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MANAGEMENT OF STAFF RELATIONSHIP FOR EFFECTIVE ADMINISTRATION OF PUBLIC SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN RIVERS STATE

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Abstract

The study investigated the management of staff relationship for effective administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers state. The study adopted descriptive research design. Three research questions and three null hypotheses were formulated and posed to guide the study. The population of the study was 6,174. A sample of 500 comprised of male and female teachers from 303 public senior secondary schools in Rivers State was used for the study. Simple random sampling techniques was used to draw the sample. A self-structured questionnaire titled "Management of Staff Relationship for Effective Administration Questionnaire (MSREAQ) was used as instrument for data collection. Mean and standard deviation scores were used to answer the three research questions, while independent sample t-test analysis was used to test the null hypotheses at .05 level of significance. The response pattern was 4 point modified Likert scale ranging from Very High Extent (VHE) = 4points, High Extent (HE) =3points, Low Extent (LE) =2points and Very Low Extent (VLH) = 1point. The instrument was validated by two experts in department of measurement and Evaluation who ascertained the face and content validity of the instrument. A reliability coefficient of the instrument was .820 using test-retest methods through Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 28. It was concluded from account of the study that management of staff relationship influences effective administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers state. Based on the account of the findings, it was recommended among that: School administrators should cultivate the culture of open communication to in order to improve the cooperation of teachers in the school, School administrators should adopt participative management style where grievances and conflict in the schools will be minimized through teachers in participation in decision making process. Besides, Schools administrators should encourage teachers by listening and accommodating their opinions in the schools and School administrators should organize and recommend teachers for training and development programmes such as in-service, workshops, seminars, conferences etc. this will serve as way of motivation to them thereby will enhances effective administration of the school.

Keywords: Management, Staff, Staff Relationship, Group, Manager, Effective Administration, Secondary School.

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INTRODUCTION

The success and failure of any organization be it public or private depend to a large extent on the human resources components of the organization. This means maintaining healthy staff relationships in an organization is a pre-requisite for organization success. Strong staff relationships are required for high job performance and human satisfaction. Staff relations generally deal with avoiding and resolving issues concerning the human elements of an organization. In the educational system, the success of any school depends on human resources for proper implementation of its goals and programmes. According to Ololube (2017), any leader in an educational institution who underestimates the essential role and importance of people may not be effective and efficient in running the affairs of the institution smoothly.

The continuous improvement of educational standards in secondary schools would be attained through proper management of the human elements ranging from recruitment, training and retraining, staff motivation and staff relations, which is the major concern of this paper, as poor management of staff may lead to poor coordination and control of the activities of secondary schools (Mayo, 2008). Teachers are the people who are exposed to a good measure of training in a teaching subject area as well as in professional education. Teachers are the backbone of an educational system. The success and failure of educational activities at any level depends on the job performance of teachers. Therefore, the performance of teachers is emphatic for the improvement of education. Teachers are the most recognized and indispensable human resources in an educational institution. This relationship cannot be attained without the age-long term called management. Management in the context of this paper refers to total utilization of resources (human, material, financial, etc.) to achieve a pre-determined organizational goal.

The term in its usual administrative and management parlance connotes the art of planning, organizing, directing, coordinating, and controlling. Management of human relationships on the other hand deals with the policies, practices and methods adopted by employers to deal with employees either collectively or individually. Managing employee relations is gaining increasing importance because of the central role of employees in driving organizational success. The question is who is to manage the staff relationship? The school principal is the chief executive officer or manager of a secondary school. He is a manager whose job is among others: planning for staff intake, motivating staff, training and development of staff, building and maintaining staff relations, creating effective communication, etc. (Lewis, 2015). In managing the human relationship, the school principal needs to be proactive in dealing with staff either collectively as in a trade union or individually depend on their personal interaction with the staff. Another interesting question here is where does he manage the staff?

Senior secondary school in the context of national policy on education (NPE) (FRN, 2014) is an education children receive after primary and junior secondary education and before the tertiary institutions. Ololube (2017) defined senior secondary school as the full-time education provided after primary and before the tertiary education for children between the age of 15 to 18 years plus. It is the transitory level of education received by pupils between the primary and tertiary education. From these plethora definitions, one can deduce that secondary education is the form of education which children receive after they have received primary and junior secondary education. It is a three-year education in which when a student completes can obtain his/her West African senior school certificate examination (WASSCE). Senior secondary school is an upper section of the secondary education that is managed under the State Ministry of

Education and its agencies such as State Education Board. The head of senior secondary school is the principal who represent the government in the school community.

