

# INFLUENCE OF PRINCIPALS' ADMINISTRATIVE ROLES ON STUDENTS ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN BENUE STATE, NIGERIA

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**Abstract:** This study investigated the influence of Principals' administrative roles on students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Benue State. The study focused on variables such as instructional supervision and discipline of teachers in decision making. The survey research design was adopted for the study. The population of the study comprised all the 5110 public secondary school teachers in Benue State. A sample size of 371 teachers was used for the study. In composing the sample, a multi-stage sampling procedure was adopted where different sampling techniques were used to arrive at the sample. A 20-item questionnaire titled "Principals' Administrative Role Questionnaire (PARQ) was used as instrument for data collection. The reliability coefficient stood at 0.97. Data was collected and analyzed using Means and Standard Deviation to answer the research questions and Chi-Square statistic to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The findings of the study revealed that, principals' administrative roles such as instructional supervision and discipline of teachers in decision making significantly influences students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Benue State. The study concluded that the administrative roles played by the principals in public secondary schools have significant influence on students' academic performances. Based on the findings, the researcher recommended among others that, the Ministry of Education should organize seminars on clinical conferences and collegial methods of supervision, encourage classroom visitation and giving of feedback to the teachers as it will in turn will enhance students' academic achievement; all schools should have competent professional guidance and counsellors to dialogue with students and discuss disciplinary matters as well as issues that affect their academic performance.

**Keywords:** *Principal, Instructional Supervision, Discipline, Academic Performance*

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## 1.0

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background to the Study

The proper functioning of any organization depends, to a very large extent on the ability of whoever is the leader to effectively utilize both the material and human resources to achieve the goals of such an organization. It is the administrator that mobilizes human and material resources and creates the necessary climate for productivity. Therefore, leadership is of particular

importance in the organization to the extent that without it, goals may be difficult to attain. It is pertinent to state that leadership is the process of influencing the activities of an organized group towards goal-setting and goal performance. Administration is an interactive relationship between leaders and followers. According to Kumar (2012); Bolman and Deal (2005), administration is a process of social influence where leaders induce followers to apply their energies and resources towards a collective objective. It is an interactive relationship between leaders and followers. This is characterized by influence and identification of goals. Perhaps, leadership is important in educational administration because it has far-reaching effects on the accomplishment of school programmes, objectives and attainment of educational goals (Peretomode, 2007). The concept of principals' administrative role in Nigerian secondary schools is often used to express the overall school effectiveness in relation to the attainment of both normative and summative values in students as spelt out in the National Policy on Education (FGN, 2004). The school principal is the accounting officer of the school who is either blamed or praised depending on the degree of his/her effectiveness in influencing the relevant orders in and outside school to enhance teaching and learning.

Principals' as school executives are charged with the daunting task of managing the school for effectiveness. Towards this end, Lydia and Nasongo (2009) are of the view that students academic performance depends on the effective use of certain administrative roles. According to Ayodele, Buari and Oguntuase (2016), the quest for improved academic performance of students necessitated the ability of principals to demonstrate or use certain administrative roles to ensure a complete well-round education and production of quality students from the secondary school system. The government, parents, and other stakeholders in education expect principals to work effectively for the enhancement of students' academic performance. Abu (2015) also notes that principals' must be able to adopt some administrative strategies and also evaluate their teachers in order to ascertain the strengths and weakness of the instructional delivery system for better academic performance. There are lots of roles that could be employed by principals in order to have a grip of the whole school and consequently move the school forward academically. These range from the monitoring of teachers' activities, use of committee system in schools, performance appraisal, participatory decision making, delegation of duties and regular staff meeting (Auwawe, 2014). In relation to the above assertions, this study attempts to investigate the influence of principals' administrative roles in the areas of instructional supervision, discipline, provision of instructional materials and involvement of teachers in decision-making on students' academic performance in secondary schools in Benue State, Nigeria.

The duty of ensuring that effective teaching and learning takes place lies with the principal who employs various supervisory strategies such as classroom visitation, classroom observation, mentorship, workshop and micro-teaching among others to ensure that effective and efficient service delivery. According to Osakwe (2010), instructional supervision is that art of over-seeing the teaching and learning process in order to ensure that the school is administered, managed and led in an effective manner to achieve the educational objectives. In the secondary schools, the principal plays a critical role in the programme of instructional improvement through effective and efficient supervision of teachers' classroom instructional display. Through classroom visitation, classroom observation, mentorship, workshop and microteaching supervisory

techniques, the principal is faced with the responsibility of supervising teachers generally to improve their instructional effectiveness. Osakwe (2010) adds that principals supervise and monitor the work of teachers' competences no matter how proficient they are deemed to be so as to provide students with quality learning. As important as instructional supervision is to the development of quality education, it has been observed that school principals often devote more of their time attending to visitors than supervising instructions (Weller, 2011). Consequently, interference of administrative functions seems to be an appendage to instructional supervisory functions of the school principals in achieving instructional objective of the school. It is therefore unfortunate that instructional supervisory functions recognized as cardinal role of the school principal could be over-looked in the midst of a variety of roles.

