

# HEADTEACHERS' MANAGERIAL BEHAVIOUR AND TEACHERS' TASK PERFORMANCE IN PUBLIC PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN CALABAR-SOUTH LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA, CROSS RIVER STATE, NIGERIA

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## ABSTRACT

This study aimed at Investigating Head teachers' Managerial Behaviour and Teachers' Task Performance in Public Primary Schools in Calabar-South L.G.A. of Cross River State. Three (3) hypotheses were formulated and tested in the study. The survey research design was adopted for the study. The study population comprised all the head teachers and deputy head teachers in the twenty one (21) public primary schools in Calabar-South L.G.A. The twenty one (21) head teachers and twenty one (21) deputy head teachers in the twenty one (21) public primary schools in the area were purposively used as sample for the study. The instruments for data collection were two structured questionnaire; Head teachers' Managerial Behaviour Questionnaire (HTMBQ) and Teachers' Task Performance Questionnaire, which were subjected to reliability test using test-retest method and were found reliable at 0.72 and 0.76 r- values. Data collected were analyzed using contingency chi-square and Pearson Product Moment Correlation statistics at 0.05 level of significance. The result of the study revealed that head teachers' decision-making strategy and head teachers' leadership style have significant influence on teachers' task performance in the sampled schools. And that head teachers' communication skills significantly relates to teachers' task performance in the area. Based on this result, it was recommended that head teachers should adopt appropriate managerial behaviour to boost teachers' morale towards high task performance.

**KEYWORDS:** Managerial behavior, Leadership, communication, decision-making and teachers' task performance.

## INTRODUCTION

Education is a sure route to the development of every nation. It is a value that is held in a very high esteem by modern societies. In Nigeria, education is seen as an instrument "per excellence" for effecting national development (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2004). Education is seen by Osokoya (2003) as "Light and Life". This description is apt in the 21st century as no meaningful development, aspirations etc, can be achieved without education. In the road map to formal education and its attendant benefits, school management cannot be overemphasized (Unachukwu & Okorji,

2014). This implies that the success of education depends on the success of schools. Hence schools must be properly managed to bring out the desired outcome as expected by the society.

However, primary education is of cardinal significance to the effective functioning of the entire educational system. FRN (2004) puts it that the primary level of education is the key to the success and failure of the whole system because the entire educational system is built on it. It is obvious from here that primary schools are of utmost importance to every nation. This means that the failure of primary school system can jeopardize the attainment of the entire educational goals of a nation. It determines the

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functionality and performance of the entire system of education in Nigeria. No child can do well in secondary school when he was not given a good background at primary school level. As a base and foundation of the whole educational system, there is a need to lay a sound performance blue-print for other levels of education. A country can only actualize its various purposes of education when the objectives of primary education are met and this will further depend on the level of performance at which primary school teachers perform or execute their tasks in primary schools within the country.

As a formal organization, the performance of any school depends on its management. According to Kinicki and Williams (2003:5), management is defined as "The pursuit of organizational goals efficiently and effectively by integrating the work of people through planning, organizing, leading and controlling the organization's resources". It is referred to as the efficient and effective organization and utilization of human and material resources in a particular system for the achievement of identified goals (Ogumu, 2000). In education, management is seen as the process of planning, organizing, directing and controlling the activities of an institution by utilizing human and material resources so as to efficiently and effectively accomplish teaching and learning. (Unachuwku & Okorji, 2014).

From the foregoing, it is clear that the success of any school system is a direct function of the managerial ability of the school head, who has the exclusive responsibility to plan the activities of the school, design tasks according to the activities, organize people (teachers) according to the tasks, communicate, direct, lead and motivate them to put in their "all" for the effective achievement of the school objectives. The school manager, which is also referred to, as the school administrator (Okon, 2004), must create a task-oriented climate where teachers will be committed to work. This is affirmed by Peretomode (2012), when he said that one major concern of educational administrators has been how to motivate, create and ensure a feeling of job satisfaction and high morale in their teachers and other subordinates since it is empirically known that motivated and satisfied teachers with high morale, tend to be more committed to their duties and also more productive in their work.

