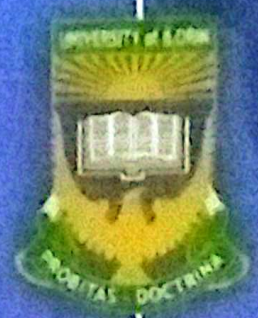


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A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF PRINCIPALS' GENDER IN THE MANAGEMENT OF PEACE IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN KWARA STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

This study was on comparative analysis of principals' gender in the management of peace in secondary schools in Kwara State, Nigeria. The study adopted a descriptive design. The study population consisted of all principals in public Secondary Schools in Kwara State in Nigeria. Random Sampling technique was used to select 120 principals from the 333 principals in the state. Thereafter, purposive sampling technique was used to select 60 male principals and 60 female principals in the state secondary schools to allow for equal representation. Data for this study were gathered through the use of questionnaire tagged Principals' Gender in the Management of Peace Questionnaire "PGMPQ". The t-test was adopted for analysing the hypotheses. Findings from this study revealed that there was a significant difference between male and female principals' leadership style in the management of peace in secondary schools in Kwara state, Nigeria. Findings further revealed that there was a significant difference between male and female principals' communication skills in the management of peace in secondary schools in Kwara state, Nigeria. Based on the findings from this study, recommendations were made that principals should be appointed based on their competences to manage peace in the school system rather than being gender biased. Also, effective communication skills should be made the yardstick for appointing principals in secondary schools because it helps to promote peace in the school system.

Key words: Principal, Gender, Management, Peace, Secondary schools

Introduction

Male and female principals have contributed a lot towards promoting peace in the school system. Their role as leaders cannot be underestimated; as they have become epitome of peace and promoters of peace-culture among staff and students and the world over. Therefore, leadership quality of the principal usually has effect on the general administration and tone of the school. The managerial prowess of the principal to a large extent determines whether he or she is able to manage peace which meets with the expectation held for his/her role by his/her significant reference group. Principals and school heads effectiveness and managerial skills in handling issues within the school and ensuring a conducive environment for learning in schools has become a major concern within the educational system especially, the disruption of learning activities and poor performance of students which such occurrences leads to.

Management of peace in schools has become a source of great concern for administration, because human beings are the most difficult animals to handle; due to the special abilities they possess. However, every principal should be prepared to handle such. This is a clue to understand that, when ensuring togetherness, as a principal, he or she should be prepared to expect the unforeseen circumstances. Therefore, in managing peace in schools, there is the need for the principals to let go of personal ego and pride and allow no selfish interest to come in when leading the staff and students in order for them to achieve the goals and objectives of the school.

Ogunsaju (1997) opined that leadership style of the principal influences the action, behaviour, beliefs and feelings of staff and pupils. More so, for the subordinates, i.e. the staff and students to willingly follow the principals' order or course of action. Then the leadership style must be in tandem with the yearnings of the staff and students. The influence of leadership style and quality in effective school management process cannot be overemphasized.

Communication skills of the principal are very crucial in the management of peace. The way and manner principals relate information to the staff and students, goes a long way of winning their obedience and cooperation. Therefore, school administrators should be able to manage whatever conflicting situation that arises in the school because they are trained managers. They are expected to manage peace effectively rather than suppress or avoid conflict. Meanwhile, in managing peace, it is pertinent that school principals should have the basic knowledge, skills and training it requires. They should be aware of the hindrances to peace in school and how to manage them. However, some of the possible ways of managing peace and preventing conflicts include compressing, dialogue, accommodating, collaborating, avoidance and competing.

Furthermore, many or most educational administrators, i.e. principals believed