

## Strategies Adopted by Principals in the Management of Human Resources in Public Secondary Schools in Enugu Education Zone, Enugu State

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### ABSTRACT

The main purpose of this study was to ascertain the strategies adopted by the principals in managing human resources in public secondary schools in Enugu Education Zone. Two research questions and two hypotheses were formulated for the study. A descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. Questionnaire was used as the instrument for data collection and was designed to elicit appropriate information from the respondents. The reliability co-efficient of the instrument was determined using Cronbach Alpha method. Alpha value of 0.86 was obtained, indicating high reliability of the instrument. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions while t-test inferential statistics was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significant. Generally, the results showed that both the male and female principals agree that they should adopt certain strategies such as involving staff and students in decision making especially on issues that are of interest to coordinate both staff and students. There is no significant difference between the mean perception scores of both male and female principals on the strategies they adopt. Based on the findings, some recommendations were made. Principals should ensure that periodic performance appraisal of teachers are duly conducted. The principals should also try as much as possible to create a conducive environment for teaching and learning to take place through involving both staff and students in making decision especially when such decision affect their interest.

**Keywords:** Management strategies, human resources, principals

### Introduction

Human resources are the life wire of every organization be it cooperate or social organization. This is because human beings describe as labour are essential and play key roles in various organization. They are the most vital assets of which the profitability and even the survival of which enterprises depends upon. Human resources in educational organization refers to all the human beings working in that organization, including teachers, students and other members of staff working in that organization. They are the central ingredients in any human organizations. Human resources are the

set of individuals who make up the workforce of an organization, business sector or economy. Other terms sometimes used for human resources are manpower, labour or simple people. They are known as employees in an organization or place of work.

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The importance of human resources cannot be overemphasized. This is why Harbinson (as cited in Aguba, 2009) remarked that; Human resources, not capital, not income, or material resources constitute the ultimate basis for the wealth of nation. Capital and natural resources are passive factors of production. Human beings are active agents who accumulate capital, exploit natural resources, build social, economic and political organizations and carry forwards natural development. Clearly, a country which is unable to develop the skills and knowledge of its people and utilize them effectively in the national economy will be unable to develop anything else. The above assertion shows that human resources are the most important factor in every organization.

Human resources management according to Eze (2002) could be viewed as the management of various activities which are designed to enhance the effectiveness of organizational goals. The above definition entails that human resources management is the management of people in order to achieve organizational effectiveness. Human resources management is therefore the most important of management in any organization, because the success or failure of the organization depends on the output of the staff.

Human resources management is therefore the creation and maintenance of a conducive work environment in which staff are willing to contribute their best towards attaining the goals and objectives of the organization. Human resources are the personal embodied with knowledge, skills and expertise in education production process. It is essential to ensure proper human resource management because they decide how much could be achieved through with other resources. Human resource management refers to assessing the need of staff, satisfying the need, disciplining and controlling staff to enhance the attainment of school goals and objectives (Ofojebe & Nnebedum, 2016). In the context of this study, human resource management strategies are approaches or schemes adopted by secondary school principals to assess and satisfy the staff needs, stimulate, discipline, control and stimulating them towards strengthening the school capacity for achieving educational goals and objectives. Persist lateness,

absenteeism, misconduct and missing of classes among staff in secondary schools in Enugu Education Zone in Enugu State seems to suggest lapses in management of human resources in the State. Management techniques in educational settings entails well planned systematic management of resources both human and material to enable the principals/administrators succeed in their leadership roles (Osakwe, 2013). Osakwe further stated that management techniques imply leadership by coordinating the skills, knowledge and potential of workers (teachers) through the adaptation of such styles that will enable the establishment (school) tieve its expected goals and objectives. Akrani (2010) opined that management techniques/strategies are also methods, processes, which school principal's manifests, which help in the effectiveness of schools. In the school system, human resources encompass two major areas; the staff and student's personnel.