The performance of any school has been intricately linked to the managerial behaviour of the school head. As Hallinger and Hack in

Ogungbemi (2012:18) declared "it has been proven empirically that schools that make a difference in students' learning are led by headmasters who make significant and measureable contributions to the effectiveness of teachers...". Such attributes as decision-making strategy, leadership style, communication skills, have been identified among others as key components of the school head managerial behaviour that have direct links with the level of teachers' task performance in a given school system (Okon, 2004; Okon, 2008; Ogungbemi, 2012; Fem, 2014; Sule, Ameh & Egbai, 2015 and Majoni, 2015).

The head teacher is the head and manager of a primary school in Nigeria. He has the responsibility of making decisions on policies, objectives, strategies etc; design the communication network of the school to pass the right information and get feedback at the right time; apply the right leadership style to raise teachers' morale for effective performance in the school. It behooves from here that for teachers to perform at the peak of their ability in a given primary school, the head teacher must have been able to use the right decision-making strategy, employ appropriate leadership style and use the right communication network that would raise teachers' enthusiasm towards hard work and effective task performance. Erukoha, Asuquo, Inaja and Petters (2010) lamented that, for over 20 years there has been a great outcry about the poor and deplorable state of the Nigerian public primary schools and their products. This establishes the fact that teachers in primary schools are not performing their task effectively, may be consequential to the managerial behaviour of the head teachers.

Omobude and Igbudu (2012) maintained that decision-making is synonymous with administration or management. Ejiogu in Okon (2004) affirmed that decision-making is related to administration and it pervades all administrative functions. Kinyanjui and Orodho (2014) conducted a study on the influence of Head teachers' leadership styles on pupil's performance in Kenya certificate of primary education examination in Dongoreti District. Descriptive survey design was adopted for the study, with a sample of 140 teachers and 22 head teachers. Descriptive statistics were to grade the results. It was revealed that majority of teachers from top performing schools were more frequently involved in decision-making process by their head teachers. A research work conducted by Duze (2011), on students' and

teachers' participation in decision-making and impact on school work and school internal discipline in Abraka, Delta State of Nigeria. He used survey inferential research design, with a sample of 3,318 student and 612 teachers. Chi-square statistics was used for data analyzes. The result showed among other things, that low participation of teachers in administrative creative decision influenced their attitude to work. Low participation was also found to have significant unwholesome impact on their attitude to school work, thus undermining accomplishment of set instructional objectives/educational goals.

According to Wehrich and Koontz (2003:396) leadership is "the art or process of influencing people so that they will strive willingly and enthusiastically, towards the achievement of group goals". A study conducted Majoni (2015), conducted a study on "Analysis of leadership styles of school heads and their impact on school administration in Zimbabwean primary schools," descriptive survey design was used, with a sample of 175 primary school teachers. Data were analyzed using simple percentages on SPSS. The finding revealed that most school heads used democratic leadership style while only a minority used liaises-faire and autocratic leadership styles.

According to Okon (2008:1), "communication is the process of transmitting information and understanding from one person to another" Deetz (2001:24) saw it as "a natural means by which the meaning of organizational events is produced and sustained". Femi (2004) investigated the impact of communication on workers' performance in selected organizations in Lagos State, Nigeria and found out that relationship exists between effective communication and workers' performance, productivity and commitment. A study conducted by Kambeya (2008) on Georgia Teachers' perception of principals' interpersonal communication skills as they relate to teachers' performance. He used author ethnographic mode of inquiry, with a sample of 150 teachers. The findings revealed that good interpersonal communication skills are essential in meeting school goals and that principals who demonstrated good interpersonal communication skills have teachers who were functioning above expectation.

