

Inhibiting Factors to Effective Staff Personnel Management by Principals for Maximum Productivity in Ebonyi State Secondary Schools: the Way Forward

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Abstract: The study examined inhibiting factors to effective staff personnel management by principals for maximum productivity in Ebonyi State secondary schools: The way forward. The study was guided by three research questions and two null hypotheses. The study adopted survey design; the population is 222 principals in all public secondary schools in Ebonyi State. There was no sampling as the population is small. The instrument for data collection is a self-structured questionnaire entitled “Inhibiting Factors to Effective Staff Personnel Management” questionnaire scale (IFSPM). The validation of the instrument was done by three experts, two from Educational Administration and one in Test and Measurement (Science Education) all from Ebonyi State University, Abakaliki. Test re-test was used to establish the reliability of the instrument using Pearson Product Moment Alpha internal consistency co-efficient and it yielded 0.77 indicating high reliability. The instrument was administered on 222 respondents with the help of three research assistants, one each from the three Education Zones of Ebonyi State. Data collected in respect of the three research questions were analyzed using mean score and standard deviation, while the two null hypotheses were tested using t-test statistic at alpha level of 0.05 significant. One of the findings was that inadequate staff motivation is an inhibiting factor to effective staff personnel management by principals for maximum productivity in Ebonyi State secondary schools.

Key words: Inhibiting • Staff • Personnel • Management • Productivity • Principals

INTRODUCTION

The importance of education in the overall national development cannot be debated. Education is a source of poverty eradication, self-reliance and illiteracy liberation. It is in this regard that government of all nations evolves educational programmes and policies that will enhance the well being of the citizens. To achieve the aims of education requires both human and material resources. Human resources will translate the philosophies of education into actions using the material resources available. At the helm of affairs in secondary schools for translation of educational policies into realities is the principal. The day-to-day administration of secondary schools rests on the principal who is the middle ground/man between the government, the school and the community [1]. In the administration of secondary schools, the principals work closely with the staff by providing a conducive environment for their productivity. Creating enabling environment for staff to perform is one of the key determinants to staff maximum productivity.

Staff personnel management can be described as providing staff needs in the school system for them to perform. It is one of the management functions that deal with managing people at work. It involves recruiting, developing, rewarding teachers, selecting, controlling, communicating and evaluating staff for optimum productivity. Personnel management is an important management function concerned with obtaining, developing and motivating the human resource required by an organization to achieve its objectives[2].

In any learning environment, the teacher quality is a determinant factor. The teacher is involved in decision-making; the teacher evolves methods and procedure in implementing policies and educational programmes for the achievement of educational programmes. The teacher is charged with character molding, imparting knowledge and skills to the learner and personal growth of the learner. To this end, he/she should be motivated for societal growth and development. This is because there is a significant relationship between organizational behaviour in terms of motivation and teacher's work productivity [3],[4].

Eboatu and Oguezimma, in Aja-Okorie [1],[4] asserted that motivation is a viable tool to ensuring accelerated productivity. Teachers motivation is a general term applying to the entire class drives, desires, needs, wishes and similar forces initiated for teachers, in order to induce them to act in desirable academically production manner [5]. According to Azubuike and Orji [3] motivation refers to those variables, factors and forces that influence teachers to do things. In summary, therefore, teachers motivation are those things such as incentives, reward for excellence, praise, promotions and provision of basic needs that will change the teachers behaviour towards maximum productivity. Inadequate teachers motivation is an obstacle to maximum productivity create low esteem and lead to mass exodus of quality teachers in the teaching profession [6]. Similarly, when the financial reward teachers get is not proportionate with the job they perform, they tend to be ineffective. There is therefore, no correlation between efforts expended by an employee and the reward the teacher receives from the organization. When an employee does not receive a reward that is commensurate with effort he put in, he withdraws and this lowers productive capacity.

