An Assessment of Home and External Variables as Correlate of Curriculum and Methods of Teaching in Secondary School in Rivers State

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ABSTRACT

This study was to assess home and external variables as correlate of curriculum and methods of teaching in secondary school in rivers state. The research was a survey with a comparative performance levels of students. The population of the study comprised principals / teacher and junior secondary school class III students from private and public secondary schools in Rivers state. The sample size of 150 principals, 100 teachers and 150 students were selected from the entire population. The main instrument of the study was tagged "HOME AND EXTERNAL VARIABLES WITH CURRICULUM AND METHODS OF TEACHING QUESTIONNAIRE (HEVCMTQ)". The validated instrument was submitted to the thesis supervisor, who is an expert in his study. All methods and techniques are subject to his ratification. The reliability was a questionnaire on principals, teachers and students from twenty secondary schools were subjected to test – retest process. The administration of instrument was administered by the researcher and the analysis of the study was based on information from the responses to the questionnaire while the method of data analysis was collected using simple percentage for the research questions of the study. Based on the findings of the study, it was concluded that supervision of leadership effectiveness can give direction of efforts to all workers in accomplishing their goal in schools and the parental and societal of students' performance of curriculum and method of teaching in secondary schools, teachers must have a clear, easy, reliable ways to receive messages from parents. The study therefore recommended that supervision provides leadership that can coordinate and improve the efforts of all those associated with the school for the realization of educational goals. Also. parents, school staff, and the society should work together to determine students' needs and provide necessary services that enhances learning activities.

KEYWORDS: Supervision, Leadership Effectiveness, Parental, Societal, Students' Performance, Curriculum, Methods of Teaching

INTRODUCTION

Supervision of leadership can provide feedback to team members who implement new strategies as part of their action research. For example, a team may decide that members should focus on checking for students understanding more frequently and effectively to improve achievement in a unit that has traditionally proven difficult for the students. The principal could focus on that aspect of instruction during observations and work with teachers to expand their strategies in that area. Finally, many new evaluation tools have component related to teacher collaboration. An effective principal will use that aspect of evaluation as a catalyst to strengthen

INTERCONTINENTAL JOURNAL OF EDUCATION,
SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY, Vol.4 No.3. USA.

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the team process. Parenting included the basic responsibilities of families, such as providing housing, health care, nutrition, clothing, and safety, as well as creating home conditions that support children's learning (e.g., purchasing necessary books and other school supply or providing a place to study). Parenting also implied that parents were warm and responsive to their children, communicated with them, and supported their development. The second most important factor in any partnership was communication. This type of involvement concerned the basic responsibilities of schools, including establishing two-way communication between family and school. Williams,

Williams and Ullman (2002) note that communication between schools and parents remained a positive step in the right direction. Uzoechina and Obidike (2007) add that communication involving sharing information, empowering parents, dismantling barriers to understanding and cooperation, and recognizing parents' strengths, priorities, and perspectives is fundamental to building strong relationships between the home and the school. Communication provides opportunities for the exchange of information were vital and must be consistently utilized for meaningful involvement to occur among parents, teachers, and administrators. Finally, collaborating with the community was the type of involvement that relied on understanding that helping the community was the best investment (Epstein et al., 2002). Through collaborations, different types of community organizations contribute to schools, students, and families. Sharing in Epstein's (1995) belief that parent involvement was essential, Goodall and Vorhaus (2011) a model of good practice Parental engagement requires active collaboration with parents and should be pro-active rather than reactive. Cheeks (2012) concluded that an increasing number of the general features of parental engagement strategies proposed by Epstein et al (2002) are supported by evidence derived from high quality research. As Goodall and Vorhaus (2011) observe, with the partial exception of numeracy, very little is known about parental involvement relating to other parts of the curriculum. It is difficult to draw conclusions about how parental involvement in curriculum is viewed by male and female principals. For instance, it is not clear whether male principals see the parents as being more involved than female principals see them and whether the areas of parental involvement differ based on the gender of the principals.

Statement of the Problem

It is obvious that the curriculum and teaching method is directly dependent on both home and external factors such as supervision, leadership effectiveness and society. These factors have over the years been observed to have remarkable influence on the aforementioned variables and this has contributed to great changes in student performance. Equally home factors such as parents, plays a very important role not only on the curriculum and teaching method but also on the academic performance of students in Rivers State. The impacts of these factors cannot be overemphasized, as they have been greatly felt within and globally. However, since the extent of the impacts has not been well defined, this study is therefore conducted to find out the extent of the impact these factors on curriculum and teaching method adopted for teaching in secondary school in Rivers State.

