

## PRINCIPAL'S MANAGERIAL COMPETENCE AS CORRELATE OF SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHER'S JOB EFFECTIVENESS IN BIASE LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA, CROSS RIVER STATE, NIGERIA

by

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### Abstract

*This study examined principals' managerial competence as a correlate of secondary school teachers' job effectiveness in Biase Local Government Area of Cross River State, Nigeria. Specifically, the study investigated the relationship between principals' professional development competence, decision-making competence, and teachers' job effectiveness. Two null hypotheses were formulated to guide the study. A correlational survey research design was adopted. The population comprised all public secondary schools in the area and 323 teachers, and a census sampling technique was employed to include the entire population. Data were collected using two researcher-designed instruments: the Principals' Managerial Competence Questionnaire (PMCQ) and the Teachers' Job Effectiveness Questionnaire (TJEQ). Each instrument consisted of Sections A and B. Section A elicited demographic information such as age, educational qualification, and years of teaching experience, while Section B contained items measuring the study variables. Six items on a modified four-point Likert scale (Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree) were used to measure each variable. The reliability of the instruments was established using the Cronbach Alpha method, yielded coefficients ranging from 0.81 to 0.83, indicating adequate reliability. Data collected were coded and analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation at the 0.05 level of significance. Findings revealed a statistically significant and strong relationship between principals' professional development competence, decision-making competence, and teachers' job effectiveness. The study concluded that principals' managerial competence significantly influences teachers' job effectiveness in public secondary schools in the study area. It was therefore recommended that educational authorities regularly organize capacity-building programmes, workshops, and in-service training to enhance principals' managerial competencies and promote improved teachers' job effectiveness.*

**Keywords:** Principals' Managerial Competence; Professional Development Competence; Decision-Making Competence; Teachers' Job Effectiveness; Secondary Schools

## Introduction

Globally, education continues to serve as a catalyst for comprehensive economic development and holistic human transformation (Isong et al., 2025). In Nigeria, the education system is structured into three major tiers, namely primary, secondary, and tertiary education. According to the National Policy on Education, the core objective of secondary education is to provide learners with the knowledge, skills, and values necessary for meaningful participation in society and for further academic pursuits (Essien et al., 2025). Attaining this objective largely depends on the presence of qualified and effective teachers who can deliver high-quality instruction, manage classrooms effectively, and foster students' academic and holistic development (FRN, 2014; Obona et al., 2020). As such, teachers' job effectiveness is a key factor in determining the standard of secondary education and in advancing Nigeria's educational goals, especially in public secondary schools that accommodate the majority of learners. Within the context of this study, job effectiveness refers to the degree to which teachers carry out their professional duties in ways that lead to positive educational outcomes (Adeniji & Ajayi, 2017). It encompasses instructional competence, classroom management, student motivation, accurate assessment of learning, and professional conduct such as punctuality, collaboration, and commitment to students' welfare. Job effectiveness is shaped by both individual teacher qualities and institutional support structures (Eze, 2019). Consequently, teachers are expected to demonstrate strong professional competencies, engage in continuous development, integrate technology, and apply appropriate instructional strategies to meet diverse learner needs, thereby enhancing students' academic achievement and sustaining a supportive learning environment (Ofoegbu, 2021; Difoni et al., 2025).

Teacher job effectiveness is crucial because teachers play a direct role in shaping students' academic achievement, classroom atmosphere, and overall school performance. Effective teachers enhance students' motivation, improve learning outcomes, and foster the development of lifelong learning skills, making job effectiveness essential for sustainable educational growth and national development. Akpan et al. (2025) note that achieving this demands strong commitment to ensuring fair access to quality education for all learners, regardless of their individual challenges, in order to foster both academic success and personal development. Madukwe et al. (2025) posit that the achievement of predefined objectives serves as a key indicator for assessing the effectiveness of a secondary school system. Teachers also play a significant role in co-curricular areas such as sports, contributing to students' participation and overall performance (Ukpong & Uchendu, as cited in Nwogbo & Ugwuoke, 2021; Akpan et al., 2025; Ogabor et al., 2025).