Staff are the employees in an organization or place of work. The primary function of staff is to facilitate production. The education system is a sure system of production, which has human beings as raw materials and also human beings (school graduates) as finished products. Staff personnel management is one of the cardinal responsibilities of the secondary school principal in achieving the goals of the school in particular and education in general. Staff personnel in school include the teaching and non- teaching staff, clerks, watchman, laboratory attendants, cooks among others (Chidiobi, 2011).

Teachers are the most potent weapon in the hands of the principal in achieving educational objectives. According to Aguba (2009), teachers determine the quality and standard of education in the schools. If they are not properly coordinated, their action could mar the school and its programmes. Staff personnel administration requires certain functions, activities and strategies such as integrating the effort of people with the other resources of the schools. the individual workers are attained. Some of these strategies could be delegation of duties, discipline, performance appraisal and evaluation, performance reward, training and development of staff, collective decision making, accommodating individual difference effective communication etc. The principal



has to function adequately in orientating, supervising and evaluation of work performance to ensure efficiency in the school.

Students are the learners in the school. They are the reason schools are established. Adesina cited in Chidiobi (2011) placed great emphasis on services rendered to students because the school are not built to cater for the interest of teachers, parents and educational administrators but for students. Students' personnel management includes all the activities performed by the school administrator towards making the learner to improve upon himself. It is the provision of enabling environment for effective teaching and learning process. It includes all such activities ranging from admission, orientation, communication, discipline and control, welfare services, guidance and counselling services, monitoring among others. Without students or learners, there would be no school. Students form part of human resources which should be coordinated by school principals. The principal as the key person in the operation of the school is the generator and power source from which the school's activities flow. The principal is expected to take lead while others follow.

#### Statement of the Problem

School improvement which revolves around positive and sustainable change is facilitated through proper management of human resources in the schools. There seems to be deficiencies in the principal's management of human resources in the school. This is evident in lateness and other misconducts among staff and students. The seemingly lapses in human resources management appears to result low commitment and dedication of members of staff in instructional delivery. The above problem impelled this study to analyse human resource management strategies adopted by principals for secondary school's improvement in Enugu Education Zone of Enugu State, Nigeria.

#### Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study was to determine the strategies adopted by principals in the management of human resources in secondary schools in Enugu Education Zone. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. determine the strategies adopted by principals to ensure effective management of staff in the school.
2. determine the strategies adopted by principals to ensure effective management of students in the school.

#### Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study.

1. What are the strategies adopted by the principals to ensure effective management of staff in the school?
2. What are the strategies adopted by the principals to ensure effective management of students in the school?

#### Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated to guide the study and were tested at 0.05 level of significance.

H<sub>01</sub>: There is no significance difference between the mean perception scores of male and female principals on the strategies they adopt to ensure effective management of staff.

H<sub>02</sub>: There is no significant difference in the mean perception scores of male and female principals on the strategies they adopt to ensure effective management of students.

#### Method

A descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. This research design was appropriate for the study since it aimed at finding out the opinion of respondents on what is being observed. The population comprise of all 31 principals in public secondary schools in Enugu education zone of Enugu State. The data collected from state education management board, showed that there are total of 31 principals. Census sampling techniques was used to draw all the 31 principals as sample size for the study. All the Principals were used in the study, since the population was small.

A structured questionnaire developed by the researcher was used for data collection. The instrument was face-validated by an expert in education research in Enugu State University of Science and Technology, Enugu State. The instrument consisted of two sections. Section A comprises personal data of the respondents. Section B



comprises of 24 items with response option; strongly agree, agree, disagree and strongly disagree. All the copies of the questionnaire were properly completed and returned to the researcher.

Research instrument was administered to 20 principals who were not part of the study area. The reliability of the instrument was ascertained using Cronbach alpha reliability method, and a reliability coefficient of 0.86 was obtained. This value was high enough and the research instrument was considered reliable.

