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PRINCIPALS' ORGANIZING STRATEGIES FOR SCHOOL PLANT MAINTENANCE IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN AWKA EDUCATION ZONE OF ANAMBRA STATE

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ABSTRACT
This study was carried out to examine principals' organizing strategies for school plant maintenance in secondary schools. The study was carried out in public secondary schools in Awka Education zone. The design adopted for the study was descriptive survey. The population comprised 18 principals in the 18 public secondary schools in the zone. The whole population was studied using purposive sampling technique. A researcher-developed instrument titled "Principals Organizing Strategies for School Plant Maintenance Questionnaire" (POSSPMQ) was used for data collection. POSSPMQ was duly validated. The co-efficient of 0.82 was obtained for POSSPMQ using Cronbach Alpha method. The researcher collected the data from the respondents. The research question was answered using mean while t-test and ANOVA were used to test the hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance. Findings indicated that respondents agreed on principals' organizing strategies for school plant maintenance in secondary schools in Awka Education zone. It was among others recommended that principals should strictly monitor school plant and ensure that the school plants are continually maintained because of roles of school plan in effective teaching and learning in secondary schools.

Keywords: Principals; Organizing Strategies; School; Plant Maintenance; Secondary Schools.

Introduction

School plant maintenance is very imperative for effective teaching and learning. Whenever the term, "school plant maintenance" is mentioned, the information conjured is that there is a malfunction of the building, equipment, or grounds and that there is need to restore it to appropriate condition. Scholars have given diverse definitions of the concept of school plant maintenance. According to Nhlapo (2022), school plant maintenance is the repair, replacement and general upkeep of physical facilities as found in school buildings, ground and safety systems. While Szuba and Young (2020) consider maintenance as being concerned with ensuring safe conditions for facility users such as the learners, educators, parents or guardians, and is also concerned with creating a physical setting that is appropriate and adequate for learning, Ajayi (2014) takes school plant maintenance to include all activities embarked upon with a view to sustaining initial use value of the school plant. In school plant maintenance, administrative strategy of organizing in very imperative. It is among the vital administrative roles of the principal.

One of the most important principals' administrative strategy is organizing strategy. According to Abdulrahman (2014), organizing in schools is an administrative process of having a structure and assigning people to the posts for the purpose of performing specific duties. It is sometimes seen as a process on which an administrator identifies and groups the work to be done in smaller units, and assigns people to the various units with relevant materials and authority. Organizing in schools enables the principal to assign duties to teaching and non-teaching staff

according to their competencies and tends to minimize conflict in schools, since each person knows what to do. Organizing helps the principal to coordinate the various organizational activities, since he is aware of the various assignments given to individuals.

Generally, organizing strategy emanates from element of management. Organization however is a process, a conversion process. It is the process of arranging and allocating work, authority and resources among organization membership for the pursuit of the goals of the organization. It is the process of engaging two or more people in working relationship in a structural way to achieve specific goals. Muraina (2014) defined organizing to relate the grouping of people and activities into specific unit and trying to establish relationship between them. Edem (2012) stated that organizing is the building up of the human and material resources needed for the successful attainment of the goals of an enterprise. In this regard, the internal organization and control of the schools depends largely and solemnly on the principals.

Organizing strategy is sometimes seen as a process on which an administrator identifies and groups the work to be done in smaller units, and assigns people to the various units with relevant materials and authority. In secondary schools, it enables the principal to coordinate the various organizational activities, since he is aware of the various assignments given to individuals. The principals however, make effective use of the organizational skill to put the right person in the right place to do the right thing at the right time for the administrative effectiveness of the school and for the effective and efficient accomplishment of specific goals and objectives of the school. Abraham, Adenaike and Mallam (2014) noted that there are four (4) fundamental steps involves in organizing. They are:

i. Works is divided into tasks to be carried out by individual with appropriate skills and competence.
ii. Tasks are combined in related manner, often referred to as departmentalization.
iii. These departments are linked with one another, specifying who reports to whom; who gives order and instructions. The linking of such departments results in hierarchy.
iv. Mechanisms are devised to integrate the various task activities for proper co-ordination.

They further noted that organizing as a process deals with the following:

a. Determining grouping and structuring.
b. Dividing and allocation roles arising from the grouping and restructuring of activities.
c. Assigning accountability for result.
d. Determining detailed rules and system of working, making and conflict resolution.