A very important element of the principals' leadership effectiveness is to enforce discipline among students and teachers. Oboegbulem (2007), defined discipline as the ability or readiness of the students and teachers to respect authorities observe established laws of the school and take responsibilities for their actions. Discipline implies self-control, restraint and respect for oneself or others. Ruiz (2010) defines discipline as the system of norms with which an organization provides itself, and the obligation or otherwise of the school/group to cope with certain conventions. Discipline has to do with the conventions, rules, customs and values that are brought into play by social interactions within each educational community. Therefore, for the principal to be effective in his/her leadership role, he/she must demonstrate the ability to induce students and teachers to have self-control and respect for one another. Ruiz further adds that when the principal leads the school on the part of discipline, students' performance increases as a result of his ability to evaluate students' academic performance, thus, there exist peace and harmony which results in the overall school development. Today, maintaining discipline in Nigerian secondary schools depends on the maturity of principals to control the activities of the students and the teachers for a peaceful and more progressive school. School rules are broken with impunity and it has become the order of the day for students to take laws into their hands. Perhaps, as the major agents in the promotion of school effectiveness, principals are the pillars of the educational system, especially at the second tier of education. Today, the position of the principals in secondary schools is far more sophisticated than in the previous decades. This complexity can best be seen in the different functions that principals are expected to perform daily and often simultaneously (Babayemi, 2006 & Adeyemi, 2011).

Similarly, provision of instructional materials is also one of the responsibilities of the school principal. Instructional materials may be seen as those objects and devices that have been systematically designed, produced and evaluated which the teacher uses to illustrate the point he/she wishes to emphasize in his/her lesson with the intention of facilitating learning (Nomigo, 2014). The use of instructional materials provides the teachers with interesting and compelling platforms for conveying information since they motivate the learners more. Furthermore, the teacher is assisted in overcoming physical difficulties that could have hindered his effective presentation of a given topic since students could see, feel, smell or touch the real object or something similar to what the teacher is talking about. For learning to take place, there is need for the teacher to sensitize students' senses of hearing, smelling, testing and touching. In order to do this, the teacher must use instructional materials provided to them by the school head

(Ojunamiri, 2007). Provision of instructional materials in this context refers to the ability of the school principal to make available materials and devices such as chairs, chalk, chalkboard, tables chart among others. These are used in learning situations to supplement the written or spoken words in transmission of knowledge. The instructional materials could also be provided by teachers. Students could also be involved in provision of such materials. When such devices are adequate, teaching and learning go on smoothly; however, without the provision of adequate instructional materials; it will be difficult to implement the school curriculum. Thus, it is the sole decision of the school principal to provide adequate materials for the development of the school.

Students' academic performance is the outcome of education, the extent to which a student has achieved his/her educational goals or how well a student meets standards set out by government and educational institutions. Michelle (2010), defined academic performance as the ability to study effectively and how facts fit together and form larger patterns of knowledge. The researcher further stresses performance to embrace being able to think for oneself in relation to facts; and being able to communicate the knowledge verbally or down on paper. To the author, students' academic performance is how well a student is able to recall facts learnt either verbally or written down on paper. The author further posits that, students' academic performance is the process of how students deal with their studies and how they cope with or accomplish different tasks given to them by their teachers. Audu (2007), argued that, academic performance to be the measure of knowledge gained in formal education usually indicated by test scores, grade points, average and degrees. Here, the achievement level of the student is judged by the marks that the students' have scored in the quarterly and yearly examinations. Students' academic performance as observed by the researcher has declined drastically of recent due to ineffective principals' administrative role performance in the areas of instructional supervision, discipline, provision of instructional materials, involvement of teachers' in decision-making and communication among others. Consequently, the issue of poor academic performance in secondary schools has reached the point where effective use of relevant administrative strategies would be explored and employed to address the situation. The researcher, therefore, deemed it necessary to investigate the influence of principals' administrative roles on students' academic performance in secondary schools in Benue State.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

It has been speculated by the relevant stakeholders in education, such as the teachers, parents, ministries of education officials that most school principals in Benue state are not effective in their administrative functions; as they seem not to adopt proper administrative roles that would motivate and encourage their subordinates in carrying out their duties effectively. The researcher therefore wonders if such school principals have subscribed themselves to the various administrative functions of regularly supervising instructional activities in their schools, communicating appropriately with their subordinates as at when due to motivate them for better performance. Others include providing instructional materials for their teachers to enhance their teachers' job performance, involving teachers in decision-making process and disciplinary matters to enhance their commitment to the development of quality and functional secondary education. Despite the aforementioned principals' administrative roles in ensuring students' academic performance in secondary schools in Benue State. The researcher observed that students'

academic performance in the area of study seem to have declined. This therefore, motivated the researcher to carry out this study to assess the extent to which principals' administrative roles influence students' academic performance in secondary schools in Benue State. The problem of the study therefore is: To what extent do principals' administrative roles influence students' academic performance in secondary schools in Benue State?

### **1.3 Objective of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to investigate the influence of principals' administrative roles on students' academic performance in secondary schools in Benue State. Specifically, the study sought to:

- i. Find out the extent to which principals' use of instructional supervision influences students' academic performance in secondary schools in Benue State.
- ii. determine the extent to which principals' use of discipline influence students' academic performance in secondary schools.

The study could be of immense value to the principals, teachers, students, Ministry of Education and further researchers. Theoretically, the findings of the study could be beneficial because the results would provide further insight in relation to existing theories such as path-goal theory and situational theory. The results of the study would enrich the knowledge and understanding of the school principals' on the relevance of using appropriate administrative roles to motivate and propel their employees towards job effectiveness that would influence students' academic performance. It could also provide information to principals on the need for involving their subordinates in the process of decision making to enhance their performance. The study would also expose the principals to the advantages and disadvantages that inappropriate administrative roles would cause to the achievement of educational goals. The findings of the study would also enable teachers to adopt measures that would sustain good relationship amongst them and their school principals and as well cooperate effectively for a better and efficient administration of the school and enhance students' academic output. Finally, the findings of this study could serve as a reference point to those directly and indirectly involved in the administration of secondary schools in Benue State of Nigeria and the nation at large. It may also provide a springboard for future researchers who may want to carry out studies in the same area, thereby increasing literature in knowledge bank. Perhaps, principals, teachers, students and other researchers would have access to this work via conference presentations and publication of some parts on the internet and a hard copy in the school library.