Objective of the Study

1) To determine the extent to which supervision and leadership effectiveness affect school performance
2) To determine the extent to which parents and society affect the curriculum and methods of teaching in school

Research question

1) To what extent does supervision and leadership effectiveness affect school performance?
2) To what extent do parents and society affect the curriculum and methods of teaching in school?

Literature review

Supervision and Leadership Effectiveness

Supervision has long been recognized as an essential process executed by educational leaders, school administrators or supervisors. UNESCO (2014) highlighted supervision as a constant and continuous process of more personal guidance based on frequent visit when attention is directed to one or more aspects of the school and its organization. Good in Essien (2014) explained supervision as all effort of school official directed towards improving leadership to teachers and other educational workers, in the improvement of instruction which involves the stimulation of professional growth of teachers, the selection and revision of educational objectives, and the evaluation of instruction. This implies that supervision can provide leadership that coordinate and improve the efforts of all those associated with the school for the realization of educational goals. It can equally be an exercise aimed at maintaining the efforts of personnel and other school human resources in line with the goals of the effort of the administration. Supervision is a strategy of orientating the school human resources so that they can self-direct or function effectively with minimum supervision. Supervision of instruction according to Ezeocha in Essien (2014) is a process which is aimed at professional growth and cooperation thereby making teachers self-directing, creative and more productive in implementing instruction. Basically, the role of supervision of instruction is a role of the principal.

Supervision can provide feedback to team members who implement new strategies as part of their action research. For example, a team may decide that members should focus on checking for students understanding more frequently and effectively to improve achievement in a unit that has traditionally proven difficult for the students. The principal could focus on that aspect of instruction during observations and work with teachers to expand their strategies in that area. Finally, many new evaluation tools have component related to teacher collaboration. An effective principal will use that aspect of evaluation as a catalyst to strengthen the team process.

The success of any organization depends greatly on leadership. It is a strong weapon for the achievement of the goals and objectives of an organization. In Ukeje et al (1992), Hersey and Blanchard supported this view when they noted that the successful organization has a major attribute that distinguishes it from an unsuccessful organization, and that is dynamic and effective leadership. Effective leadership should give direction to the efforts of all workers in accomplishing the goals of the organization: Ukeje et al (1992), concluded after reviewing 263 studies that:

The leader is characterized by a drive for responsibility and task completion, vigor persistence in pursuit of goals, venture some number and originality in problem solving, drive of exercise initiative in social situations, self-confidence and sense of personal identity ability to influence other person's behavior, and capacity to structure interaction systems to the purpose at hand.

The success of any school would therefore depend on the leaders use of leadership style. McGregor theory X and Y provide assumptions where a leader has to doubt either a coerced, controlled or threatening posture to get his subordinates to work or the attitude of consideration for subordinates. Obaro (1990), in this study of role performance effectiveness in the administration of schools, identified the following indicators;

1) The head teachers should create a situation where their subordinates would work co-operatively towards the optimum achievement of set institutional goals in a cordial atmosphere.
2) Adopt measures to ensure that students attend classes regularly and punctually, also that teachers go to classes punctually and regularly to teach according to the curriculum.
3) Assign duties and responsibilities according to qualification, experience, proven interest and competence.
4) Supervise, evaluate staff on the basis of predetermined performance standards.

Observance to these findings should produce good students sound in academics. The degree of the performance of the school depends on the degree of effectiveness of the leader. Holy and Miskel (1978), emphasized that leadership effectiveness related to organizational accomplishment.

Parental and Societal Effect on Curriculum and Methods of Teaching

The research literature review on enhancing parental roles in this regard generally focuses on how parents can help their children through home learning activities and the ways in which such activities can be optimized. Home Learning, involving parents in home learning activities vastly improves students' productivity (Rich, l987; Epstein, l99l; Walberg, l984) Programs and activities that may be called "home learning" take many forms, but most commonly include homework, leisure reading, family discussions, educational games, and enrichment activities (Moles, 1991). Well-developed local practices. Dauber and Epstein (1991) asserted that "regardless of parent education, family size, student ability, or school level (elementary or middle school), parents are more likely to become partners in their children's education if they perceive that the schools have strong practices to involve parents at school, at home on homework, and at home on reading activities." Districts and schools play a key role in developing effective school-parent partnerships to encourage home learning (Birman, l987; Hamilton and Cochran, l988; Comer, l988). The most successful schools design adult-child learning programs with parents (Crispeels, l99l) to fit the needs and expectations of families who intend to participate (Zeldin, 1989; Epstein, 1989; Rich, l985; Slaughter and Epps, l987). Training to work with families adds to the success. (Zeldin, 1989; Chrispeels, 1991; Dauber and Epstein, 1991).

