

STRESS COPING STRATEGIES AND PRINCIPALS' ADMINISTRATIVE BEHAVIOUR IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN IKWERRE LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the relationship between Stress Coping Strategies and Principals' Administrative behaviour in Public Secondary Schools in Ikwerre Local Government Area, Rivers State. Two research questions and two hypotheses were formulated to guide the study. The study adopted ex-post facto research design, the population of the study comprised 16 principals' and 3,200 teachers in public secondary schools in Ikwerre Local Government Area, Rivers State. A sample size of 16 principals and 194 teachers locating 210 respondents were selected for the study. The instrument titled Stress Coping Strategies Questionnaire (SCSQ) and Principals' Administrative Behaviour Questionnaire (PABQ) were used to gather data for the study. The data collected from the instruments were analyzed using linear regression. The result obtained from the data analysis revealed that significant positive relationship exists between stress coping strategies and Principals' Administrative behaviour in public secondary schools in Ikwerre Local Government Area, Rivers State. The study recommends that principals should properly manage time and effectively communicate with their staff in order to enhance and improve healthy condition and administrative effectiveness.

Keywords: Stress Coping, Strategies, Principals, Administrative Behaviour, Secondary Schools.

Introduction

Stress is a state of mental or emotional strain or tension resulting from adverse or demanding circumstances. Stress is a feeling of being under abnormal pressure. The pressure can come from different aspects of individuals day to day life activities. Such as an increased workload, a transitional period, an argument you have with your friends or family or existing financial crisis. According to Palmar (2017) Stress is a process which environmental events or forces

called stressor threaten an organism. Stress has a cumulative effect with each stressor building on top of one another. During this situations an individuals may feel threatened or upset and individual body might create a stress response. Stress can cause a variety of physical symptoms, change the way an individual behave and lead the individual to experience more intense emotions. Stress is the “psychological, physiological and behavioural response by an individual when they perceive a lack of equilibrium between the demands placed upon them and their ability to meet those demands which, over a period of time lead to ill health challenges. Mohammed (2014) stress could be seen as a feeling which occurs when an individual’s working living conditions or circumstances make demands beyond the individual’s capacity to handle such situation physically or emotionally. Johnson (2018) a stressed principal is the one suffering from anxiety, frustration and worried which can cause work related illness in educational sector. Principals’ stress is an uncomfortable experience on the job and education is an organization with a mandate to promote teaching and learning. Its setting is expected to incorporate facilities and other educational material resources that can enhance goals achievement. The responsibility of administering a school lies in the hand of the principal. The principal manages human and materials resources in the school setting, he presides over a complex network of international relations comprising of teaching, non teaching staff and students. The principal has to direct and control the activities of the human resources in order to achieve the educational goals. As a result of this job related tress become inevitable in secondary schools. Principals are generally seen as the heads of secondary schools as administrators. Administration is the process by which goals and objectives are achieved through collaborative human efforts in suitable environment. The administrators of the secondary schools are the principals, he/she is the chief executive offices that co-ordinates and foster the mutual existence of the schools. The principal is the head of secondary school, teachers and the administrative head that carries out the administration of the secondary schools. Monika (2017) viewed educational administration as essential service, activity or tools through which the fundamental objectives of the educational process may be more fully and efficiently realized principals’ administrative behaviour is concerned with principals’ ability to properly exhibit the right attitude to work to be committed and dedicated to administrative roles, making deliberate and construct efforts towards attainment of educational goals and objectives. Okoroma (2019) defined educational administration as the systematic arrangement of human and material resources and programmes that are available for education and the use of them carefully and systematically within defined guidelines or policies to achieve educational goals. By this definition, it means that the educational administrator is essentially an organizer and implementer of plans, policies and programmes that will help to achieve specific educational goals. Griffin, (2021) principal administrative behaviour describes principals’ ability to accomplish a given task in the educational system to achieve goals and objectives. In this regard lack of principals administrative behaviour in a school system leads to teachers and non teachers negative attitudes such as lateness to work, reluctant to develop lesson note, lack of zeal in keeping proper records, absent from work, quarrel with colleagues, despite with management, dodging responsibilities and poor job performance. The effectiveness of any school system is motivated by the school principal. The tacks of the principal in secondary school are very complex. This is because the principals have to do with utilizing and directing human and materials resources for goal attainment. In addition, the principal caries activities such as staff, non staff and students’ welfare, develop and implement educational programmes, provide proper instructions, school community relations, discipline and proper record keeping. Uche (2018) includes supervision, student

