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DISCIPLINE MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES AND TEACHERS' JOB EFFECTIVENESS IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN IKOM LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA, CROSS RIVER STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

This study was conducted to investigate discipline management techniques and teachers' job effectiveness in public secondary schools in Ikom Local Government Area, Cross River State, Nigeria. Two research questions and two hypotheses were formulated to guide the study. Descriptive survey design was adopted for this study. The population was 354 teachers in all 21 public secondary school in Local Government Area, Cross River State. The sample was 187 teachers which represent 50% of the population selected using simple random sampling technique for the study. An instrument titled "Discipline management techniques and Teachers' Job Effectiveness in Public Secondary Schools Questionnaire" (DMTTJEPSSQ)" was used for data collection. The instrument was validated by three experts both in Educational Management, Research, Measurement and Evaluation, faculty of Educational Foundations Studies, University of Calabar. The reliability was ascertained with the help of Cronbach Alpha Method and the coefficient estimate was .81 and .87 respectively. The research questions were answered using the descriptive output of Simple Linear Regression while the null hypotheses were tested using Pearson Product Moment Correlation at 0.5 level of significance. The result of the analysis revealed a significant relationship between warning techniques, suspension techniques and teachers' job effectiveness. The study concluded that discipline management techniques have a statistically significant relationship with teachers' job effectiveness in Ikom Local Government Area, Cross River State, Nigeria. This implies that effective discipline management strategies, such as the consistent enforcement of rules and the use of positive behavioral interventions, can enhance teachers' performance. Proper discipline management creates a stable and conducive working environment, minimizing distractions and conflicts that could otherwise hinder teaching. As a result, teachers can focus more on their instructional duties, ultimately improving their job effectiveness. The study recommended among others that principals should consistently implement a clear and transparent warning system to address minor infractions promptly.

Keywords: Disciplinary, Management, Techniques, Warning, Suspension, Teachers' Job Effectiveness.

Introduction

The establishment of any educational institution is driven by the need to achieve specific goals and objectives. In Nigeria, the primary purpose of secondary education, as detailed in the National Policy on Education (2013), is to provide students with a holistic and well-rounded education. This education is designed to equip students with the knowledge, skills, and values necessary for personal development, active citizenship, and national progress. To fulfill these objectives, the policy emphasizes a curriculum that promotes critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving skills. This prepares students not only for higher education but also for future employment opportunities. Ultimately, the aim is to contribute to Nigeria's socioeconomic development by producing well-rounded, informed citizens capable of positively impacting society. As Obona and Etete (2019) highlight, achieving these objectives heavily relies on the effectiveness of teachers, who serve as the key human resources essential for this purpose.

Teacher job effectiveness refers to the extent to which a teacher adeptly fulfills their duties and responsibilities, positively influencing student learning and development. Teachers are essential to the operation of any school, and the effectiveness of their work is fundamental (Difoni et al., 2024). Effective teachers surpass the simple dissemination of information and play a vital role in establishing a constructive and supportive learning atmosphere. Obona and Etete (2019), as cited in Madukwe et al. (2024), emphasize that teachers are the foundation of the secondary education system and serve as the essential human resources required for its effective operation in Nigeria. The effectiveness and commitment of teachers to their jobs can be assessed by their willingness to make necessary sacrifices, which is demonstrated through their punctuality to school and class, preparation and delivery of lessons, attendance at meetings, participation in school assemblies, classroom management, and involvement in disciplining students (Obona et al., 2024).

Teacher job effectiveness in secondary schools can be gauged through various indices such as instructional, interpersonal, and organizational dimensions. Other dimensions include classroom management, which involves the ability to create an organized learning environment; effective communication with students, parents, and colleagues; responsiveness to diverse learning needs; student engagement; relationship building, and commitment to ongoing professional development. Owan (2012) explained that an effective teacher can be assessed based on punctuality, time management, students' academic performance, interpersonal relationships, respect for rules and authority, adherence to school norms, effective communication,

accurate record-keeping, and professional conduct.

The society is becoming increasingly concerned about the attainment of secondary education goals and the effectiveness of teachers' in public secondary schools in Nigeria. Obona et al. (2023) observed that in certain secondary schools in Cross River State, many teachers exhibit a negative attitude toward their work and struggle to maintain positive relationships with both their colleagues and students. Sule (2013) reported that students' poor performance in public exams is due to teachers' poor performance. Fehintola (2015) identified poor teacher performance as the main cause of declining learner performance in exams, as parents have pointed out that teachers' methods hinder effective learning in schools. Obona and Sampson (2019) expressed concern about the lack of dedication among teachers, noting that those without passion for their work tend to perform poorly. These teachers are often disengaged, fail to take on additional responsibilities, frequently miss work, and show a lack of commitment to their teaching duties.

