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Principal's Administrative Competencies and Job Gratification of Secondary School Teachers in Uyo Local Government Area, Akwa Ibom State

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Abstract

The study determined the relationship between Principal administrative competencies and job gratification of secondary school teachers in Uyo Local Government area of Akwa Ibom State. Three research objectives, research questions, and hypotheses were formulated to guide the study. A correlational research design was used for the study. The population of the study comprised all the 6,788 teachers (3490 males, 3298 females) in the 14 public secondary schools in the area of study. A sample size of 140 public secondary school teachers was selected for the study, using the simple random sampling technique. In each of the 14 schools, 5 male and 5 female teachers were randomly selected for the study, making it a total of 140 teachers. A researcher-made instrument titled "Principal Administrative Competences and Teachers Job Gratification (PACTJG)" was used for data collection. A test-retest reliability was done with 30 teachers in the area of study, who were not part of the sample size to ascertain the reliability of the instrument. The items yielded a correlation coefficient of .84 using Pearson's Product Moment Correlation (PPMC). (PPMC) was used to answer the research questions and to test the null hypotheses at a .05 level of significance. The result of the findings of the study revealed a very high positive and significant relationship between principals' motivation, communication abilities and the job gratification of teachers, principals' communication ability, while it revealed a moderate relationship between Principal's decision-making ability and the teachers' job gratification in the area of study. Based on this direction of relationships, the researcher, therefore recommended that school principals should adopt mostly motivational and communication skills while administrating their duties to enhance the job gratification of teachers

Keywords: Administrative competencies, Gratification, Motivation, Job satisfaction, School principals

INTRODUCTION

The school administrators stand in a vital and strategic position to either promote or hinder smooth and successful learning in the school. This is because the activities in the school revolve around the administrative set-up of the school in which the principal is the chief administrator supported by other principal officers such as departmental heads and subheads. The school's reputation depends greatly on the administrative style of the school heads. This means that the school principal is involved with the totality of the educational enterprise in the school. Therefore, the teaching effectiveness of a teacher in any school depends to a large extent on the administrative skills exhibited by the school administrator. Without the principals being effective in their daily activities, the school processes may not function smoothly and successes may be unattainable. According to Bessong (2020), the bureaucratic skills of the school administrator in enhancing teaching effectiveness include skills such as principal motivational ability, principal communication ability, principal leadership ability as well as principal decision-making ability.

Job gratification and motivation ability of school heads are very crucial to the long-term growth of any educational system around the world (Filak and Sheldon, 2018). Motivation in this context is the ability of the school administrator to meet teachers' needs and consequently encourage improvement in teaching effectiveness. Ubom (2020) stated that motivation is very crucial in any organizational set-up. According to the author, financial and non-financial motivation rendered to teachers makes the teachers committed, resourceful, develop interest with punctuality and take initiative in their work. An example of financial motivation according to Johnson and Smith (2018) prompt salary payment, retirement benefits, health insurance scheme, compensation, incentives and bonuses among others. Non-financial motivation includes the feeling of being recognized, praised for a job done and participation in decision making among others. These two forms of motivation are very crucial in helping a teacher carry out his or her duties effectively and efficiently. Adelabu (2020), in a study on the extent to which teacher motivation influence teaching effectiveness of teacher found that the issue of prompt salary payment is the biggest motivational factor for teachers effectiveness Nigerian schools. In addition, effective communication ability between school heads and the staff are essential in administration. It is the exchange of information and transmission of its meaning. Communication is an integral part of every social organization, be it government, church, or school, for the achievement of specific goals. The main purpose of communication is to influence behavior and effect change in the abilities of members to achieve organizational goals (Ugwu, 2020). Communication is instrumental to the effective management and bureaucratic functioning of school heads and staff.

Hoy and Miskel (2019) found that high-level group cohesion and two-way communication between the principal and teachers produce greater accuracy. Since effective communication ability plays such vital roles in the school administration, there is, therefore, a great need for the main actors (principals) to understand the most proper way of achieving effective communication links in the schools they administer.