The objectives of senior secondary school shall be to: Inspire students with a desire for achievement and self-improvement both at school and later life, raise generation of people who can think for themselves, respect the views of others, respect dignity of labor and appreciate those values specified under broad national aims and lives as good citizens, etc. (FRN, 2014; Obanya, 2000). Armstrong (2006) opined that staff relations consist of all those areas of human resource management which involve relationships with employees-directly and/or through collective agreements where trade unions are recognized. Employee relations are generally concerned with the employment relationship which deals with the agreements of terms and conditions of employment and issues arising from employment. It is the practices which include formal processes, procedures, and channels of communication. It is important to note that employee relations are also conducted on a day-to-day informal basis by line managers and team leaders; without the framework of employment and employee relations policies but acting mainly on their own initiative.

Onasanya (1999) in a similar vein believed that human relations, being a behavioral science which deals with international, inter-work group and management of employees relationship in a social system seems to be only tool for organizational productivity and development. This is not far-fetched since efforts of Elton Mayo and his research colleagues in the 1920s on behavioral approach to management succeeded to have yielded much more factual analysis in terms of the chicken-egg relationship between human relations and productivity in an organization. To Kaliski (2001), a primary reason for managing employee relations is to ensure that the employees' level of commitment, responsibility, performance and contribution to the organizational bottom-line is recognizable and adequate enough to earn competitive advantage as well as overall organizational success. Effective administration refers to the process of producing effective results without wastage. It is the ability to present, maintain and preserve thoughts, resources, and legal paper in a perfect flow. It also means the process of implementing and facilitating the programmes of and management of the school resources for the achievement of its objectives.

Statement of Problem

In spite of the glaring importance of human relationship in the realization of organization goals, one still hears complaints of poor performance of staff and management, ineffective administration, poor human relationship, poor work environment etc. even till this day. Besides, staff usually resigns from their appointment as a result of executive harshness and autocratic management and administration of their leaders. This menace can affect the effective administration of secondary schools at anytime and anywhere. Also, inability of the school administrators to manage these important elements of the school causes failure in the administration of the school. It is as a result of these trends that this paper is hereby addressing this chaos.

Aim and objectives of the Study

The aim of this study is to investigate the management of staff relationship for effective administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers state. Specifically, the study sought to:

- Examine the extent effective communication influence relationship effective administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State
- Determine extent line staff relationship influence relationship effective administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State
- Examine the extent participative management style influence relationship effective administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State

Research Questions

The study will be guided by the following research questions:

- To what extent does effective communication influence relationship effective administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State?
- To what extent does line staff relationship influence relationship effective administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State?
- To what extent does participative management style influence relationship effective administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were postulated to guide the study:

- H₀₁: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female teachers on the extent effective communication influences effective administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.
- H₀₂: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female teachers on the extent line staff relationship influences effective administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.
- H₀₃: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female teachers on the extent participative management style influences effective administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATION

Concept of Management

The concept management refers to total utilization of scarce resources in order to achieve predetermined objectives. Ololube (2017) described some management strategies used by principals using mnemonic coined (POSLCSS) to include planning, organizing, staffing,

evaluating and developing: Planning means thinking ahead of the time and making decisions concerning the major activities that need to be carried out in the schools. It means deciding in advance what, when, who to carry out the activities. Organizing means put things together into a particular arrangement or order. It also means gather people into a group that will work on projects as a team. Once principals have developed workable plans and the methods for attaining them, they must design an organization to successfully implement them.

Staff requires the Ministry of Education to employ competent staff and distribution of staff for job position. He distributes them among the various classes and subjects for teaching purposes. Principals play the leadership role in the schools. To lead, means to guide, conduct in a certain course, direct by influence, show the way by going ahead and letting the staff follow the examples. As the head of the school the principals has the capacity to lead others because he performs the leadership role or function.

Communication is pivotal in educational settings, particularly within the framework of principal-teacher interactions. Principals' communication behavior can fast track the achievement of school goals if well handled by the principal, or hamper school effectiveness if it is poorly managed (Ololube, 2017). The principal establishes positive relationship with the teachers, parents and students. Mutual relationship among members of the school brings about effective administration (Abiodun-Oyebanji, 2004).