admission, proper documentation of school finance and creation of conducive teaching and learning environment. The principals' job in a school system also involves cordial organizing and directing of resources and high degree of accountability. Okoroma (2019) Educational administration ensures that the objectives and goals of educational achieved through effective functioning of the school system. This is facilitated through the various activities that constitute the functions of educational administration. Like policy making planning programmes, development of personnel, programme of instruction, and maintains effective interrelationship with external agencies. Educational administration by the principal involves management of available human and materials resources aid evaluation of educational effect. These cannot be achieved without effective stress coping strategies.

Amadeker (2015) describes principals' responsibilities as curriculum director, innovator policy maker, organizer, communicator school authority, educator, perfectionist and philosopher. Ezeocha (2010) posited that the responsibilities of a principal as an administrator includes supervision of instruction, school community relations, student personnel administration and also assists the teachers with their problems of improving methods, material and evaluation and provides a good measure of quality control and job performance. The responsibilities of principals in a school system cannot be over-emphasized. These responsibilities also includes directing, guiding, budgeting, planning, evaluating, provision of material resources and good leadership to enhance better job performance of teacher and students academic performance in schools, recognizes the need of teachers for the modification of mandate and to bring about necessary changes in the school to make it effective. Edem (2011), administration involves planning activities which aim at the fulfillment of the goals of educational institution, it also requires good discipline through rules and regulations and it calls for the abiding of the administrator to make the right decision to fulfill the right goals. These cannot be achieved with effective stress coping strategies. Stress coping strategies refers to techniques and measures adopted by principal or administrative of institutions to reduce or cope with day to day pressures, workload, and tensions emanating from work. It is a wide spectrum of techniques and psychotherapies aimed at controlling a person's level of stress. Ereh (2018) stress is a condition or feeling experienced when a person's perceived that demands exceeded the personal and social resources that the individual was able to mobilize. Stress produces numerous physical, psychological emotional and mental symptoms which vary according to each individual's situational factors. These can include physical health decline as well as anxiety and depression. The process of stress coping is named as one of the keys to a happy and successful life in post modern society. Although life provides numerous demands that can prove difficult to handle, stress coping strategies provides effective tools to manage worry, anxiety and maintain overall well-being. Effective stress coping strategies help to enhance principals' job effectiveness in school. Some of the strategies include effective communication skill, this skill helps administrators of schools to communicate fact, ideas, feelings and attitudes verbally or none verbally to achieve educational goals and objective principal communication skill is the transmission of messages, skills and attitudes to teachers and students in the school environment.

Effective principals' communication skills help the principal to decide plan report and provide feedback for the attainment of educational goals and objectives principals communication skills are clarity, timeliness, coherence, surgery conciseness, correctness courteousness and compactness through these the principal can initiate conversations and facilitate them as

