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EDITORIAL DESK

The Centre for General Nigerian Studies has continued to be a frontier for knowledge dissemination through her series of publications, among other activities being performed by the directorate.

This volume 5 journal of Contemporary Issues in Nigerian Economy of March 2025 housed a total of 18 well researched articles from scholars across the geographical boundaries of the Africa sub region. The team of experienced editors subjected the articles to peer review, and their plagiarism checks have satisfied the guild of editors.

The journal is recommended to researchers, scholars, lecturers, and students to read, and the planners can leverage on recommendations as panacea to the doldrums confronting the socio-economic and educational spheres of the Sub Sahara Africa nations

I wish all the contributors and readers Barka Eid Fitri and Easter in advance

Prof. M.O.B Mohammed FNAEAP

Lead Editor

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PRINCIPALS' ADMINISTRATIVE SKILLS AS CORRELATE OF STUDENT CORRUPT PRACTICES IN LAGOS STATE SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS, NIGERIA

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Abstract

This study examined principals' administrative skills as correlate of tackling students' corrupt practices in Lagos State senior secondary schools, Nigeria. The study anchored on Skill theory and adopted correlational research design. The population of the study comprised of 656 vice principals, and all SSS 3 students in the 328 public senior secondary school owned by Lagos State, Nigeria. The sample size of 60 vice principals and 300 students were selected through simple random sampling technique. Two research questions were asked and two null hypotheses were tested at a 0.05 level of significance. Two research instruments titled 'Principals' Administrative Skills Questionnaire' (PASQ) and the 'Tackling Students' Corrupt Practices Questionnaire' (SCPQ) were used for data collection. The validity of the instruments was determined by test experts to ensure content validity and reliability of the instruments were 0.66 and 0.62 using Cronbach alpha. The data collected were analysed using Pearson Product Moment correlation with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 23.0. The findings of hypotheses 1 and 2 showed that: a significant relationship existed between principals' human relations skill and tackling of students' corrupt practices in Lagos State senior secondary schools, Nigeria ($r = .532$; $N=360$; $p<0.05$); and a significant relationship existed between principals' technical skill and tackling of students' corrupt practices in Lagos State senior secondary schools, Nigeria ($r = .522$; $N=344$; $p<0.05$). Based on the findings, the study concluded that principals with strong human relation skills and technical skills are likely to reduce corrupt practices among students in senior secondary schools. It was therefore recommended amongst others that policymakers should organise seminar, training and development programmes periodically for senior secondary school principals to develop their administrative skills so as to reduce corruption among students in Lagos State, Nigeria.

Keywords: Administrative skills, Corrupt practices, Principal and Student

Introduction

Today, corruption is a global problem that affects all industries including education. In Nigeria, corruption in secondary schools is a significant concern, as it undermines the academic integrity of the education system and can have long-term consequences for students, teachers, and the

broader society. According to Abari and Mohammed (2018), education is the process of helping the individual to live the fullest life he or she is capable of living. There are three major levels of education which include primary, secondary and tertiary education. The secondary education is the link between tertiary and primary education. In Secondary school system, principals and teachers are the most important agents and they are responsible for the implementation of school programme and maintaining the day-to-day operations of the school.

The role of school principals has evolved, with a growing emphasis on their administrative skills and their role in tackling corrupt practices among students such as: examination malpractice, sexual harassment, extortion, impersonation, forgery, collusion, stealing and drug abuse among senior secondary school students in Lagos State, Nigeria. Corruption has become a norm and cultural practices among senior secondary school students in Lagos State. Corruption is unethical attitude developed by individual toward achieving a personal gain. Student corrupt practices are illegal attitude exhibited by students in schools toward achieving their personal gain such as: examination malpractices, bribery, extortion, plagiarism, forgery, cultism and impersonation. It is therefore observed that the prevalence of corrupt practices among students in Lagos State secondary schools is a major concern. Principals, as leaders of these schools, are expected to provide leadership and direction to prevent and address these practices. However, the ability of principals to prevent and address corrupt practices among students depends on their administrative skills.