Moreover, in the aspect of decision-making, most administrators find it difficult to decide how to improve the effectiveness of their decisions. This is because the decision that would bring success might not be acceptable to the people affected. On the other hand, the decision most favored by subordinates might not be the best. In this aspect, “quality” considerations conflict with “acceptance” considerations. These call for the need for staff participation in the decision-making process for proper implementation of school tasks. Hoy and Miskel (2019), stated that the opportunity to share in formulation of policies increases teachers’ morale and enthusiasm in teaching. Denga, (2020) supported that participation in decision-making is positively related to the individual teacher’s gratification with the profession of teaching. For quality and acceptance of decision-making, the principal should know when and the extent to which teachers’ consultation is needed or when to constitute a “think tank” for effective skills development in schools (Johnson and Smith, 2018).

Statement of the Problem

Teachers are significant personalities in the lives of learners. To a great extent, they are capable of instilling disciplined conduct and appropriate behavior in the learner. Despite the importance of the teacher in the teaching /learning process, the researcher observed in the study area that most teachers are dissatisfied with their work, which may be a result of the poor administrative style of school heads. This is evidenced by the usual transfer of teachers from teaching to other ministries in the state, engagement in other occupations, lack of enthusiasm, unnecessary complaints, and absenteeism among others.

However, the government and professional bodies in the education sector have been conducting periodic capacity development workshops, seminars, conferences, and other related sensitization measures for educational managers (principals) on institutional management and instructional supervision to improve the quality of teaching and learning processes and also conduct periodic awareness programs for teachers through workshops, seminars, conferences, etc, to improve teachers’ job gratification, but the issue of inadequate role performance among teachers persist. Therefore, the present study sought to determine the relationship between school principals' administrative competencies and the job gratification of secondary school teachers in Uyo Local Government area.

Purpose of the Study

The major purpose of the study was to determine the relationship between school bureaucratic variables and job gratification of secondary school teachers in Uyo Local Government area. Specifically, the study targeted the following objectives:

- (i) to determine the relationship between principals’ motivational ability and job gratification of secondary school teachers in Uyo Local Government area.

- (ii) to determine the relationship between principals' communication ability and job gratification of secondary school teachers in Uyo Local Government Area.
- (iii) to ascertain that relationship between principals' decision-making ability and job gratification of secondary school teachers in Uyo Local Government Area.

Research Questions

The following research questions were raised to guide the study.

- (i) What is the relationship between principals' motivational ability and the job gratification of secondary school teachers in Uyo Local Government area?
- (ii) What relationship exists between principals' communication ability and the job gratification of secondary school teachers in Uyo Local Government area?
- (iii) What relationship exists between principals' decision-making ability and the job gratification of secondary school teachers in Uyo Local Government area?

Null Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated for this study:

- (i) There is no significant relationship between principals' motivational ability and the job gratification of secondary school teachers in Uyo Local Government area.
- (ii) There is no significant relationship between principals' communication ability and the job gratification of secondary school teachers in Uyo Local Government area.
- (iii) There is no significant relationship between principals' decision-making ability and the job gratification of secondary school teachers in Uyo Local Government Area.

Delimitation of the Study

The study was delimited to only public secondary school teachers in 2022/2023 school years. Also, the study only investigated bureaucratic variables such as principal motivational abilities, decision making ability as well as communication ability.

Conceptual Review

Principals' Motivation Ability and Teaching Job Gratification

. The principal of the school is the chief executive of the school and the immediate boss and link person between the teacher and government, a lot is still desired to be done in respect of motivating the classroom teacher. This is because most principal deliberately refuse to recommend their subordinate (academic staff) for further studies for fear of measuring up with them on return, especially when such teachers return with equal or higher certificates, the principals consider their position threatening.

