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Teachers' Perception of Principals' Leadership Effectiveness in Public and Private secondary Schools in Ondo State

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I. INTRODUCTION

The notion of principals' leadership effectiveness has come to prominence in educational literature within the last three decades. It is increasingly recognized that the quality of leadership in any organization, school or non-school to a large extent affects the success of the organization (Ukeje, Akabogu and Ndu, 1992).

According to Ibukun (2004), leadership is the art of influencing others to work enthusiastically towards the achievement of organizational goals. Building on this

definition, the function of organizational leadership can be said to be a relationship of influence on relevant others in and out of an organization towards the achievement of the organizational goals. This is because the attainment of organizational goal is a function of the cumulative inter play of the forces (internal and external) influencing an organization. An effective leader therefore is one who diligently influences these forces to achieve the specified goals of the organization.

The concept of principals' leadership effectiveness in Nigerian secondary schools is often used to express the overall school effectiveness in relation to the attainment of both normative and summative values in students as spelt out in the National Policy on Education (FGN, 2004). The school principal is the accounting officer of the school who is either blamed or praised depending on the degree of his effectiveness in influencing the relevant others in and outside school to enhance teaching and learning. However, while much of the existing literature on principals' leadership effectiveness in Nigerian secondary schools is often evaluated in relation to quantifiable measure of outcomes such as the Junior Secondary School Examination (JSSCE) or Senior Secondary School Examination (SSCE), perhaps because such normative outcomes as character development and patriotism cannot be easily measured, there is a less effort by educationist on investigating the principals' leadership effectiveness in both public and private secondary schools from the angle of teachers who themselves are, according to Silva, Gimbert and Nolan in Pounder (2006) leaders who can "navigate the structures of schools, nurture relationships, model professional growth, encourage change and challenge the status quo". pg 22. In this era of technological advancement, diffused and multiple cultural goals, it is believed that principals are important change agents who must lead their schools to success through collaborative efforts with students, staff and the school community.

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II. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The poor performance of candidates in English Language and Mathematics in SSCE in recent times despite the importance attached to the two subjects as core subjects in the Nigerian Secondary School. Curriculum has posed serious concern to Students, Parents, Governments and even Private Investors. Government is particularly worried that many public secondary schools find it difficult to have candidates to register for WAEC and NECO in Ondo State despite her huge investment on education. The situation is more disturbing as the complaints roar that majority of parents, even some principals of public Secondary Schools prefer to send their children \ wards to private schools.

This study therefore seeks to examine teachers' perception of principals' leadership effectiveness in selected public and private secondary schools in Ondo State with regard to the pedagogical skills practiced, Administrative skills exercised, and community relations skill employed. This is because, as Ibukun (2004) opines, the principal is the leader and chief executive of his school who is expected to perform certain professional and administrative roles in order to ensure proper teaching and learning. Be it big or small, public or private, it is the leader who usually provides direction towards goals attainment (Robbins and Judges, 2007).

Unfortunately, Principals competences and authorities as the administrative, technical and pedagogical head of the school has become a matter of concern in recent years as there are increasing public outcry on accountability.

III. RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

1. There is no significant difference in teachers' perception of the pedagogical skill effectiveness of

the principals of public and private secondary schools in Ondo State.

2. There is no significant difference in teachers' perception of the administrative skill effectiveness of the principals of public and private secondary schools in Ondo State
3. There is no significant difference in the community relation skill effectiveness of the principals of public and private secondary schools in Ondo State.

IV. METHODOLOGY

a) Design

This study specifically adopted the survey method of descriptive research design. The population consisted all teachers of the 298 re-articulated public secondary schools and 500 Government approved private secondary schools in Ondo State.

b) Sample and Sampling Technique

However, samples for the study were 18 public and 18 private secondary schools selected on the basis of proportional stratification with each Local Government Area represented by one public and one private secondary schools. 10 teachers were randomly selected from each of the 36 sampled schools.

c) Instrumentation

The instrument for data collection was a self-constructed instrument titled: "Teachers perception of the Principals' Leadership Effectiveness Questionnaire" (TPPLEQ). The instrument was validated and used with a reliability index of $r = 0.78$. Descriptive statistics of frequencies and percentages were used to analyze the demographic data while t-test was used to determine the significance of the results.

