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INFUENCE OF HEAD TEACHERS' ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT PRACTICES ON TEACHERS' CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT PRACTICES IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN ENUGU STATE

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ABSTRACT

The study determined the influence of head teachers' administrative support practices on teachers' classroom management practices in primary schools in Enugu State. Three research questions guided the study. The population of this study comprised 1, 222 head-teachers in the 1,222 government owned primary schools in Enugu state. The sample for the study comprised 20 head teachers obtained using multi-stage sampling procedure. The instrument used to collect data for this study was a self-structured questionnaire titled "Influence of Head Teachers' Administrative Support Practices on Teachers' Classroom Management Practices in Primary Schools in Enugu State (IHASPTCPS). IHASPTCPS was validated by three experts from Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. The reliability of IHASPTCPS was established with Cronbach Alpha Statistics to obtain an alpha value of .891 for the head teachers' administrative support practices and .896 for teachers' classroom management practices. Mean and standard deviation were used for data analysis. The findings of the study showed a high level of head teachers' practice of instructional supervision towards influence of teachers' classroom management practices in primary schools as such practices were often carried out. More so, the level of motivational practices of head teachers towards influence of teachers' classroom management practices in primary schools in Enugu State was high as such practices were often undertaken. Additionally, the level of environmental practices of head teachers towards influence of teachers' classroom management practices in primary schools was high as such practices were often carried out. Based on the study findings, the study recommended that government should organize continuous professional development programmes for head teachers focusing on advanced instructional supervision techniques which the head teachers in turn will apply on the class teachers to improve their classroom management practices.

Keywords: Influence; Head Teachers; Administrative Support; Practices; Teachers' Classroom Management Practices

Introduction

The head teacher in primary schools has a number of duties in the school. According to Lena (2015) the head teachers are to carry out supervision of the staff and teachers, directing the task of the teachers and other staff, providing guidance to the teachers and staff, and ensuring that task of the teachers and staff are done in the most effective way to ensure the smooth learning

of the pupils. These duties of the head teachers as stated are part of the administrative support practices that the head teachers can implement that will significantly influence the overall learning environment and academic outcomes in primary schools. As part of his/her roles, the head teacher has the responsibility to exhibit administrative support practices that are expected to influence the teachers in the primary school.

Administrative support practices refer to the actions and initiatives undertaken by head teachers to assist teachers in their professional responsibilities. Administrative support practices entail the employment of several activities that can enhance the teachers' job and promote learning and teaching in the school (Huang, 2014). Such practices may include providing resources, conducting workshops on effective classroom management, promoting collaboration among teachers, and offering guidance on handling disciplinary issues (Aguolu & Nduka, 2021). Other administrative support practices involve checking the teachers' records and pupils' work; provide instructional materials, right motivation and enough stimulation for the staff and pupils to enhance teachers' job performance and pupil achievement (Aseka, 2016). Additionally, other administrative support practices of the head teachers are instructional supervision, motivational practices, and environmental supervision practices. These administrative support practices of the head teacher should be able to portray him/her as a team player.

On the aspect of the head teachers' instructional supervision, this administrative support practice is carried out to ensure that the teachers teach what they are expected to teach. According to Huang (2014), the head teachers carry out instructional supervision of the teachers teaching activities to ensure that they do not divert to teaching areas that are not in line with the subject and its learning objectives. The head teacher is to monitor the teachers teaching process and ensure that they use the required teaching aids and learning tools in the class. With this type of head teachers' instructional supervision, the teachers will be made to teach what is expected of them in the curriculum and what is stated in the syllabus.

On the area of head teachers' motivational practices, the head teachers also have the duty to ensure that they implement motivational practices that can make the staff to be committed and effective in their work. A smooth application of the head teachers' motivational practices will improve the teacher's satisfaction on the job if the motivational tools are well applied (Begley, 2018). The motivational practices can be in form of financial incentives, rewards and recommendations etc. Head teachers' motivational practices can also include carrying out activities that will ease the promotion or appointment of the teachers, provide them with leave allowance, health benefits, car loan support and child educational benefits. These motivational practices are the basic administrative support practices that head teachers must be careful about when

implementing them so that it won't lead to eye service, bias or discrimination

In relation to the head teachers' environmental supervision practices, the head teacher also has the task to ensure that they conduct environmental supervision practices as this will ensure that the aesthetic nature and climate of the school setting are conducive and attractive to learn. The environment needs to be good and well kept in a way that it will bring out the beauty of the school (Lena, 2015). The head teacher's application of the environmental supervision practices will make the teachers and the students to be relaxed and teach/learn in a conducive atmosphere that is devoid of harmful or polluted environment. The environment need to be clean with well-cut grasses and field that is regularly cut down to avoid snakes and other harmful animal hiding within.