## **2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW**

This chapter is discussed theoretical framework, conceptual framework and review of related empirical studies.

### **2.1 Theoretical Framework**

This study is hinged on Robert House (1971) Path-Goal theory of leadership.

#### **2.1.1 Robert House's (1971) Path-Goal Theory of Leadership**

The path-goal theory, also known as the path-goal theory of leader effectiveness or the path-goal model, is a leadership theory developed by Robert House, an Ohio State University graduate, in 1971 and revised in 1996. The theory states that a leader's behavior is contingent to the satisfaction, motivation and performance of his or her subordinates. The revised version also

argues that the administrator engages in behaviors that complement subordinate's abilities and compensate for deficiencies. According to House, a managers' job is to guide workers to choose the best paths to reach their goals as well as the organizational goals. The theory argues that leaders will have to engage in different types of administrative roles or behaviors depending on the nature and the demands of a particular situation. It is the leader's job to assist followers in attaining goals and to provide the direction and support needed to ensure that, their goals are compatible with the organization's goals. The path-goal theory is a leadership participation method, where the leader does what he or she can to clear a path for group members to act. This is done by delineating clearly what is to be done, removing obstacles and rewarding those who perform well. The levels and intensity a leader may do these things will vary according to the circumstances. The follower may be more motivated or capable, or the work to be done could be easy or difficult. The leadership styles in this method can vary from being dictatorial to the leader being participatory. House (1971) states that these styles include supportive, directives, participative and performance-orientated. A leader facilitates the group by appealing to a group member's self-esteem and making the task enjoyable or at least palatable. A leader simply may direct the group to do the task with a contingency theory approach, at some points, a leader may engage in a participative leadership style, where he or she takes suggestions from the group on how to do work. This assumes that the members are knowledgeable. A leader may set standards, goals and urge the group to attain them. This style is used usually for tasks that are more complex. Whatever the case, the assumption is that the administrator knows what is best in the way of accomplishing something. The theory also assumes that the leader is rational and that there are ways that can work positively for a situation. House (1971) states that for leaders to be effective, they need to engage in behaviors that complement subordinates' environments and capabilities in a manner that compensates for deficiencies and is instrumental to subordinate's satisfaction, individual and work unit's performance. The author admits that there have been no specific tests of any theory of how a leader's behavior affects followers.

The 1996 version of the theory expands to eight classes of leader behavior that he says will help leadership performance. In addition, the behavior can be substituted for each other depending upon the circumstances. House adds that group members can be empowered through delegation of authority and work facilitation (developing task autonomy). There is an enhanced group decision process and interaction among members. House talks emphasizes that value based leadership motivates workers to achieve their goals and is justified if it enhances their performance. Path-goal theory assumes that leaders are flexible and that they can change their style, as situations require. The theory proposes two contingency variables. These are such as environment and follower characteristics that moderate the leader behavior-outcome relationship. Environment is outside the control of the follower-task structure, authority system, and work group. Environmental factors determine the type of leader behavior or role required if the follower outcomes are to be maximized. Follower characteristics are the locus of control, experience and perceived ability. Personal characteristics of subordinates determine how the environment and leader are interpreted. Effective leaders clarify the path to help their followers achieve goals and make the journey easier by reducing pitfalls. Employee's performance and satisfaction are positively influenced when the leader compensates for the shortcomings in either the employee's or the



work setting. According to House (1971) the theory is useful because it reminds leaders that their central purpose is to help subordinates to define and reach their goals in an efficient manner. The theory is relevant to this study because it helps the principals to understand that to clarify the path, they must know the processes involved and have the vision on how to achieve the goals of the school. To be able to remove obstacles for performance of the school's goals from the path of the followers, the administrator must have the necessary skills to know when there are obstacles, what to do and how to do it. Therefore, as administrators would have to play leading roles for the subordinates to follow, this research work is anchored on House (1971) path-goal theory.

## **2.2 Conceptual Framework**

The concepts reviewed in this study include the concept of principals' administrative roles, students' academic performance in secondary schools, influence of principals' use of instructional supervision on students' academic performance in secondary schools and principals' use of discipline on students' academic performance in secondary schools.

### **2.2.1 Concept of Principals' Administrative Roles**

Administration is a social process concerned with identifying, maintaining, motivating, controlling and unifying formally and informally organized human and material resources within an integrate system designed specifically to achieve predetermined objectives. Administration has to do with getting things done with the accomplishment of defined objectives (Teddy, 2007). On a broader perspective administration could be seen as an integral part of any organization. It is crucial for maintaining and expanding the relevance, effectiveness and productivity of complex institutions. Such as Government Department, Prisons, School Systems, Universities among others (Austin, 2009). For example, the survival of all the organization, like the school and other institutions is dependent largely on the quality of administrative services available. Administration therefore influences the results to be achieved, the direction to be pursued, and the priorities to be recognized within the organization. Administration, according to Enaohwo and Eferakeya (2009), can be defined as the process by which goals are achieved through collective and cooperative human effort in a suitable environment. This definition specifies four important points: First, Administration is a process, which involves the manipulation of certain operations. Second, administration is goal oriented. Thirdly, a collective and cooperative human effort is required in administration, and fourthly, of a suitable environment, where participants can maximize performance. Now that the meaning of administration have been understood, it is pertinent to relate administration in the context of education or school organizations. To be able to do that, education administration can be defined as a means of achieving the goals of education through effective and efficient manipulation of available inputs.

