

## ASSESSMENT OF THE CHALLENGES FACED BY PRINCIPALS IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN NKANU WEST LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF ENUGU STATE.

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### ABSTRACT

This Study is an Assessment of the Challenges faced by Principals in Secondary Schools in Nkanu West Local Government Area of Enugu State. The objective of the study was to find out the Challenges Secondary School Principals face with regards to; Low Motivation of Teachers and Inadequate Funding of Schools. The study design was a descriptive survey, the population for the study was all the 15 principals and 49 vice-principals in Nkanu West Local Government Area of Enugu State. Complete enumeration was done hence removing sampling bias. The instrument for collecting data for the study was a self-structured questionnaire designed by the researcher. Two research questions were formulated for the study. Data collected were analyzed using mean and {SD} Standard Deviation. Four point Likert scale was used. Some of the findings are: Absenteeism and Lateness, Inability to cover the Scheme of Work by Teachers, Lack of Adequate Funding and Infrastructural Facilities all combine lowered the standard of education at the secondary level and are major Challenges confronting the secondary school Principals in Nkanu West Local

Government Area of Enugu State. Some recommendations made were that there is need for teachers to be well motivated through regular and consistent payment of salary, housing and health insurance scheme should also be introduced; that secondary schools should be adequately funded to facilitate smooth running of the schools and for maintenance of infrastructural facilities. Schools supervision should also be intensified.

**Keywords:** Assessment, Challenges, Principal, and Secondary School

### Introduction

Education can be regarded as the key that unlocks the development of personal national potential and all other kinds of rights and powers in the world. The increasing awareness of the importance of education for sustainable development in Africa is paramount. Education for sustainable development in Africa, can be defined as the educational process of accomplishing sustainable human development which includes economic growth, social development, environmental protection, scientific development and employment opportunities in an equitable manner. Ofojebe (2020) opined that education is the light, without which, the world would be in darkness. It is the basis for modernity, scientific and technological breakthrough, which have made all nations of the world accord immense priority to education. Nigeria as a nation strives towards the provision of quality and affordable education for its citizens through the guiding principle of National Policy on Education (2013). The guiding principles of education in Nigeria is the equipping of every citizen with acquisition of knowledge, desirable skills, attitude and values as well as to enables him or her to derive maximum benefits from his or her society, and also contribute his quota meaningfully towards the development of the

nation at large. Secondary school education is one among the levels of education in Nigeria. Nwankwo (2022) defined Secondary school education as the form of education, which children receive after primary education and before the tertiary level. It is the second level of education in Nigeria headed by a school administrator called principal. Certainly, Principal is the head of an institution that occupies a pivotal position, requires initiatives and skills for the day to day administration of a secondary school. As a school leader, principal must have foresight for effective, efficient and dynamic principles in handling matters between the school, staff and the host community. Similarly, a principal must be in a position to guide and provide expertise guardian in regards to curriculum development, teaching methods, and evaluation as well as supervision of human and material resources.

For the school to function well, the principal must be in a position to exploit all possible means to keep a healthy environment for the students, staff and the general public, therefore as a principal, who is the chief executive officer of a school, should guides and inspires the teachers' for job satisfaction. It also sets the direction of polices, acceptable standards for academic and behavioral achievement of students, establishes a

friendly school climate and influences the commitment of every stakeholder in the society for the achievement of the educational goals. Principal as a leader is also the liaison officer that mediates between the school and the society.

A critical role of a principal is to mobilize the teaching and non-teaching staff towards the achievement of the school objectives. Ibukun (2010) views leadership as a position of dominance and prestige accompanied by the ability to direct, motivate and to assist others in achieving a specified purpose. Aina (2011) posited that leadership is about concern for social justice, a compassion for the under privileged, dedicated to the growth of self-reliance, commitment, ability to communicate, courage to take risks, make bold decisions, ability to achieve the desired result and faith in the people's ability. Aghenta (2010) viewed school principal as a leader that provides direction and expert advice on development of teaching and learning in school. The principal has a duty to lead, guide, conduct, direct and motivate both the teaching and non-teaching staff toward achievement of the school goals and objectives. The principal position is a high-pressure job in the context of instructional supervision and funds management in his or her day to day running of school. It is also a job that the remuneration is less compare with the responsibilities attached to it.