Conversely, ineffective teaching can result in poor academic performance, increased dropout rates, and declining public confidence in the education system. Given its importance, teachers' job effectiveness has attracted sustained scholarly attention. Effective teaching has been linked to key dimensions such as quality instruction, meaningful assessment, a supportive classroom environment, and positive personal attributes of teachers (Stronge et al., as cited in Aina et al., 2015). However, several studies report persistent challenges in Nigerian schools, including

poor lesson preparation, weak instructional delivery, inadequate assessment practices, limited use of teaching materials, absenteeism, and low teacher commitment (Sule et al., 2015; Adeyemi, 2020; Difoni et al., 2025). These deficiencies negatively affect student discipline, academic performance, and trust in the school system, highlighting the urgent need to improve teachers' job effectiveness for better educational outcomes.

The situation in many public secondary schools in Biase Local Government Area of Cross River State presents a comparable scenario. Evidence from field observations indicates a high incidence of teachers' job ineffectiveness, manifested in frequent absenteeism, inadequate lesson planning, low levels of student engagement, poor classroom management, and limited use of innovative instructional strategies. These shortcomings significantly weaken the quality of teaching and learning processes and consequently hinder the attainment of secondary education objectives. Teachers' job ineffectiveness therefore constitutes a serious challenge, as it adversely influences students' academic achievement, moral development, and readiness for future societal roles. When teachers do not effectively discharge their professional duties, the fundamental aims of secondary education, namely, preparation for productive living and further education, remains unattainable. This challenge carries broader implications for national development, given that education is widely recognized as a critical driver of social mobility, human capital formation, and economic advancement (Okoro, 2019).

Therefore, tackling teachers' job ineffectiveness is not only an educational priority but also a socio-economic necessity. Several strategies have been proposed to address this challenge, including regular in-service training and continuous professional development programmes aimed at updating teachers' knowledge and instructional skills (Adebayo, 2020). Researchers have further stressed the importance of effective supervision by school administrators, the establishment of appropriate incentive systems, and the provision of adequate instructional resources to boost teacher motivation and improve classroom delivery (Nwosu, 2019). In addition, the adoption of technology-driven and innovative pedagogical approaches has been identified as a viable means of enhancing teaching effectiveness (Ofoegbu, 2021). Collectively, these measures underscore the need for school administrators to apply sound financial management strategies to strengthen overall system effectiveness (Obona et al., 2025). However, the present study focuses specifically on principals' professional development competence and decision-making competence.

Principals' professional development competence is a key element of managerial effectiveness in schools, involving the ability to plan, organize, and sustain continuous learning opportunities that enhance teachers' skills, knowledge, and professional growth. Principals who excel in this area ensure regular capacity-building initiatives, including workshops, mentoring, coaching, and access to modern instructional resources. By fostering a culture of ongoing professional learning, principals help teachers adopt current pedagogical techniques, improve lesson delivery, and respond effectively to evolving curriculum demands. This, in turn, increases teachers' motivation, efficiency, and instructional quality, leading to better student learning outcomes and overall school performance (Madukwe et al., 2025; Iyiebuniwe et al., 2025).

Empirical studies underscore the positive impact of principals' professional development competence on teachers' job performance. In Nigeria, research by Ajetunmobi et al. (2020) and Nwachukwu et al. (2024) found that principals' support for professional development significantly enhances teachers' productivity, commitment, and instructional effectiveness. Similarly, studies in other contexts, including Dubai (Abbassi & David, 2021), Pakistan (Rassul, 2015), Tanzania (Mduma & Mkulu, 2021), and the health sector (Ali et al., 2021), demonstrate that well-designed training programs improve staff performance, professional competence, and organizational commitment. Effective principals adopt collaborative leadership styles, supervise classroom instruction consistently, and provide motivational support, thereby reinforcing teachers' job effectiveness, enhancing classroom practices, and ultimately improving students' academic outcomes (Bratton & Gold, 2012; Wenzare, 2012; Chimezie-Mathew & Assumpta, 2022).

The critical role of teachers in educational institutions across the globe is widely acknowledged (Obona et al., 2024). In a related study, Obona et al. (2024) found that effective knowledge management is strongly associated with teachers' job effectiveness in public secondary schools within the Ikom Education Zone of Cross River State, Nigeria. This finding suggests that processes such as knowledge creation and sharing contribute to teachers' professional development, enhance their job performance, and improve the overall quality of education. Similarly, Udokpan et al. (2024) reported that both financial and non-financial incentive management have a statistically significant positive relationship with teachers' service delivery, indicating that well-structured incentive systems play a crucial role in enhancing teachers' effectiveness in fulfilling their professional duties.