The situation is not very different among public secondary schools in Ikom Local Government Area, Cross River State. It was observed that many teachers are ineffective in their jobs. These teachers exhibit unprofessional attitudes towards their work in various areas, including punctuality, instruction, record-keeping, relationships with students, time management, and discipline. In addition, there are other instances of indiscipline among school teachers, such as absenteeism, neglect of students, unethical behavior like accepting bribes or offering bribes to supervisors, refusal to carry out assigned duties, poor attitudes towards taking notes during lessons, and more.

This is perhaps one contributing factor to the poor students' academic performance in classroom as well as internal and external examinations. From observation, there exists a big vacuum in the quality of students produced to the tertiary institutions. The poor quality of students produced annually from the tertiary institutions, may be attributed to the poor quality of graduates produced from the nation's secondary school system. Some people attribute this decline to school administrators (principals) and teachers, while others blame the students and parents. It is crucial to address these poor attitudes in order to improve the quality of education provided to students. Many factors can enhance the effectiveness of teachers' job performance, one of which is discipline management techniques. A well-managed discipline enhances the overall learning environment and support teachers in achieving their educational goals efficiently.

Effective management fosters a safe and conducive environment for both teachers and students. Discipline management techniques in the context of this study involve strategies adopted by school administrators to maintain order, enforce policies, and create a conducive teaching

learning environment. According to Mintah (2011), disciplinary action refers to any action taken by a company in response to unsatisfactory employee performance or behavior. This includes setting clear behavior expectations, consistently applying rules, managing conflicts, and promoting accountability. They provide a clear framework for regulating the behavior of the workforce (Wedaga, 2012). Effective disciplinary approaches, guidelines, and procedures applied in schools or workplaces can manage behavior, ensure compliance with established standards, and handle misconduct. These can involve proactive steps, such as clearly communicating expectations and rules, as well as reactive responses like corrective actions or penalties. The goal managing discipline is to foster an organized, respectful atmosphere conducive to learning, productivity, promoting accountability and maintaining institutional harmony. Discipline should be constructive, aiming to help teachers improve performance or correct behavior, rather than serve as punishment (Ewah, 2017).

According to Bacal (2002) as cited in Ekpe (2018), there are various disciplinary measures that head teachers or employers can use to maintain discipline among teachers. These measures include: development of a code of conduct, warnings, reprimand, dismissal, suspension, deprivation of privileges, salary deductions, query and demotion. Similarly, Owan (2012) suggests several positive measures that can effectively prevent disciplinary problems in any organization. These measures include: manager's self-discipline, promotion of workers, frequent and consistent communication. However, this study will investigate two discipline management techniques namely, warning and suspension techniques.

Educators often use warnings to address minor violations of classroom rules or inappropriate behavior. These warnings can be verbal or written, serving as a preliminary measure to correct misconduct before harsher consequences are applied. Ekpe (2018) defines a warning as an alert to a teacher about improper actions deemed inappropriate by the head teacher. A warning communicates expectations, highlights unacceptable behavior, and encourages correction to prevent further consequences. Suspension, on the other hand, is a more severe disciplinary action used for serious misconduct that disrupts the school environment. It involves temporarily removing a teacher from school activities. Initiated by the principal or administrator, suspension follows an investigation, and the teacher remains away from the school without compensation until the issue is resolved (Ukpong, 2017).

Despite efforts by some administrators to improve leadership styles and regularly pay salaries, some teachers still demonstrate poor job performance, which has raised concerns about the effectiveness of discipline management techniques. This concern has prompted an investigation into the relationship between discipline management techniques and teachers' job effectiveness in public secondary schools in

Ikom Local Government Area of Cross River State.

Statement of the problem

Secondary school teachers play a vital role in implementing the curriculum and shaping the education of young learners. For schools to achieve their goals, it is crucial that teachers perform their responsibilities effectively and efficiently. When teachers carry out their instructional and pedagogical duties properly, it positively influences students' academic performance, contributing to a more productive secondary school system.

Unfortunately, in the secondary schools of Ikom Local Government Area, some teachers are failing to meet these expectations. They display behaviors such as truancy, absenteeism, lateness, poor preparation, neglect of teaching duties, and engagement in unethical practices. These actions have negatively impacted many schools, leading to students struggling with basic skills like reading and writing, poor performance in both internal and external examinations, and low-quality outcomes as they progress to tertiary education.

