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## PRINCIPALS' ORGANIZATIONAL MANAGEMENT AND STUDENTS ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN EKITI-STATE NIGERIA

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### Abstracts

*This study investigated the managerial roles of principal in the students' academic performance in school certificate examination in Ekiti State. The study was occasioned by the continued poor performance of students in school by certification examination in most secondary schools in the state. It was a descriptive research design of the survey type which aimed at eliciting information from the school principals and teachers on how organizational management of principals affect academic achievement of students. Eighty five secondary schools were randomly selected out of 175 secondary schools in the state. Questionnaire tagged (PATQ) principals' administrative technique questionnaire was the instrument used to elicit information from the respondents. The population of the study consisted of all the principals and teachers in Ekiti State. Sampled schools comprised eighty five principals and eight hundred and fifty teachers randomly selected. The data collected were analyzed using frequency count, percentages and means. Inventory of School Examination result was also used in the study. Findings showed that principals of the selected schools adopted quality improvement measures, encourage team work with staff and students, participate in academic activities that influenced academic achievement in the school. The principals were involved in academic activities of students by supervising teachers work and students, disciplined and discouraged examination malpractices. It was recommended that principals should maintain discipline in the schools so as to improve teaching and learning.*

**Keywords:** *Academic achievement, principal, instructional supervision, efficiency, supervision, monitoring.*

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### INTRODUCTION

In recent times, education stakeholders have expressed their concerned over the poor performance of students in the school certificate examination. Some blamed the school administrators (principals) and the teachers while some blamed the students themselves and the parents. Whoever to be blamed, the fact remains that, the school and its organizational management has correlation with the academic achievement of the

students. Leith (2004). The school principal who is the manager has a lot of roles to play in the academic achievement of the students. Ruth et al (1979) Wekessa (1997) Olagboye (2004) noted that to improve students' performance, principals or managers are required first to improve the management of the schools. This can be done if the principal set a clear vision for the schools, exhibit instructional leadership, and also allow for team spirit in the school.

Lack of vision in the management of school often lead to imbalance in the allocation of and use of resources. This is why Ayot and Briggs (1992) noted that academic achievement of students depends on effective leadership. The principal is the chief executive of the school. He has some administrative tasks to perform such as supervision of instructional programmes in the school, management of school personnel, management of school finance, maintenance of student welfare services and establishment of good community relations.

His or her failure to perform these tasks effectively and efficiently will affect the tone of the school and achievement of academic goals.( Nwankwo 1982 and Peretomode 1991). In the discharge of these tasks, the manager is expected to plan, control, organize, coordinate and direct human and non-human resources in the organization in order to achieve the goals of the organization (Adeleke 2001 and Onifade 2004).

Nigeria education system is largely examination oriented. Hence poor performance of students in examination is always attributed to the school administration where the principal is at the helm of affairs.

Report of academic performance of students in the Senior School Certificate Examination (SSCE) conducted by the West African Council (WAEC) and the National Examination Council (NECO) were poor in Nigeria between 2007 and 2010. The percentage of students who obtained credit level passes in five subjects and above including English language and Mathematics was about 25% in Nigeria. (Quality Education Assurance Agency, 2010). In 2011, only

30.9% of the 1,540,250 candidates obtained credit level passes in five subjects including English and Mathematics while in the 2011 June/July NECO SSCE only 22.34% of the 1,160,561 candidates obtained credit level passes and above in English Language and 25.14% in Mathematics in the 36 states of the Federation and the Federal Capital Territory (Owadie, 2011 and Okpala 2011).

In 2012 May/June West African Senior School Certificate Examination, 649,156 candidates (38.81%) of the 1,677,224 candidates that sat for the examination obtained 5 credit level passes and above in subjects including English Language and Mathematics in the 36 states of the Federation and the Federal Capital Territory (Owadie, 2011).

In the states noted for good performance in the past, the performance of students in senior Secondary Certificate Examination (SSCE) was relatively low during the period

under discussion. In Ondo, Osun Ogun and Ekiti states for instance. The percentage passes with credits in five subjects including English Language and Mathematics was shown in Table 1.