### **2.2.2 Concept of Students' Academic Performance in Secondary Schools**

Academic performance is the outcome of education, the extent to which a student achieves educational goals or how well a student meets standards set out by government and institutions. According to Damsa (2010) students' academic performance in schools is measured mainly in terms of their ability to pass or fail examination (internal and external). Damsa, further states that academic performance of students is a very vital evidence of measuring their level of knowledge, skills, ideas, values acquired in school. Similarly, Adamu (2010) maintains that students' academic performance can be assessed from two clear perspectives: one view point is from criteria of the system, such as the profile of students' performance in continuous assessment and terminal

examinations in school and in standardised examinations like junior secondary school certificate examination (JSSCE), senior school certificate examination (SSCE), join admission and matriculation board (JAMB), and University examinations. Adebule (2014) defines students' academic performance as the extent of the desired outcome of academic achievement of students who have undergone some studies in school. It is also measured by the level of understanding of the lesson taught to them by their teachers which result to good or bad feedback. Igukor (2006) views students' academic performance as the measurement of the extent of performance of students which is aimed at getting a quality result at the end of such programme or studies undertaken.

### **2.2.3 Influence of Principals' use of Instructional Supervision on Students' Academic Performance**

Every organization either corporate or otherwise including the school exists essentially to achieve certain stated objectives. Thus, in order to achieve the stated goals and objectives of an organization, there is every need to put in place certain mechanisms towards ensuring its success. In the school system, one of the mechanisms to be put in place towards achieving the goals of behavioural change in both the staff and learners is supervision. In general, supervision is the help and guide given to teachers and students with the aim of improving the teaching and learning situations for the benefit of both the teachers and the learners. According to Osakwe (2010), instructional supervision is that art of over-seeing the teaching and learning process in order to ensure that the school is administered, managed and led in an effective manner to achieve the educational objectives. In the secondary schools, the principal plays a critical role in the programme of instructional improvement through effective and efficient supervision of teachers' classroom instructional display. Through classroom visitation, classroom observation, mentorship, workshop and micro-teaching supervisory techniques, the principal is faced with the responsibility of supervising teachers generally to improve their instructional effectiveness.

The importance of principal's supervisory behavior or role in post primary schools cannot be over-emphasized. The principal as a leader of a group of teachers in the school system has the function of interacting with the teachers and students in order to improve the teaching learning situation through instructional supervision. Instructional supervision is one of the processes by which school administrators attempt to achieve acceptable standards of performance and results. It is the tool of quality control in the school system and a phase of school administration which focuses primarily upon the performance of appropriate expectation of educational system (Peretomode, 2004). The author further states that the role of the principals is to facilitate the implementation of the various learning programmes aimed at improving the learning situation. Teachers whether new or old on the job need necessary support in implementing the instructional programmes. Principals as school heads therefore, need to provide this support to teachers. They have to be involved in the implementation of instructional programmes by overseeing what teachers are doing with the students in the classroom. A good principal should devote himself or herself to supervise the teaching-learning processes in his school (Peretomode, 2004).

Audu (2009) adds that before, the role of external school supervisors were to visit schools once in a while and check teachers' mistakes in their discharge of duties and correct them. This process is not only aimed at making the teachers to seat, but also encouraged the students as well to put



in more efforts towards their educational advancement. The principals were to take a major role in instructional supervision in order to improve the quality of learning. A study done by Musungu and Nasongo (2008) found that in Kenya, the head-teacher's instructional role included checking lesson books, schemes of work, records of work covered, attendance, class attendance records and staff movement books. Waweru (2013) adds that in Nigeria, the roles played by the head-teacher include supervision of the approved curriculum, staff personnel, student personnel, supervision and promotion of school community relations and supervision of physical and material resource. According to Muchiri (2008), the head-teacher is responsible for all matters pertaining to the smooth running of the school. This implies that the principal also carries out instruction supervisory roles which include organization and monitoring of timetable, provision of instructional materials, motivation of staff, supervision and monitoring to ensure that teachers are performing their duties for effective learning to take place.

Similarly, Charles, Chris and Kosgei (2012) suggest that head teachers need to effectively supervise teachers by ensuring that they are observed regularly; lessons are planned early; lessons are structured with an interesting beginning; revision of previous knowledge and teachers' use of voice variation and summary of major points at the end; teachers use backups/teaching aids properly; teachers have a good relationship with their students and teachers follow up the curriculum strictly. Effective instructional supervision aids head teachers in coordinating, improving and maintaining high teaching and learning standards in schools to enhance students' academic performance. Wanzare (2012) adds that principals play the role of supervisor from time to time by checking the teachers' classroom work and assessing their overall performance based on students' academic performance. Principals are also charged with the duty of promoting the academic and professional status of teachers by availing them with current curriculum materials and in-service courses. The principals are expected to provide the right motivation and stimulation for staff and students to enhance academic performance. They are to use supervisor teacher friendly methods moving away from the traditional method of control and authoritarianism (Wenzare, 2012). The traditional methods of inspection instill fear to teachers and lower their moral (Republic of Kenya, 1965). Principals therefore ought to be sources of inspiration for teachers and their students.

