

School-Community Relationship as Predictor of Principals' Administrative Effectiveness in Public Secondary Schools in Anambra State, Nigeria

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Abstract

The study investigated school-community relationship as predictor of principals' administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools in Anambra State. One research question guided the study and one hypothesis was tested at 0.05 level of significance. Correlational survey research design was adopted for the study. The population of the study comprised 267 principals in public secondary schools in Anambra State. Two structured validated questionnaires developed by the researcher were used for collection of data. The reliability of the instruments was achieved through a pilot test. Simple regression was used to analyze data for the study. The finding of the study revealed that school-community relationship positively predicts principals' administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools in Anambra State. Findings further showed that school-community relationship significantly predicts principals' administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools in Anambra State. The researcher concluded based on these findings that school-community relationship plays a significant role in improving principals' administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools in Anambra State. The researcher therefore recommended that principals in collaboration with other school administrators should adopt structured community engagement strategies that would ensure effective collaboration with the community without overburdening principals.

Keywords: Administrative Effectiveness, Predictor, Principals, Relationship, School-Community

Introduction

Education is fundamental to both individual and societal development, serving as the cornerstone for human progress, social transformation, and economic growth. Through education, individuals acquire knowledge, skills, and values that enable them to navigate life's challenges and contribute meaningfully to their communities. It equips learners with the necessary tools to excel across

various domains, fostering critical thinking, creativity, problem-solving abilities, and effective communication. In Nigeria, formal education is structured into three levels: primary, secondary, and tertiary education. This study will specifically focus on secondary education. Secondary education in Nigeria spans six years and is divided into two phases: Junior Secondary School (JSS), which lasts for three years, and Senior Secondary School (SSS), which also lasts for three years. It builds upon the foundation established at the primary level and serves as a preparatory stage for higher education or direct entry into the workforce. According to the Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN, 2013), the primary objectives of secondary education are to equip students for further academic pursuits and meaningful societal participation. The achievement of these objectives of secondary education is dependent on principals administrative effectiveness.

In Nigeria, the principal serves as the chief executive of a secondary school, bearing ultimate responsibility for all school activities. While delegating tasks to capable staff, the principal retains overall accountability as the institution's accounting officer (Osuji et al., 2021). Moreover, the principal oversees, monitors, and evaluates educational activities while disseminating up-to-date information on pedagogical advancements to enhance teachers' professional development and promote best practices in curriculum delivery. Crucially, principals are responsible for fostering a school environment that supports both student and teacher growth. To achieve this, they must collaborate with teachers, empower them, and actively involve them in cultivating a sense of wholeness, professional connection, core values, initiative, and teamwork, ultimately benefiting the school as a whole. Manafa (2020) stated that the principal ensures optimal teacher performance by providing guidance and support, thereby fostering administrative effectiveness.

Administrative effectiveness refers to the ability of school principals to efficiently execute administrative responsibilities related to instructional management, internal relations, organisational oversight, student performance, and school-community engagement, all aimed at achieving institutional goals and objectives (Ogbiji, 2018). Hussein (2018) opined that administrative effectiveness is defined as the extent to which secondary school principals successfully fulfil their schools' mandates. Administrative effectiveness, in this context, refers to the principal's ability to efficiently utilise available resources to achieve institutional objectives. It is assessed based on the extent to which set goals are successfully attained. The effectiveness of a school extends beyond students' academic performance in both internal and external examinations. It also encompasses the extent to which students and staff adhere to school rules and regulations, the efficient utilisation of school facilities, teachers' commitment to their responsibilities, and the principal's ability to provide strong leadership and maintain better school-community relationship.

A school-community relationship refers to the mutual interaction and symbiotic connection between a school and its surrounding community, where both entities collaborate to achieve shared objectives. Duru-Uremadu (2017) stated that school-community relationship is built on reciprocal cooperation among the school, its staff, parents, and community members, acknowledging that the success of the school and the well-being of the community are interconnected. According to Ajayi as cited in