According to Epstein (1991) has concluded that for teachers, parent involvement in students' home learning is largely an organizational problem, a willingness of teachers to build on parent strengths. Effective programs respect and utilize the strengths of all parents, regardless of

parental income, education, or social status (Zeldin, 1989) to form a strong partnership. Further, successful programs view even minor involvement as the basis for later, more active involvement (Eastman, 1988). Research from the Johns Hopkins Surveys of Schools and Family Connections (Epstein and Becker, 1987) showed that teachers believe that parents' help is necessary if schools are to solve problems. Teachers mainly requested that parents review or practice activities that were taught in class. Some researchers have focused on how to increase teachers' understandings of the literacy practices that go on in any home (Brice-Heath, 1983; Cochran, 1987; Slaughter and Epps, l987) which understanding have been shown to enhance teachers' effectiveness.

Epstein and Herrick (1991) developed and evaluated a number of specific practices that teachers could use to increase parent involvement in the home. One such practice was the use of home learning packets in math and language arts in the first year to which they added science and health in the second year. These were used during the summer by parents of students who would enter grades seven and eight. Evaluations showed that students who worked with their parents completed a greater number of activities in the packets and that the packets had a moderate effect on student performance for some students, especially those who had marginal skills.

A focus on quality education for all students. The research literature for Effective Schools emphasizes the importance of developing the abilities of all children regardless of their current achievement level or their cultural, ethnic, or socioeconomic background. The concept of teaching the whole child has extended upward from the elementary level. Educators must consider the social, emotional, physical as well as the academic development of the middle grade student (Davies, 1991). The changing structure of the family and its related needs must be considered in relationship to the school and its available resources (Epstein, 1988). Schools and families must work together to form high, yet realistic expectations that lead to success for all students as they restructure the school to meet their local needs (American Indian Science and Engineering Society, 1989; Bliss, 1986; Davies, 1991).

Parent Involvement in middle grade school restructuring. Berla, Henderson, and Kerewsky (1989) outlined the kinds of things that middle schools should be doing if an effective school/parent/family partnership is in place:

- ➢ A clear, welcoming parent involvement policy is published for all to see and posted in an obvious place.

- ➢ The school is organized so that at least one person knows each child well.

- ➢ The school office is friendly and open.

- ➢ The school sponsors parent-to-parent communication and events.

- ➢ A full-time parent contact person is responsible for bringing parents and school together.

- ➢ There is a parent room in the school building.

- ➢ Parents whose primary language is not English are made to feel welcome at the school and a translator is provided to help them communicate.

The 1989 Gallup Poll of the Public's Attitude Toward the Public Schools (Gallup and Elam, 1989) revealed that a majority of parents believed that they should be involved in tangible ways, e.g., in decisions on allocation of school funds and selection and hiring of school administrators, in the reform/restructuring of schools (Solomon, l99l). Snider (1990c) reported that in Chicago parents gained a controlling majority on local school councils. Other urban districts have explored this "Chicago-style" proposal, including Seattle, Boston, and Houston. In Denver Public Schools, Colorado Governor Roy Romer ordered the formation of 12-member school councils to supervise the running of the schools. Parents, community members, business leaders, and school personnel on these school councils have made decisions and changes that include: the setting of school goals and priorities, hiring and firing of administrators, and school wide exemptions from districtwide mandated standardized testing. Educators must be prepared to help parent and community groups by sharing their knowledge.

Method

Research design

This research was a survey with a comparative analysis of performance levels of students who attend public secondary schools and their counterparts who attend private secondary schools in social studies.

Population

A total of 1480 principals / teacher and 3000 junior secondary school class III students are the target population from 580 publics and 260 private secondary schools in Rivers State.

Sample size and sampling technique

A sample size of 150 principals, 100 teachers and 150 students was selected from the entire population.

Instrument

The main instrument for the work was a questionnaire tagged "HOME AND EXTERNAL VARIABLES WITH CURRICULUM AND METHODS OF TEACHING QUESTIONNAIRE (HEVCMTQ)"

Validity of the Instrument

The instrument was submitted to the thesis supervisor, who is an expert in his study. All methods and techniques are subject to his ratification

Reliability

The questionnaire on principals, teachers and students from twenty secondary schools were subjected to test – retest process

Administration of instrument

The bulk of the instrument was administered by the researcher. The analysis of the study was based on information from the responses to the questionnaire.

Method of data analysis

The data collected were analyzed using simple percentage for the research questions The following are the analysis of the data collected from school principals, school teachers and school children from the selected schools.

