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PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL, MENTORSHIP AND TEACHERS' EFFECTIVENESS IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN ENUGU STATE: THE NEXUS AND PRAXIS

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ABSTRACT

Teachers' lack of commitment, poor attitude to job, lateness to school and absenteeism as well as frequent incidence of squabbles, petty gossips and workplace incivility among teachers and principals in secondary schools across public secondary schools in Enugu state, lend credence to the unlikelihood of mentorship and staff performance appraisal. This prompted the researchers to embark on study to determine the relationship between performance appraisal, mentorship and teachers' effectiveness in public secondary schools in Enugu State. Two research questions guided the study and two hypotheses were tested. Correlation survey research design was adopted for the study. The population of the study comprised 8,644 teachers from 292 public secondary schools in the six

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Education zones in Enugu State. Simple random sampling was used to draw 863 teachers in the 292 public schools in Enugu State. A 10-item questionnaire titled ''Staff Appraisal and Mentorship Rating (SAMRS) and 20- item questionnaire titled "Teachers' Effectiveness Rating Scale" (TERS) respectively were the instruments for data collection. The instruments were subjected to face validation by three experts from the Faculty of Education, Nnamdi Azikiwe University. Cronbach alpha method was used to ascertain the reliability of the instrument. The overall coefficient of 0.78 was obtained. The researchers with the help of five research assistants collected the data for the study. Pearson 'r' as a linear correlation was used to answer the research questions, while t-test was used to test the null hypotheses at P<0.05 level of significance. The findings of the study among others revealed that there is a moderate positive relationship between principals' use of staff appraisal strategy and teachers' effectiveness in public secondary schools. Based on the findings, it was recommended among others that the management should continue to ensure that performance appraisal practice is conducted as and when due in line with the stated regulation to encourage hardworking staff, improve their job performance as well as make recalcitrant staff to sit up

Keywords: Performance; Appraisal, Mentorship; Teachers Effectiveness

Introduction

The delivery of quality education in secondary schools cannot be achieved without the commitment of the teachers. Teachers are the vanguards of education curriculum implementation. Prosmala (2024) posited that the role of teachers in curriculum management implementation is crucial to examine, as teachers serve as the primary implementers of the curriculum within educational institutions. Teachers bear direct responsibilities for instructing and guiding students, as well as executing the curriculum prescribed by the government. These huge responsibilities on the teachers require that they be effective in carrying out their tasks by displaying great expertise in subject mastery, effective communication, lesson preparation and presentation.

The effectiveness of a teacher can be measured by his instructional delivery, the way he assesses his students to know the learning outcome, the way he interacts with his students, and other personal qualities of a teacher-an effective teacher is not only worried about the student learning outcome but an effective teacher is concerned about the overall growth and development of his students (Ashaq, 2023). Several factors can influence teachers' effective

teaching in secondary schools. One of such factors is principals' management strategies. Management strategies encompass the techniques and approaches used to guide and direct an organization towards achieving its goals, encompassing areas like leadership, goal-setting, operational activities, and business administration (Ajaegbo, 2020). In educational organizations, the onus of managing schools for realization of educational objectives rest on the principal. In order to achieve optimum results, the principal should be skilled in management. It is his duty to ensure that goals of educational policies and programs are realized. Notable among the management strategies that the principals can adopt to ensure that teachers are effective in carrying out their functions are staff performance appraisal and mentoring management strategies. These two management strategies will form the thrust of this study.

Staff performance appraisal as a management strategy is the process of assessing performance of staff while on the job to ascertain those eligible for either promotion or those who deserve some sort of merit. According to Marivene, Jarah, Prima, Ruel and Janell (2023), teacher performance appraisal is a continuous process for identifying, evaluating, and developing teachers' work performance so that the school's goals and objectives are more effectively achieved. Marivene et al further submitted that staff performance appraisal benefits teachers in terms of performance recognition, and professional development, and in the school, the effectiveness of teaching/learning and its continuous improvement is assured by effective monitoring and evaluation. Staff appraisal as a management strategy used by principals can sufficiently impact on teachers' teaching effectiveness as the evaluation targets include: qualification, preparation of lesson plan, organization of lesson, maintenance of discipline, mastery of subject matter, teacher appearance, punctuality, students' performance at the end of the year examination and other related activities. These evaluation targets may eventually spur the teachers on the need for seriousness in their work. Beyond performance appraisal, the principal as the leader and role model can engage in and provide mentorship for the staff and guide them to excel in their duties.

