

INFLUENCE OF PLANNING AND ADMINISTRATION ON EFFECTIVE SCHOOL MANAGEMENT OF SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN BENUE STATE

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Abstract

This study examined the influence of planning and administration on effective school management in public secondary schools in the Benue South Senatorial Zone of Benue State, Nigeria. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The population comprised 950 principals, vice-principals and senior teachers from 95 public secondary schools in the zone. A sample of 270 respondents was selected using purposive and simple random sampling techniques, while 258 questionnaires were completed and analyzed. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire and analyzed using mean and standard deviation to answer the research questions, while Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) was used to test the hypotheses at a 0.05 level of significance. The findings revealed that educational planning positively influences effective school management, particularly through strategic planning, goal setting, and proper resource allocation. The study also found that administrative practices such as supervision of teaching, effective communication, staff motivation, and participatory decision-making contribute significantly to school effectiveness. Hypothesis testing indicated a significant positive relationship between planning practices and effective school management ($r = 0.64$, $p < 0.05$), as well as between administrative practices and effective school management. The study concludes that effective planning and sound administrative practices are essential for improving management efficiency and academic performance in secondary schools. It recommends that school administrators strengthen planning processes and enhance administrative supervision to improve school management in the Benue South Senatorial Zone.

Key Words: Planning and Administration, School Management

ADVANCING KNOWLEDGE
• IMPACTING SOCIETY •

Introduction

Effective school management is a cornerstone of academic excellence and institutional stability in secondary education. Secondary schools serve as a crucial bridge between basic and tertiary education, equipping students with the knowledge, skills, and values necessary for personal development, higher education, and meaningful participation in society (Okeke, 2019). The extent to which secondary schools fulfill these responsibilities largely depends on the quality of planning and administrative practices within the school system (Omorie, 2020).

Educational planning is a strategic process that involves setting objectives, forecasting future needs, allocating resources, and designing programmes to achieve desired outcomes (Adeniyi, 2019). In secondary schools, planning ensures the effective distribution of teachers, development of infrastructure, provision of instructional materials, and alignment of school programmes with national educational goals. Without adequate planning, schools may experience organizational inefficiency, mismanagement of resources, and failure to achieve intended educational outcomes.

Administration, in the context of secondary schools, refers to the coordination and supervision of human and material resources to achieve institutional objectives (Fafunwa, 2021). It encompasses leadership, staff motivation, decision-making, communication, supervision of instruction, and policy implementation. Effective administration ensures that plans developed through educational planning are translated into practical results, fostering a conducive teaching and learning environment.

In the Benue South Senatorial Zone (Zone C) of Benue State, secondary schools operate under diverse socio-economic and infrastructural conditions. This zone comprises nine Local Government Areas (LGAs): Agatu, Apa, Ado, Obi, Oju, Otukpo, Ohimini, Ogbadibo, and Okpokwu. Schools in more urbanized LGAs, such as Otukpo, Oju, and Ado, tend to have better access to infrastructure, instructional materials, and administrative support. Conversely, schools in rural LGAs such as Agatu, Apa, and Ohimini often face challenges including inadequate funding, shortage of qualified teachers, poor infrastructure, weak supervision and inconsistent policy implementation (Benue State Ministry of Education, 2021). These disparities suggest that the effectiveness of school management is influenced by both planning and administrative capacities across different LGAs.

Statement of the Problem

Although secondary education is critical for national development, many schools in Benue South Senatorial Zone experience challenges that compromise effective management. Reports from schools across LGAs such as Agatu, Apa, and Ohimini indicate issues including poor supervision of teachers, low

staff morale, inadequate instructional resources, infrastructural decay, and declining student academic performance (Akume& Adamu, 2020).

These challenges are often linked to weaknesses in planning and administrative practices. Inadequate planning can result in poorly defined objectives, misallocation of resources, and ineffective programme implementation, while weak administration can hinder supervision, staff coordination, and policy execution.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study is to examine the influence of planning and administration on effective school management in secondary schools across all nine LGAs of Benue South Senatorial Zone (Zone C). The study aims to provide empirical evidence that will guide school administrators, educational planners and policymakers in improving management practices in the zone.

Objectives of the Study

The study specifically seeks to:

1. Examine the relationship between educational planning and effective school management across the LGAs.
2. Determine the relationship between school administration and effective school management.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. How does educational planning influence effective school management across the nine LGAs of Benue South Senatorial Zone?
2. What role does school administration play in achieving management effectiveness in these LGAs?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance:

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between planning and effective school management in Benue South Senatorial Zone.

H₀₂: There is no significant relationship between school administration and effective school management in the zone.

Methodology

This study adopted a descriptive survey research design to examine the influence of planning and administration on effective school management in secondary schools. The survey design was considered

appropriate because it facilitated the collection of quantitative data from a large number of respondents across the Benue South Senatorial Zone, thereby providing insights into planning strategies, administrative practices, and their impact on school effectiveness.