Due to the size of the sample, the researchers administered the instrument directly to all the respondents and collected back the completed instruments the same way. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions. Items with mean below 2.50 were regarded as

Table 1

*Mean Ratings of the Response of the principals on the strategies they adopt to ensure effective management of staff in the school*

S/N	ITEMS	$\bar{X}$	MALE		$\bar{X}$	FEMALE	
			SD	DECISION		SD	DECISION
1.	To ensure effective management of staff you use effective communication	3.48	0.79	Agree	3.31	0.87	Agree
2.	Ensure adequate evaluation and appraisal of staff job performance	3.20	0.86	Agree	2.56	0.80	Agree
3.	Recruit and hire qualified personnel	3.26	0.84	Agree	3.33	0.86	Agree
4.	Expose staff to training and retraining through workshops and seminars	3.02	0.91	Agree	2.82	1.01	Agree
5.	Involve teachers in decision making	3.29	0.88	Agree	3.33	0.86	Agree
6.	Form committee among teachers to solve school problems	3.06	0.92	Agree	3.08	0.90	Agree
7.	Assign duties to staff based on extracurricular activities of their interest	3.23	0.89	Agree	3.20	0.86	Agree
8.	Do not caution teachers in the presence of students	3.43	0.82	Agree	3.32	0.87	Agree
9.	Assign subjects target according to teachers' areas of specialization	2.70	1.02	Agree	2.63	1.00	Agree
10.	Use coercion to get people do their work	2.17	1.31	Disagree	2.24	1.10	Disagree
11.	Give reward for excellent job performance	3.14	0.90	Agree	3.20	0.86	Agree
12.	Hold meeting with teachers before taking action	3.26	0.82	Agree	3.35	0.82	Agree
13.	Ensure adequate supervision	3.46	0.82	Agree	3.35	0.82	Agree
14.	Delegate duties to staff	3.17	0.90	Agree	3.27	0.88	Agree
	Cluster mean	3.13	0.85		3.15	0.89	

Key:  $\bar{X}$  Mean, SD Standard Deviation

Table 1 above shows that both the male and female principals agree that they employ certain measures such as effective communication, periodic evaluation and appraisal of staff job performance,

disagree while items with mean 2.50 and above were regarded as agree. Independent sample of t-test was used to test the null hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance.

Consequently, the mean scores were interpreted as follows:

3.5	-	4.0	=	strongly agree
2.5	-	3.4	=	agree
1.5	-	2.4	=	disagree
0	-	1.4	=	strongly disagree

#### Result

The results of the study are presented in the tables below according to the research questions and null hypotheses.

**Research question 1:** What are the strategies adopted by principal to ensure effective management of staff in the school.

training and retraining through workshops and seminars, involving staff in decision making, giving rewards for good performance, ensuring adequate supervision, delegating of duties and assigning



subjects taught based on teachers areas of specialization to ensure effective management of staff in their schools. This is revealed by the items which has mean scores above 2.5 meanwhile, item 10 which has a mean score of 2.17 and 2.24 respectively shows

Table 2

*Mean Ratings of the responses of the principals on the strategies they adopt to ensure effective management of the students in the school*

S/N	ITEM	X	MALE SD	DECISION	X	FEMALE SD	DECISION
1.	Invites parent of deviant students and habitual late comers for dialogue	3.23	0.89	Agree	3.22	0.89	Agree
2.	Discuss disciplinary measures with teachers	3.26	0.84	Agree	3.20	0.86	Agree
3.	Delegate disciplinary measures with teachers	3.26	0.84	Agree	3.27	0.88	Agree
4.	Ensure the guidance counselor pays individual attention to student	3.46	0.82	Agree	3.63	0.83	Agree
5.	Use corporal punishment	1.66	1.70	Disagree	1.86	1.71	Disagree
6.	Provide enabling environment for teaching and learning	3.35	0.82	Agree	3.26	0.	Agree
7.	Use expulsive as an alternative measure for punishing offenders	2.37	1.42	Disagree	2.08	1.46	Disagree
8.	Make student aware of the consequences of violating school rules and regulation	3.27	0.89	Agree	3.17	0.90	Agree
9.	Ensure that both you and the teachers monitor the students closely	3.14	0.90	Agree	3.20	0.86	Agree
10	Allow senior students to enforce punishment on your behalf on the juniors who offend	1.89	1.72	Disagree	1.78	1.78	Disagree
	Cluster mean	2.89	1.08		2.86	1.09	