Mentoring is a management strategy where one person (a mentor) offers help, guidance, advice (counsels) and support to facilitate learning and professional development of another person (mentee or protégée). Okumu, Ogwang and Wafula (2021) are of the view that mentorship as a professional development tool, has direct relevance to teacher effectiveness. They further contend that teachers need to liaise with mentors to gain inclusion in the body of professionals. Mentoring is essential as it brings about changes in pedagogical practices. Through mentoring teachers are guided, supported and taught

to transform their classroom practices. This transformation improves mentees' lesson preparations, teaching quality and learning environment leading to teacher effectiveness.

Meanwhile, despite the critical roles of performance appraisal and mentorship in ensuring teachers' effectiveness in secondary schools, there are still noticeable signs and indications that teachers are not been regularly appraised in public secondary schools in Enugu state. Eke, Onwuadi and Egbe (2020) posited that secondary school administrators in Enugu state have not been serious with staff performance appraisal practices possibly because they are not knowledgeable about the strategic role of staff performance appraisal in the effective implementation of the school curriculum and teachers' effectiveness. Eke et al observed that this poor appraisal practice is evidenced in the teachers' lack of commitment, poor attitude to job, lateness to school and absenteeism among teachers in public secondary schools in Enugu State. In similar vein, Amoke (2018) observed that Enugu State government appear not to be doing well in formal mentoring of teachers especially in relation to classroom management practices and that this development has adversely affected the quality-of-service delivery of teachers in schools across the state. It is therefore against this backdrop that this study was conceived to determine the relationship between staff performance appraisal, mentorship and teachers' effectiveness in public secondary schools in Enugu state.

Statement of the Problem

There is sufficient evidence in literature that appear to support the claim that secondary school principals can adopt staff appraisal and mentorship as strategic management tools to improve teachers' effectiveness and bring about quality education and efficient service delivery to the students through teaching and learning. Teachers in public secondary schools in Enugu seem not to be receiving adequate attention needed in terms of performance appraisal and mentorship. The teachers' lack of commitment, poor attitude to job, lateness to school and absenteeism as well as frequent incidence of squabbles, petty gossips and workplace incivility among teachers and principals in secondary schools across the state, lend credence to the unlikelihood of mentorship and staff performance appraisal.

If this trend is allowed to persist, teachers' effectiveness is likely to suffer further nosedive and the expected gains and prospect which secondary education holds will elude the state, hence this study will determine the relationship between staff performance appraisal, mentorship and teachers' effectiveness in public secondary schools in Enugu State.

Purpose of the Study

The general purpose of this study was to ascertain the relationship between staff appraisal, mentorship and teachers' effectiveness in public secondary schools in Enugu State. Specifically, the study established the relationship between principals' use of:

1. Staff appraisal strategy and teachers' effectiveness in public secondary schools in Enugu State.
2. Mentoring strategy and teachers' effectiveness in public secondary schools in Enugu State.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What is the nature of relationship between principals' use of staff appraisal strategy and teachers' effectiveness in public secondary schools in Enugu State?
2. What is the nature of relationship between principals' use of mentoring strategy and teachers' effectiveness in public secondary schools in Enugu State?

Hypotheses

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

Ho_1: The relationship between principals' use of staff appraisal strategy and teachers' effectiveness in public secondary schools in Enugu State was not significant.

Ho_2: The relationship between principals' use of mentoring strategy and teachers' effectiveness in public secondary schools in Enugu State was not significant.

Method

A correlation survey design was adopted for this study. The population of the study comprised 8,644 teachers from 292 public secondary schools of the six Education zones in Enugu State. The sample for the study is 863 teachers representing ten percent of the entire population. The instruments for collection of data were researcher's developed instruments titled: Staff Appraisal and Mentorship Strategies Rating Scale (SAMRS) and Teachers' Effectiveness Rating Scale (TERS). To ascertain the face validity of the instrument for the study, the researcher submitted the instruments together with the research topic, purpose of the study, research questions and hypotheses to two experts in Department of Educational Management and Policy and one expert in the Department of Education Foundation, all from the Faculty of Education, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. These experts were requested to validate the instrument relative to the appropriateness of the structure, instructions, item statements and content coverage and freely modify the sections as they deem fit. Based on the corrections and recommendations of by the experts, the final draft of the instrument was made. In order to establish the reliability of the

instruments, copies of the instruments were administered on 20 teachers in state government secondary schools in Anambra State. The responses of the respondents were collated to determine the internal consistency of the items in each section of the instruments and this was done using Cronbach's alpha method. The reliability co-efficients for SAMRS and TERS were 0.80 and 0.76 respectively. The researchers administered copies of the instruments directly on the respondents with the help of five research assistants who are secondary school teachers. Out of 861 copies of questionnaire distributed for data collection, 841 copies were retrieved; this means that 97% retrieval rate.