However, the success of any system relies heavily on the administration and control structure it has in place. The head of the secondary school system holds a great deal of responsibility, such as delegating authority, supervising teaching staff, and overseeing students and their conduct, as well as monitoring the performance of the teachers. Without the right administrative skills, an organisation goals and objectives cannot be effectively achieved. Principal administrative skills refer to specific abilities and competencies required for effective school management and leadership. These skills encompass a wide range of responsibilities and tasks which included technical skill, conceptual skill, human relation skill, communication skill, decision-making skill, school management skill, problem-solving skill, adaptability skill and budgeting. Therefore, principals must be able to allocate resources efficiently, make effective decisions, and build positive relationships with teachers, staff, students, and parents. Effective administrative skills are crucial for creating a supportive work environment that fosters academic integrity by promoting excellence in student academic performance.

Statement of the Problem

Lagos State, being the economic hub of Nigeria, has a large number of senior secondary schools, both public and private. However, despite efforts by the government to improve the secondary education sector, corruption remains a significant challenge in many public senior secondary schools in the state. Student seems to have engage in corrupt practices, such as examination malpractice, bribery, and extortion, are common in many schools. In Lagos State, corruption in senior secondary schools is a significant concern, as it undermines the academic integrity of the education system and can have long-term consequences on student academic performance in WASSCE. Corrupt practices among students, such as examination malpractice, sexual harassment, drug abuse, stealing, bribery, impersonation and extortion are a major concern in

senior secondary schools in Lagos State. Principals' administrative skills such as: technical skill, conceptual skill, human relation skill, communication skill, time management and community relation skill require to play a critical role in preventing and addressing these corrupt practices. The principals' administrative skills are crucial in carrying out such preventive measures effectively.

Research Hypotheses

The following Null hypotheses were raised:

H₀1: There is no significant relationship between principals' human relation skill and tackling of students' corrupt practices in Lagos State senior secondary schools, Nigeria.

H₀2: There is no significant relationship between principals' technical skill and tackling of students' corrupt practices in Lagos State senior secondary schools, Nigeria.

Literature Review

The study anchored on skill theory developed by a renowned social psychologist Robert Katz in 1955. Katz in Abari and Mohammed (2018) believed that leaders are made, not born, and that leadership abilities can be learned and developed through practice and experience. It focuses on what leaders do using their skills in carrying out jobs effectively. According to this theory, a leader should exhibit three basic skills – technical skills, human relation skills and conceptual skills. This theory has been the subject of numerous studies and has been discussed in the academic literature for several decades. Previous studies have shown that principal administrative skills, such as communication, decision-making, and supervision, are essential for effective school management (Leithwood & Riehl, 2003; Hallinger & Heck, 2010). However, there is limited research on the relationship between principal administrative skills and students' corrupt practices. Principal administrative skills refer to the capabilities and competencies that principals needed to lead their schools. These skills include: technical skills, human-relation skills, conceptual skills, leadership skills instructional leadership skills, school management skills, problem-solving skills, decision-making skills, financial management skills, community relations skills, and adaptability skills. More so, students' corrupt practices refer to the unethical and illegal behaviours that students engage in, such as examination malpractice, bribery, and extortion. These practices undermine the integrity of the education system and can have serious consequences for students, teachers, and the broader society (Transparency International, 2013).

Methodology

The study adopted correlational research design. The population of the study comprised of 656 vice principals and all SSS 3 students in the 328 senior secondary schools owned by Lagos State, Nigeria. The sample size of 60 vice principals and 300 students was selected through simple random sampling technique. 10 vice principals and 100 SSS 3 students were selected from each of the six Education Districts in Lagos State. Two research instruments titled 'Principals' Administrative Skills Questionnaire' (PASQ) and the 'Tackling Students' Corrupt Practices Questionnaire' (SCPQ) were used for data collection. The questionnaire is divided into two sections: Section A and B. Section A contained the personal information of the respondents and section B contained 30 items structured around the search questions. Each statement was measured on a four-point modifier Likert-type-rating scale, namely: "Strongly Agree (SA)", "Agree (A)", "Strongly Disagree (SD)" and "Disagree (D)". The validity of the instruments was determined by test experts to ensure content validity and reliability of the instruments were 0.66 and 0.62

using Cronbach alpha with the implication that the instruments were reliable. The data collected were analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation coefficient through Statistical Package for Social Sciences version 23.0 and the p-value of analysis was 0.05.

