

PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT CHALLENGES OF PRINCIPALS IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN ENUGU STATE.

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Abstract

This study ascertained the personnel management challenges of principals in secondary schools in Enugu State. Descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. Two research questions and two hypotheses guided the study. The study was carried out in secondary schools in Enugu State. The population for the study comprised all the 329 principals and the 8628 teachers in Enugu State. The sample for the study was 896 respondents. They were made up of 33 principals and 863 teachers in the secondary schools in Enugu State. Proportionate stratified random sampling technique was adopted for the sampling. Stratification was based on education zones in the state and 10% of the principals and teachers in secondary schools in each zone were sampled. The instrument for data collection was a researchers' developed questionnaire which was faced-validated by three experts. Two of the experts are in Department of Educational Management and the other expert is from Measurement and Evaluation Unit of Department of Science and Computer Education all in the Faculty of Education, Enugu State University of Science and Technology (ESUT). The instrument comprised 12 items allocated to each research questions. The reliability of the instrument was determined using Cronbach Alpha in which 0.84 was determined for section A and 0.80 for section B with an overall reliability index of 0.82 which made the instrument highly reliable. A 4 point response scale of Very Great Extent (VGE), Great Extent (GE), Low Extent (LE) and Very Low Extent (VLE) was used. The researcher was assisted by two research assistants in the administration and collection of data. Mean and standard deviation were used for analysing the data collated. One of the findings was that staff welfare service is a personnel management challenge of the principals in secondary schools to a great extent. One of the recommendations made was that, Enugu State Government should ensure payment of staff salaries and allowances as at when due and the provision of other incentives. It will elevate the level of hard work and performance of the personnel in secondary schools.

Keywords: Management, Personnel Management, Principals, Challenges.

Introduction

Education is the process of facilitating learning or the acquisition of knowledge, skills, values, beliefs and habits. Education has long been accepted as a veritable instrument par excellence for effecting family, community and national development. Education at secondary school level is defined by the Federal Republic of Nigeria FRN (2013) as the form of education children receive after primary education and before the tertiary stage. Secondary education is a very crucial level of education. It is a bridge between primary and tertiary levels of education. Secondary education level provides the general training necessary for individuals to acquire skills necessary to programme themselves for future career challenges. Secondary school education is critical to the education of a child, being the bridge between primary and tertiary levels of education. According to Ogba (2011), the need to bridge educational gaps

arising from primary education and preparing students for specialization in different fields of life, place fresh demands on the managers of secondary school level of education. This is because the number and structure of the workforce expand at this level and there exist some degree of academic independence among teachers and other staff. The head of secondary school education is known as principal.

A principal is someone who is the leader of an entire community within a school. He or she is responsible for managing the major administrative tasks and supervising all the students and teachers. Chidobi (2012) noted that principal is the name given to the leader of secondary school. He is the educational leader who is in-charge of the administrative task areas in school at that level. He deals with human beings at all levels, the staff personnel, pupil personnel, members of the community, members of the board, government officials and coordinates their activities and material resources to achieve the institutional goals or educational organization. Nwachukwu (2009) posited that for an organization to attain its desired objectives, it must seek to obtain the co-operation of the personnel working under it. It is clear that personnel management is challenging in every organization but far more challenging in educational institutions.

Personnel is the most vital and useful resource in every organization. The term personnel is referred to as all the human resource involved in the day-to-day running of an organization. The absence of personnel in any organization makes the rest of other resources such as finance and material resource useless. Inferring from the above, it is therefore clear that the academic and non academic staff in any Secondary School Education Management Board are personnel or human resources because they possess abilities, knowledge and skills to perform their various respective duties or functions such as teaching, research, safeguarding educational resources and the effective management of resources (Nwachukwu, 2009).

The word management has been conceptualized in so many ways with the same idea of achieving organizational goals and meeting the needs of the workers. Management is that network of planning, organizing, coordinating and controlling of activities for the achievement of organizational goals. Okafor and Udu (2008) perceived management as a set of activities (planning, decision making, organizing, leading and controlling) directed at an organization's resources (human, financial and physical) with the aim of achieving organizational goals in an efficient and effective manner. Ogbonnaya (2009) defined management as a social process which has goals to achieve; that involves planning, organizing, staffing, leadership, directing, controlling and coordinating of the efforts of people towards the achievement of goals; and is the guidance or direction of people towards organizational goals or objectives. Management has become a major challenge for modern organizations including educational institutions. This is because without proper personnel management or the coordination of both human and material resources, the achievement of educational goals and objectives will be a mirage.

