TOWARDS ENHANCING MANAGERIAL SKILLS FOR IMPROVED STUDENTS' ACADEMIC PERFORMANCES FOR NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT.

By

Olayiwola G. Olorisade, PhD. & Stephen O. Afolabi, PhD.

Department of Business Education, Kwara State University, Malete.

ABSTRACT

This study investigated the relationship between managerial skills (technical, conceptual and interpersonal) of institutional managers and students academic performances in Nigerian Colleges of Education. The research is a follow-up to an earlier one that considered other types of skills and its effect on organizational effectiveness. The study sample consisted of 461 academic staff, from nine Colleges of Education in Nigeria. Managerial Skills, Staff Morale and Work Effectiveness Questionnaire was the basic instrument used. Simple percentages and Pearson Product Moment Correlation statistics were used to test the questions and hypotheses. The study revealed a significant relationship between the technical and conceptual skills with students' academic performance; while there was no significant relationship between interpersonal skills and students' academic performance. Based on the findings, it was recommended that institutional managers should get more engaged with classroom teaching, to use and improve on their technical skills. They should involve staff in policy formulation, decision making, and goal setting to prepare efficient successors to manage the institutions, for improved students' academic performances. Institutional staff should also be exposed to leadership training, to acquire competencies in managerial skills in the bid to enhance institutional performances.

Introduction

Educational provisions have steadily grown over the years in Nigeria; but there has been no corresponding development in economic prosperity, social welfare, scientifc and technological development, health provision, etc. According to Udobia (2012), one of the factors holding back development in many countries, is the poor state of education. According to him, the standard of Nigerian education is poor, going by the poor academic performances of students, who are mostly considered as unemployable. He further observed that the poor standard could be attributed to improper management of education.

To achieve the goals of education, qualified personnel in the right quality are required to effectively discharge the functions of teaching and supervision. Therefore much is expected of institutional managers, who have to handle expectations from government, employers of labour, parents, and the larger society; in order to guide their institutions towards success. In this wise, institutional managers have the task of establishing long range plans with subordinate staff on how to achieve the goals of education. To accomplish this, earlier researchers had identified varying types of skills upon which effective performance and successful administration rests (Edem, 1993; Peretomode, 2003; Yalokwu, 2000). According to Olorisade (2008), educational institutions like other organizations, have become increasingly complex owing to their size, coverage, technology and corporate social responsibilities. He observed that organizations now strive to enhance their performance by focusing efforts on managerial effectiveness. Institutional managers perform various activities such as planning the work, taking decisions, delegating authority, solving problems of employees and organization, co orienting and controlling the deviations (Kamble, 2011). According to him, these functions are pivotal to perform effectively and to make organizations competitive.

Educational institutions aim at achieving specified national goals and contribute to national development through; the development of human resources, promoting technological revolution, developing scientific ways of exploiting and utilizing national resources,

promoting industrialization through inventions, increasing production through effective training and development of multiple abilities. Institutional managers are required, therefore, to play pivotal role at enhancing students' performances, towards achieving the above stated goals. Alam, Khalifa & Shahjamal (2009) revealed that school leadership influence school climate and environment, and thus plays pivotal role at improving school outcomes. According to them, such leadership provides motivation and enhances capacities of school teachers to deliver. Cheng, Mok & Chow (2003) observed that leaders are often perceived as the key actors mobilizing institutional members to face up with institutional challenges and they ensure that educational services and provision are made more effective. This definitely enhances the work performance of teachers and translates into improved students' performances. Some earlier studies argued that institutional managers do not have direct effect on students' achievement (Olorisade, 2011; Hallinger and Heck, 1996); while some others claim that managerial skills of school heads are directly related to students' achievement (Chapman, 1984; Adewole, 1987). The study became important as research is beginning to suggest that teachers must not only be trained to increase learning experiences for their students, but trained also to be leaders in an increasingly challenging world (Roser & Massey, 2013). The objective of this study therefore is to determine the relationship between the technical, conceptual and interpersonal skills of institutional managers, and students' academic performance towards enhancing national development.

