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PRINCIPALS` COMMUNICATION COMPETENCY AND JOB SECURITY PRACTICE AS CORRELATES OF TEACHERS` JOB PERFORMANCE IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN AGUATA EDUCATION ZONE

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ABSTRACT

The study investigated principals` communication competency and job security practice as correlates of teachers` job performance in public secondary schools in Aguata Education Zone in Anambra State. The study was guided by two research questions and two hypotheses which were tested at .05 level of significance. Correlational research design was adopted for the study. The population of the study comprised 640 teachers in the 50 public secondary schools in Aguata Education Zone, Anambra State. The sample for the study consisted of 128 teachers drawn using simple random sampling technique. Three sets of structured instruments titled "Principals` Communication Competency Questionnaire (PCCQ)", "Principals` Staff Job Security Questionnaire (PSJSQ)" and "Teachers` Job Performance Questionnaire (TJPQ)" were used for data collection. The instruments were subjected to face and construct validation by three experts made up of two experts in Educational Management and a specialist in Measurement and Evaluation all from Department of Educational Foundations in the Faculty of Education, Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University, Igbariam Campus. Cronbach Alpha which was used for the test of the internal consistency of the instruments yielded overall coefficient of 0.80, 0.79 and 0.80 for PCCQ, PSJSQ AND TJPQ respectively. The researcher together with the help of two research assistants who are secondary school teachers in the zone administered the instruments to the respondents through a direct approach. A total of 128 copies of the questionnaire were administered and 120 were properly filled and successfully retrieved indicating 93.8% return rate. Data collected were analyzed using Pearson`s Product Moment Correlation Coefficient to answer the research questions while simple regression was used to test the hypotheses. The findings of the study indicated among others that there is positive and significant relationship between principals` communication competency and teachers` job performance in public secondary schools in Aguata Education Zone, Anambra State. Based on the findings it was recommended among others that School principals should organize quarterly

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meetings and interactive session with members of the staff to improve school communication which creates a conducive environment for better job performance of teachers.

Keywords: Teacher, Principal, Communication Competency and Staff Job Security

Introduction

Human resource in any organization determines to a great extent the achievement of the organizational goal. This is because human resource plays an indispensable role of manipulating other resources toward achieving the organizational goal. In educational organization especially in public secondary schools, teachers are one of the human resources whose job performance determines the attainment of the school set goals. Stressing the place of teachers in education, Nwaka and Ofojebe (2010) stated that teachers are the crucial resources for effective implementation and realization of the educational policies and objectives at the practical level of classroom. Teachers are the pillars of the society who help students grow and shoulder the responsibility of nation building. A teacher is a person trained in knowledge, skills, attitude and values, in a formal training institution, to teach or impart same to the learners in the most acceptable way. Teachers could be described as the human catalyst who intentionally influence the interaction among the teacher, the learner and the environment of the learner by restructuring the environment of the learner in such a way that the learner will acquire the desired knowledge, skills and attitudes and meaningfully contribute to the development of humanity at an appropriate time. Hence, the success or failure of any education system depends to a large extent on the quality and caliber of teachers who are referred to as interpreters and transmitters of required knowledge, attitudes, skills, and values in society.

Teachers' job performance is the extent of teachers` involvement in the achievement of the school goals. Mgbere and Andrew (2019) defined teachers` job performance as the sum total of a teacher`s execution of tasks assigned to him/her. They further stressed that the success and quality of the school organization is closely tied to the job performance of each teacher which greatly depends on the quality of teachers and their performance level as regards to professional qualification, teaching experience, knowledge of subject matter and quality of students produced which is the output. Agu, Amajuoyi and Agogbua (2021) noted that teachers' job performance is the overall ability of teachers to exhibit the right attitude to work, be committed and dedicated to the teaching roles while making deliberate efforts toward the attainment of educational goals and objectives.