Personnel management is also called human resource management. The importance of personnel management towards the achievement of educational goals cannot be over-emphasized. According to Armstrong (2005), it helps in identifying current and future human resource requirements to avoid shortages of manpower. According to Ogbonnaya (2009), personnel management, whether in industry, business or schools, is concerned with management of people at work and their relationship within the enterprise" Its aim is to bring

together and to develop into an active organization, the men and women who make up the enterprise and having regard for the well being of the individuals and the working groups to enable them to make their best contributions to the success of the organization. Emechebe (2009) saw personnel management in education as the activities involving getting the teaching and nonteaching staff to work toward attainment of educational goals. Emechebe added that the management of human resource in education is a complex process because both the employee (Staff) the product (students) requires proper management in order to achieve the end objectives of education.

The aims of personnel management in a school organization according to Adeyemi (2009), are to develop the kinds of personnel that would effectively perform the various tasks, provide effective leadership, create a climate conducive to maximum productivity, influence members of staff in performing effectively and assess what constitutes the needs of the organization. However, through personnel management, staff are recruited, selected, trained and developed for the achievement of the objectives of an organization. Secondly, without an efficient personnel management, staff welfare, appraisal and promotion will be neglected. Nwachukwu (2009) posited that staff welfare services, staff development programmes amongst others are some of the personnel management challenges being faced by the secondary school principals.

Staff welfare service is an important personnel management function. It deals with conditions of service and provision of social amenities at work place. Agu (2009) maintained that welfare of staff include such issues like adequate and prompt payment of salaries and allowances, grant of study leave, grant of maternity leave and sick leave, among others. Staff development programme is a personnel management function which is essential for professional growth and to keep abreast with changes in teaching techniques and methods which are not static. Onu (2012) described staff development as a consciously designed programme to improve the professional growth of employees for the achievement of organizational goals especially in the educational sector. Nwachukwu (2009) noted that most principals are faced with the challenge of confronting the government in order to take adequate care of its personnel so as to improve their performance. Based on the above review, the researcher investigated the personnel management challenges of principals in secondary schools in Enugu State.

Statement of the Problem

Enugu State has taken education as a matter of priority in its yearly budgetary statement. In spite of the said government priority measures, researchers have identified among other problems bedeviling education in the state which include negligence of personnel management. The welfare of staff has not really been met accordingly by the state government thereby, creating panic among the education stakeholders. The government appears not to be interested in the welfare services and development of staff. This has become a major challenge for school administrators like the principals in secondary schools. Consequently, this has dampened the morale of teachers and other workers in the educational sector in the state. This in effect has affected their performances. The study therefore, investigated the personnel management challenges of principals in secondary schools in Enugu State with particular reference to staff welfare services and staff development programmes.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to investigate the personnel management challenges of principals in secondary schools in Enugu State. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. ascertain the personnel management challenges of principals in secondary schools in Enugu State relating to staff welfare services;
2. find out the personnel management challenges of principals in secondary schools in Enugu State relating to staff development programme.

Research Questions

The following research questions were formulated and they guided the study.

1. What is the extent of personnel management challenges of principals in secondary schools in Enugu State relating to staff welfare services?
2. What is the extent of personnel management challenges of principals in secondary schools in Enugu State relating to staff development programme?

Research Hypotheses

The following hypotheses guided the study:

HO₁: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of principals and teachers on the extent of personnel management challenges of principals in secondary schools in Enugu State relating to staff welfare services.

HO₂: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of principals and teachers on the extent of personnel management challenges of principals in secondary schools in Enugu State relating to staff development programme.

Method

Descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. According to Kuezuilo (2007) as cited by Jean (2017) a descriptive survey research design is the plan, structure and strategy of investigation conceived so as to obtain answer to research questions and to control variance. The study was carried out among the secondary schools in the six Education Zones of Enugu State. The population for the study comprised all the 329 principals and the 8628 teachers in Enugu State. The sample for this study was 896 respondents. They are made of 33 principals and 863 teachers in the secondary schools in Enugu State. Proportionate stratified random sampling technique was adopted for the sampling. Stratification is based on education zones in the state and 10% of the principals and teachers in secondary schools in each zone were sampled. The sample consisted of 10% of the population of principals and teachers respectively. This 10% is in line with Uzoagulu (2011) who stated that if the population of a study is in a few thousand, a 10% sample will do.

