

Time Management Strategies as a Panacea for Principals' Administrative Effectiveness in Secondary Schools in Enugu State, Nigeria

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Abstract

This study ascertained the time management strategies for principals' administrative effectiveness in secondary schools in Enugu State. Two research questions guided the study. The study adopted a descriptive survey design. The study was conducted in Enugu State. The study population comprised all the 291 secondary school principals' in Enugu State. Simple random sampling technique was used to sample 146 principals for the study. The instrument used for data collection was a well-structured 15 items researcher developed instrument titled; Time Management Strategies for Principals' Administrative Effectiveness Questionnaire (TMSPA EQ). The instrument was structured on a four rating scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD) weighted 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively. The face validation of the instrument was established by subjecting it to criticism by colleagues, experts and authorities in the field of inquiry. The cronbach alpha was used to determine the reliability of the instrument. Data were analyzed using mean and

standard deviation. The findings of the study revealed that principals' manage their time for administrative effectiveness in secondary schools by adopting meetings management strategies, it also revealed that principals' do not adopt delegation strategies in managing time for administrative effectiveness in secondary schools in the areas of; allowing assistants to make decisions regarding assigned tasks, having complete faith in staff ability when delegating tasks, delegating to staff according to their abilities, and placing a limit for task completion when delegated among others. The study concluded among others that principals' do not adopt delegation strategies in managing time for administrative effectiveness in secondary schools in Enugu State. Based on the findings, it was recommended that capacity building on effective time management should be considered by State Ministry of Education by organizing workshops, seminars and conferences on time management strategies for a successful school administration among others.



Keywords: time, management strategies, principals', administrative effectiveness, secondary schools

Introduction

Timely discharge of administrative tasks and responsibilities is of great concern to administrators and managers in various sectors of the economy including the education sector. Similarly, Hallinger and Murphy (2013) pointed out that finding time to perform multifarious tasks is one of the greatest challenges of leadership for school improvement in the principals' job. The school system like every other enterprise has set goals and objectives which should be actualized at a specified period. At the secondary level of education, the principal is the chief executive officer of the school who is responsible for effective management of school resources for the actualization of stated goal and objectives. Time is a valuable and irreversible abstract resource available for human progression. Whatever achievements and biological growth of man may be, they are achieved with time. It is imperative to every individual, organization and the society at large thus, must be effectively managed.

Claessens, Van Eerde, Rute, and Roes (2007) defined time management as "behaviour that aims at achieving an effective use of time while performing certain goal-directed activities". Time is a

scarce resource, and principals must make decisions about how to allocate their time among competing demands. Time-use decisions are important for effective leadership, as evidenced by the relationship between principal time use and school outcomes (Grissom, Loeb, & Master, 2012). Effective management of time requires good strategies and planning if goals must be achieved. Managers should adopt time management strategies by setting goals that are achievable, prioritizing tasks, delegating tasks to subordinates, avoiding unnecessary interruptions and time wasting activities, maintaining focus on tasks, and leading by example. However, school administrators spend more time on meetings and other school activities yet, finds it difficult to complete tasks at the appropriate time. Setting target for meetings, ensuring timely converge of scheme of work, delegation of duties to teachers and students scheduling extra-curricular activities among others are characteristics of time management of school leaders. Mullins (2005) pointed out that whatever, the attributes or qualities of successful managers are, or the qualities of subordinate staff are, one essential underlying criterion is the effective use of time. If school leader is incompetent in effective use of time, all the administrative and managerial efforts for school improvement will be a waste. Principals' appropriate management of time in secondary schools enhances teachers'

coverage of scheme of work which invariably improve students' academic performance. However, several time management strategies promote teaching and learning. These strategies according to Macan cited in Grissom, Loel and Mitani (2013), are settings goals and priorities, mechanics (that is making lists and scheduling), and preference for organization. Similarly, Sabelis (2001) opined that one can make use of time by applying practices such as keeping time logs, setting immediate and long-standing goals, prioritizing responsibilities, constructing to-do lists and arrangement and organizing one's workspace.

Graig and Steven (2014) stated that time management practices include: short-term and long-term goals, determining priority and scheduling of activities and minimizing time wasters. Long-term goals is concerned with handling every day's jobs over longer time perspective by keeping follow-up of significant dates and setting objectives (Alay & Kocak cited in Shazia & Muhammad, 2015). On the other hand, short-term goal is an instructional time management practice surrounded by daily or weekly time structure and covers the activities such as setting objectives at the commencement of the day, planning and prioritizing daily behaviours and creation of work contents (Yilmaz, Yoncalik & Bekta, 2006). Principals' encouragement of regular teachers' preparation of lesson plans and notes for

multiple classes each day is an essential short-term time management strategy. Time is a valuable asset that should be held in high esteem in order to minimize waste in any organization. It requires proper utilization and management if stated goals must be fully achieved. School administrators should also ensure appropriate delegation of duties to subordinates and manage their meeting time for a successful administration.

