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Assessment of the Quality of School Managers' Development as Determinant of their Effective Operations in Primary Schools

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Abstract

This study was designed to assess the effect of the quality of School Managers' development on their effective operations in schools. One hundred and twenty (120) school managers were drawn from the four (4) Local Government Areas (LGA5) under Lagos State Education District III South West, Nigeria. These include: Epe, Ibeju-Lekki, Eti-Osa, and Lagos Island. Thirty (30) School managers were selected from each LGA. T-test statistical analysis was used to analyse the data collected. The two (2) hypotheses formulated were analyzed at 0.05 level of significance. The result indicated that there was a statistically significant difference in the assessment of effective operations between school managers of high-quality development and those of low-quality development. However, there was no significant statistical difference among male and female school managers who were of high-quality development in their effective operations. It was recommended, among others, that continuous high-quality development and follow-up of school managers should be embraced or embarked upon by school supervisors to enhance continuous effective operations.

Keywords: Assessing Effective Operations, School Manager, School Manager Development, Assessing Quality of School Manager Development

INTRODUCTION

The quality of any educational system is mostly assessed by the performance of the systems products. The fact is that a greater percentage of the products of basic/primary education cannot stand on their own and contribute to the achievement of the national goals and objectives. (Oni and Jegede, 2016). This bothers on the effective operations of school managers to be able to impart positively on the people they work with.

There can never be any meaningful impact if the quality of school managers' development is low. In other words, effective operations/performance of any school manager is a function of the level of the capacity building acquired within a period of time-based on set goals. Joining this concern, Maduewesi (2005) suggested that it is more fitting to address the issue of quality rather than standard which is considered a subject of quality.

Quality refers to being able to meet customers' requirements either in terms of products (pupils) or in terms of service rendered by school/class managers (Aina and Oyetakin, 2015). It requires a continuum of worth, ranging from the highest levels of excellence to the lowest level.

Quality education, relatively, should be capable of improving the quality of the workforce by raising the levels of its skills and efficiency. In this connection, Lassa (2000) declared that measuring quality involves measuring outputs from the education system and at the same time examining the educational processes which produce these outputs. Part of the processes includes building the capacity of class teachers and school managers.

The United Kingdom through the Department for International Development embarked on a baseline survey of how heads of schools work "tagged head teacher shadowing" in selected schools in Lagos State. The report was that the school managers spent their days mostly on administrative matters. (Education Sector Support Programme in Nigeria/Department for International Development, 2009). In other words, school managers were not really providing leadership in teaching and learning. They were mostly engaged in attending to memos/circulars from the education authority, moving round just to sight teachers in the classroom or attending to parents/guardians.

Leadership training was organized severally for head teachers and their assistants. For instance, as parts of the efforts at attaining Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the National Teachers Institute organized training for heads of schools and class teachers. Inductions were organized for newly appointed head teachers and their assistants by the State Universal Basic Education Boards and Local Government Education Authorities. There seemed to be no difference in the way school managers do their jobs.

Measuring quality from the input dimension, Babalola (2007) gauged the quality of education through pupils capacity plus motivation to learn and the curriculum (or the subjects to be learned). He equally inferred quality from the input side by identifying teachers who know how to teach and can actually teach, time for learning and the requisite tools for teaching and learning.

Examining quality from the process dimensions would recognize all the activities going on within the school. These include teaching and learning, leadership, planning and doing all things to meet pupils' needs. Combining inputs and processes involve include training and capacity building of school managers and classroom managers plus providing support as they utilize .training knowledge in schools. The amount and quality of human development and support may likely improve/enhance personnel effective operation. This implies that quality can mean desired or derived levels of attainment expressed in terms of input, process, and products in education. It was in this connection that Maduewesi (2005) examined quality in relation to education as a multifaceted issue which takes into cognizance, that entire place within the teaching-learning process and how they are managed so as to produce the desired outcome.

Gender of school managers may have an impact on the control and administration of the school. A male school head may have more energy and strength to demonstrate certain skills than his female counterparts. However, having more female school managers than male school managers in primary schools will give room for the enhanced and effective operation of schools (Jegade 2005). This may result from the fact that female school/class managers appear more compassionate while working with other personnel (staff/pupils) in the school/class than their male counterparts. Contrastingly, Adebajo (2009) concluded that it provided the same environment, necessary motivation and monitoring, school heads under such team supervisors or inspectors (whether male or female) will likely perform well.

Apart from the aspect of achievement and standards and learners' personal skills and their participation, five key areas were focused in the report on quality assurance evaluation of some public schools below the tertiary level in 2011 and 2012 (Lagos State Ministry of Education, 2012). The five areas are (1) the quality of teaching and learning (2) quality of curriculum and other activity (3) the quality of care, guidance and support (4) the quality of Learning environment and (5) the effectiveness of leadership and management.

The overall effectiveness of quality assured 249 public nursery and primary schools was put thus: No (0%) school was outstanding, 75 (30.1%) schools were good, 166 (66.7%), fair, 8(3.2%) poor and no (0%) school was very poor. Quality assurance approach of schools was designed to assess the quality of education focusing on outcomes for learners (Lagos State Ministry of Education, 2012).