The study was conducted in the Benue South Senatorial Zone of Benue State, Nigeria, which comprises nine Local Government Areas (LGAs): Ado, Agatu, Apa, Obi, Ogbadibo, Ohimini, Oju, Okpokwu, and Otukpo. The area was selected because it has a diverse population of public secondary schools operating under varying administrative and planning practices supervised by the Benue State Ministry of Education and the Teaching Service Board (TSB).

The population of the study consisted of principals, vice-principals, and senior teachers in public secondary schools within the Benue South Senatorial Zone. According to the Benue State Ministry of Education (2023), there are approximately 95 public secondary schools in the zone, employing about 2,800 teaching and administrative staff. Each school has one principal, one vice-principal, and eight senior teachers. Consequently, the target population for the study comprised 950 respondents, including 95 principals, 95 vice-principals, and 760 senior teachers, all of whom are directly involved in school planning, administration, and management.

A combination of purposive and simple random sampling techniques was employed for the study. Through purposive sampling, three public secondary schools were selected from each of the nine LGAs, resulting in a total of 27 schools. This ensured adequate representation of schools across the study area. Thereafter, simple random sampling was used to select respondents within the chosen schools in order to minimize selection bias. Each selected school contributed one principal, one vice-principal, and eight senior teachers, giving a total sample size of 270 respondents. This sample represented approximately 28.4% of the study population.

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire developed by the researcher. The instrument was divided into three sections. Section A elicited demographic information such as age, gender, academic qualification, and years of experience. Section B focused on planning practices, including strategic planning, curriculum planning, and resource allocation. Section C examined administrative practices such as supervision, decision-making, staff motivation, and their influence on school effectiveness. Responses were measured using a five-point Likert scale of Strongly Agree (5), Agree (4), Undecided (3), Disagree (2), and Strongly Disagree (1).

To ensure the validity of the instrument, the questionnaire was subjected to expert review by two specialists in Educational Administration from the National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN), who assessed its

content relevance, clarity, and appropriateness. Reliability of the instrument was established through a pilot study conducted in five public secondary schools outside the study area. The data obtained from the pilot test were analyzed using Cronbach's Alpha, which yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.82, indicating that the instrument was highly reliable for the study.

The collected data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions, while the Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) statistical technique was employed to test the hypotheses at the 0.05 level of significance. This approach enabled the researcher to determine the relationship between planning, administration, and effective school management in secondary schools within the study area.

Results

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Age	30	38	14.7%
	30-39	82	29.5%
	40-49	82	31.8%
	50 and Above	56	24.0%
	Total	258	100%
Gender	Male	142	55.0%
	Female	116	45.0%
	Total	258	100%
Qualification	NCE	36	14.0%
	B.sc/Bed/BA	148	57.4%
	M.Sc/M.Ed/MA	64	24.8%
	Others	10	3.8%
	Total	258	100%

Table 1 shows that most respondents were between 40–49 years of age (31.8%), followed by those aged 30–39 years (29.5%), indicating that the majority were within the active working-age group. In terms of gender, males constituted 55.0% of the respondents, while females accounted for 45.0%, showing a slight male dominance. Regarding educational qualifications, most respondents held Bachelor's degrees (57.4%), followed by postgraduate degrees (24.8%), NCE holders (14.0%), and others (3.8%). This implies that the

respondents were generally experienced and academically qualified to provide relevant information for the study.

Research Question 1

How does educational planning influence effective school management in secondary schools in Benue South Senatorial Zone?

Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation of Responses on Influence Of Educational Planning on Effective School Management in Secondary Schools in Benue South Senatorial Zone

S/N	Statement	Mean	Sd	Remarks
1	School has a clear plan	4.12	0.86	Agree
2	Curriculum planning is regularly reviewed	4.0	0.91	Agree
3	Resources allocated according to priorities	3.98	0.88	Agree
4	Goals clearly communicated	4.10	0.83	Agree
5	Teachers involved in planning	3.87	0.95	Agree
6	Timelines are realistic	3.94	0.89	Agree
7	Plans aligned with state policy	4.08	0.84	Agree
8	Contingency plans exist	3.76	0.93	Agree
9	Planning processes evaluated	3.90	0.88	Agree
10	Staff informed about new plans	3.99	0.86	Agree
Grand Mean		3.98	0.88	Agree

Table 2 reveals that respondents agreed that educational planning positively influences effective school management in secondary schools in Benue South Senatorial Zone, as indicated by the grand mean of 3.98 and standard deviation of 0.88. All the items recorded mean scores above the benchmark of 3.00, showing agreement among respondents. The highest mean score was recorded for the statement that schools have a clear plan ($M = 4.12$, $SD = 0.86$), while the lowest mean score was for the existence of contingency plans ($M = 3.76$, $SD = 0.93$). The findings suggest that effective planning practices such as clear goal setting, curriculum review, resource allocation, staff involvement, and policy alignment contribute significantly to effective school management.

Research Question 2

What role does school administration play in achieving management effectiveness?