According to Arop, Owan and Madukwe (2019) teacher job performance is the statutory curricular function that is performed by the teachers to enable learners to achieve the set educational goals in the schools. Teachers` job performance can be measured in several ways. Nwanga and Amaikwu (2020) noted that teachers' job performance can be assessed through their

regularity/punctuality in school, participation in staff meeting and co-curricular activities, lesson presentation, coverage of scheme of work, discipline of students, students' academic performance, preparation of lesson notes and plans, and execution of official duties delegated by the principals among others. It can be measured in terms of level of attendance to classes, lesson preparation, presentation and delivery among others (Ezeugbor, Onyali & Okoye, 2018). The researcher defines teachers' job performance as the ability of a teacher at a particular period of time to carry out his or her teaching and non-teaching responsibilities assigned to him by the school principal effectively in order to achieve the stated objectives and increase students' learning.

The principal is the head and chief executive of secondary school who utilizes human and material resources of the school to achieve the school`s set goals. Onyali, Ikegwuonu and Nnebedum (2018) viewed principal as the chief executive of secondary school who is in a vintage position to plan, coordinate, monitor and control both human and material resources for the delivery of quality education. Utebor, Enwemasor and Ononiwu (2020) maintained that the school principal is the chief officer in charge of the daily management of secondary school. Continuing, Utebor et al averred that some of the duties of the principal include: ensuring that funds entrusted on them is properly utilized; ensuring the provision and maintenance of physical facilities; ensuring that teachers are motivated for their total commitment and ensuring the supervision of instructional materials to ascertain effective teaching and learning. Principal as the leader in secondary school influences and controls personnel to foster the attainment of predetermined objectives. Igoni (2020) described principal as the administrative leader who is the coordinator of the entire secondary school activities to ensure the success of the entire school. The principal is the leader who exerts influence on members of staff to achieve set goals.

Principals as the human resource managers in public secondary schools need to possess communication competency and apply job security practice in order utilize teachers to achieve their respective schools` set goals which will in turn boost students` academic performance. The term competency as opined by Carol and Edward as cited by Nwune, Nwogbo and Okonkwo, (2016) is the successful performance of a task through the use of knowledge, skills, attitude and judgment. It is the ability and required skills to accomplish a given task. Managerial competencies are the possession of required abilities and skills by managers to accomplish administrative tasks for attainment of set goals. Similarly, Liridon and Mimoza (2017) defined managerial competencies as the knowledge, abilities, skills and behaviors required for effective performance of administrative tasks. Managerial competencies are crucial in controlling the daily activities of an organization. It is the sets of knowledge and behaviour necessary for effective discharge of administrative jobs.

Managerial competencies are the frequency or how well a job/task is carried

out by a person. Hence, principal's managerial competencies are the measure of how well or the frequencies at which principals carry out their duties in the task areas of management of secondary schools. Akinfolarin (2017) opined that managerial competencies is the measure of how well a job task is performed by the principal in his roles towards ensuring that effective teaching and learning take place for the achievement of secondary school goals. Therefore, managerial competency can be termed as the possession of necessary skills to effectively manage resources for performance.

Managerial competencies are the possession of necessary skills to effectively manage resources for productivity. Nurtanio, Dwi and Suyud (2021) defined managerial competencies as the abilities to formulate school development plan and control the available school resources such as personnel, finance, time and facilities to attain set educational objectives. According to Owan and Agunwa (2019), principal managerial competency refers to the ability of the school principal to plan, lead, direct, guide, coordinate, and harness all the resources at his disposal for the purpose of achieving school goals. In the context of this study, managerial competencies are the necessary skills, habits, abilities and knowledge for successful coordination controlling and utilization of available resources for attainment of predetermined educational objectives.

There are different concepts of communication by various scholars, all pointing to the same general process of transmission of a message from source to the receiver through a medium. Rahmawati (2021) defined communication as the transmission of meaning to others in the form of symbols or certain languages so that people who receive the information can understand. Communication is the exchange of information by either speaking or writing or through any other means. Communication is the process in which a communicator attempts to convey an image to a receiver. Without effective communications, organizations will not be what it is, and functions will not be carried effectively towards the achievement of the organizational goal.