Similarly, when the learning environment is not conducive, staff tends to become frustrated, tensed up, stressed and at times become aggressive. For instance, if the staff and the principal are in conflict or that there is conflict between students and staff or that there is role conflict experienced by the principal, there is bound to be low productivity among and between staff. Conflict according to Obi [7] is the process that begins when one party perceive that the other has negatively affected something that he or she cares about. It can also be viewed as human and social problems which involve mutual hostility, aggression, differences, disagreement, opposition, thesis and antitheses antagonistic behaviour, dissatisfaction resulting to man's inhumanity to man, use of violence, crisis which can escalate to the level of psychological warfare or physical or naked war. Staff-personnel conflicts accounts for most of the problems in educational institution because it can lead to lack of achievement of desired goals and objectives of secondary education system [8]. Ogebade [9] hinted that conflict has been mostly associated with negative outcomes in schools as it leads to communication breakdown, hoarding of vital information between groups, students' unrests, teachers strike action and misinterpretation of information. Collaborating Ogebade's view, Ocho [10] asserted that conflict among principals and teachers have been mostly associated with negative results such as

communication gap, teacher indiscipline, closed organizational climate, administrators, truancy and individual rivalry among staff thereby hindering the attainment of school objectives.

Equally the indiscipline in our secondary school system leaves much to be desired, indiscipline is an evil wind that blow no one good. Indiscipline in secondary school according to Akinboye in Alumode [11] is the actions and inactions of secondary school students which negates the school rules and regulations and which in turn are inimical to the growth and development of students. Indiscipline is the actions which people exhibit that are not in tandem with the normal acceptable rules and regulations. In the secondary school system, indiscipline is the actions of students that disrupt academic growth of the school and in extreme cases leads to poor academic achievement of students. In a situation where there is constant indiscipline in secondary schools the principals maybe handicapped in his management of staff especially where this indiscipline behaviour is coming from the staff. Staff indiscipline in form of absenteeism, selling of items during school period, feigning sickness to delay policy initiative, failing to carry out assigned tasks properly and gross misconduct in instructional delivery are all forms of indiscipline that impedes principals' effective staff personnel management [12]. Mkpa [13] defined indiscipline as continuous disobedience to constituted authorities, absenteeism and late coming to work and other such negative work behaviour that adversely affect the school system. In the light of the above, Falae [14] asserted that indiscipline among teachers could be equated with disorderliness, dirty habits, disobedience of rules and authority, rudeness, truancy, malingering, lying, cheating and stealing.

Government, individuals and education managers have variously expressed their concern over the obstacles posed to the education sector by indiscipline among teacher. Odom in Eziuzo [15] noted that indiscipline teachers cannot train students to transform the society morally as well as intellectually. Falae [14] said that educational standards are bound to continue deteriorating once order and discipline are not restored in schools. Uzoechina [12] in his view said that the out-come of personal experience in acts of indiscipline among teachers in primary and secondary schools has great negative impact on the lifestyles of students. This is because in situations of this nature, most of the students will go home without learning anything and hence the temptation to cheat during examinations will grow. Therefore,

teachers' indiscipline seems to affect principals' effective management of personnel. It is against this backdrop that the study sets out to examine the inhibiting factors to effective staff personnel management by principals for maximum productivity in Ebonyi State Secondary Schools.

Statement of the Problem: The rate at which secondary school staff perform ineffectively in their jobs as a result of inadequate motivation is worrisome to all those concerned with the management of education. When teachers withdraw their efforts which lower their productive capacity, principals seem to be handicapped and this impede their effective staff personnel management.

Equally, poor learning environment which tends to frustrate staff, stressed them, make them tensed up and at times make them aggressive all combine to also frustrated principals efforts in personnel management. Staff related conflicts which are in various forms occasioned by poor learning environment is also obstacle to principals in effective staff personnel management in secondary schools in Ebonyi State.