Staff motivation entails spurring the staff to maintain good work status. It is said that when the laborer is praised his cutlass begin to cut. Staff motivation come inform of praise, recognition, good working environment promotion etc. and also a motivated staff put more effort to work (Obanya, 2000). Staff training and development entails providing professional programmes to staff so as to keep them abreast to current job situation. In the school this training and development programmes include in-service training, workshops, seminars, conferences, etc. (Ololube, 2017).

METHODS

The study investigated the management of staff relationship for effective administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers state. The study adopted descriptive research design. Research questions and null hypotheses were formulated and posed to guide the study. The population of the study was 6,174. A sample of 500 male and female teachers from 303 public senior secondary schools in Rivers state was used for the study. Simple random sampling techniques was used to drawn the sample. A self-structured questionnaire titled "Management of Staff Relationship for Effective Administration Questionnaire (MSREAQ) The response pattern was 4 point modified Likert scale ranging from Very High Extent (VHE) = 4points, High Extent (HE) =3points, Low Extent (LE) =2points and Very Low Extent (VLH) = 1point. The instrument was validated by two experts in department of measurement and Evaluation who ascertained the face and content validity of the instrument. A reliability coefficient of the instrument was .820 was obtained. Mean and standard deviation scores were used to answered the research questions, while independent sample t-test analysis was used to test the null hypotheses at .05 level of significance using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 28.

RESULTS

Research Question One: To what extent does effective communication influence effective administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State?

Table 2: Mean ratings of respondents on the extent effective communication influence effective administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State

S/N	Items	Male Teachers		Female Teachers		Mean Set ($\bar{X}_1 + \bar{X}_2$)	Decision
		Mean	SD.	Mean	SD.		
1.	Effective communication fast track the teachers commitment to job	3.55	.79	2.89	.78	3.22	High Extent
2.	Effective communication facilitate the teachers transparency at work	3.49	.62	2.56	.81	3.02	High Extent
3.	Effective communication create mutual relationship among teachers	3.46	.67	3.22	.79	3.34	High Extent
4.	Effective communication build staff morale	2.85	.99	2.65	.65	2.75	High Extent
5.	Effective communication build staff trust	2.87	.76	2.77	.77	2.82	High Extent
Cluster Mean		3.24	.77	2.81	.76	3.03	High Extent

Table 1 showed the mean ratings of respondents on the extent effective communication influence effective administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. All the items from 1-5 had high mean scores above the criterion mean of 2.50. Item 1 had a mean and standard deviation of 3.55 and standard deviation of .79. This implies that the respondents agree to a high extent that effective communication fast track teachers commitment to job. Item 2 had a mean and standard deviation of 3.49 and standard deviation of .62. This implies that the respondents agree to a high extent that effective communication facilitates teachers' transparency at work. Item 3 had a mean and standard deviation of 3.46 and standard deviation of .67. This implies that the respondents agree to a high extent that effective communication build staff morale. Item 4 had a mean and standard deviation of 2.85 and standard deviation of .99. This implies that the respondents agree to a high extent that effective communication build staff morale. Item 5 had a mean and standard deviation of 2.87 and standard deviation of .76. This implies that the respondents agree to a high extent that Annual leave regain staff energy to work effective communication build staff morale. The cluster mean and standard deviations of 3.24 and .77, for male teachers, and 2.81 and .76 for female teachers showed that the respondents agree to a high extent that effective communication: fast track the teachers commitment to job, facilitate the teachers transparency at work, create mutual relationship among teachers, building teachers morale and building staff trust enhances effective administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

Research Question Two: To what extent does line staff relationship influence effective administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State?

