TIME MANAGEMENT PRACTICES ADOPTED BY PRINCIPALS FOR EFFECTIVE SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN ANAMBRA STATE

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ABSTRACT
This study aimed at investigating time practices adopted by principals for effective school administration in secondary schools in Anambra state. To this end, the researchers outlined three purposes, three research questions and three hypotheses tested at 0.05 level of significance. A descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. The population comprised all 256 principals of public secondary schools in Anambra state. There was no sampling as the population was considered manageable thus the entire population was studied. Data was collected using a questionnaire of 29 items developed by the researchers and titled Principals Time Management strategies Questionnaire (PTMSQ) which was validated by experts from the faculty of education, Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka. Internal consistency reliability index of 0.88 was obtained using Cronbach’s alpha method. Data analysis was done using mean and standard deviation. z-test was used to test the hypotheses. The findings revealed among others that principals agree that they establish priorities, schedule contacts and manage meetings for effective school administration.

Keywords: Time Management, Time Management Practices, Effective School Administration.

Introduction
In many nations of the world, education has been universally acknowledged as an instrument for effecting national development. Educators and economists alike have for long held a consensus that education is a prerequisite for economic growth and the key to all forms of change. Nigeria as a developing country has adopted education as instrument per excellence for national development (Federal Republic of Nigeria, FRN, 2013). Consequently, Nigeria has for decades invested in education to enable her generate qualify and skilled manpower in order to compete and maintain and edge in the international community. To this end, Nwaka (2010) averred that a well administered education would equip individuals with the capacity to understand and adapt to new problems and changing situations, awaken intellectual curiosity, encourage their spirit of inquiry and make them inventive, self-reliant and resourceful.
To achieve the above objectives, principals of secondary schools have a crucial role to perform as their performance determines the success or failure of the educational plan in their schools. The principal is the chief executive who performs the necessary managerial functions for administrative effectiveness. Administrative effectiveness according to Interstate School Leadership Consortium (2014) relates to the standards for what the school leaders should know and are able to do. Adeniyi and Omoteso (2014) conceived administrative effectiveness as the extent to which secondary school principals achieve the goals and objectives of their schools.

Tess (2003), claimed that school administrators must motivate staff to use their creativity and initiative in making inputs, towards the accomplishment of institutional goals. To effectively achieve these, the principals are expected to take timely actions as leaders to encourage and coordinate members of their staff to accomplish tasks or achieve high productivity. The ability of a principals to satisfactorily perform these roles depends on, among other things, how they manage their time (Trozzi 2004).

Time management is very important to educational managers. It is the ability to produce and follow a schedule, meet deadlines, prioritize and minimize distractions and unimportant tasks. It includes managing time wisely so that tasks and projects can be done effectively and efficiently. According to Shirley (2008), a good time management can be achieved if goals have been set and then all future work is prioritized based on how it moves the individual or organization towards meeting the goals.

Researchers have explained how administrators can make good use of their corporate time to achieve the goals of the organization. For instance, Robertson (1999) provided a comprehensive list of time management strategies by grouping time management strategies of principals into six categories: 1. establishing Priorities, 2. Managing paperwork, 3. Scheduling contacts, 4. Handling interruptions, 5. Delegating tasks, and 6. Managing meetings. This study will focus on three most important time management practices, which are: establishing priorities, scheduling contacts and managing meetings.

Establishing priorities, includes tasks such as devoting time every day to plan out the day, week, and month’s jobs and prioritizing them by preparing lists on urgency basis and setting deadlines (Gordon & Borkan, 2014; Kearns & Gardiner, 2007). Scheduling contacts includes being clear about a schedule time, i.e. a start time and a finish time. Scholars suggest that principals should always plan and schedule their activities and try to stick to them according to the diary, planner chart or calendar in accomplishing educational goals and objectives (Claessens, Van Eerde, Rutte, & Roe, 2007; Kaufman, 2004). Managing meetings includes how to conduct effective meetings, having a clear agenda, time a meeting takes and the dynamics within the meeting (Robertson, 1999).

Effective time management appears to be a major challenge secondary school principals in Nigeria are facing today as they have lots of duties to perform within a limited time. It also
appears that some principals do not realize the need to manage their time for school success. Most principals attend to issues that should have been handled after their corporate hours. Such issues include unnecessary personal phone calls, wasting much time with drop-in visitors, involving in routines and duties that should have been delegated. Without adequate management of time, many principals may never be sure of what they are supposed to be doing at a particular time. For example, receiving visitors, working on files, writing reports, holding meetings, supervising teachers and attending to students personal and educational problems, might become burdensome for such principals. Other important functions which may be begging for attention may never be attended to, because some other less pressing problems may have occupied the attention of the principal who should give attention to the problem.

