

The need for administrative effectiveness of the principals at secondary level

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Abstract

With the increasing pressure on the education system, the pressure on the head of the institution has increased many folds. The role of the principal is no longer limited to the administration of the school. His role has rather expanded to that of an instructional leader who can provide assistance to the teachers whenever required. The principal now needs to be administratively effective for the improvised performances of all including the students.

Keywords: social norms, educational policy

1. Introduction

Administration as perceived by many scholars can be defined as the process of working with and through others to accomplish organizational goals efficiently. It is a social process in which the behaviour of the social system gets the upper hand in operating an educational organization (Tyagi, 2009) ^[11]. Sapre (2001) ^[10] defined administration as generally input oriented which is a major indicator of progress. Studies have shown that administration includes the functions like management of the affairs with the use of well thought out principles and practices like budgeting, staffing, evaluation along with the processes such as leadership, organization, communication and coordination etc.

Education administrators set educational standards and establish the policies and procedures required to achieve them. They also supervise managers, support staff, teachers, counsellors, librarians, coaches, and other employees. Their tasks also include developing academic programs, monitoring students' educational progress, training and motivating teachers and other staffs, managing career counselling and other student services, recordkeeping, prepare budgets, and performing other general duties.

2. Understanding Administrative Effectiveness

The concept of administrative effectiveness has been defined differently by different authors due to its complex nature (Bao 2009). Some researchers defined it as "the positive response to administrative efforts and actions with the intention to accomplish stated goal" (Akomolafe 2012; Ademilua 2012) ^[2, 1]. Administrative effectiveness is also defined as the product of a series of complex nested relations and an interaction pattern (Cammock *et al.* 1995) ^[6]. The term can be explained in simple language as the administrative skills possessed by an individual to run an organization in an easy and effective manner. The term effective may be seen in a variety of dimensions viz. the economic dimension, the political dimension, the social dimension and many more.

Bakhsh *et al.* (2013) ^[7] focused on certain factors influencing the effectiveness of heads of Departments in public sector universities. The researcher developed a questionnaire to measure the determinants and the effectiveness was measured by Leadership Practices Inventory LPI. A sample of five

hundreds teachers from twenty one randomly selected universities participated in the study. Regression analysis of the collected data was made to answer 'How well the selected factors influence the administrative effectiveness of Heads of Departments (HoDs)'. It was found that all the selected factors were positively correlated with administrative effectiveness. Personality Traits proved as strongest determinant followed by organizational climate with significant predictive powers.

Ekundayo *et al.* (2013) ^[7] examined time management skills and administrative effectiveness of principals in Nigerian secondary schools. The descriptive survey design was used for the study. The population consisted of all the principals and teachers of secondary schools in Ondo, Ekiti and Osun states. The sample comprised of 200 principals and 600 teachers randomly selected from the three states. The data collected were analysed using frequency counts, simple percentage, mean and standard deviations. The study revealed that the time management skills as well as the level of administrative effectiveness of the principals were encouraging. However, the study revealed the factors that constitute impediments to the time management skills of the principals. These included the need to respond to emergency cases in the school, the need to respond to urgent calls from the ministry of education among others. The study further revealed the strategies that can be put in place for better time management among the principals. These included the need for the principals to identify their most consuming tasks and determine whether or not they have investing their time in the most important activities, and keeping a readily accessible record of their appointment and tasks among others. Based on the findings, it was recommended that the tempo of time management skills of the principals as well as their administrative effectiveness should be sustained while efforts should be directed towards avoiding those factors that constitute impediments to their time management skills.

3. Role of Principals at Secondary Levels

The principal, being the top most member in the hierarchy of administrators, holds the most important place to ensure the administrative effectiveness of an institution. His role and contribution holds an eminent place and on his skills relies the success and future of the institution. It is his responsibility to

run an institution in a manner that is fulfilling to all the stakeholders of education including the teachers, the children, the parents, the society etc.

Research has suggested that to ensure a positive result of staff development, the school climate must contain trust, mutual respect and a willingness to work collaboratively (Nolan & Hoover, 2004) ^[9]. Thus, the principal must ensure that the environment of the institution is respectful towards all the members and healthy for the success of all attached to it. The principal must play the role of the instructional leader for the teachers and strive for their professional development. Professional development, in the broad sense, refers to the development of a person in his or her professional role. It helps the teachers to be professionally more responsive towards the need of the education system. The principal must also take part in the academic supervision of the teachers. Academic Supervision is a formative process that focuses upon professional development and the improvement of instruction. It is characterized by a collegial, helping relationship between administrators and the teachers in a climate of trust and mutual understanding. Instructional supervision is a way to support professional growth and competency and has been identified as an integral component of staff development, not a separate activity (Nolan & Hoover, 2004) ^[9].

In summary, the "dramatically different role" of the principal as an instructional leader is outlined by Brewer (2001) ^[5] as "one that requires focusing on instruction; building a community of learners; sharing decision making; sustaining the basics; leveraging time; supporting ongoing professional development for all staff members; redirecting resources to support a multifaceted school plan; and creating a climate of integrity, inquiry, and continuous improvement" (p.30).

4. The Need for Administrative Effectiveness of the Principals at Secondary Level

The educational organisation can function effectively and prosper only if the head of the institution viz. the principal is administratively effective. His effectiveness in the administrative skills is necessary for the efficient and prosperous working of the organisation. The administrative effectiveness of the principals is important due to the following reasons:

- **Improved Instructional Leadership:** The principal who is skilled in administrative matters can be an effective instructional leader to the teachers who need constant support and guidance from the head of the institution. Instructional leadership involves setting clear goals, allocating resources to instruction, managing the curriculum, monitoring lesson plans, and evaluating teachers. It is defined as all those actions that a principal takes or delegates to others, to promote growth in student learning (Flath, 1989) ^[8]. Thus, an administrative effective principal can be a better instructional leader as a whole.
- **Professional development of the teachers:** Professional development of the teachers is vital component for the growth of the organization. An effective principal can ensure that there is a balance between the school routine activities ensuring sufficient time for the professional development of the teachers of them to respond in a better manner towards the needs of the secondary school students.

- **Improved Academic Supervision:** A skilled principal can ensure better academic supervision of the teachers with the quality feedback to enable them to learn better strategies of classroom management.
- **Improved results:** The respectful, congenial environment of the schools promotes growth and development of all the stakeholders including the students who are the direct beneficiaries of the effective administrative skills of the principals. A well organized schooling routine, with motivated teachers is essential for the success of the students.
- **Enhanced Involvement of the stakeholders:** An effective leader makes sure that all the stakeholders of education are informed and involved for the successful running of the educational organization

5. Conclusion

Thus it may be concluded from the discussion above that the principal of the school, being the head of the institution, needs to be administratively effective for the successful running of the organization. It ensures improved performances of the institution as a whole. Efforts need to be put in by the school regulating authorities for ensuring the regular training of the school principals to keep them up to date in their field of activity. The training needs to be done focussing on all the important aspects to transform the head of the institution into an instructional leader who can provide timely support and correct guidance to the staff members whenever needed.

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7. References

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