The head-teachers in primary schools are supposed to be qualified and skilled in applying these administrative support practices such as instructional supervision, motivational practices, and environmental supervision practices as this will enable him/her to effective in leading other staff and teachers in the school. These skills will enable the head teacher to provide the required support services and other administrative innovations needed to drive the performance of the school. In the view of Begley (2018), he stated that stated head teacher are expected to acquire various skill sets and strategies which can support them to make decisions. The head teacher administrative support practices also involve the ability to analyze staff professional development needs and address them by running school based programmes. Administrative support practices of the head-teacher can enhance teachers' classroom management practices. The extent and effectiveness of administrative support practices of the head teachers directly classroom management approaches of the teachers.

The term "classroom management" connotes the organization and control of all variables in a classroom setting. Classroom management is one of the most important elements of effective teaching. Classroom management is defined as the strategies and techniques used by teachers to ensure discipline and promote a conducive learning atmosphere which is critical at the primary school level (Mustafa, 2019). Classroom management enables the teacher to motivate the children towards learning that can improve on the children's development and encourage their active participation. Teachers who are effective in their classroom management will be able to manage feedback for children's work through the use of appropriate and effective classroom management practices.

Effective classroom management practices are crucial for maintaining an orderly and stimulating learning environment where students can thrive academically and socially. Effective classroom management practices have been shown to enhance students' academic performance, motivation, and overall well-being. According to Wang and Czerniak (2018), teachers adopt a variety of classroom management practices, including proactive strategies such as establishing clear rules and expectations, building

positive teacher-student relationships, and using praise and reinforcement Reactive strategies, such as addressing disruptive behaviors promptly and consistently, are also employed (Crossman, 2014). There are the psychological and social classroom environment management, teacher-pupil's personal communication, organization of the lesson, and disciplinary approach which according to Marzano and Marzano (2018) has been critical to the teacher's effective classroom management practices.

In Enugu state, heads of primary schools have not been effective in their provision of support services to their teachers. Most especially, in a study of Ezieke (2015) who correlated management practices of primary school head teachers in promoting child-friendly school environments in South-East, Nigeria revealed that head teachers do not apply professional development practices for enhancing teachers' job performance which in turn affects child with an unfriendly school environment. This makes the children to feel uncomfortable with such school environments which do not promote effective collaboration. In this regard, teachers will not be able to apply effective teaching method to enable them share knowledge and new teaching strategies. This aspect implies a lack of instructional supervision practice in the school which certainly has affected teachers' classroom management practices. Furthermore, the study found that Enugu state teachers are not adequately sponsored to conferences to enable them withstand the challenges brought about by change and innovation, and granting study leave for teachers to go for refresher courses. These motivational practices as lacking among Enugu state teachers may affect the teachers' classroom management practices. The current state of lack of application of poor instructional supervision practice and motivational practices by the school heads on the classroom teachers may have been the reason for the poor teachers' implementation of classroom management practices in Enugu state in recent time

Similarly, current situation in Enugu state depict that head teachers are not providing sufficient administrative support practices with respect to environmental supervision to enable their teachers to effectively manage their classroom. Preliminary investigation by the researcher shows that few primary schools do not have the needed beautification of their classroom and school compound. The aesthetic nature of the environment is not attractive to encourage learning. According to Ezieke (2015), there are further cases of non-constant maintenance of recreational facilities in primary schools and most of the classrooms are not well ventilated and spaced for conducive teachers' classroom management practices.

Several empirical studies have explored the relationship between head-teachers' administrative support practices and teachers' classroom management effectiveness. These studies have highlighted the positive impact of supportive leadership on teachers' job satisfaction, motivation, and instructional practices (Adeyemi, Olowomofe & Fajonyomi, 2015; Adediwura & Tayo, 2018). Similarly, Specioza and Zuwena (2023) found that

head teachers' management practices positively influenced teachers' motivation in selected public secondary schools in Nyagatare District, Rwanda. However, some research further indicates that inadequate administrative support can lead to burnout and dissatisfaction among teachers, negatively affecting classroom management (Ofojebe & Akaninwor, 2020). Despite the potential influence of head teachers' administrative support on classroom management practices, there remain challenges in this aspect of the Nigerian educational system. Issues such as lack of resources, limited professional development opportunities, and insufficient communication between administrators and teachers can hinder the effective implementation of classroom management strategies (Akpenpuun & Iorliam, 2019; Igbinosa & Adu, 2022). Thus, the present study sought to determine the influence of head teachers' administrative support practices on teachers' classroom management practices in primary schools in Enugu State. In line with the afore-mentioned, the following research questions were raised:

1. What is the level of head teachers' practice of instructional supervision to influence teachers' classroom management practices in primary schools?
2. What is the level of head teachers' motivational practice to influence teachers' classroom management practices in primary schools?
3. What is the level of head teachers' environmental practice of supervision to influence teachers' classroom management practices in primary schools?

