

## Poor School Management And Students Academic Performance In Secondary Schools In Delta North Senatorial Zone Of Delta State

**Dr. A.G. Ossai**  
School Of Education  
College Of Education, Agbor  
Delta State, Nigeria.

---

### Abstract

The study investigated the poor school management by principals and the academic performance of secondary school students in Delta North Senatorial District of Delta State. The study adopted the descriptive survey research design and the stratified sampling technique was used in obtaining the total sample of 24 principals and 120 teachers. Two research questions and one null hypothesis was formulated to guide the study. The instrument for data collection was an 11 item questionnaire developed by the researcher. The data collected were analysed using means and standard deviation to answer the research questions while the t-test statistical analysis was used to test the null hypotheses. Findings from the study revealed among others that; the principals' inability to effectively and efficiently manage the school has adversely affected the graduants of secondary school in Delta North Senatorial District and made them unfulfilled and incompetent in the technological world. Also, teachers are not motivated, teaching and learning are impaired and classrooms are overcrowded. Based on these findings, conclusion was drawn and recommendations were made.

---

**Keywords:** School Management, Secondary School, Students, Academic Performance

---

### INTRODUCTION

The broad goals of Nigerian secondary school was specified in the National Policy on Education (NPE), are aimed at preparing students for useful living within the society and higher education(1). However, Egboku (2) observed that achieving these goals has remained largely elusive because of problems of poor school management by school principals. Formal education in Nigeria is rapidly changing and technically tailored towards meeting certain set goals, such as education for all (3). The requirements of these various goals from the school managers are centered on the advancement of teaching and learning through the implementation of effective management, which is led by a management team, with the principal as the overall head.

The basic requirement for effective school administration is inherent in the ability of the principal to positively influence teachers, students and other members in the society in the realization of educational goals. The role of the school manager (principal) also includes being able to translate educational policies into programmes and actions in the school (4). The success or failure of the school depends to a large extent in the principal's ability and capacity to effect desired educational goals. Thus, his role as an executive head of the school is enormous and therefore brings a lot of challenges in terms of being able to manage not only instructional programmes but also teachers and students of the school to bring about positive change. In terms of specific duty of the principal, Ocho stressed that the

principal's scope of work is "vast and intricate, and demands a lot of time, energy, dedication and sacrifice" (5). He further outlined some of the principal's pre-occupations to include the following; managing instructional programmes, staff personnel administration, student personnel administration, financial and physical resources management and school-community relationship management. In summary, the principal is seen as a setter of the tone of the school; an exemplar and above all a leader whose actions to a large degree determine the success of the school (6). Infact, one of the ways through which one can assess a good secondary school administrator is through the academic performance of students.

Academic performance refers to the rate at which educational objectives are being achieved by those within the school system (7). Therefore, students' academic performance may be seen as the extent to which students are achieving educational goals and objectives. According to Erum and Zahoor, students' academic performance and graduation rates have been the area of interest, and investigation of factors related to the academic performance of secondary students has been a topic of much interest to scholars (8)

Within Delta North Senatorial District, secondary school students' academic performance seems to be poor, dwindling or unstable. Many students are struggling academically as revealed in their poor performance when they take some classroom or

external examinations. This issue has raised the concern of parents, teachers, and policy makers, who have been questioning the effectiveness of the secondary school system not only within the Senatorial District, but also in Delta State and Nigeria generally. In the past, secondary school students' poor academic performance was tied to poor supply of infrastructure, poor parental involvement, and students study habits among several other variables. However, with recent improvements in the raising and supply of buildings and other infrastructures by the Government, Non-Governmental organizations, and other interested parties, coupled with the improved involvement of parents in their children education, one expects to see a corresponding improvement in the academic performance of secondary school students. Where this has not been fully achieved, indicates that there are other problems within or outside the school system which may be contributing to such academic performance. On this note, the researcher considers poor management on the part of principals associated with school management as having a link to secondary school students' academic performance.

There appears to be poor mentoring of teachers activities, with poor performance appraisal of teachers which often result in poor instructional delivery in schools. For instance, Ayeni and Akinfolarin noted that to improve students academic performance. Principals are required to improve their management strategies in schools(9). This can be done by setting a clear vision for the school, adequate job analysis and work plan, regular staff meeting, delegation of duties, effective monitoring of teachers, involvement of teachers in decision making and committed system.

From the forgoing, it can be seen that there is need for improved students' academic performance within and outside the Senatorial District. The reason is that, schools are established because of students and their performance is of great importance to all stakeholders concerned. It is based on these issues that it was considered necessary to look at the poor school management and how it affects secondary school students' academic performance in Delta North Senatorial District of Delta State, Nigeria.

