



IMPACT OF SCHOOL PRINCIPALS' AREA OF SPECIALIZATION ON STUDENTS' ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN BAUCHI STATE

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Abstract

This study investigated the impact of principals' area of specialization on students' academic performance in senior secondary schools in Bauchi State. The study adopted the descriptive research designed of the correlation type. Purposive sampling

Keywords

*Performance,
Specialization,
Secondary School,
Principals, Impact.*

technique was used to select 30 out of 85 senior secondary schools in urban area of Bauchi State. A

INTRODUCTION

The quality of education has been continuously alleged to be falling due to issues of overcrowded classrooms, laboratories, inadequate instructional materials and poor library facilities (Farombi, 1998). Aremu, Oluwole and Fayombo (2001) identified some of the factors responsible for poor academic performance to include: motivational orientation, self-esteem, learning approach, anxiety, intelligent quotient emotional problems, students' study habit, etc. This study therefore addressed the impact of principals' area of specialization, in order to achieve the lofty objectives of secondary education,

combination of (IPASSAP). The impact of principals' purposive and simple questionnaire was pilot area of specialization on random sampling tested after experts students' academic technique was used to have ascertained the performance. Based on select 30 principals, 27 contents validity and the findings, it was vice principals' the reliability recommended among administration and 17 coefficient obtained others that, school vice principals was 0.73. The data principals should be academic as well as 359 collected were analysed encouraged to obtain teachers from 30 senior using Statistical degrees in relevant and secondary schools in Package for Social specialized areas in Bauchi State making it a Science (SPSS). One education specifically total of 433 subjects as hypothesis was educational participants to this formulated and tested. administration and study. The instruments Pearson Product planning so as to get all used to collect relevant Moment Correlation (r) the necessary data was a self-Coefficient analysis knowledge and skills of designed questionnaire procedure was used to leadership procedures on the Impact of test the hypothesis that will positively Principals' Area of 0.05 significant levels. impact students' Specialization on The results of the academic performance. Students' Academic analysis showed that, Performance there was significant

proper placement of school principals is a necessity.

National Policy on Education (2004) stated that, the success of any system of education is hinged on proper planning, efficient administration and adequate financing. Administration is a function of organization and structure, proprietorship and control, inspection and supervision. This means that the success or failure of secondary school system largely depends on the school principals' area of specialization and leadership provided in the day to day management of the affairs of such schools. However, several factors affecting students' academic performance include many other such as immaturity, sex, emotional tension in students' home background and above all the non-

specialize principals in the area of education, specifically educational administration and planning.

Principals' Area of Specialization and Students' Academic Performance

Adesina (1990) explains that, principals who obtained degrees in educational management stand a better chance than those with other degrees. It is very important that, school principal has the necessary academic qualification and professional training to carry out his or her duties effectively. Nevertheless those who are responsible for the initial selection employment and deployment of school principals are accountable for the success or otherwise of the school goals and objectives. The school principal has to facilitate teaching and learning through development of operational goals and policies. He/she stimulates and develops programmes of instructions, he/she makes available all the necessary instructional materials, equipment and other important resources that teachers need to successfully carry out teaching. To accomplish his leadership function the principal keeps with more recent research findings, to upgrade his or her administrative and supervisory abilities and techniques. Consequently teachers need professionally trained principals to be in charge of their schools to lead, coordinate and harmonize efforts.

The school principal should possess skills in leadership because he/she is in the position to advice and direct the teachers who are in turn leaders of the children. Edem (1998) acknowledged that, study and training helps to widen the hard earned experience of practicing principals by enriching it. Training brings more knowledge and knowledge results in more skills. Again it takes a very long time to accumulate leadership skills on the job. Training helps to shorten the process, therefore, it can be defended as being less expensive than trial and error leadership. The trial and error process support the policy of choosing the most senior teacher as the school principal on the assumption that his long years of teaching experience have helped him to acquire the tricks of the trade, and that his seniority will win for him the loyalty and respect of his subordinates. There is very likelihood however; that a teacher so chosen will do only what the job traditionally calls for. His ability to introduce innovations and changes will be very limited. At that stage of social, economic and technological development, African nations need creative

schools and principals who are capable of breaking tradition to bring about desired social transformation. Thus appointing trained personnel to principal post is most desirable.

Adesina (1990) argued that, at both primary and secondary school levels, the men and women that manage the educational enterprise should be people who are unmistakably educated. At present the picture of secondary school levels is less intolerable. He further suggested that, all principals at the secondary school levels should have a broad liberal education, for which a degree in humanities, the social sciences and sciences is appropriate. The school principal should have super training in the field of education in general and should be aware of the nature of the society and the forces affecting its changes.

Objectives of the Study

The following is the specific objectives of this study;

1. To find out the impact of principals' area of specialization on students' academic performance in senior secondary schools in Bauchi state.

Research Questions

1. What is the impact of principals' area of specialisation on students' academic performance in senior secondary schools in Bauchi state?

