

INFLUENCE OF SCHOOL-BASED DECISION-MAKING ON ADMINISTRATIVE EFFECTIVENESS OF PUBLIC SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL PRINCIPALS IN LAGOS STATE, NIGERIA

IBRAHEEM Sherifat Titilayo. PhD

sherifatak3@gmail.com

+2349034971896

OLOWU, Sulaimon Babatunde. PhD

Department of Educational management, Lagos State University

ORCID ID: 0009-0008-0754-9764

tundeolowu5@gmail.com

+2348094204760

ONIYIDE, Olawale Idris. PhD

Department of Educational management, Lagos State University

ORCID ID: 0009-0007-1396-2320

Oniyideolawale1@gmail.com

+2348091587639

ABSTRACT

This study investigated the influence of school-based decision-making and administrative effectiveness of senior secondary school principals in Lagos State, Nigeria. research questions were raised and answered and one hypothesis was formulated and tested. Population for this study consisted of all Principals, Vice Principals, and teachers from 327 Public Senior Secondary Schools in the six Education Districts of Lagos State. Purposive sampling technique was adopted to select 101 principals and 101 vice principals, while simple random sampling technique was used to choose 505 teachers. 707 total respondents participated in this study. Instruments used in collecting data were Administrative Effectiveness of Secondary School Principals Questionnaire (AESSPQ) ($r = 0.812$) and School-based Decision-making Questionnaire (S_bDMQ) ($r = 0.842$). Instruments were also subjected to validity testing and taken through a pilot study. Findings of the study revealed that school-based decision-making does not significantly relate with administrative effectiveness of public senior secondary school principals in Lagos State, Nigeria ($r = -.059$, $p <$

0.05); *The study concluded that school-based decision-making do not necessarily lead to administrative effectiveness of public senior secondary school principals. Hence, it was recommended among others that principals and staff should be given necessary resources to effectively engage in school-based decision-making.*

KEYWORDS: Decision-making, School-Based Decision Making, Administrative effectiveness

Introduction

Education is a global service that every country strives to provide for its citizens since it serves as a tool for socio-economic development. It has remained a systematic process through which a child or an adult acquires knowledge, experience, skill and sound attitude. It makes an individual civilized, refined, cultured and enlightened. Evidence from around the world also indicates that education is vital for economic and social development, as it contributes to economic growth and poverty reduction, sustains health and well-being, and lays the foundations for open and cohesive societies (UNESCO, 2014).

Nigeria, having realized the effectiveness of education as a powerful instrument for national progress and development, adjusted her educational philosophy and methodology to match the ideals and challenges of changing economic and social structure of modern society (Federal Republic of Nigeria, FRN, 2014). In the current educational system, Secondary education is the second in the tripod of formal education starting from the primary, secondary and tertiary stages in ascending order of magnitude (Amaghionyeodiwe & Osinubi, in Lucky & Edungsung, 2020). Consequently, it is not a gainsaying that secondary education is very important and unique in the Nigerian education system. The importance of secondary education in the educational system cannot then be overemphasized.

Secondary schools are administered by principals who are accountable to the authorities that appointed them. As principals, they are expected to perform administrative functions including: planning, organising, supervising, staffing, evaluating, coordinating, leadership and purchasing and maintenance of instructional materials, equipment and facilities. The effectiveness of the principals, as administrators of their schools, then depends on the extent to which they perform the above administrative functions effectively.

Administrative effectiveness is important in educational institutions where the primary objective is human capacity development, since education is considered the vehicle to develop intellect for creativity and to teach values and tolerance that promote economic, social, cultural and political

development of nations and individual (Ayushi, 2018). Effective educational administration thus ensures that school activities run efficiently in ways that enhance realization of the stated educational objectives whether in preprimary, primary, secondary, post-secondary or tertiary institutions.

