

Human Relations as Correlates of Effective Administration of Secondary Schools in North East Senatorial District of Benue State, Nigeria

¹Ijov, Terlumun Mark

²Wombu Ruth Nguzan &

³Odu Rose Okay

¹Department of Educational
Foundations,

Benue State University,
Makurdi, Nigeria

^{2&3}Benue State Examinations
Board, Makurdi

Abstract

Human beings are not inanimate things, maintaining a harmonious working relationship helps to achieve both the organizational and individual goals. The thrust of this paper is to investigate human relations as correlates of effective administration of secondary schools in North East senatorial district of Benue State, Nigeria. Three research questions and three hypotheses guided the study. Survey research design was adopted for the study. The population was 1713 teachers out of which 300 respondents were sampled using the systematic random sampling. The instrument for data collection was the questionnaire. Mean and standard deviations were used to answer the research questions, while chi-square (χ^2) was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 significant level. The finding revealed that; communication, staff/students' rapport and involving students in decision-making significantly influence the effective administration of secondary schools in the study area. It was recommended among others that the government through the ministry of education and its parastatals should monitor and assist school principals in order to create better communication channels so that free flow of information would prevail from the school to them and vice versa.

Keywords:

Human Relations,
Administration,
Communication,
Staff/Students'
Rapport and
Decision-Making

Corresponding Author:
Ijov, Terlumun Mark

Background the Study

Education is a strong tool for sustainable development of any nation, for it is through education that all facets, economic, social, political, economic and religious activities are learned and carried out. No country can rise above the quality of its education. Through education, the world is fast changing by globalization and technological breakthrough which require a new approach by every nation to catch up with the new challenges. Education delivery is now facing a lot of challenges in this country because Nigeria continues to undergo changes in its occupational, social and economic structures.

Education in Nigeria is an instrument “Par excellence” for effecting national development (FRN, 2004). As a social organization, it is made up of people interacting with one another as its characteristics. The control of others for the purpose of accomplishing a common task is both necessary and a desirable skill and it is likely to remain so as long as we must cope with the task which one cannot accomplish without the assistance of others.

Human relations according to Encyclopedia of Business and Finance (2007) include fitting people into work situations so as to motivate them to work together harmoniously. The process of fitting together should achieve higher levels of productivity for the organization, while also bringing employees economic, psychological and social satisfaction. In agreement with the above, Akpakwu (2008) states that the principle of human relations operate on the basis of “friendliness begets friendliness”. This according to him emphasizes such terms as respect, courtesy, kindness, consideration, confidence, trust, open-mindedness, honesty and sincerity in dealing with the staff of educational institutions.

Secondary education as encapsulated in the FRN (2004) is the education children receive after primary education and before the tertiary stage. The broad goals of secondary education are to prepare the individual for useful living within the society and higher education. School administration as observed by Nwankwo (2003) is the process concerned with using methods, principles and practices to establish, develop and execute the goals, policies, plans and procedures necessary to achieve the objectives of the school. Adebola (2006) sees school administration as the process of guiding, leading and controlling the efforts of a group of individuals towards some common objectives and creating interaction of human and material resources. It is the capacity to coordinate many, and often conflicting social energies in a single organization so adroitly that they shall operate as a unity.

Human relations is a situation whereby the head enters understanding and sympathetically into the thoughts, the aspirations and the motives of teachers, pupils and parents (Kochhar, 2005). Akpa (2002) asserts that good human relations are desired for effective management that leads to targeted goal achievement. The new circumstances in management require manager to create an enabling environment for staff/students rapport so that effective teaching and learning can be fostered.

In the researcher's opinion, the students as future leaders also need to be trained on how to assume their leadership roles after their graduation from school. The ability of the school administrator (principal) to engage the students in decision-making process of the school can go along way in achieving the lofty goals of the school.

It is an established fact that staff of educational institutions differ in aptitude, knowledge, skills, culture, social tendency, background, health and physical vigour. It is therefore possible that their performance will also differ. It is the responsibility of the principal to devise means of achieving and encouraging effectiveness, efficiency and higher performance in educational institutions.

Statement of the Problem

Crises and conflict situations feature prominently at the level of management against staff, staff and students against each other; staff in connivance with students against the management is seen to be a serious concern in most secondary schools in the study area. Most principals in the study area are observed to marshal out orders without showing concern for their effects on students, staff and the learning process. The channels of communication remain closed to all except the one from the top to the bottom. It has also been observed that most principals of secondary schools create an avenue for one-sided rapport and relationship. While some of the school principals are harsh and unapproachable, others move with an air of arrogance and ego-centricism thereby making effective communication in administration unattainable with the result that the 'push' instead of the "pull" syndrome becomes the order of the day in their schools.