V. RESULT

a) Demographic Information

Table 1 : Frequency and Percentage Analyses of Respondents' Academic Qualification

Qualification	Public Secondary Schools		Private Secondary Schools	
	Freq.	%Freq.	Freq.	%Freq.
SSCE/OND	0	0	28	16
NCE	72	40	98	54
HND/PGDE/BA/B.ED/B.Sc.	90	50	48	27
MA/M.SC/M.ED.	18	10	6	3
Total	180	100%	180	100%

Source: Fieldwork, 2011.

Of the total 180 respondents from public secondary schools, 72 respondents representing 40% were NCE graduates, 90 respondents representing 50% were HND/ PGDE / BA / BED/ B.Sc. graduates 18 respondents representing 10% were MA /MSC or M.ED. Post graduates while none was either OND, GCE, WASC or NECO certificate holders. However, in the Private Secondary Schools, of the total 180

respondents, 28 respondents representing 16% were either OND, WASC, GCE or NECO certificate holders, 98 respondents representing 54% were holders of NCE, 48 respondents representing 27% were holders of HND PGDE /BA /B.ED or B.Sc. degree certificate while the remaining 6 respondents representing 3% were Masters degree graduates in either science, Arts or Education. This is also illustrated by figure 1.

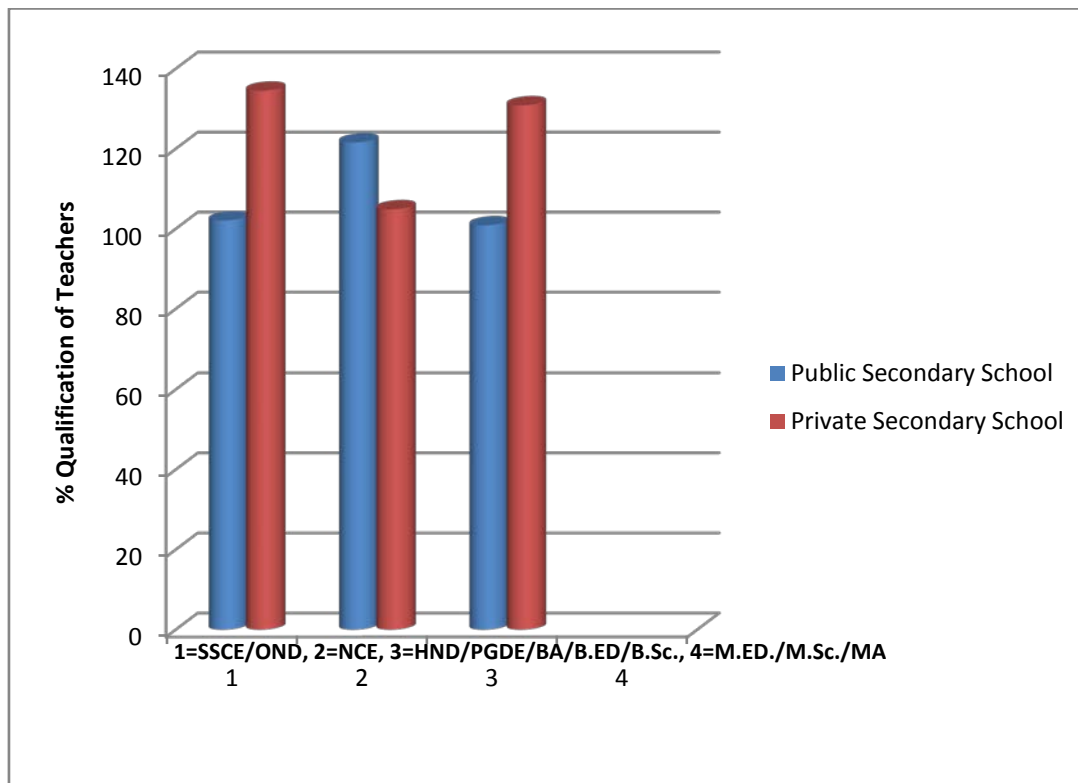


Figure 1 : Histogram Showing Respondents Distribution by Academic Qualifications

Source : Derived from Table 1

b) Testing of Hypotheses

Hypothesis One : There is no significant difference in teachers' perception of the pedagogical

