



Financial Control Measures and the Enhancement of Administrative Effectiveness of Principals in Secondary Schools in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

This study was focused on the determination of the relationship between financial control measures and enhancement of administrative effectiveness of secondary school Principals in Akwa Ibom State. The choice of this topic was necessitated by the fact that despite the continuous personnel auditing conducted in the public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom State, financial mismanagement still persists. The population of the study was 227 principals from the 227 public secondary schools in the state. The sample size for the study was 192 using stratified random sampling technique for the selection. Eighteen-item structured questionnaire designed by the researcher was used for data collection. The instrument was face validated by five experts. Three (3) null hypotheses were tested. The major findings were that the principals have not adopted budget preparation, budget implementation and internal auditing for the control of school finances. It was found that there is significant relationship between the variables and principals' administrative effectiveness. The recommendations made based on the findings were that (1) State Secondary Educational Board should instruct principals to prepare annual budget of their schools. (2) State Secondary Education Board should properly monitor the implementation of the school budget. (3) Internal auditors should be sent by the Ministry of Education to Schools.

Keywords: Control, Measures, Enhancement, Effectiveness

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

Financial control measures are the methods and procedures adopted to control mismanagement of cash and other assets of the school. Controlling

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entails monitoring, comparing and correcting errors in the duties of the accounting staff. The essence of controlling is to prevent financial fraud. According to Buyers in Holmes (2000), controlling function helps in regulating the spending of money and reveals losses, waste and inefficiency, thus making it possible for corrections to be made promptly. Control of school finance forms an integral part of school administration. Nwankwo (2001), stated that one of the administrative functions of the school Principal is the controlling of finance of the school. Without controlling the finance of the school, the objectives of the school may not be achieved. According to Ukpong (2006), lack of prudence and mismanagement of school funds by the principals could give rise to poor students' performance since it might slow down the acquisition of essential materials for teaching and learning.

Effectiveness in this study is referred to the level of achievement based on the available resources, time and situation. Mamman (2008), defines effectiveness as "The achievement of set objectives, using the right quantity and quality of resources at the right time and place". Administrative effectiveness can be attained by means of proper financial control. Inadequate financial control could bring about mismanagement of school fund and non-attainment of the schools' objectives. Principals' administrative effectiveness in this study described the judicious control and use of available school funds for excellent carrying out of school activities at the right time. Effective school administration is dependent on financial control by the principals of public secondary schools among other issues. These include control measures such as preparation of budget, budget implementation and internal auditing. The utilization of these control measures could lend support to effectiveness of the principals administratively.

Statement of the Problem

One of the administrative problems experienced in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom State is financial mismanagement. Therefore, to enhance principals' administrative effectiveness in public secondary school system, adoption of financial control measures is inevitable. The consequence of improper use of financial control measures in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom State is loss of money and assets which results in shortage of funds for effective school administration, and inadequate provision of teaching and learning materials. This also results in low standard of secondary education in Akwa Ibom State (Ukpong, 2006).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to determine the relationship between financial control measures and enhancement of principals' administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom State. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. Ascertain the relationship between budget preparation and enhancement of the principals' administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom State.
2. Assess the relationship between budget implementation and enhancement of principals' administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom State.
3. Determine the relationship between internal auditing and enhancement of the principals' administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom State.

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance.

1. There is no significant relationship between budget preparation and enhancement of principals' administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools.
2. There is no significant relationship between budget implementation and enhancement of principals' administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools.
3. There is no significant relationship between internal auditing and enhancement of principals' administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools.

Review of Related Literature

Related literature on financial control measures and enhancement of principals' administrative effectiveness were reviewed. The literature reviewed, revealed that the principals in public secondary schools did not adopt budget preparation, budget implementation and internal auditing as methods of controlling the schools' funds. This is therefore the gap that this study is attempting to fill.

According to Sarka (1995), the primary aim of internal auditing is to establish moral checks on the personnel of an organization regarding their honesty, integrity, skills, care and diligence in their duties. The internal auditing is to detect and discover all deficiencies in finances. A good internal auditing ensures care and continuous review of all the elements of financial control in an organization.

Design of the Study

The design adopted for this study was the survey design. Survey design was considered appropriate for this study since information on financial control were collected from the principals of secondary schools using questionnaire. Ojo (2001), stated that survey is the best technique for obtaining the

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necessary data from people through the use of questionnaire. According to Osuala (2001), the survey design is the design suitable for collection of data based on the opinion of people.

Area of the Study

This study was conducted in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom State. There are 227 public Secondary Schools in Akwa Ibom State. The state is divided into 25 Local Education Committees in the three senatorial districts. This State was selected for this study owing to the frequent personnel auditing in public secondary schools mainly to discover non-existing workers (ghost workers) and to control financial mismanagement.

Population of the Study

The population of this study comprised 227 principals from the 227 public secondary schools in the three senatorial districts of the State namely South-South, 63; North-East, 84; and North-West, 80. The rationale for using the principals was that they were accountable for school finances.

Sample and Sampling Technique

The sample for this study was 192 principals selected from the population of 227. The selection was done through stratified random sampling technique (see Table 1).

Table 1: Determination of sample size.

Senatorial Districts	Schools/Number of Principals	Number of Principals Sampled (85%)
South-South	63	53
North-East	84	71
North-West	80	68
Total	227	192

Source: Field of study.

