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**PRINCIPALS' LEADERSHIP PRACTICES AND TEACHERS'
EFFECTIVENESS IN PRIVATE SECONDARY SCHOOLS,
KWARA STATE, NIGERIA**

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Abstract

Teachers' effectiveness is an important ingredient for the attainment of secondary school goals and objectives. However, certain behaviours such as indiscipline exhibited by some private secondary school and sub-par working condition such as pay and job security is suggesting a potential low effectiveness among these teachers which spark the interest of considering variables that could bring about improvement in the level of teachers' effectiveness; thus, the study examined the relationship between principals' leadership practices and teachers' effectiveness in private secondary schools in Kwara State. The research design adopted was descriptive survey of correlational type. Proportional and convenience sampling technique was used to select 341 out of 3119 teachers of private secondary schools in Kwara State. Two validated questionnaires titled: 'Principal Leadership Practice Questionnaire' and 'Teachers' Effectiveness Questionnaire', with Cronbach Alpha coefficient of 0.78 and 0.82 respectively were used to obtain data from the

respondents. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the two research questions raised while the hypotheses were tested using Pearson product-moment correlation (PPMC) at 0.05 level of significance. The findings of the study among others showed that the level of teachers' effectiveness was generally moderate and principal motivational practice is the mostly adopted practice by private secondary school principals. Based on the findings of the study, it was recommended, among others, that principals of private secondary schools in Kwara State should maintain their motivational practices and also adopt and practice more of teamwork practices with their teachers in order to ensure high level of teacher's effectiveness.

Keywords: Leadership practices, Teachers' effectiveness, Modeling practice, Motivational practice, Mentoring practice

Introduction

Education is universally recognized as the most effective tool in promoting and maintaining human development on a global scale. It is equally an indispensable tool for enhancing economic growth and national development. Education is regarded as the fundamental element of all progress, acting as a foundation for acquiring knowledge, skills, technological advancements, and the capability to utilize a nation's natural resources. The principal of a secondary school holds a significant position of authority and responsibility, serving as the primary leader and guiding force. They undertake numerous leadership responsibilities in order to ensure the school meets its educational goals. The roles of principals cannot be over emphasized in improving teachers work performance and the overall productivity of schools. Leaders are individuals who influence others by setting and inspiring them to pursue specific goals. They often implement alterations in order not to only accomplish current objectives, but also to target new ones. In Nigeria, secondary school principals hold a significant role as leaders within the educational organization. They are not only highly visible but also exposed to vulnerability, which gives them the potential to exert a great influence on their schools (Katolo, Gathumbi, & Kamola, 2021).

Being a principal involves various responsibilities including leadership, supervising and evaluating teachers, and maintaining student discipline. As the leader of the teachers in the school, the principal's main role is to interact with them in order to enhance the teaching and learning environment for the students. The school principal is responsible for establishing goals and objectives for the school that align with national objectives. They also analyze tasks and distribute responsibilities among the staff based on their areas of specialization and expertise (Katolo, Gathumbi, & Kamola, 2021). Leadership is defined by the execution of duties and responsibilities, as well as the methods used by principals. These methods are known as leadership practices, and private school principals possess similar academic experiences to their public school counterparts. However, there is a noticeable disparity in their job performance (Abdullahi, Titus, & Musa, 2021). Therefore, the manner in which a principal implements their leadership style greatly impacts the

success or failure of educational objectives, including the effectiveness of teachers.

The main focus of teacher effectiveness is to improve students' learning and performance by considering teachers' behaviors, classroom procedures, and conducts that contribute to positive outcomes for students (Kapur, 2020). The effectiveness of teachers depends on their ability to teach well, have enough knowledge about the subject, evaluate students, identify their learning needs, and use questioning techniques to engage and challenge them. Additionally, effectively using assessments to enhance understanding is also a crucial aspect of teacher effectiveness. (Ko, Summons, & Bakkum, 2018). According to Abiodun and Olamilekan (2016), key signs of being effective in a school setting are consistent and punctual attendance, improved communication with both parents and students, and the successful execution of instructional responsibilities. In Nigeria private secondary schools generally and Kwara State specifically, teachers working in private secondary schools are constantly searching for new job prospects, whether in similar private institutions or public schools. This could be due to concerns about job stability, inadequate salary, and unfavorable working conditions, among other factors. The mistrustful mindset of teachers makes it extremely challenging for them to focus and fully commit to their employer, ultimately reducing their effectiveness. In visits to private schools by the researchers, it has been noticed that a number of these educators lack proper training in the field of education, leading to a lack of knowledge in fundamental principles such as classroom management, lesson preparation, and time management. Consequently, the students suffer as a result of their incompetence in these crucial areas.