Principals organizing strategy for school plant maintenance could be affected by gender and years of experience. Gender can be an influencing factor on the opinion of teachers on the administrative strategies for school plant maintenance. Gender according to Ozioko (2016) is the varied socially and culturally constructed roles, qualities, and behaviours that are ascribed to women and men in different societies. It is important to note that the opinion of male teachers may differ from their female counterpart regarding administrative strategies. Another important factor to be considered is experience. In this study school experience is categorized into experienced and less experienced. People who have worked for ten years and above are said to be experienced while those who have worked for less than ten years are said to be less experienced. The study by Samoei (2021) found out that experienced principals do well in internal supervision strategies, financial management strategies, conflict management strategies when compared to less experienced secondary school principals.

Statement of the Problem

Some school plant that were procured and used for several years are worn and torn, requiring repair or replacement in public and private secondary schools in Anambra State. It is a worrisome situation that school plant maintenance seems to only take place when there is break down of the facilities in some public and private secondary schools in Anambra State. Bisi-Onyemaechi, Akani, Ikefuna, Tagbo, Chinawa (2018) observed that some buildings are dilapidated with worn-off and dusty floor and there are classrooms without ceiling which interfere with learning in schools in Anambra State. Chris-Korie in Emenalo and Chris-Korie (2016) reported that school plant have experience blown-of roofs due to frequent stormy wind, over-flooding of play ground as a result of heavy rainfall, flood, excessive heat from increase temperature from blocked drainage system in secondary schools in south east, Nigeria. The state of school plant utilization and maintenance may differ in public and private secondary schools due to varying efforts of the owners of the schools to control the activities of principals. The public secondary school plants are collectively owned by everybody and thereby often regarded as ‘‘nobody’s properties’’ which may prompt principals to use and maintain them as they wish to. This is in contrast to private secondary school plant owned by individuals who may go extra mile to ensure that principals utilize and maintain their properties to attract more students to their schools. Thus, this study analyzed principals’ organizing strategies for school plant maintenance in public secondary schools in Anambra State.

Research Question: What are principals’ organizing strategies for school plant maintenance in secondary schools in Awka Education zone?

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female principals on the organizing strategies for school plant maintenance in secondary schools in Awka Education zone.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of principals on organizing strategies for school plant maintenance in secondary schools in Awka Education zone based on years of experience.

Research Method

This study was carried out in public secondary schools in Awka Education zone. The design adopted for the study was descriptive survey. The population comprised 18 principals in the 18 public secondary schools in the zone. The whole population was studied using purposive sampling technique. A researcher-developed instrument titled “Principals Organizing Strategies for School Plant Maintenance Questionnaire” (POSSPMQ) was the instrument for data collection. The instrument was made up of two parts- “A” and “B”. Part A was on the bio-data of the respondents while part B contained items on principals organizing strategies for school plant maintenance. The instrument is a rating scale structured thus: Strongly Agree (SA) = 4points; Agree (A) = 3points; Disagree (D) = 2points; and Strongly Disagree (SD) = 1 point. The face and content validity of the instrument were established by three experts; two in Educational Administration and one in Measurement and Evaluation. All the experts are lecturers in the Faculty of Education, Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University (COOU) Anambra State. To determine the reliability of the instrument, the Cronbach Alpha method was used. Ten copies of the instrument were administered on 10 respondents who are principals in public secondary schools in Onitsha education zone. The co-efficient of 0.82 was obtained for POSSPMQ. This high reliability index indicated that the instrument is reliable and therefore considered adequate for the study. The researcher collected the data from the respondents. The research

question was answered using mean. Similarly, t-test and ANOVA were used to test the hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance. As a general rule, the null hypothesis was not accepted where the calculated value was equal or greater than the critical or table value, while the null hypothesis was accepted where the calculated value is less than the critical value.

Presentation of Results

Research Question: What are principals' organizing strategies for school plant maintenance in secondary schools in Awka Education zone?

Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation Ratings of Organizing Strategies for School Plant Maintenance (N= 18)

S/N	As the principal in my school, I:	X	SD	Remarks
1	organize programs like debate and quiz competition during special assembly at least once in a week	3.20	0.70	Agree
2	make proper arrangements prior to any external examination	3.25	0.68	Agree
3	make sure that materials needed for conducting examinations are made available to the examination committee at the right time	2.94	0.66	Agree
4	organize staff meeting on the first day of every term	3.03	0.72	Agree
5	instruct the sport master to invite teachers from other schools to officiate the inter-house sport competition	3.04	0.77	Agree
6	make sure PTA meeting is conducted at least ones in a term	2.58	0.99	Agree
7	consult with staff members before organizing a send forth party for outgoing students	2.66	0.83	Agree
8	make sure that letters of invitation to attend PTA meeting are served to all parents through their children in the school	2.73	0.71	Agree
	Cluster Mean	**2.93**		**Agree**