Principals' decision-making competence refers to the ability of school leaders to make timely, informed, and objective decisions that facilitate school operations and enhance instructional effectiveness. Principals with strong decision-making skills gather relevant information, consult stakeholders when appropriate, evaluate available options, and choose actions aligned with the school's goals. Transparent and fair decision-making regarding resource allocation, teacher assignments, student welfare, and conflict resolution fosters a positive and stable work environment, reduces uncertainty, lowers stress, and strengthens collaboration among staff. Consequently, effective decision-making by principals supports teachers' professional growth, enhances job effectiveness, and contributes to the overall quality of education, whereas poor decision-making can lead to low morale, inadequate resources, and diminished teacher engagement.

Empirical studies consistently indicate that principals' decision-making competence is a significant predictor of teachers' job effectiveness. Okoye (2025) reported that decision-making competence positively influenced teachers' productivity in public secondary schools in Anambra State, with regression analysis showing a strong predictive relationship ( $r = 0.664$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). Similarly, Nosike et al. (2025) found that principals' decision-making styles significantly predicted teachers' job commitment, indicating that participatory and timely decisions enhance teacher satisfaction and engagement. Chike and Nwogbo (2025) further

confirmed this relationship, emphasizing the role of competent decision-making in promoting teacher dedication and improving overall job performance.

Similarly, other studies reinforce these findings. Mailool et al. (2020) reported that principals' decision-making, organizational commitment, and school climate positively affected teacher performance in vocational high schools in North Minahasa Regency. In North-East Nigeria, Ahmed (2025) found that principals exhibited high decision-making competence, which significantly predicted teachers' job performance ( $\beta = 0.82$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ;  $R^2 = 0.67$ ). Collectively, these studies highlight that principals' ability to make informed, fair, and timely decisions is central to creating an environment that enhances teachers' effectiveness, motivation, and professional commitment, ultimately supporting the achievement of educational goals.

Despite the valuable insights provided by previous studies, several gaps were identified in the existing literature regarding variables, geographic focus, scope, and research methodology. Most of the reviewed studies were conducted outside Biase Local Government Area and Cross River State, with some situated in international contexts. Additionally, while these studies are related to the current research, they often investigated different variables, employed varying methodologies, and used instruments and procedures that differ from those applied in this study. Therefore, given the observed lack of prior research specifically addressing this topic within this context, the present study on principals' managerial competence and secondary school teacher's job effectiveness is particularly significant. It seeks to address these gaps and contribute new knowledge relevant to the specific setting.

The effectiveness of teachers in carrying out their professional responsibilities is a key determinant of educational success, particularly at the secondary school level, which is tasked with preparing students for meaningful societal participation and higher education. Ideally, effective teachers exhibit professionalism, punctuality, creativity in lesson delivery, efficient classroom management, consistent assessment of student progress, and a commitment to ongoing professional development. In many public secondary schools within Biase Local Government Area, Cross River State, however, concerns have been raised regarding declining teacher effectiveness. Observations indicate that some teachers frequently demonstrate indifference to their duties, arrive late or are absent, inadequately prepare lessons, fail to engage students, and lack innovative approaches to instruction. Such patterns of ineffectiveness are evident in poor student academic outcomes, increasing instances of examination malpractice, and declining motivation and interest in learning among students.

The implications of teacher ineffectiveness are far-reaching. Teachers experience professional stagnation and public criticism, students suffer from weak foundational knowledge, low academic performance, and diminished self-confidence, and the broader education system faces challenges in producing quality graduates, reducing dropout rates, and achieving national development goals. While government initiatives such as enhanced supervision, promotion incentives, and timely salary payments have been introduced, their impact has often been limited, likely due to poor implementation, corruption, and inadequate monitoring. Consequently, teacher ineffectiveness remains a persistent challenge in the study area. This

situation underscores the critical need to examine the relationship between principals' managerial competence and secondary school teachers' job effectiveness in Biase Local Government Area, Cross River State, Nigeria, which forms the focus of this study.

The main purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between principals' managerial competence and secondary school teacher's job effectiveness in Biase Local Government Area, Cross River State, Nigeria. This study specifically examined the relationship between:

7. Principals' professional development competence and teacher's job effectiveness
8. Principals' decision-making competence and teacher's job effectiveness

The following null hypotheses were formulated to guide the study.