States	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Ondo	7.55	16.87	21.16	25.42	301.7
Ogun	7.24	4.18	4.85	9.19	10.55
Osun	4.46	1.42	3.83	8.5	9.8
Ekiti	8.9	20.36	22.6	26.3	32.7

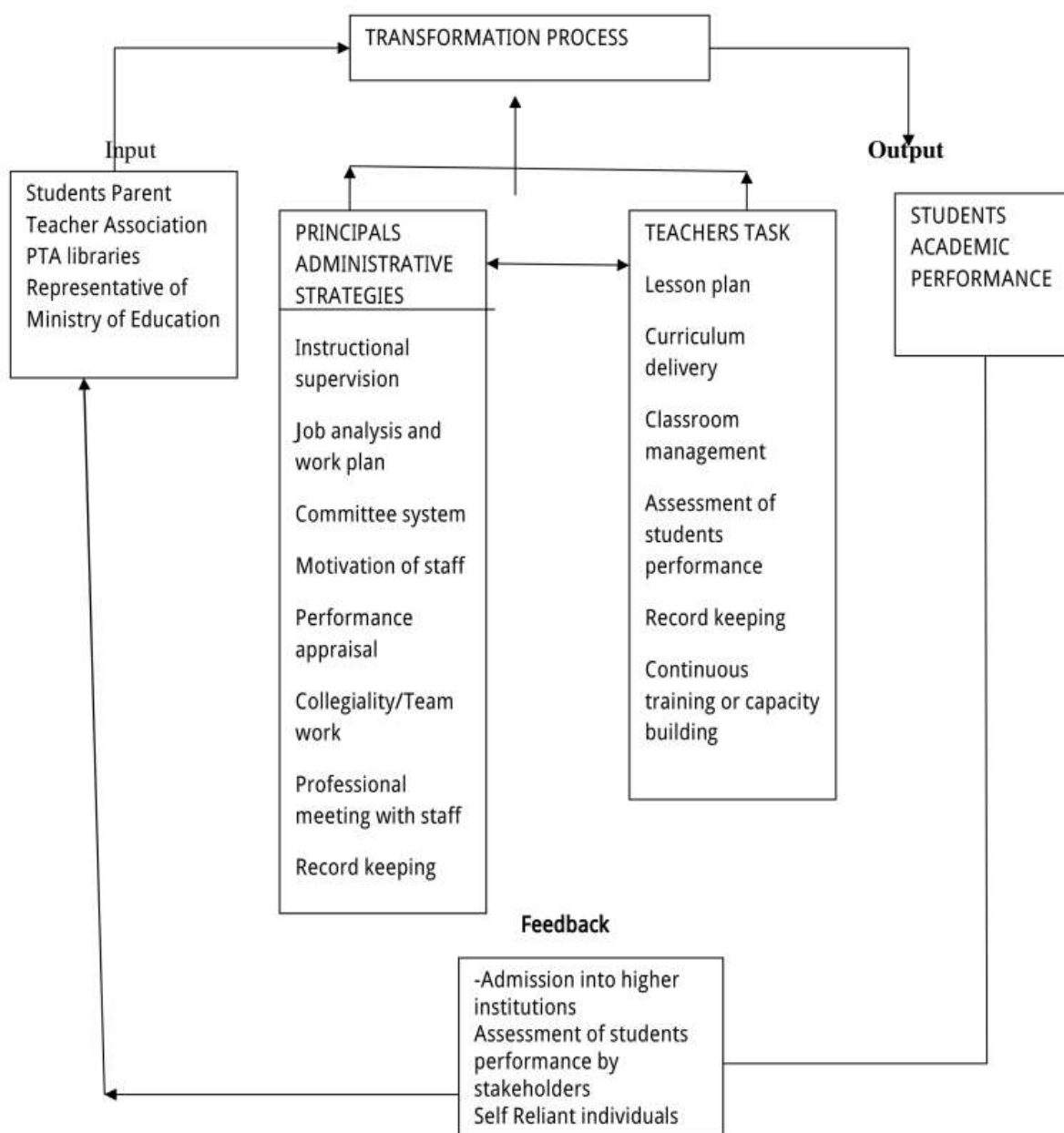
The result showed poor performances which perhaps could be attributed to poor management strategies of some principals and teachers in the performance of their administrative tasks.

The poor performance of students in these examinations had been largely attributed to poor management of the principals. It appears that most principals fail to monitor, and disseminate current information on educational issues and modern teaching techniques to teachers in the schools.