### **Statement of the Problem**

To achieve the goals of secondary education in Nigeria, there is need for increased academic performance of students in the secondary school system. In a normal situation, efforts were supposed to be made by all those concerned to improve students' academic performance. The government was supposed to provide all the relevant materials and infrastructures, incentives and other services that will promote good academic performance of students. The school principals were expected to use their

expertise and professionalism to make the school environment conducive for teachers and students in order boost their effectiveness and promote students' academic performance. Unfortunately, the quality of students' academic performance especially in Delta North District of Delta State has been an issue of serious concern. Many students in the area doesn't seem to be performing well academically as indicated by their performance in internal and external examinations. Aside from this, many secondary school students can neither read nor write. As a result, they engage in examination malpractices as means of passing their examinations. This trend has not only affected the secondary school system, it has also eaten deep into the quality of graduants produced for the tertiary education level. Government made efforts to send quality supervisors to schools for routine checks and inspection, they have improved their consistency in payment of teachers' salaries, more infrastructure are now in supply to schools. Many parents are now actively involved in the training of their children/wards and ensuring that students are not at home during school hours. However, with these efforts made by the government and other stakeholders to improve students' academic performance, there has not been any evident of improvement in the performance of secondary school students within the senatorial district, in commensurate with the efforts made.

A study conducted by National Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC) and that of Education Research Centre (NRC), on the performance of students in public examination over some years, revealed that 75% of the total factors causing success or failure of students are decided by nature of school management(10). It is against this background that the researcher examined the effects of poor school management on student's academic performance in secondary schools in Delta North Senatorial District of Delta State. The issue of this study put in question form is: to what extent does poor management of schools by principals, affect secondary school students academic performance.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The general purpose of this study is to identify the effects of principals poor school administration on students' academic performance and make recommendations. Specifically, the study would investigate:

- i. The impact of poor management of schools by principals on the academic performance of students.
- ii. The roles the school principals would play as the administrative head to improve students' academic performance.

**Research Questions**

The following questions were raised to guide the study:

- i. How does poor management by principals affect academic performance of students?
- ii. What responsibilities could the school principals shoulder as the administrative head to improve students’ academic performance?

**Hypothesis**

There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of teachers and principals with regard to the ways poor management of school by principals affect student’s academic performance

**Significance of the Study**

This study is important because to develop Nigeria needs a functional quality education system for the masses. The present system is deteriorating and this problem needs urgent investigations for solutions and this work is one of such investigation.

The findings of this study will not only help to consolidate our stand academically but will also help to uphold the visions and missions of the National Policy on Education. Also, the result of this study will enable principals to adopt the administrative style that will enhance the academic performance of students in both internal and external examinations. Also, the result of this study will provide an insight into what will motivate the teachers to do their work satisfactorily.

Also, findings of this study will be very useful to educational administrators as it will expose them to different effects of poor school management by principals and their effects on student’s academic performance. It is hoped that the availability of the findings to policy makers in education will help to create awareness in government for the usefulness of training and retraining of principals to enable them meet the challenges of their job.

**METHODOLOGY**

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. According to Fadipe descriptive survey

research method involves the studies that aim at collecting data on and describing in a systematic manner, the characteristics, features or facts about a given population. It is usually concerned with description of events as they are (11).

The population of the study consisted of principals and teachers in the public secondary schools in Delta North senatorial District of Delta State. The researcher used the stratified sampling technique in obtaining the total sample of 120 teachers and 24 principals.

Questionnaire titled “effects of poor School Management by principals on students academic performance (EPSMAPSAPQ) was used to solicit information from the respondents. It contains 11 items, grouped in 2 clusters. Cluster one requested for demographic information about the respondents while cluster two contains 11 items which the respondents will respond to. A four point Likert rating scale of Strongly Agree (SA) 4 points; Agree (a) 3 points; Strongly Disagree (SD) 2 points and Disagree (D) 1 point, were adopted for the study. The research questionnaire was validated by experts in the faculty of Education, College of Education, Agbor. It was pilot tested using 10 teachers and 6 principals in secondary schools in Delta Central Senatorial District. The split-half method was used to compute the reliability coefficient based on the responses of the respondents in the pilot test. Using the Spearman Brown Prophecy formular, the overall reliability coefficient obtained was 0.71.

Copies of the questionnaire were administered to the respondents by the researcher. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions. A mean of 2.50 was adopted as the agreement level for the items while below 2.50 will be discarded. The t-test statistics was used to test the null hypothesis.

**PRESENTATION OF RESULTS**

Research Question 1: How does poor management by principals affect academic performance of students?