This paper investigated the effect of school managers' development/capacity building on their effective operations in primary schools. It, therefore, looked into and asked whether:

1. The quality of school managers development has any effect on their effective operations in schools or not
2. Gender of school managers has any effect on their effective operations in primary schools or not

Hypotheses

Considering the foregoing, the following hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance:

1. There is no significant difference in the assessment of school managers of high-quality development and those of low-quality development in their effective operations.
2. There is no significant difference between male and female school managers' assessment in their effective operations in primary schools.

Method

Research Design: The descriptive research design of an *ex-post-facto* type was adopted. This was used for the purpose of collecting detailed and factual information that described the existing phenomenon, identify problems and justify current condition and practices; determine what others are doing with similar problems or situations and to benefit from others' experience in order to make future plans and decisions.

Population of the study: The population comprised the 188 school managers from the 188 public primary schools in the four (4) local government areas under Lagos State Education District III (that is Epe 78, Ibeju-Lekki 38, Eti-Osa 37 and Lagos Island 35), South West Nigeria (Lagos State Ministry of Education, 2013)

Sample and Sampling Techniques:

The sample comprised 120 school managers who were selected using multi-stage sampling technique. All the 20 school managers that have received high-quality development through training, follow-up, and support that is 12 male and eight (08) female schools managers were selected. One hundred (100), i.e. 42 male and 58 female school managers were also randomly selected out of the 168 school managers that have not been trained. A total of 54 male and 66 female school managers were selected for the study respectively.

The sampling was accomplished by collecting the list of schools and their head teachers from the four local Government Education Authorities (Epe, Ibeju - Lekki, Eti-Osa, and Lagos Island) All the 5 school managers from each LGEA totaling twenty (20) that have received capacity building, follow-up and support were selected. The remaining categories from the two groups were randomized having equal chances of being selected.

Instrumentation: Headteachers Effective Operation Scale (HEOS) was adopted from Jegede (2018) and used for the data collection.

This consisted of two sections A and B. Section A contains items on demographic information about the school managers' school, gender, e.t.c. While Section B measures the school managers' effective operations.

The reliability was re-established through the test-retest method by administering it to school managers in Mushin Local Government Area of Lagos State, Nigeria at a two-week interval and a reliability index of 0.78 was obtained. This affirms the suitability of the instrument for use in this study.

For the purpose of testing the two hypotheses, the mean scores were subjected to t-test statistics at 0.05 level of significance. The results are presented in tables 1 and 2.

Results

Table 1: T-test Analysis of School Managers' Effective Operations

Groups	N	X	S	DF	Cal t-value	t-critical value	Decision
High-Quality Developed School managers	20	11.5	1.83	118	88.84	1.960	Rejected at 0.05
Low-Quality Developed School managers	100	75.25	7.5				

As presented in Table 1, the calculated t-value of 88.84 which is greater than the critical t-value of 1.960 reveals that a significant difference exists between the school managers of high-quality development and those of low-quality development in their effective operations.

Table 2: T-test Analysis of Gender Differences among Schools Managers in their Effective Operations

Groups	N	X	S	DF	Cal t-value	t-critical value	Decision
Male School Managers	54	104	1.82	118	1.08	1.96	Rejected at 0.05
Female School Managers	66	119	1.92				

The result of the finding presented in table 2 revealed that the calculated t-value of 1.08 is less than the critical value of 1.96. This implies that no significance difference exists in the effective operations of male and female school managers in primary schools.

Discussion

The overall findings indicated that hypotheses one (H_{01}) were rejected while hypotheses two (H_{02}) was accepted. The significant difference that was found existing between the school managers of high-quality development and those of low-quality development in their effective operations was corroborated by some researchers when they concluded that trained and followed-up school heads are capable of working towards school effectiveness (Adebanjo, 2009. ESSPIN/DFID, 2009 and Jegede 2018).

In support of the significant difference that did not exist in the effective operations of male and female school managers, Babalola (2007) declared that heads of schools whether male or female working under the same ideal public service condition will delegate duties appropriately for effectiveness. It, therefore, indicates that gender among school managers will not raise or reduce effective operations.

Conclusion and Recommendation

School managers who regularly receive empowerment/capacity building and follow-up have been classified as having the ability to operate effectively in primary schools. The effectiveness of academic leadership and management will make learners attain achievement and standard in schools.

Based on the findings, the following are recommended:

- i. The state Universal Basic Education Boards (SUBEB) are to identify capacity building needs of all heads of schools and provide such with appropriate follow-up techniques.
- ii. For the purpose of enhancing quality through effective operations of school managers, officers from the Ministry of Education, SUBEB and Local Government Education Authorities (LGEA) should embark on

mentor-mentee relationships and techniques so that heads of schools will no longer see them, as fault finders.

- iii. All school managers are to work in line with the in-service training received 'and in accordance with the capacity building acquired cum experience found in their respective school locations.

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