The concept of administrative effectiveness has been a topic of interest globally, with researchers and scholars exploring its significance in various contexts. In the global perspective, administrative effectiveness is seen as a critical factor in achieving organizational goals and objectives (Hoy & Miskel, 2013). The importance of administrative effectiveness in African schools especially in Nigeria can also not be overstated. With the growing demand for quality education in Africa, school administrators play a crucial role in ensuring that schools are managed efficiently and effectively.

Administrative effectiveness is the positive response to administrative efforts and actions with the intention to accomplish stated goals. According to Manafa (2020), administrative effectiveness implies what a manager achieves. That is, the ability of the organizational head to optimally utilize both human and material resources available to the organization in order to achieve organizational goals. Uche in Kariago (2013) opined that the administrative effectiveness of a secondary school is a symbol of good administrative style which is visible in teamwork, high morale, motivated staff, quality teaching and a conducive school environment. Hence, administrative performance in decision-making, delegation of duties to subordinates, and setting good examples and motivating the teachers and students alike in an effort to create a conducive working environment to accomplish school goals and objectives could enhance subordinate performance for school success.

A well administered secondary school has a seasoned administrative team which is effective in the management of teaching and learning systems and processes in ways that improve school performance as well as ensuring that students acquire knowledge, skills, values and habits that empower them to contribute positively to the society. The indicators of administrative effectiveness, according to Adegun, cited in Manafa (2020), include: high productivity, morale (high motivation), turnover rate of teachers, degree of integration, maximization of individual potentialities, maximum utilization of available resources and value contributions to the society.

The administrative effectiveness of secondary school principals can be determined using diverse yardsticks. This includes their ability to attain stated target, circulate information and effectively coordinate the school activities and resources. Target attainment is a critical aspect of administrative effectiveness in schools that involves the setting of goals and objectives, and the development of strategies to achieve them. Information circulation on another hand is another important aspect of administrative effectiveness in schools. It involves the sharing of information among stakeholders, including teachers, administrators, and parents. Research has shown that

effective information circulation can lead to improved communication, collaboration, and decision making. Effective coordination however, involves the coordination of resources, including personnel, facilities, and equipment. Hence, public senior secondary school principals needs to make crucial decision that promotes target attainment, information circulation and effective coordination of their schools.

Administrative effectiveness is a function of principals' effective decision-making. The level at which the principal attains school objectives is determined by his ability to make crucial decisions. The school principals can review and modify the school programmes to promote good human relations and manage changes in the system as lack of these can create fear, apprehension, and misunderstanding, among other litanies of problems.

According to Anakaa and Laye (2022), decision-making is an essential component of every organizational management. As opined by Ogbo, Ikedimma, Chukwu and Emere (2021), informed decision-making is very important for schools to remain relevant and competitive to their ever-changing environment. It is even essential for schools because with data driven decision-making, schools are able to know where to channel their limited resources, identify areas of need, improve students' achievement and respond to their most urgent needs. Decision-making without necessary information may at times become very difficult and unrealistic, chaotic, and in some cases may not lead to accurate results (Ogbo *et.al* 2021). This underscores the essence of school records utilization in enhancing administrative decisions for school improvement.

School-based decision making is a critical aspect of administrative effectiveness in schools. It involves the devolution of decision-making authority to schools, allowing teachers, administrators, and other stakeholders to make decisions that are in the best interest of the school (Obanya, 2014). School-based decision-making refers to the process by which educators and administrators make decisions about instructional programs, student services, and school operations (Hoy & Miskel, 2020). Effective school-based decision-making is critical for improving student outcomes, enhancing teacher professional development, and promoting school improvement (Leithwood et al., 2020). However, school-based decision-making can be influenced by various factors, including the availability and quality of data, the capacity of school leaders to analyze and interpret data, and the degree of autonomy granted to schools (Hallinger & Heck, 2020).