Statement of the Problem

Institutional managers have a duty to establish work plans with subordinate staff, motivate them, coordinate their tasks and ensure appropriate school environment is provided in order to achieve the ultimate purpose of the institutions. This will become a reality only when institutional leaders understand the skills required of them to succeed, and put to effective use appropriate managerial skills to enhance students' performance. This study therefore seeks to investigate the actual relationship between the main components of managerial skills (technical, conceptual and interpersonal) and students' academic

performance in foundational teacher training institutions. This is with a view to enhancing national development through the production of competent human capital (teachers) for Nigerian schools.

Purpose of the Study

This study seeks to determine the technical, conceptual and interpersonal skills of institutional managers, and to establish the relationship between the demonstration of these skills and students' academic performance towards the development of competent human capital, adequately prepared to cope with the present and future challenges of teaching.

Significance of the Study

Findings of the study will broaden knowledge on the importance of managerial skills, of institutional managers, as an additional factor at enhancing students' academic performance, and for the production of competent teachers. It has implications for the government and governing councils of the institutions at ensuring that institutional mangers acquire appropriate managerial skills towards improving their teaching effectiveness and their administrative performance. This will aid the development of competent teachers through improved method of knowledge dissemination, character formation and skill acquisition for the would-be-teachers.

Research Questions

This study will address the following question:

1. What is the level of demonstration of technical skills by institutional managers?

2. What is the level of demonstration of conceptual skills by institutional managers?

3. What is the level of demonstration of interpersonal skills by institutional managers?

Research Hypotheses

The study attempts to provide answers to the following null hypotheses:

Ho_1: There is no significant relationship between institutional manager's technical skills and students' academic performance.

Ho_2: There is no significant relationship between institutional manager's conceptual skills and students' academic performance.

Ho_3: There is no significant relationship between institutional manager's interpersonal skills and students' academic performance.

Methodology

The study design was the descriptive survey research, based on correlation design and carried out ex-post facto. The pertinent data was collected from 461 academic staff of Colleges of Education in South-Western Nigeria. Purposive sampling technique was used to select nine Colleges of Education; while stratification was done on the basis of schools to select proportionate samples, after which random sampling technique was employed to obtain a total of 461 respondents. Managerial Skills, Staff Morale and Work Effectiveness Questionnaire was the basic instrument used, with a probability coefficient of .70; while a proforma was adopted on students performance. Descriptive statistics was employed to establish the level of skills demonstration and Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) statistical tool was used to test the hypotheses raised for the study.

Data Analysis

Research Question 1: What is the level of demonstration of technical skills by intermediate school managers?

Table 1: Institutional managers' demonstration of skills

S/N	Institutions	Technical skills	Conceptual skills	Interpersonal skills	Average
1	Adeniran Ogunsanya COE,Otto-Ijanikin	73.75	71.25	72.75	72.58
2	Adeyemi College of Educ., Ondo	66.00	68.00	66.25	66.75
3	Federal Col. of Educ., Abeokuta	69.00	65.75	65.75	66.83
4	Federal Col. of Educ (Tech.), Akoka	71.25	72.75	72.50	72.17
5	Federal Col. of Educ (Special), Oyo	66.25	58.00	58.75	61.00
6	Michael Otedola Col of Pri. Edu Epe	68.25	66.00	65.25	66.50
7	Osun State Col. of Educ	71.75	73.75	72.50	72.67

	Ila-orangun				
8	Osun State Col. of Education, Ilesha	73.50	72.00	70.00	71.83
9	Alayande Col. of Education, Oyo	70.75	72.00	71.75	71.50
	Average	70.06	68.83	68.39	

The result in table 1 revealed that institutional managers demonstrated high technical skills (70.06%). This reveals institutional managers who have clear understanding of actions, consequences and results of specific classroom behaviors. It also reveals managers who use appropriate tools, methods and processes necessary to facilitate learning. Managers ability at performing classroom functions, using appropriate methods and teaching aids, enhances their effectiveness and contributes to improving students performances. These managers serve as role models both to subordinates and students who are taught to maximally contribute to national development.

