

UNIJERPS
Unizik Journal of Educational Research and Policy Studies Vol.3;
https://unijerps.org
2021 Impact Factor: 5.641; 2020 Impact Factor: 5.355.
January-June, 2021
Indexing and Impact Factor URL: http://sjifactor.com/passport.php?id=21363

ACADEMICJOURNALS
expand your knowledge
http://www.academicjournals.org

ADMINISTRATIVE FUNCTIONS AND REDUCTION IN THE SPREAD OF CORONAVIRUSAMONGSECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN NIGERIA

Dr. Adaeze Oguegbu
aoguegbu@liberty.edu
Liberty University, Virginia, USA

Abstract
COVID-19 is a threatening disease that has led to total lockdown of educational institutions in various countries, Nigeria inclusive. Presently, there is no vaccination for its cure yet; thus, the need for preventive mechanisms to reduce its spread in the schools. The secondary school which this study is delimited is made of students whose ability to prevent this disease is minimal due to their level of physical and mental development, therefore they require proper attention. The principals and teachers who occupy administrative positions in secondary schools need to manage the students so as to prevent the spread of corona virus in the schools. The main purpose of this study is to suggest how principals and teachers can practically discharge theiradministrativefunctionssoastoreducecoronavirusspreadamongstudents in secondary schools. This is expected to give an insight into healthy adaptive mechanisms for the staff and students in secondary schools in Nigeria. Finally, the following recommendations were made: providing hygiene facilities, services of healthcare workers and isolation centre in the school for students that may need extra care.

Keywords*: Coronavirus; Secondary Education; Administrative Functions; Post COVID-19.*

Introduction

Educational system in Nigeria has been faced with various challenges such as poor funding and managerial issues. This leads to decay in the educational system. It also leads to incessant strike among teachers. One of such strike actions just commenced on March 2020 in tertiary institution in the federation. Notwithstanding the above, the outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic has also triggered the ban of social organizations such as business organizations, church and educational institutions, among others. Government ban on social

UNIJERPS

organizations have hindered the operation of educational activities which brought about sit at home for both the teachers and learners.

Recently, the federal government gradually eased the restriction which includes reopening of schools. According to Nigerian Tribune news on 30th April, 2020, the Head of Service (HOS) Folasade Yewmi-Esan gave directives that federal government offices are to reopen three times a week. Honourable Commissioner for Basic education in Anambra State for example announced that schools in the state would reopen on Monday 4th May 2020 without students. He maintained that only teachers will resume arranging on how to apply the COVID-19 policy in the schools before the students will join them.

Consequently, the news that schools would resume earnestly was received by parents and guardians of students with mixed feelings. There is no doubt that it will be good for students to return back to school after the unplanned long stay at home due to the pandemic. However, the parents and guardians are apprehensive that if enough precautionary measures were not put in place in the schools, the spread of the virus would be very overwhelming. The chunk of the responsibility rests on both the principals and classroom teachers.

To this end, this paper examined the administrative functions of head teachers and class room teachers in the bid to reduce coronavirus spread in secondary schools. This is expected to give an insight to school administrators on adaptable health preventive mechanisms to reduce the corona virus upsurge while discharging their core administrative functions in the schools.

Schools are said to be institutions with complex activities which are carried out by people and are coordinated by a person or persons. Schools are also regarded as non-profit oriented but service goals oriented as they work for the realization of common goals of society (Nwangwu, 2015). Such goals, according to Nwangwu, include transmitting of societal values and norms from one generation to another. Because of the complexity of activities that are involved in schools, order is needed for proper administration. Aguba (2009) observed that administration in school entails working with and through teachers, non-teaching staff and students to get things done effectively. School

administration is more concerned with the implementation of educational goals and policies. Ugwu (2013) observed that in school administration, the primary aim has to do with the improvement of teaching and learning, and all the activities of the schools. The functions of administration in schools are performed by the school heads like the principals also known as the administrator.

Uzoigwe (2014) observed that the principal of a school could be regarded as an administrator, and by extension the school administrator can be regarded as a leader. This is because the administrator performs certain functions that make the school to be effective. The notion of principal's leadership effectiveness has come to prominence in educational literature within the last three decades. It is increasingly recognized that the quality of leadership in any organization, school or non-school to a large extent affects the success of the organization (Ukeje, Akabogu & Ndu, 2017).