School-based decision making is also the process by which educators and administrators make decisions about instructional programs, student services, and school operations (Hoy & Miskel, 2020). This process is critical for improving student outcomes, enhancing teacher professional development, and promoting school improvement (Leithwood et al., 2020). Effective school-based decision making requires a collaborative approach, where educators, administrators, and other stakeholders work together to make informed decisions that support student learning and achievement.

School-based decision making is an important ingredient for organizational attainment of set goals as it allows educators and administrators to make decisions that are tailored to the specific needs of their students and school community (Hallinger & Heck, 2020). This approach recognizes that each school is unique, with its own strengths, challenges, and priorities. By making decisions at the school level, educators and administrators can respond quickly and effectively to changing circumstances, and make decisions that are informed by their knowledge of the local context. School-based decision making promotes a collaborative approach to decision making, where educators, administrators, and other stakeholders work together to make informed decisions (Leithwood, 2020). This implies that decision making is a shared responsibility, and that educators and administrators have a critical role to play in shaping the direction of their school. By working together, educators and administrators can pool their knowledge, expertise, and experience, and make decisions that are informed by a range of perspectives.

As posited by Hoy & Miskel (2020), school-based decision making is critical for promoting school improvement and student achievement. By making decisions that are tailored to the specific needs of their students and school community, educators and administrators can identify areas for improvement, and develop strategies to address these areas. This approach recognizes that school improvement is an ongoing process, and that educators and administrators must be proactive in identifying areas for improvement, and developing strategies to address these areas.

School-based decision making is influenced by a range of factors, including the availability and quality of data, the capacity of school leaders to analyze and interpret data, and the degree of autonomy granted to schools (Hallinger & Heck, 2020). Data is critical for informing school-based decision making, as it provides educators and administrators with the information they need to make informed decisions about instructional programs, student services, and school operations. However, the availability and quality of data can vary significantly between schools, and educators and administrators must be able to analyze and interpret data effectively in order to make informed decisions.

The main objective of the study was to examine digitized record keeping practices, school-based decision-making and administrative effectiveness of senior secondary schools in Lagos State, Nigeria. Specifically, the study was intended to:

1. examine the extent of effectiveness of principals of public senior secondary schools in the administration of their schools in Lagos State, Nigeria.
2. determine the influence of school-based decision-making on administrative effectiveness of public senior secondary school principals in Lagos State, Nigeria.

Based on the stated objectives, the following research questions were raised and answered in the study:

- i. to what extent are principals of public senior secondary schools effective in the administration of their schools in Lagos State, Nigeria?
- ii. what is the influence of school-based decision-making on administrative effectiveness of public senior secondary school principals in Lagos State, Nigeria?

The following hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 significance level:

H₀₁: there is no significant relationship between school-based decision-making and administrative effectiveness of public senior secondary school principals in Lagos State, Nigeria;

H₀₂: there is no influence of school-based decision-making on administrative effectiveness of public senior secondary school principals in Lagos State, Nigeria.

Methodology

Descriptive design of survey type was employed for this study. The target population of this study were all Principals and vice principals (Principal cadre) and teachers of 327 Lagos state public senior secondary schools. The sample for this study consisted of 707 respondents, drawn from all the six Education Districts of Lagos State using multistage sampling technique (Stratified random sampling, disproportionate sampling, simple random and purposive sampling techniques. Administrative Effectiveness of Secondary School Principals Questionnaire (AESSPQ) and School-based Decision-making Questionnaire (S_bDMQ) were the instruments for data collection. Each research instrument has sections A and B. While section A seek information on personal data of respondents, section B of AESSPQ and S_bDMQ contained 20 and 15 structured items respectively, designed in line with the variables of the study. Data collected were analysed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics used include tables, percentage, mean and standard deviation. Inferential statistics of Pearson's Product-Moment Correlation (PPMC) Analysis was used to test the null hypotheses.

Results

Research Question One

To what extent are principals of public senior secondary schools effective in the administration of their schools in Lagos State, Nigeria?

