

The Impact of Head Teachers' Characteristics on Primary School Effectiveness in Delta Central Senatorial District

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines the effects of some demographic variables such as status (experience), gender, and location of head teachers' characteristics on administrative effectiveness. The target population of the study consisted of all the head teachers in Delta Central Public Primary Schools. A simple random sampling technique was used to select the schools and teachers from eight local government areas. Head teachers from 26 schools and 156 teachers were selected from 4 local government area were used for the study. Questions were posed to guide the study and jive null hypothesis were tested. A reliability of 0.69 was obtained using statistical tools such as simple percentage, mean score, standard deviation and Z-statistical test. The findings from the result shows that head teachers in Delta Central Public Primary Schools were effective in the administrative task. The study recommended that areas of least effectiveness should be examined and improved upon, more female head teachers should be made to head schools, incentives should be given to head teachers in rural areas, the department in charge of appointment and promotion of teachers to the rank of head teachers should consider greatly the attribute of prospective head teachers. The ministry of education should employ the services of experience head teacher who are in the senior level by deploying such persons into school for effectiveness and finally, the ministry of education should employ head teachers who obtain their degree in education, such persons are more of professional model are competent in heading a school.

Keywords: Impact of head teachers, characteristics of head teachers, primary school and effectiveness

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INTRODUCTION

The impact of Head teachers' characteristics on primary school effectiveness is of particular importance in educational institution because of the far reaching effects on the accomplishment of school programmes, objectives and attainment of educational goals. "Being an effective school head requires a broader set of skills and responsibilities" (Ndung et al., 2019). The role of head

teacher is to provide leadership that inspires and motivates teachers to achieve high academic performance of students. Bratton and Nelson (2005), did express a situational theme in the leadership model when they made the point that the most effective Head or administrator are not authoritative or democratic but flexible heads who are able to select a style that is not

only comfortable to them but also appropriate for the situation they are handling. It is argued that effective leaders are made not born. The major argument of this theory is that situational or environment in which the organization is operating dictates leadership skills for the leaders to be successful (Babygeya, 2002). These theories guided the study in discussion and making conclusion of the study community demands for more effective schools have placed a growing attention on the crucial roles of school heads. An effective head teacher is required to see the school becomes the centre for its own improvement (MOEC 1993). Hobon and Jackson (2002) reveal that novice head teachers experiences feelings of Isolation and loneliness and have to deal with the legacy of previous head besides issues such as workload, time management, school budgeting, facilities, new curricula, and school improvement projects laterly, researchers have drawn attention to novice head teachers experiencing challenges such as isolation, lack of knowledge of leadership, a low level of confidence (Male and Miklos 2009). Socialization issues (Daresh and Arrow Smith, 2002) and problems in adopting their new schools culture (Cowie and Crawford, 2008). Effective head teachers achieve the right balance between leading, managing, and administrating competences (Male and Miklos 2009). These three areas require different competences (KOVACIC et al 2013). The organizational socialization which occurs immediately after the appointment in which the head teachers have to adjust their preferences towards their school's array of people, policies and preferences (Browne – Ferrigno 2003, Male and Miklos 2009, Greenfield, 1985. In this sense, researching into headship (Earley and Weindling 2004, Simkins, Close and Smith, 2009) have also highlighted that novice heads will face failure and are not expected to clinch their effective role without any proper support structures resources and administrative training in place within their professional socialization. The school heads therefore must take cognizance of the various situational forces. These include the school climate group effectiveness, pressure time and the nature of the problem. The effectiveness of primary schools is influenced by various factors, including the characteristics of head teachers. Research has shown that head teachers play a crucial role in shaping the school's culture, climate, and instructional practices. Effective head teachers possess certain characteristics that contribute to improved pupils outcomes, increased teacher morals, and enhanced school reputation. This literature review examines the impact of head teachers' characteristics on primary school effectiveness.