The instrument for data collection was a researchers' developed questionnaire which was faced-validated by three experts. Two of the experts are in Department of Educational Management and the other expert is from Measurement and Evaluation Unit of Department of Science and Computer Education all in the Faculty of Education, Enugu State University of Science and Technology (ESUT). The instrument comprised 12 items allocated to each research questions. The reliability of the instrument was determined using Cronbach Alpha in which 0.84 was determined for section A and 0.80 for section B with an overall reliability index of 0.82 which made the instrument highly reliable. A 4 point response scale of Very Great Extent (VGE), Great Extent (GE), Low Extent (LE) and Very Low Extent (VLE) was used.

The researcher was assisted by two research assistants in the administration and collection of data. Mean and standard deviation were used for analysing the data collated.

Research Question 1: What is the extent of personnel management challenges of principals in secondary schools in Enugu State relating to staff welfare services?

Table 1: Mean response scores of principals and teachers on the extent of personnel management challenges of principals in secondary schools in Enugu State relating to staff welfare services

ITEMS		Principals 33			Teachers 863		
S/N	Personnel management challenges of principals as regards staff welfare services include:	$\bar{x}$	SD	Dec	$\bar{x}$	SD	Dec
1	Enforcing prompt payment of teachers' annual leave allowances.	2.52	0.96	GE	2.50	0.99	GE
2	Staff are not paid their leave allowances at the commencement of their leaves.	2.71	0.90	GE	2.59	0.87	GE
3	Processing and forwarding retirement benefits of the family of dead teachers to the government takes a lot of time.	2.64	0.84	GE	2.52	0.90	GE
4	Monitoring all the activities of Staff Promotion Committee (SPC) to ensure justice.	2.53	0.99	GE	2.72	0.88	GE
5	Enforcing the payment of hospital allowances for the teaching staff.	2.63	0.89	GE	2.53	0.86	GE
6	No well packaged send-off parties are organized for teachers/staff going on transfer.	2.54	1.00	GE	2.57	0.89	GE
Grand Mean		2.60	0.93	GE	2.57	0.90	GE

Data presented on Table 1 shows that the responses of the respondents were to a great extent. However, the principals' mean ranged from 2.52 to 2.71 while those of the teachers ranged from 2.50 to 2.72. In addition, they were grand means of 2.60 and 2.57 couple with standard deviations of 0.93 and 0.90 for principals and teachers respectively. Thus; the respondents were generally of the view that the personnel management challenges of principals in secondary schools in Enugu State relating to staff welfare services is to a great extent.

Research Question 2: What is the extent of personnel management challenges of principals in secondary schools in Enugu State relating to staff development programme?

Table 2: Mean response scores of principals and teachers on the extent of personnel management challenges of principals in secondary schools in Enugu State relating to staff development programme

ITEMS		Principals 33			Teachers 863		
S/N	Personnel management challenges of principals as regards staff development programme include:	$\bar{x}$	SD	Dec	$\bar{x}$	SD	Dec
7	By not allowing staff to participate in conferences in their areas of specialization.	2.66	1.01	GE	2.59	0.90	GE
8	Staff who acquire additional academic qualification are not given increment in salary.	2.58	0.95	GE	2.62	0.94	GE
9	Applications for in-service training are not always approved.	2.77	0.89	GE	2.68	0.99	GE
10	Teachers do not always get research grants/aids from the state government.	2.51	0.91	GE	2.65	0.93	GE
11	Resource persons are not invited to the school to help teachers up-date their knowledge on current trends.	2.55	0.99	GE	2.62	0.95	GE
12	Seminars/Workshops are politically oriented rather than academic oriented.	2.57	0.89	GE	2.64	1.01	GE
Grand Mean		2.61	0.94	GE	2.63	0.95	GE

Data presented on Table 2 shows that the responses of the respondents were to a great extent. However, the principals' mean ranged from 2.51 to 2.77 while those of the teachers ranged from 2.59 to 2.68. In addition, they were grand means of 2.61 and 2.63 couple with standard deviations of 0.94 and 0.95 for principals and teachers respectively. Thus; the respondents were generally of the view that the personnel management challenges of principals in secondary schools in Enugu State relating to staff development programme is to a great extent. **HO₁:** There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of principals and teachers on the extent of personnel management challenges of principals in secondary schools in Enugu State relating to staff welfare services.