This has been a source of concern to the government and education stakeholders. Observation shows that most schools both in rural and urban are not well equipped of learning materials, enough teachers, computers were not available which could have prepared the students for electronic examination in future

Even in some urban schools where computers were available the epileptic supply of electricity has limited their use. A consideration of the above posed a challenge to the administrative effectiveness of the principal. The inability of some principals to encourage team spirit, among teachers, poor human relations with teachers and inconsistent classroom visitations are all hindrance to effective learning and teaching. Research findings showed that principals can significantly contribute to the academic performance of students if attention is given to teaching, methods, class management, size of the school, patterns of discipline and characteristics of school climate (Rutter, et. al 1979). A principal who properly exercises his or her leadership responsibility will enable his or her school to realize good academic achievement. This augments the fact that effective management of organization is a prime contributory factor in achievement (Chitiavi, 2002). Teachers are not exempted from the controversy on the poor performance of students in secondary school examinations. The poor attitude of teachers to teaching and lack of professional development contribute to poor academic performance of students. A critical look at the students' academic performances over the year show that much work is expected to be performed by principals and teachers in order to improve the level of academic performance in secondary schools in the state. It is against this background that this study investigated the role of principal's organizational management on academic achievement of students in secondary schools in Ekiti States. The theoretical framework of this study is based on system theory. In relating system theory to educational system, a

secondary school is an open system which comprises of input that is human and material resources. All these are interrelated, organized processed to achieve the goal of the school which is outputs in form of graduates



Source: Adapted from Peretomode (1991)

The model shows the interrelationship between the inputs and output chain of the secondary school system

**Statement of the Problem**

Poor performance of students in senior secondary school examination has persisted despite the fact secondary schools are assumed to be having well-qualified pupils from primary schools, trained and qualified principals. The reasons for poor performance cannot

be easily discerned without focused investigation. This implies that much work is being expected to be performed by teachers and principals in order to improve the level of students' academic performance in secondary schools. This study therefore aimed at focusing on the role of principal who is at the helm of affairs of the school on academic achievement of the students in secondary school.

The following research questions guided the study.

- What are the principals' organization skills that influenced academic achievement of the student?
- Which academic activities does the principal need to participate to help improve academic performance of student.

## **METHOD**

The descriptive research of the survey type was adopted for the study. Descriptive analysis was employed to establish opinions and knowledge about the role of principals of schools in academic achievement of students in Senior Secondary School Certificate Examination (SSCE).

Fraenkel and Wallen (1993) described descriptive analysis as that method that involves asking a large group of people questions about a particular issue. The study population comprised all the 175 secondary schools in Ekiti State, Nigeria. Out of this population, a sample of 85 secondary schools was taken and selected through the simple random sampling technique. Eighty Five (85) principals from sampled schools participated in the study. 850 teachers were randomly selected, 10 teachers from each school. Two instruments were used to collect data for the study. These were principals Administrative Techniques Questionnaire (PATQ). The questionnaire was divided into two Sections; Section A contained the Bio data of the principal. Section B elicited information on Principals management variables vis-a-vis academic performance of students. 15 items questionnaire was administered on the respondents on the scale of "Agree" and "Disagree".

The teachers questionnaire was the second instrument tagged Teachers appraisal questionnaire of the principal management technique. (TAQ) 5 items questionnaire was administered. The third instrument was an inventory on students' academic achievement. This was to elicit information on students' academic performance in Senior School Certificate Examination in the state.

### **Valid and Reliability of the Instruments**

In order to ascertain the content and face validity of the instruments. The questionnaire were critically assessed by experts in Tests and Measurement in Educational Foundations and Management in Ekiti State University, Ado-Ekiti for vetting.

The reliability of the instrument was made through the test and re-test reliability. The instrument was administered twice within an interval of two weeks. The results

obtained from the two occasions were collated and analyzed using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Technique to determine the reliability co-efficient. A correlation coefficient of 0.72 was obtained for the principals' administrative Technique (PATQ) while a correlation coefficient of 0.75 was obtained for Teachers appraisal Questionnaire (TAQ). This indicated that the instruments were reliable and consistent for the study.

The instruments were administered by the researcher and research assistants. After a period of two weeks the completed instruments were retrieved from the respondents. All the respondents duly completed the two instruments indicating 100% response rate. The data collected were analyzed using frequency counts, percentages, mean.