It is based on the above scenario that the researchers seek to investigate the human relations approaches as correlates of effective administration of secondary schools in the study area.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study primarily was to investigate human relations as correlates of effective administration of secondary schools in North East Senatorial District of Benue State, Nigeria. The specific objectives of the study were as follows;

1. To examine the extent to which communication influence the administration of secondary schools in North East Senatorial District of Benue State, Nigeria.
2. To ascertain the extent to which staff/students' rapport influence the administration of secondary schools.
3. To find out how involving students in decision-making influence the administration of secondary schools.

Research Questions

The following questions were raised to guide the conduct of the study;

1. To what extent does communication influence the administration of secondary schools in North East Senatorial District of Benue State, Nigeria?
2. Does staff/students' rapport influence the administration of secondary schools?
3. How does involving students in decision-making influence the administration of secondary schools?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance

- Ho₁** There is no significant influence of communication on the administration of secondary schools in North East Senatorial District of Benue State, Nigeria.

Ho₂ There is no significant influence of staff/students' rapport on the administration of secondary schools.

Ho₃ There is no significant influence of involving students in decision-making on the administration of secondary schools.

Significance of the Study

This study is significant in the following ways;

The ministries of education and other parastatals under it will find this study useful as their job of monitoring schools will be based on good human relations. For instance, listening to genuine complaints and emphatically making joint consultations to proffer solutions to discovered problems instead of nagging.

The study will also enable principals of secondary schools to realize that schools do not exist in a vacuum but in close relationship with the Ministry of Education, Teaching Service Boards, Parents'-Teachers' Association (PTA), Old Students and other donor organizations. On publication of the findings via conferences, other scholars may be motivated by the findings of this study to investigate into areas of gaps arising from this study.

Conceptual Clarification

The conceptual review is carried out as follows:

Concept of Human Relations

The concept of human relations as a principle of educational administration is viewed by Okwori and Ede (2012) to entail that workers are seen and considered as human beings who have personal needs and desires that must be satisfied. There should be respect for human person and dignity irrespective of positions or offices. Encyclopaedia of Business and Finance (2007) defines human relations as fitting people into work situations so as to motivate them to work together harmoniously. The process of fitting together should achieve higher levels of productivity for the organization, while also bringing employees economic, psychological, and social satisfaction. Adewunmi (2003) submits that apart from the availability of materials and financial resources that are provided to a school, the success of a school also depends on the following human/public relations; the level of training of the teachers; relationships between the teachers and the school head; relationship within the teachers themselves; relationship between the school head and the students; relationship between the school and the surrounding community. However, one important group which he omitted on this list is the non-teaching staff who constitutes an integral aspect of the school.

In a nutshell, human relations cover all types of interactions among people- their conflicts, cooperative efforts and group relationships. It is the study of why our beliefs, attitudes and behaviours sometimes cause interpersonal conflict in our personal lives and in work-related situations.

Concept of School Administration

According to Adebola (2006), administration in school entails working with and through teachers, non-teaching staff and pupils or students to get things done effectively school administration has its attention primarily on the school. It is more concerned with the

institution, its goals, policies and execution of those policies, the functions of administration in school are performed by the school heads (ie head teacher/principal) known as the school administrator.

In their contribution, Okunamiri, Ibiam and Okunamiri (2006) regards school administration as the arrangement of the human (teachers and non teachers) and material (school plant, equipment, fields, constraints etc) resources and programmes available for education and carefully using them systematically for the attainment of educational objective. Smith and Patricia (2007) view it as a function, and a set of tasks shared by every person in the educational system.

In school administration or educational administration, like in other settings, the emphasis is on the mobilization of the efforts of a number of people towards the achievement of a common goal. Thus, education administration is the process of integrating the efforts of personnel and of utilizing appropriate materials in such a way as to promote effectively the development of human qualities.

Methodology

Descriptive Survey research design was adopted for this study. A survey research design is a way of collecting information by interviewing or administering questionnaires to sample of individuals (Chandra, 2004). In a survey design, a situation is studied as it is during the time of investigation. Hence variables cannot be manipulated. The study is confined to North East Senatorial District of Benue State, Nigeria. It is made up of seven local government areas namely; Katsina-Ala, Konshisha, Kwande, Logo, Ukum, Ushongo and Vandeikya respectively.