Bogler (2001) identified three important elements of the work situation that will help determine which leadership style will be effective. These elements are the Head-member relations, task structure and the heads position power. The Head-member relations refer to the degree of

confidence trusts and respect the subordinates have in the Head. Thus, school effectiveness means the extent to which the set goals or objectives of a school programmes are accomplished. Such effectiveness can be seen in relation to either the quality of educational instruction given in a school. Hence, in discussing "effectiveness" we find out that the number of terms and concepts will constantly crop up, including efficient, development, evaluation, improvement, quality, monitoring, reviewing, and professional, appropriateness, accountability, performance etc. This shows us that the concept of effectiveness is very broad, ranging over purpose, effort and accomplishment. Therefore, school effectiveness is judged by the extent to which the group accomplishes its task. That is the quality and efficiency of staff personnel who perform the functions necessary for the fulfilling of stated goals and objectives of the school.

The quality of education in the school system depends largely upon the quality of the personnel engaged in the educational process, and upon the effectiveness with which they carry out individual/group responsibilities. The Head teacher as the school head administrator, apart from monitoring the teaching done by teachers also ensure that appropriate grades for the continuous assessment of the pupils are reflected in their results. The effectiveness off the school will be therefore determined, the impact of the Head teacher characteristics. Head teachers in this respect have major responsibility for the successful implementation of theses educational goals. They are expected to demonstrate high sense of administrative capabilities and efficiency towards the realization of the educational objectives and goals. As chief executive officer of the school, the Head Teacher integrates the teaching staff, non-teaching staff, pupils, and other resources into productive working mechanism for the achievement of the educational objectives.

To this effect, the administrative skills of the Head teacher therefore must be such as would serve the diverse need of the pupils to become a total man. The Head teacher in his dual functional capacity as a teacher and as an administrator. As an administrator, the Head teacher engages in routine duties such as planning organizing, staffing, directing and controlling. This is a paramount role for the Head teacher, which requires him/her to lead the way in curriculum implementation and be held accountable for its success or failure.

The school effectiveness would determine the level of discipline in the Head teacher. The role and duties of the Head teacher is so delicate and vital that good care should be exercised in appointing the right calibre of persons who have the aptitude interest and character profile for the public.

Leadership of a primary school should not be for every teacher who has the requisite academic professional qualification. Rather it should be reserved for those who

in addition to the necessary academic and professional qualifications have the essential qualities of a good teacher. Some of these essential qualities include his personal characteristics such as age, sex, experience, professional qualification and marital status. The age of head teacher is a factor that must be considered for the school effectiveness or ineffectiveness. Head teacher must show maturity, insight and diplomacy.

The sex of head teachers as another factor to be considered for school effectiveness, the school effectiveness is judged by the extent to which the group accomplished its task i.e the quality and efficiency of who perform the function necessary for the fulfilment of stated goals and objectives of the school refuting the policy of selection of Head teacher from amongst teachers with long serving experience alone. Chan Yuen (2009), remarked that acquisition of administrative experience is different from just classroom experience. Consequently, the training of school heads or management, relevant administrative experience, oral and written interview and a proof of leadership capability supporting the acquisition of diverse skills for effective role performance of the school. The marital status of the Head teacher is not a factor for school effectiveness; his administrative style is what is needed for the school to achieve his goals and objectives.

The professional qualification of the head teacher, for head teacher to achieve effectiveness of school whose climate provide the right mixture of order, flexibility and diversity, such head must be prepared to face and resolve challenges. The Headship position, therefore, can be seen as the oldest administrative position in the school system. In addition, the general stress resulting from the economic crunch, had made it imperative for Heads to acquire extra administrative capabilities for school effectiveness under the prevailing situation, therefore there is the need for an appraisal of Head teachers characteristic on primary school effectiveness in Delta States, in order to find out how well they are actually performing the various administrative task in their schools. Various schools of thoughts have presented their views on how they perceive Head Teacher characteristics on primary school effectiveness and their problems. Opinions have also been presented on how Head teacher should function in various capacities to achieve their educational aims and objectives.

CHARACTERISTICS OF EFFECTIVE HEAD TEACHERS

Transformational leadership

Head teachers who exhibit transformational leadership styles, such as vision, empathy and empowerment, foster a positive school culture and improve pupil achievement (Leithwood and Jantzi 2008).

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Instructional leadership

Head teachers who focus on instructional leadership, including curriculum development and teacher support enhance teacher effectiveness and student learning (Hallinger and Heck, 2016).