Table 1 the extent to which principals of public senior secondary schools are effective in the administration of their schools

	VE	E	RE	NE	Mean	Std. Deviation
1. Attainment of school goals	0	6	220	151	3.3846	.51887
	0.0%	1.6%	58.4%	40.1%		
2. Performance of students in Senior School Certificate Examinations	1	5	236	135	3.3395	.51710
	0.3%	1.3%	62.6%	35.8%		
3. Performance of students in quiz, debate and sporting competitions	0	12	258	107	3.2520	.50281
	0.0%	3.2%	68.4%	28.4%		
4. Attainment of State's minimum benchmark for each school	1	15	277	84	3.1777	.49221
	0.3%	4.0%	73.5%	22.3%		
5. Attainment of conducive school climate	2	19	257	99	3.2016	.54255
	0.5%	5.0%	68.2%	26.3%		
6. Attainment of interpersonal human relations	0	14	261	102	3.2334	.50387
	0.0%	3.7%	69.2%	27.1%		
7. Issue of report cards to students on the day schools close for the term	8	30	249	90	3.1167	.62498
	2.1%	8.0%	66.0%	23.9%		
	3	11	256	107	3.2387	.53722

8. Prompt circulation of information within and outside the school	0.8%	2.9%	67.9%	28.4%		
9. Involvement of Teachers in Decision-making	1	18	262	96	3	.52257
					.2016	
	0.3%	4.8%	69.5%	25.5%		
10. Maintenance of Good Rapport with Public	1	13	269	94	3.2095	.50118
	0.3%	3.4%	71.4%	24.9%		
11. Provision of data as at when needed	2	17	273	85	3.1698	.51348
	0.5%	4.5%	72.4%	22.5%		
12. Retrieval of data as at when needed	2	21	262	92	3.1777	.53865
	0.5%	5.6%	69.5%	24.4%		
13. Coordination of school resources	1	18	259	99	3.2095	.52705
	0.3%	4.8%	68.7%	26.3%		
14. Organization of instructional programmes	1	20	263	93	3.1883	.52498
	0.3%	5.3%	69.8%	24.7%		
15. Delegation of Duties to subordinates	0	17	260	100	3.2202	.51242
	0.0%	4.5%	69.0%	26.5%		
16. Organizational control	0	19	249	109	3	.53224
					.2387	
	0.0%	5.0%	66.0%	28.9%		
17. Supervision of instruction	0	11	264	102	3.2414	.49205
	0.0%	2.9%	70.0%	27.1%		
18. Evaluation of instruction	1	9	263	104	3.2467	.50016

		0.3%	2.4%	69.8%	27.6%		
19. Evaluation of Students	0	7	264	106	3.2626	.48103	
		0.0%	1.9%	70.0%	28.1%		
20. Human resources management	0	7	255	114	3.2846	.49139	
		0.0%	1.9%	67.8%	30.3%		
Average					3.2297	0.5188	

Key: VE= Very Effective; E= Effective; RE= Rarely Effective; NE= Not Effective

Note: Mean response ranges from 0 – 1.4 = Not Effective; 1.5 – 2.4 = Rarely Effective;

2.5 – 3.4 = Effective; 3.5 – 4.0 = Very Effective.

Table 1 shows the extent to which principals of public senior secondary schools are effective in the administration of their schools in Lagos State, Nigeria, the following were revealed: Attainment of school goals (mean=3.38); Performance of students in Senior School Certificate Examinations (mean=3.34); Performance of students in quiz, debate and sporting competitions (mean=3.35); Attainment of State's minimum benchmark for each school (mean=3.18); Attainment of conducive school climate (mean=3.20); Attainment of interpersonal human relations (mean=3.23); Issue of report cards to students on the day schools close for the term (mean=3.12); Prompt circulation of information within and outside the school (mean=3.24); Involvement of teachers in decision-making (mean=3.20); Maintenance of good rapport with public (mean=3.21); Provision of data as at when needed (mean=3.17); Retrieval of data as at when needed (mean=3.18); Coordination of school resources (mean=3.21); Organization of instructional programmes (mean=3.19); Delegation of duties to subordinates (mean=3.22); Organizational control (mean=3.24); Supervision of instruction (mean=3.24); Evaluation of instruction (mean=3.25); Evaluation of Students (mean=3.26); Human resources management (mean=3.29). The average mean of principals of public senior secondary schools effective in the administration of their schools in Lagos State is given as 3.23, which implies that to a high extent, the principals of public senior secondary schools are effective. This also implies that the responses respondents submitted is true as it falls within the range of 2.5 – 3.4 = Effective.