1. There is no significant relationship between principals' professional development competence and teacher's job effectiveness.
2. Principals' decision-making competence does not relate to teacher's job effectiveness.

## Methodology

The research design adopted for this study is correlational survey research design. This design was deemed appropriate because the researcher is interested in examining the relationship between principals' managerial competence and secondary school teacher's job effectiveness. The study area is Biase Local Government Area (LGA). The population of the study comprised all public secondary schools and three hundred and thirty (323) teachers spread across the secondary schools in the area. The sampling technique that used for this study was census. census study occurs if the entire population is very small or it reasonable to include the entire population in the study, and also the data are gathered on every member of the population. This sampling technique was used in the study for adequate result.

The main instruments used for data collection were two structured questionnaires designed by the researcher titled "Principal Managerial Competence Questionnaire (PMcq) and Teacher Job Effectiveness Questionnaire (TJEQ)." The questionnaires were divided into two sections: A and B. section A of each was designed to obtain information from respondents based on demographic variables of se: age, educational qualifications and years of experience and class, while section B was designed to obtain information from respondents based on the sub-variables of the independent and dependent variables of the study. Six (6) items on a modified four point Likert-Scale were designed to measure each variable. Each item required the respondents to indicate the frequency of their opinion under Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), Strongly Disagree (SD). In rating the scale, positively worded items were rated 4,3,2,1 while negatively worded items were rated 1,2,3,4. The validity of the instruments was established by two measurement and evaluation expert. The items developed were submitted to the measurement and evaluation expert for screening and vetting. Irrelevant items were either

modified or discarded and corrections were effected respectively. The reliability estimate of 0.81-0.83 was determined by Cronbach Alpha Reliability Estimate. The researcher personally visited the sampled schools with the help of seven trained and motivated assistants and administered the questionnaires directly to the subjects through the cooperation of the principals and vice principals. Teachers were purposively selected from each school to respond to Principal Managerial Competence Questionnaire (PMSQ), while senior students from SS1-SS3 were also selected from each school to respond to Teachers Job Effectiveness Questionnaire (TEQ). At the end of the exercise, all the instruments were collected immediately and properly checked to avoid using items that were not properly ticked. The data collected for the study were sorted and coded accordingly. The hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance using Pearson Product Moment Correlation.

## Results

### Hypothesis one:

There is no significant relationship between principals' professional development competence and teacher's job effectiveness in Biase Local Government Area of Cross River State. The result of the data analysis is presented in table 1.

Table 1: Pearson product moment correlation analysis of the relationship between principals' professional development competence and teacher's job effectiveness. N = 323

Variables	$\bar{X}$	S.D	r	Sig.
Principals' professional development competence	18.42	4.19		
Teachers job effectiveness	18.67	3.89	.60*	.000

\*Significant at  $p < .05$   $df=321$

Table 1 showed the correlation coefficients between principals' professional development competence and teacher's job effectiveness. The correlation coefficient was statistically significant for teachers' job effectiveness ( $r = .60$ ,  $p < .05$ ). Since  $p(.000)$  is less than  $p(.05)$ , hypothesis one is rejected in terms of teachers' job effectiveness. The result of the analysis implied that there was a statistically significant high relationship between principals' professional development competence and teacher's job effectiveness in Biase Local Government Area of Cross River State.

### Hypothesis two:

Principals' decision-making competence does not relate to teacher's job effectiveness in Biase Local Government Area of Cross River State. The result of the data analysis is presented in table 2.

**TABLE 2:** Pearson product moment correlation analysis of the relationship between principals' decision-making competence and teacher's job effectiveness. N = 323

Variables	$\bar{X}$	S.D	r	Sig.
Principals' decision-making competence	17.68	4.41		
Teachers job effectiveness	18.67	3.89	.75*	.000

\*Significant at  $p < .05$   $df = 321$

Table 2 showed the correlation coefficients between principals' decision-making competence and teacher's job effectiveness. The correlation coefficient was statistically significant for teachers' job effectiveness ( $r = .75$ ,  $p < .05$ ). Since  $p(.000)$  is less than  $p(.05)$ , hypothesis two is rejected in terms of teachers' job effectiveness. The result of the analysis implied that there was a statistically significant high relationship between principals' decision-making competence and teacher's job effectiveness in Biase Local Government Area of Cross River State.