In the light of the above, Adeleke (2018) noted that decision making is another key responsibility of the school leader towards achieving the school objectives. According to Adeleke, decision-making is a process of generating and evaluating alternatives and making choice among them. It involves thinking of different options and weighting them properly so as to know and select the one which is likely to fit into a particular situation within organization in a school system, the administrator engages in planning, organizing, directing and controlling the activities of other members towards the achievement of educational objective.

Effective execution of the administrative functions will, to a large extent, be determined by the quality of decision that is made on different aspects of their duties or functions. Ijaiye (1997) observed that the practicability of any decision will depend on available data regarding the educational objectives, the duties to be performed and the resources available in the organization. Based on the current situation in Nigeria, the area that requires urgent attention of the school administration is how to stop the spread of the deadly pandemic, corona virus (COVID-19)

The truth in blueprint is that COVID-19 has no known vaccination for its cure yet. Thus, there is need for essential carefulness to reduce its spread. COVID-19 is a disease that was traced to Wuhan, Hubei, China in the year

UNIJERPS

2019.ItwasnamedCOVID-19 to distinguish this particular disease from other known corona viruses. It can be defined thus: COVID-19 stands for: CO= Corona; VI=Virus; D= Disease; 19=2019 (which is the year it was identified).

Corona virus is an infectious disease that is transmitted from human to human. It is a virus that is spread by droplet released from an infected person. It has been estimated to have an incubation period of 14 days. According to World Health Organization (WHO,2020), there have been various known corona virus that cause illness ranging from the common cold to more severe diseases such as severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) and the Middle East respiratory syndrome (MERS). However, the nature of COVID-19 is better understood by looking at its symptoms and effects on the body.

SomeofthesymptomsofCOVID-19include: common cold, pains, sore throat, headache, chest pain, kidney failure, difficulty breathing, pneumonia, diarrhoea and nausea, among others. Among its grave effects include: heightened level of carbondioxide in the body, respiratory illness, inability of the body to filter the blood, kidney failure and death.

In Nigeria, the Nigeria Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) recorded about 2388 confirmed cases, 385 recovered and 85 deaths as at onMay3, 2020. There are indices of persistent increase in the cases of COVID-19 spread. To this effect, Nigeria government deployed various prevention and management mechanisms to reduce the spread of the pandemic. Some of the mechanisms include: closure of schools, nationwide lockdown, bans of public gathering (church, markets, bank, restaurants, wedding, meeting, social events, conference, seminars, and workshops), curfew, mandatory sit at home, and restrictions on travels; among others, all in the bid to reduce COVID-19 spread. Despite the efforts by the government, the rising trend of the infection in the country continues unabated. One of the affected areas which is the focus of this paper is secondary education.

Secondary education is received in secondary schools. Students spend six years in secondary school, which is 3 years of JSS (Junior Secondary School), and 3 years of SSS (Senior Secondary School). During the 3 years of Junior Secondary School education, students are to take subjects such as Mathematics,

UNIJERPS

English, Social Studies, Home Economics, or Fine arts and so on. Senior Secondary curriculum is based on 4 core subjects completed by 4 or 5 elective subjects. Core subjects are: English; mathematics; Economics; Civic Education; one or more electives out of Biology, Chemistry, Physics for science class; one or more electives out of English literature, History, Geography, Agricultural science or a vocational subject which includes: Book Keeping, Commerce, Food and Nutrition, Technical Drawing amongst other 17 subjects. After primary education, students can also join a technical college. The curriculum for these also lasts 3 years and lezxcvads to a trade/craftsmanship certificate.

The Federal Republic of Nigeria is made up of thirty-six States and the Federal Capital Territory and there are about two Federal Government Colleges in each state. These schools are funded and managed directly by the Federal Government through the Ministry of Education. Teachers at the Federal Government schools are required to possess a bachelor's degree in Education or in a particular subject area, such as, Mathematics, Physics, etc. These schools are supposed to be model schools carrying and maintaining the ideals of secondary education for Nigerian students. Admission is based on merit, determined by the National Common Entrance Examination taken by all final year elementary school pupils. Tuition and fees are very low, approximately twenty five thousand naira ($69.08), because partial funding comes from the Federal Government.