For the analysis of data, descriptive and inferential statistics were used. Descriptive statistics (Pearson "r" as a linear correlation) was used for the research questions. That is, research questions were answered using linear correlation statistics; Pearson "r". This statistics helped to establish the linear relationship between the variables in this study. For the test of hypotheses, the associated inferential statistics (t-test of significance of simple linear correlation) was employed. That is, hypotheses were tested using t-test of significance of simple linear correlation to ascertain the significance of the relationship in the study. P< 0.05 level of significance were stated for all the hypotheses.

For the research questions, the coefficient (r) and the size of the relationship was interpreted using the following:0.00=no relationship, 0.01-0.20=very low relationship, 0.21-0.40=low relationship, 0.41-0.60=moderate relationship, 0.61-0.80=high relationship, 0.81-0.99=very high relationship and 1.00=perfect relationship. For the hypotheses, the acceptance or rejection of null hypotheses were based on the t-cal value and t-tab value. This means that when the t-calculated value is greater than the t-tabulated value, the null hypothesis was rejected but if otherwise, the null hypothesis was not rejected

Result

Research Question 1: What is the nature of relationship between principals' use of staff appraisal strategy and teachers' effectiveness in public secondary schools?

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Table 1: Summaries of descriptive statistics for the nature of relationship between principals' use of staff appraisal strategy (X) and teachers' effectiveness (Y) in public secondary schools

V	N	∑	r	r^2	$\%r^2$	Remarks
X	841	5186				Moderate
			0.541	**0.2916**	**29.16**	Positive
Y	841	20597				Relationship

Size (n), Summation (∑), Simple Linear Correlation (r), Coefficient of Determination (r^2), Percentage Coefficient of Determination ($\%r^2$) and Remarks

The explanation for the calculated nature of relationship between principals' use of staff appraisal strategy and teachers' effectiveness in public secondary schools is presented on Table 1. An apparent view of the table shows that the calculated relationship between principals' use of staff appraisal strategy and teachers' effectiveness in public secondary schools is 0.54, which indicates a moderate positive relationship. The positive sign shows that an increase in one variable could lead to the same measure of increase in the other variable, implying a corresponding relationship between the two variables. The percentage coefficient of determination is obtained as 29.16, indicating that holding other factors constant, the two variables can account for variation in each other with 29.16% certainty. Accordingly, the answer to the above question is that there is a moderate positive relationship between principals' use of staff appraisal strategy and teachers' effectiveness in public secondary schools.

Research Question 2: What is the nature of relationship between principals' use of mentoring strategy and teachers' effectiveness in public secondary schools?

Table 2: Summaries of descriptive statistics for the nature of relationship between principals' use of mentoring strategy (X) and teachers' effectiveness (Y) in public secondary schools

V	n	∑	r	r^2	$\%r^2$	Remarks
X	841	5217				High
			0.63	**0.3969**	**39.69**	Positive
Y	841	20597				Relationship

Size (n), Summation (∑), Simple Linear Correlation (r), Coefficient of Determination (r^2), Percentage Coefficient of Determination ($\%r^2$) and Remarks

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The explanation for the calculated nature of relationship between principals' use of mentoring strategy and teachers' effectiveness in public secondary schools is presented on Table 2. An apparent view of the table shows that the calculated relationship between principals' use of mentoring strategy and teachers' effectiveness in public secondary schools is 0.63, which indicates a high positive relationship. The positive sign shows that an increase in one variable could lead to an increase in the other variable by the same token, implying a corresponding relationship between the two variables. The percentage coefficient of determination is obtained as 39.69, indicating that holding other factors constant, the two variables can account for variation in each other with 39.69% certainty. Hence, the answer to the above question is that there is a high positive relationship between principals' use of mentoring strategy and teachers' effectiveness in public secondary schools.

Hypothesis 1: The relationship between principals' use of staff appraisal strategy and teachers' effectiveness in public secondary schools was not significant.