The population of the study consists of 1,713 teachers from the existing 119 government and grant-aided secondary schools in the study area. Three hundred (300) teachers representing 17.5% of the total population were sampled from 20 schools representing 16% of the schools using the systematic random sampling technique. The instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire consisting of 15 items which elicited responses from the respondents. The instrument was structured on a four-point rating scale with the response mode of Strong Agree (SA)⁴, Agree (A)³, Disagree (D)² and Strongly Disagree (SD)¹. The instrument was subjected to face and content validation. Cronbach Alpha was used to determine the reliability of instrument, with a coefficient of 0.82, this indicated high reliability. The research questions were analyzed using mean and standard deviation. A criterion mean of 2.50 was used as bench mark for decision making, any mean score of 2.50 and above was regarded as a positive response and accepted as having the desired influence while any mean score below 2.50 was regarded as a negative response and rejected. The chi-square was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

Results and Findings

The results and findings of the study are presented as follows;

Research Question 1

To what extent does communication influence the administration of secondary schools in North East Senatorial District of Benue State, Nigeria?

Table 1: Mean Ratings and Standard Deviations of Respondents on the Influence of Communication on the Administration of Secondary Schools

Item No	Item Description	SA	A	D	SD	(\bar{x})	ST.D	Decision
1	The notice board is used regularly by the principal for information dissemination	190	50	30	30	2.73	0.75	Accepted
2	Information in the school is not normally spread by rumour and gossips	100	130	40	30	2.89	0.94	Accepted
3	Teachers are free to enter the principals' office to air their views on management issues	110	100	60	30	2.98	0.85	Accepted
4	Regular staff meetings are held for teachers to be intimated on the polices and programmes of the school	140	100	40	20	2.86	0.73	Accepted
5	Principals disseminate information to the teachers and students as and when due.	150	90	40	20	2.69	0.82	Accepted
Criterion Mean/Standard Deviation						2.83	0.86	Accepted

Table 1 showed that the respondents rated all the items from 1 -5 in the cluster above the cut-off point of 2.50. Their ratings of items 1-5 are 2.73, 2.89, 2.98, 2.86 and 2.69 with the corresponding standard deviations of 0.75, 0.94, 0.85, 0.73 and 0.82. Based on the data, the respondents' views were that the notice board is used regularly by the principal for information dissemination. Information in the school is not normally spread by rumour and gossips. Teachers are free to enter the principals' office to air their views on management issues. Regular staff meetings are held for teachers to be intimated on the polices and programmes of the school and the respondents also agree that principals disseminate information to the teachers and students as and when due. The criterion mean of 2.83 with the standard deviation of 0.86 was above the cut-off point of 2.50. This indicates that communication has influence on the administration of secondary schools.

Research Question 2

Does staff/students' rapport influence the administration of secondary schools?

Table 2: Mean Ratings and Standard Deviations of Respondents on the Influence of Staff/Students' Rapport on the Administration of Secondary Schools

Item No	Item Description	SA	A	D	SD	(\bar{x})	ST.D	Decision
6	Teachers are always willing to help their students when the need arises	180	40	40	40	2.97	0.82	Accepted
7	Teachers show pleasure and enjoy the company of their students	150	100	30	20	3.55	0.59	Accepted
8	The students are always ready to approach their teachers on any issue bordering on their personal and academics	101	109	70	20	3.04	0.70	Accepted
9	Teachers demonstrate knowledge, interest on the background and emotional state of their students.	180	20	40	60	2.86	0.71	Accepted
10	Students interact in a responsive and respectful manner towards their teachers.	130	120	30	20	2.79	0.72	Accepted
Criterion Mean/Standard Deviation						2.74	0.86	Accepted

Table 2 showed that the respondents rated all the items from 6-10 in the cluster above the cut-off point of 2.50. Their ratings of items 6-10 are 2.97, 3.55, 3.04, 2.86 and 2.79 with the corresponding standard deviations of 0.82, 0.59, 0.70, 0.71 and 0.72. Based on the data, the respondents' views were that teachers are always willing to help their students when the need arises. Teachers show pleasure and enjoy the company of their students. The students are always ready to approach their teachers on any issue bordering on their personal and academics. Teachers demonstrate knowledge, interest on the background and emotional state of their students. The respondents also agree that students interact in a responsive and respectful manner towards their teachers. The criterion mean of 2.74 with the standard deviation of 0.86 was above the cut-off point of 2.50. This implies that staff/students' rapport has influence on the administration of secondary schools.

Research Question 3

How does involving students in decision-making influence the administration of secondary schools?