Table 1: mean ratings of the opinions of teachers and principals on how poor management by principals affect academic performance of students.

S/N	ITEMS	PRINCIPALS			TEACHERS		
		X	SD	Decision	X	SD	Decision
1	Teaching and learning are not supervised	3.2	0.28	high	3.6	0.31	high
2	Principals do not encourage or motivate teachers even when their morale is low	2.50	0.28	high	3.14	0.28	high
3	Principals do not involve teachers in decision making which involve instructions	2.34	0.21	Low	3.00	0.33	high
4	Students are not exposed to the techniques of external exams because principals care less about that	2.51	0.22	high	2.65	0.24	high
5	School programmes and activities are not organized, planned or coordinated by the principal, so students are left to fend for themselves	3.23	0.29	high	3.12	0.28	high
6	Learning facilities are few and inadequately refurbished	2.40	0.21	Low	3.41	0.31	high
7	School buildings are dilapidated and classroom over crowded	2.80	0.25	high	3.40	0.30	high

From table 1 above, all the items were rated high by the teachers and principals except items 3 and 6 which were rated low by the principals. Therefore, poor school management affects students academic performance because, teaching and learning are not supervised, teachers are not motivated, they are not involved in decision making that involves instruction, school programmes and activities are not coordinated

and students are left to fend for themselves; school buildings dilapidated and classrooms overcrowded

**Research Question 2:** What responsibilities could the school principal shoulder as the school administrative head to improve student’s academic performance?

**Table 2:** mean ratings on the view of principals and teachers on the responsibilities the school principal could shoulder as the school administrative head

S/N	ITEMS	PRINCIPALS			TEACHERS		
		X	SD	Decision	X	SD	Decision
8	Provision of instructional materials planning organizing, directing, coordinating and decision making execution of curriculum	3.6	0.32	High	3.44	0.32	High
9	Management of school facilities funds, human and material resources	3.9	0.34	High	3.01	0.31	High
10	Supervision of instruction and other school programmed	2.83	0.25	High	2.99	0.31	High
11	Organizing in-service training, seminar and workshop for teachers	2.92	0.26	High	3.01	0.28	High

From table 2 above, all the items are rated high by both principals and teachers. They all agreed that the school principal should shoulder the following responsibilities as the school administration; provision of instructional materials, planning, organizing, directing coordinating and decision making, execution of curriculum, management of school facilities, funds, human and material resources, supervision of instruction and other school

programmes; organizing in service training, seminar and workshop for teacher. All these would enhance the students’ academic performance in both internal and external examinations.

**Hypothesis 1:** There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of principals and teacher with regards to the ways poor management of school by principal affect students’ academic performance.

**Table 3:** T-test analysis of the differences between the mean scores of principals and teachers or how poor school management by principals could affect students’ academic performance

Groups	N	X	SD	DF	Level of significance	Calculated T-value	Critical t-value	Decision
Principals	24	3.52	0.31	142	0.05	0.73	1.96	Accepted
Teachers	120	3.91	0.34					

As indicated in table 3 above, the calculated t-value is 0.73 at 142 degree of freedom and 0.05 level of significance. Since the calculated value of 0.73 is less than the critical table value of 1.96, the null hypothesis is accepted. Therefore, there is no significant difference between the opinion of principals and teachers on how poor school management by principal affects student’s academic performance.

Adesinawhen he noted that poor school management has generally resulted in poor student’s academic performances in external examination and consequently the non realization of secondary education objectives (12). Also Dada lamented the poor student academic performance in senior secondary school examination (SSSE), and blaming the secondary school heads for the ugly situation (13).

**DISCUSSION OF RESULTS**

In research questions one, both the principals and teachers agreed that poor school management affects students academic performance. That is when teaching and learning are not supervised, principals do not encourage or motivate teachers, even when their morals is lows, students are not exposed to the techniques of external exams because principals are careless about that, school programmes and activities are not organized, planned or coordinated by principal, students are left to fend for themselves and school buildings are dilapidate and classrooms over crowded. These facts were corroborated by

On the responsibilities of the school principal of the school head, both categories of respondents acknowledged that provision of instructional materials, planning, organizing, directing, coordinating and decision making, execution of curriculum, management of school facilities, in-service training, seminar and workshop for teachers as well as supervision of instructions and other schools programmes are the functions of the school principal. This is in line with Nnabue et.al who opined that the principal has the great task of leading efficiently and effectively in the development and management of the school in all dimensions (14). In

line with this, Ehiare adduces that the school principal should ensure satisfactory standards in the maintenance of the school environment, plays a leading role in improving the quality of teaching and learning and constantly keeps in view the educational goals of the school and ensure the whole school activities are geared towards the achievement of the educational goals (15)