The role of school leadership in achieving organizational success is crucial as it involves the influence of an individual on others to attain specific goals of the organization. One of the focuses of school leadership is ensuring that policies and decisions are put into action in order to guide an organization toward its intended objectives. Drawing on this information, it can be inferred that leadership plays a crucial role in the success of an organization by allowing a leader to inspire and instill confidence in their team members, ultimately leading to improved teacher effectiveness and subsequently, better student performance. The way in which principals lead is crucial to how teachers carry out their work. Principals should serve as a source of inspiration for teachers, encouraging them to fulfill their daily responsibilities with motivation and effectiveness. If leaders do not demonstrate effective practices, it can have a detrimental impact on teachers, ultimately leading to subpar academic performance among students. Having strong leadership skills is crucial in school administration as it greatly impacts teachers' effectiveness and students' achievement. This is why principals must thoroughly understand their responsibilities as instructional leaders. If school leaders are not doing their job properly, it can have a negative impact on students' academic performance because teachers may not be as effective as they should be (Lawrence, 2013).

It is worth mentioning that the way a leader behaves can either inspire or demotivate employees, leading to their best efforts or lack thereof. It was against this

background that the researchers examined the contributory factor of leadership practices on teachers' effectiveness in the areas of classroom teaching, classroom management, co-curricular activities and lesson note preparation in private secondary schools, Kwara State.

Statement of the Problem

In order for secondary schools to achieve their goals, it is essential for teachers to be effective, as this greatly impacts students' academic performance. Teachers must be skilled in preparing lesson notes, proficient in managing classrooms, and have a deep understanding of the subject matter. However, the researchers through visits to some private schools observed that private secondary school teachers are not meeting expectations in terms of classroom management, student assessment, subject knowledge, and syllabus coverage, all of which suggest that their effectiveness as teachers is subpar. This is apparent in cases where some teachers lack formal training in education, which limits their ability to understand important aspects of classroom management and lesson planning. In order to achieve the aims and objectives of private schools, their level of effectiveness must be enhanced. This prompts the researcher to examine the role of principal leadership practices in determining teachers' effectiveness.

Similar studies that have been carried that are related to this study include the study conducted by Tijani and Obiweleozor (2019) on in-service training and school effectiveness in private secondary schools in Ilorin Metropolis, Kwara State. Another study was carried out by Umar, Kenayathulla and Hoque (2021) on principal leadership practices and school effectiveness in Niger State, Nigeria. While Umar, Kenayathulla and Hoque study was carried out in Niger State, this study was conducted in Kwara State. Also, the indicators used for the study as well as the methodology are quite different from the ones adopted for this study. Similarly, Bada, Ariffin and Nordin (2020) carried out a study on the effectiveness of teachers in Nigerian secondary schools: The role of instructional leadership of principals. The study was conducted in North-central geo-political zone, Nigeria while this study was restricted to private school in Kwara State. To the best knowledge of the researcher, and based on the literature reviewed, certain gaps in terms of locale and indicators are left by the previous researcher and these among others are the gaps this study intends to fill.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study is to examine the relationship between principals' leadership practices and teachers' effectiveness in private secondary schools, Kwara State, Nigeria. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. examine the leadership practice mostly adopted by principals in private secondary schools, in the study area;
2. find out the level of teachers' effectiveness in private secondary schools, in the study area;

3. ascertain the relationship between principal leadership practices and classroom teaching in private secondary schools, in the study area;
4. determine the relationship between principal leadership practices and co-curricular activities participation in private secondary schools, in the study area;
5. find out the relationship between principal leadership practices and classroom management in private secondary schools, in the study area, and examine the relationship between principal leadership practices and lesson note preparation in private secondary schools, in the study area.