Studies have shown connections between principal motivational ability and teachers' job gratification. One of such study was conducted by Anokye (2020). The sample for the study consisted of 450 teachers selected from the six Local Government areas, (LEC) in Ikot Ekpene Senatorial District using the stratified random sampling technique. A 24-item questionnaire was constructed by the researcher; the Effective Management of Human Resources Questionnaire (ERMHRQ) measuring on a 4 point rating scale was used for data collection. Pearson Product Moment Correlation was used to test the hypothesis. It gave an observed value of 0.20 and the critical r-value of 0.098, the null hypothesis was rejected since the observed value (0.20) is greater than the critical r-value (0.098). The finding of the study, among other things, was that principals' motivational technique has a strong association with teachers' job gratification. Also, in a study conducted by Anokye (2020), the researcher found a positive relationship between high levels of motivation on the part of the principals and effective job gratification among staff in public secondary schools.

Principals' Communication Ability and Teachers' Job Gratification

Communication, according to Dahama and Bhatnagar (2020), is an act by which a person shares knowledge, feelings, ideas, and information in ways such that each person gains a common understanding of the meaning, intent, and use of the message. Awotua and Efebo (2019) opined that communication is the conveying of information and knowledge from one person to another. It involves the sender transmitting an idea to a receiver by the use of appropriate and relevant communication channels. From the above definitions, Bassey (2021) stated that effective communication flow between the school heads and teachers in secondary schools enhances effective job performance. The author added that the absence of proper communication flow between school heads and teachers could result in truancy, lateness to work, absenteeism, and low morale. The effects of these are mostly felt by the students because there will be no class control, lack of adequate assessment, and completion of task-schedule.

However, studies have shown that two-way communication between school heads and teachers enhances job gratification on the part of the teachers. One of such studies was conducted by Akpan (2021), and the result was that interpersonal relationships existing between the super-ordinate and the subordinate bear considerable influence on the performance of the subordinates. This relationship cannot be established without communication. The author also found that if a principal establishes a cordial relationship with his teachers and students, there is bound to be discipline in the school. Also, the knowledge of the subordinates and possible reinforcement of their contributors will enhance good decision-making. (Peretomode, 2020).

In a related study by Nya (2018), the purpose was to determine the relationship between principal communication platforms and teacher effectiveness in secondary schools in Calabar, Cross River State. 400 teachers were drawn from 10 secondary schools in Calabar comprising 5 secondary schools each from Calabar Municipality and Calabar South Local Government Area. Data was collected using the Principal Motivational Technique Questionnaire (PMTQ) and analyzed using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation analysis. The calculated r-value (0.423)

was greater than that of the critical r-value (0.196) at 0.05 level of significance. The result of the study revealed among other things that, principals' communication pattern has significant relationship with teachers' job gratification in public schools.

Principals' Decision-Making Ability and Teachers' Job Gratification

Decision-making is a central responsibility of the educational administrator. It is a fundamental process in any productive organization. Decision making, according to Durosaro and Ogunsaju (2019) is a process of identifying alternatives and choosing one among others, in order to address a situation. Ugwu (2020) defined decision-making as the process of identifying a problem and choosing among alternative courses of action. A school administrator, who has problems with making decisions, certainly had problems with his job. The school administrator makes decisions on behalf of the teachers, students, and supportive staff. In the school system, some decisions may be taken by the administrator only while other decisions may be taken by the deputy or the class teachers'. However, a good administrator should not delegate too many responsibilities to his staff for decision-making. An effective principal should decide after due consideration (Mbipom, 2018). This is a rational decision.

Decision-making consideration, as Mbipom (2018) argued, has five sequential steps, which include Problem definition or identification, Development of alternatives for solutions, Appraisal of alternatives, Selection of solution alternative evaluation, and one is selected in terms of effectiveness, and the selected alternative is implemented. The author added that school principals should adopt these five sequential steps in the decision-making process before he or she can be acknowledged as good administrators.

Research has shown that principal's decision-making ability has an outstanding association with teachers' job gratification. One of such study was conducted by Ugwu (2020). The author found that when decision-making authority is centralized in the hands of school administrators, such leadership style is bound to initiate conflict and hostility among staff, hence, bringing about job disgratification. Nkang (2020) also added that when teachers are adequately involved in decision making by the school principals', (seeking their opinions when important bureaucratic decision are to be taken), such teachers' are most likely to have a sense of belonging and put in their best in the discharge of their professional duties.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Design of the Study

The correlational research design was adopted for the study. This design is used whenever the researcher wants to find out the magnitude and direction of the relationship that exists between the dependent and independent variables (Udoh and Joseph, 2018). Therefore, this design was considered suitable for this study because it enabled the researcher to measure the interrelationship between variables of this study.