The secondary school principals are faced with many challenges in their daily routine; these challenges are enormous which hinder

the attainment of secondary schools aim and objectives in Nigeria. The situation in Nkanu West Local Government Area seems to be the same as everywhere else in the country and secondary schools in this education zone are facing numerous administrative challenges ranging from issues on inductions, development and motivation of teachers in schools, managing support staff, human resources management effect on learning and teaching and the coping mechanisms. This study therefore tries to investigate the administrative challenges that are faced by principals in managing secondary schools in Nkanu West Local Government Area. Concept and Role of School Principal; School principal is the highest-ranking administrator in the secondary schools. Principals typically report directly to the school superintendent, but may report to the superintendent's designee, usually an associate superintendent, in larger school districts. Okuom and Kegode (2012). The highest-ranking school level administrator in some private schools is called the head master. Headmasters have many of the same responsibilities as principals, but they may engage in additional activities such as fundraising. In some school districts, a single person functions as superintendent and principal. Principals, headmasters and others who are responsible for the overall operation of a school are often called school leaders. In an era of shared decision-making and site-based management, the term school leader may also be used in reference to other school administrators and leaders within the school such as assistant principals, lead teachers, and others who participate in school

leadership activities. Schools have not always had principals.

Around the beginning of the twentieth century, as schools grew from one-room schoolhouses into schools with multiple grades and classrooms, the need arose for someone to manage these more complex organizations. This need was plied initially by teachers, who continued to teach while also dealing with their school's management needs. These teachers were called principal teachers. As schools continued to grow, principal teachers became full-time administrators in most schools. Most principals soon stopped teaching because of the many demands their management responsibilities placed on their time managers, principals were responsible for financial operations, building maintenance, student scheduling, personnel, public relations, school policy regarding discipline, coordination of the instructional program, and other overall school matters. The management role included some curriculum and instruction supervision but overall school management was the primary role principals played until the early 1980s. As the accountability movement gained momentum, the role of the principal changed from school manager to school instructional leader and then to the school reform leader. With this shift in role focus, principals retained their management roles. Principals currently play multiple roles: school manager, instructional leader, and the leader of school reform. Principals are responsible for the overall operation of their schools. Some of their duties and responsibilities are delineated in

state statutes. States and school districts have also set expectations for principals through their principal evaluation criteria and procedures.

During the latter part of the twentieth century, as schools began to be held more accountable for the performance of their students on national and state assessments, the duties and responsibilities of principals changed. Principals became more responsible for teaching and learning in their schools. In particular, their duty to monitor instruction increased along with their responsibility to help teachers improve their teaching. With this change in responsibilities, principals discovered the need to more effectively evaluate instruction and assist teachers as they worked to improve their instructional techniques. The principal's duty to improve the school instructional program is mandated by legislation in some states. Some state legislation requires the removal of principals when schools are classified as low performing (students do not meet achievement expectations) for a specified period of time. With schools facing increased pressure to improve teaching and learning, the duties and responsibilities of principals expanded further to include the responsibility for leading school reform that would raise student achievement. Success in leading reforms to increase student achievement often hinged upon a principal's ability to create a shared vision within the school community and success in implementing new organizational structures that engage teachers in shared decision-making. Principals have discovered that engaging the entire school



staff in making decisions results in more commitment to school reform initiatives. Principals are also responsible for facilitating their school's interactions with parents and others in the school community.

This responsibility includes working with parents when disciplinary issues arise, when students are not succeeding academically, and when parents have concerns. Principals also interact with parents how serve on school advisory boards, parent/teacher organizations, and booster clubs. According to teacher proficiency training manual (2019) the principal is responsible for school base teacher development and skill upgrading. He is also charged with the responsibility of promoting the welfare of all staff and pupils within the school as well as guiding and counseling teacher trainee during practice. The principal is al supposed to induct and mentor new teachers. Owojori and Asauri (2020) agree that the function of the school head is also to induct new staff and assign duties to them. However, it should be stressed that this function can be delegated to the Heads of department of whom the staff is directly accountable. These are just but some of the role of this principal towards management of the school staff.

