



PRINCIPAL’S HUMAN RELATION STRATEGIES AND TEACHER’S JOB PERFORMANCE IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN ILORIN WEST LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF KWARA STATE

BY

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ABSTRACT

The study examined teachers' job performance and the human relations strategies used by principals in secondary schools in the Ilorin West Local Government Area of Kwara State. It had three objectives. The research utilized a descriptive design. The sample consisted of 160 teachers out of 550 academic staff and 80 principals/vice principals from secondary schools in that area, selected through simple random sampling. Data was collected using the Principal's Human Relation Strategies Questionnaire (PHRSQ) and the Teacher's Job Performance Questionnaire (TJPQ). The questionnaire had a reliability coefficient of 0.68. Mean and standard deviation descriptive statistics addressed the two research questions. While teachers' job performance quality in those secondary schools was found to be average, the results indicated principals most commonly used a communication strategy for human relations. The findings and conclusion recommended that as school leaders, principals should ensure policies and guidelines governing teacher conduct are fair and flexible to foster effective human relations, which can enhance teachers' job performance.

KEYWORDS: Administrator, Human, Performance, Teacher

INTRODUCTION

Every society aims to have an educational system that helps children develop into productive adults. Education is the foundation of all civilizations, though its methods vary across cultures. Any nation that undermines education is playing with fire that will eventually explode. For a country's educational goals to be met, the key players in learning - teachers, students, and the environment - must be cooperatively aligned. This cooperative alignment hinges on the principal, the top administrator at the school level. Through supervisory actions, collaboration, motivation, effective communication, and evaluations, the principal shapes teachers' behaviors and beliefs toward achieving educational objectives. This integration of teachers, non-teaching staff, students, and resources into a productive mechanism helps improve student performance. Prior research has shown that principal leadership styles significantly influence teacher motivation and job satisfaction (Sayyed, 2021; Okorji & Ndubisi, 2022).

However, many have criticized school principals for the declining quality of education, accusing them of lacking the strong leadership the system needs. Some blame principals for students' poor academic

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performance, rule-breaking, and unpreparedness for the workforce, while others fault the government for not meeting educators' needs. Evidently, each component of the educational system bears responsibility for its shortcomings. A study by Adeyemi (2019) found that principals' leadership practices were a major determinant of students' academic achievement in Nigerian secondary schools. A principal's attitude toward subordinates significantly impacts teachers' behavior, which in turn affects students' academic performance. Thus, a principal's interactions with teachers, directly or indirectly, determine students' performance levels. Against this backdrop, this study aims to examine the human relations techniques used by principals and the work performance of teachers in secondary schools in the Ilorin West Local Government Area of Kwara State. Effective principal-teacher relationships have been linked to improved teacher performance and student outcomes (Lim & Gooi, 2020). Effective principal leadership is key to a school's success.

The principal fosters a collaborative environment, solves problems, builds proper human relationships with instructional leadership qualities, assumes accountability, and disseminates plans for effective teaching among staff. A previous study by James (2009) on human relations and teacher job performance in Ilorin East primary schools found a significant correlation between the two variables. Similarly, Eyal and Roth (2011) reported that principals' instructional leadership practices positively impacted teachers' motivation and performance in Israeli high schools. This current study addresses a literature gap by focusing on secondary schools in Ilorin West, rather than primary schools as in the prior study, though both are in Kwara State. Its main objective is to examine principals' human relations strategies and teachers' work performance in Ilorin West secondary schools. Specifically, it aims to determine principals' use of human relations strategies, evaluate secondary teachers' work performance, and assess the association between communication strategies and teachers' job performance in the area. Recent studies have emphasized the importance of principals' interpersonal and communication skills for cultivating positive school climates (Obi, 2021; Bolarinwa & Olugbeko, 2022).

The study can be grounded in the Path-Goal Theory of Leadership developed by Robert House. This theory proposes that effective leaders engage in behaviors that complement subordinates' abilities and compensate for deficiencies in the work environment. By providing support, guidance, and removing obstacles, leaders enhance subordinates' motivation and satisfaction, thereby improving performance.

The path-goal theory identifies four principal leadership behaviors:

1. Directive Leadership - Providing clear expectations, rules, and procedures for subordinates.
2. Supportive Leadership - Being friendly, approachable, and showing concern for subordinates' well-being.
3. Participative Leadership - Consulting with subordinates and involving them in decision-making.
4. Achievement-Oriented Leadership - Setting challenging goals and high expectations while expressing confidence in subordinates' abilities.

The theory posits that these leadership styles will be effective depending on the subordinates' characteristics and situational factors. For example, directive leadership works best with ambiguous tasks, while supportive leadership is beneficial in stressful situations.

In the educational context, the school principal plays a critical leadership role in guiding and motivating teachers towards achieving instructional goals. By employing appropriate human relations techniques aligned with path-goal behaviors, principals can foster a positive work environment, enhance teacher motivation and satisfaction, and ultimately improve student outcomes.

Prior research (e.g., Eyal & Roth, 2011) supports the path-goal theory, showing that principals' instructional leadership practices impact teacher motivation and job performance. This study extends that work by examining how principals' human relations strategies, corresponding to path-goal leadership behaviors, influence secondary school teachers' work performance in the Ilorin West area of Kwara State.