Population of the Study

The population of the study comprised of all 6,788 public secondary school teachers (3490 male and 3298 female) in the 14 secondary schools in Uyo Local Government Area. Source: (State Secondary Education Board, Uyo 2022).

Sample and Sampling Technique

A sample size of 140 (70 males, 70 Females) public secondary school teachers was selected for the study using a simple random sampling method. In each of the 14 public secondary schools, ten (10) teachers were randomly selected making up the 140 sampled teachers.

Instrumentation

A researcher-made instrument titled “Principal Administrative Competences and Job Gratification of Secondary School Teachers (PACJGSST)” with a four-point Likert scale option was used for data collection. The PACJGSST instrument has three parts A and B. Part (A) contained 15 items on School Bureaucratic Variables with five items each. Part (B) has 8 items on the job gratification of secondary school teachers. The respondents were required to tick from a list of options as individuals.

Validation of the Instrument

To ensure the content validity of the instrument, copies of the instrument were validated by two lecturers from the Department of Social Studies & Citizenship Education, and also from an expert in the Department of Psychological Foundations of Education, Faculty of Education, University of Uyo. The inputs and corrections made by the evaluators and that of the researchers were used to form the final copy for instrument.

Reliability of the Instrument

The questionnaire was administered to 30 public secondary school teachers in a selected school not included in the sample of the study. Two weeks later, the same set of teachers were given clean copies of the same instrument to fill. The test-retest reliability of the instrument was obtained based on the scores from the first and second tests. The analysis of the scores in the two tests was carried out using Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) statistics. The items yielded a correlation coefficient of 0.84 for the fifteen items in section A and 0.846 for the eight items in section B, as presented in the SPSS Table of reliability statistics below.

Data Collection

The research copies of the instrument were personally administered to the respondents in their respective schools by the researchers. Also, permission from the respective principals was obtained to allow the respondents to respond to the items in the instrument. In addition to items written on the questionnaire, the subjects were given verbal instructions and clarifications where necessary. Copies of the questionnaire were retrieved after completion without subjecting the respondents to time constraints. All 80 copies of the questionnaires administered were filled properly according to instructions and collected by the researchers. Hence, none was missing because it was an instant collection.

Data Analysis

Data generated were analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) for answering the research questions and Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) for testing hypotheses, all at a .05 level of significance and 376 degrees of freedom.

Decision Rule

Research Questions

The research questions were answered using Pearson's Product Moment Correlation and decisions on the relationship between the independent and dependent variables were interpreted as follows:

Coefficient (r)	-	Relationship
$\pm .00$ to $\pm .20$	-	Negligible, weak, very low, little or none
$\pm .21$ to $\pm .40$	-	Present, slight, but low
$\pm .41$ to $\pm .60$	-	Average, moderately high, fairly high
$\pm .61$ to $\pm .1.00$	-	Very high

For the null hypotheses, the standard decision was to reject the null hypotheses when the calculated r-value was greater than or equal to the critical value and retained when the calculated value was less than the critical value.

RESULTS

Research Question 1

What is the relationship between principals' motivational ability and job gratification of secondary school teachers in Uyo Local Government area?

Table 1: Correlation analysis of responses on the relationship between principals' motivational ability and teachers' job gratification in secondary schools in Uyo Local Government Area

Variables	N	$\sum x$ $\sum y$	$\sum x^2$ $\sum y^2$	$\sum xy$	r-value	Remark
Principals' Motivational Ability	130	384	4928			Very High
				4667	0.87	Positive
Teachers' Job Gratification	130	390	5112			Relationship

Result in Table 1 shows that a very high positive relationship exists between principals' motivational ability and teachers' job gratification in secondary schools in Uyo Local Government area. The result yielded a correlation coefficient of 0.87, which means that principal motivational ability have a strong association with teachers' job gratification in secondary schools in the study area. This implies that teachers are most likely to be very satisfied in discharging their duties if motivated by school principals.