Research Hypothesis

Following is the hypothesis generated to guide the conduct of this study;

Ho₁: principals' area of specialisation has no significant impact on students' academic performance in senior secondary schools in Bauchi state.

Research Design

The study was a descriptive survey designed of correlation type. It involved survey approach in data collection and analysis of descriptive data on principals' area of specialization and students' academic performance in senior secondary schools in Bauchi state. However the main attempt was to describe and correlate data and analyse opinions collected from respondents.

Population of the Study

The population of this study comprises all eighty five (85) government senior secondary schools in Bauchi state. This was to ensure homogeneity of the

conditions of service under which the selected schools are operating. All of these senior secondary schools are in urban centres. Some of the schools are mixed schools while others are single sex schools for either boys or girls only. Some are boarding while others are day secondary schools. The summary of the breakdown of the population is presented in table 1

Table 1: Summary of the Population of the Study

Senatorial E/ office	rincipals	VP I	VP II	Teachers	G Total
Bauchi	37	35	30	308	410
Bauchi Central	22	20	19	290	351
Katagum	26	25	25	300	376
Total	85	80	74	898	1137

Key: VP1 = Vice Principal Administration and VP II = Vice Principal Academic
Table 1 shows that, the population of this study comprises all eighty five (85) senior secondary school principals, eighty (80) vice principals administration, seventy four (74) vice principals academic and eight hundred and ninety eight (898) teachers.

Sample and Sampling Techniques

Secondary school principals, vice principals and teachers served as participants for this study. They were so chosen because they had the required knowledge and experience to provide reliable information about school principals' area of specialization especially as it affect students' academic performance. Table 2 indicated the summary of the sample used for the study.

Table 2: Summary of the Sample used for the Study

Item	Number existing	Number selected
Schools	85	30
Principals	85	30
Vice principal administrations	80	27
Vice principal academic	74	17
Teachers	898	359

Source: Fieldwork, 2019

Table 2 shows that, there are eighty five (85) senior secondary schools in Bauchi state, out of this number thirty (30) were selected and determined using the purposive sampling technique. This was to ensure that all categories of schools were represented in the study. There are thirty (30) principals and forty four 44 vice principals in the selected schools. All the principals and vice principals were deliberately sampled due to their small number. There are eight hundred and ninety eight (898) teachers in the selected schools; out of this number three hundred and fifty nine (359) were selected based on simple random sampling technique. This is a method of selecting number of units of sample out of the total population in such a way that every member has an equal chance of being selected. Therefore the subjects of this study comprised a total of 433 both principals, vice principals and teachers. Kerlinger (1979) opined that, statistics calculated from large samples are more accurate than those calculated from small sample provided the numbers of sample are drawn independently; the larger the sample, the closer the true value of the population in approach.

Instrumentation

The instruments of this study is the self-designed questionnaire on the Impact of Principals' Area of Specialization on Students' Academic Performance (IPASSAP). The questionnaire contained two sections; section "A" contained questions on the impact of principals' area of specialization and section "B" contained questions on students' academic performance. The questions were based on a four point likert scale

Validity of the Instruments

The self-designed questionnaire on the Impact of Principals' Area of specialization on Students' Academic Performance (IPASSAP) was submitted to two experts in educational administration and planning unit, Department of Educational Foundations, Federal University, Kashere Gombe state for an input which determined the contents validity, their observations and corrections were infected in the original that upgrade its standard and accuracy.

Reliability of the Instruments

The reliability of the self-designed questionnaire on the Impact of Principals' Area of Specialization on Students' Academic Performance (IPASSAP) was

tested in a pilot study, the study was conducted in 20 schools out of 55 that were not part of the selected schools for the study. Test re-test method was applied with an interval of three weeks in order to establish the reliability of the instruments over time. Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMCC) was used in correlating the set of scores of the test-re-test exercise. A reliability index of 0.73 was obtained at 0.5 level of significance which indicated that the instrument was reliable.

Data Presentation and Discussions

Table 3 indicated the principals' area of specialisation in senior secondary schools in Bauchi state.

Table 3 Principals' Area of Specialization

S/N	Specialization	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1.	Educational administration	4	13 (%)
2.	Specialized area in education	11	37 (%)
3.	Public administration	0	0 (%)
4.	Business administration	1	3 (%)
5.	Social science	1	3 (%)
6.	Arts	9	30 (%)
7.	Science	4	13 (%)
8.	Technology	0	0 (%)
	Total	30	100 (%)

Source: Fieldwork, 2019

Table 3 indicated that 37%, senior secondary school principals in Bauchi state had degrees in a specialized area in education, while 30% had specialized in arts and only 13% had degree in educational administration. This statistical information confirmed that most of the principals were not professionals.

Hypothesis One:

Ho₁: School principals' area of specialisation has no significant impact on students' academic performance in senior secondary schools in Bauchi state. This hypothesis was tested and presented in table 4.