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Research Questions

- (i) What interpersonal techniques do principals in the secondary schools in the Kwara State local government area of Ilorin West primarily employ?
- (ii) What is the quality of teaching at secondary schools in the Kwara state local government area of Ilorin West?

Methodology

The study used a correlational descriptive survey design. The researcher selected ten schools, or 66.7% of the total of fifteen schools in the Ilorin West local government region, for ease of use and accessibility. The schools are mixed, and a total of 80 respondents—one principal, one vice principal for academics, one vice principal for administration, and one vice principal for special duties—were chosen through the use of stratified random sampling techniques. For the study, 160 teachers with at least five years of experience in the schools as well as HODs were chosen. A questionnaire that the researcher created was utilized to collect data. The researcher used the test-retest reliability method on the instrument, giving the participants the same questionnaire again after a two-week period. Spearman ranking order statistics were used to link the results of the two tests. This produced a coefficient of 0.87, indicating that the instrument was judged to be extremely dependable for the intended use. 240 questionnaires were distributed, with the researcher administering the instrument herself along with two study assistants. Pearson product moment correlation statistics were used to examine the responder data, with a significance level of 0.05 being assessed. This aids in evaluating the importance of the human relations techniques used by secondary school administrators and the work performance of their instructors in the Ilorin West local government region of Kwara State.

Results

Research Question 1: What interpersonal techniques do principals in the secondary schools in the Kwara State local government area of Ilorin West primarily employ?

Human Relation Strategies Mostly Used by the Principal

S/N	Variables	N	X	SD	Mean Ranking
1	Collaboration Stre	160	3.65	.75	2 nd
2	Communication St	160	3.80	.66	1 st
3	Motivation Strateg	160	1.81	.39	3 rd
4	Safety Strategy	160	1.72	.32	4 th

Source: -Field Survey, 2022

Table 1 showed the principals' human relation strategies mostly used in secondary schools in Ilorin west local government area, kwara state. The results showed that communication strategy was the most human relation strategies by the principal, while collaboration, motivation and safety were ranked 2nd, 3rd and 4th respectively.

Research Question 2: What is the quality of teaching at secondary schools in the Kwara state local government area of Ilorin West?

Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation of the level of Teachers' Job Performance

S/N	Variables	N	X	SD	Mean Ranking
1	Preparation of Lesson Plan	80	1.73	.44	Average
2	Classroom Teaching	80	2.80	.69	High
3	Discipline	80	1.82	.37	Average
4	Counselling	80	1.77	.44	Averages

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**Key**1.0 – 1.59 *Low*1.60 – 2.59 *Average*2.6 – 5.00 *High*

Table 2 shows the mean and standard deviation of the level of teachers' job performance in secondary schools in Ilorin west local government area, kwara state where classroom teaching was found to be high with a mean score of 2.80 while preparation of lesson plan, discipline and counselling were found to be average with mean scores of 1.73, 1.82 and 1.77 respectively. Therefore, the level of teachers' job performance in secondary schools in Ilorin west local government area, kwara state was found to be average overall.

Discussion of Results

This section gives detailed discussion of the findings from the research questions/ The results in Table 1 shows that communication strategy was the most used human relation strategies by the principal, while collaboration, motivation and safety were ranked 2nd, 3rd and 4th respectively. The findings buttressed that of Adeyeye (2012) who posited that effective communication by principal in school will enhance school effectiveness. Ijaiya (2000) elucidated that communication is needed in school for the manager to explain government policies e.g., curriculum matters, student welfare issues, circulars from the Ministry of Education and Teaching Service Commission.

Findings from Table 2 show that the level of teachers' job performance in secondary schools in Ilorin west local government area, kwara state was moderate where classroom teaching was found to be high with mean score of 2.80 while preparation of lesson plan, discipline and counselling were found to be average with mean scores of 1.73, 1.82 and 1.77 respectively. The findings are similar to that of Ekpoh and Eze (2015) they explained that teachers' job performance involves all the activities carried out by the teacher to achieve the desired effects on students. It involves the extent to which the teacher participates in the overall running of the school in order to achieve the expected objectives and goals of the school.

Conclusion

The conclusion from the preceding findings is that principals' human relation strategies on the other hand in term of collaboration, motivation, safety and communication also have a corresponding impact on teachers' job performance. From these therefore, it is very necessary for secondary school principals to ensure the utilization of various human relation strategies for teachers to improve their teaching capabilities and overall work performance in the school. Hence, teachers' job performance depends significantly on these strategies which have been found as basis for improvement in the quality of teachers' job performance that will result in improved students' academic achievement.

From the findings and conclusions of this study, the following recommendations are made: Principals as the head of the schools should make efforts to ensure that the rules and regulations that serve to guide the conduct of their teachers should be fair and not rigid in order to give room for effective human relations that will no doubt increase teachers' job performance; Opportunity should be given for teachers to say their views on matters affecting them. Leadership training programmes should be designed for principals, apart from their academic qualification as to enable them gain in-depth knowledge and understanding of human relations' strategies; Teachers also should be encouraged to further improve their communication skills through reading. They should for instance, be given responsibilities in the co-curricular activities like literacy and debating society and quiz programmes', use of English language while communicating in the staff room and during staff meeting should be made mandatory in schools; and The state teaching service commission should make arrangement for the training of teachers in the area of information management system to enhance their teaching effectiveness and to adequately cope with the present educational challenges. They will also get new ideas that can improve their teachings.

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