### Discussion of Findings

The analysis of the first hypothesis revealed a significant relationship between principals' professional development competence and teachers' job effectiveness in public secondary schools in Biase Local Government Area of Cross River State. This finding suggests that principals who are knowledgeable and proactive in identifying teachers' training needs, organizing relevant professional learning programmes, and providing continuous instructional support are more likely to enhance teachers' effectiveness. One plausible explanation is that well-structured professional development activities strengthen teachers' pedagogical skills, deepen subject mastery, and boost professional confidence, which subsequently translate into improved instructional practices, higher commitment, and increased classroom productivity. The implication of this result is that teachers' job effectiveness in public secondary schools is strongly linked to the quality of leadership support for professional growth; consequently, inadequate professional development competence among principals may undermine teachers' performance and impede the attainment of educational goals in the area.

The finding of this study aligns with several empirical studies. In Nigeria, Ajetunmobi et al. (2020) reported a significant positive relationship between professional development, participatory management, and teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Ogun State, indicating that effective professional development initiatives driven by school leaders enhance teachers' productivity and effectiveness. Similarly, Nwachukwu, Njihia, and Aringo (2024) found that principals' support for professional development significantly and positively influences teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Ondo West Local Government Area, underscoring the critical role of principals' competence in fostering teachers' effectiveness. Beyond the Nigerian context, Abbassi and David (2021) demonstrated that professional development significantly affects teachers' job performance in private schools in Dubai, highlighting the universal importance of principals' capacity to plan and implement professional learning activities. In the same vein, Mduma and Mkulu (2021) established that

teachers' professional development practices are strong predictors of job performance in secondary schools in Tanzania, further corroborating the present study's conclusion that effective leadership in professional development enhances teachers' job effectiveness.

The analysis of the second hypothesis revealed a significant relationship between principals' decision-making competence and teachers' job effectiveness in public secondary schools in Biase Local Government Area of Cross River State. This finding indicates that when principals make sound, timely, and inclusive decisions regarding instructional planning, staff deployment, discipline, and the utilization of school resources, teachers are more likely to carry out their responsibilities effectively. A plausible explanation for this relationship is that effective decision-making offers clear direction, minimizes role ambiguity, and promotes fairness and transparency within the school system, thereby enhancing teachers' morale, commitment, and instructional efficiency. The implication of this result is that teachers' job effectiveness in public secondary schools is strongly influenced by the quality of principals' leadership decisions; hence, poor decision-making competence among principals may adversely affect teachers' performance and hinder the achievement of secondary school educational objectives.

This finding is consistent with several empirical studies. In Nigeria, Okoye (2025) found that principals' decision-making competence significantly and positively predicted teachers' productivity in public secondary schools in Anambra State, suggesting that effective leadership decisions enhance teachers' work output. Similarly, Nosike, Nwofor, Chike Okoye, and Ogwo (2025) reported that principals' decision-making styles significantly predicted teachers' job commitment in public secondary schools, indicating that sound and participatory decision-making improves teachers' engagement and effectiveness. In the same vein, Chike and Nwogbo (2025) established that principals' decision-making styles significantly predicted teachers' job commitment, further emphasizing the importance of competent decision-making in fostering dedication and effective job performance among teachers. Beyond the Nigerian context, Mailool et al. (2020) demonstrated that principals' decision-making had a positive and significant effect on teachers' performance in vocational high schools, reinforcing the present study's conclusion that principals' decision-making competence is a critical determinant of teachers' job effectiveness across diverse educational settings.

## **Conclusion**

Based on the findings, the study concluded that principals' managerial competence is significantly related to teachers' job effectiveness in secondary schools in Biase Local Government Area of Cross River State. This suggests that principals who exhibit strong managerial abilities—such as effective planning, supervision, coordination, and leadership—are more likely to create a supportive school environment that enhances teachers' efficiency, commitment, and overall job performance.

## **Recommendations**

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

1. Educational authorities should regularly organize capacity-building programmes, including workshops and in-service training, to strengthen principals' professional development competencies and enhance teachers' job effectiveness.
2. Principals should adopt participatory and data-driven decision-making practices that involve teachers, as this will promote transparency, improve morale, and enhance teachers' job effectiveness.

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