

## **RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AND WORK STRESS AMONG SECONDARY SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS IN AKWA IBOM STATE**

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### **Abstract**

The study investigated the relationship between resource management and work stress among secondary school administrators in Akwa Ibom State. Three hypotheses were formulated to direct the study while the ex-post facto research design was adopted. The population of the study consisted of all the school administrators and teachers in the State. The purposive and simple random sampling techniques were used in selecting 210 administrators and 1050 teachers for the study. Two instruments duly validated and their reliability established were used in collecting data for the study while the simple regression was used in the analysis. All the hypotheses were rejected implying that there is a significant relationship between the selected variables of resource management and work stress among secondary school administrators in the State. It was concluded that effective management of school resources leads to reduced work stress of secondary school administrators.

Generally, resource management implies the effective utilization of human and material resources for the attainment of organizational goals. In the education sector, it includes the effective mobilization, development, prudent allocation and judicious utilization of human, material, financial and other available scarce resources based on the needs, expectations and values of the system for the optimal achievement of set educational goals (Banjoko, 2002; Olagboye, 2004 and Fajingbesi, 2009).

Educational or school resources, on the other hand, refer to all human and material inputs to the education system. According to Adeogun (2002), school resources include all the things that are used directly or indirectly for the purposes of supporting, facilitating, influencing or encouraging transmission or acquisition of knowledge, competence and skills. School resources therefore include human, finance, physical facilities, machines, computers, teaching technology, time, communication, information and educational resource centers (Adeogun, 2002; Aigboje, 2005 and Babalola, 2006).

Although the federal and state ministries of education, secondary school boards and local education committees are directly involved in the management of secondary schools in the areas of recruitment, deployment and discipline of staff as well as provision and allocation of resources, the greater task of managing those resources is carried out by the individual school administrators generally referred to as the principals. In the Nigerian secondary school system and in Akwa Ibom State in particular, the administrator occupies a unique position. He or she performs managerial, instructional and public functions (Oladipo, 2009). The instructional and public functions are all subsumed in the managerial roles. Presently, the roles of the principals have become more complex and enormous as the expectations that the society has on schools continue to broaden. The secondary school system is constantly faced with some changing needs in line with the aspirations of the society

and emerging global trend. Changes in the school structure, physical setting, technology, educational content and the pattern of interaction and communication are all coordinated and controlled by the principal. These outlined roles of the school administrators are by all standards enormous and challenging.

It is a known fact in Akwa Ibom State secondary school system that resource management has been very challenging in the face of inadequate funding of education by the state and federal governments. It is not surprising as echoed by Kanu (1997) in Edem (2006) that teachers are unhappy, frustrated and unmotivated while school environments are dotted with dilapidated structures. The declaration of free and compulsory secondary education in the year 2007 in the state witnessed increased enrollment in schools and some exceeding the carrying capacities with overwhelming pressure on the administrators and staff.

Until recently, human resource management in schools was routine and nominal. Presently, the management of human resources in secondary schools has assumed a more complex dimension because both the employee (staff) and the product (student) require proper management in order to achieve the objectives of education. Such mixed grid – staff and students management seems to be difficult and stressful because of the nature of membership (Daresh, 1998). Allida (2005), Shield (2006), Naicker (2009) and Abadi (2010) in their various studies agreed that there is a significant relationship between human resource management and work stress in organisations.

Financial or business management in secondary schools being the core activity of the school administrator refers to the process of funds mobilization, allocation and judicious utilization towards the achievement of defined educational goals. Findings by Doring (1993), Friedman (1997), Kitavi & Westhuizen, (1997) and Swatz (2004) revealed that financial management in schools was adjudged a difficult task for the administrators and that effective finance policy was nonexistent in schools. Others include ineffective financial controls, inadequate school funding and non involvement of stakeholders.

The maintenance function of the school administrator has become more significant and onerous in view of the deplorable state of physical facilities in our schools compounded by increased enrollment of students. Akomolafe (2001) and Adeogun (2008) unanimously agreed that the physical facilities in our public schools are obsolete and overused. This situation according to Akomolafe (2001) puts the school administrators in quandary and frustration resulting in the school sites being littered with dilapidated, abandoned and uncompleted structures, broken down vehicles, equipment and machines. The results of the studies by Udoho (2002), Allida (2005), Abadi (2010) and Olatun (2012) showed that financial issues, job requisites, physical requisites (plant management), role and position requisites and relationship requisites were effective in producing stress among principals of the school.