Table 3: t-test on the mean response scores of principals and teachers on the extent of personnel management challenges of principals in secondary schools in Enugu State relating to staff welfare services

Group	N	Mean	SD	df	t-cal	t-crit	Decision
Principals	33	2.60	0.93	894	0.17	1.96	Not Significant
Teachers	863	2.57	0.90				

Hypothesis 1 tested above on table 3 shows that the t-calculated value of 0.17 is less than the t-table value of 1.96 which means that the null hypothesis is not significant. This signifies that there is no significant difference between the mean response scores of principals and teachers

on the extent of personnel management challenges of principals in secondary schools in Enugu State relating to staff welfare services.

HO₂: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of principals and teachers on the extent of personnel management challenges of principals in secondary schools in Enugu State relating to staff development programme.

Table 4: t-test on the mean response scores of principals and teachers on the extent of personnel management challenges of principals in secondary schools in Enugu State relating to staff development programme

Group	N	Mean	SD	Df	t-cal	t-crit	Decision
Principals	33	2.61	0.94	894	0.11	1.96	Not Significant
Teachers	863	2.63	0.95				

Hypothesis 2 tested above on table 4 shows that the t-calculated value of 0.11 is less than the t-table value of 1.96 which means that the null hypothesis is not significant. This signifies that there is no significant difference between the mean response scores of principals and teachers on the extent of personnel management challenges of principals in secondary schools in Enugu State relating to staff development programme.

Summary of Findings

The following are the major findings of the study:

1. Staff welfare service is a personnel management challenge of principals of secondary schools in Enugu State.
2. Staff development programme is a personnel management challenge of principals of secondary schools in Enugu State.
3. There is no significant difference between the mean response scores of principals and teachers on the extent of personnel management challenges of principals in secondary schools in Enugu State relating to staff welfare services.
4. There is no significant difference between the mean response scores of principals and teachers on the extent of personnel management challenges of principals in secondary schools in Enugu State relating to staff development programme.

Discussion of Findings

The finding on staff welfare services revealed that both principals and teachers of secondary schools are of the opinion that staff welfare service is a personnel management challenge of principals of secondary schools. The respondents responded to a great extent that monthly payment of salaries and allowances are not paid as at and when due. They also responded that leave allowances are not paid at the commencement of such leaves, medical and health insurance schemes are not provided, no well packaged send-forth parties, sick leaves are not granted to staff as well as retirement benefits not regularly paid. The finding is in line with Omeje (2004) who observed that improvement strategies for staff welfare should include assuring serving staff that they will receive their retirement benefits as soon as they are retired.

The above statement is important since most serving staff never plan for the days of retirement. Thus, the hypothesis tested revealed that there was no significant difference between the mean response scores of principals and teachers on the extent of personnel management challenges of principals in secondary schools in Enugu State relating to staff welfare services.

The findings on staff development programme revealed that both principals and teachers of secondary schools are of the opinion that staff development programme is a personnel management challenge of principals of secondary schools. It was also found that applications for in-service trainings are not always approved for staff, seminars/workshops are politically oriented rather than academic oriented, staff who acquire additional academic qualification are not given increment in salary and teachers do not always get research grants/aids from the state government. The finding is in line with Omeje (2004) who stated that for the principals not to have challenge in terms of staff developmental programmes in Enugu State, strategies to be adopted in staff development include, organizing regular seminars and workshops, sponsoring of staff to in-service training and conference and that the state government should sponsor principals to undertake in-service training in school administration. Hence, if the principals are abreast of the factors surrounding staff development, it will not be a challenge to them in due course. Thus, the hypothesis tested revealed that there was no significant difference between the mean response scores of principals and teachers on the extent of personnel management challenges of principals in secondary schools in Enugu State relating to staff development programme.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions were made. Staff welfare service to a great extent is one of the personnel management challenges of principals in secondary schools: staff development programme to a great extent is also a personnel management challenge of principals in secondary schools. The two research questions were not significant because there were no significant difference between the principals and teachers on the extent of personnel management challenges of principals in secondary schools in Enugu State relating to staff welfare services and staff development programme.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations were proffered:

1. Enugu State Government should ensure payment of staff salaries and allowances as at when due and the provision of other incentives. It will elevate the level of hard work and productivity of the personnel in secondary schools.
2. Staff in the secondary schools should be allowed to be involved in any form of developmental programme in order for them to meet up with the trend of secondary school organization.

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