Given the critical role teachers play and their status as foster parents under the doctrine of "*In Loco Parentis*, it is concerning that many exhibit such unprofessional behavior. Therefore, it is necessary for school administrators and relevant authorities to enforce appropriate disciplinary measures to address these issues. This study therefore examines the relationship between discipline management techniques and teachers' job effectiveness in public secondary schools in Ikom Local Government Area.

Purpose of the study

The main purpose of this study was to examine discipline management techniques and teachers' job effectiveness in public secondary schools in Ikom Local Government Area, Cross River State. Specifically, this study sought to examine the relationship between:

i. Warning technique and teachers' job effectiveness in public secondary schools in Ikom Local Government Area, Cross River State.
ii. Suspension technique and teachers' job effectiveness in public secondary schools in Ikom Local Government Area, Cross River State.

Research questions

The research questions below were posed to guide the study.

i. What is the extent of the relationship between warning technique and teachers' job effectiveness in public secondary schools in Ikom Local Government Area, Cross River State?
ii. To what extent does suspension technique relates to teachers' job effectiveness in public secondary schools in Ikom Local Government Area, Cross River State?

Statement of hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated to guide the study

i. There is no significant relationship between warning technique and

teachers' job effectiveness in public secondary schools in Ikom Local Government Area, Cross River State.

ii. Suspension technique does not have any significant relationship with teachers' job effectiveness in public secondary schools in Ikom Local Government Area, Cross River State.

Literature review

Warning measure and teachers' job effectiveness

A warning, as a disciplinary measure, serves to alert teachers to misconduct or inappropriate behavior identified by the head teacher. It can be delivered either orally or in writing, with formal warnings carrying an implied commitment to future action if the behavior persists. Rexburg (2015) notes that verbal counseling often precedes more serious disciplinary action, allowing teachers a chance to correct their behavior. However, if the behavior continues, the disciplinary process may escalate, potentially leading to termination.

Empirical studies highlight the relationship between warnings and teacher effectiveness. Agesa (2015) examined the role of warnings in enhancing teacher discipline in public secondary schools in Kangundo Division, Machakos County, Kenya. Using a descriptive survey design, the study found that warnings were effective in controlling teacher behavior. Similarly, Ewah (2017) studied the link between warnings and principals' task performance in secondary schools in Boki Local Government Area, Cross River State, and found that warnings were useful in improving principals' effectiveness.

Another study by Ekpe (2018) investigated disciplinary control and teacher effectiveness in public primary schools in Ikom Local Government Area, Cross River State. Using a descriptive survey, the study revealed a significant relationship between warnings and teachers' job performance. These findings suggest that warnings, when used appropriately, can serve as a valuable tool for improving both teacher and principal effectiveness in educational institutions.

Suspension measure and teachers' job effectiveness

Suspension is a disciplinary measure where a teacher is temporarily relieved of their duties by school management or authorities, usually pending the outcome of an investigation. According to Rexburg (2015), suspension is appropriate when an investigation is necessary and the teacher should not return to work until it concludes. The duration of suspension should reflect the severity of the offense, the investigation length, and the staff member's previous record. Examples of offenses that may lead to suspension include theft, inappropriate behavior, threats, or disruptive conduct. Studies have shown a link between suspension and factors such as teachers' job effectiveness. For instance, Ebuara and Coker (2012) explored how staff discipline impacts job satisfaction among lecturers in Cross River State. The study used a four-point Likert scale survey and found no significant difference in job satisfaction based on teachers' perception of discipline, but recommended improving the teaching environment to ensure appropriate discipline.

Ukpong (2017) examined the relationship between suspension and teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Ikono Local Government Area, Akwa Ibom State, using a sample of 120 teachers. The study found that suspension serves as an effective disciplinary measure, encouraging better performance among teachers. Similarly, Apalia (2017) conducted research on the effects of disciplinary management on teachers' performance in Turkana County, Tanzania. Using a case study design and regression analysis, the study revealed that suspension positively influenced teacher performance, and disciplinary policies contributed to promotions and improved outcomes.

Several studies, both conceptual and empirical, have been reviewed in line with the sub-variables of this research. However, the majority of these studies were conducted outside Cross River State and Ikom Local Government Area. Furthermore, none of the existing research specifically examined the relationship between discipline management techniques and public secondary school teachers' job effectiveness in Ikom Local Government Area using the same methodology. This indicates a clear gap in the literature that needs to be addressed. Therefore, this study aims to fill that gap by investigating the specific discipline management techniques and their impact on the effectiveness of public secondary school teachers.

