

Relationship Between Principals Administrative Strategies and Student Disciplinary Problems in Secondary School, Bayelsa State

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Abstract

This study examined the relationship between administrative strategy by principals and their effectiveness in tackling disciplinary problems. Three research questions were asked and one hypothesis was raised and tested at 0.05 level of significance. Ninety-five randomly selected principals from Bayelsa State constitute the sample. The instrument for the study is made up of three parts—first part is biodata of the respondents; second part solicits information on administrative strategy, while the third part solicits information on disciplinary problems. It has a test re-test validity. The r-value for this instrument is 1.96. This measures internal consistency. The findings reveal a significant relationship between principal's administrative strategy and their effectiveness in handling disciplinary problems. It also shows that there is a significant relationship between Administrative Strategy and their assessment of students' behavioural outcomes. It was recommended that there should be re-orientation by way of counselling to fight against manifested disciplinary problems also there should be adequate provision of funds, instructional— Disciplinary committees should be set up by school administrators and orientation programmes organized which include campaign enlightenment strategies, seminars, etc as a tool in tackling indiscipline in schools.

Keywords: Principals, Administrative, Strategy, Disciplinary problems, Effectiveness, Secondary School.

Introduction

As principals plan, organization direct, control, co-ordinate, report and budget at the school administration level, teachers are responsible for the administration of classroom. Omemu, F. (2015) consequently, for effective management of the basic education system, certain essential leadership and administrative skills are required of the head teacher who are the leaders and administrators of the system at the primary level. They are the hub of academic wheel with their knowledge and abilities applied in the management of the students under their care so that the knowledge needed by them for furtherance and useful personality attribute will be implanted in them. Agih, A.A. (2013) the teacher is the main plant in any educational enterprise. Thus, Torubeli, V. & Omemu, F. 2015 states Adolescents and youths of recent times behave in defiant and aggressive ways in and out of school setting such as disrupting school activities, bullying, drugs consumption, cultism, disobeying school rules and regulations etc, there is the need to find solution to this maladaptive behavioural trend of students in school environment.

School indiscipline has been Over time on issue of concern for educators and can even state that it has become a huge concern among educators, policy makes and the public opinion in general, owing to the outbreak of aggressiveness among peers, violence within teacher-student relationship and vandalism, as well. Indiscipline is a behavioural disorder that is classified as an act of delinquency. Just like, lying, stealing and playing truant or running away from home. It is often the cause of a lot of mental, emotional and also physical damage, such as damage of property in homes as well as in school. An undisciplined child is an uncontrollable child and can do just about any damage when he or she does not get whatever he or she want

Principals, irrespective of gender must understand the complexity of human beings and prepare measures of tackling anticipation disciplinary problems in their schools. Awareness of discipline will help in addressing the problems and make for effective administration even as the problem spreads its tentacles over the universe. This is borne out of the fact that prevention is always better than cure" (Ikoya, 2006). School disciplinary problems can be described as unacceptable attitudes or behaviours that run contrary to the lay down rules and regulations of the school which may be satisfying to the students at that point in time. Peter E. (2013) noted that, several sources like family background, corruption, norms, values etc have been identified to be the roots of indiscipline. While some attribute the cause of indiscipline to the home, others believe that indiscipline has its roots in the weaknesses of the school system i.e. it could be in the teacher, the administration, the students themselves or the parents. Sometimes it could be sourced by a combination of some or all these roots. Some behavioural problems as a result of cultural/ethnic differences, upbringing, social class, and peer group etc are indiscipline. Meziebi (2006), identified behavior problems as physical fighting, stealing, bullying, disobedience, smoking, dishonest act, purposeful destruction of school property, cheating in examinations, immoral acts, noise making, impersonations, lateness, absence from school, lying, wearing incorrect school uniform, and extortion of money and property from junior students by senior students, these signs of indiscipline can be grouped into anti-social acts, acts of defiance, and acts of negligence. Disciplinary problems make the objectives of setting