Research Questions

The following research questions were raised to guide the study:

1. Which leadership practice is mostly adopted by principals in private secondary schools, Kwara State, Nigeria?
2. What is the level of teachers' effectiveness in private secondary schools, Kwara State, Nigeria?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated to guide the study.

- H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between principal leadership practices and classroom teaching in private secondary schools, Kwara State, Nigeria.
- H₀₂: There is no significant relationship between principal leadership practices and co-curricular activities participation in private secondary schools, Kwara State, Nigeria.
- H₀₃: There is no significant relationship between principal leadership practices and classroom management in private secondary schools, Kwara State, Nigeria.
- H₀₄: There is no significant relationship between principal leadership practices and lesson note preparation in private secondary schools, Kwara State, Nigeria.

Methodology

The research design adopted for this study was a descriptive survey of correlational type. The design allows for an accurate record of what was observed and that the analysis could yield meaningful information for adequate description of the situation as it exists. The population of the study comprised all the 3119 teachers in private secondary schools, Kwara State as at the time of this study. 341 out of 3119 teachers were sampled using Krejcie and Morgan table. Multi-stage sampling technique was adopted for the study. In the first stage, teachers were stratified proportionally along the three senatorial districts in the State. At this stage, 238 out of 2179, 59 out of 541 and 44 out of 399 were sampled from Kwara Central, Kwara South and Kwara North respectively. In the second stage, convenience sampling

technique was used to sample the teachers within each senatorial district of the state.

The data for the study was collected through the use of researcher-designed instruments titled 'Principals' Leadership Practices Questionnaire' (PLPQ) and "Teachers' Effectiveness Questionnaire" (TEQ). The questionnaires comprised items on the principals' leadership practices and teachers' effectiveness respectively with responses based on the four-point Likert type scales with responses: Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD). Teachers from the selected private secondary schools responded to the items contained in PLPQ and TEQ. The questionnaires were given to three experts in the Department of Educational Management for validation. The recommendations of the experts were incorporated. The final drafts were administered on the population of this study which will not form part of the samples for this study to ascertain the clarity and relevance of the items of the questionnaire. To ascertain the reliability of the questionnaire, Cronbach's Alpha measure of internal consistency was used and a reliability coefficient of 0.781 and 0.823 were generated for PLPQ and TEQ respectively. Descriptive statistics of mean, standard deviation and rank order were used to answer research questions 1 and 2, while Pearson product-moment correlation was used to test the hypotheses formulated at 0.05 level of significance. All ethical considerations on research were fully abided with. Participation in the survey was strictly voluntary and anonymous

Results

Research Questions

Research Question 1: Which leadership practice is mostly adopted by principals in private secondary schools in Kwara State?

Table 1: Leadership practice mostly adopted by the principals in private secondary schools in Kwara State

SN	Leadership Practices	Mean	SD	Rank
1	Motivational Practice	2.787	0.949	1st
2	Mentoring Practice	2.736	0.986	2nd
3	Team-work Practice	2.642	0.999	4th
4	Behavioural Modelling Practice	2.673	0.967	3rd
	Grand Total Average	2.709	0.975	

Table 1 revealed the various leadership practices adopted by the principals in private secondary schools in Kwara State. The results revealed that principal motivational practice with a mean score of 2.78 ranked first, is the mostly adopted practice by private secondary school principals and team-work practices with a mean score of 2.64 ranked last.

Research Question 2: What is the level of teachers' effectiveness in private secondary schools in Kwara State?

Table 2: Teachers' effectiveness

SN	Teacher Effectiveness	Mean	SD
1	Classroom Teaching	2.758	0.958
2	Co-curricular Activities Participation	2.726	0.983
3	Classroom Management	2.697	0.991
4	Lesson Note Preparation	2.621	0.971
	Grand Total Average	2.700	0.975

Key: 1.00-2.00 (Low); 2.00-3.00 (Moderate); and 3.00-4.00 (High)

Table 2 revealed the level of teachers' effectiveness in Kwara State private secondary schools to be generally moderate with average mean scores of 2.70. This result indicates that dimension of classroom teaching with mean score of 2.758, co-curricular activities participation with mean score of 2.726 and classroom management with mean score of 2.697 were ranked 1st, 2nd and 3rd respectively while effective lesson note preparation with mean score 2.62 was ranked last.