Research Method

The study area was Ikom Local Government Area. The study adopted a descriptive survey design. The focus of this design was on gathering factual data rather than testing theoretical hypotheses. The descriptive survey design was deemed suitable for this study because it utilizes questionnaires to describe observed phenomena. The population was 354 teachers in all 21 public secondary school in Local Government Area, Cross River State (Planning Research and Statistics Department: Secondary Education Board, Calabar 2023). The sample was 187 teachers which represent 50% of the population selected using simple random sampling technique for the study. An instrument titled "Discipline management techniques and Teachers' Job Effectiveness in Public Secondary Schools Questionnaire" (DMTTJEPSSQ)" was used for data collection. The instrument was validated by three experts both in Educational Management, Research, Measurement and Evaluation, faculty of Educational Foundations Studies, University of Calabar. The reliability was ascertained with the help of Cronbach Alpha Method and the coefficient estimate was .81 and .87 respectively. Although teachers were direct target group, they were also used to provide responses on the discipline management techniques. Additionally, in other to avoid possible response bias students were purposively selected to access their teachers' job effectiveness. Thus, a total of 105 students (5 students from each school) were purposively sampled for their opinion on the job effectiveness of their teachers. The research questions were answered using the descriptive output of Simple Linear Regression while the null hypotheses were

tested using Pearson Product Moment Correlation at 0.5 level of significance.

Presentation of Results

Research question one: What is the extent of the relationship between warning technique and teachers' job effectiveness in public secondary schools in Ikom Local Government Area, Cross River State? Simple Linear Regression was used to answer the research question and the result presented in table 1.

Table 1: Simple Regression Analysis on the relationship between warning technique and teachers' job effectiveness in public secondary schools in Ikom Local Government Area, Cross River State

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Decision
1	.693[a]	.481	.478	2.293	High Positive Relationship

a. Dependent variable: Teachers' job effectiveness
b. Predictors: (Constant), Warning technique

Table 1 revealed that the value of r of.693 implied that a high and positive statistical relationship existed between warning technique and teachers' job effectiveness in public secondary schools in Ikom Local Government Area. The value of r^2 of .481 meant that warning technique accounted for 48.1% of teachers job effectiveness while the remaining 48.1% was as a result of other external factors.

Research question two: To what extent does suspension technique relates to teachers' job effectiveness in public secondary schools in Ikom Local Government Area, Cross River State? Simple Linear Regression was used to answer the research question and the result presented in table 2.

Table 2: Simple Regression Analysis on the relationship between suspension technique and teachers' job effectiveness in public secondary schools in Ikom Local Government Area, Cross River State

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Decision
1	.805[a]	.648	.646	1.889	High Positive Relationship

c. Dependent variable: Teachers' job effectiveness
d. Predictors: (Constant), Warning technique

Table 2 revealed that the value of r of.805 implied that a high and positive statistical relationship existed between suspension technique and teachers' job effectiveness in

public secondary schools in Ikom Local Government Area. The value of r^2 of .648 meant that suspension technique accounted for 64.8% of teachers job effectiveness while the remaining 35.2% was as a result of other external factors.

Hypothesis one: There is no significant relationship between warning technique and teachers' job effectiveness in public secondary schools in Ikom Local Government Area, Cross River State.

The two variables in this hypothesis are warning technique and teachers' job effectiveness. Pearson Product Moment Correlation was used to test the hypothesis and the result of the analysis is presented in Table 3. Table 3 showed the correlation coefficients between warning technique and teachers' job effectiveness. The correlation coefficients was statistically significant for teachers' job effectiveness (r = .69, p<.05). Since *p*(.000) is less than *p*(.05), hypothesis one is rejected in terms of teachers' job effectiveness. The result of the analysis implied that there was a statistically significant relationship between warning technique and teachers' job effectiveness in public secondary schools in Ikom Local Government Area of Cross River.

Table 2: Summary of correlation between warning technique and teachers' job effectiveness in public secondary schools in Ikom Local Government Area of Cross River State (N=187)

Variables	$\bar{X}$	S.D	r	Sig.
Warning technique	19.79	3.24		
Teacher's job effectiveness	19.24	3.17	.69*	.000

*Significant at p<.05 df=185

Hypothesis two: Suspension technique does not have any significant relationship with teachers' job effectiveness in public secondary schools in Ikom Local Government Area, Cross River State. The two variables in this hypothesis are suspension technique and teachers' job effectiveness. Pearson Product Moment Correlation was used to test the hypothesis and the result of the analysis is presented in Table 4. Table 4 showed the correlation coefficients between suspension technique and teachers' job effectiveness. The correlation coefficients was statistically significant for teachers' job effectiveness (r = .80, p<.05). Since *p*(.000) is less than *p*(.05), hypothesis one is rejected in terms of teachers' job effectiveness. The result of the analysis implied that there was a statistically significant relationship between suspension technique and teachers' job effectiveness in public secondary schools in Ikom Local Government Area of Cross River.