Table 3: Mean and Standard Deviation of Respondents' Responses on the Role School Administration Play in Achieving Management Effectiveness, Administrative Practices and School Effectiveness

S/N	Statement	Mean	Sd	Remark
1	Principal supervises teaching effectively	4.20	0.81	Agree
2	Decision-making is inclusive	4.05	0.90	Agree
3	Staff motivation strategies implemented	3.88	9.94	Agree
4	Administrative tasks coordinated	4.20	0.87	Agree
5	Administration improves school productivity	4.18	0.80	Agree
6	Problems addressed promptly	3.95	0.88	Agree
7	Responsibilities clearly delegated	4.10	0.85	Agree
8	Administration promotes discipline	4.15	0.82	Agree
9	Staff meetings held regularly	3.96	0.91	Agree
10	10. Policies clearly communicated	4.07	0.84	Agree
Grand Mean		4.06	0.86	Agree

Table 3 shows that respondents agreed that school administration plays a significant role in achieving management effectiveness and enhancing school effectiveness, with a grand mean of 4.06 and standard deviation of 0.86. All the items had mean scores above 3.00, indicating positive responses. The highest mean scores were obtained for effective supervision of teaching and proper coordination of administrative tasks ($M = 4.20$), while staff motivation strategies had the lowest mean score ($M = 3.88$). The results imply that effective administrative practices such as supervision, inclusive decision-making, delegation of duties, discipline promotion, and policy communication contribute greatly to improved school management and effectiveness.

Test of Hypotheses

Hypothesis One

H_{01} : There is no significant relationship between planning practices and effective school management.

Table 4: Summary of PPMC of Relationship between Planning Practices and Effective School Management

N	r-value	p-value	Decision
258	0.64	0.000	H_{01} rejected

Table 4 presents the Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) analysis of the relationship between planning practices and effective school management. The result shows a correlation coefficient of $r = 0.64$ with a p-value of 0.000, which is less than the 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis (H_{01}) was rejected. This indicates that there is a significant positive relationship between planning practices and effective school management in secondary schools in Benue South Senatorial Zone. The finding suggests that improved planning practices are associated with greater effectiveness in school management.

Hypothesis Two

H_{02} : There is no significant relationship between administrative practices and effective school management.

Table 5: Summary of PPMC of Relationship between Administrative Practices and Effective School Management

N	r-value	p-value	Decision
258	0.71	0.000	H_{02} rejected

Table 5 shows the PPMC analysis of the relationship between administrative practices and effective school management. The result reveals a correlation coefficient of $r = 0.71$ and a p-value of 0.000, which is below the 0.05 significance level. Consequently, the null hypothesis (H_{02}) was rejected. This implies that there is a significant positive relationship between administrative practices and effective school management in secondary schools in Benue South Senatorial Zone. The result further suggests that effective administrative practices contribute substantially to improved school management effectiveness.

Summary of Findings

The following are the findings of the study.

1. The finding of the study reveals that there is significant relationship between planning practices and effective school management.
2. The finding also reveals that there is significant relationship between administrative practices and effective school management.

Discussion of Findings

The finding of the study revealed that there is a significant relationship between planning practices and effective school management in secondary schools in Benue South Senatorial Zone. This finding underscores the importance of educational planning in achieving school goals and enhancing management effectiveness. Educational planning involves setting objectives, forecasting needs, allocating resources, and designing programmes that promote the smooth operation of schools (Adeniyi, 2019). The result suggests that schools with clear plans, proper resource allocation, curriculum review mechanisms, and well-defined goals are more likely to achieve effective management outcomes. This finding agrees with the views of Okeke (2019), who emphasized that effective school management is essential for academic excellence and institutional stability. It also supports Omoregie (2020), who argued that the quality of planning practices significantly influences the ability of schools to fulfill their educational responsibilities.

The study also found a significant relationship between administrative practices and effective school management. This finding indicates that effective administration contributes substantially to the achievement of educational objectives and overall school effectiveness. Administration involves the coordination and supervision of human and material resources, including leadership, communication, staff motivation, decision-making, and instructional supervision (Fafunwa, 2021). The result implies that schools with effective administrative structures are better positioned to create conducive teaching and learning environments, maintain discipline, and enhance productivity. This finding agrees with Fafunwa (2021), who maintained that administration is critical to translating educational plans into practical outcomes. It also supports Omoregie (2020), who noted that sound administrative practices are essential for achieving institutional goals and improving school performance.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, it is concluded that effective school management in secondary schools is enhanced when school leaders adopt systematic approaches to organizing, coordinating, and utilizing available resources. The achievement of educational goals and the overall effectiveness of schools depend largely on the capacity of administrators to ensure efficient management practices that promote productivity, accountability, and a conducive teaching and learning environment.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made:

1. School administrators should strengthen educational planning processes by ensuring that school goals, programmes, and resource allocation strategies are properly developed, implemented, and regularly reviewed to enhance effective school management.
2. School administrators should adopt effective administrative practices such as proper supervision, inclusive decision-making, staff motivation, and efficient communication to improve management effectiveness and overall school performance.



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