Again, indiscipline of staff in form of absenteeism, selling of items during school periods, continuous disobedience to constituted authorities, failing to carry out assigned tasks properly and gross misconduct in instructional delivery are all in some way evidences of principals inability to manage staff effectively for productivity in Ebonyi State secondary schools. This form of indiscipline seen to have been the causes of students cheating in examination as they have not learnt any thing. This may result to mass failure of students in West African School Certificate Examination and other related external examinations. The problem of this study put in a question form is "what are the inhibiting factors to effective staff personnel management by principals for maximum productivity in Ebonyi State Secondary schools"?

Purpose of the Study: The main purpose of this study is to examine inhibiting factors to effective staff personnel management by principals for maximum productivity in Ebonyi State secondary schools. Specifically the study sought to:

- Determine the extent staff inadequate motivation hinders principals' effective staff personnel management maximum for productivity in Ebonyi State Secondary school

- Examine the extent poor learning environment poses problem to principals' effective staff personnel management for maximum productivity in Ebonyi State secondary school.
- Explore the extent indiscipline of staff impedes principals effective staff personnel management for maximum productivity in Ebonyi State secondary schools.

Research Questions:

- o what extent is staff inadequate motivation a hindrance to principals' effective staff personnel management for maximum productivity in Ebonyi State secondary schools?
- To what extent has poor learning environment posed problem to principals' effective staff personnel management for maximum productivity in Ebonyi State Secondary School?
- To What extent has staff indiscipline impeded principals' effective staff personnel management for maximum productivity in Ebonyi State Secondary Schools?

Hypotheses:

- Ho₁: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female principals on their inhibiting factors to effective staff personnel management for maximum productivity in Ebonyi State Secondary schools.
- Ho₂: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of urban and rural principals on their inhibiting factors to effective staff personnel management for maximum productivity in Ebonyi State Secondary Schools.

Method: The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The population of the study consists of 222 secondary school principals. There was no sampling as the number is not too large. Therefore, all the 222 principals were used for the study. The instrument for data collection is a researcher self-structured questionnaire entitled "Inhibiting Factors to Effective Staff Personnel Management" questionnaire scale (IFESPM). It is made up of two parts, 'A and B' Part 'A' dealt with the bio-data of the respondents while part 'B' contains-items in respect to the three research questions. Three experts, two from Educational Administration and planning and one from Test and Measurement

(Science Education department) all from Ebonyi State University, Abakaliki validated the instrument.

The reliability of the instrument was established using the test re-test method. The instrument was administered on 100 principals outside the area of the study. The same instrument was administered on the same respondents after two weeks interval. Thereafter, the two tests were correlated using Crombach Alpha internal consistency co-efficient and it yielded 0.74 indicating high reliability.

The instrument was a 4-point rating scale questionnaire with options; Very High Extent (VHE), High Extent (HE), LESS Extent (LE) and Very Less Extent (VLE) weighted 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively. It was administered on the respondents with the help of three research assistants who were briefed by the researcher on the modalities for responding to the items in the questionnaire. 222 copies of the instrument were administered on the respondents and all were collected back and used for the study. Data collected in respect to the three research questions were analyzed using mean and standard deviations. Any score from 2.5 and above was adjudged to a very high extent and high extent, while any mean below 2.5 and below was considered less extent and very less extent. The t-test statistic was used to test the two null hypotheses at the level of 0.05 of significance.

RESULTS

Research Question 1: To what extent is staff inadequate motivations hindrance to principal effective staff personnel management for maximum productivity in Ebonyi State Secondary Schools?

Table 1: Response of respondents on how inadequate staff motivations hinder principal's effective staff personnel management in Ebonyi state secondary schools.