Table 3: Mean Ratings and Standard Deviations of Respondents on the Influence of Involving Students in Decision-making on the Administration of Secondary Schools

Item No	Item Description	SA	A	D	SD	(\bar{x})	ST.D	Decision
11	Students are not considered inferior to be incorporated in the decision-making process of the schools	180	30	50	40	3.52	0.87	Accepted
12	Students' Representative Council are given a free hand to operate in the school	120	110	40	30	2.89	0.79	Accepted
13	Students are involved in decision-making of the school on matters bordering their welfare	100	110	60	30	3.38	0.94	Accepted
14	Students are involved in administrative decisions of the school	190	30	40	40	2.50	0.89	Accepted
15	There is no conflict between the students' representative body and the school management in our school.	110	120	60	10	2.77	0.88	Accepted
Criterion Mean/Standard Deviation						2.97	0.69	Accepted

Table 3 showed that the respondents rated all the items from 11-15 in the cluster above the cut-off point of 2.50. Their ratings of items 11-15 are 3.52, 2.89, 3.38, 2.50 and 2.77 with the corresponding standard deviations of 0.872, 0.79, 0.94, 0.89 and 0.88. Based on the data, the respondents' views were that students are not considered inferior to be incorporated in the decision-making process of the schools. Students' Representative Council are given a free hand to operate in the school. Students are involved in decision-making of the school on matters bordering their welfare. Students are involved in administrative decisions of the school. The respondents also agree that there is no conflict between the students' representative body and the school management in our school. The criterion mean of 2.97 with the standard deviation of 0.69 was above the cut-off point of 2.50. The implication is that involving students in decision making has influence on the administration of secondary schools.

Hypotheses Testing

The null hypotheses were tested using chi-square (χ^2) test of goodness of fit as follows:

Hypothesis 1

There is no significant influence of communication on the administration of secondary schools in North East Senatorial District of Benue State, Nigeria.

Table 4: Chi-square (χ^2) Test of Influence of Communication on the Administration of Secondary Schools

Opinions	Observed frequency	Expected frequency	Df	χ^2 -cal	χ^2 -tab	Level of sig	Decision
No Influence	92(30%)	150(50%)	1	36.64	7.82	0.05	Significant
Has Influence	208(70%)	150(50%)					

Values in parentheses are percentages $\chi^2 = 36.64$, $df = 1$ $P = 0.05 > 0.00$

Table 4 showed that the descriptive and inferential statistic of percentages and chi-square (χ^2) were used to test the influence of communication on the administration of secondary schools. The results indicated that 208 respondents representing 70% of the total respondents agreed that communication has influence on the administration of secondary schools as against 92 respondents representing 30% of the respondents who disagreed.

Table 4 also showed that chi-square (χ^2) calculated value of 36.64 was greater than the chi-square (χ^2) tabulated value of 7.82 checked at 0.05 level of significance and at 1 degree of freedom. Therefore, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant influence of communication on the administration of secondary schools in North East Senatorial District of Benue State, Nigeria was rejected. This implied that communication has significant influence on the administration of secondary schools.

Hypotheses 2

There is no significant influence of staff/students' rapport on the administration of secondary schools.

Table 5: Chi-square (χ^2) Test of Influence of Staff/Students' Rapport on the Administration of Secondary Schools

Opinions	Observed Frequency	Expected Frequency	Df	χ^2 -cal	χ^2 -tab	Level of sig	Decision
No Influence	126(42%)	150(50%)	1	58.46	7.82	0.05	Significant
Has Influence	174(58%)	150(50%)					

Values in parentheses are percentages $\chi^2 = 58.46$, $df = 1$ $P = 0.05 > 0.00$

Table 5 showed that the descriptive and inferential statistic of percentages and chi-square (χ^2) were used to test the influence of staff/students' rapport on the administration of secondary schools. The results indicated that 174 respondents representing 58% of the total

respondents agreed that staff/students' rapport has influence on the administration of secondary schools as against 126 respondents representing 42% of the respondents who disagreed.

Table 5 also showed that chi-square (χ^2) calculated value of 58.46 was greater than the chi-square (χ^2) tabulated value of 7.82 checked at 0.05 level of significance and at 1 degree of freedom. Therefore, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant influence of staff/students' rapport on the administration of secondary schools was rejected. The implication of the result is that staff/students' rapport has significant influence on the administration of secondary schools.

Hypotheses 3

There is no significant influence of involving students in decision-making on the administration of secondary schools.