secondary education, most of the times, a mirage behavior. This reared its ugly head when the schools were taken over by government from the missionaries in the 1960s that is why people talk of the “good old days”. This very problem tasks the beginning principals and teachers, and it challenges the experienced ones (Doyle, 1986). As the society gets more corrupt with crimes against humanity, it seeps into the school and aggravate the situation. This is why all reformatory efforts of government seem to have failed. It will still be futile if our value system is not re-orientated. There is need for teachers and administrators at the secondary level to devise various and diversified strategy that will be effective in tacking discipline problems in his or her class if the lesson’s objectives and the overall school’s objectives are to be achieved. Le Reche (1998) maintained that the teachers’ behaviour and teachers’ style go a long way in influencing the classroom situation making students to be on constructive tasks all the time. Secondary school administrators whether in the rural or urban areas need to help teachers and students overcome disciplinary problems by employing varying administrative strategy both human and non-human to achieve the objectives of secondary education. Fagbohun, R.O. (2003) opined that school administrators must understand the intricacies that are attendant to human behaviours with a view to using such knowledge to solve problems that may emerge. This required knowledge is based on the human relations. School administrators; head teachers and principals should accept individuals in the different groups as they are and show regard for individuals, he should also not loose his own position. As a leader, classroom administrative strategy involves the application of behavioral principles and discipline polices that are effective to bring about ideal academic system in the area of getting the right people to become teachers, developing them into effective instructors, ensuring that the system is able to deliver the best possible instruction for every child in other to achieve targeted objectives. These behavioural principles include: reinforcement of every kind, modeling, extinction, satiation, role shifts, utilization of logical consequences, successive approximation etc, which assist principals and teachers in overcoming indiscipline (Mezieobi 2006). Harry and Wong (2005), saw management as procedures that govern how students go about doing work in the classroom; while discipline is seen as the way students behave.

Effective leadership of school administrators involves clearly communicating goals, priorities and expectations to staff, parents, students and the community. The need for emphasizing the value of achievement, establishing systems of incentives and rewards that encourage excellence, establishing and maintaining a supportive and orderly environment and also actively involving staff and parents in planning, development and improvement efforts.

Equity cut across all of these issues of effective leadership by administrators both at the primary and secondary levels. Administrative activities can be carried out by school staff members who hold other than administrative positions.

Administrative strategies include, but are not limited to

1. Recognizing equity as an important issue and actively planning for and promoting it
2. Developing and implementing sex equitable policies
3. For and supporting staff development activities related to equity
4. Establishing a school climate that promotes excellence in education, sex fairness for staff, students, parents and community
5. Monitoring equity progress overtime.

Enyi (2004) sees organizing in schools as an administrative process of having a structure and assigning people to the post for the purpose of performing specific duties. It is sometimes seen as a process in which an administrator identifies and groups the work to be done in smaller units, and signs people to the various units with relevant materials and authority.

Enyi (2004) also stated responsibilities of the administrators as follows:

1. Determining the personal needs of the school
2. Satisfying personal needs
3. Maintaining and improving services of the staff

The administrative dealings of various secondary schools in Bayelsa state seen to have been hindered by numerous problems. These problems may include conflict among teachers, poor leadership style of the principals, indiscipline among Students and among others. For the administrative process to be effective in achieving discipline there is need to adopt some administrative process strategies (Ivan, 2008).

Administrative process strategy is concerned with shaping an organization in the right path towards the achievement of its goal. Some of the administrative process strategies of the principals include: planning strategy, organizing strategy, staff personnel strategy, coordinating strategy and decision making strategy. These administrative strategies are pertinent in the achievement of disciplinary problems in secondary schools.

Administrative strategy such as - establishing and communicating high expectations for students; behavior, developing clear behavioural rules and procedures and making these expectations for stakeholders, parents and community, engaging school and community wide commitment to establishing and maintaining appropriate students’ behaviour in school and at school sponsored events, encouraging teachers to handle all

classroom discipline problems that they can, increasing visibility and informal involvement in everyday life of the school, increasing personal interactions with students by taking interest in their plans and activities and arranging for appropriate staff development activities.

The problem of discipline is still an issue in Bayelsa state secondary schools. Principals are faced with lots of problems in handling disciplinary problems in these schools either by teachers, student, parents and even the community.

Good administration strategies of secondary school principals have been tested to be effective against the cankerworm of discipline problems in our educational system. In Bayelsa State, there have been evidences of the application of a number of administrative strategies, such as - establishing and communicating high expectations for students; behavior, developing clear behavioural rules and procedures and making these expectations for stakeholders, parents and community, engaging school and community wide commitment to establishing and maintaining appropriate students' behaviour in school and at school sponsored events, encouraging teachers to handle all classroom discipline problems that they can, increasing visibility and informal involvement in everyday life of the school, increasing personal interactions with students by taking interest in their plans and activities and arranging for appropriate staff development activities. In spite of these strategies being used students' disciplinary problems are still on the increase, students still bully, steal, riot, collect items from junior ones, absent from classes, insult and mock teachers, make noise, destroy school property, involve in corrupt practices, drug abuse, cultism, examination malpractice, truancy, immoral acts and their disruptive behaviours. What then is responsible for disciplinary problems in our schools? Does it mean that the strategies are obsolete as regards individuals and setting (environment or ineffective discipline practices? Therefore the problem put in a question form — what is the relationship between principal's administrative strategies and their effectiveness in handling disciplinary problems in schools?