Research Question 2

What relationship exists between principals' communication ability and job gratification of secondary school teachers in Uyo Local Government Area?

Table 2: Correlation analysis of responses on the relationship between principals' communication ability and teachers' job gratification in secondary schools in Uyo Local Government Area

Variables	N	$\sum x$ $\sum y$	$\sum x^2$ $\sum y^2$	$\sum xy$	r-value	Remark
Principals' Communication Ability	130	386	4928			Very High Positive
				4867	0.78	Relationship
Teachers' Job Gratification	130	390	5144			

Results in Table 2 shows that a very high positive relationship exists between principals' communication ability and teachers' job gratification in secondary schools in Uyo Local Government area. The result yielded a correlation coefficient of 0.78, which

establishes an association between principals' communication ability and teachers' job gratification in secondary schools. This implies that teachers tend to be very satisfied in the discharge of duties if the principal established cordial relationship with the staff.

Research Question 3

What relationship exists between principals' decision-making ability and job gratification of secondary school teachers in Uyo Local Government area?

Table 3: Correlation analysis of responses on the relationship between principal' decision-making ability and teachers' job gratification in secondary schools in Uyo Local Government Area

Variables	N	$\sum x$	$\sum x^2$	$\sum xy$	r-value	Remark
		$\sum y$	$\sum y^2$			
Principal' Decision-Making Ability	130	325	5325			Moderately
				5099	0.60	High Positive
Teachers' Job Gratification	130	388	5145			Relationship

Result in Table 3 reveals a moderately high positive relationship between principals' decision-making ability and teachers' job gratification in Uyo Local Government area. This is shown on the correlation coefficient result of 0.64. This result implies that teachers tend to be very satisfied in their teaching job if they are parts and parcels of decisions made by the school principals'.

Hypothesis by Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis 1

There is no significant relationship between principals' motivational ability and job gratification of secondary school teachers in Uyo Local Government area.

Table 4: Pearson Product Moment Correlation analysis of responses on the relationship between principals' motivational ability and teachers' job gratification in Uyo Local Government Area

Variables	N	$\sum x$	$\sum x^2$	$\sum xy$	r-value	r-crit	Decision
		$\sum y$	$\sum y^2$				
Principals' Motivational Ability	130	384	4928				
				4667	0.87	0.074	S

Teachers' Job Gratification 130 390 5112

S = Significant; P<.05; df = 128; critical r = 0.074

Table 4 shows that the calculated r-value of 0.87 is greater than the critical value of 0.074 at degree of freedom of 128 and at .05 significant levels. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected while the alternate hypothesis is retained. This implies that the more teachers are motivated by school principals, the greater they are bound to discharge their teaching duties satisfactorily and vice versa.

Hypothesis 2

There is no significant relationship between principals' communication ability and job gratification of secondary school teachers in Uyo Local Government area

Table 5: Pearson Product Moment Correlation analysis of responses on the relationship between principals' communication ability and teachers' job gratification in Uyo Local Government Area

Variables	N	$\sum x$	$\sum x^2$	$\sum xy$	r-value	r-crit	Decision
		$\sum y$	$\sum y^2$				
Principals' Communication Ability	130	386	4928				
				4867	0.78	0.074	S
Teachers' Job Gratification			5144				
	130	390					

S = Significant; P<.05; df = 128; critical r = 0.074

Table 5 shows that the calculated r-value of 0.78 is greater than the critical value of 0.074 at degree of freedom of 128 and at .05 significant levels. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected while the alternate hypothesis is retained. This implies that the more principals adopt friendly approach with teachers while communicating, the greater they are bound to discharge their teaching duties satisfactorily and vice versa.

Hypothesis 3

There is no significant relationship between principals' decision-making ability and job gratification of secondary school teachers in Uyo Local Government area.