The rigours, pressures and challenges embedded in schools' resource management coupled with inadequate administrative support, incessant and fragmented demands may result in work stress of the school administrators. According to Mullins (2005), stress sets in when an individual works outside his comfort zone. Robins and Judge (2007) see stress as a dynamic condition in which an

individual is confronted with an opportunity, demand, or resource related to what the individual desires and for which the outcome is perceived to be both uncertain and unimportant. Viewed in this perspective, work stress can be seen as average unpleasant reactions to workplace pressures which weigh so heavily on the individual almost to the point of exceeding his/her coping capabilities. Although some measure of stress is said to enhance performance, continued and consistent work stress may result in negative effects. These include absenteeism, turnover, burnout, physical and emotional exhaustion, reduced personal accomplishment, depersonalization, high blood pressure, stroke and even death.

### **Statement of the Problem**

It has been observed by the researcher that principals go through a number of cumbersome and onerous daily routines in the management of resources in schools. These include behaviour management of staff and students involving maintenance of discipline, conflict mediation and resolution; financial management and school plant management in the face of inadequate funding of schools. These tasks are quite enormous, strenuous and require performance within a time frame.

It is likely that irrespective of the principals' level of experience and expertise, there may be occasions, experiences and situations that upset their equilibrium and sometimes cause serious consequences to their physical, mental, social and spiritual well being and may require remedies. It is also likely that exposure of these school administrators to consistent pressures, challenges and difficulties in the performance of their duties may result in work stress which manifests in various forms such as absenteeism, job turnover, depression, anxiety, anger and more serious physiological health-related problems such as strain, burnout, cancer, high blood pressure, stroke and even death. The fundamental problem of this study, therefore, is how do resource management tasks of principals relate to their work stress in secondary schools in Akwa Ibom State?

### **Purpose of the Study**

Specifically, the objectives of the study are to determine the relationship between:

1. Human resource management and work stress among secondary school administrators.
2. Financial management and work stress among secondary school administrators.
3. Plant management and work stress among secondary school administrators.

### **Null Hypotheses**

The following null hypotheses were formulated to direct the study:

1. There is no significant relationship between human resource management and work stress among secondary school administrators.
2. There is no significant relationship between financial management and work stress among secondary school administrators.
3. There is no significant relationship between plant management and work stress among secondary school administrators.

### **Procedure**

The study area was Akwa Ibom State and ex-post facto research design was adopted for the study. The population of the study consisted of all the school administrators and teachers of public

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secondary schools in Akwa Ibom State put at 227 and 5666 respectively at the time of the study. The purposive sampling technique was used in selecting 227 principals while simple random sampling was used in selecting 1135 teachers (five in each school) to rate their principals on resource management capabilities. Two sets of questionnaire ‘Resource Management Questionnaire’ (RMQ) and ‘Work Stress Questionnaire’ (WSQ) were used in collecting data for the study. Simple regression was used to analyse the data for the study. The response rate was 92.5% and this reduced the sample size from 1362 to 1260.

**Hypotheses Testing: Hypothesis One**

There is no significant relationship between human resource management and work stress among secondary schools’ administrators.

**Table 1: Simple Regression Analysis of the Relationship between Human Resource Management and Work Stress among Administrators in Secondary Schools in Akwa Ibom State**

	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics
Model					R Square Change
	0.35*	0.12	0.12	3.62	0.12

Significant at 0.05 alpha level; N=1260; df =1258; critical r-value = 0.089

Data in Table 1 show that the calculated R-value of 0.35 was greater than the critical R-value of 0.086 at 0.05 alpha level with 1258 degree of freedom. The R-square value of 0.12 predicts 12% of the relationship between human resource management and work stress among administrators in secondary schools in Akwa Ibom State. This rate of percentage is low but significant and therefore implies that there is significant relationship between human resource management and work stress among administrators in secondary schools in Akwa Ibom State.

**Hypothesis Two**

There is no significant relationship between financial management and work stress among secondary schools’ administrators.