skill effectiveness of the principals of public and private secondary schools in Ondo State.

Table 2 : Summary of Teachers' Perception of Principals' Pedagogical Skill Effectiveness of the Principals of Public and Private Secondary Schools in Ondo State

Source	N	Mean	SD	df	t-cal	t-val	Sig.
Public Sec. Sch.	180	102.09	40.81	358	0.12	.128	P>.05
Private Sec. Sch.	180	134.53	111.57				

*Significant

Table 1 shows that t- cal is greater than critical value, implying that hypothesis 1 which states that there is no significant difference in the teachers' perception of the principals pedagogical skill effectiveness of the public and private secondary school principals is

rejected.(t (358) = 0.12 ; p> .05).

Hypothesis 2 : There is no significant difference in teachers' perception of the principals administrative skill effectiveness of the public and private secondary school principals

Table 3 : Summary of Teachers' Perception of the Principals Administrative Skill Effectiveness of the Principals of Public and Private Secondary Schools in Ondo State

Source	N	Mean	SD	df	t-cal	t-val	Sig.
Public Sec. Sch.	180	121.57	81.15	358	.879	.383	P>.05
Private Sec. Sch.	180	104.82	59.77				

*Significant

From table 3, t-cal is greater than critical value, hence hypothesis two which states that there is no significant difference in the teachers' perception of the Administrative skill effectiveness of the Principals of Public and Private Secondary Schools is rejected. ($t(358) = .879$; $p > .05$).

Hypothesis 3: There is no significant difference in teachers Perception of Principals community relation skill effectiveness of the Principals of Public and Private Secondary Schools.

Table 4: Summary of Teachers' Perception of the Principals Community Relation Skill Effectiveness of the Principals of Public and Private Secondary Schools in Ondo State

Source	N	Mean	SD	df	t-cal	t-val	Sig.
Public Sec. Sch.	180	100.85	53.19	358	-.176	.247	P<.05
Private Sec. Sch.	180	130.85	100.93				

Not Significant

Table 3 shows that t- cal. is greater than critical value, implying a rejection of the hypothesis which says that there is no significant difference in the teachers' perception of the community relation skill effectiveness of the Public and Private Secondary School Principals.

($t(358) = -.176$; $p < .05$).

Figure 2 represents the mean outcome of the tested hypotheses in the three areas of Principals' effectiveness in both public and private secondary schools in Ondo State.

