of freedom, thus the null hypothesis is accepted indicating that the male and female teachers do not differ significantly in their mean rating on how principals poor management of secondary schools in Ebonyi state influences student academic performance.

DISCUSSION

Results of findings of the study drawn from the respondents generally indicated that principals' poor management of personnel and poor management of school fund influence student academic performance in Ebonyi state secondary schools.

Table 1 determined how principals' poor management of personnel influence academic performance of students in Ebonyi state secondary schools. In essence, principals' poor motivation of staff, poor leadership style, inadequate supervision of teachers by principals and improper communication mechanism influence academic performance of secondary schools' students in Ebonyi state. This finding agrees with the view Onwuasoanya *et*

al. [4] who noted that quality education and educational output which were supposed to borne when managerial skills of educational functionary's interplay with the availability of adequate educational resources were not because of principals' inability to manage the personnel properly. Lack of proper personnel management is a predictor of poor commitment by staff, poor classroom instruction delivery which transcend to poor academic performance of students. Onwuasoanya *et al.* [4] highlighted that unsatisfactory performance often experienced in schools by students and educational programme is always attributed to lack of effective management by school principals in terms of basic infrastructures, lack of adequate and accurate statistics, inadequate funding, embezzlement, bureaucratic bottleneck and poor attitude to work.

Table 2 further revealed embezzlement of school fund by secondary school principals meant for procurement of school facilities, motivation of staff, provision of instructional materials, for payment of staff salaries and purchase of food items for students influences students' academic performance. If there is financial lacunae in the management of secondary schools, teaching and learning take place under a most non-conducive environment, lacking basic materials occasioned by principals poor management of school fund and thus hindered the fulfilment of educational objectives. It is not an exaggeration to say that the absence of these all-important facilities in no small measure account for poor academic performance of student in secondary schools especially in Ebonyi state. Therefore, for the academic performance of students in Ebonyi state secondary schools to improve principals should ensure prudent spending of money giving to them by government.

Table 3 showed that there are management practices which principals could adopt in the management of secondary schools for the achievement of students'

academic performance. These strategies include among others; provision of instructional material, proper and efficient planning of instructions, execution of policies received from Ministry of Education, adequate co-ordination of all the activities of both teaching and non-teaching staff and wisdom organisation of both human and material resources for effective teaching and learning. This is in agreement with Onwuasoanya *et al.* [4] who noted that the principals could adopt such management practices as provision of instructional materials, planning, directing, organising, co-ordinating, decision making and execution of policies and curriculum received from Ministry of Education for proper management of schools. These will go a long way in achieving the purposes for which secondary schools are established.

The test of hypotheses which looked into the differences in the mean ratings of urban and rural teachers and the mean ratings of male and female teachers on how poor secondary school management by principals influence academic of students' in Ebonyi state secondary schools found both areas in inquiries not significant.

CONCLUSION

This study that investigated the influence of poor secondary school management by principals on students' academic performance in Ebonyi state, calls for adequate and proper management of personnel, proper use and accountability of funds meant to run secondary education programme and the importance of proper adoption of proper management functions by principals as these will enhance academic performance of students. Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made below.

Recommendations:

- There should be effective and proper management of personnel by principals in collaboration with the Ministry of Education.
- Government should declare state of emergency in the education sector and provide funds for effective and efficient management of secondary schools.
- Government should encourage principals to adopt proper management functions for effective management of secondary school. This is because the failure or success of any education programmes at all level of education lies squarely in the administrative competence of the principal.

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