For the purpose of this research only the challenges that are experienced by the principals directly will be discussed. Administrative challenges confronting school principals are numerous and some of them are Teacher recruitment, Induction, Staff development, Poor School Infrastructural Facilities, Absenteeism and

lateness of teachers, Support Staff and Motivation etc Recruitment: Teacher recruitment is school-based in some countries. In Kenya for instance, the members of Board of Governors are supposed to ensure that the school has adequate teachers throughout and that in case of any shortage; they are supposed to provide solutions that would lead to the employment of new teachers. As such, it is imperative that they perform the roles of ensuring that the schools have adequate teachers and that some of the teachers who are bringing problems to the school are discipline. In Enugu State, the school principal may not be involved directly in the exercise of recruitment but the parent teachers' association could be. According to Okoroafor (2011) the school head could be involved in the recruitment of teachers indirectly by helping in the advertisement and specifying the subject areas that are needed by the school. It is clear that when this happens, the school heads are involved in the whole process. Induction: According to Simatwa, (2020), induction is the process designed to acquaint newly employed individuals with the community, the school, and the colleagues.

Through induction programs, there can be improved employee retention and job performance. An effective induction program must have well-defined objectives that reflect the needs of new employees in specific school systems. The new employee becomes fully integrated into the service after the induction. The time of induction is a transition period when the beginning teacher becomes a worker or a teacher. During the

induction period, there is need for manager to assist the new employers to go through a well-designed induction program. An important factor that influences whether new teachers will remain in the profession is the amount of support and guidance they receive from school administrators and colleagues (Council for Education Policy, research and Improvement, 2020). This enables the new staff to settle down on the job as smoothly as possible. Induction minimizes the frustration and conflict behaviors, for it serves a psychological purpose by providing for controlled and gradual development of teachers' confidence and ability.

Many people, teachers inclusive leave organization shortly after joining them due to the treatment they receive from other employees and employers during the initial phase of employment. Simatwa and Ayodo (2021) found out that Challenges faced by the Induction process in Secondary Schools as reported by principals included; financial constraint, work overload for mentors who must continue with other assigned duties, lack of time to offer a comprehensive induction, inadequate skill and knowledge by mentors, lack of documents such as policy blue prints and school bronchus to facilitate induction process.

Influence of informal induction from veteran teachers who are opposed to school administration, rigid attitude and refusal to accept new ideas by newly appointed teachers during induction, discontent between what to expect and the reality of facilities in the schools were also among the

challenge cited. While Nwankwo, (2019), also observed that when induction was delegated to senior members of staff, it was not done well due to lack of time to do it well. At the same time, the study shows that some members of staff were uncooperative.

Motivation has been defined as the process that account for an individual's intensity, direction, and persistence of effort towards attaining a goal. Otunga (2010) indicated that work motivation refers to the psychological processes that influence individual behavior with respect to the attainment of workplace goals and tasks. Only when these basic need have been met is it possible for 'higher-order' needs, which are the basis of true job satisfaction, will be realized. Low salaries are a major problem. Very low pay forces large proportions of teachers to earn secondary income from private tutoring and other activities. Substantial proportions of teachers have second jobs and sometimes third wage-earning jobs Pay on its own does not increase motivation, work and living environments for many teachers are poor, and tends to lower self-esteem and is generally demotivating teachers.

Housing is a major issue for nearly all teachers. Nwankwo (2019) found out that there are inadequate staff houses to accommodate all the teachers in the compound. Many commuted from far and that affected the preparation for the teachers' lessons. Poor motivation and lack of accountability is widely reported to result in high levels of teacher absenteeism and

lateness to school. Poor timekeeping among teachers is a major problem to principals. Teachers arriving late, finishing early, and leaving their classes during the day can seriously reduce total instructional time. If the cumulative time lost is taken into consideration, then the teachers might not be putting up to 40 hours a week as required by the service.

Other challenges faced by principals in Nkanu West local government area is compulsory transfer of teachers from one school to another. This is usually a big challenge to school heads administratively. Collins (2020), argued that teachers transfer happen without the consent of the principal because the teachers on their own show interest to be transferred. Even when the principals try to block them from making such moves they use everything at their disposal to move on. Most times such moves affect the flow of things in the school system. Another important challenge that principals face in the management of staff in the Secondary Schools in Nkanu West local government area is the inability of teachers who stay in the school compound to pay for rent. Even though these schools are government owned, such payments are needed to make things work as expected. Speaking on this, Otunga (2020) argued that School heads experience hardships in the direction as the inability of teachers to pay such rents present a rather difficult picture of the accounting program of the schools. This situation clearly portend danger to the overall wellbeing of the school administratively. The

support staff seems to closer with the students than the teachers Ocheng (2021).