According to Onuma (2016), principals generally seem to spend more of their official hours on administrative functions to the detriment of effective supervision process and programmes of the school. Little seem to have been done by Ministry of Education, stakeholders in education and school principals to arrest the situation. Public outcry, reports and comments in print and electronic media alleging fallen standards of education in public secondary education reveal in part that internal supervision is probably not effectively carried out by school principals. Onuma's study revealed that failure of the school principal to effectively supervise classroom instructions as a result of some administrative problems would impact negatively on teaching and learning as well as curriculum implementation. If the curriculum content is not covered, students are liable to get involved in examination malpractices. Therefore, school principals, irrespective of school location should endeavour to carry out effective supervision of classroom instruction, monitor and support staff development through seminars and conferences.

In turn, this would improve teaching/learning and effective coverage of curriculum. This will ultimately improve students' academic performance and general standard of education. The author further stresses that principal's lacked supervisory techniques and inability to regularly supervise and maintain accurate record keeping indicates incompetency on the part of the principals. Principals should always seek the assistance of their vice principals (academic and administration) and deans of studies for effective supervision of instruction. Active participation of sub-ordinates in supervisory activities does not only improve teaching and learning but also contributes to knowledge in the school system. Participation of vice principals in supervision of instruction establishes cordial relationship thereby creating good rapport between principals and their vice principals (Onuma, 2016).

#### **2.2.4 Influence of Principals' use of Discipline on Students' Academic Performance**

Discipline is the act of orderliness, obedience and maintenance of proper subordination among students and a check or restraint on the liberty of individuals. It is the training that corrects moulds and strengthens the individuals' behaviour (Chichi, 2011). According to Furlan (2010), discipline refers to all the measures that are taken to enhance the set of formal and informal rules governing an institution. Stresses it further to mean, the personal behaviour of individuals who wish to conform to social, legal and other norms in the society. It also implies showing due respect for the provisions and rules established by the institution. According to Oboegbulem (2007), discipline is the ability or readiness of students to respect authorities, observe established laws of the school and take responsibilities for their actions. Thus, discipline implies self-control, restraint and respect for oneself or others. Ruiz (2010) defines discipline as the system of norms with which an organization provides itself, and the obligation or otherwise of the school/group to couple with certain conventions that, to be accepted must have been democratically drawn up and critically reviewed by all members of the community. His definition shows that discipline has to do with the conventions, rules, customs and values that are brought into play by social interactions within each educational community.

Okwori and Ede (2012) aver that discipline is an act which involves integration and cooperation of all the human resources namely staff, students, administrators (proprietors/government) in the schools in an effort to achieve lay down educational objectives. Relatedly, Idoko (2005) posits that organizations have rules and regulations which its members, staff and students have to obey. In addition, Gordon (2012) also defines the word discipline as a particular order that is put forth in accordance with previously defined rules, and the behaviours put forth by individuals in this direction. The main objective of discipline is to ensure that individuals are in harmony both with themselves and the environment by introducing them certain habits and to maintain the moral development of individuals with the sense of responsibility (Yavuzer, 2013).

Interestingly, Nakpodia (2010) observes that in the school system, discipline is necessary for effective management if the goals of the school are to be accomplished. It is the element of managerial tasks that involves the measurement and correction of the performance of the subordinates by the principal to make sure that the objectives of the school are accomplished. Discipline in school organization includes any rational approach used by the principal to overcome the problems of the school environment. To bring about effective discipline of students and

teachers, the school formulates a set of rules to guide the conduct of students. Principal leadership is the key to determining how schools operate, specifically with discipline structure of the school. Successful principals make themselves visible within a school.

They are present in the hallways, classrooms and lunchrooms. Principals who lead their school in this way expect teachers to handle the routine discipline problems and see their role as facilitating the problem-solving skills of teachers and students (Short, 2008). As discipline in schools has come into the public eye, many different groups have expressed their opinions on the state of public education. Students and teachers were found to be the two groups with the least amount of input into discipline problems being addressed in our school systems. The teacher belongs to a special class (sub-group) saddled with the responsibility of molding the child into a functional adult that will contribute to national development with the following qualities; knowledge of the subject matter being taught far ahead of that of the students; professional skill or know-how to awaken a child's interest in what is being taught and to enkindle in his students a love of learning and a good moral character (Anyamebo, 2007).

Effective discipline is needed in school for good academic performance. When there is effective discipline in a school and in the classroom, effective teaching and learning can take place. Gawe, Vakalisa and Jacobs (2011) emphasize co-operative learning as a solution. If a school lacks effective discipline, the performance academically will be poor. In Nigeria, both principals and teachers alike have to contend with matters such as student discipline Alfa (2007) enumerates the causes of indiscipline to include: Lack of interest in other staff and student on the part of the principal, some teacher's lesson create boredom, habit formation, lack of proper home training (negligence on the part of parents to provide their children/wards with basic requirements) societal influence and many others.