Communication fosters understanding and prevents conflict in secondary schools. Omebe (2014) also noted that there must be a good communication network in the school to enable teachers to be constantly informed of the progress being made in the school. The communication network is seen as being very significant to the life of the school. This is because it is a major means through which the school personnel get an opportunity to identify and appreciate what the school is doing, the atmosphere in which it operates, what is expected from the school and the public. Communication is thus important in an organization like schools because it constitutes one of the chief means through which organizational members work together. Planning and decision-making in schools could only be done through effective communication, hence teachers should be encouraged to participate in planning and decision making in the school. This is because effective communication improves productivity and workers` job satisfaction

while poor communication can result to low employee commitment and performance.

Communication facilitates cooperation and teamwork in schools. Nnebedum and Ugwu (2017) asserted that internal communication is concerned with the exchange of ideas, information, knowledge and also interaction between the principal and personnel within the school system so as to facilitate understanding, cooperation and enhance good interpersonal relationship for the attainment of school goals. Preiksha (2022) defined internal communication as a means of conveying ideas, expression, feelings and thoughts within an organization with a result to get feedback. In internal communication, there are vertical, downward, upward and diagonal communication which focuses on how to communicate and not only on what is being communicated in order to achieve organizational goals.

Communication competency is the proficiencies in dissemination of information in an organization. Thompson and Ofojebe (2020) noted that communication competency is the ability of principals to exchange ideas and disseminate information to their subordinates in a timely and accurate manner. It is through communication competency that a school principal dispatches and receives information from the teachers including some useful feedback. It is through these feedbacks that he also comes to know the performance and academic and personal needs of each teacher. For Manafa (2018), communication skill entails speaking appropriately to people while maintaining good eye contact, eloquent speech with tailored language, listening effectively, writing clearly with concise language, being confident, friendliness, empathy, use of question, open mindedness and presenting your ideas appropriately. Principal who possesses good communication skill creates friendly school environment which assures teachers of their job security.

Security is a great persuader that permits an individual to move on in life, it leads to sense of fulfillment and satisfaction when individuals understa nd that they are secured/safe in whatever profession they involve themselves. Abolade (2013) affirmed that when a person is safe/secured then he can seek to achieve other things so desired. Once an individual is assured of security especially of his job, and he sees it practically displayed, he may be motivated to be the best he could be since nothing poses as a threat to him in this wise. The workplace is expected to be a comfort zone for workers and a place of refuge from some challenges of life like economic and social challenges which are some of the aftermath of losing one's job. The most imperative thing an employee needs in employment relationship is job security that guarantees peace of mind. Security is one of the second fundamental needs of man as postulated by Maslow's hierarchy of needs. Langbert (2012) declared that security needs are indispensable needs, for desire, physical safety and to be free from fear of deprivation and physiological needs. Job security to an employee is that his/her job is not threatened and that the individual will be on the job for as long as the individual wants with no

feeling or reasons whether objective or subjective that he/she might lose the job.

Job security is the expectation and the assurance of continuity in current job situation. It has to do with employees` feeling over the loss of job or lose of desired job feature such as lack of promotion chances, current working conditions, as well as long-term career opportunities. Jimenez and Didona (2017) defined job security as the probability of an employee to keep his/her job. The higher the probability of keeping employment, the higher the job security. Job security is an important factor in job performance. In school system, job security of teacher is ensured after the issuance of confirmation letter. In other words, the staff is accorded his tenure status. This means that the teacher cannot be dismissed from the job arbitrarily. Tenure, therefore, gives the teacher a sense of job security (Abdullah & Ramay, 2012). Job security is the hope an employee has concerning the continuity and stability of their employment. It concerns the employees' emotions regarding the loss of a job or desired aspects of a job such as good working conditions, promotions, or desired long-term career prospects (Akpan, 2013). Job security induces organization commitment of employees and their job satisfaction. For Bhasin (2020), job security is an assurance that you have your job in the foreseeable future irrespective of outside factors. It also means that your employer is satisfied with your job and is in no hurry to terminate your employment.