Table 6 Chi-square (χ^2) Test of Influence of Involving Students in Decision-making on the Administration of Secondary Schools

Opinions	Observed frequency	Expected frequency	Df	χ^2 -cal	χ^2 -tab	Level of sig	Decision
No Influence	106(35%)	150(50%)	1	48.96	7.82	0.05	Significant
Has Influence	194(65%)	150(50%)					

Values in parentheses are percentages $\chi^2 = 48.96$, $df = 1$ $P = 0.05 > 0.00$

Table 6 showed that the descriptive and inferential statistic of percentages and chi-square (χ^2) were used to test the influence of involving students in decision-making on the administration of secondary schools. The results indicated that 194 respondents representing 65% of the total respondents agreed that involving students in decision-making has influence on the administration of secondary schools as against 106 respondents representing 35% of the respondents who disagreed.

Table 4 also showed that chi-square (χ^2) calculated value of 48.96 was greater than the chi-square (χ^2) tabulated value of 7.82 checked at 0.05 level of significance and at 1 degree of freedom. Therefore, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant influence of involving students in decision-making on the administration of secondary schools was rejected. This implied that involving students in decision-making has significant influence on the administration of secondary schools.

Discussion of Findings

The first finding of the study showed that communication has significant influence on the administration of secondary schools in North East Senatorial District of Benue State, Nigeria. The finding is supported by Adams (2014) whose study found out that communication significantly affects the management of secondary schools. It is also supported by Ajobiewe (2008) who opined that adequacy of information flow demands that the objective and programmes of the organization should be effectively communicated to staff and students.

The second finding revealed that staff/students' rapport has significant influence on the administration of secondary schools. It agrees with Crosnoe, Elder and Kirkpatrick (2004) who stressed that interpersonal relationships between the students and their teachers foster a more enjoyable learning environment and a higher level of achievement.

The third finding showed that involving students in decision making has significant influence on the administration of secondary schools. It is supported by Whiteley (2011) who asserts that students and teachers need to work together to set meaningful goals. Meaningful goals must be formed with the students, otherwise we spend time where we decide what learning will occur, not giving the students the ability to take charge of learning and challenge themselves.

Conclusion

Based on the results of the study, it was concluded that communication, staff/students' rapport and involving students in decision-making has significant influence on the effective administration of secondary schools in North East Senatorial District of Benue State, Nigeria.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were made based on the findings and conclusion;

1. The government through the ministry of education and its parastatals should monitor and assist school principals in order to create better communication channels so that free flow of information would prevail from the school to them and vice versa.
2. Principals of secondary schools and other educational administrators should ensure that a healthy relationship is instituted and maintained between staff and students to create a healthy school atmosphere.
3. School administrators should ensure that students as stakeholders in the educational institutions are involved in the decision-making process of the school.

References

- Adams, S. (2014). *Human relations and effective management of secondary schools in Kogi East Senatorial District*. Unpublished M.Ed Dissertation, Benue State University, Makurdi.
- Adebola, O.J. (2006). School administration and supervision in J.B. Babalola; A.O. Ayeni; S.O. Adedeji; A.A. Suleiman & M.O. Arikewuyo (Eds) *Educational management: Thoughts and practice*. Ibadan: Codat Publications.
- Adewunmi, J. A. (2003). *Effective educational personnel and financial management in schools*. Lokoja: JAADE Publishers.
- Ajobiwe; J. A. (2008). *Motivating the Nigerian secondary school personnel for quality secondary education*. Ado-Ekiti: ANCOPSS.
- Akpa, G.O. (2002). *Theory and practice of educational administration in Nigeria*. Jos: Jos University Press.
- Akpakwu, S.O. (2008). *Essentials of educational management*. Makurdi: Jalim Press Nig Ltd.
- Chandra, E. (2004). *Research methods: A quantitative approach with illustrations from Christian ministries*. Nairobi: Daystar University.
- Encyclopaedia of Business and Finance (2007). Human relations. Retrieved from <http://www.encyclopaedia>.
- Federal Republic of Nigeria (2004). *National policy on education*. Lagos: NERDC Press.
- Kochhar, S.K. (2005). *Secondary school administration*. New Delhi: Sterling Publishers.
- Nwankwo, G.O. (2003). *Education and training for public management in Nigeria*. Enugu: Jones Communication Publishers.
- Okunamiri, P.O.; Ibiam, N. & Okunamiri, M. C. (2006). Basic concepts in educational planning and administration in J.B. Babalola; A.O. Ayeni; S.O. Adedeji; A.A. Suleiman & M.O. Arikewuyo (Eds) *Educational management: Thoughts and practice*. Ibadan: Codat Publications.
- Okwori, A. & Ede, S. (2012). *Management issues in education*. Makurdi: Aboki Publishers.
- Smith, L. & Patricia, F. (2007). *School facilities: Management practice in Nigeria. Current issues in educational management in Nigeria (NAEAP)* Benin: Ambik Press Ltd.
- Whiteley, J. (2011). *Involving students in the decision making process*. European Tour