Research Question 2: What is the level of demonstration of conceptual skills by intermediate school managers?

Table 1 also indicated that institutional managers demonstrated high conceptual skills (averaging 68.83%). It depicts managers who understand institutional activities, who are able to discern interrelationships among organizational parts, position and goals of their institutions. Conceptual skills of managers reflects their ability to view the organization as a whole and how the varying units work

together to achieve stated objectives. These managers make decisions that appreciates the functional interconnectivity of departments and how their institutions fits into the larger society (Obamiro, 2008).

Research Question 3: What is the level of demonstration of interpersonal skills by intermediate school managers?

Evidences from table 1 revealed that institutional managers demonstrate appropriate interpersonal skills (69.09%). This reveals school managers who understand, communicate and are able to work with others, both as a group member and leader. These managers motivate and develop in subordinates, the team spirit required to achieve results. This is essential to mobilize subordinates and students to collaborate towards attaining improved national development. These managers show understanding to subordinates feeling and attitudes, and interact with them to get work done. These managers listen to and are sympathetic to subordinates problems. All these encourage subordinates to render their best service in the bid to accomplish instructional objectives (Dessler, 2004).

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant relationship between institutional managers' demonstration of technical skills and students' academic performance.

Table 2: Correlation analysis of technical skills and students academic performance

Variables	No of Cases	X	S.D.	Df	Cal. R	Critical R	Decision
Technical skills	9	70.06	2.7				Ho
Students academic performance	9	71.85	12.12	16	.516	.468	Rejected

The result in table 2 revealed that there was a significant relationship between the technical skills of institutional school managers and students' academic performance. This shows the ability of such managers to perform assigned tasks. The use of varying methods and techniques to handle classroom tasks by these managers rub positively on students' performances.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant relationship between managers' demonstration of conceptual skills and students' academic performance.

Table 3: Correlation analysis of conceptual skills and students academic performance

Variables	No of Cases	X	S.D.	Df	Cal. R	Critical R	Decision
Conceptual skills	9	68.83	4.73				Ho
Students academic performance	9	71.85	12.12	16	1.96	.468	Rejected

The result in table 3 revealed that there was a significant relationship between the conceptual skill of institutional managers and students' academic performance. The managers' analytical and creative skills, aids their lecture delivery and classroom management. They are able to readily identify problems and tackle them for the benefit of their class and institution. This enhances students' academic performances.

Hypothesis 3: There is no significant relationship between managers demonstration of interpersonal skills and students' academic performance.

Table 4: Correlation analysis of interpersonal skills and students academic performance

Variables	No of Cases	X	S.D.	Df	Cal. R	Critical R	Decision
Interpersonal skills	9	68.39	4.49				Ho
Students academic performance	9	71.85	12.12	16	.278	.468	accepted

The result in table 4 shows that there was no significant relationship between interpersonal skills of institutional managers and students academic performance. The ability to understand, communicate and work with other lecturers does not have direct impact on classroom tasks. This may explain the lack of significant relationship between interpersonal skills and students academic performances.

Discussion and Implications

The result in table 1 revealed that institutional managers demonstrated high technical skills (70.06%), high conceptual skills (68.83%) and high interpersonal skills (68.39%). This shows institutional managers who demonstrate clear understanding of actions, consequences and result of specific classroom behaviors. It revealed managers who understand institutional activities, discern interrelationships among organizational parts and goals of institutions; as well as people who communicate and work well with others.

Evidences in table 2 revealed that there was a significant relationship between the technical skills of the managers and students academic performance. This agrees with Adewole's (1987) submission that there was a corresponding relationship between principals' performance of their instructional duties and teachers' level of performance of their expected instructional duties and students

academic achievement. This reveals that the managers use appropriate tools, methods and processes necessary for the facilitation of permanent learning on the part of the students. It also indicates a basic skill required of academic staff for the accomplishment of institutional goals, which subordinates are guided to exhibit by their institutional managers.