Statement of the Problem
Effective time management appears to be a major challenge secondary school principals in Anambra state are facing today as they have lots of duties to perform within a limited time. It has been observed that the most common difficulty encountered by some principals of secondary schools in Anambra is their inability to organize and plan their work properly. Some principals attend to issues that should have been handled after their corporate hours. Such issues include unnecessary personal phone calls, wasting much time with drop-in visitors and involving in routines and duties that should have been delegated.

The researchers are worried that many principals in Nigeria especially in Anambra State appear not to manage their time well. As a result, the administration of secondary education in Anambra State is faced with many problems. Some of these administrative problems are manifested as instances of inefficiencies in the performance of administrative tasks, rushing of tasks to meet deadlines, poor personnel administration, absence from important meetings, hasty internal supervision and gross inadequacies in policy implementations by principals (Aghadiuno, 2007, Nworah 2005 & Onuorah 2005). This study therefore investigated the time management practices adopted by principals for effective school administration in secondary schools in Anambra state.

Purpose of the Study
The main purpose of this study was to find out the time management practices adopted by principals for effective school administration in secondary schools in Anambra state. Specifically, the study investigated whether:

1. Principals establish priorities for effective school administration.
2. Principals schedule contacts for effective school administration.
3. Principals manage meetings for effective school administration.

Research Questions
The following research questions guided the study.

1. Do principals establish priorities for effective school administration?
2. Do principals schedule contacts for effective school administration?
3. Do principals manage meetings for effective school administration?
Hypotheses
The following three null hypotheses were formulated and tested at the 0.05 level of significance.

1. There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female principals on whether principals establish priorities for effective school administration.
2. There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female principals on whether principals schedule contacts for effective school administration.
3. There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female principals on whether principals manage meetings for effective school administration.

Materials and Methods

Research Design
A descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. By using the design the researchers were able to collect factual information from a sample of a specified population through a questionnaire on the time management practices adopted by principals of secondary schools for effective school administration in Anambra State.

Population and Sample for the Study
The population for this study was the 256 principals of public secondary school in the six education zones in Anambra state. They comprised 132 female and 124 male principals in the state. The entire population was used for the study.

Instrument for Data collection
A researcher developed questionnaire titled Principals Time Management Practices Questionnaire (PTMPQ) was used to collect data. The questionnaire consisted of two parts, part one and part two. Part one with three items gathered background information of the respondents while part two was divided into three sections (section 1, 2 and 3) and it consisted 29 items and elicit information on the three time management practices.

Validation of Instrument
The validity of the instrument was determined by presenting the draft instrument, the topic of the study, the purpose of the study, research questions and hypotheses to three experts. Two of the experts were from the Department of Educational Management and Policy, and one from the Department of Measurement and Evaluation in Educational Foundation, all are lecturers in the Faculty of Education, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka.

Reliability of the Instrument
To determine the reliability of the instrument, internal consistency reliability test using Cronbach Alpha method was used. Cronbach Alpha method was considered appropriate in order to determine the extent of homogeneity of the items in the clusters. The data used for computing the reliability indices were obtained from the questionnaire instrument administered on a sample of 20 principals in Enugu state. The internal consistency reliability coefficient obtained for the three sections put together was .88 (section 1, has .87, section 2, .96 and section 3, .80). The high reliability index of .88 was considered satisfactory.
Method of Data Collection
Copies of the questionnaire were administered directly to the respondents using direct administration and on the spot retrieval method by the researcher and three research assistants. The distribution and collection of the questionnaire lasted for two weeks.

Method of Data Analysis
Mean and standard deviation were used in answering the research questions while z-test was used in testing the hypotheses.

RESULTS

Research Question One: Do principals establish priorities for administrative effectiveness?