Description of Instrument for Data Collection

An 18-item structured questionnaire designed by the researcher was used to collect data for this study. This was responded to by the principals.

The response options were:

Strongly Agree (SA)	4 points
Agree (A)	3 points
Disagree (D)	2 points
Strongly Disagree (SD)	1 point

Validation of the Instrument

The instrument was given to five experts in accounting for face validation. The essence of the validation was to ascertain the appropriateness of the instrument for the study.

Reliability of the Instrument

In order to determine the reliability of the instrument, a test retest reliability method was employed in the study. That is, the instrument was administered twice to the respondents at the interval of two weeks. Pearson Product Moment Correlation was used and the coefficient index of 0.78 was obtained which ensured reliability of the instrument.

Data Analysis Technique

The data collected were processed with the use of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The hypotheses were tested using Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) Analysis at .05 level of significance to determine the significant relationship between the independent and dependent variables. The null hypotheses were rejected when the calculated t-value was greater than the critical r-value at .05 level of significance and it was upheld when the calculated t-value was less than the critical r-value at the same alpha level.

Hypothesis One

There is no significant relationship between budget preparation and enhancement of principals' administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools.

Tables 2: Pearson Product Moment Correlation Analysis of the relationship between budget preparation and enhancement of principals' administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools. N = 192.

Variables	ΣX	ΣX^2	ΣXY	r-cal	Decision
	ΣY	ΣY^2			
Budget Preparation (X)	14090	1047166	1138327	.57	Significant
Principals' Administrative Effectiveness (Y)	15405	1250271			

Significant at .05 level; df = 190, r-crit = .196.

From Table 2, the calculated r-value was .57 while the critical r-value was .196 with 190 degree of freedom at .05 level of significance. The result was significant and the null hypothesis rejected.

Hypothesis Two

There is no significant relationship between budget implementation and enhancement of principals' administrative effectiveness.

Tables 3: Pearson Product Moment Correlation Analysis of the relationship between budget implementation and enhancement of principals' administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools. N = 192

Variables	ΣX	ΣX^2	ΣXY	r-cal	Decision
	ΣY	ΣY^2			
Budget Implementation (X)	13773	1000981	1114088	.66	Significant
Principals' Administrative Effectiveness (Y)	15405	1250271			

Significant at .05 level; df = 190, r-crit = .196.

Table 3 shows the calculated r-value as .66. This was compared with the critical r-value of .196 at .05 level of significance with degree of freedom of 190. The calculated r-value of .66 was greater than the critical r-value of .196. Hence the result was significant. The null hypothesis was rejected.

Hypothesis Three

There is no significant relationship between internal auditing and enhancement of principals' administrative effectiveness in secondary schools. Table 4 reveals that the calculated t-value of .88 was greater than the critical r-value of .196 at .05 alpha level and 190 degree of freedom. The result was significant. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected.

Table 4: Pearson Product Moment Correlation Analysis of the relationship between internal auditing and enhancement of principals' administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools. N = 192

Variables	ΣX	ΣX^2	ΣXY	r-cal	Decision
	ΣY	ΣY^2			
Internal Auditing (X)	13527	967209	1097783	.88	Significant
Principals' Administrative Effectiveness (Y)	15405	1250271			

Significant at .05 level; df = 190, r-crit = .196

Findings of the Study

1. There is significant relationship between budget preparation and enhancement of principals' administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools.
2. There is significant relationship between budget implementation and enhancement of principals' administrative effectiveness.
3. There is significant relationship between internal auditing and enhancement of principals' administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools.

DISCUSSION

The result of the data analysis was significant due to the fact that calculated r-value was greater than the critical r-value at .05 level of significance with 190 degree of freedom. This result proved that there is significant relationship between budget preparation, budget implementation and internal auditing and enhancement of principals' administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom State.

Educational Implications of the Findings

The findings of this study have a lot of implications on the academic performance of students in secondary schools. An honest and transparent application of the school finances to service teaching and learning programmes would boost the status of the school and raise the standard of academic performance of students. The principals' administrative effectiveness would be enhanced thereby maintaining the morale of secondary schools in Akwa Ibom State. Regular internal auditing of secondary schools accounts would detect embezzlement, losses, errors, pilfering and stealing of school funds at an early stage. The educational implication of this is that the school finances would be safeguarded and used for academic programmes of the school.

Proper budget preparation and implementation can help the principal to predict and control educational expenses of the school. The principal can easily base the future educational plans on the past budget of the school. The implication of this finding is in support of Akpan (2003), who maintained that the success and attainment of educational objectives depends on the ability of the principal to budget for the school.

CONCLUSION

The following conclusions were drawn based on the findings of the study. Financial mismanagement is persistent in secondary schools as a result of improper use of financial control measures. Internal auditing can be used effectively to control finances in secondary schools for the attainment of educational goals.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings and conclusions of this study, it is recommended that:

1. The State Secondary Education Board should conduct seminars and workshops for principals on school budget preparation.
2. The State Secondary Education Board should properly monitor the implementation of school budget.
3. Ministry of Education and State Secondary Education Board should recruit qualified accounting personnel's as internal auditors and send them to secondary schools to carry out internal auditing.
- 4.

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