Data presented in Table 1 showed the item by item analysis of organizing strategies for school plant maintenance in secondary schools in Awka Education zone of Anambra State. The result revealed that items all the items (1-8) with mean scores 3.20, 3.25, 2.94, 3.03, 3.04, 2.58, 2.66, and 2.73 were rated agreed. This is why the cluster mean of 2.93 summarized that respondents agreed on organizing strategies for school plant maintenance in secondary schools in Awka Education zone. The standard deviation scores ranging from 0.66 – 0.99 show that respondents do not vary too much in their ratings on organizing strategies for school plant maintenance.

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female principals on the organizing strategies for school plant maintenance in secondary schools in Awka Education zone.

Table 2: t-Test Significance in the Mean Ratings of Male and Female Principals on Organizing Strategies for School Plant Maintenance in Secondary Schools

Variables	N	$\overline{X}$	SD	df	t-cal	p-value	α-value	Remark
Male	10	22.39	3.23					
				16	3.31	0.01	0.05	Significant
Female	8	23.34	3.11					

Data presented in Table 2 revealed that at 0.05 level of significance, the t-cal value is 0.599 with 16 df and p-value of 0.01. The result shows that the p-value of 0.01 is less than 0.05 ($p > 0.05$) at 0.05, this means that the null hypothesis is therefore rejected. Thus, there is a significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female principals on organizing strategies for school plant maintenance in secondary schools in Awka Education zone.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of principals on organizing strategies for school plant maintenance in secondary schools in Awka Education zone based on years of experience.

Table 3: ANOVA Test of Significant Difference in the Mean Ratings of Principals on Organizing Strategies for School Plant Maintenance

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	270.549	2	135.274	13.930	.000
Within Groups	4826.529	16	9.711		
Total	**5097.078**	**18**			

The data presented in Table 3 revealed 0.05 alpha level, the F-value is 13.93 with 16df and *p*-value of 0.000. The result revealed that the p-value of 0.00 is less than the alpha level of 0.05 ($p<0.05$), the null hypothesis is rejected. This means that there is a significant difference in the mean ratings of principals on organizing strategies for school plant maintenance in secondary schools in Awka Education zone based on years of experience.

Summary of Findings

From the analysis, the following findings were made:

1. Respondents agreed on principals' organizing strategies for school plant maintenance in secondary schools in Awka Education zone.
2. There is a significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female principals on organizing strategies for school plant maintenance in secondary schools in Awka Education zone.
3. There is a significant difference in the mean ratings of principals on organizing strategies for school plant maintenance in secondary schools in Awka Education zone based on years of experience.

Discussion of Findings

The finding revealed that the respondents agreed on principals' organizing strategies for school plant maintenance in secondary schools in Awka Education zone. This means that principals in the area of the study organize programmes and make proper arrangements. They also organize staff meeting and instruct the sport master to invite teachers from other schools. This finding agreed with the finding of Abdulrahaman (2014) that principals' organizing strategies for quality assurance in secondary schools comprise making proper arrangements prior to any external examination, organizing programmes like debate and quiz competition during special assembly at least once in a week among others is not the principals' organizing strategies for the achievement of quality assurance in secondary schools. The finding also revealed that there is a significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female principals on organizing strategies for school plant maintenance in secondary schools in Awka Education zone. This finding was in line with the finding of Abdulrahaman (2014) that there is a significant difference between the mean ratings of male and female principals organizing strategies for the achievement of quality assurance in secondary schools.

The finding also revealed that there is a significant difference in the mean ratings of principals on organizing strategies for school plant maintenance in secondary schools in Awka Education zone based on years of experience. This means that the responses of principals of different years of experience on organizing strategies for school plant maintenance in secondary schools in Awka Education zone are not similar.

Conclusion

From the findings, it was concluded that teachers agreed on the organizing strategy for school plant maintenance in secondary schools in Awka Education zone. The finding also revealed that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female principals on organizing strategies for school plant maintenance in secondary schools in Awka Education zone.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were made:

1. Principals and teachers alike should be exposed to relevant seminars and workshops that could build their capacities in organization strategies to facilitate school plant maintenance in secondary schools.
2. Principals should strictly monitor school plant and ensure that the school plants are continually maintained because of roles of school plan in effective teaching and learning in secondary schools.

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