In some public secondary schools in Aguata Education Zone, some principals seem to be dictative, autocratic and unapproachable which not only scare teachers away and endangers their job but also retards teachers` job performance. This unfriendly school environment could be attributed to principals` lack of communication competency and used of job security practice which in turn adversely affect students` academic performance.

The study was guided by two research questions and two null hypotheses.

1. What is the relationship between principals` communication competency and teachers` job performance in public secondary schools in Aguata Education Zone, Anambra State?
2. What is the relationship between principals` job security practice and teachers` job performance in public secondary schools in Aguata Education Zone, Anambra State?

Two null hypotheses were tested for the study.

1. There is no significant relationship between principals` communication competency and teachers` job performance in public secondary schools in Aguata Education Zone, Anambra State.
2. There is no significant relationship between principals` job security practice and teachers` job performance in public secondary schools in Aguata Education Zone, Anambra State.

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Research Method

Correlational research design was adopted for this study. The study was carried out in Aguata Educational Zone in Anambra State using public secondary schools. The population of the study comprised 640 teachers. The sample of the study consisted of 128 respondents. Data collected were analyzed using Pearson`s Product Moment Correlation Coefficient to answer research questions and simple regression to test hypotheses.

Research Question 1: What is the relationship between principals` communication competency and teachers` job performance in public secondary schools in Aguata Education Zone in Anambra State?

Table 1: Pearson (r) on Relationship between Principals' Communication Competency and Teachers' Job Performance

Variables	N	Principals' Communication Competency	Teachers' Job Performance	Remarks
Principals' Communication Competency	120	1.00	.770	Strong Positive
Teachers' Job Performance	120	.770	1.00	

As shown in Table 1, a Pearson's correlation coefficient (r) of .770 was obtained. This shows that there is strong relationship between principals` communication competency and teachers` job performance in public secondary schools in Aguata Education Zone in Anambra State. This indicated that the increase in principals' use of communication competency will strongly improve the job performance of teachers.

Research Question 2: What is the relationship between principals` staff job security practice and teachers` job performance in public secondary schools in Aguata Education Zone in Anambra State?

Table 2: Pearson (r) on Relationship between Principals' Staff Job Security Practice and Teachers' Job Performance

Variables	N	Principals' Staff Job Security Practice	Teachers' Job Performance	Remarks
Principals' Staff Job Security Practice	120	1.00	.711	Strong Positive
Teachers' Job Performance	120	.711	1.00	

As shown in Table 2, a Pearson's correlation coefficient (r) of .711 was obtained. This shows that there is strong relationship between principals` staff job security practice and teachers` job performance in public secondary schools in Aguata Education Zone in Anambra State. This indicated that the increase in principals' use of staff job security practice will strongly improve the job performance of teachers.

Hypothesis One: There is no significant relationship between principals` coummunication competency and teachers` job performance in public secondary schools in Aguata Education Zone in Anambra State.

Table 3: The Summary of Simple Regression Analysis of the Relationship between Principals' Communication Competency and Teachers' Job Performance

Predictor	R	R^2	*F*	*P-value*	Remark
Communication Competency	.770	.593	745.573	.003	*S

*Significant

As shown in Table 3, the simple regression coefficient (R) is .770, while the R^2 is .593 showing that principals' communication competency makes 59.3% contribution to the variance in teachers' job performance in public secondary schools. The *F* (1/513) = 745.573 and the *p*-value of .003 .is less than .05. Therefore, since the *p*-value is less than the stipulated .05 level of significance, the null hypothesis was rejected. Therefore, there is significant relationship between principals` communication competency and teachers` job performance in public secondary schools Aguata Education Zone in Anambra State.

Hypothesis Two: There is no significant relationship between principals` job security practice and teachers` job performance in public secondary schools in Aguata Education Zone in Anambra State.