Table 2: Mean ratings of respondents on the extent line staff relationship influence effective administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State

S/N	Items	Male Teachers		Female Teachers		Mean Set ($\bar{X}_1 + \bar{X}_2$)	Decision
		Mean	SD.	Mean	SD.		
6.	Line staff relationship change teachers attitude to work	2.85	1.08	3.23	.91	3.04	High Extent
7.	line staff relationship encourage creativity in teachers	3.44	.57	3.27	.45	3.35	High Extent
8.	Motivation retain teachers interest to work	3.41	.67	3.06	.72	3.23	High Extent
9.	line staff relationship boost teachers engagement to work	3.18	.81	2.56	.56	2.87	High Extent
10.	line staff relationship reduces teachers absenteeism to work	3.25	.75	3.03	.66	3.14	High Extent
Cluster Mean		3.23	.78	3.03	.66	3.13	High Extent

Table 2 showed the mean ratings of respondents on the extent line staff relationship influence effective administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. All the items from 6-10 had high mean scores above the criterion mean of 2.50. Item 6 had a mean score and standard deviation of 2.85 and 1.08 respectively. This implies that respondents agree to a high extent that line staff relationship change the attitudes of teachers to work. Item 7 had a mean score and standard deviation of 3.44 and .57 respectively. This implies that the respondents to a high extent agree that encourage creativity in teachers. Item 8 had a mean score and standard deviation of 3.41 and .67 respectively. This implies that the respondents to a high extent agree that line staff relationship retain teachers interest to work. Item 9 had a mean score and standard deviation of 3.18 and .81 respectively. This implies that the respondents to a high extent agree that line staff relationship boost teachers engagement to work. Item 10 had a mean score and standard deviation of 3.25 and .75 respectively. This implies that respondents agree to a high extent that line staff relationship reduces teachers absenteeism to work. The cluster mean and standard deviations of 3.23 and .78, for male teachers and 3.03 and .66 for female teachers showed that the respondents to a high extent agree that line staff relationship change teachers attitude to work, encourage creativity in teachers, retain teachers interest to work, boost teachers engagement to work and reduction of teachers absenteeism to work influence effective administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

Research Question Three: To what extent does participative management style influence effective administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State?

Table 3: Mean ratings of respondents on the extent participative management style influence effective administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State

S/N	Items	Male Teachers		Female Teachers		Mean Set ($\bar{X}_1 + \bar{X}_2$)	Decision
		Mean	SD.	Mean	SD.		
11.	Increase team morale of teachers	3.08	.91	2.96	.88	3.32	High Extent
12.	Promote collaboration among teachers	2.99	.84	3.03	.76	3.26	High Extent
13.	Improve teachers commitment to work	3.21	.83	3.33	.72	2.81	High Extent
14.	Encourage teachers participation in the decision making process	3.26	.79	2.88	.67	2.94	High Extent
15.	Discourage redundant habit of the teachers	2.70	.72	2.89	.87	2.79	High Extent
Cluster Mean		3.06	.81	3.01	.74	3.22	High Extent

Table 4 showed the Mean ratings of respondents on the extent participative management style influence effective administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. All the items from 11-15 had high mean scores above the criterion mean of 2.50. Item 11 had mean and standard deviation score of 3.08 and .91 This implies that respondents agree to a high extent that participative management style Increase team morale of teachers. Item 12 had a mean and standard deviation score of 2.99 and .84. This implies that the respondents agree to a high extent that participative management style Promote collaboration among teachers. Item 13 had a mean and standard deviation score of 3.21 and .83. This implies that the respondents agree to a high extent that participative management style improve teachers' commitment to work. Item 14 had a mean and standard deviation score of 3.26 and .79. This implies that the respondents agree to a high extent that participative management style encourage teachers participation in decision making. Item 15 had a mean and standard deviation score of 2.70 and .72. This implies that the respondents agree to a high extent that participative management style Discourage redundant habit of the teachers enhance effective administration. The cluster mean and standard deviation scores of 3.06 and .81 for male teachers and 3.01 and .74 for female teachers showed that the respondents to a high extent agreed that increase team morale of teachers, promote collaboration among teachers, improve teachers commitment, discourage redundant habits of the teachers and encourage teachers participation in decision making process which influences effective administration of public senior secondary schools in River State.