### Results:

**Question 1:** What are the principals' management skills that influenced academic achievement of the students?

**Table 2: Management skills of secondary school principals**

Variables	N	Agree	%	Disagree	%
1 Encourage frequent testing and giving of	85	80	94.1	5	5.9
2 Organized Remedial teaching in school	85	78	91.76	07	5.88
3 Controlled entry mark for students joining	85	48	56.47	37	8.24
4 Provide learning resources such as laboratory equipment, electronic media books, computer to improve students'	85	72	84.70	13	15.32
5 Foster team building	85	68	80	17	20
6 Ensuring regular staff meetings and constant briefings and consultation	85	82	96.5	03	3.5
7 Appreciating each other's contribution	85	56	65.9	29	34.1
8 Delegate of responsibilities to other	85	77	90.59	08	9.41
9 Coordinate both internal and external	85	83	97.6	02	2.4
10 Resolve conflict among staff and students	85	70	82.3	15	17.7
11 Supervise teachers and students	85	74	87.05	11	12.95
12 Encourage syllabus coverage by teachers	85	82	96.4	03	3.6
13 Motivate teachers to perform	85	75	88.2	10	11.8
14 Maintain Discipline in school	85	77	90.5	08	9.5
15 Provision of physical facilities such as enough classrooms, tables and chairs	85	72	84.7	13	15.3
Mean Total	85	73	85.7	12	114.3

From table 2, the findings showed various responses rate in respect of each of the variables examined. It was evident that over 90% of the school principals encouraged frequent testing and giving of feed-back, ensuring regular meeting with staff, co-ordinate both internal and external examinations encourage syllabus coverage by teachers and delegate responsibilities to other members of staff. Over 80% of the principals provide learning resources such as laboratory, libraries etc. Foster learn work in schools by having a get together to celebrate and review any achievement, supervise teachers and students instructional activities and manage conflict among staff. However only 56% of the principals

had control over the entry mark for students joining the school. The reason for this was that the entry mark is always decided by the Ministry of Education for form one students. Only 65% of the principal appreciate teachers' contribution.

The study revealed that principals use of team work, delegation of duties, supervision of instructional programmes and maintaining discipline in schools were all organization skills used to influence academic performance in schools.

### **Table 2: Principals Involvement in Academic Activities**

**Question 2:** What academic activities does the principal participate in to help improve student academic achievement?

In Table 2, The teachers were asked to appraise their principals with regard to variables such as observing and checking students and teachers work, ensuring that all departments had enough teachers, participation in internal classroom supervision, check teachers lesson note and school records. Eradicating cheating in examination. Their responses were summarized in Table 2.

Table 2 showed that over 90% of teachers rated the principals high in checking teachers' lesson notes and school records. Over 80% rated the principals in observing, checking teachers and students academic work, participate in internal classroom supervision.

70% agreed that the principals ensured that all departments had enough teachers, eradicate cheating among students. It was evident from their responses that principals who were rated high in all these variables helped in improving academic performance of students in their schools.

### **DISCUSSION**

The foregoing showed analysis of data collected for this study. In the analysis, several findings were made. One salient, finding was in respect of the organizational skills that the principals used. The principals got involved in academic activities of the school by observing and checking teachers and students work, helping in eradicating cheating in examination, and ensuring that all departments had enough teachers. These findings were consistent with the findings of Adeyemi, (2009), Lydia & Nasongo (2009).

### **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Considering, the findings, it was concluded that the principal organizational skills that influenced high academic performance of students in secondary schools included checking of teachers and students academic work, eradicate cheating among students, encourage syllabus coverage, organized remedial teaching in school, briefing teachers on performance of students. However, the principals need to appreciate and motivate teachers to work hard in the school. The academic achievements of the students depended on the

application of all aforementioned skills. The open-mind policy and team spirit of principals of secondary schools tend to facilitate high academic performance of students.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Based on the findings of this study, it was recommended that principals of secondary schools in Ekiti-State should continue to employ organization skills such as team work with the staff, and various quality improvement measures to influence high academic performance of the schools both internally and externally.

The state government should also provide infrastructural facilities that will influence learning and teaching in the school. The school team, such as teachers and principals should monitor and discipline students so as to improve learning in the school. To achieve the objectives of the National Policy on Education (FGN, 2004) which stipulate a favourable environment in schools, it is pertinent for all education stakeholder therefore to work together in creating conducive environment for teaching and learning in all the schools.

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