### **2.3 Review of Related Empirical Studies**

Samoei (2014), conducted a study on instructional supervisory role of principals and its influence on students' academic performance in public schools in Nandi North District, Nandi County, Kenya. The purpose of the study was to examine the influence of instructional supervisory roles of the principals on students' academic performance. Five research questions guided the study. The study adopted a mixed method of cross sectional survey and naturalistic phenomenology designs. The population consisted of 849 (39 principals, 120 teachers and 690 form four students) in 39 public secondary schools out of which 117 respondents were selected in nine public secondary schools using probability and non-probability sampling technique. Questionnaire titled Instructional Supervisory Role of Principals Questionnaire (ISRPQ), an interview guide as well as document analysis guide were used to collect data. Descriptive statistics such as frequencies were used to summarize information obtained from the field. It was presented in distribution tables of frequency, percentages and pie charts. Qualitative data were categorized into themes guided by research questions and presented in form of narratives and direct quotes. The findings established that principals were viewed to have oriented new teaching staff, supervise curriculum timetabling and monitor students' academic progress. They were rated very highly as roles frequently performed. Principals were found to refrain from visiting classrooms for lesson observation and rarely provided in-service training for teachers. The major challenges that faced

principals included lack of finance, inadequate staffing, high turnover of teachers and inter-relationship challenges.

Dangara (2015) conducted a study on the impact of instructional supervision on academic performance of secondary school students in Nasarawa North Senatorial District of Nasarawa state, Nigeria. The purpose of the study was to establish the relationship between instructional supervision and students' academic performance in secondary schools in Nasarawa North Senatorial District. Five research questions and five research hypotheses guided the study. The study adopted descriptive survey design. The population was made up of 528 senior secondary school teachers in 58 secondary schools. A sample of 92 teachers was selected from 37 secondary schools using simple random sampling technique. Questionnaire titled Instructional Supervision on Students Academic Performance Questionnaire used for data collection. The reliability of the instrument was ascertained using a test-retest method. The reliability co-efficient of 0.97 and 0.93 were obtained respectively. Pearson product moment correlational statistics and t-test were used to test the research questions and hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The findings revealed that regular instructional supervision has significant bearing on students' academic performance in secondary schools. It further revealed that there was a significant impact of class visitation by principals on students' academic performance in secondary schools. It was also revealed that despite the significant role instructional supervision plays in academic performance of students in Nasarawa State, the schools were not regularly supervised and monitored to ensure quality control in teaching-learning process. This has affected students' academic performance in SSCE based on the fact that the input in quality would always have the implication on the output of the students. The study recommended that a remedial mechanism should be developed and built into the school by the government, teachers, educational planners, policy makers, curriculum planners and parents. If quality education is to be achieved, a functional supervision mechanism involving parents should be built into the school system to ensure quality control and assurance from the system. The inspectorate unit of the Ministry of Education should be properly staffed with qualified instructional supervision professionals that are radical enough to articulate changes within the current supervision dynamics. The two studies were similar because the present study used two of the variables of the former study and both studies were being guided by research questions and hypotheses. They also used the same design. However, the two studies differ significantly as the present study is being carried out in a different location with different population and sample size. The previous study used only simple random sampling technique, but the present study proportionate stratified random sampling technique.

Iroegbu and Etudor-Eyo (2016), conducted a study on principals' instructional supervision and teachers' effectiveness in secondary schools in Uyo Local Government Area of Akwa Ibom State. The purpose of the study was to examine how principals' instructional supervision brings about differences in teachers' effectiveness in public secondary schools. Four research questions and four research hypotheses guided the study. The study adopted ex post facto design with the population of 1, 105 teachers and principals in 97 secondary schools. A total of 201 teachers and 14 principals were selected in 14 secondary schools using proportionate stratified random sampling technique. Principals' Instructional Supervision Interview (PISI) and Teachers' Teaching Effectiveness Questionnaire (TTEQ) were used for data collection. The instruments were

subjected to face validity by two experts in the faculty of Education, University of Uyo. The reliability coefficient of 0.83 and 0.79 were obtained for PISI and TTEQ respectively. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions and independent t-test was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 alpha level of significance. The findings revealed that there is a significant difference in teachers' effectiveness based on principals' classroom observation, analysis/strategy, post-observation conference and post-conference analysis. The findings further revealed that when teachers are supervised, they perform their duties more perfectly and this boosts the output of the school.

Onuma (2016) conducted a study on principals' performance of supervision of instruction in secondary schools in Ebonyi Central Education Zone of Ebonyi State, Nigeria. The purpose of the study was to establish principals' performance of supervision of instruction in secondary schools in Nigeria. Two research questions and four null hypotheses guided the study. The study adopted descriptive survey design. The population consisted of 1640 teachers in 142 public secondary schools. The sample was made up of 605 teachers from 22 public secondary schools using stratified proportionate random sampling technique. Questionnaire titled Principals' Performance of Supervision of Instruction in Secondary Schools (PPSSS) was used for data collection. The data collected were analysed using mean and standard deviation to answer the research questions and t-test to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The findings revealed that that failure of the school principal to effectively supervise classroom instruction as a result of some administrative problems would impact negatively on teaching and learning as well as curriculum implementation. If the curriculum content is not covered students are liable to get involved in examination malpractices. It also revealed that principal's lacked supervisory techniques and inability to regularly supervise and maintain accurate record keeping. The study recommended that school principals as instructional leaders should emphasize internal supervision of instruction in the school.

### **3.0 METHODOLOGY**

The design for this study is a survey research design. Survey design is one in which a group of people or items is studied by collecting and analyzing data from few people considered to be a representative sample of the entire population. The geographical area of the study was Benue State, Nigeria. The population of the study consisted 5110 teachers from 297 public secondary schools in Benue State (Benue State Ministry of Education, 2017). The sample size for this study is 371, which was determined using the Taro Yamane formula and the study adopted a multi-stage sampling procedure; this was because the sampling process involves various stages and each stage requires different sampling technique. The sampling techniques that were used includes: Purposive, simple random and proportionate stratified random sampling. In the purposive sampling, four Local Governments were purposively sampled from each of the three educational zones in the state. A simple random sampling technique was used to select five schools from each of the local government sampled. The simple random sampling technique was used to make a fair representation of every school and give them equal chance to be included in the sample. Proportionate-stratified random sampling technique was used to ensure that each of the schools selected contribute a proportionate number of teachers in the sample. Finally simple

random sampling technique was again used to compose the teachers in the final sample. A self-structured questionnaire titled Principals’ Administrative Role Questionnaire (PARQ) was used to collect data for the study. The result of the trial test yielded an alpha co-efficient of 0.97.