Hypotheses One:

H₀₁: There is no Significant Relationship Between School-Based Decision-making and Administrative Effectiveness of Public Senior Secondary School Principals in Lagos State, Nigeria.

To test the null hypothesis, Pearson's Product-Moment Correlation Analysis (PPMCA) was carried out between school-based decision-making and administrative effectiveness of public senior secondary school principals. The scores of responses on items of school-based decision-making were computed and used as a single variable to correlate the sum of scores on items of administrative effectiveness of public senior secondary school principals.

Table 2: Relationship between school-based decision-making and administrative effectiveness of public senior secondary school principals in Lagos State, Nigeria

			School-based decision- making	Administrative effectiveness
School-based decision- making	Pearson Correlation	1		-.059
	Sig. (2-tailed)			.416
	N	190		190
Administrative effectiveness	Pearson Correlation	-.059		1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.416		
	N	377		376

Table 2 presents correlation between school-based decision-making and administrative effectiveness of public senior secondary school principals in Lagos State, Nigeria and the results show that there is a very weak, negative and non-significant relationship between school-based decision-making and administrative effectiveness of public senior secondary school principals in Lagos State, Nigeria ($r = -.059$, $p > 0.05$). This implies that school-based decision-making does not statistical significantly relate with administrative effectiveness of public senior secondary school principals in Lagos State, Nigeria. Therefore, the hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between school-based decision-making and administrative effectiveness of public senior secondary school principals in Lagos State, Nigeria is hereby not rejected.

Discussion of Findings

From the data analysis above, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between school-based decision-making and administrative effectiveness of public senior secondary school principals in Lagos State, Nigeria was accepted. This implies that school-based decision-making may not be a significant predictor of administrative effectiveness in public senior secondary schools in Lagos State, Nigeria. This is because schools may have limited autonomy to make decisions due to centralized education policies or bureaucratic constraints. Principals and staff could also lack the necessary skills, training, or resources to effectively engage in school-based decision-making. More so, external factors such as funding, community involvement, or parental expectations may influence administrative effectiveness more significantly than school-based decision-making. Studies by Afolabi (2018) and Adeyemi (2020) in support of this finding, emphasized the limitations of school-based decision-making in Nigerian schools. However, Ogbonnaya (2019) argued that school-based decision-making can enhance administrative effectiveness by promoting flexibility, adaptability, and responsiveness to local needs.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, it can be concluded that school-based decision-making does not automatically translate into improved administrative effectiveness among public senior secondary school principals. Although participatory decision-making remains an important aspect of contemporary school management, its impact on administrative outcomes appears to depend on supporting conditions such as policy autonomy, resource availability, and staff competence. Therefore, without adequate empowerment, decentralization, and capacity-building, the potential benefits of school-based decision-making may not be fully realized within the secondary school system.

Recommendations

In light of the conclusions drawn from this study, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. Decentralization of Educational Policies:

Government should further decentralize education policies by granting senior secondary school principals greater administrative autonomy. Reducing bureaucratic constraints will enable school leaders to take timely, context-specific decisions that can enhance school management and overall effectiveness.

2. Capacity Building for Principals and Staff:

Principals and relevant staff members should be equipped with the necessary skills, training, and professional development opportunities required for effective school-based decision-making. This includes training in leadership, conflict management, financial management, and collaborative decision-making processes.

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