others add their ideas, suggestions and question. This mean they can take the lead in development and maturing word relationships at any level including between teachers, students community and parents. Draft (2017) opined communication as the process by which information is exchanged, understood and leads to action. It is the ingredient which makes organization possible. It is the vehicle through which the basic administrative functions are carried out. Communication is varying essential element in the administration of secondary schools. This is because the secondary system is a social system which consists of groups of people that have purposive interest. Okorie (2017) communication in secondary schools system should be properly coordinated and the extend by communication is made to be effective in the administration of the secondary schools helps for reduction of stress, effective teaching and learning which creates conducive school climate Abilade (2012) effective communication is therefore vary important in the secondary schools system. It helps for smooth running of the schools and decision making process which such creates a profound school climate for good stress management, teaching and learning to strive. Obamiro (2018) for the secondary school goals to be achieved, the school principals cannot do without the proficient science of the teaching and non teacher staff while the teachers cannot do without the students and instructional materials likewise, the students cannot do without the secondary schools administrator, teacher and non teachers staff; libraries and laboratories. There must be the interactions of both human teaching materials for the secondary school educational goals to be achieved. Ramah (2010) it is therefore the duty of the secondary school principal to influence behaviour in such a way as to improve the quality of learning among students and academic performance. The attainment of the secondary school goals of teaching and learning is successfully manipulated in different communication channels. Communication is very necessary in organization seething of the secondary school system. It occupies the focal position in the administrative function of the secondary school management team. The more effective the communication is the higher the probability of effective joint social action towards achieving secondary school educational goals and improves students' academic performance Draft (2017) highlighted the importance of communication as an administrative skill to achieve coordination action, express feeling and emotions, shore information regarding school organizational goals, talk's direction, decision making to achieve effective control, to encourage staff participation in decision making and hence to improve students' academic performance. Principal ability to communicate is the key factors to their effectiveness effective principals are continuously searching for new skills and mean of communicating with their external and internal publics. According to Bennis (2019) a vision that is not understood remains a mere occurrence but one that is understood can become a living experience. Therefore, one determining factor of a principal's ability to effectively communicate is whether he or she can connect with the intended audience. Fullan (2011) principal should take many approaches towards communicating the organization goals and vision to move the staff in action and direction for better academic performance of students. One way that the principal's communication can move teachers into action are by illustrating to them the disequilibrium and disorder that exists and how it has reached a point where it can no longer be ignored Wheatley (2018). According to Morgan (2017) principals need to realize that it will take more than verbal rhetoric to effectively communicate the goals and priorities of the school. As a leader, principal non-verbal communication skills are equally important in determining the effectiveness of their leadership by positively or negatively influencing the school culture for better academic performance of students, when principals are effectively and properly communicate the goals of the school help to improve teachers and

student's performance. Communication has been found to be a central factor for effective stress management. Akpan (2016) principal ability to communicate increased teachers perception morale, reduced stress, misunderstanding and interpersonal conflict and staff and consequently enhanced teachers effectiveness and also promote administrators performance. Communication has crucial impacts within or among work groups in the organization. Organizational communication is a channel by which information and policies are properly communicated for the attained of educational goals. To explain the influence of communication skills on administrative effectiveness of principals therefore, Scott and Mitchell (2013) mentioned four (4) major functions of communication.

- a. Communication gives staff the opportunity of expressing their feeling and also serves as a medium for conflict resolutions. Reducing tensions and refining direction for individual.
- b. It serves a motivational function of encouraging achievements in subordinates.
- c. It provides the necessary information for decision-making.
- d. It is used to control the activities in a school system.

Communication as an administrator's tool is frequently expected to share information with staff and members of the schools, to coordinate activities to reduce untimely to improve school achievement Pandey and Srivastara (2014). Good relationship enhances team spirit and cooperation between the principals and teachers and helps the reduction of stress. According to Ibukun (2013) communication functions, human relation function and decision-making function are essential for effective stress management. Time management is the ability to manage time properly, time management means those behaviours that aim at achieving an effective use of time while performing school goals directed activities. Principal's time management is an administrative skill that enables the principals to get their work done in time to achieve educational goals and objectives. According to King (2012) principal time management helps both the principals and teachers to be time conscious effective principal time management also enables the teachers to perform their duties effectively in school, irrespective of school location to improve students' academic performance. Principal's time management is important in the teaching and learning situation and have resultant effect on academic performance of students and teachers job achievement. Komolafe (2012) effective principal's time management helps to facilitate and stimulate education at all levels. Principal's time management skills are of the most important variables in the study, Adebayo & Omojola (2015). Time management is a set of practice that works together to help the administrator get more values of his time and with the aims of the quality of administrative styles time management is an art of arranging, organizing, scheduling and budgeting ones time for the purpose of generating more effectiveness work and productivity. It is a priority based structuring of time allocation and distribution among competing demands since time cannot be stored and its availability can neither be increase beyond nor decrease from the 24 hours. Time management is a set of principles, practices, skills, tools and system that works together to help principals or administrator get more values of their time with the aim of improving the quality of their administration. The management is a principal administrative skill it refers to the ability to produce and follow a schedule meet deadline prioritize and minimize distractions and unimportant task. Palmar (2017) define time management as the effective and efficient utilization of a managers or administrator cooperative time to achieve organizational and personal goals. Time management involve identifying tasks to be