Teachers' task performance is a significant factor to the success of a school system. Affianmagbon (2007) has observed professional laxity on the part of teachers. To him, many teachers are merely staying on the job to

look for better jobs outside. This study was motivated by the fact that if we must have quality education in primary schools, teachers must perform their tasks effectively. And if this must be effectuated, head teachers must deploy appropriate behaviour that would boost teachers' morale towards high performance in the primary school system.

### Statement of the problem

The issue of poor task performance of primary school teachers in Cross River State, especially in Calabar-South L.G.A, has been a long standing problem that has received concern of government and other stakeholders. Many studies had been conducted and recommendations made. Government in response, to ameliorate this ugly, has over the years intensified primary school supervision, increased the welfare of primary school teachers, employed and trained more teachers, built and renovated dilapidated structures in primary schools within the state. Nevertheless, this undesirable trend has not been arrested. Its attendant effect is quite obvious in the poor performance and high rate of failures of primary school pupils in external and internal examinations in Calabar-South L.G.A of Cross River State.

Considering the need for effective teachers' task performance to the school system, it is pertinent to raise the question; "to what extent does head teachers' managerial behavior relate to teachers' task performance in public primary schools in Calabar-South L.G.A. of Cross River State?".

### Purpose of the study

The general purpose of the study is to determine the influence of Head teachers' managerial behaviour on primary school teachers' task performance in Calabar-South L.G.A of Cross River State. Specifically, the study sought to find out whether;

1. Head teachers' decision-making strategy has any influence on teachers' task performance
2. Head teachers' leadership style has any influence on teachers' task performance
3. Head teachers' communication skills relate with teachers' task performance

**Statement of hypotheses**

To direct the study, the following hypotheses were formulated for testing.

1. Head teachers' decision-making strategy has no significant influence on teachers' task performance
2. Head teachers' leadership style has no significant influence on teachers' task performance
3. There is no significant relationship between head teachers' communication skills and teachers' task performance

**METHODOLOGY**

The research design adopted for the study was the survey research design. The population of the study comprised of all head teachers and deputy head teachers in public primary schools in Calabar-South L.G.A of Cross River State. There are twenty one (21) public primary schools in Calabar-South L.G.A with one (1) head teacher each. It was also discovered that all the public primary schools in the area have one (1) deputy head teacher each. This made the population of the study to be forty two (42) subjects, made up of seven (7) males and

thirty five (35) females. The entire population of the study was purposively used as sample for the study. The instruments used for data collection were a modified 4-point Likert questionnaires titled; Head teachers' Managerial Behaviour Questionnaire (HTMBQ) and Teachers' Task Performance Questionnaire (TTPQ). The questionnaires were designed to measure Head teachers' Managerial Behaviour and teachers' task performance. The instrument was validated using Face validity method. The reliability of the instrument was ascertained using Test-retest method. The data collected from the subjects on two occasions of administering the instruments were correlated using Pearson product moment correlation statistics and the reliability coefficients were found to be 0.72 to 0.76 r-values. Contingency chi-square statistics was used to analyze data for hypothesis 1 and 2, while the data for hypothesis 3 were analyzed using Pearson product moment correlation statistics (r).

**RESULT**

**Hypothesis one**

Head teachers' Decision-making strategy has no significant influence on teachers' task performance. The result of the data analysis is presented in table 1.

**Table 1:** Contingency chi-square analysis of the influence of Head teachers' decision-making strategy on teachers' task performance

Head teachers' Decision-making Strategy	Teachers' Task performance		Total	N	df	$\chi^2$ cal	$\chi^2$ crit.
Grouped	High	Low	100	206	1	14.20*	3.84
	fo 60 fe (46.6)	fo 40 fe (53.4)	106				
Ungrouped	fo 36 fe (49.4)	fo 70 fe (56.6)	106				
Total	96	110	206				

Significant at 0.05 alpha level.

The result in table 1 shows that the calculated  $\chi^2$  value of 14.20 is greater than critical  $\chi^2$  value of 3.84 at 0.05 level of significance and 1 degree of freedom, implying that Head teachers' decision-making strategy has a significant influence on teachers' task performance.