### CONCLUSION

Within the findings of this study, the researcher concluded amongst others, that the principals inability to effectively and efficiently manage the school has adversely affected the graduands of secondary school and made them skillful and incompetent in the technological world. To this end, effective management remains the bedrock of school growth, effectiveness and sustainability, as it enhances effective productivity by teachers and overall performance of students. Therefore, there is need for an integrated effort by the stakeholders in the education sector to ensure that good, adequate and necessary resources are available. This will facilitate and enhances successful realization of educational goals and objective and attainment of teaching –learning outcomes in secondary schools in Delta North senatorial Districts of Delta State.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this study, it was recommended that;

1. Principals should carry his management team along in management and decision making
2. Government should organize workshop and seminar for school principals to imbibe knowledge or creativity and acquire management skills.
3. The quality of education should be improved through regular supervision of teachers and consistent repairs, replacement or supply of school facilities. This will help provide an enabling environment for effective teaching and learning to thrive.
4. Principals should maintain a cordial relationship between the school and the state school board.

### CONTRIBUTION TO KNOWLEDGE

The study had been able to find out that the poor management of secondary schools by principals contribute to the poor academic performance of students in both internal and external examinations. Equally, all the strategies to ensure that principal would perform effectively have been identified. Since student academic success is often viewed as a correlate of principals effectiveness, students would perform very well and the much needed goal of all round development of a nation would be realized.

### LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

This study is limited by the fact that only public secondary schools were used for the study. Again, the study was conducted only in Delta North Senatorial District, one of the three districts in Delta State. This findings and recommendations should not be generalized beyond Delta North Senatorial District, although many of the institutions in Delta North may be very similar to the condition in other Senatorial Districts in Delta State and Nigeria in general

### REFERENCES

- (1) Federal Republic of Nigeria, National Policy on Education (4<sup>th</sup>ed) (Nigeria, NERDC, 2014)
- (2) Egboka, P.N, Strategic Management Competencies Utilized by Secondary School Principals in Anambra State. (Unpublished Ph.D dissertation, Faculty of Education, NnamdiAzikiwe University, Awka, 2008)
- (3) Nwagwu, N.A, The Politics of Education Policies in Nigeria. (Faculty of Education Distinguished Lecture Series, University of Benin, 2002)
- (4) Owan, V.I, Nwannunu, B.I &Madukwe, E, Problem of School Management and Students' Academic Performance in Secondary schools in Calabar Education Zone, Cross River State, Nigeria". International Journal of Research and Innovation in Social Science (IJRSS) 2(10) 120-127 (2018).
- (5) Ocho, L.O. The purpose of education and the place of the principal in the realization of aims. In C. Nweze (ed.) *Capacitybuilding of junior secondary school principals onSchool administration and management in Ebonyi state*. Ebonyi State Universal Basic Education Board, Abakaliki.(2010)
- (6) Aja-Okorie, U. Administrative challenges confronting school principals in Nigeria: A Gender-based perspective. *Knowledge Review*, 1(3), 5 – 14.(2010)
- (7) Owan, V. J. *Some causes of poor performance of pupils in primary school mathematics. A case study in Akamkpa L.G.A Cross River State*. Retrieved from <https://goo.gl/NTTxqc>(2012)
- (8) Erum S. &Zahoor A. A study on academic performance of university students.*Proc. 8th International Conference on Recent Advances in Statistics* Lahore, Pakistan – February 8-9; 255 – 268.(2011)
- (9) Ayeni, A.J &Akinfolarin, "Assessing Principals Coordinating and Controlling Strategies for Effective Teaching and Quality Learning Outcome in Secondary Schools in Ondo state, Nigeria". International Journal of Learning, Teaching and Educational Research, 7(1) 180-200 (2014).
- (10) Federal Government of Nigeria, National Policy on Education (Lagos, NERDC, 2004)

- (11) Fadipe, P.I, Manpower Approach in Educational Planning. EDP8061 (Lagos, Nigeria, National Open University, 2011)
- (12) Adesina, S, Educational Management, (Enugu, Fourth Dimension Publishers, 1990).
- (13) Dada, A, Mass Failure in Public Examinations: Causes and Problems. (Ibadan, Heinemann Broke, 1957)
- (14) Nnabuo, P, Okorie, N &Agab, O.G, Introduction to School Management (Owerri, Versatile Publishers, 2002)
- (15) Ehiane, O. S. Discipline and academic performance: A study of selected secondary schools in Lagos, Nigeria. *International Journal of Academic Research in Progressive Education and Development*, 3(1), 181 – 194.(2014)