State-owned secondary schools are funded by its state government and are not comparable to Federal government colleges. Although, education is supposed to be free in the majority of the state-owned institutions, students are required to purchase books, uniforms and pay for miscellaneous things costing them an average of fifty thousand naira ($130) in one academic year. Teachers in state-owned institutions usually have a National Certificate of Education or a bachelor's degree, but this is not always the case as many secondary schools in Nigeria are filled with unqualified teachers who end up not being able to motivate their students, these schools are often understaffed due to low state budgets, lack of incentives and irregularities in payment of staff salaries. Some state-owned secondary schools are regarded as elite colleges because of the historically high educational standard and alumni who have become prominent

citizens and successful in various careers. However, the college ranking of these institutions has since dropped because of the arrival of some privately-owned institutions. Whether the schools are federal, state or private-owned, the school heads or administrators are expected to carry out some administrative functions.

From literature, the following are the Fayol's administrative functions: planning, organizing, directing, coordinating and controlling. These administrative functions could be applied at the school level to curb Corona virus spread in the schools.

1. *Application of Planning in the School: This is the process of setting or making detailed ideas on how to achieve the set primary education goal. According to Nwogbo (2014), planning is an intelligent process of preparing or arranging a set of decisions for future action directed at achieving goals and objectivesby best possible means or methods. Application of this function in the school requires that the head teacher should design the ways and means of reducing coronavirus spread in the schools. The preventive method should involve the following:*

i. Identifying the Hygiene Facility's Needs: There is need for proper identification of areas of poor hygiene facilities in the schools. It is reasonable to note things or areas like drinking water, rest rooms (if possible, bathing rooms), disinfectant, detergent, and hand sanitizers, face masks, fumigating school compound, healthcare services and facilities. It is important to involve healthcare experts for proper guidance.
ii. Deploying of Resources: There is need to source information, draw up a budget by making market survey from reliable source in order to make purchases and supply of the hygiene facilities
iii. Participation: To accomplish the above, there is need to involve other education stakeholders, thus joint participation of other stakeholders is of great important to achieving health goal.

2. *Application of Organizing in the School: This is the process of*

UNIJERPS

specifying and arranging the planning functions in achievable order. According to Abulkareem and Oduwaye (2017), organizing involves arranging activities and resources for effective classroom behaviour and performance. The head teacher can achieve this through assigning duties to school staff like posting the hygiene rule at strategic places in the school, especially at the school gate, integrating the school hygiene rules to parents or guardians, assigning a staff to ensure that adherence to the hygiene rule is a guarantee for gaining entrance to school premises and updating of parents contact numbers and address in case of health emergency need, ensuring contact lines of health workers.

3. *Application of Directing in the School: Directing is to ensure that staff performs their duties and students exhibit expected hygiene behaviours in the school. The principals should apply this through provision of hygiene facilities in every classroom, library, offices, playground, adequate supervision and monitoring to ensure that none of the hygiene facilities or behaviours is ignored by staff, parents and students.*

4. *Application of Controlling in the School: According to Oyedeji (2017), coordinating is function that is targeted at eliminating all forms of waste (time, materials & funds) so as to meet the set standard. The head teacher should ensure proper health records and purchases inventory for proper accountability. He also should ensure the provision for portable water, washing soap (preferably liquid soap), hand sanitizer, tissue, reserved mask for staff and students.*

5. *Application of Coordinating in the School: This is steering the activities of all stakeholders' efforts geared towards curbing COVID-19 spread in the school. The head-teacher will achieve this function by: regularly fumigating the school environment, ensure proper disposal of waste preferably through incineration, creating steadyCOVID-19 awareness in the school using manual and electronic device (computer, projector, television & healthcare workers) etc.*

Specifically, the classroom teachers can also apply Fayol's administrative functions in the

classroom to prevent the spread of the virus in the class. Teachers are the classroom managers and as such perform administrative functions in the classroom. These are ways of curbing the spread of coronavirus in secondary school by teachers using Fayol's administrative functions. They are discussed as follows:

1. *Application of Planning in the Classroom: Classroom planning is process of making decision on what to teach and how to teach it successfully (Ezeugbour,Okeke-James&Emengin,2019). The teacher achieves this by: decongesting crowded classroom and making provision of classroom hygiene facilities (toiletries, disinfectants) in the classroom.*