Heads can delegate duties to their subordinates by:

1. Allowing assistants to make decisions regarding assigned tasks
2. Delegating authority and responsibility to the right person
3. Providing necessary authority, resources and support to staff
4. Having complete faith in staff ability when delegating duties and
5. Giving time to staff to brief you about their assigned tasks among others.

Heads can adopt the following strategies in managing meetings time by:

1. Communicating meeting agenda one day prior to meeting
2. Setting clear time limits for meetings and tasks
3. Setting time to begin and end meetings and stick to them

4. Dealing effectively with interruptions
5. Summarizing major points at the end of meeting and
6. Following-up on actions to be taken after meeting.

Principals with good time management strategies allocate more time in ensuring quality instructional delivery in their schools. Timely communication of instructional objectives to both teachers and students will help minimize time wastage. There must be a good communication mechanism among teachers', students' and school administrators' within and outside the school for goals achievement at all levels of education (Akinfolarin & Rufai, 2017). To have effective administration, school administrators' must communicate school goals in a timely manner to staff and students. This will depend on principals' ability to manage time and other resources to ensure administrative effectiveness.

Administrative effectiveness involves efforts and technical skills directed towards organizational tasks leading to goals achievement. Similarly, Akomolafe (2012) defined administrative effectiveness as the positive response to administrative efforts and actions with the intention to accomplish stated goal. Administrative effectiveness can be measured through school administrators extent of accountability, school performance

improvement, curriculum improvement, effective resources management, monitoring, appropriate delegation of tasks, timely discharge of duties and constant meeting of targets. The smooth running and uninterrupted activities of any organization require high level of administrative skills of the leader. Most school administrators face difficulties in meeting deadlines and curriculum targets. The principal is the chief administrator of the secondary level of education who should always discharge his or her duties in a timely manner for overall effective administration. Effective time management skill is need for administrative effectiveness.

Statement of the Problem

Principal has the duty as the school leader to ensure quality and timely delivery of educational services. The successful realization of school goals depends on principal ability to manage school time and other limited resources. However, personal observation of the researcher revealed cases of inadequate coverage of scheme of work and inability to meet school targets which may be due to principals and teachers time waste during meetings, irrelevant assembly activities, irregular break time and poor delegation strategies among others in Enugu State. Premised on this problem that the study aimed at determining time management strategies for principals'

administrative effectiveness in secondary schools in Enugu State.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study is to determine time management strategies for principals' administrative effectiveness in secondary schools in Enugu State.

Specifically, this study sought to determine:

1. Principals' meetings management strategies in managing time for administrative effectiveness in secondary schools in Enugu State.
2. Principals' delegation strategies in managing time for administrative effectiveness in secondary schools in Enugu State.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study.

1. What are principals' meetings management strategies in managing time for administrative effectiveness in secondary schools in Enugu State?
2. What are principals' delegation strategies in managing time for administrative effectiveness in secondary schools in Enugu State?

Method

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design which sought to collect data on the opinions of the participants. The study was conducted in Enugu State. The study population comprised all the 291 secondary school principals' in Enugu State. Simple random sampling technique was used to sample 146 principals for the study. The instrument used for data collection was a well-structured 15 items researcher developed instrument titled; 'Time Management Strategies for Principals Administrative Effectiveness Questionnaire (TMSPA EQ)'. The instrument was structured on a four rating scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD) weighted 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively. The face validation of the instrument was established by subjecting the instrument to criticism by colleagues, experts and authorities in the field of inquiry. The suggestions and inputs of the experts were reflected on the final draft of the instrument. The cronbach alpha was used to determine the reliability of the instrument. Copies of the questionnaire were distributed by the researcher together with six research assistants who were briefed on how approach the respondents. Data were analyzed using mean and standard deviation. The mean response were adjudged on the following basis of any mean score of 2.50 or above is taken to indicate agreement while

any mean score that falls below 2.50 is taken as disagreement.

Results

Research Question 1: What are principals’ meetings management strategies in managing time for administrative effectiveness in secondary schools in Enugu State?

Table 1: Mean scores and standard deviation ratings of principals’ meetings management strategies in managing time for administrative effectiveness in secondary schools.

S/N	Items	\bar{X}	SD	Decision
1.	Communicating meeting agenda one day prior	2.63	1.22	Agree
2.	Setting clear time limits for meetings and tasks	3.02	0.34	Agree
3.	Setting time to begin and end meetings and stick to them	2.88	0.99	Agree
4.	Dealing effectively with interruptions during meeting	2.48	1.47	Disagree
5.	Following-up on actions to be taken after meeting	3.50	0.66	Agree
6.	Summarization of major points at the end of meeting	2.31	0.23	Disagree
7.	Placing a time limit on unscheduled meetings/visitors	2.76	0.85	Agree
Grand Mean and Standard Deviation		2.80	0.82	Agree

Items 1, 2, 3, 5 and 7 in table 1 is above the mean score of 2.50 which indicate that respondents’ agreed with the statements while items 4 and 6 mean scores are below 2.50 which indicate that respondents’ disagreed with the statements. The grand

mean score of 2.80 which is above the accepted mean score of 2.50 indicates agreement in principals’ meetings management strategies in managing time for administrative effectiveness in secondary schools in Enugu State.