Emotional intelligence

Head teachers with high emotional intelligence including self-awareness social skills and emotional regulation, build strong relationships with teachers, pupils, and parents, leading to improved school outcomes (Goleman, 2000).

Communication skills

Effective head teachers possess strong communication skills, including active listening, clarity, and transparency which facilitate collaboration and trust among stakeholders (Tschannen – Moran, 2004).

Visionary and strategic thinking

Head teachers who articulate a clear vision and develop strategic plans align school goals with teachers' practices leading to improved pupil outcomes (Fullan, 2001). Head teachers' experience and qualifications also play a crucial role in school effectiveness. Research suggests that more experience head teachers tend to have a more significant impact on pupils achievement and school improvement (Day et al., 2009). Furthermore, head teachers' personal qualities, such as integrity, resilience and adaptability, can influence their ability to lead and manage schools effectively (Hargreaves & Fink, 2006).

Overall, the literature suggests that head teachers' characteristics can significantly impact primary school effectiveness, highlighting the importance of selecting and developing head teachers with the right skills, experience, personal qualities and possessing transformational leadership, instructional leadership, emotional intelligence, effective communication skills and visionary, thinking; head teacher s can create a positive school environment, enhance teacher effectiveness, and improve pupils outcomes. Further research should explore the development and support of head teachers in cultivating these essential characteristics.

METHODOLOGY

The study uses sample and sampling procedure, research design to collect data from diverse population of head teachers and teachers of public primary schools in Delta Central. The population includes 26 head teachers and 156 teachers across 8 local government areas.

The design of the study is a descriptive survey type. It sampled the opinion of primary school teachers in Delta Central Senatorial district on the impact of Head teachers Characteristics on primary school effectiveness. The Delta Central Senatorial district covered eight local Government Areas. In this Senatorial District, there are eighty seven (87) primary schools with eighty seven (87) Head teachers and one thousand and forty—four teachers. A comprehensive list of all the primary schools in Delta Central is shown in the appendix. From the population of the study, sample sizes of four (4) Local Government Areas were sampled for the study. This represents 50% of the total number of Local Government Area in the Senatorial District. Also 26 primary schools were sampled from the four local governments through random sampling procedure. In each of schools sampled (6) teachers were selected, thus making a total of (156) teachers. The research utilized two sets of instruments. The first was designated “Head Teacher Demographic Inventory” and the second was designated ‘Teachers Perception on Head Teacher School Effectiveness’, both instrument were designed by the researcher after reviewing literature relating to the study. The ‘Head Teacher Demographic Inventory’ contained 8 simple random approaches on Demographic and organization variables. Data collection was conducted using two structured questionnaire: Sections A and B. Eliciting information on the respondent bio-data, school name and on the critical areas of competency and effectiveness of school by head teachers, as perceived by teachers. All variables were measured using likert four point scale; Strongly Agree (SA) 4 points, Agree 3 points, Disagree (D) 2 points and 1 point for Strongly Disagree (SD). However the highest attribute 4 & 3 of the Likert Scale indicate positive section while attributes 2 & 1 indicate negative reaction to the statement. The corrections were carried out to remove ambiguities and irrelevance. In order to establish reliability of the instrument used for the collection of data, the Teachers Perception of Head Teachers Administrative effectiveness was used and administered to 26 respondents in Delta South whom were not part of the sample for the study. A test re-test method was used which involved administration of the instrument at different times. The same set of instrument was re-administered to the same group of respondents and the resulting test scores were correlated, Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMC) to test the hypothesis.

RESULTS

Teachers view towards head teachers’ administrative effectiveness

Data on teachers view towards administrative effectiveness of head teachers was gathered with

questionnaires. The result revealed that the instrument in the conduct is reliable, 26 selected primary school (two teachers from each of the schools). On the whole, a total of 170 were distributed but the number actually filled returned and use was 156 representing 90% of the number distributed. Percentage, Mean Standard deviation and Z-statistical test were used to analyze, data collected for the study. Thereby establishing 0.05 level of significance to retain or reject the hypotheses.

Hypothesis one:

Ho₁: There is no significant difference in the levels of head teachers’ administrative experience in Delta Central senatorial District.