performed planning and scheduling of organizational activities, prioritizing such activities, allocating time to the task according to their degree of importance. This enhance productivity minimizes interruptions and frivolities and deals with routine task in such a way that the only most important task receives due attention. According to Shirley (2018) time management helps identify needs and want in terms of their importance and also brings about orderliness, it enable one to be more productive and fulfilled and also reduces stress and promote academic performance of students without proper time management the responsibilities would not be effectively delegated to individuals base no schedule. North (2014) time management is the organization of task or event by first estimating how time a task will be completed when it must be completed and then adjusting event that would interfere with it completion in the appropriate amount of time. Time management is one of the skills that principals of schools can use to improve teachers and student performance in schools. It is imperative that principals' irrelevant tasks that could deter them from completing task schedule for each period; this would help to promote students' academic performance in schools Etuk (2018) stated that time management practices include short term and long term goals delimiting priority and scheduling of activities and minimizing time waste. Long term goals is cornered with handling every days job over longer time perspectives by keeping follow up of significant dates and setting objectives. Shazia and Mohammed (2014) stated that short term goal is an instructional time management practices surrender by daily and weekly time structure and covers the activities such as setting objectives at the commencement of the day, planning and prioritizing daily behaviour and creation of work contempt. Ajabade (2015) principal encouragement of regular teachers' preparation of lesson plans and notes for multiple classes each day is an essential short term management strategies. Time is a valuable asset that should be held in high esteem in order to minimize waste in any organization it requires proper utilization and management if stated goals must be fully achieved. Effective and time management by school administrators helps to enhance academic performance in school. Adebayo and Omojola (2015) principal time management plays a vital role in improving student's academic performance. Effective time management by principals helps the students to be concentrated in their academic works, setting goals and priorities, using time management mechanism. This will serve as a guild for students to effectively manage their time and study by full capacity. Etuk (2018) time management is a group of practices, skills, tools and systems that works together to help improving the qualities of life principals time management helps the student to control their time and hence improve their academic performance.

Statement of the Problem

Principals in Rivers State have the duty as the school leaders to ensure quality and timely delivery of educational services. But faced with numerous factors that facilitate the development of work, stress such as poor condition of school building, inadequate teaching facilities, paucity of fund and unsatisfactory reward system in terms of salary fringe benefit, high student enrolment and inadequate man power, Principals suffer from a lot of stressful conditions in their attempt to attain a high percentage of students' academic performance, discipline of staff and students, resolution of conflict, taking appropriate decision, supervising teaching and learning activities. This seems to have resulted in principals, administrative ineffectiveness which is evidenced in poor supervision of teachers and student. Inability to hold regular staff meeting, poor supervised of instructional delivery and general lack of concern for staff welfare. Principal poor administrative effectiveness is also observed in their

inability to maintain a healthy school community relationship. However the success of school goals and objective depends on principals ability to manage time and effective communication personal observation by the researcher reviewed cases of inadequate coverage of scheme of work inability to meet school target which may be due to principals and teachers time waste during meeting, irrelevant assembly activities irregular break time and poor communication strategies among principals. However, this problem of principal administrative ineffectiveness may be attributed to their adoption on various stress coping strategies such as communication skills and effective time management among others. It is assumed that if principals adopt these stress coping strategies it could lead to the administrative effectiveness however the researcher attempts to providing solution to this problem yet the problem exist, this has created a gap which those study titled stress coping strategies and principals' administrative behaviour in public senior secondary schools in Ikwerre Local Government Area, Rivers State intends to fill up empirically.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to determine the extent of relationship between stress coping strategies and principals' administrative behaviour in Public Senior Secondary Schools in Rivers State.

