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ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS AND PRINCIPALS' LEADERSHIP STYLES AS PREDICTORS OF STUDENTS' ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN ILORIN METROPOLITAN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS, KWARA STATE

Dr. A. A. Tijani, A. O. Sofoluwe

Abstract

This paper investigates the relationship among environmental factors, on principals' leadership styles and students' academic performance in Ilorin metropolitan public secondary schools. Stratified random sampling technique was used to select 32 from 52 secondary schools in the study area. Questionnaire was used to elicit information from 100 respondents from the target population through simple random sampling techniques. However, Three hypotheses were formulated to guide the study. Person product moment correlation statistics was used to test two of them while multiple regression analysis was used for the third one. They were all tested at 0.05 level of significance. The finding revealed a significant relationship among environmental factors, principals, leadership styles and students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Ilorin metropolis. Based on the findings, the paper recommends that the principals should as much as possible understand the environment surrounding the school setting and endeavour to influence it. They must also adapt appropriate leadership style which the situations warrant.

Introduction

School as a formal organization is surrounded by many factors. One of it is the environment at which the school is situated. The impact and importance of environment to school cannot be over-looked. It is because of this that Cole(2004), considered the analysis of an organization in a turbulent environment. The organization must assess the current obstacles and the wider environment at large before going for its goals, aims and objectives. If these elements are properly evaluated, the school as an organization will achieve the expected objectives of attainment of better students' academic performance. To do this, however, the principals must thoroughly understand the nature of the school environment for an improved students' academic achievement to take place.

Education has been seen as a bastion for economic and socio-cultural and political development of nations and individuals (Obayan, 2006). Education is a process in which one achieves societal competence and individual growth carried on in a selected and controlled environment. Ogunsaju (2004), described education as act of learning one-self and one's environment for the purpose of self development. In developing countries, education has been recognized as a viable tool for achieving national growth and development, economic prosperity and social transformation. This importance of education is a justification why the Federal Government on the National Policy on Education (2004), adopted it as an instrument per excellent for effecting national growth and development. Education as a vehicle for development takes place in a formal school system which itself is affected by environment within and outside it.

Further more, the style of leadership chosen by the school head will as well determine the success or failure of the school system. Therefore, effective leadership is an important key aimed at improving the quality of programme in the school. No organization can function well without an effective leader who has chosen and adopted appropriate style in managing

must be able to direct the affair of the school through the staff by assisting them to do the right thing. The principal's leadership style determines the nature of the follower which as

the influence of both environmental factors and principal's leadership style on the students' academic performance in metropolitan public secondary schools

Concept of Environmental Factors

John (1997), in Oxford Dictionary of Economics defined environment as the conditions under which people, creatures and plants have lived the natural environment. It concerns matters such as purity of air to breath, water to drink and soil to cultivate, and several further aspects ranging from biodiversity to noise. Cole (2004), described environment as the activities of stake holders and other external sources of change but can also be used to refer to internal conditions within an organization such as management style, employees' attitudes, technical environment and financial situation. Generally, environmental factors could be internal and external forces that affect organization and perhaps school performance. Internal environment of schools are those forces within a school that could lead to chance (Rober & Angelo, 2004), it, therefore, relates to those climates and atmosphere surrounding the school environment such as teachers, management, physical facilities, communities and culture. To this end, the concept of environmental factors is inevitable in educational management. The forces in the environment could bring about change that normally has powerful influence on students' academic performance. External

environmental factors of a school are those things outside a school boundary. It is the set of forces outside the school surroundings that create its overall context. These include economic, social, political and technological forces. Each one combination of these factors could have impact on school system and can generally be used to predict students' academic performance

Principals' Leadership Style

Leadership is the process of social influence in which one person can enlist the aid and support others in the accomplishment of a common goal. Oyedeji (1998), described leadership as an input in an organization intended to influence the behaviours of the members in order to attain the organizational objectives, and coordinate the functions of other members of the group. According to Adesina (1988), leadership connotes the ability to get things done with the assistance and cooperation of other people. In school setting, leadership would refer to the ability of the school leaders to obtain the educational goals in the school system through the assistance and cooperation of other supporting staff (teaching and non teaching).

In secondary school, principal is the overall head of both academic and non academic staff. All the groups within the school system are accountable to him. The success of the school to a very large extent depends on what the principal is able to make out of it based on his personality, leadership style; attitude to work and motivation. Ijaiya (2000), believed that the tone of the school is dependent on the amount of the co-operation the teachers are prepared to the principal or any school head. Oyedeji (1998), states leadership style is a factor that determines the organizational effectiveness as a well as that of its leader. Leadership behaviour includes all things that a leader could do in a work situation; which has do with planning, structuring of task, controlling and his interpersonal relationships with his workers. Okorie (2000), says that effective leadership is absolutely a prerequisite to the survival and growth of every organization and that there is no one "best or right". Leadership style that is applicable to all situation democratic, autocratic and laissez-fair leadership styles are commonly recognized but Salam(2000), includes transactional and contingency type of leadership style

Methodology

The research design for this study is a descriptive survey as it attempts to investigate whether environmental factors and principals' leadership style predicts students' academic performance in public secondary school of Ilorin metropolis, Kwara State.