Obasi (2022), a school-community relationship is a deliberate initiative and a platform through which the school seeks to understand the community and, when necessary, communicate its purpose, programmes, challenges, and needs. It also involves engaging the community in planning, evaluating school policies, and assessing progress. Ampho (2020) stated that school-community relationship operate as a two-way interaction, ensuring a continuous exchange of support between both parties. Owan (2019) found that parent-teacher relationships, school-community resource utilisation, communication, and collaboration are significantly associated with the effectiveness of the secondary school system. Similarly, Chukwu et al., (2023) reported that school plant planning and school-community relationships have an impact on the effectiveness of principals in secondary schools in Enugu State. Ogundele et al. (2012) also established a significant correlation between community-school relations and the administrative efficiency of secondary school principals. However, involvement in school-community engagement can increase principals' workload, as they are required to take part in building and sustaining these relationships (Hauseman et al., 2017). However, these views have not been empirically proven to be the case in secondary schools in Anambra State. It is against this background that the researcher sought to investigate school-community relationship as predictor of principals' administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools in Anambra State.

Statement of the Problem

A strong school-community relationship appears to be important for the success of public secondary schools in Anambra State. Observations by researchers seem to indicate that some principals may play significant roles in fostering these relationships. However, the researcher also observes that school-community relationships are often weak in some secondary schools in Anambra State. This seems to be evident in cases where some secondary school principals exhibit autocratic leadership styles that do not foster positive relationships. Furthermore, the communication styles of some secondary school principals in Anambra State may contribute to strained relationships within the school environment. Also, there are cases where community leaders display a lack of commitment towards the schools in their community. This situation is concerning because when school-community relationships are weak, schools may struggle to secure the necessary support from the community, which seems to have a negative effect on school development. Therefore, this study seeks to explore the extent to which school-community relationships may predict principals' administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools in Anambra State.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of the study was to investigate school-community relationship as predictor of principals' administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools in Anambra State.

Research Question

What is the predictive value of school-community relationship on principals' administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools in Anambra State?

Hypothesis

The null hypothesis was formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance:

School community relationship does not significantly predict principals' administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools in Anambra State.

Methodology

The study adopted the correlational research design. The area of the study was Anambra State. Anambra State is a state located in southeastern Nigeria. The population of the study comprised 267 principals in 267 public secondary schools in Anambra State. The entire population was used for the study because it was manageable. Two structured questionnaire were used to collect data for the study. The first instrument is titled School-Community Relationship Questionnaire (TCPQ). The instrument was developed by the researcher. The instrument contains 16 items on school community relationship. The second instrument was a structured questionnaire developed by the researcher titled Principals Administrative Effectiveness Questionnaire (PAEQ). It contains 12 items on principals' administrative effectiveness. Both instrument were structured on a 4-point rating scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD). The face validity of the instruments was ascertained by submitting the instruments together with the research topic, purpose of the study, research questions and hypotheses were reviewed by two experts in the Department of Educational Management and Policy and one from Measurement and Evaluation, all from Faculty of Education, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. The experts determined the face and content validity of the questionnaires by vetting the items in terms of clarity of the words used, whether the items are easily understandable, relevance of items to the subject matter and content coverage of the questionnaire. The topic of study, statement of problem, purpose of study, research question and hypothesis were attached to the copies of questionnaires that were given to the experts. These helped to serve as a guide for them to make their inputs. The experts corrected some item statements and instructions to make them clearer and straight forward. The researcher was also asked to separate double-barrel items, include source of questionnaire. Based on the suggestions, comments and corrections of the experts, the final version of the instrument was produced.

The reliability of the instruments were established through a trial test. The questionnaires were administered on 20 principals of public secondary schools in Enugu State who were not included in the population of the study. The data collected were analyzed using Cronbach Alpha. The reliability coefficient values of 0.89 for School-Community Relationship Questionnaire (TCPQ) and 0.90 for Principals Administrative Effectiveness Questionnaire (PAEQ). These coefficient values indicated that the instrument is reliable for the study. The research question was answered using simple regression. A positive coefficient (+) indicates a positive prediction between variables, while a negative coefficient (-) indicates a negative prediction. In testing the null hypothesis, simple regression was used to assess the predictive value of the independent variables (school=community relationship) on the dependent variable (principals

administrative effectiveness). If the p-value was ≤ 0.05 , the null hypothesis was rejected, indicating a significant predictive effect. Conversely, if the p-value was > 0.05 , the null hypothesis was not rejected, indicating no significant predictive effect.