The relationship is prompted by differences in the educational levels between teachers and non-teaching staff. There have been suspicions that some drugs; cigarettes, an alcohol that infiltrates the school, pass through the hands of the non-teaching staffs. He stated further that some cases of girls sneaking out of school at night have been blamed on watchmen who become permissive and succumb to some bribes or inducement by the girls. There is also some non-teaching staff may choose to discuss teachers with the students thus the role of a teacher as a counselor and as a disciplinarian. All this require tactful intervention of the principal with skills and knowledge in staff management.

### Statement of the Problem

In Enugu State, Administrative Challenges Faced by Principals of Secondary Schools are tasking, enormous, complex and evolving with time. The appointment of principals by the Post Primary Schools Management Board (PPSMB) is done based on experience of the teacher and his rank in service. However, most principals usually assume their roles in the office without having any formal training to prepare them for their new roles. Principals are expected to oversee the organization of departments and the allocation of resources within the units in the school, facilitate

professional development and in-service training of human resources, as well as monitor how teaching and assessment of students is conducted and effectively managed the outcome. These challenges clearly indicate that on appointment, principals need formal training to ensure effective administration and management of secondary school in Enugu State. Research has also shown that some secondary school principals are lacking leadership competencies, resulting in low quality of instruction, indiscipline among staff and students Aina (2011). This study therefore, seek to examine the Administrative Challenges Confronting the Principals in secondary schools in Nkanu West Local Government Area.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study is to investigate the extent of administrative challenges faced by principals in secondary schools in Nkanu West Local Government Area., Enugu State.

Specifically, the study sought to:

1. Find out the extent of administrative challenges that the principals face due to lack of teacher motivation and
2. The extent of administrative challenges faced by principals due to inadequate funding of secondary education.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions guided the study.

1. To what extent does lack of teacher motivation constitute administrative challenges to principals in Nkanu West local government area?
2. To what extent does inadequate funding constitute administrative challenge to principals in Nkanu West local government area?

### **Methodology**

The design for the study was descriptive survey. This study was conducted in Nkanu West Local Government Area of Enugu State. The population for the study comprised of 15 Principals and 49 Vice-Principals; a total of sixty-four (64) in all the fifteen (15) secondary schools in Nkanu West Local Government Area of Enugu State. A total of sixty-four (64) principals and vice principals in all the fifteen (15) secondary schools in Nkanu West Local Government Area of Enugu State were studied. The fifteen (15) Principals and forty-nine (49) Vice-Principals of all the secondary schools in the Nkanu West Local Government Area were studied without any omission (total population). The instrument for data collection was a self-structured questionnaire titled Principals' Administrative Challenges Questionnaire (PACQ). The instrument was subjected to face validation by three experts. To ascertain the reliability of the instrument, a trial test was carried out. Cronbach Alpha Co-efficient of 0.76, 0.71 were obtained for clusters A and B. The overall reliability estimate obtained for instrument was 0.85. This confirmed that the instrument was reliable for the study. The mean rating (Likert scale) method of analysis was done based on mean and grand mean for the research questions.



### Results:

To what extent does low teacher motivation constitute administrative challenge to principals in Nkanu West Local Government Area?

S/N	Statement Item	VHE 1	HE 2	LE 3	VLE 4	Mean	SD	Decision
1.	Low attendance to school	30	20	9	5	3.17	0.95	HE
2.	Poor lesson delivery	25	30	5	4	3.18	.83	HE
3.	Low participation in school activities	27	23	10	4	3.14	0.91	HE
4.	Nonchalant attitude to school activities	26	24	9	5	3.11	0.91	HE
5.	Poor time keeping	28	22	12	2	3.18	0.83	HE
6.	Absenteeism and lateness	30	23		74	3.23	0.89	HE
	<b>Cluster Mean</b>					<b>3.16</b>		<b>HE</b>

From table 1, all the items showed a high extent with a mean rating above 3.0 which implies that Low attendance to school, Poor lesson delivery, Low participation in school activities, Nonchalant attitude to school activities, Poor time keeping and Absenteeism and lateness are The Administrative Challenges Facing Principals of Secondary Schools in Nkanu West Local Government Area of Enugu State due to low motivation of the teachers. The standard deviation ranges from 0.83 to 0.95 which is low showing closeness of the responses. A cluster means of 3.16 to a high extent affirmed the findings above.