Research Questions

1. what are the indiscipline behaviours of students in secondary schools in Bayelsa
2. what are the principals administrative strategies in handling students indiscipline behaviours in secondary schools in Bayelsa
3. what administrative strategies do principals used most in handling indiscipline problems of students in Bayelsa

Hypothesis

The following hypothesis was formulated to guide the study.

1. There is no significant relationship between principals types of administrative strategies and students indiscipline behaviours in secondary schools in Bayelsa

Purpose of the Study

The study is set forth to find out the relationship of the effectiveness if administrative strategy can be used in tackling disciplinary problems among principals in school setting.

The age long problem of indiscipline in our schools has done great havoc to the educational system towards the targeted objectives in the National Policy on Education (2004) concerning secondary education. This study will help to install sanity into the educational system as well as improve the moral standards of the youths internally and internationally. The result will be useful to parents, teachers, administrators, students and government towards resolving the problems of indiscipline in our schools, thereby making teaching and learning a scholarly venture.

Method of Study

The survey method was adopted for this study. The study was correlational in nature because the study sought to establish the extent of relationship between the independent and the dependent variables. The population of the study comprises of all secondary school principals in Bayelsa State of Nigeria. The sample was made up of ninety-five principals which was selected using the simple random sampling technique were 95 principals were randomly selected from all principals in secondary schools in Bayelsa state. A self-constructed questionnaire titled (RBPASDP) was used to collect data for the study and this was divided into three parts. The first part sought information about the bio-data of respondents on qualification, age, gender, and experience, the second part sought information on administrative strategies and the third part sought information on disciplinary problems. The second and third part contains 15 questionnaire items each which was administered to the respondents to sought information on administrative strategies and students disciplinary problems in secondary schools. A four point likert scale of SA, A, D, SD, was used to measure the 30 items in the instrument which comprises items in B and C. The reliability of the instrument was tested using test re-test method and the 'r' value obtained was 1.96. The data collected were analyzed using Pearson moment correlation analysis for

measuring the hypothesis. The alpha level of significance was set at 0.05. The reliability of the instrument was tested using simple frequency count and percentage which measure the research questions.

Discussion and Findings

The present study has shown that there is a significant relationship between principal's administrative strategy and their effectiveness in handling disciplinary problems. The possible reason for this finding is because the principals experiences (interaction with students) over the years and understands disciplinary problems and may have applied them using trial and error basis, now knows the most appropriate strategy for the students in this contemporary times. The finding confirms the work of Mezieobi (2006) who said that classroom administration involves the application of behavioural principles and discipline policies that are effective to bring about ideal academic system so as to achieve targeted objectives, and these principles assist principals overcome disciplinary problems. This study has also revealed that there is a significant relationship between principal's administrative strategy and their assessment of student's behavioural outcomes. The understanding of individual's behaviours over the years and administrative strategy utilized by the principals confirms these findings. The finding is at variance with Marshall (2007) who opined classroom management can be promoted when procedures are learned and routines are established, these routines give structure to instruction and a good classroom administration that bring about a stress-free but effective strategy of behaviour control.

Conclusion

There is high level of disciplinary problems in the secondary schools, but effective administrative strategy of principals will curb these problems. The result of this study indicates administrative strategy of principals go a long way in handling disciplinary problems and their assessment of students behavioural outcomes. Thus, principals should be consistent in the application of administrative strategy that suit a particular situation and continue to text and apply other approved strategies of handling disciplinary problems. This will bring about sanity in our secondary educational system.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were made for effective administration of disciplinary problems in the secondary school system;

- Principals should understand the complexity of human beings and prepare measures of tackling disciplinary problems in their schools.
- There should be re-orientation by way of counseling in secondary schools to fight against disciplinary problems.
- Principals should help teachers and students overcome disciplinary problems by employing varying administrative strategy to achieve the objective of secondary education.
- The government should also, workout ways of improving the social and psychological status of teachers so that they (teachers) will be motivated in order to pay appropriate attention to the psychological and emotional needs of the students.
- Disciplinary committees should be set up by school administrators and orientation programmes organized which include campaign enlightenment strategies, seminars, etc as a tool in tackling indiscipline in schools.

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Presentation of Results

Hypothesis 1

There is no significant relationship between principal’s administrative strategy and their effectiveness in handling disciplines problems.

Table 1: Principals administrative strategy and their effectiveness in handling discipline problems.

	N	X	DF	R-Cal	r-Critical	Level of sign	Decision
Principal Administrative Strategy (X)	95	59.28	93	2.58	1.96	0.05	Significant (Rejected)
Students Behavioural Outcome (Y)	95	38.50					

Table 1 above shows that the computed value of the relationship between principal Administrative strategy and their effectiveness in handling disciplinary problems — the calculated r-value of 2.58 is greater than -the-r-critical value of 1.96. The null hypothesis is, therefore rejected. This indicates that there is a significant relationship between the dependent and independent variables.