Test of Hypotheses

Hypothesis One (H_{01}) There is no significance difference in the mean responses of male and female teachers on the extent effective communication influences effective administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

Table 4: Independent samples t-test of the significant difference in the mean responses of male and female teachers on the extent effective communication influences effective administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State

Gender	N	X	SD.	Df	Sig. 2-(tailed)	t-value	Decision
Male	200	3.89	1.79	498	5.444	.017	Ho ₁
Female	300	3.03	1.74				Rejected

Data in Table 4 show summary of t-test analysis result on the extent effective communication influences effective administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. It showed that the calculated t-value .017 at df=348 and P=.444 is greater than .05 ($5.444 > p .05$), therefore the null hypothesis of no significant difference between male and female teachers on the extent on the extent effective communication influences effective administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. is rejected. This implies that there is significant difference in the mean responses of male and female teachers on the extent effective communication influences effective administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. Male and female teachers had the different opinion on the extent effective communication influences effective administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

Hypothesis Two (H₀₂) There is no significance difference in the mean responses of male and female teachers on the extent line staff relationship influences effective administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

Table 5: Independent samples t-test of the significant difference in the mean responses of male and female teachers on the extent line staff relationship influences effective administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State

Gender	N	X	Std.	Df	Sig. 2-(tailed)	t-value	Decision
Male	200	2.99	1.72	348	4.430	.018	Ho ₄
Female	300	3.62	1.90				Rejected

Data in Table 5 show summary of t-test analysis result on the mean ratings of male and female teachers on the extent line staff relationship influences effective administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. It showed that the calculated t-value .018 at df = 498 and P = 4.430 is greater than .05 ($.430 > p .05$), therefore the null hypothesis of no significant difference between male and female teachers on the extent on the extent line staff relationship influences effective administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State is rejected. This implies that there is significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female teachers on the extent line staff relationship influences effective administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. Male and female teachers had the different opinion on the extent staff motivation influences effective administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

Hypothesis Three (H₀₃) There is no significance difference in the mean responses of male and female teachers on the extent participative management style influences effective administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

Table 6: Independent samples t-test of the significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female leader's the extent participative management style influences effective administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State

Gender	N	\bar{X}	SD	Df	t	P	Decision
Males	200	3.19	.81	398	4.666	.023	Ho₁ Rejected
Females	300	2.59	.74				

Data in Table 6 show summary of t-test analysis result on the mean ratings of male and female teachers on the extent participative management style influences effective administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. It showed that the male teachers had calculated mean of 3.19 (SD = .81), while the female teachers had a mean value of 2.59 (SD = .74). The t-value is 4.666. Therefore, the null hypothesis of no significant difference between male and female teachers on the extent participative management style influences effective administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State is rejected. This implies that there is significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female teachers on the extent participative management style influences effective administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. Male and female teachers had the different opinion on the extent participative management style influences effective administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

DISCUSSION OF FINDING

The result of the findings showed that the respondents agreed to a high extent that the areas of managing staff relationship that influences effective administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State are effective communication, staff motivation, and participative management style. The result of research question one showed that the respondents agreed to a high extent that Effective communication influences effective administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State (Abiodun-Oyebanji, 2004). In supporting this view posited that communication is pivotal in educational settings, particularly within the framework of principal-teacher interactions. Principals' communication behavior can fast track the achievement of school goals if well handled by the principal, or hamper school effectiveness if it is poorly managed. Principals' communication behaviors play a significant role in shaping teacher engagement, motivation, and overall school culture. A principal ability to convey expectations, provide a constructive feedback, and establish open lines of communication significantly impacts teacher morale and commitment.

The result of research question two showed that the respondents agreed to a high extent that staff motivation influence effective administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. This finding corroborated with that of (Obanya, 2000) who stated that a motivated staff put more efforts to work and increase productivity. The result of research question three showed that the respondents agreed to a high extent that participative management style influences effective administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. This findings tandem with that of Elton Mayo and his collogues whose advocates the interrelationship among workers in workplace, this will foster creativity and innovation in employees.

CONCLUSION

The success and failure of any organization be it public or private depend to a large extent on the human resources components of the organization. This mean maintaining healthy staff relationship in an organization is a pre-requisite for organization success. Strong staff relationship is required for high job performance and human satisfaction. Staff relation generally deals with avoiding and resolving issues concerning the human elements of an organization.

Recommendations

Based on the above findings, the following recommendations were made from the findings of the study below as follows:

- School administrators should cultivate the culture of open communication to in order to improve the cooperation of teachers in the school.
- School administrators should adopt participative management style where grievances and conflict in the schools will be minimized through teachers in participation in decision making process.
- Schools administrators should encourage teachers by listening and accommodating their opinions in the schools.
- School administrators should organize and recommend teachers for in-training and development programmes such as in-service, workshops, seminars, conferences etc. this will serve as way of motivation to them thereby will enhances effective administration of the school.

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