Testing of Hypotheses

Hypothesis One

There is no significant relationship between principals' human relation skill and tackling of students' corrupt practices in Lagos State senior secondary schools, Nigeria.

Table 1: Pearson's correlation analysis between principals' human relation skill and tackling of students' corrupt practices in Lagos State senior secondary schools, Nigeria

		Principals Human Relation Skill	Tackling Student Corrupt Practices
Principals Human Relation Skill	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	1 .532** .000	
Tackling Students Corrupt Practices	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	.532** .000	1
	N	360	360

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 1 indicates that there is a positive significant relationship between principals' human relation skill and tackling of students' corrupt practices in Lagos State senior secondary schools, Nigeria ($r = .532$; $N=360$; $p<0.05$). Hence, the hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between principals' human relation skill and tackling of students' corrupt practices in Lagos State senior secondary schools, Nigeria is rejected. This implied that a significant relationship existed between principals' human relation skill and tackling of students' corrupt practices in Lagos State senior secondary schools, Nigeria. This finding was in line with Hallinger and Heck (2010) that Principals with strong administrative skills are able to create a culture of integrity and transparency in their schools, which reduces the likelihood of student corrupt practices. On the other hand, principals with weak administrative skills may create an environment that is conducive to corrupt practices.

Hypothesis Two

There is no significant relationship between principals' technical skill and tackling of students' corrupt practices in Lagos State senior secondary schools, Nigeria.

Table 2: Pearson's correlation analysis between principals' technical skill and tackling of students' corrupt practices in Lagos State senior secondary schools, Nigeria

		Principals Technical Skill	Tackling Student Corrupt Practices
Principals Technical Skill	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	1	.522** .000
Tackling Student Corrupt Practices	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	.522** .000	1
	N	360	360

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 1 indicates that there is a positive significant relationship between principals' technical skill and tackling of students' corrupt practices in Lagos State senior secondary schools, Nigeria ($r = .522$; $N=344$; $p<0.05$). Hence, the hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between principals' technical skill and tackling of students' corrupt practices in Lagos State senior secondary schools, Nigeria is rejected. This implies that a significant relationship existed between principals' technical skill and tackling of students' corrupt practices in Lagos State senior secondary schools, Nigeria. This finding negates Akpotu and Akpochafo (2014) found that principals' administrative skills were negatively related to student corrupt practices in Nigerian secondary schools. However, Ofoegbu and Nwadiani (2015) found that principals' leadership styles were significantly related to student corrupt practices in Lagos State secondary schools.

Conclusion

The study concluded that principals with strong administrative skills are better equipped to prevent and address corrupt practices among students. The literature reviewed has shown that Principals with strong administrative skills are able to create a culture of integrity and transparency in their schools, which reduces the likelihood of student corrupt practices. Theoretical framework such as skill theory provided a useful framework for understanding the relationship between principal administrative skills and student corrupt practices. Based on the findings of this study, a significant relationship existed between principals' administrative skills and tackling of students' corrupt practices in Lagos State senior secondary schools, Nigeria. The study concluded that teacher corrupt practices can damage the reputation of the school and student academic integrity in Lagos State senior secondary school. The findings also highlighted the importance of principal administrative skills in promoting school ethical standard and tackling corrupt practices in Lagos State senior secondary school system.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations were made:

1. Policymakers should organise, provide seminar, training and development programmes periodically for senior secondary school principals to develop their administrative skills so as to reduce corruption among students in Lagos State, Nigeria.
2. School principals should implement effective policies and procedures to prevent and address corrupt practices as well as create a positive school culture that promotes academic integrity.

3. Educational policymakers should promote transparency and accountability in schools, ensuring that all stakeholders are aware of the expectations and consequences for engaging in corrupt practices while experienced principals should mentor new principals to equip them to develop their administrative skills.
4. The Lagos State Ministry of Education should design a regular supervision and monitoring system by ensuring that principals are using their technical and human relation skills effectively in the school.
5. State government should provide resources and support to help schools develop and implement anti-corruption policies in senior secondary schools.

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