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## **ANALYSIS OF PRINCIPALS' MANAGERIAL COMPETENCIES FOR EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT OF SCHOOL RESOURCES IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN ANAMBRA STATE, NIGERIA**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*This study analyses principals' managerial competencies for effective management of school resources in secondary schools in Anambra State. The study was conducted in Anambra State. The study population comprised 257 principals in public secondary schools in the State. The study adopted a descriptive survey design. A 24 items researcher developed instrument titled "Principals' Managerial Competencies for Effective Management of School Resources Questionnaire (PMCEMSRQ)" was used for data collection. The Cronbach alpha was used to determine the reliability of the instrument which yielded a high reliability coefficient of 0.85. The study found out that secondary school principals' in Anambra State do not have managerial competencies in procurement of physical and instructional materials, provision of e-library facilities and equipping classrooms and offices with needed furniture for effective material resource management. The study also found out that school principals' have managerial competencies in prioritizing financial allocation according to school needs, keeping accurate financial information of the school, ensuring accountability in all school expenditures, carrying out periodic auditing of school budgets and adopting cost-saving strategies for effective financial resource management among others. The study recommended that School principals' should strive to acquire managerial competencies in involving teachers' in decision making, organizing seminars and workshops for professional advancement of teachers, providing incentives' for students' for effective human resource management in schools, procurement of physical and instructional materials, provision of e-library facilities and equipping classrooms and offices with needed furniture and other school materials for effective material resource. Conclusion was drawn.*

### **KEYWORDS**

*Principals', Managerial Competencies, Effective Management, School Resources, Secondary Schools*

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

Education is a transformational tool in every society and should be held in high esteem. It is the acquisition of knowledge and skills required to sustain individual, groups, and organizational advancement at all levels and spheres of life. Egwu (2016) opined that the principal is a leader who must plan, coordinate and supervise the affairs of the school, so that they run smoothly. The principal is the chief administrator of secondary school who is expected to effectively use various resources through the adoption of management principles and practices for the realization of school goals. If education system must achieve its national policies and goals, the school managers at all levels must ensure optimum management of human, material, financial and time resources.

Management is the arrangement of available human and material resources for the achievement of desired goals and objectives (Nwune, Nwogbo & Okonkwo, 2016). It is the productive use of available resources in an efficient and effective manner geared towards goals realization. Nkwoh (2011) observed that school principals must possess a wide array of competencies in order to lead schools effectively towards the accomplishment of educational goals, which has led to changing expectations of what leaders need to know and must be able to do. Competency as opined by Carol and Edward (2004) is the successful performance of a task through the use of knowledge, skills, attitude and judgment. It is the ability and required skills to accomplish given task. Managerial competency is the possession of necessary skills to effectively manage resources for productivity. Heller (2012) outlines functions of school administrators as including management of instructional programmes, staff personnel administration, students' personnel administration, finance and physical resource management and community relationship management. Effective management of human, material, time and financial resources is highly crucial for institutional sustainability and the development of school action plan.

### **1.1 PRINCIPALS' MANAGERIAL COMPETENCIES FOR EFFECTIVE HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT**

Human Resource is the people who operate within the organization for goals achievement. They are the engine that drives the organization to a higher height. Human Resource Management is the overall management efforts geared towards deriving the best in people for productivity. Human Resource Management (HRM) is the function within an organization that focuses on recruitment of, management of, and providing direction for the people who work in the organization (Heathfield, 2011). According to Ekanem (2014), meaningful educational value change can take place in individual human beings' who are involved in the management of the educational system for sustainable growth. Human resource is a vital asset to the school which must be venerated. For school heads to derive the best out of teachers', students', and school auxiliary workers, he must be competent in motivating, supervising, training and providing sustainable welfare policies to personnel. Welfare policy does not only include money, but other packages such as employer and employee interpersonal relationship, as it is often times geared purposely towards the enrichment of personnel performance (Akinfolarin, 2017). School Principals' should often involve school personnel in decision making process with constant communication to increase their commitment and dedication to school goals and objectives. According to Akinfolarin and Rufai (2017), there must be a good communication mechanism among teachers', students' and school administrators' within and outside the school for goals achievement at all levels of education. The presence of

good information and communication system in school management will help to carry teachers' and students' along with school aims and objectives which would motivate them for improved teaching and learning process. Teachers' and students' can be intrinsically or extrinsically motivated through the provision of incentives which could be tangible or intangible. School leaders should strive to identify the categories of incentives that would yield the best result based on individual differences. It is pertinent to note that there are two areas of human resource management in the school system; the staff human resource management and the students' human resource management. For effective staff human resource management, school administrators' must develop good competencies in staffing, orientation, communication, training, supervision, conflict management, motivation, discipline and ensuring professional growth of academic and non-academic staff, while for effective students' human resource management, school administrators should acquire competencies in increasing students' enrolment, orientation, students' discipline, welfare services, counselling services and provision of incentives to students'. Also, there must be a favourable teaching and learning environment with adequate instructional and learning materials which should be properly managed for positive academic outcome.

