

STRESS AND ADMINISTRATIVE EFFECTIVENESS OF SCHOOL PRINCIPALS

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Abstract

The study focused on establishing relationship between stress and the administrative effectiveness of school principals in Imo State. Questionnaire was constructed using two types of questionnaire namely principals' Stress Inventory (PSI) and Principals' Performance Appraisal Scale (PPAS). Pearson's product-moment correlation was applied to test the hypothesis at 0.05 alpha level of significance. The results showed that there is a significant relationship between stress and the administrative effectiveness of school principals in Imo State. Recommendations were made based on the findings such as Sanitization of social-ills and bad morals from the school system by the government.

Background of the Study

The ultimate aim of every organization, be it private or governmental, is to achieve certain goals and objectives through effective administration and the school system is no exception in this regard.

In these recent years of rapid increase in secondary school education with a corresponding increase in societal problems and economic crunch, the school principals face a lot of problems. Ezeocha (1985 p62) observed that "the school administrator is likely to grapple with a number of problems in his efforts to ensure effective administration. One essential pre-requisite for effective administration is a relaxed and conducive environment. •Uzoeshu (1995 p5)) equally noted that a relaxed mind is an active and productive mind.

Nigeria today is tense and the societal and economic hardships are getting harder every day. There is stress everywhere and the academic environment and its actors are not left out in the parade of stressed work places and individuals. Stress has become a part of life and every individual experiences it at one time or the other, and in one form or the other, when it occurs, it destabilizes the individual. Stress could be deadly and over-dose or frustration, conflict and pressure kills (Harry & Kaplan, 1993).

These feelings of anxiety, conflict, frustration, apathy, indifference, dismay and tension characterize the life of a large number of school principals and other professional administrators. A good number of school principals find many stresses and strains in their jobs and lives. In Nigeria today, almost everything is competed for, like grades, positions, jobs, honours, contracts, admission, employment and a host of others, individuals are therefore under constant pressure to compete; indeed man has unlimited sources of stress in both his internal and external environment. In Nigeria, such factors as economic crunch, compulsive striving to accomplish societal frame, cut-throat competition in academic, social, economic and political spheres, meeting deadlines, emergency assignments, relationships with superiors and subordinates, seeking promotion, marriage, death, pregnancy, change in financial position, trouble with in-laws, ceremonial occasions, job insecurity, sexual difficulties, divorces, retrenchment, early retirement, heavy-work load etc, have been identified as sources of stress among workers (Denga, 1991; Ikeotuonye, 1988; Odebum, 1992; Ekwe, 1989 and Iwuji, 1990).

The word "Stress" is derived from the Latin word "stringers" meaning to draw tight. But to some, stress describes a state of physical body which has been subjected to pressures or forces close to or beyond its tolerance; to others the term describes that phenomenon which produces these pressure or forces; to some, stress is a physical entity associated with physical change; to others, they are descriptive of cause and effect (Uzoeshi, 1994 p82).

Purpose of Study

This study focused on how stress relates to the administrative effectiveness of school principals.

Statement of the Problem

It has been observed that in executing the task of school administration the principal encounters a lot of problems otherwise known as "stressors".

One of the primary objectives of any administration in an organization is that of co-ordinating the efforts of people towards the achievement of goals. The quest to satisfy these needs and meet the goals

set result to encountering of conflicts, pressures, lacks, delays, failures and obstacles.

In discharging their administrative duties, teachers and principals are often besieged with numerous stressors which adversely affect their job performance. Ezeocha (1985) Identified some administrative problems of the principal which include problems of administration, problems of authority, problem of finance, problem of manpower, community related problems and some specific problems of the school.

Further Cooper and Marshal (1976) identified some environmental stressors at work like, role in organizational climate and structure, family problems, life satisfaction etc.

Moreso, in the report on principals' conference on discipline and motivation in school held in 1977, identified school management, lack of facilities, staffing, mass media and problems of the larger society as stressors.

Hypothesis

There is no significant relationship between the administrative effectiveness of school principals and their perceived level of stress,

Methodology Population

The population of the study consists of all the principals and teachers of secondary schools in Imo State.

Sample

The sample for the study consists of 50 principals randomly selected from the entire population and 150 teachers. Three teachers each were also selected from the schools of the principals chosen, who carried out the performance evaluation on their principals.

Instrument

Two instruments were, constructed for the study-principals stress inventory (PSI) and Principals' Performance Appraisal Scale (PPAS). It was determined by for scholars in the field of Educational Psychology, Management and Planning. As a result of their expert suggestions, the instrument was modified and then used. The questionnaire was constructed using four-point scale response items.

Data Analysis

In analyzing the data, the scores of the various principals on the stress and the imperative effectiveness items were individually totaled. The responses of all the teachers on the performance Appraisal scale were also decoded, the mean computed, ranked and tables constructed.

To test the hypothesis, the scores of the principals on the measuring instruments were listed, summed up and squared as applicable. Pearson's product - moment co-relational analysis was used in testing the hypothesis at 0.05 alpha level of significance with 199 degree of freedom and at critical-value of 0.139.

Results

Table 1: Relationship Between Stress and Administrative Effectiveness of School Principals

Variables	I^*					
E	ΣX	Σxy	df	Cal rxy	Tab rxy	
Administrative Effectiveness	27997	393950	5	2961421	198	0.500
Principals	21150	371950				0.139

N - 200.

Calculated relationship = 0.5.

Tabulated relationship = 0.139.

Table 1 shows that the calculated value of 0.500 is greater than the critical value of 0.139 at 0.05 alpha level of significance and 198 degree of freedom. In effect the null hypothesis is thereby rejected and an alternative hypothesis retained.

Discussion

From the data collected and analyzed, it was observed that there is significant relationship between the administrative effectiveness of school principals and their perceived level of stress because the calculated value of 0.500 is greater than the critical value of 0.139. In effect the null hypothesis is rejected and an alternative hypothesis is accepted. This means that the principals' level of stress is related to their effectiveness. Pressure, hassles and stresses have become a part of life of Nigerians and most Nigerians indeed, the entire nation operate under pressure. Since no Nigerian Inspector will accept stress as a reasonable excuse for ineffectiveness, the principals themselves may have decided to even achieve more effectiveness when stressed.

General societal problems, organization and structure of school system, lack of equipment, and method of funding schools contribute to principals' administrative stress. It also follows that what may be tagged a stressor in one situation may not be viewed in the same way at other situations.

The educational implication of this finding is that the consequences of stress are not only negative but positive sometimes. In support, Ikeme, (1988 p80) reported that some people do not function effectively if there is no amount of stress in their daily routine. Ivancevich & Matteson, (1980 pi 50) posit that stress arouses people. According to them, such arousal becomes positive when it stimulates motivation and achievement. Further Selye (1978 p48) believes that a stress situation is Eutress meaning "Good Stress" If the individual experiences positive stimulation, intrinsic satisfaction and high spirit.

Recommendations

Government should provide enough facilities and school equipment, sanitize school system of bad morals and social ills, eradicate some of the societal problems that besiege our school system and save the principals from further stress.

Conclusion

Principals in schools suffer many stressful conditions, which the consequences are either negative or positive. Factors that cause stress are varied and come in various shapes and therefore what may be tagged a stressor in one situation may not be viewed in the same way at other situation. It is concluded that administrative effectiveness of any school principal denotes the ability of the administrator to achieve the goals and objectives of the organization set out to accomplish and also stress is said to be good when it stimulates positively and motivates people for higher achievement of goals.

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