Specifically, the study sought to determine the extent of the relationship between:

1. Effective communication skills and principals administrative behaviour.
2. Time management and principal's administrative behaviour in public Senior Secondary School in Rivers State.

Research Questions

To guide the study, the following questions were raised:

1. To what extent does effective communication skills relate to principals' administrative behavior?
2. To what extent does time management relate to principals' administrative behavior?

Hypothesis

The following null hypothesis were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance:

1. There is no significant relationship between effective communication skills and principals' administrative behaviour in Public Senior Secondary Schools in Rivers State.
2. There is no significant relationship between time management and principals administrative between in Public Senior Secondary Schools in Rivers State.

Methodology

The study utilized ex-post facto research design to determine the relationship between stress coping strategies and principals' administrative behaviour in Public Senior Secondary Schools in Rivers State. Two research questions and two hypotheses were formulated to guide the study. The population of the study comprised 16 principals and 3200 teachers in Public Senior Secondary Schools in Ikwerre Local Government Area of Rivers State. A sample size of 210 respondents was selected for the study. The instrument titled Stress Coping Strategies Questionnaire (SCSQ) and Principals Administrative Behaviours Questionnaire were used to gather data for the study. The data collected from the instruments were analyzed using linear

regresses. The result obtained from the data analysis revealed that significant positive relationship exists between stress coping strategies and principals' administrative behaviour in Public Senior Secondary Schools in Ikwerre Local Government Area of Rivers State.

Result

To what extent does effective communication skills relate with principals' administrative behaviours in Public Senior Secondary Schools in Ikwerre Local Government Area of Rivers State?

Table 4:1

Regression analysis result of effective communication skills and principals' administrative behaviour

Model	R	R-square	Adjusted R-square	Std. Error of the estimate
1	.942	.888	.887	.190

Data in Table 1 above presented the regression analysis of the extent of effective communication skills related with principals' administrative behaviour in Kwerre Local Government Area, Rivers State. The analysis reveals that the Coefficient of Relationship (R) is .942 which indicates a very strong positive linear relationship. Moreover, the coefficient of determination (R^2) is .870. This shows that 87.0% of principals' administrative behaviour is as a result of effective communication skills. This implies that effective communication skills relate with principals' administrative behaviour in Public Senior Secondary Schools in Ikwerre Local Government Area of Rivers State.

Table 4:2 Hypotheses

There is no significant relationship between effective communication skills and principals' administrative behavior in Public Senior Secondary Schools in Ikwerre Local Government Area of Rivers State.

Model	Sun of Squares	Pf	Means Square	F	P
1 Regression	42.412	1	42.412	1631.12	.028
Residua	5.362	209	.026		
Total	47.774	210			

Significant at 0.05 Alpha Levels

The Table above shows that the regression analysis of linear regression indicates that the F-value of 1631.12 obtained at 1 and 209 degrees of freedom had an associated P – value of 0.028 Alpha levels. Therefore the null hypotheses which stated that there is no significant relationship between effective communication skills and principals' administrative behaviour in Public Senior Secondary Schools in Ikwerre Local Government Area of Rivers State were rejected. Hence there is a significant relationship between effective communication skill and principals' administrative behaviour in Public Senior Secondary Schools in Ikwerre Local Government Area of Rivers State.

Table 4:3

To what extent does time management related with principals' administrative behaviour in Public Secondary Schools in Ikwerre Local Government Area of Rivers State?