## **1.2. PRINCIPALS' MANAGERIAL COMPETENCIES FOR EFFECTIVE MATERIAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT**

Material resources are school facilities like buildings, laboratories, library, e-learning facilities, instructional materials, furniture, classrooms, offices, school records, and sport facilities among others that augment teaching and learning process. Material resource management is the effective and efficient utilization of physical facilities and instructional materials are for school improvement. The quality of education delivered by teachers and academic achievement of pupils of any school is dependent on several factors of which school facilities is paramount (Asiyai, 2012). Akinfolarin and Ehinola (2014) suggested that institutional facilities should continue to be provided to facilitate effective teaching and delivery of knowledge as it improves academic performance. However, material resource management is very crucial to the school system as poor management of it may decrease the quality of educational outputs. Despite the significance of material resources to educational system, schools in Nigeria are still experiencing faulty and shortage of vital facilities in the implementation of action plan for school improvement. Similarly, Akinfolarin and Rufai (2017) posit that some facilities in our schools are underutilized while some are overutilized and some are not available. Quality education cannot be realized when school facilities are not adequate or mismanaged. Material resource management functions include planning, procuring, storing, utilization and maintenance of school facilities to enhance the quality of teaching and learning process. Also, periodic inspection of school facilities should be carried out by stakeholders in the education industry in order to identify the areas that are deficient for solution. Alimi, Ehinola and Alabi (2012) opined that in South-West Nigeria secondary schools, instructional space such as classrooms, libraries, technical workshops and laboratories are structurally defective, that is, classrooms are not spacious enough". School managers should not only ensure the availability of physical and instructional materials but should equally acquire competencies in effective material resource management for instructional improvement. However, the adequate provision of physical facilities and instructional materials is hinged on school finance which must be well managed.

### **1.3. PRINCIPALS' MANAGERIAL COMPETENCIES FOR EFFECTIVE FINANCIAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT**

The central purpose of financial management is the raising of fund and ensuring that the funds mobilized are utilized in the most effective and efficient manner. Financial management is the planning, organizing and controlling of inflow and outflow of money aimed at achieving organizational success and development. Financial management practices involve budgeting, auditing, application accounting strategies, cost-saving approaches, profit maximization, sourcing of funds among others. In secondary schools, school principals and administrators are responsible for preparation of the school budget and ensure effective financial management in order to achieve the objectives of the school (Alia & Iwuoha, 2014). In any organization, the head is the chief accounting officer who play key role in the efficient management school finance. Poor budgeting is one of the major reasons that derail effective management of schools due to overspending or underspending which can lead to misappropriation and mismanagement of school funds (Mito & Simatwa, 2012). Some school heads in Nigeria seem not to involve stakeholders in budgeting processes and sourcing of funds for school improvement which amount to setback in the actualization of school action plan. Bua and Adzongo (2014) noted that poor state of schools in Benue State in Nigeria was as a result of financial management issues such as the inability to generate revenue internally and misuse of available resources. The principal is the chief accounting officer in the school entrusted with the fiscal task of ensuring accountability and efficiency in the management of financial resource for the attainment of school goals and objectives. Magak (2013) summarized the challenges that school administrators faced in managing school funds. This included incompetency in procurement, inadequate and irregular auditing, lack of accounting supportive documents and records and inability to prepare end year financial statements among others. Lipham (2016) say that financial management skills are needed by the school principals to make them effective in planning, sourcing and in utilization of school funds. The federal government of Nigeria budgetary allocation to education sector is below twenty percent (20 %) which is relatively low to promote quality education. Since the budgetary allocation to the education sector in Nigeria is low, it is pertinent for school heads at all levels to acquire relevant skills in managing the allocated funds for school improvement.

For any organization to achieve its goals and objectives and for continuous existence, managers must acquire appropriate competencies in effective management of its vital resources. According to Ikediugwu (2016), good school managers must carefully and effectively handle educational resources particularly money, material and machines including computers, teaching technology and internal facilities put under their custody for proper management of fund. Ikediugwu further posited that managing people is very central to educational management owing to the nature of the educational system, as a labour intensive and child centred industry. Education is a vital tool for societal transformation having the school as an institution for the realization of it goals and objectives. Schools in Nigeria are witnessing numerous challenges ranging from poor and inadequate infrastructural and instructional facilities, shortage and poorly motivated personnel, and mismanagement of funds which may be due to managerial incompetency of school managers'. Institutions of learning need human, material and financial resources to implement the national policies and goals of education. School resources must be well managed by competent school administrators for goals achievement.