The result in table 3 revealed a significant relationship between conceptual skills and students performances. This reflects the ability of the managers to coordinate and integrate the activities of their respective departments and schools. This establishes the importance of managers understanding of institutional activities and the ability to discern relationships among organizational parts, positions and goals of their institutions; as well as analyze work and situations. The managers through their analytical and creative abilities help their subordinate staff to solve problems encountered while performing their tasks. This assist their staff to work towards the goals of their institutions, thereby positively influencing the performances of students.

Again, result in table 4 showed that there was no significant relationship between managers' interpersonal skills and students' performance. This agrees with the findings of Hafeez and Wazir (2012) that principals were not solely responsible for the outstanding educational outcomes observed; but their leadership has been found an inevitable factor in producing the environment where these outcomes occur.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The findings of the study are:

i) Institutional managers demonstrate high technical, conceptual and interpersonal skills.

ii) There was a significant relationship between managers technical skills and students academic performance.

iii) There was a significant relationship between managers conceptual skills and students academic performance.

iv) There was no significant relationship between managers interpersonal skills and students academic performance.

On the basis of these findings, the following recommendations are suggested:

1. Institutional managers should get more engaged in classroom teaching, and not focus totally on administrative tasks. This will enable them to put into use and improve on their technical skills, as well as mentor younger lecturers to develop appropriate technical skills for effective delivery of lectures. This, it is hoped, will improve their lesson delivery and result in the training of more competent middle-level manpower for schools, who will contribute more to national development.

2. The importance of managerial skills for enhanced students' performances has revealed the need for institutional managers to constantly involve their lecturers in policy formulation, curriculum planning, goal setting and decision making in order to develop the required managerial skills, and to transfer a legacy that will aid the preparation of efficient successors to manage the institutions for the attainment of educational objectives.

3. Again, all lecturers in these institutions should be exposed to management and leadership training, in addition to the acquisition of higher degrees. This will help them to acquire competencies in managing the institutions, and contributing to improving students' academic performances through the demonstration of appropriate managerial skills. This will ultimately raise the standard of education and equip the graduates to maximally contribute to national development.

References

Adewole, A. (1987). Relationship between principal's leadership roles and teachers' performance on the academic achievement of students in Ondo State secondary schools. Unpublished M.Ed thesis, University of Ilorin.

Alam, G. M.; Khalifa, M.T.B. & Shahjamal, M. M. (2009). Return from education system in Bangladesh: an investigation on comparative flashback scenario. African Journal of Business Management, 3 (10): 567-575.

Chapman, H.L. (1984). Relationship between teachers' evaluation of Georgia middle grade school principals on selected areas of administrative responsibility. Dissertation Abstract International. 45 (9) 2707-A

Cheng, Y.C.; Mok, M.C. & Chow, K.W. (2003). Organization and the management of education: Development and growth. In J.P. Keeves, R. Watanabe (Eds.) International handbook of educational research in the Asia-Pacific region. Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers. pp 915-930.

Edem, D.A. (1998). Introduction to educational administration in Nigeria. Ibadan: Spectrum books Ltd.

Hafeez, A. & Wazir, S.K. (2012). Impact of human relation skill heads' on students' academic achievement. Interdisciplinary Journal of Contemporary Research in Business. 3 (12).

Hallinger, P. & Heck, R.H. (1996). Reassessing the principals' role in school effectiveness: a review of empirical research, 1980-1995. Education Administration Quarterly.32(1): 5-44

Olorisade, G.O. (2011). Influence of managerial skills of middle level managers on organizational effectiveness in Nigerian Colleges of Education. Academic Research International. 1 (2): 246-253.

Olorisade, G.O. (2008). Relationship among managerial skills, staff morale and organizational effectiveness in Colleges of Education, South-West, Nigeria. Unpublished Ph.D thesis, University of Ilorin.

Peretomode, V.F. (2003). Educational Administration: Applied concepts and theoretical perspectives. Lagos: Joja Educational Publishers.

Yalokwu, P.O. (2000). Management concepts and techniques. Lagos: Peak Publishers.