**Hypothesis two**

Head teachers' leadership style has no significant influence on teachers' task performance. The result is presented in table 2.

**Table 2:** Contingency chi-square analysis of the influence of Head teachers' leadership style on teachers' task performance

Head teachers' Leadership Style	Teachers' Task performance	N	dff	$\chi^2$ cal	$\chi^2$ crit.		
Democratic	High fo 80 fe (60.9)	Low fo 30 fe (48.9)	110	206	1	25.60*	3.84
	Autocratic fo 34 fe (53.1)	fo 56 fe (40.1)					
Total	114	86	206				

Significant at 0.05 alpha level.

The result of data analysis in table two reveals that the calculated  $\chi^2$  value of 25.60 is greater than the critical  $\chi^2$  value of 3.84 at 0.05 level of significance and 1 degree of freedom, meaning that Head teachers' leadership style has a significant influence on teachers' task performance.

**Hypothesis three**

There is no significant relationship between head teachers' communication skills and teachers' task performance. The result is presented in table 3.

**Table 3:** Pearson Product Moment Correlation analysis of the relationship between head teachers' communication skills and teachers' task performance

N = 206

Variables	$\sum X$	$\sum Y$	$\sum X^2$	$\sum Y^2$	$\sum XY$	r.cal.
Head teachers' communication skills (X)	771		1,246			
Teachers' task performance (Y)		584		1011	1,886	0.291*

Significant at 0.05 alpha level. df = 204. r. crit. = 0.113.

The result of the analysis in table 3 shows that the calculated r-value of 0.291 is greater than the critical r-value of 0.113 at 0.05 level of significance and 204 degrees of freedom. This means that there is a significant relationship between head teachers' communication skills and teachers' task performance.

**DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS**

The result of the first hypothesis revealed that head teachers' decision-making strategy significantly influence teachers' task performance in public primary schools in Calabar- South L.G.A. of Cross River State. This result agrees with

Kinyanjui and Orodho (2014), who established that decision-making, has a great influence on teachers' performance. This is further supported by Omodude and Igbudu (2012) who, in their study, found out that participative decision-making can influence performance. Duze (2011), investigated decision-making and teachers' attitude to work and found out that low participation in decision-making was the cause of low performance of teachers

The result of the second hypothesis revealed that head teachers' leadership style has a significant influence on teachers' task performance. This result is in tandem with the findings of Majoni (2015), on his study on

“Analysis of leadership styles of school heads and their impact on school administration in Zimbabwean primary schools,” which revealed that most school heads used democratic leadership style while only a minority used liaises-faire and autocratic leadership styles .A study conducted Majoni (2015), conducted a study on “Analysis of leadership styles of school heads and their impact on school administration in Zimbabwean primary schools,” revealed that most school heads used democratic leadership style while only a minority used liaises-faire and autocratic leadership styles. The above expression supports the fact that the leadership style of a leader in a given instance has a significant impact on the performance of subordinates.

The analysis of the third hypothesis revealed that there is a significant relationship between head teachers’ communication skills and teachers’ task performance. The result is collaborated with Femi (2004), who investigated the impact of communication on workers performance and established that a relationship exists between communication and workers’ performance, productivity and commitment. Effective communication skills will help school heads to pass the right information at the right time, as well enhancing teachers’ effective task performance in the school system.

## CONCLUSION

No school system can function without effective decision-making process, leadership style and efficient and effective communication. Based on the findings of the study, it is concluded that head teachers’ managerial decision-making strategy and leadership style have significant influence on teachers’ task performance. And also, that head teachers’ communication skills has a significant relationship with teachers’ task performance in public primary schools in Calabar-south L.G.A. of Cross River State.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### The following recommendations are made;

1. Head teachers should adopt proper decision-making strategy.
2. Head teachers should maintain good leadership styles in the primary schools in the area.

3. Head teachers should use all the channels of communication in the school for adequate dissemination of information to teachers.

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