Table 2: Summary of correlation between suspension technique and teachers' job effectiveness in public secondary schools in Ikom Local Government Area of Cross River State (N=187)

Variables	$\bar{X}$	S.D	r	Sig.
Suspension technique	19.79	3.24		
Teacher's job effectiveness	19.24	3.17	.80*	.000

*Significant at p<.05 df=185

Discussion of Findings

The finding of hypothesis one revealed that, there is positive relationship which is statistically significant between warning technique and teachers' job effectiveness in public secondary schools in Ikom Local Government Area of Cross River State. This finding is not surprising because it suggests that school administrators properly administered warnings which act as a motivational tool, encouraging teachers to adhere to professional standards and improve their performance. When warnings are delivered constructively and follow due process, they can prompt teachers to reflect on their duties and make necessary adjustments, ultimately enhancing their job effectiveness. The implication of this finding is that school administrators should adopt a structured and fair warning system as part of their supervisory practices to foster accountability and improve teaching outcomes.

This finding supports that of Agesa (2015) who studied the effectiveness of warnings in enhancing teachers' discipline in public secondary schools in Kangundo Division, Machakos County, Kenya. The study showed that many teachers were willing to embrace warning as a disciplinary tool because they seemed to recognize the intrinsic value in their day-to-day life and discipline enhancement. The finding is also in line with that of Ewah (2017) who determine the relationship between warning and principals' task performance effectiveness in secondary schools in Boki Local Government Cross River State. The result of the finding revealed that warning should be used as disciplinary control measure in order to improve principals' task performance effectiveness.

The finding of hypothesis two established that, there is positive relationship which is statistically significant between suspension technique and teachers' job effectiveness in public secondary schools in Ikom Local Government Area of Cross River State. This finding may be due to the fact that, in most public secondary schools in Ikom Local Government Area, there are laid down procedure for suspending erring teachers. Also, majority of the principals were fair in the administration of suspension as a disciplinary control measure. The practical implication of this result is that, an improvement in the quality of suspension administered on erring teachers will lead to an improvement in the quality of their job effectiveness in the secondary and vice versa.

This finding supports the finding of Rexburg (2015) that suspension is generally appropriate during a period of investigation in a situation where a faulty member should not return to work until the investigation is concluded. The length of suspension should be commensurate with the nature of the alleged offense, the length of the investigation, and the faculty member's past record. Also, the finding is agreement with that of Ukpong (2017) who conducted a study to determine the relationship between suspension and teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Ikono Local Government Area, Akwa Ibom State, a sample size of one hundred and twenty (120) teachers was used. The data collected were analysed using four-point Likert scale type questionnaire to answer the research questions and Pearson Product moment for testing the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The result of the finding revealed that suspension should be used as measure for punishing defaulting teachers in order to serve as a warning to other teachers.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, it was concluded that; there was a significant relationship between discipline management techniques and teachers' job effectiveness in Ikom Local Government Area, Cross River State. This implies that effective discipline management strategies, such as the consistent enforcement of rules and the use of positive behavioral interventions, can enhance teachers' performance. Proper discipline management creates a stable and conducive working environment, minimizing distractions and conflicts that could otherwise hinder teaching. As a result, teachers can focus more on their instructional duties, ultimately improving their job effectiveness.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, it was recommended that:

1. Principals should consistently implement a clear and transparent warning system to address minor infractions promptly.
2. They should be collaboration between secondary school administrators and the Ministry of Education to establish a unified and equitable suspension policy for schools, emphasizing the importance of considering alternative interventions and ensuring that the suspension process adheres to legal and procedural standards.

Contribution to knowledge

This study advances knowledge by demonstrating the essential impact of effective discipline management on improving teachers' performance in secondary schools. It provides evidence on how techniques like positive reinforcement, rule enforcement, and conflict warning and suspension can foster a supportive teaching environment, enhancing both teacher productivity and student outcomes. The findings offer practical guidance for school administrators, policymakers, and educators on the need for structured and consistent discipline strategies to boost professional conduct and job effectiveness among teachers. Additionally, this research contributes to the broader literature on educational leadership and teacher

performance, especially within the Nigerian context.

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Declaration of conflicting interests

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

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