

Principals' Time Management in Secondary Schools in Ondo State, Nigeria

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Abstract

This study examined principals' time management in secondary school in Ondo State. A total of 500 teachers were sampled from public secondary schools in Ondo State, using multi-stage, and simple random sampling techniques. Data were gathered using self-constructed questionnaire. One research question was raised and answered, while two hypotheses were generated. The hypotheses were analysed using analysis of variance (ANOVA) and t-test statistical method. The research question was subjected to descriptive analysis using mean rating and standard deviation. The study established the skillfulness of principals in allocating time to school administrative activities. The finding showed that principals' time management was adequate and that they spent their time doing worthwhile assignments. The study revealed that students' enrolment and location of schools were not important in time management skills of the principals. This study would add to principals' concept of time as a resource that could be well managed. The principal would be sensitive to work with time, and this would enhance the level of competence and improvement in their administrative task. It was concluded that leadership today should be skillful in the management of time; giving priorities to core administrative duties, and making adequate planning of time. It was recommended that principals should always give priorities to core administrative duties in their time allocation. The principal should always exhibit the skill of time management regardless of the location of their schools and the students' enrolment.

Keywords: principal, time management, students' enrolment, school location, time schedule,

INTRODUCTION

Leadership in school organizations has received the attention of researchers across ages. The school principal can be described as an intermediary and interpreter of policy, aims and objectives between his school and community, government, and other public and private agencies. The principal occupies a crucial position, therefore his managerial effectiveness is an indicator of the schools' prospects for achieving the educational goals and objectives. School administrators' managerial abilities should reflect on their time management skills. Time management skills are essential for effective people. According to (Manktelow n.d) the heart of time management is concentration on results, not on being busy. Akomolafe (2005) was of the view that the judicious use of time is an asset to school organization. It is very essential to manage the activities while following time management principles and skills. Poor time management is often a symptom of over confidence. The absence of personal time management is characterized by last minute rush to meet deadlines, and meetings are either double booked or achieved nothing (Akomolafe 2005).

Time management is a set of principles, practices, skills, tools and systems that work together to help get more value out of time with the aim of improving

the quality of life. According to Akomolafe (2011) time management is the art of arranging organizing, scheduling, and budgeting one's time for the purpose of generating more effective work and productivity. Time management can be seen as making use of one's time, so that the person involved can handle all his responsibilities, without giving to the misery of procrastination. Time management could be perceived as the development of a process and tools that helps someone to be more productive and efficient. Thinking about time management is to ensure that objectives are accomplished within a time limit. The review of literature reveals various researches in time management. Cole (1990) stated that time wasting arise from: prolong unnecessary meeting with colleagues, interruption from own staff, colleagues or both, unnecessary memorandum and other paper work, and also time loss due to travelling between jobs. Calabrese (1977) in his study confirmed that school size, location and experience of principals affected their time utilization.

Burke (1980) revealed that the experience of principals and school size to be predictors of time usage. Ayegbusi (1999) in a study on time utilization among Nigeria workers, revealed that the average worker spends little time on the day's, spend more time off work on activities incongruent with

organizational goals, like sitting idle, loitering, discussing, reading and eating. Akomolafe (2005) in her studies revealed a poor perception of principals' time management abilities by their teachers.

It further showed that academic activities of students, however did not receive much attention of the principals and they were somehow not very close to the teachers at work. Akomolafe (2005) identified some principals' time management difficulties to include; frequent need to respond to crises, little time for actual planning ahead and sort out priorities, lack of sufficient time to devote to activities that build up professional reputation, and guilty or anxious because of job left undone after leaving the place of work on time.

This study would contribute to knowledge on the need for school administrators to set priorities on routine school activities, and that school enrolment and location would not hinder principals' time management strategies. It could be an important factor for students' academic success if school administrators are conscious of prudent use of time, more time could be allocated to academic activities. Example is better than precept; teachers' use of their time could be enhanced if school leadership engages prudent use of time in school activities. The study could benefit the larger society on the importance of proper time management in effective management of individual business venture and undertakings, and for effective and efficient management of organizations.

The problem of this study was that the school principals seem to be haphazard in their allocation of time to duties and tasks, and they seem not to be conscious of setting time based on priorities. Observations have shown that principals have been engaging in meeting with either Board of governors or visitors that has eaten deep into the time schedule of the school programmes. The time spent in meetings seems to affect their functions as heads who should oversee things. In some cases principals fix meeting during the long break, which extend to the subsequent periods, and eventually nothing is done for the rest of the day. It appears the principals that are posted to rural areas do not spend their time judiciously. It was also observed that schools with large number of students are not adequately catered for, for instance some of the students were found roaming the streets during the school period.

The purpose of this study was to examine how the principals allocate time to their basic functions in the school. It was also to ascertain whether there is any difference in principals' time management in schools located in rural or urban. It was to examine if there would be any difference in time management of principals with low, medium or high students' enrolment.

RESEARCH QUESTION:

How do principals manage their time?

RESEARCH HYPOTHESES:

- 1 There is no significant difference in time management of principals with low, medium or high students' enrolments.
- 2 There is no significant difference in principals' time management and the location of schools.

METHODOLOGY

This study is a descriptive survey research. It focused on the observations and perception of teachers, about their principals. The population of the study comprises of teachers in public secondary schools in Ondo State. Multi-stage and simple random sampling technique, were employed to select subjects from the population of the study, in stages. A total number of 500 teachers were sampled. The instrument that was used to gather information from the respondents was a self-constructed questionnaire titled "Principals' time management and students' discipline" (PTMSD). The face and content validity of the instrument was established. The reliability of the instrument was determined through test re-test method. A correlation coefficient of 0.82 was obtained indicating that the instrument was reliable for the study. The data collected were analyzed using means and standard deviations for the research questions. The decision on the adequacy of time management was based on the mean rating of each item. The mean score obtainable on each item was 4.00, while the mean rating of below 2.5 was poor time management, the mean rating of 2.5 was moderate and adequate while the mean rating of above 2.5 was rated as high and very skillful time management. The research hypotheses were analyzed using Analysis of variance (ANOVA) for hypothesis one, while t-test statistical method was used for hypothesis two. All the hypotheses were found significant 0.05 level.

DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Research Question: How do Principals manage their time?

The result showed that principals schedule adequate time for various activities in the discharge of their duties because most of the administrative activities of the principals attracted much time. The respondents rated high the time the principals spent on supervision of instruction, and checking of students' class work records. The judicial use of time reflected on principals' spending little time on entertainment, and collection of school fees. The respondents also indicated that the principals spent moderate time on signing of letters and chatting. However, the principals wasted much time in morning because it was indicated by the respondents, that the principals spent too much time in morning assembly.

Table 1: Mean and standard deviation of items on principals time management

S/N	My principal	X	SD	REMARK
1	Spends too much time in morning assembly	2.613	0.48	High
2	Spends too much time in writing and signing letter and little time for supervision of teachers & students	2.506	0.50	Moderate
3	Spends too much time on entertainment of visitors which affects his supervisory role	2.486	0.501	Low
4	Much time in collection of school fees and often disturb school lessons	2.44	0.498	Low
5	Spends much time in chatting which affect his supervisory roles	2.506	0.501	Moderate
6	Schedules adequate time for supervision of instruction	2.73	0.44	High
7	Spends time to check students class work	2.73	0.44	High
8	Spends adequate time for supervising school records	2.91	0.291	High
9	Spends adequate time to oversee co-curricular activities	2.846	0.361	
10	Spends adequate time to counsel students who have special problems	2.793	0.406	

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant difference in time management of principals with low, medium or high students' enrolment.

Table 2: ANOVA table on Principals' time management with low, medium or high students' enrolment

Source	SS	df	MS	f-cal	f-table
Between groups	41.790	2	20.895	1.161	3.000
Within groups	2644.770	497	17.992		
Total	2686.560	499			

The result in table 2 revealed that f-calculated was less than the f-table which was not significant at 0.05 level. The hypothesis was therefore not rejected. Hence there was no significant difference in time management of principals with low, medium, or high students enrolment. Therefore students' enrolment was not an important factor in principals' time management.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant difference in principals' time management and the location of schools.

Table 3: t-test on Principals' time management and location of schools

Groups	N	\bar{X}	SD	df	t-cal	t-test
Rural	200	25.88	6.23	498	.761	1.96
Urban	300	26.73	3.97			

The result in table 3 showed that t-calculated value was less than the table value. The result was therefore not significant at 0.05 level, hence the hypothesis was not rejected. Therefore there was no significant difference in the principals' time management and the location of the school. In other words location of school in either rural or urban cannot influence the principals' time management.

DISCUSSION

The study revealed that principals' time management was adequate. The principals spent most of their time doing worthwhile assignments except in the morning assembly when much time was spent. The result of

this study is contrary to Akomolafe (2005) in which she submitted that teachers have poor perception of their principals' time management abilities. She said that the principals were perceived as not able to accomplish task without interruptions and that they did not create enough time for students' academic activities.

The result of this study affirmed that students' enrolment is not an important factor in management of time by principals. There was no significant difference in principals' time management with low, medium or high students enrolment. Edoreh (1989) corroborated the finding of this study, he indicated that there was no significant difference in students' enrolment and their principals' allocation of time to task. However, Allison and Mortiff (1994) in their earlier studies were in support of this study, they found students' enrolment to be a predictor of time usage by principals. Burke (1980) negates this study, he said experience of the principals and school size to be predictors of time usage.

The study revealed that the location of schools has no influence on the principals' time management.

It is probably because the school location either in rural or urban, does not affect the skills of principals. Whatever the location, it still requires the principals to put their skills and experience, in their efforts to achieve the best. The findings of this study is contrary to calabrese (1977), he confirmed that schools' size, location and experience of principals affected their time utilization. The finding of Arubayi (1986) negates this study because he revealed a significant relationship between principals' time usage and school location

CONCLUSION

The skill of time management in leadership is a manifestation of leaders' preparedness to ensure the objectives and the goals of the school organization are accomplished. The ability of the principals to schedule adequate time for supervision of instruction, checking of students' learning materials, and supervision of school records, is a manifestation of

skillfulness of principals in managing time in the schools. The principals were able to manage their time to the extent of not spending much on entertainment of visitors, and collection of schools fees. It is noteworthy that moderate time was spent on writing of letter, so as to pay more attention to others.

The school principals must continue to pay much attention to effective and adequate allocation of time to school activities. The school cannot afford to fail or lack behind in this digital age. There is the need for principals to commit every school activities to adequate time schedule. It is worthy of note that school locations either rural or urban has not made principals to deviate to a norm or standard of maintaining adequate time schedule to school activities. Never the less the students' enrolment has not imparted negatively on the management of principals' time, since the enrolment of low, medium or high population cannot deter the principals' time management skills.

This study is a worthwhile exercise and there is no doubt that it would not only be of benefit to school community but also to general readers. This study met with the challenges of poor attitude to filling of questionnaire which resulted in slight delay in retrieving the completed copies.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations were made based on the findings of this study:

- 1 The principals should always give priorities to core administrative duties while allocating time.
- 2 School assembly, and meetings should be handled in such a manner that they do not consume classroom academic activities.
- 3 The school principals should always exhibit the skill of time management regardless of the location of their schools.
- 4 The principals should be up to their responsibilities, and manifest the skill of time management regardless of the school enrolment.

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