From (Table 1) analysis above $z\text{-cal.} = 3.01$ and $z\text{-critical value} = 1.960$ at 0.05 level of significant with degree of freedom 154. Since the $z\text{-cal.}$ is greater than $z\text{-critical value}$ which is $3.01 > 1.960$ therefore, the formulated null hypothesis is rejected in favour of the alternative hypothesis. This suggests that, there is a significant difference in the level of head teachers’ administrative effectiveness in Delta Central Senatorial District. The value of the mean scores show the rate of difference based on their levels.

Hypothesis two

Ho₂: There is no significant difference in the administrative effectiveness between male and female head teachers of public primary schools in Delta Central Senatorial District.

Table 2 above, shows $z\text{-cal.}$ of 2.01 and $z\text{-critical value}$ of 1.960 at 0.05 level of significant with degree of freedom 154. Therefore, since the $z\text{-cal.}$ is greater than $z\text{-critical value}$ ($2.01 > 1.960$) the postulated null hypothesis is rejected in favour of the alternative hypothesis. This suggests that, there is a significant difference in the administrative effectiveness between male and female head teachers in Delta Central Senatorial District. The mean scores show the difference in the administrative effectiveness between the male and female head teachers in Delta Central Senatorial District.

Hypothesis three

Ho₃: There is no significant difference in the administrative effectiveness between experienced and less experienced head teachers of public primary schools in Delta Central Senatorial District.

The analysis of (Table 3) above shows $z\text{-cal.}$ of 3.2 and $z\text{-critical value}$ of 1.960 at 0.05 level of significant with

Table 1: Z-test analysis showing the level of head teachers' administrative experience.

Level	N	Mean	S.D	DF	z-cal	z-critical value	Remark
Junior head teachers	62	3.4	2.2	154	3.01	1.960	Rejected
Senior head teachers	94	6.4	3.9				

P<0.05

Table 2: Z-test analysis showing level of administrative effectiveness between male and female.

Group	N	Mean	S.D	DF	z-cal	z-critical value	Remark
Male head teachers	74	13.4	3.4	154	2.01	1.960	Rejected
Female head teachers	82	12.6	2.8				

P>0.05

Table 3: Z-test analysis showing administrative effectiveness between experienced and less experienced head teachers.

Group	N	Mean	S.D	DF	z-cal	z-critical value	Remark
Experienced head teachers	92	13.01	2.4	154	3.2	1.960	Rejected
Less experienced head teachers	64	9.6	1.8				

P>0.05

Table 4: Z-test analysis showing the administrative effectiveness of head teachers based on location.

Location	N	Mean	S.D	DF	z-cal	z-critical value	Remark
Rural	86	8.5	3.04	154	2.09	1.960	Rejected
Urban	70	6.02	2.6				

P<0.05

degree of freedom 154. Also, since the z-cal. is greater than z-critical value (3.2>1.960) the postulated null hypothesis is rejected in favour of the alternative hypothesis. This suggests that, there is a significant difference in the administrative effectiveness between experienced and less experienced head teachers in Delta Central Senatorial District. The mean scores show that, the experienced head teachers are more skillful than the less experienced head teachers in Delta Central Senatorial District.

Hypothesis four

Ho₄: There is no significant difference between head teachers location in the administrative effectiveness of public primary schools in Delta Central Senatorial District.

From (Table 4) analysis above, z-cal. = 2.09 and z-critical value 1.960 at 0.05 level of significant with degree of freedom 154. Since the z-cal. is greater than z-critical value (2.09 >1.960) the postulated null hypothesis is rejected while the alternative hypothesis is retained. This suggests that, there is a significant difference in the administrative effectiveness of head teachers in Delta

Central Senatorial District based on location. The value of the mean scores show the rate of difference based on location.

Hypothesis five

Ho₅: There is no significant difference between head teachers' qualification in the administrative effectiveness of public primary schools in Delta Central Senatorial District.

From (Table 5) analysis above, z-cal. = 2.52 and z-critical value = 1.960 at 0.05 level of significant with degree of freedom 154. Since the z-cal. is greater than z-critical value therefore, the postulated null hypothesis is rejected in favour of the alternative hypothesis. This suggests that, there is a significant difference in the administrative effectiveness of head teachers in Delta Central Senatorial District based on qualification. The value of the mean scores show the rate of difference based on qualification.