Table 1: Principals’ mean ratings on whether principals establish priorities for effective school administration.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Remark</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>3.32</td>
<td>.97</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>3.23</td>
<td>.42</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>3.74</td>
<td>.43</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>3.37</td>
<td>.48</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>3.62</td>
<td>.48</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>3.60</td>
<td>.48</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>3.14</td>
<td>.35</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>3.14</td>
<td>.35</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>3.08</td>
<td>.60</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>3.37</td>
<td>.48</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Grand Mean 3.36 .50 Agree

As shown by the grand mean score of 3.36 in Table 1, principals agree they establish priorities for effective school administration. The item by item analysis indicates that principals agree they adopt all the 10 listed practices for establishing priorities. Their mean ratings ranging from 3.08 to 3.74.
**Research Question Two: Do** principals schedule contacts for administrative effectiveness?

**Table 2: Principals’ mean ratings on whether principals schedule contacts for effective school administration.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Remark</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Ensure secretary screens telephone calls</td>
<td>2.46</td>
<td>.84</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Give secretary vital information in advance of expected telephone calls</td>
<td>2.74</td>
<td>.43</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Make list of issues available prior to making a return call when possible</td>
<td>3.25</td>
<td>.69</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Generate a list of issues during a contact</td>
<td>3.48</td>
<td>.50</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. have most appointments made through the secretary</td>
<td>2.60</td>
<td>.83</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Accept telephone calls during your meetings and conferences</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>1.04</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Keep your telephone calls brief</td>
<td>2.76</td>
<td>.42</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Place limit on meetings with unexpected visitors</td>
<td>2.88</td>
<td>.91</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Have secretary refer an unexpected visitor to another administrator’s office</td>
<td>2.60</td>
<td>.49</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Schedule your day by appointment only</td>
<td>3.62</td>
<td>.48</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grand Mean</strong></td>
<td><strong>2.97</strong></td>
<td><strong>.66</strong></td>
<td><strong>Agree</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The grand mean score of 2.97 as shown in Table 3 indicates that principals agree they schedule contacts for effective school administration. The item by item analysis shows that principals agree they adopt all the ten practices of scheduling contacts listed. Their mean ratings ranging from 2.46 to 3.62 except for item one which is utilized to a low extent with mean rating as 2.46.

**Research Question Three**

To what extent do principals schedule contacts for administrative effectiveness?

**Table 3: Principals’ mean ratings on whether principals manage meetings for effective school administration.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Remark</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Have the minutes of the meeting available 24 to 48 hours after the meeting</td>
<td>3.30</td>
<td>.82</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Give the purpose of the meeting prior to the start.</td>
<td>3.39</td>
<td>.83</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Distribute an action agenda of each meeting well in advance of the meeting.</td>
<td>3.48</td>
<td>.73</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Set general time limits for each meeting.</td>
<td>3.76</td>
<td>.42</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Start and end meetings on time.</td>
<td>3.53</td>
<td>.84</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Invite to the meeting only those faculty and staff members who are affected by the decisions to be made in the meeting</td>
<td>3.53</td>
<td>.49</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
7. Summarize the major points of discussion at the end of the meeting. 3.76 .42 Agree
8. Have the secretary take minutes and distribute them. 3.53 .49 Agree
9. Use a system to follow up on actions to be taken following meetings. 3.30 .82 Agree

Grand Mean 3.50 .65 Agree

As shows in table 3, principals agree they manage meetings for effective school administration. This is indicated by the grand mean score of 3.50 which is above the cut off mean of 2.50. The item by item analysis shows that all the nine listed practices of managing meetings are adopted by principals. Their mean ratings ranged from 3.30 to 3.76.

**Hypothesis Testing**

**Hypothesis One**

There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female principals on whether principals establish priorities for administrative effectiveness

**Table 4: z-test comparison of male and female principals’ mean ratings on whether principals establish priorities for effective school administration**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source of variation</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>z-cal</th>
<th>z-crit</th>
<th>Decision</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male Principals</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>3.36</td>
<td>.30</td>
<td>254</td>
<td>.22</td>
<td>1.96</td>
<td>Not Sig</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female Principals</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>3.36</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The result in Table 4 shows that at 0.05 level of significance and degree of freedom (df) 254, the calculated z-value (.22) is less than the critical value (1.96). This is an indication that the difference in the mean ratings of male and female principals on whether principals establish priorities for effective school administration was not significant. Therefore, the null hypothesis was not rejected.
Hypothesis Two

There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female principals on whether schedule contacts for effective school administration.