Data collected was analyzed using descriptive statistics of Mean and Standard Deviation to answer the research question and a non-parametric statistic of Chi-square to test the hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance. The instrument which took the form of a continuum of Very High Influence VHI, High Influence HI, Low Influence LI, and Very Low Influence VLI was scored thus; VHI=4, HI=3, LI=2 and VLI=1. The Mean benchmark for the influence was calculated thus;

$\frac{4+3+2+1}{4} = 2.50$ . Therefore any item with a Mean value of 2.50 and above was considered ‘High influence’ while those below 2.50 were considered “Low Influence” For the Chi-square test of hypotheses, the decision was based on P-values and Alpha values. When  $P < .05$ , it was considered “Significant Influence” and  $P > .05$  was considered “No Significant Influence.

#### **4.0 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

This chapter is concerned with data presentation, analysis, interpretation and discussion of findings. The presentation follows the sequence of the research question and hypothesis that guide the study.

##### **4.1 Data Presentation and Interpretation**

**4.1.1 Research Question One:** To what extent does principals’ use of instructional supervision influence students’ academic performance in secondary schools in Benue State?

**Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviations of influence of Principals’ Use of Instructional Supervision on Students’ Academic Performance in Secondary Schools**

Item Statement	Mean	Standard Deviation	Influence
Principals’ classroom visitation aids in the syllabus coverage which influences students’ academic performance.			High Influence
Principals monitoring of lesson plan enhances the quality of knowledge transition and this influence students’ academic performance in secondary schools	2.81	0.88	High Influence
Principals’ classroom observation influences teachers’ job performance which leads to better students’ academic performance.	3.08	0.90	High Influence
Principals’ mentorship role during classroom visitation enhances teachers’ job performance and leads to improved students’ performance	2.91	0.91	High Influence
Principals’ interaction with the staff and students during classroom visitation enhances teachers’ use of effective teaching methods which subsequently students performance	2.86	1.18	High Influence
<b>GRAND MEAN</b>	<b>2.87</b>	<b>0.98</b>	<b>High Influence</b>

Source: Field Work 2017



Results in Table 1 shows that the teachers agreed to all the five (5) items as having influence on students’ academic performance with mean values between 2.70-3.08 which are above the benchmark of 2.50. The grand mean of all the items was revealed to be 2.87 and SD= .98. This shows that principals’ use of instructional supervision has high influence on students’ academic performance in secondary schools.

**4.1.2 Research Question Two:** To what extent does principals’ use of discipline influence students’ academic performance in secondary schools in Benue State?

**Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviations of Influence of Principals’ Use of Discipline on Students’ Academic Performance in Secondary Schools**

Item Statement	Mean	Standard Deviation	Influence
Principal’s use of corporal punishment makes students to be attentive in the class and this enhances concentration.	2.87	1.03	High Influence
Principal’s use of appropriate disciplinary action makes students’ to remain in the classrooms and this enhances students’ academic output.	2.70	0.97	High Influence
Principals’ who give query to teachers’ influences teachers’ punctuality and this enhances students’ academic performance.	2.75	0.79	High Influence
Principal’s use of suspension makes students’ to disassociate from fighting and this enhances their concentration and outward performance.	3.15	0.91	High Influence
Principal’s use of expulsion makes students’ to desist from stealing school facilities and this influence their academic performance.	2.95	0.95	High Influence
<b>GRAND MEAN</b>	<b>2.88</b>	<b>0.93</b>	<b>High Influence</b>

**Source: Field Work 2017**

Results in Table 2 shows that the teachers agreed to all the five (5) items as having influence on students’ academic performance with mean values between 2.70-3.15 which are above the benchmark of 2.50. The grand mean of all the items was revealed to be 2.88 and SD= .93. This shows that principals’ use of discipline has high influence on students’ academic performance in secondary schools.

**4.1.1 Hypothesis One:** Principals' use of instructional supervision has no significant influence on students' academic performance in secondary schools in Benue State.

**Table 5: Chi-Square Test of the Influence of Principals' Use of Instructional Supervision on Students' Academic Performance in Secondary Schools**

	Df	$x^2cal$	Sig	Alpha Level	Remark
<b>Pearson Chi-square</b>	3	40.460	.000	.05	Significant
<b>Number of Valid Cases</b>		365			

**P<.05**

Table 5 above shows the Chi-square calculated value of 40.460, degree of freedom df=3 and a sig (P-value=0.00) which is less than the alpha value ( $\alpha=.05$ ). Since  $P<.05$ , the result is significant, therefore the null hypothesis is rejected. This implied that, Principals' use of instructional supervision has significant influence on students' academic performance in secondary schools in Benue State

**4.1.2 Hypothesis Two:** Principals' use of discipline has no significant influence on students' academic performance in secondary schools

**Table 6: Chi-Square Test of the Influence of Principals' Use of Discipline on Students' Academic Performance in Secondary Schools**

	Df	$x^2cal$	Sig	Alpha Level	Remark
<b>Pearson Chi-square</b>	3	89.900	.000	.05	Significant
<b>Number of Valid Cases</b>		365			

**P<.05**

Table 6 above shows the Chi-square calculated value of 89.900, degree of freedom df=3 and a sig (P-value=0.00) which is less than the alpha value ( $\alpha=.05$ ). Since  $P<.05$ , the result is significant, therefore the null hypothesis is rejected. This implied that, Principals' use discipline has significant influence on students' academic performance in secondary schools in Benue State.

