AJEMATES
African Journal of Educational Management, Teaching and Entrepreneurship Studies
VOL.15 (1), May-August, 2025 https://ajemates.org

EVALUATION OF PRINCIPALS LEADERSHIP PRACTICES ON TEACHERS JOB EFFECTIVENESS IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN OKPE LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA IN DELTA STATE

Juliana Nkechi Odoh (Ph.D.)
nj.odoh@unizik.edu.ng,jullyodoh@gmail.com.
Department of Educational Management and Policy. Faculty of Education.
Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka ,

Dr. Loveline Benataokwu Ekweogu.
lb.ekweogu@unizik.edu.ng
Department of Educational Management and Policy. Faculty of Education.
Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka,
&
Chukwu Regina Nwamaka
nr.chukwu@unizik.edu.ng
Department of educational management and Policy
Faculty of Education
Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka,

ABSTRACT

This study evaluated the impact of principals' leadership practices on teachers' job effectiveness in secondary schools in Okpe Local Government, Delta State. The leadership style adopted by school principals plays a crucial role in shaping the performance and effectiveness of teachers, which ultimately affects student outcomes. This research explores how various leadership practices, such as communication, decision-making, delegation, and professional development, influence teacher motivation and performance. A descriptive survey research design was employed, using questionnaires to collect data from principals and teachers in selected secondary schools within Okpe Local Government. The population size is 600 teachers with the sample size of 200 teachers. the analysis revealed that transformational leadership practices, including fostering collaboration, providing clear goals, and supporting professional development, positively influence teacher job effectiveness. Conversely, autocratic leadership styles were found to hinder teacher motivation and reduce performance. The study also identified key challenges faced by principals, such as insufficient resources, limited opportunities for professional development, and communication barriers, which impact the implementation of effective leadership practices. Based on the findings, the study recommends regular leadership training for principals and the creation of supportive and collaborative school environments to enhance teacher effectiveness.

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This research contributes to the understanding of how leadership practices in secondary schools can influence teacher performance, offering practical strategies for improving leadership and fostering better educational outcomes.

Keywords: Evaluation, Leadership Practices, Teachers, Job Effectiveness, Secondary schools

Introduction

Educational leadership is a key factor in determining the success and effectiveness of schools. In secondary schools, principals play a pivotal role as they are responsible for setting the tone, vision, and climate that directly affect teacher performance and student outcomes. In Nigeria, particularly in Okpe Local Government Area of Delta State, the quality of educational leadership has been a topic of concern, given the crucial role principals play in enhancing teacher job effectiveness and, by extension, student achievement.

Principal leadership practices, such as setting clear goals, creating a supportive school environment, and facilitating professional development, have been identified as essential to teacher motivation and job satisfaction (Oplatka & Arar, 2017). These leadership practices can either enhance or hinder the effectiveness of teachers in carrying out their duties. The Nigerian education system, particularly at the secondary school level, is faced with challenges such as inadequate infrastructure, limited resources, and a lack of continuous professional development for teachers. These issues are exacerbated by weak leadership practices that fail to support teachers adequately Teachers' job effectiveness is influenced by factors such as leadership style, working conditions, and the availability of resources (Zheng, Yin, & Li, 2019). Effective principals not only lead but also create a conducive learning environment by empowering teachers, facilitating collaboration, and fostering professional growth. Research has shown that principals who adopt transformational leadership practices positively impact teacher motivation and student outcomes (Dutta & Sahney, 2016).

This study focused on evaluating how principals' leadership practices influence teacher job effectiveness in secondary schools in Okpe Local Government Area, Delta State. Given the critical role of teachers in the education system, understanding the connection between leadership practices and teacher effectiveness is essential for improving educational outcomes in the region

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Statement of the Problem

In recent years, there has been growing concern about the declining quality of education in Nigeria, particularly in rural areas such as Okpe Local Government. One of the key issues is the perceived ineffectiveness of teachers in performing their duties, which is believed to be linked to poor leadership practices by school principals (Amanchukwu, Stanley, & Ololube, 2015). Despite efforts to improve the quality of education, teachers in many secondary schools in Okpe Local Government face challenges related to poor motivation, lack of resources, and inadequate leadership support. This has resulted in low student achievement and overall school ineffectiveness.