Table 4: The Summary of Simple Regression Analysis of the Relationship between Principals' Job Security Practices and Teachers' Job Performance

Predictor	R	R^2	*F*	*P-value*	Remark
Job Security Practice	.711	.506	523.869	.000	*S

*Significant

As shown in Table 4, the simple regression coefficient (R) is 711, while the R^2 is .506 showing that principals' job security practices makes 50.6 % contribution to the

variance in in teachers' job performance in public secondary schools. The *F* (1/513) = 523.869 and the *p*-value of .000 .is less than .05. Therefore, since the *p*-value is less than the stipulated .05 level of significance, the null hypothesis was rejected. Therefore, there is significant relationship between principals` job security practice and teachers` job performance in public secondary schools in Aguata Education Zone in Anambra State.

Based on the data analysis, the summary of the findings is presented as follow:

1. There is positive and significant relationship between principals` communication competency and teachers` job performance in public secondary schools in Aguata Education Zone, Anambra State.
2. There is positive and significant relationship between principals` job security practice and teachers` job performance in public secondary schools in Aguata Education Zone, Anambra State.

Discussion of the Findings

The result of the study indicated that there is moderate positive relationship between principals` communication competency and teachers` job performance in public secondary schools in Aguata Education Zone in Anambra State. This agreed with the finding of Thompson and Ofojebe (2020) which indicated that there is a strong relationship between principals' application of communication skill and teachers' job performance in secondary schools. The agreement in findings could be attributed to the fact that two studies carried in the same geographical location with the same participants. The communication competency is applied to enable teachers comprehend their roles and expectations which possibly explains the strong relationship with their job performance. The principals that possess good communication competency listen attentively to the needs of teachers and provide professional responses that could improve their job performance. As teachers feel listened to and understood by the principals, they are likely to develop good feeling which enhances their engagement to their duties to improve their job performance.

It was found that there is significant relationship between principals` communication competency and teachers` job performance in public secondary schools in Aguata Education Zone in Anambra State. This agreed with the finding of Owan and Agunwa (2019) which revealed that there is significant relationship between principals` communication competency and teachers` job performance in public secondary schools. The agreement in findings is explained by the fact that the two studies were conducted in secondary schools in the same country. The task clarity and direction made possible through communication competency eliminate confusion and role conflict which contribute to significant relationship with job performance of teachers.

It was shown that there is strong positive relationship between principals` job security practice and teachers` job performance in public secondary schools in Aguata

Education Zone in Anambra State. This disagreed with the finding of Kwabiah, Hodibert and Amankwa (2016) which indicated that there was weak correlation between job security and job performance of employees. The difference in time span and participants of the study could explain the dissimilarities in findings. Also the geographical location and the nature of the organization whose employees` job performance was studied could be responsible for the disagreement. Job security practices make teachers mentally stable to carry out their responsibility which could account for the strong association with teachers' job performance. The more-relaxed atmosphere created by job security contributes to better job performance among teachers. This finding could also be explained by the fact that job security makes teachers feel protected against layoffs or sack which they reciprocate by diligently discharging their duties to attain outstanding job performance.

It was found out that there is significant relationship between principals` job security practice and teachers` job performance in public secondary schools in Aguata Education Zone in Anambra State. This disagreed with the finding of Kwabiah, Hodibert and Amankwa (2016) which indicated that there was no significant correlation between job security and job performance of employees. This disagreement may be attributed to difference in geographical location and time span between the two studies. This finding is probably due to the fact that teachers who feel secure with their teaching job are likely to work harder to improve their job performance.

Conclusion

Based on the findings, it is concluded that principals` communication competency and staff job security practice have positive and significant correlations with teachers` job performance in public secondary schools in Aguata Education Zone, Anambra State.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations were made:

1. School principals should organize quarterly meetings and interactive session with members of the staff to improve school communication which creates a conducive environment for better job performance of teachers.
2. Principals should as much as possible assure the teachers of their job security to make them comfortable and ready to put all their efforts to improve their job performance.

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