### Research Question 2

To what extent does inadequate funding constitute administrative challenge to principals in Nkanu West Local Government Area?

S/N	Item Statement	VHE 1	HE 2	LE 3	VLE 4	Mean	SD	Decision
7.	Poor maintenance of classroom facilities	30	20	8	4	3.25	0.91	HE
8.	Poor maintenance of Laboratories	25	30	5	4	3.18	0.83	HE
9.	Poor maintenance ICT facilities	32	20	8	4	3.25	0.91	HE
10.	Poor maintenance of staff room facilities	28	22	8	6	3.13	0.97	HE
11.	Dilapidation of available structures	32	20	8	4	3.25	0.91	HE
12.	Inability to develop new structures.	4	10	24	26	1.88	0.90	LE
13.	None availability of chalk for teaching.	28	32	8	6	1.13	0.97	HE

	<b>Cluster mean</b>					<b>3.01</b>		<b>HE</b>
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From table 2, items 12 indicated a very low extent with a mean rating of 1.88, this implies that inability to develop new structures might not be part of administrative challenges facing principals due to inadequate funding. All other item indicated a high extent with mean rating above 2.0 indicating that poor maintenance of the following; classroom facilities, laboratory facilities, ICT facilities, staff room facilities and dilapidation of available structures and non-availability of chalk for teaching are The Administrative Challenges Facing Principals of Secondary Schools in Nkanu West Local Government Area of Enugu State due to inadequate funding. The standard deviation ranges from 0.83 to 0.97 which is low, indicating closeness of the responses. A cluster means of 3.01 indicates a high extent and affirms the findings above.

### Discussion of Findings

Discussions of the findings will be done in line with the objectives of the study. The first objective sought to determine the extent to which lack of teacher motivation constitutes to Administrative Challenges Facing Principals of Secondary Schools in Nkanu West Local Government Area of Enugu State. The Findings revealed that low attendance to school, poor lesson delivery, low participation in school activities, nonchalant attitude to school activities, poor time keeping and absenteeism and lateness to a high extent are administrative challenges facing principals of secondary schools in Nkanu West Local Government Area due to low motivation of the teachers. This finding is in agreement with B.F Skinner's Operant Conditioning, (1948) which posits that behavior that is followed by pleasant consequences is likely to be repeated, and behavior followed by unpleasant consequences is less likely to be repeated. When there is low motivation of teachers, the desire to put optimum time and effort is lacking. The teachers are line officers that implement the educational policies in schools

and when they slack no matter how little, the effect becomes glaring both in delivery of service and behavior of the students.

The Findings also show that poor maintenance of the following; classroom facilities, laboratory facilities, ICT facilities, staff room facilities and dilapidation of available structures and non-availability of chalk for teaching to a high extent are challenges confronting principals of secondary schools in Nkanu West Local Government Area due to inadequate funding. This finding is in line with the Functionalist Theory of Emile Durkheim (1958) which posited that the society or organization as a biological organism which has parts and those parts are interrelated; when one component units that make up the whole. For him, when changes occur, the internal order and mechanism should be allowed to absorb the changes without altering the equilibrium state of the society. One of the criticisms against the theory is that it tends to view the society or organization from the static point. This finding is expected considering that teachers and students need to be in a

conducive learning environment for optimum teaching and learning outcome to take place. Where all these are lacking, the effect will be very negative on the teachers and students alike. Adequate funding of schools remains an important factor in ensuring suitable teaching and learning environment.

### Conclusion

In line with the findings, it is concluded that the administrative challenges facing principals of Secondary Schools in Nkanu West Local Government Area of Enugu State are enormous as with regards to low motivation of teachers, inadequate funding of secondary education, lack of infrastructural facilities and low staff discipline. Apart from malfunctioning of secondary schools in the

Area, it adversely affects the product of these secondary schools and the society at large.

### Recommendations

The following recommendations are made:

1. Teachers should be adequately motivated by their employers. Apart from regular and consistent pay of salaries, there should be an upward salary review to be in line with the current economic situation in the country. Other incentives like regular promotion, health insurance, housing scheme and periodic training should be arranged for them.
2. Government should ensure adequate funding of secondary schools. This will enable the school administrators/principals to properly maintain the facilities in place and run the school smoothly.

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