Purpose of the Study

The primary purpose of this study is to evaluate the influence of principals' leadership practices on teachers' job effectiveness in secondary schools in Okpe Local Government, Delta State. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. Examine the types of leadership practices adopted by principals in secondary schools.
2. Investigate the impact of these leadership practices on teacher motivation and job performance.
3. Identify the challenges faced by teachers in relation to leadership practices.

Research Questions

The study will be guided by the following research questions:

1. What leadership practices are commonly adopted by principals in secondary schools in Okpe Local Government?
2. How do principals' leadership practices affect teacher motivation and job effectiveness?
3. What challenges do teachers face in connection to their principals' leadership practices?

Methodology

This study employs a descriptive survey research design. This design is appropriate for the study as it seeks to describe the evaluation of principal leadership practices on teachers' job effectiveness by collecting data from a sample of teachers and school administrators. A survey approach allows for a broad investigation of the perceptions of teachers regarding the leadership practices of their principals and their own job effectiveness. Okpe Local Government Area (LGA) is one of the 25 local government areas in Delta State, Nigeria. Situated in the southern part of the state, Okpe LGA plays a significant role in the socio-economic and educational landscape of Delta State. The headquarters of Okpe LGA is located in Orerokpe, a town with historical and administrative significance in the region. Okpe LGA is located within

the Urhobo ethnic region, with the Urhobo people making up the dominant ethnic group. The area lies close to the Warri metropolitan axis and is strategically located, bordered by several other LGAs, including Sapele, Uvwie, and Ethiope West. It is part of the Niger Delta region and is characterized by a tropical climate with substantial rainfall, especially during the rainy season. The geography of the area includes riverine and swampy regions, as well as savannah zones, which makes it a mixture of urban and rural settlements. Education in Okpe LGA is administered by the Delta State Ministry of Education, and the area is home to both public and private secondary schools. Public schools in the area are managed by the government, while private schools are established and run by private entities, with oversight from the Ministry of Education. There are 17 public secondary schools in Okpe LGA. These schools cater to students from various socio-economic backgrounds, providing an opportunity to explore the educational challenges and leadership practices in diverse settings. The population of this study consists of all the principals and teachers in secondary schools within Okpe Local Government Area (LGA), Delta State. The total population includes all public secondary schools, with an estimated number of 600 teachers. The population is drawn from the 17 public secondary schools across the local government area. (Delta State Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education). The sample populations for this study is two hundred from the 17 public secondary schools across the local government area. These teachers were selected at random using the simple random sampling technique. It is essential to select a sample that is representative of the entire population. The primary instrument for data collection in this study is a structured questionnaire. This questionnaire is designed to gather relevant data on principal leadership practices and their influence on teachers' job effectiveness in secondary schools in Okpe Local Government Area (LGA), Delta State. The questionnaire is tailored to capture both qualitative and quantitative data from the respondents (teachers) and the likert scale is used in the questionnaire from (4-1) with 4 being the highest and 1 being the lowest. To ensure the validity of the instrument, the researcher submitted the instrument alongside the purpose of study and research questions to an expert in the department of Educational Foundation and two experts from the department of Educational Management and Policy both in the Faculty of Education at Nnamdi Azikiwe University for face and content validation the experts made necessary corrections which helped modify the instrument. The

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reliability of the instrument was tested using the cronbach alpha method and a reliable value of 0.84 was obtained for each of the four instruments respectively and this was considered high enough to judge its reliability. The data collected from the respondents through the questionnaire was used to answer the research questions using the statistical weighted mean

Formulae $x = \frac{\sum x}{N} = \frac{4+3+2+1}{4} = \frac{10}{4} = 2.50$

Mean value of 2.50 was used as the midpoint of the scale of decision this means that any response with the value of 2.50 and above was seen as an agreement with said item while if it is lower than 2.50 it was seen as a disagreement with said item

posed in Chapter One. Each research question was analyzed using the responses from the relevant sections of the questionnaire

. **Research Question 1**: What leadership practices are commonly adopted by principals in secondary schools in Okpe LGA?