Table 4: Impact of Principals' Area of Specialisation on Students' Academic Performance

Variables	N	\bar{X}	SD	df	Cal-r	p-value	Decision
Specialisation	30	1.62	.99	29			
performance	30	2.99	.73		.98	.66	Ho ₁ rejected

Source: Fieldwork, 2019

Table 4 indicated that, calculated (r) value of .98 was greater than the p-value of .66 at 0.05 level of significant. The hypothesis which stated that, principals' area of specialization has no significant impact on students' academic performance in senior secondary schools in Bauchi state was rejected.

Discussion of the Findings

The findings of the study revealed that, principals' area of specialization was significantly and highly correlated with students' academic performance in senior secondary schools in Bauchi state. This meant that the hypothesis which stated that there was no significant impact of principals' area of specialization and students' academic performance was rejected. However the findings revealed that, school principals who obtained degree in the area of administration could perform better in the management of human and material resources in schools and that would definitely improve the academic performance of students. Likewise school principals who acquired specialization in educational administration and planning or specialized in education generally could have positive impact on students' academic performance in their schools than those in other specialization. Majority of the participants (83%) agreed that principals' area of specialization could significantly influence students' academic performance.

Students' academic performance questionnaire respondents' responses and frequencies.

The responses of the respondents were summarized accordingly, students' academic performance responses, frequencies and percentage

Table 5: Respondents responses about students' academic performance in senior secondary in Bauchi state

S/N	Item	Responses options (%)				
		SA	A	D	SD	Total
A.	Students' academic performance					
1.		38(9)	194(45)	187(43)	14(3)	433(100)
2.		17(4)	158 (37)	232(54)	26(6)	433(100)
3.		10(2)	39(9)	225(52)	159(37)	433 (100)
4.		5(1)	38(9)	261(60)	129(30)	433 (100)
5.		4(1)	38 (9)	269(62)	12 (28)	433(100)

Source: Fieldwork, 2019

Table 5 showed that, 38 and 194 representing 9% and 45% strongly agreed and agreed that, students' performance in NECO examination in Bauchi state senior secondary school was satisfactory. While 187 and 14 which were representing 43% and 3% were in the disagreement with the same view that, students' performance in NECO as satisfactory. 54% disagree with the questionnaire item that, students' performance in NECO practical examination was the actual skills possessed by the students. On the other hand 36% agreed that, students' performance in NECO practical was the reflection of the actual skills possessed by them. 225 and 159 respondents which were equivalent to 52% and 37% disagreed with the item description that the school principals were carefully performing all administrative functions of planning, organizing, directing, staffing, supervising, coordinating, communicating and budgeting to ensure students' academic performance. While only 2% and 9% positively agreed and strongly agreed with that item. 6% and 30% disagree and strongly disagree with the item

description that, the school principals ensure that, students makes optimum use of resources for good students' academic performance in Bauchi state senior secondary schools. While the minority views were 1% and 9% strongly agreed and disagreed. Again 269 and 122 respondents representing 62% and 28% negatively responding to disagree and strongly disagree respectively, whether school principals ensures that, resources are properly maintained to guarantee good students' academic performance in their schools. While only 1% and 9% positively responded to the item as strongly agree and agree.

The findings of this study agreed with Adesina (1990) who stated that, principals who obtained degrees in educational management stand a better chance than those with other degrees. Result generated from observation inventory (checklist) revealed that only 13% school principals had degree in educational administration, 37% of school principals acquired degrees in specialized area in education while the remaining 50% were graduates from other degrees. This statistical information confirmed that, most of the principals were not professionals. The fact that, majority 69% of the participants highly appreciated the value of specialization of school principals in influencing students' academic performance in senior secondary schools in Bauchi state has not been given serious attention it deserved. This showed that, poor academic mastery of administrative knowledge and skills of school principals was perhaps due to the deliberate neglect on the part of educational planners and policy makers and this could negatively affect students' academic performance. The untrained school principals in line with the administrative process and principles who happened to be on the principals' position by chance are generally unable to apply the right administrative processes and procedures; and therefore, could end up negating students' academic performance.

Summary of Findings

The results of the analysed data for this study revealed that, there was significant impact of principals' area of specialisation on students' academic performance in senior secondary schools in Bauchi state. Therefore, specialization of school principals is considered to be a necessity.

Conclusions

The study therefore concluded that, principals' areas of specialisation to a large extent affect students' academic performance. This is due to the singular fact that, specialization on an area would enable school principals to efficiently and effectively utilize human and material resource available to make sure that, organizational objectives have been actualized.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study the following recommendations were proffered;

1. Government should in as much as possible encourage school principals to obtain degrees in relevant and specialized areas in education specifically educational administration and planning so as to get all the necessary knowledge and skills of leadership procedures that will definitely enhance students' academic performance.
2. Government and stakeholders should make necessary arrangement for the selections and appointments of school principals taking into consideration principals' area of specialization that will further promote students' academic performance.

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