Hypotheses

The following three hypotheses were formulated and tested

H2: There is no significant relationship among environmental factors, principal's leadership style and students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Ilorin metropolis.

H2: There is no significant relationship between general environmental factors and students academic performance in public secondary schools in Ilorin metropolis

H3: There is no significant relationship between principal leadership style and students academic performance in public secondary schools In Ilorin metropolis

Instrumentation

Questionnaire was the major instrument used to elicit information from the respondents on the research topic. A sample of 32 were drawn from 52 schools in Ilorin metropolis using stratified random sampling technique. Also, a total number of 100 were randomly chosen in three Local Government Areas (LGAs) made of Ilorin metropolis. Ilorin West, South and East LGAs have 17, 14 and 21 schools respectively. Multiple reason analysis was used to test the first hypothesis while Pearson product- moment correlation was used to test the second and third hypotheses at 0.05 significant level.

Testing of Hypothesis

TABLE 1: Relationship among Environmental Factors, Principals' Leadership Style and Students' Academic Performance.

Models	DF	Sum of Square	Mean Square	Calculated r-Value	Critical r-Value	Decision
Regression	2	1626.09	813.05	13.59	3.0	Rejected
Residual	197	1155.69	5.87			

for 197 degree of freedom at 0.05 level of significance. This, therefore, implies that the null-hypothesis which says that there is no significant relationship among Environmental factors, principals leadership style change and students academics performance is thereby rejected.

This implies that both environmental factors and principal leadership styles significantly and positively influence students' academic performance. Favorable environmental factors

will improve teaching and learning in the school and thus enhance students' academic performance. Similarly, an appropriate management and leadership style adopted by a school principal will encourage teachers' job performance and thereby enhance students' academic performance.

TABLE 2:- Correlation Analysis between General Environmental Factors and Student Academic Performance

Variable	N	Mean	SD	DF	Calculated r-Value	Critical r-Value	Decision
General Factors Environmental	100	28.427	3.461	98	.388	.195	Rejected
Students Performance Academic	100	51.248	6.957				

Table 2 shows that the calculated r-value of 388 is greater than the critical r-value of 195 at 0.05 level of significance. This indicates the rejection of a null-hypothesis and then it implies that general environmental factor relates to students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Ilorin metropolis.

The general environmental factors of a school are internal and external factors which jointly influence the school system. Teacher as an internal factor in school environment has a greater influence on the school output (students). When a school has more professional and qualified teachers, the students' academic performance will be enhanced. This is tallied with observations of Ijaiya (2004), Ogunsaju (2004), and Umoh (1998), who noted that teachers' quality is the most important educational factor predicting students' academic performance. Similarly, technology as one of the major external factors in school environment that does affect students' academic performances is a major source of every change and development which refers to the practical applications of scientific knowledge to improve academic activities.

Table 3: Correlation Analysis of between Principal Leadership Style and Students Academic Performance

Variable	N	Mean	SD	DF	Calculated r-Value	Critical r-Value	Decision
Principals' Leadership style	100	28.436		98	.581	.195	Rejected
Students Academic Performance	100	51.248					

0.05 level of significance. This shows that the null-hypothesis which says that there is no significance relationship between principals' leadership styles and students' academic performance is thereby rejected. This implies that principals' leadership style has a relationship with students' Academic performance in public secondary schools in Ilorin metropolis of Kwara State. As principal adopts appropriate leadership style in school management, and the job performance of staff (academic and non- academic) will be stimulated and thus enhance students' academic performance and achievement.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The paper establishes a positive relationship between environmental factors and students' academics performance in Ilorin metropolitan secondary schools. It also discovers a significant relationship between principals leadership style and students' academic performance in Ilorin metropolitan public secondary schools. The study also revealed that keeping abreast with environmental factors and principals' leadership style could improve students' academic performance in the study area. The conclusion that could be drawn from the study is that students' academic performance will be enhanced with the adequate

harmonious reaction with staff, ensures privacy when given feedback as negative behaviour of teachers, and schools make use of ultra modern equipment which could go along way to produce quality students.

In view of the findings, the paper recommends that principals should be aware and understand the environment of the school. They should exhibit good leadership qualities at all time and adopt appropriate leadership style capable of moving the school forward to enhance improved students' academic performance.

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