Research Question 2: What are principals’ delegation strategies in managing time for administrative effectiveness in secondary schools in Enugu State?

Table 2: Mean scores and standard deviation ratings of principals’ delegation strategies in managing time for administrative effectiveness in secondary schools

S/N	Items	\bar{X}	SD	Decision
8.	Allowing assistants to make decisions regarding assigned tasks	2.14	0.33	Disagree
9.	Delegating authority and responsibility to the right person	2.55	0.76	Agree
10.	Providing necessary authority, resources and support to staff	2.52	0.82	Agree
11.	Having complete faith in staff ability when delegating duties	2.12	1.16	Disagree
12.	Giving time to staff to brief you about their assigned task	2.53	0.39	Agree
13.	Delegating to staff according to their abilities	2.28	0.45	Disagree
14.	Following up on the work delegated to staff	2.61	1.80	Agree
15.	Placing a limit for task completion when delegated	2.03	0.77	Disagree
Grand Mean and Standard Deviation		2.35	0.81	Disagree

Items 9, 10, 12 and 14 in table 1 is above the mean score of 2.50 which indicate that respondents’ agreed with the statements while items 8, 11, 13 and 15 mean scores are below 2.50 which indicate that respondents’ disagreed with the statements. The grand

mean score of 2.35 which is below the accepted mean score of 2.50 indicates disagreement in principals’ delegation strategies in managing time for administrative effectiveness in secondary schools in Enugu State.

Discussion of Findings

Findings in table 1 indicate that respondents’ agreed with items 1, 2, 3, 5 and 7 which revealed that principals’ manage their time



for administrative effectiveness in secondary schools by adopting meetings management strategies in the areas of; communicating meeting agenda one day prior, setting clear time limits for meetings and tasks, setting time to begin and end meetings and stick to them. The result also showed that respondents' disagreed with items 4 and 6 which revealed that principals' do not manage their time for administrative effectiveness in secondary schools by not adopting meetings management strategies in the areas of; dealing effectively with interruptions during meeting and summarizing major points at the end of meeting. However, the grand mean score of 2.80 which is above the accepted mean score of 2.50 revealed that principals' adopt meetings management strategies in managing time for administrative effectiveness in secondary schools in Enugu State. This finding is in line with Igbal, Umar, Naseer and Allah (2015) findings that school principals in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa manage their time effectively through meetings management strategies. The findings have also been reported in similar studies carried out by Tracy (2014) and Ugwulashi (2011).

Respondents' agreed with items 9, 10, 12 and 14 in table 2 which revealed that principals' adopt delegation strategies in managing time for administrative effectiveness in secondary schools in Enugu State by delegating authority and

responsibility to the right person, providing necessary authority, resources and support to staff, giving time to staff to brief you about their assigned tasks, and following up on the work delegated to staff. The findings of this study further showed that respondents' disagreed with items 8, 11, 13, and 15 which revealed that principals' do not adopt delegation strategies in managing time for administrative effectiveness in secondary schools in the areas of; allowing assistants to make decisions regarding assigned tasks, having complete faith in staff ability when delegating tasks, delegating to staff according to their abilities, and placing a limit for task completion when delegated. However, the grand mean score of 2.35 which is below the accepted mean score of 2.50 revealed that principals' do not adopt delegation strategies in managing time for administrative effectiveness in secondary schools in Enugu State. This contradicts Igbal et al (2015) findings that school principals in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa manage their time well through delegation practices which got the total mean value of 3.77. Some school heads avoid delegating certain duties to their assistants due to the fear of their jobs been overtaken by subordinates which may amount to delay tasks completion. School principals must understand that they are the chief administrator of their various schools thus, should ensure effective and efficient school administration through appropriate

delegation of administrative and academic tasks to staff and students in order to minimize time wastage. Time management is a crucial aspect of any administration, if properly managed, will help to ensure prompt goals actualization. Manager and administrators must acquire competencies in utilizing the available time to achieve administrative success.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, it was concluded that:

1. Principals' adopt meetings management strategies in managing time for administrative effectiveness in secondary schools in Enugu State.
2. Principals' do not adopt delegation strategies in managing time for administrative effectiveness in secondary schools in Enugu State.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were made premised on the findings:

1. School leaders should adopt meetings management strategies in managing time in the areas of; dealing effectively with interruptions during meeting and summarizing major points at the end of meeting

among others to help ensure effective school administration.

2. Delegation strategies in managing time in the areas of; allowing assistants to make decisions regarding assigned tasks, having complete faith in staff ability when delegating tasks, delegating tasks to staff according to their abilities, and placing a limit for task completion when delegated should be considered by school administrators for administrative effectiveness in secondary schools.
3. Capacity building on effective time management should be considered by State Ministry of Education by organizing workshops, seminars and conferences on time management strategies for a successful school administration.

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