Key: X Mean, SD Standard Deviation

In Table 2, questionnaire items 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 8 and 9 have mean score above 2.5. This reveals that the principals agree that they adopt those items as strategies they adopt in ensuring effective management of students. However, they all disagree to items 5, 7, and 10. These items have individual means less than 2.50.

#### Test of hypothesis

Table 3

*Independent sample of t-test analysis of no significant difference in the mean perception score of male and female principals on the strategies they adopt to ensure effective management of staff*

Respondents	Mean	SD	N	t-critical	t-cal	Decision
Male	3.13	0.85	12	1.96	1.31	NS
Female	3.15	0.89	19			

that they seem to disagree to the use of coercion as a strategy for getting workers do their job.

**Research question 2:** What are the strategies adopted by principal to ensure effective management of students in school?

Table 3 shows that there is no significant difference in the strategies adopted by male and female principals in the managing of staff in schools. This indicated by the calculated t-value of 1.31 which is less than the t-critical value of 1.96. Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted. This analysis shows both the male and female principals apply almost the same strategies in the management of staff in the schools.

Table 4

*Independent sample of t-test analysis of no difference in the mean perception scores of male and female principals on the strategies they adopted to ensure students management*

Respondents	Mean	SD	N	t-crit	t-cal	Decision
Male	2.89	1.08	12	1.96	1.47	NS
Female	2.86	1.09	19			



Table 4 shows that there is no significant difference in the strategies adopted by the male and female principals in the management of students in their schools. The null hypothesis is therefore accepted since the calculated t-value of 1.47 is less than the table t-value. This shows that both male and female principals responded alike, showing that they adopt almost the same strategy in managing students in the school.

### Discussion

The study shows that the respondents the male and female principals responded favourably in relation to effective communication, collective decision making, periodic appraisal, monitoring, performance rewards, providing enabling environment, orientation, guidance counselling and adequate supervision as strategies for effective human resources management in secondary schools. These findings agree with Ani (2007), Aguba (2009), Nwangwu (2005), and Ikediugwu (2008). Ani stated that in order to ensure effective perseverance on the part of the teacher, there should be regular monitoring of the operations of the continuous assessment at all levels while Ikediugwu asserts that the school head must send clear signals if he/she is to be understood and gets clear results, also teachers should be motivated from time to time so that they can put their best. Nwangwu noted that there cannot be qualitative teachers if there is no systematic and continuous appraisal plan for teachers while Aguba opines that the school climate must be such that allows each student to increase his /her feelings of satisfaction, sense of belonging, identification and achievement in present and projected life situations. The author also stated that the man behind the machine is more important than the machine.

### Conclusion and Recommendations

In this study, the strategies for ensuring effective human resources management have been discussed. The strategies are means of ensuring increased job performance and also means of ensuring that the school's goals and objectives are achieved. The principals agree that they adopt these strategies in managing human resources in their various schools.

Based on the findings, the following recommendations were made.

1. The principals should intensify effective communication so as to ensure that information sent are received as conveying the principal's intentions.
2. To ensure quality performance, principals should ensure that periodic performance appraisal of teachers are duly conducted.
3. School principals should ensure that quality guidance and counseling service are provided for both staff and students to promote acceptable behaviour in the school.
4. The principals should try as much as possible to create a conducive environment for teaching and learning to take place through involving both staff and students in making decision especially when such decision affects their interest.

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