### **4.3 Discussion of Findings**

Based on the findings derived from the results of the study, the following were discussed. Findings of the study as shown on Table 1 revealed that principals' use of instructional supervision has influence on students' academic performance in secondary schools in Benue State. This is evident in that, the teachers agreed to all the five items on the influence of principals' use of instructional supervision on academic performance of students in secondary schools. As revealed by the findings of the study, principals' classroom visitation aids in the syllabus coverage which

influences students' academic performance, Principals monitoring of lesson plan enhances the quality of knowledge transition and this influence students' academic performance in secondary schools, Principals' classroom observation enhances teachers' job performance which leads to better students' academic performance, Principals' mentorship role during classroom visitation enhances teachers' job performance and leads to improved students' performance and Principals' interaction with the staff and students during classroom visitation enhances teachers' use of effective teaching methods which subsequently students performance. A related test of hypothesis as shown on Table 5 revealed a significant influence of principals' use of instructional supervision on students' academic performance in secondary schools in Benue State. This finding corroborates with that of Iroegbu and Tudor-Eyo (2016) who in their study reported that when teachers are supervised, they perform their duties more perfectly and this boosts the output of the school in terms of students academic performances. Similarly, the finding corroborate that of Onuma (2016) who reported that failure of the school principal to effectively supervise classroom instruction as a result of some administrative problems would impact negatively on teaching and learning which will subsequently hamper students performance. From this finding, it can be inferred that principals who play the role of supervisor from time to time by checking the teachers' classroom work helps in improving the academic performance of the students in secondary schools in Benue State.

Findings of the study as shown on Table 2 revealed that principals' use of discipline has influence on students' academic performance in secondary schools in Benue State. This is evident in that, the teachers agreed to all the five items on the influence of principals' use of discipline on academic performance of students in secondary schools. As revealed by the findings of the study, Principal's use of corporal punishment makes students to be attentive in the class and this enhances concentration, Principal's use of appropriate disciplinary action makes students' to remain in the classrooms and this enhances students' academic output, Principals' who give query to teachers' influences teachers' punctuality and this enhances students' academic performance, Principal's use of suspension makes students' to disassociate from fighting and this enhances their concentration and outward performance and Principal's use of expulsion makes students' to desist from stealing school facilities and this influence their academic performance. Similarly, a test of related hypothesis as shown on Table 6 revealed a significant influence of principals' use of discipline on students' academic performance in secondary schools in Benue State. This finding corroborates with that of Nwaogu (2001) who reported that when the principal adapts such disciplinary approaches, the school comes under proper control and as a result the students' academic performance is improved. The author discovered that through regular scheduling of duties to students that they are regularly involved in one activity or the other; hence the rate of indiscipline is reduced among them and this enhances their academic performance. Similarly, Yaroson (2004) reported that during field work exercise that in schools where discipline was strictly adhered to, learning was more serious than in schools where indiscipline was the order of the day. The seriousness of the learning process thus enhances students' academic performance.

## **5.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **5.1. Conclusion**

Based on the findings of this study, the researcher concluded that principals' administrative roles such as instructional supervision, discipline, provision of instructional materials and involvement of teachers in decision-making have significant influence on students' academic performance in secondary schools in Benue State. The use of a set of administrative roles by principals is informed by the fact that principals are to bring all round development into the school, in order to improve students' academic performance. They must be able to adopt some administrative roles and also evaluate their teachers in order to ascertain the strengths and weakness of the instructional delivery system for better academic performance.

### **5.2 Recommendations**

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. The Ministry of Education should organize seminars on clinical conferences and collegial methods of supervision, encourage classroom visitation and giving of feedback to the teachers. This in turn will enhance students' academic achievement.
2. All schools should have competent professional guidance and counsellors to dialogue with students and discuss disciplinary matters as well as issues that affect their academic performance

### **5.3 Limitations of the Study**

The objectives of the study were achieved however, some limitations were encountered. Other administrative roles of the principal such as maintenance of infrastructure, utilization of resources and students-staff relationship were not covered in this study which limited the generalization of the finding to other indices of principals' administrative roles. Also, the study initially was intended to cover North-Central Geopolitical zone but due to the limited duration for the researchers programme, he resorted to only Benue State as a geographical area for the study.

### **5.4 Suggestions for Further Studies**

In the light of the above limitations, the following suggestions are made for further studies;

1. Replication of this study in other states of the federation to enhance generalization of the results.
2. Influence of principals' administrative roles not covered in this study should be investigated on students' academic performance
3. Influence of principals' use of instructional supervisory strategies on students' academic performance in Benue State.

### **5.5 Contribution to Knowledge**

The study has brought to limelight effective principals' administrative role on students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Benue State, Nigeria. The study developed an instrument titled "Principals Administrative Role Questionnaire (PARQ)" which could be adopted by other researchers. The study contributed to existing body of knowledge in the field of Educational Administration and Planning. This contributed to the limited body of literature by examining the Influence of Principals' Administrative Roles on Students' Academic Performance in Public Secondary Schools in Benue State, Nigeria.

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