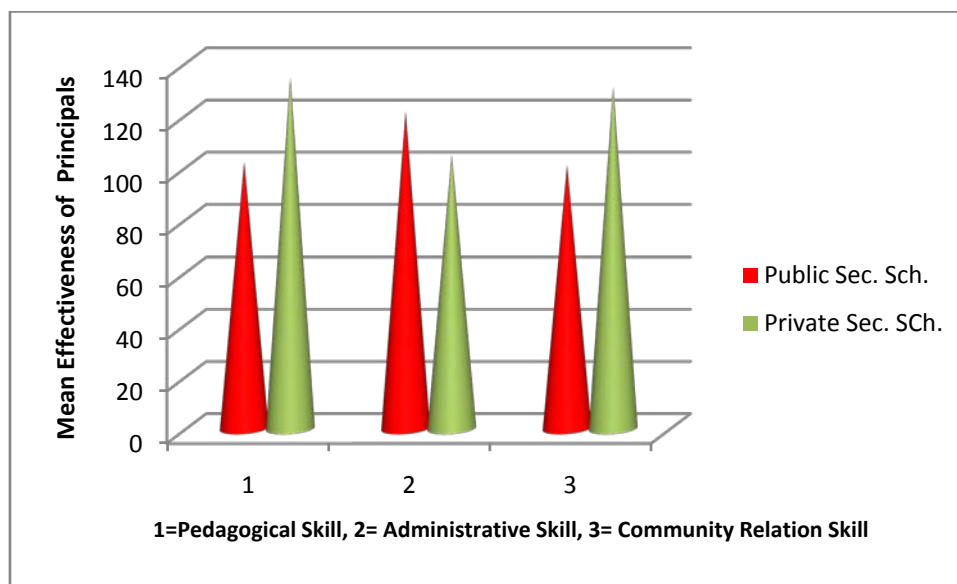


Figure 2: Mean of Principals' Skill Effectiveness in the Tested Hypotheses
Source: Derived from Tables 2, 3, and 4

VI. DISCUSSION

The study showed that there is a significant difference between teachers perception of the pedagogical Skill effectiveness of the principals of Public and private Secondary Schools in Ondo State. This finding is consistent with previous research (Hall and Lord, 1995). However, the finding showed that teachers of Private Secondary Schools have high Perception of their principals' Pedagogical Skill effectiveness than teachers of public schools. This situation is surprising because the teachers in public secondary schools as revealed in table 2, and by

extension their principals are better trained and more qualified for pedagogy than those in private secondary schools. Adegoke (2003) opines that an effective principal is a definer of reality in his secondary schools. The principal must have the good opportunity to use his professional ingenuity, resource-fullness, creativity and association in facing challenges and forging ahead through exemplary performance and systematic dialogue with authorities and subordinates to create and sustain the required enabling environment that will engender efficacious secondary school administration.

One major reason could be adduced to the higher rating of the private secondary school principals' pedagogical skill effectiveness despite the latter's evidence of superior professional knowledge. One reason could be due to the differing organizational culture in Public and Private Secondary Schools. While public secondary schools are established and funded by the government and are not meant to maximize profit, Private Secondary Schools are established and funded by the private individual or groups and are quite often than not, aimed at maximizing profits through quality improvement of the classroom, teaching and learning.

A second reason could be the general laxity and lack of commitment to any governmental project by Nigerians, which has led the government to deregulate the education industry up to the university level. The study also revealed that there is no significant difference in the teachers' perception of the Administrative skill effectiveness of the principals of public and private secondary schools. While teachers of public secondary schools perceived their principals as being more position conscious giving more attention to official mails, delegating responsibilities to teachers and attending meetings. The principals of private secondary schools are perceived by their teachers as being more dictatorial, emphasizing compliances to established rules and high productivity. This is supported by the claim of Atkinson (2005) that the success of the school for the principal to carry out his duties depends so much on his competence as a good administrator.

The result of the third hypothesis showed that there is a significant difference in the teachers' perception of the community relation skills of the principals of public and private secondary schools in Ondo State. The principals of public secondary schools were perceived to be less adequate in their community relation skill effectiveness.

Generally, it therefore, appears that the public secondary school principal is driven by the ancient Yoruba adage which says that "Oga ta, Oga o ta,owoalaaru a pe", meaning that the servant must be paid his complete wage regardless of the masters' sales, whereas in private secondary schools, productivity determines the pay.

VII. RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations were made based on the findings of this study to improve the leadership effectiveness of the principals of public and private secondary schools in Ondo State

1. Appointment of principals in schools should not be based on seniority or experience on the job alone but also on capability as a change agent to influence others through collaborative problem solving with students, staff, community and stake holders.

2. The performance of students in external examinations should be a major factor for consideration in the recognition and promotion of principals.
3. Principals should always state and discuss the mission of their schools, with the stakeholders at the beginning of each academic year and collaborate with staff and even students to prioritize the set plans for implementation.
4. Principals should be more concern about classroom monitoring in order to enhance teaching and learning.

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