Results

The analysis was structured according to the research questions

Table 1: Responses on leadership practices are commonly adopted by principals in secondary schools

S/N	Item Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N	X
1	The principal promotes a shared vision for the school.	80	60	40	20	200	3.0
2	The principal encourages open communication among staff.	64	76	35	25	200	2.89
3	The principal supports innovative teaching practices.	55	85	45	15	200	2.97
4	The principal recognizes and rewards teachers for their efforts.	77	63	60	0	200	3.1
5	The principal involves teachers in decision making processes.	20	80	58	42	200	2.39
	Mean Average						**2.87**

Discussion: The data indicate that the majority of principals in Okpe Local Government adopt leadership practices such as promoting a shared vision, encouraging communication, and supporting innovative teaching. The mean scores suggest a positive overall perception of leadership practices. As seen by the mean of questions 1-4 but question 5 shows that respondents disagree with the item stated that teachers are involved

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in the decision-making process of the school.

Research Question 2: How do principals' leadership practices affect teacher motivation and job effectiveness?

Table 2: Responses on principals' leadership practices effect on teacher's motivation and job effectiveness

S/N	Item Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N	X
1	The principal's leadership positively influences my motivation.	45	95	35	25	200	2.8
2	I feel more effective in my teaching when supported by leadership	43	97	31	29	200	2.77
3	The principal's feedback helps me improve my teaching performance.	06	100	24	16	200	3.02
4	I feel valued and respected as a teacher under the principal.	67	73	33	27	200	2.9
5	The principal encourages professional development opportunities.	23	65	75	37	200	2.37
	Mean Average						**2.77**

The analysis reveals that most respondents believe that principals' leadership practices significantly enhance teacher motivation and effectiveness. Teachers who receive regular feedback and feel valued by their principals are more likely to experience job satisfaction and effectiveness. These findings support Leithwood, K., & Azah, (2017) who emphasized the importance of leadership in improving teacher performance.

Research Question 3: What challenges do teachers face in relation to their principals' leadership practices?

Table 3: Responses on the challenges teachers encounter in relation to leadership practices

S/N	Item Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N	X
1	Insufficient resources provided by the leadership.	80	100	20	0	200	3.3
2	Lack of effective communication of expectations by the principal.	50	90	40	20	200	2.85
3	Lack of support in addressing student behavioral issues	20	60	100	20	200	2.48
4	Overwhelmed by administrative demands.	40	97	43	20	200	2.78

5	Leadership style creates a stressful work environment.	35	71	69	25	200	2.58
	Mean Average						**2.79**

Discussion: The findings suggest that the most common challenges faced by teachers are insufficient resources and Lack of effective communication of expectations by the principal these challenges can hinder teachers' ability to perform effectively and create a stressful work environment. The results are consistent with studies by Bubb & Earley, (2020**)** which indicate that resource shortages and excessive administrative work are common barriers to teacher effectiveness.

Conclusion

The study concludes that effective leadership practices by principals are crucial for enhancing teacher motivation and job effectiveness, which in turn contributes to overall school effectiveness. Leadership practices that promote collaboration, innovation, and recognition are more likely to lead to positive outcomes for both teachers and students. However, challenges such as insufficient resources and overwhelming administrative tasks can hinder teachers' ability to perform at their best.

The study also underscores the need for continuous professional development for school leaders to ensure they are equipped with the skills and knowledge necessary to lead effectively in a dynamic educational environment. Moreover, fostering open communication and providing adequate support to teachers are critical components of successful school leadership.

Recommendations

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

1. Continuous professional development programs should be provided for principals to enhance their leadership skills. These programs should focus on areas such as communication, conflict resolution, and instructional leadership to better support teachers and improve school outcomes.
2. Principals should adopt a more collaborative leadership style that involves teachers in decision-making processes.
3. The local government and school authorities should ensure that schools are adequately resourced to support effective teaching and learning. This includes providing teaching materials, technology, and other necessary resources to reduce the burden on teachers.

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