Hypotheses Testing

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between principal leadership practices and classroom teaching in private secondary schools, Kwara State, Nigeria.

Table 3: Relationship between principal leadership practices and classroom teaching in private secondary schools, Kwara State, Nigeria

Variable	N	$\bar{X}$	Sd	r-value	P-value	Decision
Principals' Leadership Practices	341	2.71	0.98	0.116	0.001	Rejected
Classroom Teaching	341	2.75	0.96			

* **Sig., p < 0.05**

Table 3 showed a calculated r-value of 0.116 and the p-value (0.001) which is less than 0.05 level of significance. Thus, the hypothesis is rejected. This implies that, there is a significant relationship between principal leadership practices and classroom teaching in private secondary schools, Kwara State, Nigeria.

H₀₂: There is no significant relationship between principal leadership practices and co-curricular activities participation in private secondary schools, Kwara State, Nigeria.

Table 4: Relationship between principal leadership practices and co-curricular activities participation in private secondary schools, Kwara State, Nigeria

Variable	N	$\bar{X}$	Sd	r-value	P-value	Decision
Principals' Leadership Practices	341	2.71	0.98	0.812	0.000	Rejected
Co-curricular Activities Participation	341	2.75	0.98			

***Sig., p < 0.05**

On Table 4, the r-value value (0.812) and the p-value (0.000) which is less than 0.05 level of significance. Thus, the hypothesis is rejected. This implies that, there is significant relationship between principal leadership practices and co-curricular activities participation in private secondary schools, Kwara State, Nigeria.

H₀₃: There is no significant relationship between principal leadership practices and classroom management in private secondary schools, Kwara State, Nigeria.

Table 5: Relationship between principal leadership practices and classroom management in private secondary schools, Kwara State, Nigeria

Variable	N	$\bar{X}$	SD	r-value	P-value	Decision
Principals' Leadership Practices	341	2.71	0.98	0.245	0.001	Rejected
Classroom Management	341	2.69	0.99			

*** Sig., p < 0.05**

Table 5 r-value (0.245) and the p-value (0.001) which is less than 0.05 level of significance. Thus, the hypothesis is rejected. This implies that, there is a significant relationship between principal leadership practices and classroom management in private secondary schools, Kwara State, Nigeria.

H₀₄: There is no significant relationship between principal leadership practices and lesson note preparation in private secondary schools, Kwara State, Nigeria.

Table 6: Relationship between principal leadership practices and lesson note preparation in private secondary schools, Kwara State, Nigeria

Variable	N	$\bar{X}$	SD	r-value	P-value	Decision
Principals' Leadership Practices	341	2.71	0.98	0.208	0.006	Rejected
Lesson Note Preparation	341	2.62	0.97			

*** Sig., p < 0.05**

Table 6 revealed r-value (0.208) and the p-value (0.006) which is less than 0.05 level of significance. Thus, the hypothesis is rejected. This implies that there is a significant relationship between principal leadership practices and lesson note preparation in private secondary schools, Kwara State, Nigeria.

Discussion of Findings

Table 1 revealed the various leadership practices adopted by the principals in private secondary schools in Kwara State. The results revealed that principal motivational practice with a mean score of 2.78 ranked first, is the mostly adopted practice by private secondary school principals and team-work practices with a mean score of 2.64 ranked last. Although the results showed that all the leadership practices identified are moderately adopted by the principals however, the findings explained that private secondary school principals often use motivation of teachers to get task done in the school. This may have implication if the principal decide to withdraw some of the intervention provided.

Table 2 revealed the level of teachers' effectiveness in Kwara State private senior secondary schools to be generally moderate with average mean scores of 2.70. This result indicates that dimension of classroom teaching with mean score of 2.758, co-curricular activities participation with mean score of 2.726 and classroom management with mean score of 2.697 were ranked 1st, 2nd and 3rd respectively while effective lesson note preparation with mean score 2.62 was ranked last. This implies teachers in private school still have a lot to do in their area of lesson note preparation, participation in co-curricular activities, classroom management as well as classroom teaching. The findings of the study however disagree with findings of Tijani and Obiweluzor (2019) which revealed the level of teachers' effectiveness in Kwara State private secondary schools to be high as perceived by the students.