#### **1.4. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

There are serious challenges in secondary schools in Nigeria ranging from inadequate coverage of scheme of work, teachers' persistent lateness, frequent conflict, truancy among students, inadequate and damaged physical facilities, shortage of fund, unprecedentedly high fees charged on students among others. This may be as a result of poor managers' competencies in effective and efficient management of the key resources in every organization including the school system which are; human, material, financial and time resources. No meaningful organizational change can take place without effective management of resources. Premised on these challenges that the study aimed at analysing principals' managerial competencies for effective management of school resources in secondary schools in Anambra State.

#### **1.5. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

The main purpose of this study is to analyse principals' managerial competencies for effective management of school resources in secondary schools in Anambra State. Specifically, the study analysed:

1. Principals' managerial competencies for effective human resource management in secondary schools in Anambra State.
2. Principals' managerial competencies for effective material resource management in secondary schools in Anambra State.
3. Principals' managerial competencies for effective financial resource management in secondary schools in Anambra State.

#### **1.6. RESEARCH QUESTIONS:**

1. What are principals' managerial competencies for effective human resource management in secondary schools in Anambra State?
2. What are principals' managerial competencies for effective material resource management in secondary schools in Anambra State?
3. What are principals' managerial competencies for effective financial resource management in secondary schools in Anambra State?

## **2. METHOD**

The study adopted a descriptive survey design and was conducted in Anambra State. The study population comprised 257 principals in public secondary schools in the State. No sampling was used due to the manageable size of the population. A 24 items researcher developed instrument titled "Principals' Managerial Competencies for Effective Management of School Resources Questionnaire (PMCEMSRQ)" was used for the study. Each of the items was structured on a 4-point Liked-scale namely; Strongly Agreed (SA), Agreed (A), Strongly Disagreed (SD) and Disagreed (D). The face validation of the instrument was established by three experts, two in Department of Educational Management and Policy and one in Educational Measurement and Evaluation from the Department of Educational Foundations, all lecturers in the Faculty of Education, Nnamdi Azikiwe University. The administration of the instrument was done by the researcher together with five (5) research assistants who were briefed on how to approach the respondents. The Cronbach alpha was used to determine the reliability of the instrument. This yielded a high reliability coefficient of 0.85. Data were analysed using mean and standard deviation in answering the three research questions.

### 3. RESULTS

**Research Question 1:** What are principals' managerial competencies for effective human resource management in secondary schools in Anambra State?

**Table 1: Mean and standard deviation scores of principals' managerial competencies for effective human resource management**

S/N	ITEMS	X	SD	Decision
1.	Delegation of tasks to teachers' in order to give them sense of responsibility	3.59	0.95	Agree
2.	Involving teachers' in decision making for school improvement.	2.32	0.34	Disagree
3.	Ensuring teachers' and students' discipline	3.01	0.12	Agree
4.	Organizing seminars and workshops for professional advancement of teachers	2.22	0.55	Disagree
5.	Providing incentives for teachers' to increase their motivation to work	2.69	0.94	Agree
6.	Appraising staff in order to improve their job performance	2.78	0.50	Agree
7.	Providing incentives to students' to improve academic performance	1.95	0.88	Disagree
8.	Orientating new staff and students on school activities and goals	2.25	0.77	Disagree
9.	Promoting teachers' welfare to increase their commitment to instructional tasks	2.98	0.55	Agree
10.	Supervising teachers' and students' in order to render professional guidance.	3.25	0.22	Agree
<b>Grand Mean and Standard Deviation</b>		<b>2.70</b>	<b>0.58</b>	<b>Agree</b>

Item 1, 3, 5, 6, 9 and 10 on table 1 is above the mean score of 2.50 which indicate that respondents agreed with the statements while item 2, 4, 7, and 8 mean scores are below 2.50 which indicate that respondents' disagreed with the statements. The grand mean score of 2.70 indicates that principals' managerial competencies for effective human resource management are on the average.

**Research Question 2:** What are principals' managerial competencies for effective material resource management in secondary schools in Anambra State?