PBSS = Public Secondary school

PVSS = Private Secondary school

Y = Yes

DK = Don't know

NO. OF RESPONDENT			PUBLIC	PRIVATE
Teachers	=	3000	150	150
Principals	=	200	100	100
Students	=	300	150	150
Total	=	800	400	400

Research Question 1

To what extent does supervision and leadership effectiveness effect school performance?

TABLE 1: Frequency and percentage distribution of responses on administrative performance of school heads.

ITEMS	TYPE OF SCHOOL	Y	N	DK	TOTAL
The principals ensure that teachers teach social studies	PBSS	100 40	69 27.6	81 32.4	250 100%
	PVSS	180 72	30 12	40 16	250 100%
All programmes implemented are supervised	PBSS	146 58.4	48 19.2	56 22.4	250 100%
	PVSS	220 88	18 4.8	12 4.8	250 100%

The principal play clarifying roles	PBSS	135	69	46	250
		54	27.6	18.4	100%
	PVSS	189	26	46	250
		75.6	27.6	18.4	100%
Supervisors come regularly	PBSS	102	120	28	250
		40.80	48.0	11.2	100%
	PVSS	240	8	2	250
		96	3.2	0.8	100%
Lesson notes for teachers are supervised.	PBSS	100	110	40	250
		40	44	16	100%

In table 1 above, there is an indication that private secondary schools supervise the activities of teachers than public secondary schools. On the task of ensuring that the subject of social studies is taught, 72% of respondents from private schools, whereas only 40% of respondents from public schools give credit to this effect to school principals.

There is such disparity again when it comes to supervising teachers' lesson notes. 95% of private school respondents consider it a normal thing whereas only 40% of public school respondents think so. Supervisors seem to shy away from public schools, which now seem unruly and ungovernable. That is why only 40.8% of public schools' respondents agreed that supervisors come regularly whereas in private schools 96% of respondents see supervisors regularly.

There is however general agreement that all programmes implemented in school are supervised, 58.4% of public school respondents and 88% of those from private schools agreed in that. Again, there is no doubt that principals play policy clarifying roles in both private and public schools. The basic thing to note here is that a greater number of principals in this role are found in private schools. 54% respondents in public school's contrast with 75.6% of respondents in private secondary schools.

Research Question 2

To what extent do parents and society affect the curriculum and methods of teaching in school.

TABLE 2: Frequency and percentage distribution of responses on effects of parents and society on school methods.

ITEMS	TYPE OF SCHOOL	Y	N	DK	TOTAL
Your parents allow you	PBSS	100	36	14	150

to watch films on television		66.7	24	9.3	100%
	PVSS	64	75	11	150
		42.7	50	7.3	100%
Your parents live in a big flat	PBSS	18	102	30	150
		12	68	20	100%
	PVSS	97	39	14	150
		64.7	26	9.3	100%
Parents and teachers meets regularly	PBSS	110	20	20	150
		73.4	13.3	13.3	100%
	PVSS	140	5	5	150
		93.4	3.3	3.3	100%
Your parents wealth affect how you study	PBSS	76	38	36	150
		50.7	25.3	24	100%
	PVSS	40	80	30	150
		26	53.3	20	100%

From table 2 it could be seen that the socio-economic status of parents of students in private schools tend to be higher than that of parents of students in public secondary schools. Item on the type of residence of students have 64.7% of respondents from private school admitting that their parents live in a big flat while only 12% of parents of students in public schools.

Parents of students of public schools tend to be more carefree about the leisure of their children at home while parents of students in private school seem to restrict their children's pass-times. On whether parents allow their children to watch television, 66.7% of students in public schools were free to do so while only 42.7% of those in private schools have such permission on their leisure.

Parents-teacher's meetings are common in both types of school but it still remains true that parents of students in private schools and the teachers of their children have more rapport (93.4%) than their counterparts in public schools (73.4%). Students in public schools have the opinion that the wealth of their parents determine their ability to learn. 50.7% of respondents in public schools think that more parental wealth would make for better adjustment academically. However, only 26.7% of respondents in private school think alike. To the others, learning does not solely depend on the influence of parents and society.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, it was concluded that:

Supervision of leadership effectiveness give direction to the efforts of all workers in accomplishing the goals of the organization. parental and societal of students' performance of curriculum and methods of teaching in secondary school, teachers must have clear, easy, reliable ways to receive and process messages from parents.

Recommendation

Based on the finding of the study it was recommended that:

1) Supervision provides leadership that can coordinate and improve the efforts of all those associated with the school for the realization of educational goals
2) Parents, school staff, and the society should work together to determine students' needs and provide necessary services that enhances learning activities.

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