S/N	Inadequate Staff Motivation	Mean	SD	Decision
1	Creative low esteem in teachers	3.2	0.28	VHE
2	Leads to mass exodus of teachers from teaching professions	3.6	0.31	VHE
3	Make staff ineffective	3.00	0.33	VHE
4	Causes staff frustration	2.52	0.22	HE
5	Is a source of stress to staff	2.65	0.24	HE
6	Is a source of staff conflict	3.14	0.28	VHE
7	Make staff become aggressive	3.23	0.29	VHE
8	Lower staff productivity	2.80	0.25	HE
9	Reduce staff morale	3.65	0.32	VHE
10	Make staff withdraw his efforts resulting to low output	3.9	0.34	VHE
Total grand Mean		3.17	0.25	VHE

Note: SD = Standard Deviation VHE = 3.0-4.0, HE =2.5-2.99, LE =1.5-2.49 & VLE =0.01-1.49

Result on table I with a grand mean of 3.17 which is below the benchmark of 2.5 is an indication that inadequate staff motivation is one of the inhibiting factors to effective staff personnel management by principals for maximum productivity in Ebonyi State secondary schools.

Research Question 2: To what extent has poor learning environment posed problems to principal effective staff personnel management for productivity in Ebonyi State Secondary Schools?

Table 2: Response of respondents on how poor learning poses problems to principals' effective staff personnel management for productivity in Ebonyi state secondary schools.

S/N	Inadequate Staff Motivation	Mean	SD	Decision
1	Poor learning environment	3.08	0.98	VHE
2	Is a source of poor academic performance of students	2.98	1.03	HE
3	Leads to examination malpractice	3.02	0.99	VHE
4	Decreases productive capacity of staff	2.89	1.00	HE
5	Promotes poor principal-staff relationship	3.13	0.95	VHE
Grand Mean		3.02	0.99	VHE

Result on table 2 has a grand mean of 3.02 which indicates that poor learning environment is an impediment to effective staff personnel management by principals for maximum productivity in Ebonyi State Secondary School Schools.

Research Question 3: To what extent has staff indiscipline impeded principals' effective staff personnel management for productivity in Ebonyi State Secondary Schools?

Table 3: Responses of respondents on the extent staff indiscipline has impeded principals' effective staff personnel management for productivity in Ebonyi state secondary schools.

S/N	Indiscipline of staff	Mean	SD	Decision
1	Cannot train students to transform	3.33	0.98	VHE
2	Deteriorates the standard of education.	3.09	0.85	VHE
3	Has great negative impact on the lifestyles of students	2.97	0.90	HE
4	Leads to staff outdoor activities outside their official duties.	3.09	0.90	VHE
5	Make students to learn nothing which tempts them to cheat during examination	2.69	1.35	HE
Grand Mean		3.03	1.01	VHE

Result on table 3 showed that with a grand mean of 3.03 which invariably is below the benchmark of 2.5 is an impediment to principals' effective staff personnel management for maximum productivity in Ebonyi State secondary schools.

Table 4: t-test difference in the mean ratings of male and female principals on the extent staff inadequate motivation hinder principals' effective staff personnel management for maximum productivity in Ebonyi state secondary schools.

Group	Mean	SD	N	DF	t-cal	t-crit	Decision
Male Principals	3.52	0.31	198	220	0.74	1.96	Accept
Female principals	3.91	0.34	24				

$P > 0.05$, $DF = 220$

Result on table 4 showed that the calculated t-value of 0.74 is less than the critical t-value of 1.96 ($0.74 < 1.96$) needed for significance at 0.05 level of significance and 220 degree of freedom. This is an indication the null hypothesis is accepted while the alternate hypothesis is rejected. This showed that there is no significant difference in the mean responses of male and female principals on the extent staff inadequate motivation hinder principals' effective staff personnel management for maximum productivity in Ebonyi State secondary schools.