Table 3: Summaries of inferential/test statistics for the relationship between principals' use of staff appraisal strategy and teachers' effectiveness in public secondary schools

V	n	∑	r	α	df	t_{cal}	t_{tab}	Decision
X	841	5186						
			0.541	0.05	839	**12.534**	**1.96**	Fail to Accept Ho_1
Y	841	20597						

The explanation for the test of the significance of the relationship between principals' use of staff appraisal strategy and teachers' effective teaching in public secondary schools is presented on Table 3. The result indicates the degree of freedom as 839 and the t-calculated value of 12.534 is greater than the t-tabulated value of 1.96. Since the-calculated value is greater than the t-tabulated value, the researcher therefore rejected the null hypothesis; thus, concluding that the moderate relationship between principals' use of staff appraisal strategy and teachers' effectiveness in public secondary schools is significant.

Hypothesis 2: The relationship between principals' use of mentoring strategy and teachers' effectiveness in public secondary schools was not significant.

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Table 14: Summaries of inferential/test statistics for the relationship between principals' use of mentoring strategy and teachers' effectiveness in public secondary schools

V	N	∑	r	A	df	t_{cal}	t_{tab}	Decision
X	841	5217						
			0.63	0.05	839	**15.771**	**1.96**	Fail to Accept Ho_2
Y	841	20597						

The explanation for the test of the significance of the relationship between principals' use of mentoring strategy and teachers' effectiveness in public secondary schools is presented on Table 4. The result indicates the degree of freedom as 839 and the t-calculated value of 15.771 is greater than the t-tabulated value of 1.96. Since the-calculated value is greater than the t-tabulated value, the researcher therefore rejected the null hypothesis; thus concluding that the high relationship between principals' use of mentoring strategy and teachers' effectiveness in public secondary schools is significant.

Nature of relationship between principals' use of staff appraisal strategy and teachers' effectiveness in public secondary schools

It was revealed in this study that there is a moderate positive relationship between principals' use of staff appraisal strategy and teachers' effectiveness in public secondary schools. The inference from this is that the moderate relationship between principals' use of staff appraisal strategy and teachers' effectiveness in public secondary schools is significant. This finding indicates that there is a moderate contribution of principals' use of staff appraisal strategy to teachers' effectiveness in public secondary schools. The above finding supports that of Achaa (2023) whose study showed that strengthening performance appraisal is a key element to improving teachers' effectiveness in basic schools in Ghana. The similarity in the findings of both studies not minding the disparity in levels of education, government policies and location is an indication that staff performance appraisal is indeed a strong determinant of teachers' effectiveness.

Similarly, the finding of the study by Mbabazi (2023) corroborates the finding of present study by submitting that performance appraisal and motivation significantly predicted job performance of secondary school teachers in selected secondary schools in Kampala, Uganda. This suggests that an effective appraisal would result in enhanced teacher motivation and would significantly predict the performance and effectiveness of the teachers in schools.

Nature of relationship between principals' use of mentoring strategy and teachers' effective teaching in public secondary schools

The study also revealed that there is a high positive relationship between principals' use of mentoring strategy and teachers' effectiveness in public secondary schools. This finding led to the deduction that the high relationship between principals' use of mentoring strategy and teachers' effective teaching in public secondary schools is significant. This finding is in accordance with the study of Okonkwo (2024) whose finding showed that principals' exposure of vice principals and teachers on their task performance to instructional leadership, fostering a friendly atmosphere, keeping good and community relations to a high extent improve the productivity and performance of the teachers. Time and location proximity as well as similarity in government policy may account for the similarity in the findings of the two the studies.

The present study is equally in agreement with the finding of the study by Bambi and Bakari (2021) whose study concluded that principals' mentoring of teachers in instructional leadership and career development correlates significantly with teachers' job performance in senior secondary schools in Adamawa state, Nigeria. This implies that mentorship as a management strategy is very useful in promoting teachers' effectiveness and that a strong positive relationship exists between the principals' use of mentorship and teachers' effectiveness.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study it was concluded that there is positive relationship between principals' use performance appraisal, mentorship and teachers' effectiveness in public secondary schools but whereas the relationship was moderate for appraisal, it was strong for mentorship.

Recommendations

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

1. The management should continue to ensure that performance appraisal practice is conducted as and when due in line with the stated regulation to encourage hardworking staff, improve their job performance as well as make recalcitrant staff to sit up.
2. The school management should continue to maintain good mentoring services to new teachers as it relates with teachers' teaching effectiveness

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