Regression analysis result of time management and principals' administration behaviour

Model	R	R-square	Adjusted R-square	Std. Error of the estimate
1	.742	.888.551	.548	.380

Result presented in Table 3 above shows the regression analysis of the extent of time management and principals' administrative behaviour in Public Secondary Schools in Ikwerre Local Government Area of Rivers State. The analysis (R) is .742 which indicates that strong positive linear relationship exists between time management and principals' administrative behaviour in Public Secondary Schools in Ikwerre Local Government Area of Rivers State. Moreover, the coefficient of determination (R^2) is .550. This shows that 55.0% of administrative behaviour is as a result of time management. This implies that time management relate with principal administrative behaviour in Public Secondary Schools in Ikwerre Local Government Area of Rivers State.

Table 4:4 Hypotheses

There is no significant relationship between Time Management and Principals' Administrative Behaviour in Public Secondary Schools in Ikwerre Local Government Area of Rivers State.

Summary of regression analysis on time management and principals' administrative behaviour

Model	Sun of Squares	Df	Means Square	F	P
1 Regression	26.311	1	26.311	225.45	.018
Residual	21.464	209	.103		
Total	47.775	210			

Significant at 0.05 Alpha Levels

Table 4 above shows the regression analysis of linear regression that the F – value of 225.45 obtained at 1 and 209 degree of freedom had an associated P – value of .018 which is less than 0.05 alpha levels.

Therefore, the null hypothesis which stated that there is a significant relationship between Time Management and Principals' Administrative Behaviour in Public Secondary Schools in Ikwerre Local Government Area of Rivers State was rejected. Hence there is no significant relationship between Time Management and Principals' Administrative Behaviour in Public Secondary Schools in Ikwerre Local Government Area of Rivers State.

Discussion of Finding

The findings of the study are discussed based on the specific purpose of the study. The results presented in table 1 and 2 shows that strong positive relationship exists between effective communication skills and principals' administrative behavior in Public Secondary Schools in Ikwerre Local Government Area of Rivers State. The results presented in table 2 also reveals that there is a significant relationship between effective communication skills and principals' administrative behaviour in Public Secondary Schools in Ikwerre Local Government Area of Rivers State.

Rivers State. The researcher wishes to establish that principal's effective stress strategies to promote principals' administrative behaviour.

This finding is in line with the earlier finding of Draft (2017) who found out that organizational communication is official and deals with the daily activities of the administrative style and structure of organizational environment and also involves the flow of message within a network to interdependent relationship which helps to enhance student academic performance of Monika (2017) who found out that good communication is seen as a strong tool for effectiveness in the teaching profession as variety of skills are needed for administrative behaviour. Effective communication skills are very important for administrators in transmitting of education, classroom management and interaction with both teachers and students.

The result presented in table 3, shows that strong positive relationship exists between Time Management and Principals' Administrative Behaviour in Public Secondary Schools in Ikwerre Local Government Area of Rivers State and the result presented in table 4 reveals that there is a significant relationship between principals' Time Management and Principals' Administrative Behaviour in Public Secondary Schools in Ikwerre Local Government Area of Rivers State. The finding is in line with the earlier finding of Etuk (2018) who found out that time management helps principals to create and maintain relationship in the school system. Also this result corroborates the earlier finding of Shirley (2018) who found out that better time management can be achieved if goals have been set and all the future works are prioritized based on how it moves the individual towards meeting the goals.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions are drawn. There is an established significant relationship between stress coping strategies and administrative behaviour in Public Secondary Schools in Ikwerre Local Government Area of Rivers State. This is so because effective communication skills and time management have strong significant relationship with administrative behaviour.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Principals should ensure that effective stress coping strategies are used to enhance their administrative effectiveness.
2. Principals should effectively communicate with their staff to enhance administrative effectiveness.
3. Principals should properly engage in time management as this will help to improve their health condition and administrative effectiveness.
4. Seminars and workshops should be organized by the ministry of education for principals on the need and importance of stress coping strategies.

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