DISCUSSION

It has been revealed from the analysis that, there is a great impact of head teachers' characteristics on primary

Table 5: Z-test analysis showing the level of administrative effectiveness based on qualification.

Qualification	N	Mean	S.D	DF	z-cal	z-critical value	Remark
Low	68	2.62	2.04	154	2.52	1.960	Rejected
High	88	4.02	3.12				

$P \leq 0.05$

school effectiveness. From the response about the level of Head teacher experience in Delta Central. The analysis of the hypothesis revealed that there is significant difference in the levels of head teachers' administrative experience in Delta Central Senatorial District. This finding is in agreement with Mc Ghee and Lew (2007) that Head teachers demographic factors that the long years' experience Head teachers were more 'actively involved than their peer in decision making related to staff development and instruction'.

Data from item two, (Table 2) indicates that there is a significant difference in the administrative effectiveness between male and female head teachers in Delta Central Senatorial District. The finding agreed with Eagly and Johnson 1990 claimed that the unique life experience and traditional roles of women cause them to bring more interpersonal concept of head teacher as compare to men.

Results from Item three, (Table 3) formulated to find out if there is a significant difference in the administrative effectiveness between experienced and less experienced head teachers of public primary schools in Delta Central Senatorial District. The analysis reveals that, the administrative effectiveness between experienced and less experienced head teachers differs significantly. This analysis agreed with the study of Dame Dana (2002), who found out that, head teachers administrative effectiveness varies significantly according to their years of experience.

Item four formulated to find out if there is a significant difference between head teachers location in the administrative effectiveness of public primary schools in Delta Central Senatorial District revealed that there exist a significant difference in the administrative effectiveness of head teachers in Delta Central Senatorial District based on location while the mean scores of the hypothesis shows that the administrative effectiveness in urban differs from that of the rural.

Also item five formulated to find out if there is any significant difference between head teachers' qualification in the administrative effectiveness of public primary schools in Delta Central Senatorial District. The results of the study show that 5% level of significant with Df 154 was revealed that, there is a significant difference between head teachers' qualification in the administrative effectiveness of primary schools in Delta Central

Senatorial District. This finding is in accordance with Mondol (2010) findings that, Head teachers who obtained their degree in education are more of professional models and more competent in heading than those with ordinary degrees. Conclusively, it was revealed in this research that administrative effectiveness depends on Head characteristics. Also from the research it was revealed that, years of experience and of Head teachers play a paramount role in the administrative effectiveness on primary schools in Delta Central Senatorial District. Hence, the administrative effectiveness of primary schools in Delta Central Senatorial District differs significantly based on sex, location and levels of Head teachers.

Conclusion

The conclusion based on the finding of the study. From the findings, it was concluded that head teachers in Delta Central Senatorial District that their administrative effectiveness depends on their characteristics. Also from the research, it was re-called that years of experience and qualification of head teachers play a paramount role in the administrative effectiveness on primary schools in Delta Central. It could be concluded therefore that the administrative effectiveness of primary schools differs significantly based on sex, location, qualification and levels of head teachers.

Recommendations

Since the findings of this research have shown that administrative effectiveness of head teachers in Government owned primary schools depend on their characteristics in carrying out their administrative tasks. The Ministry of Education and the department in charge of promotion and deployment of teachers should consider the attribute and prospects of Head teachers to match their leadership style with schools that need such leadership. More female head teachers should be made to head schools since the study has shown that the unique life experience and traditional roles of women cause them to bring more interpersonal concepts as Head teachers compared to men. The Ministry should

employ the service of experience head teachers who are in the senior level by deploying such persons into school for effectiveness. Incentives in the form of out-stations allowance should be given to teachers to head teachers in rural areas to attract their interests in bringing about effectiveness. Head teachers who obtain degree in education are more professional model and competent in heading school than their counterparts with no educational backgrounds should be considered. Lastly, routine visitation by the Ministry of education/department in charge to schools to monitor the activities of head teachers in their administrative task.

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