2. *Application of Organizing in the Classroom: The teacher achieves this by mapping classroom hygiene rules and penalty for defaulters, strategically sandwiching COVID-19 awareness in lesson notes, class work and assignments. Also, ensure that students sit quietly in their seats and maintain social distance in the classroom.*

3. *Application of Directing in the Classroom: The teacher ensures adequate supervision through exemplary healthy living and behaviour for students to emulate. The teacher should ensure frequent hand washing by everyone in the class.*

4. *Application of Controlling in the Classroom: The teacher should ensure adequate classroom hygiene evaluation such as: ensuring that students eat their snack, food or water alone, washing of hands before entering into the classroom, mandatory use of cloth face mask as a criterion for entrance to classroom.*

5. *Application of Coordinating in the Classroom: The teacher ensures classroom control, that students maintain hygiene behaviours such as: cover nose and mouth when sneezing, avoidance of close or body contact with your friends and minimizing class noise in the classroom. The teacher should ensure that students take permission whenever there is need to go out from theclass.*

UNIJERPS

Conclusion

Healthy training and habits are among essential prerequisite for reducing COVID-19 spread in the schools. This is because the age bracket of secondary school students is often faced with physical and psychological demands, also they learn easily through emulation of their principals and classroom teachers.

Recommendations

Government should ensure acquiring hygiene facilities where they are not sufficient and the classroom teachers should instil hygiene consciousness and information to pupils while they also maintain healthy hygiene habits and behaviours. Also, recommendations were made with regard to providing hygiene facilities, servicesofhealthcareworkersandisolation centreintheschoolforpupilsthat may need extra care. Finally, e-learning should be encouraged at all levels of education in Nigeria.

REFERENCES

Abulkareem, A.Y & Oduwaye, R.O. (2017).Concepts, principles and functions of educational management. *Educational management: New perspectives*. Amfitop books, Apapa-Lagos.

Craige, A.P. (2018). Definition of educational administration. Retrieved from https://www.theclassroom.com

Ezeugbor, C.O, Okeke-James, N.J. & Emengini, B. (2019). Teachers' classroom management techniques: a panacea for enhancing students' academic performance in secondary schools. *Unizik Journal of Education Graduate6*(1).215-222.

Ezeugbor,C.O,&Anozie, P.O. (2019). Educational management and new dimension. SCOA Heritage publications. Awka.

Igbokwe, I.C., Okorji, P.N.,& Asiegbu, E.C.(2016).School climate dimensions as predictors of principals' job performance in secondary schools in Enugu State, Nigeria. *Journal of Educational Policy and Entrepreneurial Research, 3*(7),106-114.

Nigeria Centre for Disease Control (2020).Covid 19 in Nigeria. Retrieved on 3rd June, from2020Covid19.ncdc.gov.ng/#!.

Nwogbo, V.N. (2014). Basic concepts in educational administration and management In Unachukwu, G. O & Okorji, P.N.(Eds.). *Educational management: A skill building approach.* Nimo, Rex Charles and PatrickLimited.

Odunayo,B.J.(2020).Onthemonitoringof coronavirusdisease2019 (covid - 19) pandemic outbreak in Nigeria.*African Journal of Biology and Medical Research, 3*(2),33-40.

Okeke-James,N.J.,Igbokwe,I.C.,Anyanwu,A.N.&Obineme,O.P. (2020). Gender influence on school climate and organizational silence amongst teachers in Anambra State. *European Scientific Journal, 16*(10), 223-237.

Okeke-James, N. J., Igbokwe, I. C., Ogbo, R. N., Ekweogu, L. B., & Anyanwu, A. N.(2020).School climate as a predictor of teachers' job performance in secondary schools in Anambra State, Nigeria. *International Journal of Education and Research, 8*(3),17-26.

Okorji, P. N., Igbokwe, I. C. & Ezeugbor, C. O. (2016). Relationship between school climate and principals' job performance in secondary schools *European Scientific Journal, 12*(4), 55-67.

Oyedeji, N. B. (2017). Management theories and their applications to school administration. Educational management: New perspectives. Amfitop books, Apapa-Lagos.

World Health Organization (WHO, 2020). There is a current outbreak of coronavirus (COVID-19) disease. Retrieved from https://www.who.int/health-topics/coronavirus#tab=tab_1

UNIJERPS