Research Method

Research design: Survey research design was adopted for the study. The appropriateness of the design is based on the fact that according to Nworgu (2015), it is aimed at collecting data and describing in a systematic way, the features of a given population.

Procedure: The population of the study consisted of 1, 222 head-teachers in the 1,222 government owned primary schools in Enugu State. The participants for the study consisted of 20 head teachers obtained using multi-stage sampling procedure. A 34-item self-structured questionnaire titled "Influence of Head Teachers' Administrative Support Practices on Teachers' Classroom Management Practices in Primary Schools in Enugu State (IHASPTCPS) was used for data collection. A four-point Likert summated rating Scale of R= Rarely; S= Sometimes; O= Often; and U= Usually was used to measure the opinion of the respondents. A numerical value of 4, 3, 2 and 1 was attached to each of the above responses respectively. The IHASPTCPS was validated by three experts from Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. The reliability of the validated IHASPTCPS was tested using Cronbach Alpha Statistics to obtain an alpha value of .891 for the head teachers' administrative support practices and .896 for teachers' classroom management practices.

Data analysis: Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions. Criterion mean was used as any item with mean of 2.50 and above was considered as

Often/Usually while any item below 2.50 was considered as Rarely/Sometimes.

Presentation of Results

Table 1: Mean scores on Level of Head Teachers' Practice of Instructional Supervision towards the Influence of Teachers' Classroom Management Practices in Primary Schools.

S/NO	ITEMS	Head teachers (n=20) Mean	SD	Decision
1.	Observe classroom instruction to ensure curriculum coverage.	2.97	1.10	Often
2.	Check teachers' lesson plan and lesson notes for possible guidance.	2.92	1.04	Often
3.	Monitor teachers' compliance to school schedule.	3.05	1.21	Usually
4.	Meet regularly with teachers to discuss instructional challenges.	3.53	1.17	Often
5.	Monitor teachers' use of instructional materials.	2.75	0.98	Often
	Cluster Mean	**3.04**	**1.1**	**Often**

Results presented in Table 1 show that the mean ratings of the respondents on item 1-5 are above 2.50; indicating an agreement with the statements. The standard deviation of 1.1 shows that there is homogeneity in their responses. The cluster mean of 3.04 which is above 2.50 indicates that a high level of head teachers' practice of instructional supervision towards the influence of teachers' classroom management practices in primary schools in Enugu State as such practices are often carried out.

Table 2: Mean scores on Level of Head Teachers' Motivational Practices towards the Influence of Teachers' Classroom Management Practices in Primary Schools.

S/NO	ITEMS	Head teachers (n=20) Mean	SD	Decision
6.	Recommend teachers for promotion as at when due.	3.17	1.21	Usually
7.	Involve teachers in decision making on instructional progress.	2.92	1.19	Often
8.	Provide adequate chances for professional growth and research development.	1.02	1.22	Rarely
9.	Acknowledge teachers' instructional achievement openly.	2.87	1.50	Often
10.	Establish good relationship with teachers.	3.25	1.36	Usually
	Cluster Mean	**2.65**	**1.3**	**Often**

Results presented in Table 2 show that the mean ratings of the respondents on item 6, 7, 9 and 10 are above 2.50; indicating an agreement with the statements. However, only item 8 is below 2.50; indicating disagreement with the item. The standard deviation of 1.3 shows that there is similarity in their responses. The cluster mean of 2.65 which is above 2.50 indicates a high level of motivational practices of head teachers towards the influence of teachers' classroom management practices in primary schools in Enugu State as such practices are often carried out.

Table 3: Mean scores on Level of Head Teachers' Environmental Practices towards the influence of Teachers' Classroom Management Practices in Primary Schools.

S/NO	ITEMS	Head teachers (n=20)		
		Mean	**SD**	**Decision**
11.	Ensure beautification of classroom and school compound.	2.91	1.15	Often
12.	Put waste paper baskets in the classroom and strategic positions within the school.	2.87	1.07	Often
13.	Ensure adequate laboratory facilities.	2.95	1.11	Often
14.	Ensure constant maintenance of recreational facilities.	2.33	1.22	Sometimes
15.	Ensure that the classroom are well ventilated and spaced	2.75	1.08	Often
	Cluster Mean	**2.76**	**1.13**	**Often**

Results presented in Table 3 show that the mean ratings of the respondents on items 11, 12, 13 and 15 are above 2.50; indicating an agreement with the statements. However, only item 14 was below 2.50; indicating disagreement with the item. The standard deviation of 1.13 show that there is homogeneity in their responses. The cluster mean of 2.76 which is above 2.50 indicates that a high level of environmental practices of head teachers towards the influence of teachers' classroom management practices in primary schools in Enugu State as such practices are often carried out.