Table 5: z-test comparison of male and female principals’ mean ratings on whether principals schedule contacts for effective school administration

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source of variation</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>z-cal</th>
<th>z-crit</th>
<th>Decision</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male Principals</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>3.03</td>
<td>.26</td>
<td>254</td>
<td>2.95</td>
<td>1.96</td>
<td>Sig</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female Principals</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>2.92</td>
<td>.32</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The result in Table 5 reveals that the difference in the mean ratings of male and female principals on whether principals schedule contacts for effective school administration was significant. This was shown by the calculated $z$-value (2.95) which was greater than the critical value (1.96) at 0.05 level of significance and degree of freedom (df) 254. The null hypothesis was therefore rejected.

Hypothesis Three

There will be no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female principals whether principals manage meetings for administrative effectiveness.

Table 3: z-test comparison of male and female principals’ mean ratings on whether principals manage meetings for administrative effectiveness

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source of variation</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>z-cal</th>
<th>z-crit</th>
<th>Decision</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male Principals</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>3.37</td>
<td>.54</td>
<td>254</td>
<td>4.54</td>
<td>1.96</td>
<td>Sig</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female Principals</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>2.65</td>
<td>.43</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The result displayed in Table 3 shows that the difference in the mean ratings of male and female principals on whether principals schedule contacts for effective school administration was significant. This was shown by the calculated z-value (4.54) which was greater than the critical value (1.96) at 0.05 level of significance and degree of freedom (df) 254. The null hypothesis was therefore rejected.

Discussion
Establishing Priorities for effective school administration
The findings of this research reveal that principals establish priorities for effective school administration. This indicates that public secondary school principals in Anambra state, maintain a “to do” list; adherence to the list of tasks mapped out to be done each day; share a master list of priorities with school personnel, link daily activities to established priorities, link school priorities to community priorities, schedule their day in a completely uninterrupted block of time, set aside priorities and work on them in that order, list on paper major tasks for the day in a priority order, focus upon one task at a time and set deadlines for themselves and their staff for decisions to be made.

This finding is in line with the findings of Larry (2003). Larry in his study found that principals identified that they prefer to set aside priorities and work on them in that order. If tasks are prioritized in to do list, it would allow time for other responsibilities to be completed during the day. The finding also tally with the view that an administrator should choose a reasonable number of time robbers from the list and place them in order of importance.

The findings of this study is also supported by Claessens et al., (2007); Chase et al., (2007); Gordon & Borkan, (2014); Kearns & Gardiner, (2007) who stated that establishing priorities includes tasks such as devoting time every day to plan out the day, week, and month’s jobs and prioritising them by preparing lists on urgency basis and setting deadlines. According to Khan, Ahmad and Naseer-ud-Din (2015), it is noteworthy that all time management strategies are learnable and if one knows how to use one’s time effectively and efficiently, many problems may be pre-empted and resolved effectively.

Scheduling Contacts for Effective School Administration
This study also found out that principals schedule contacts for effective school administration. Contacts in this study was used as face-to-face conferences, telephone conversations, electronic mail responses, and touring which is walking around the building to informally meet with teachers, students and other persons within the school. Scholars suggest that principals should always plan and schedule their activities and try to stick to them according to the diary, planner chart or calendar in accomplishing educational goals and objectives (Britton & Tesser, 1991; Claessens et al., 2007; Gordon & Borkan, 2014; Kaufman, 2004; Macan, 1994).

This finding disagrees with Erike (2008) who found that head teachers in Anambra State primary schools engaged in very few planned time management strategies and they allow unexpected incidents to drive the day and have frequent “emergency visitors”. Ebgoka and Ofojebe (2014) also found that principals do not make use of most of the time management strategies. The
Fining of this study is also in contrast with Robertson (1999) who found that principals seem to “go with the flow” or allow themselves to “hop” with events that can be controlled, as well as those that cannot. Therefore, no matter what the pace of the day brings, some principals are not using basic scheduling strategies that could help put some controls on their time.

Managing Meetings for Effective School Administration
The findings of this study indicated that principals agree they manage meetings for administrative effectiveness. Managing meetings includes conducting effective meetings, having a clear agenda, time a meeting takes and the dynamics within the meeting (Robertson, 1999; Tracy, 2014). The findings of this study agrees with that of Robertson (1999) who principals in his study also recognized the value of using strategies for managing meetings. In his study the principals reported that the purpose of the meetings was known prior to the start and that general time limits were set for meetings, and meetings started and ended on time.

Conclusion
From the data interpretation and discussions of results from the findings of this study concluded that principals of public secondary schools in Anambra state agree establish priorities, schedule contacts and manage meetings for effective school administration.

References