**Table 2: Simple Regression Analysis of the Relationship between Financial Management and Work Stress among Administrators in Secondary Schools in Akwa Ibom State**

	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics
Model					R Square Change
	0.53*	0.28	0.28	3.27	0.28

Significant at 0.05 alpha Level; N=1260; df =1258; critical r-value = 0.089

Data in Table 2 shows that the calculated R-value of 0.53 was greater than the critical R-value of 0.086 at 0.05 alpha level with 1258 degree of freedom. The R-square value of 0.28 predicts 28% of the relationship between financial management and work stress among administrators in secondary schools in Akwa Ibom State. This rate of percentage is low but significant and therefore implies that there is significant relationship between financial management and work stress among administrators in secondary schools in Akwa Ibom State.

**Hypothesis Three**

There is no significant relationship between plant management and work stress among secondary schools' administrators.

**Table 3: Simple Regression Analysis of the Relationship between School Plant Management and Work Stress among Administrators in Secondary Schools in Akwa Ibom State**

	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change statistics
Model					R Square Change
	0.41*	0.17	0.17	3.52	0.17

Significant at 0.05 alpha level; N=1260; df =1258; critical. r-value = 0.089

Data in Table 3 shows that the calculated R-value of 0.41 was greater than the critical R-value of 0.086 at 0.05 alpha level with 1258 degree of freedom. The R-square value of 0.17 predicts 17% of the relationship between plant management and work stress among administrators in secondary schools in Akwa Ibom State. This rate of percentage is low but significant and therefore implies that there is significant relationship between plant management and work stress among administrators in secondary schools in Akwa Ibom State.

**Discussion of Findings**

The findings of the study are discussed as follows:

### **Human Resource Management and Work Stress**

The data analysis of the first hypothesis reveals a significant relationship between human resource management and work stress among administrators in secondary schools in Akwa Ibom State. The significance of the result caused the null hypothesis to be rejected. The significance of the result is in agreement with the opinions of Doring (1993) and Friedman (1997) who described human resource management, conflict management and management of relationship as factors that greatly contribute to work stress of school leaders. This finding is also supported by the studies of Allida (2005), Naicker (2009) and Abadi (2010) who found that human resource management especially behaviour management, management of change and special needs, discipline and relationship management were the factors that related significantly with work stress of school administrators.

### **Financial Management and Work Stress**

The result of data analysis of the second hypothesis shows a significant relationship between financial management and work stress among administrators in secondary schools in Akwa Ibom State. The significance of the result caused the null hypothesis to be rejected. The significance of the result is in agreement with the opinions of Doring (1993), Kitavi and Westhuizen (1997), Friedman (1997), Swartz (2004), who found that financial management (cost of running schools) in the face of inadequate funds, constitutes a very difficult and stressful task for school administrators.

### **Plant Management and Work Stress**

The result of testing the third hypothesis reveals a significant relationship between plant management and work stress among administrators in secondary schools in Akwa Ibom State. The significance of the result caused the null hypothesis to be rejected. This finding is in agreement with the opinions of Akomolafe (2001) and Adeogun (2008) who agreed that the plant maintenance function of school administrators has become so onerous and stressful for school administrators. This finding also agrees with the research findings of Allida (2005), Abadi (2010) and Olatun (2012) who found that plant management or management of physical facilities relates significantly with work stress of secondary school administrators.

### **Conclusions**

Based on the results of the study, the following conclusions were drawn:

1. Human resource management in schools relates significantly with work stress among school administrators. Effective human resource management relates with reduced administrators' work stress and vice versa.
2. Financial management in secondary schools has a significant relationship with work stress among their administrators. Effective financial management relates with low work stress of school administrators and vice versa.
3. School plant management relates significantly with work stress among secondary school administrators. Effective school plant management relates with reduced work stress among administrators and vice versa.

### **Recommendations**

On the basis of the findings and conclusions of the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. The State Ministry of Education, the State Secondary Education Board (SSEB) and Local Education Committees (LECs) should put in place adequate relevant legislations on the conduct of staff and students with sanctions well spelt out, and administrators should be re-trained on the modern strategies of human resource management in schools.
2. The State government should ensure that secondary education is properly funded. Monitoring groups should be put in place to ensure that funds released to schools are duly delivered with no diversion. Furthermore, principals should be encouraged to seek alternative ways of raising funds without jeopardizing government policy on education. The relevant regulatory agencies should provide a comprehensive fiscal policy on financial management in schools.
3. The State government and its respective relevant agencies should make concerted effort to equip libraries and laboratories, erect new structures and improve other physical facilities in secondary schools. The relevant regulatory bodies should ensure that a comprehensive custodial programme is put in place for proper and timely maintenance of the school plant while school administrators should supervise its operation.

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