Table 6: Pearson Product Moment Correlation analysis of responses on the relationship between principals' decision-making ability and teachers job gratification in secondary schools in Uyo Local Government Area

Variables	N	$\sum x$	$\sum x^2$	$\sum xy$	r-value	r-crit	Decision
		$\sum y$	$\sum y^2$				
Principals' Decision-Making Ability	130	325	5325				
Teachers' Job Gratification	130	388	5145	5099	0.60	0.074	S

S = Significant; P<.05; df = 128; critical r = 0.074

Table 6 shows that the calculated r-value of 0.60 is greater than the critical value of 0.074 at degree of freedom of 128 and at .05 significant levels. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected while the alternate hypothesis is retained. This implies that the more teachers' views and opinions are considered by the principal before making important decisions, the more the teachers can discharge their teaching duties satisfactorily and vice versa.

Findings of the Study on Research Questions/Hypotheses

Based on the findings of the study, the magnitude of the relationship that existed between the variables of principal administrative competencies and teachers' job gratification was found as follows:

- (i) Research Question/ Hypothesis 1: Very high positive relationship /Significant
- (ii) Research Question/ Hypothesis 2: Very high Positive relationship/ Significant
- (iii) ResearchQuestion/ Hypothesis 3: Moderate high Positive relationship/significant

DISCUSSION

The researchers made a combined discussion of findings from the research questions and hypotheses of the study.

Principals' Motivational Ability and Teachers' Job Gratification

Results in research question and hypothesis one revealed that there is a very high positive and significant relationship between principals' motivational ability and teachers' job gratification in secondary schools in Uyo Local Government area. This finding is in line with the finding of the study conducted by Anokye (2020) which found out that principals' motivational ability has a significant relationship with the job gratification of secondary school teachers. Also, this finding conforms with that of Aderounmu and Ehiamentalor (2020), who stated that administrators' motivational ability is a strong factor in teachers' job gratification. Based on this finding, the researchers wish to observe that teachers are most likely to discharge their teaching duties satisfactorily if motivated by school principals.

Principals' Communication Ability and Teachers' Job Gratification

Results of research question two and hypothesis two revealed that there exists a very high positive and significant relationship between principals' communication ability and teachers' job gratification in secondary schools in the Uyo Local Government area. This finding is supported by Bassey (2021) and stated that effective communication flow between the school heads and teachers in secondary schools enhances job gratification on the part of the teachers. The findings of Akpan (2021) also re-affirmed that the interpersonal relationship existing between the super-ordinate and the sub-ordinate bear considerable influence on the performance of the subordinates. Based on this finding, the researchers wish to observe that effective communication flow between school principals' and the teachers contribute to teachers' job gratification.

Principals' Decision-making Ability and Teachers' Job Gratification

Result in research, question three and hypothesis three revealed that there exists a moderately high positive and significant relationship between principals' decision-making ability and teachers' job gratification in secondary schools in Uyo Local Government area. This finding is in tandem with the finding of the study conducted by Ugwu (2020). The author found out that when decision-making authority is centralized in the hands of school administrators, such leadership style is bound to initiate conflict and hostility among staff, hence, bringing about job dissatisfaction. Nkang (2020) also added that when teachers are adequately involved in decision-making by the school principals (seeking their opinions when important bureaucratic decisions are taken), such teachers' are most likely to have a sense of belonging and put in their best in the discharge of their professional duties.

Recommendations

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

- (i) Principals should draw up certain motivational approaches like special rewards, recognition, promotion of teachers, giving of awards; allowances among other thing to teachers, so that they can be encouraged to work satisfactorily.

- (ii) Principals should ensure that regular meetings are held with teachers and circulate duties to teachers in a friendly and cordial manner so that teachers would contribute satisfactorily to the progress of the school.
- (iii) School principals should embrace democratic decision-making by ensuring that teachers are parts and parcels of decisions made in the school to enhance teachers' job gratification.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, it is concluded that principals' motivational ability, communication ability as well as decision-making ability has a strong association with job gratification among secondary school teachers.

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