Table 5: t-test difference in the mean responses of urban and rural principals on the extent poor learning environment pose problem to principals' effective staff personnel management for maximum productivity in Ebonyi state secondary schools

Group	Mean	SD	N	DF	t-cal	t-crit	Decision
Urban Principals	3.64	1.21	150	220	1.64	1.96	Accept
Rural principals	3.89	1.19	72				

$P > 0.05$, $DF = 220$

Result on table 5 showed that the calculated t-value of 1.64 is less than the critical t-value of 1.96 ($1.64 < 1.96$) level of significance and 220 degree of freedom, thus the null hypothesis is accepted. This is an indication that urban and rural principals do not differ significantly in their mean ratings on the extent poor learning environment pose problems to principals' effective staff personnel management for maximum productivity in Ebonyi State Secondary schools.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Result of findings on table I shows basically that inadequate staff motivation is one of the factors that hinder effective staff personnel management by principals

for maximum productivity in Ebonyi State Secondary Schools. It should be noted that motivation is a strong strategy for keeping staff alive in their duty posts. When staffs are motivated, they put in extra efforts in making sure that the purposes for which the secondary schools are established are achieved. Contrary to this, inadequate staff motivations are sources of staff ineffectiveness, reduction in staff morale and low staff productivity. This is in agreement with Nnamani [6] who lamented that inadequate staff motivation is an obstacle to productivity, create low esteem and lead to mass exodus of quality teachers in the teaching profession. This scenario incapacitates principals in managing his staff in secondary schools.

Findings on table 2 revealed that poor learning environment is an impediment to effective staff personnel management by principals for maximum productivity in Ebonyi State Secondary Schools. Poor learning environment is a breeding ground for poor principal-staff relationship, poor academic performance by students, examination malpractices and poor staff realization of educational objectives. All these variables are all inhibiting factors to effective staff personnel management. This agrees with Alumode [11] who opined that any learning environment that is not stimulating, the teacher cannot achieve much and learning will not be effective.

Result on table 3 revealed that staff indiscipline is an impediment to principal's effective staff personnel management for maximum productivity in Ebonyi State Secondary schools. According to Eziuzo [15] staff indiscipline is posing a foremost threat to the management of technology, technical and vocational education in secondary schools in Anambra State.

Hypothesis (H_{01}) was tested to find out if there is significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female principals on the extent of staff inadequate motivation as an inhibiting factor to principals' effective staff personnel management for maximum productivity in Ebonyi State Secondary Schools. The hypothesis which was tested using t-test revealed that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female principals regarding inadequate staff motivation as a factor hindering effective staff personnel management of Ebonyi State Secondary schools by principals for maximum productivity. The findings of this study, shows that male and female principals share the same view as supported by Ndubisi, [16] that gender is not a significant variable. H_{02} was tested with t-test to find out if there is significant difference in the mean ratings of urban and rural secondary school principals on the extent poor

learning environment pose problems to principals' effective staff personnel management for maximum productivity in Ebonyi State Secondary Schools. The result revealed that there is no significant difference in mean ratings of urban and rural secondary school principal on the extent poor learning environment pose problems to principal's effective staff personnel management for maximum productivity in Ebonyi State Secondary Schools. This is an indication that the opinion of both urban and rural secondary school principals do not differ. The findings of this study shows that both urban and rural secondary school principals share the same view as supported by Nwankwo, [17] that location is not a significant variable.

CONCLUSION

The study x-rayed the inhibiting factors to effective staff personnel management by principals for maximum productivity in Ebonyi State Secondary Schools and discovered various factors are responsible. Such factors include inadequate staff motivation, poor learning environment and staff indiscipline among others. Therefore, these factors should be harmonized by stakeholders in education in Ebonyi State for effective staff personnel management by principals to pave way for maximum productivity in secondary schools.

The Way Forward: The following recommendations were made by the researchers from the findings of the study. They are:

- Government should provide adequate motivation inform of prompt and regular payment of teachers salaries and promotions, proper job security, payment of leave allowances and other entitlements will make staff sit up to their responsibilities in terms of increased productivity. These will help principals discharge their duties effectively.
- Government should improve the learning environment so as to stimulate teaching which will result to effective learning and positive change in the behaviour of learners. This will create a good relationship between staff and principals.
- All problems associated with staff indiscipline should be addressed by government, community members, Parent Teachers' Association (PTA) and other philanthropists. When this is done, principals will then perform their civic duties in effective management of staff personnel for maximum productivity in Ebonyi State Secondary Schools.

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