Results

Research Question

What is the predictive value of school-community relationship on principals' administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools in Anambra State?

Table 1: Summary of Simple Regression Analysis on the Predictive Value of School-Community Relationship on Principals' Administrative Effectiveness in Public Secondary Schools in Anambra State

	Unstandardized β	Std. Dev. β	Standardized β
Constant	38.147	9.434	
School-Community Relationship	.781	.312	.812
R	.812		
R ²	.707		
Adj. R ²	.689		

The summary of the simple regression analysis as shown in Table 1 indicated that school-community relationship highly predict principals' administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools in Anambra State as shown by the regression coefficient ($R = .812$). The coefficient of determination (R^2), .707, showed that the explanatory power of the variable was highly strong. This implies that 71% of the variations in principals' administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools in Anambra State were accounted for by the variations in school-community relationship. The adjusted R^2 supported the claim of the R^2 with a value of .689 indicating that 69% of the total variation in the dependent variable (principals' administrative effectiveness) was explained by the independent variable (school-community relationship). Thus, adjusted R^2 supports the statement that the explanatory power of school-community relationship is highly strong in determining the principals' administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools in Anambra State. Nevertheless, the standardized beta weight ($\beta = .781$) showed that school-community relationship is a positive predictor of principals' administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools in Anambra State.

Hypothesis

School community relationship does not significantly predict principals' administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools in Anambra State.

Table 3: Test of Significance of Simple Regression Analysis on the Predictive Value of School-Community Relationship on Principals' Administrative Effectiveness in Public Secondary Schools in Anambra State

	Unstandardized β	Std. Dev. B	Standardized β	t-value	p-value
Constant	38.147	9.434		45.847	0.000

School-Community Relationship	.781	.312	.812	57.611	0.000
R	.812				
R ²	.707				
Adj. R ²	.689				
F	44.003				0.000

The summary of the test of significance of simple regression analysis as shown in Table 2 revealed that the simple regression coefficient (R) is 0.812 while the R² is 0.707 and Adjust R² is 0.689. The F-ratio associated with regression is 44.003, the t-test is 57.611 and the P-value = 0.000. Since p-value (.000) is less than the specified level of significance 0.05. This means that the effect of school-community relationship on principals' administrative effectiveness is statistically significant. Thus, school-community relationship significantly predicts principals' administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools in Anambra State. Thus, the null hypothesis was rejected.

Discussion

The finding of the study revealed that school-community relationship is a positive predictor of principals' administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools in Anambra State. This can be attributed to the mutual support and collaboration that exist between schools and their surrounding communities. A strong relationship fosters access to resources, including financial contributions, infrastructural support, and expertise from community members, all of which enhance the principal's ability to manage the school effectively. Also, positive engagement with the community promotes open communication and stakeholder involvement in decision-making, which strengthens trust and cooperation, ultimately improving school administration. This finding is in line with the Ampho (2020), who highlighted that school-community relationships function as a continuous exchange of support. Similarly, Owan (2019) established that parent-teacher relationships, resource utilisation, communication, and collaboration significantly contribute to the effectiveness of the secondary school system. Chukwu et al. (2023) also found that school-community relationships, alongside school plant planning, influence the effectiveness of principals in secondary schools in Enugu State. This is also validated by the finding on the hypothesis which revealed that school-community relationship significantly predicts principals' administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools in Anambra State. This is in consonance with Ogundele et al. (2012) who confirmed a strong correlation between community-school relations and the administrative efficiency of school principals.

Conclusion

The researcher concludes based on the findings of the study that school-community relationship positively predicts principals' administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools in Anambra State. The findings highlight the positive role of school-community engagement on the overall efficiency of school administration. However, while these relationships strengthen

principals' administrative effectiveness, they may also impose additional responsibilities on principals, requiring them to balance their leadership roles with active community engagement.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the researcher proffers the following recommendations:

1. Principals in collaboration with other school administrators should adopt structured community engagement strategies that would ensure effective collaboration with the community without overburdening principals. This can be done by organizing regular stakeholder meetings, allowing participatory decision-making and establishing well-defined channels of communication to facilitate ongoing cooperation.
2. The State Government and educational authorities should provide support mechanisms, like leadership training and employing additional administrative staff, to help principals manage the demands of school-community interactions effectively.

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