Discussion

The findings of the study as gleaned from the research results presented in Table 1, showed that there was a high level of head teachers' practice of instructional supervision towards influence of teachers' classroom management practices in primary schools in Enugu State as such practices are often undertaken. This points to optimum job performance of teachers in classroom management as a fallout of effective instructional supervision by head teachers in primary schools. It further shows that the head teachers are alive to their statutory responsibilities and the logical

consequence could be high level of discipline among primary school pupils. Corroborating the findings of the current study, Hoy and Hoy (2013) found a significant enhancement of teachers' classroom management and overall teaching effectiveness by head teachers' effective instructional supervision. The afore-mentioned is a demonstration of consistent supervision practices for better adherence to curriculum standards and improved pupils' outcomes. Further corroborating the current finding, Al-Harbi (2015) observed that teachers who receive regular, constructive feedback from their head teachers have a high tendency of implementing effective classroom management strategies. This indicative of the relevance of head teachers' active involvement in instructional supervision with a view to fostering a positive learning environment. In contrast to findings of the current study, Aseka (2016) found that while supervision is essential, its impact on classroom management is not as significant in all contexts within the rural setting. This points to the fact that in certain cases, the lack of resources and support systems can hinder the effectiveness of instructional supervision, making it less impactful on classroom management. Generally, these studies agree with the findings in Enugu State by suggesting that the high level of instructional supervision always translate to improved classroom management, particularly in high-resourced settings.

The finding of the study as obtained from the analysis of research question 2 showed a high level of motivational practices of head teachers towards influence of teachers' classroom management practices in primary schools in Enugu State given that such practices are often carried out. This is indicative of the fact that a motivated teacher is bound to be effective in matters of classroom management. In other words, the use of motivational techniques such as promotion, salary increase and performance-based pay has a way of bringing about teachers' optimum performance in classroom management. The finding of the current study tallies with the study of Specioza and Zuwena (2023) that head teachers use of motivation enhances teachers' classroom management and instructional practices. Put differently, motivation is key to teachers' classroom management. Contrasting the finding of the current study, Griffith (2014) highlighted that other factors, such as school climate, resources, and external support significantly influenced classroom management while not undermining the vitality of motivational practices. In some cases, even with high motivational practices, the absence of these additional factors could limit the overall effectiveness. Overall, these reviews agree with the findings in Enugu State by suggesting that motivational practices is sufficient to ensure effective classroom management, especially in more supportive environments.

Data from the analysis of research question 3 showed that a high level of environmental practices of head teachers towards influence of teachers' classroom management practices existed in primary schools in Enugu State as such practices are often carried out. This goes to show that teachers' effectiveness in classroom

management can hardly be separated from their head teachers' environmental practices. Thus, the more effective the head teachers' environmental practices, the higher the tendency of perform well in matters of classroom management. The finding of the present study is consistent with the finding of Smith and Turner (2013) who found that head teachers who actively foster a positive school climate and environment contribute significantly to effective classroom management. This includes ensuring safety, providing resources, and maintaining a supportive atmosphere. Similarly, Johnson (2012) highlighted that head teachers who focus on creating a structured and well-organized school environment positively influenced teachers' ability to manage their classrooms effectively. This captures clear policies, adequate resources, and a focus on pupils' well-being. In contrasts to the findings, Ezieke (2015) found that while environmental factors are important, the direct impact of head teachers on instructional practices had a more significant effect on classroom management and student outcomes. The argument is that the sole focus on environmental practices might not be as impactful without strong instructional leadership. Overall, these studies agree with the findings in Enugu State by suggesting that environmental practices alone might be sufficient to ensure effective classroom management, emphasizing the need for a balanced approach that includes both environmental and instructional leadership.

Conclusion

Based on the findings, it was concluded that head teachers' administrative support practices positively influenced teachers' classroom management practices in primary schools in Enugu State. In further conclusion, the study affirms that head teachers' administrative support practices, including instructional supervision, motivational practices, and environmental practices, significantly influenced teachers' classroom management practices in primary schools in Enugu State.

Recommendations

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

1. The government should organize continuous professional development programs for head teachers focusing on advanced instructional supervision techniques which the head teachers in turn will apply on the class teachers to improve their classroom management practices. These programs should include workshops, seminars, and training sessions that emphasize modern supervision methods and effective feedback mechanisms.
2. Head teachers should develop structured recognition and reward programs that acknowledge outstanding teachers. This could include awards, certificates, public recognition, and other incentives that motivate teachers to maintain high standards.
3. Head teachers should ensure that the allocations provided for the school resources and facilities are channeled to maintain and improve the physical and psychological learning environment. This includes

providing necessary teaching materials, maintaining school facilities, and creating safe and conducive classroom settings.

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