**Table 2: Mean and standard deviation scores of principals' managerial competencies for effective material resource management**

S/N	ITEMS	X	SD	Decision
1.	Procurement of physical and instructional materials for teaching and learning	2.22	0.80	Disagree
2.	Ensuring regular school cleanup for conducive	2.50	0.25	Agree

	leaning environment			
3.	Enforcing punishment on teachers and students' who vandalizes school facilities	2.51	0.78	Agree
4.	Maintaining instructional materials for instructional improvement	2.66	0.65	Agree
5.	Providing e-library facilities to aid teachers' and students' research	1.55	0.26	Disagree
6.	Equipping classrooms and offices with needed furniture	2.08	0.33	Disagree
7.	Inculcating maintenance culture in school through proper orientation of staff and students'	2.53	0.95	Agree
<b>Grand Mean and Standard Deviation</b>		<b>=</b>	<b>2.29 0.57</b>	<b>Disagree</b>

Respondents' agreed with items 2, 3, 4, and 7 on table 2 as the mean scores are above 2.50 while item 1, 5 and 6 mean scores are below 2.50 which indicate that respondents disagreed with the statements. The grand mean score of 2.29 indicates that principals' do not have managerial competencies for effective material resource management.

**Research Question 3:** What are principals' managerial competencies for effective financial resource management in secondary schools in Anambra State?

**Table 3: Mean and standard deviation scores of principals' managerial competencies for effective financial resource management.**

S/N	ITEMS	X	SD	Decision
1.	Prioritizing financial allocation according to school needs	2.75	0.87	Agree
2.	Joint preparation of school budgets with heads of departments and units	2.39	0.05	Disagree
3.	Keeping accurate financial information of the school	3.60	0.44	Agree
4.	Ensuring accountability in all school expenditures	2.58	0.35	Agree
5.	Generating funds for school improvement	1.94	0.92	Disagree
6.	Carrying out periodic audit of school budgets	2.55	0.60	Agree
7.	Adopting cost-saving strategies	2.70	0.44	Agree
<b>Grand Mean and Standard Deviation</b>		<b>=</b>	<b>2.64 0.52</b>	<b>Agree</b>

Table 3 show that respondents agreed with items 1, 3, 4, 6, and 7 as the items are above the mean scores of 2.50 while the mean of items 2 and 3 is below 2.50 which show that respondents disagreed with the statements. The grand mean score of 2.64 indicates that principals' managerial competencies for effective financial resource management are on the average.

#### **4. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS**

Based on the results on table 1, secondary school principals' in Anambra State have managerial competencies for effective human resource management through delegation of tasks to teachers', ensuring teachers' and students' discipline, providing incentives for teachers' appraising staff, promoting teachers' welfare and supervising teachers' and students' in order to render professional guidance. The grand mean score of 2.70 indicates that principals' have managerial competencies for effective human resource management in secondary schools in Anambra State. This contradicts the findings of Nnebedum and Egboka (2017) that many human resource management strategies have not been adequately adopted by principals for secondary schools improvements in Enugu State.

Results on table 2 show that respondents' agreed with some items indicating that principals' ensure regular school clean up, enforces punishment on teachers and students' who vandalizes school facilities, maintains instructional materials and inculcate maintenance culture in school through proper orientation of staff and students' in secondary schools in Anambra State while respondents' disagreed with some items which indicate that principals' do not procure physical and instructional materials, provide e-library facilities and do not equip classrooms and offices with needed furniture. The grand mean score of 2.29 indicates that principals' do not have managerial competencies for effective material resource management in secondary schools in Anambra State. This is similar to the finding of Nnebedum and Egboka (2017) which revealed that many material resource management strategies have not been adequately adopted by principals for secondary schools improvements in Enugu State.

Based on the analysis on table 3, respondents' agreed with some items which indicate that secondary school principals' in Anambra State prioritizes financial allocation according to school needs, keeps accurate financial information of the school, ensure accountability in all school expenditures, carry out periodic audit of school budgets and adopts cost-saving strategies while the mean of items 2 and 3 is below 2.50 which shows that school principals' do not jointly prepare school budgets with heads of departments and units and do not generate funds for school improvement. The grand mean score of 2.64 indicates that principals' have managerial competencies for effective financial resource management in secondary schools in Anambra State. This contradicts the report of Miriti and Wangui (2014) that financial management remained a challenge for secondary schools.

#### **5. CONCLUSION**

Based on the findings of this study, it is concluded that secondary school principals' in Anambra State have managerial competencies for effective human resource management. However, the study concluded that principals' do not have managerial competencies for effective material resource management in secondary schools in Anambra State but have managerial competencies for effective financial resource management in secondary schools in Anambra State.

#### **6. RECOMMENDATIONS**

The following recommendations were made based on the findings:



1. School principals should strive to acquire managerial competencies in involving teachers' in decision making, organizing seminars and workshops for professional advancement of teachers, providing incentives for students' and orientating new staff and students for effective human resource management in schools.
2. School administrators should acquire managerial competencies in procurement and maintenance of physical and instructional materials, provision of e-library facilities and equipping classrooms and offices with needed furniture and other school materials for effective material resource management.
3. Principals' should also jointly prepare school budgets with heads of departments and units and involve stakeholders in generating funds from either internal or external sources for school improvement.

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