Table 3 showed a calculated r-value of 0.116 and the p-value (0.001) which is less than 0.05 level of significance. Thus, the hypothesis is rejected. This implies that, there is a significant relationship between principal leadership practices and classroom teaching in private secondary schools, Kwara State, Nigeria. The finding shows there is a positive connection between the leadership practices adopted by principal teachers' classroom teaching effectiveness. Study conducted by Tijani and Obiweluzor (2019) on in-service training and school effectiveness in private secondary schools in Ilorin Metropolis, Kwara State found out that there was a significant relationship between in-service training and school effectiveness in private secondary schools. On Table 4, the r-value value (0.812) and the p-value (0.000) which is less than 0.05 level of significance. Thus, the hypothesis is rejected. This implies that, there is significant relationship between principal leadership practices and co-curricular activities participation in private secondary schools, Kwara State, Nigeria. This shows that the kind of leadership practice adopted by principal has a connection with the level of participation of teachers in co-curricular activities like sporting among others in the school system. The finding of this study agrees with that of Muema (2019) which revealed that school administration is a factor responsible for teachers participation in co-curricular activities in secondary schools.

Table 5 showed r-value (0.245) and the p-value (0.001) which is less than 0.05 level of significance. Thus, the hypothesis is rejected. This implies that, there is

a significant relationship between principal leadership practices and classroom management in private secondary schools, Kwara State, Nigeria. The outcome above showed that the level of teachers' classroom management has certain connection with the leadership practices adopted by the principal in private secondary schools. The findings of this study agrees with the study carried out by Tang (2023) which revealed that school leadership practices were found to have a very high impact to classroom management as well as to school environment based on the perception of both the principal/administrator and teachers' respondents. The findings of the study also agrees with that of Morgan (2015) which showed a significant positive relationship between perceived school leadership of principals and perceived teachers' classroom management.

Table 6 revealed r-value (0.208) and the p-value (0.006) which is less than 0.05 level of significance. Thus, the hypothesis is rejected. This implies that there is a significant relationship between principal leadership practices and lesson note preparation in private secondary schools, Kwara State, Nigeria. The result indicates that the level of lesson note preparation of teachers in private secondary schools could be determined by the type of leadership practices adopted by them. This agreed with the findings of Bada, Ariffin and Nordin (2020) on the role of principals as instructional leaders. The study was conducted in North-central geo-political zone, it revealed that about 14% ($R^2=0.14$) of the variation in school effectiveness accounted for leadership practices. The study emphasized principals' that, definition of school mission, management of instructional programme as well as development of positive school climate as important element of teachers' effectiveness. The findings of the study revealed that about 14% ($R^2=0.14$) of the variation in school effectiveness accounted for leadership practices.

Conclusion

This conclusion was made based on the findings of this study. There are various leadership practices principals of private secondary schools in Kwara State adopt but the most adopted practice was the motivational leadership practice while teamwork practice was the less adopted and practiced. The teachers' effectiveness was found to be moderate based on their job performance with teachers' class room teaching as area with the highest level of performance. Lastly there was a significant relationship among principal leadership practices and all teachers' effectiveness indicators in private secondary schools, Kwara State, Nigeria.

Recommendations

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

1. Principals of private secondary schools in Kwara state should maintain their motivational practices and also adopt and practice more of teamwork practices with their teachers in order to ensure high level of teacher's effectiveness.

2. Teachers in private secondary school should make concerted effort to improve their effectiveness in the area of classroom teaching, co-curricular activities participation, classroom management as well as their lesson note preparation.
3. The state school quality assurance officers should ensure that trainings, workshops and seminars are held for all principals and teachers in the state so as to ensure better leadership and more effectiveness among teachers in secondary schools.
4. Struggling and inexperience teachers should be assisted by pairing them with more experienced teachers to ensure the inexperience teacher is conversant with the preparation of standard lesson note and classroom management techniques.
5. Principals should sustain the current level of leadership that produced very high positive relationship co-curricular activities of teachers and this should be replicated with other teachers activities.

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