

Effects of Principals' Monitoring of Students' Academic Progress on Pedagogic Practices of Teachers in Public Secondary Schools in Bauchi State

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Abstract: The study investigated the extent to which principals monitor students' progress and also established the effect of principals' monitoring of students' progress on teachers' pedagogical practices in public secondary schools in Bauchi state. Descriptive survey and causal research designs were employed for the study. The target population consisted all the principals and teachers in public secondary schools of Bauchi state. The samples comprised 29 principals and 384 teachers were drawn using random sampling technique. The study has one research question and a hypothesis. Questionnaire was the main tool for data collection. Cronbach's alpha reliability of the instruments stood at 0.87. The data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Simple linear regression was used to test the null hypothesis at .05 significance levels. The study revealed that principals' monitoring of students' progress has significant effects on pedagogical practices of teachers ($R^2=.099$, $p<.05$). It was also established that majority of principals did not review students' class work and assessment records in determining students' progress. The study concluded that effective monitoring of students' progress by principals will significantly enhance teachers' pedagogical practices in public secondary schools. It was recommended that State Ministries of Education should be organizing training workshop for principals to improve their skills of monitoring the academic progress of students. It was also suggested that principals should intensify supervision of class work and assessment records.

Key words: Pedagogic practice, Monitoring, Supervision, Progress

I. BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Studies have shown that monitoring students' progress has been part of the responsibilities of principals in school administration. The purpose of monitoring generally is to guarantee quality in teachers' instructions and students' learning process, (Wango, 2014). Grauwe (2007) contend that monitoring students' progress have spurred much of the major reorganization of the education system of New Zealand, England, and Australia. Some scholars have viewed the monitoring of students' progress in schools differently. For instance, Halverson (2010) described monitoring of learning as the procedure of deliberate assembling and recording of data about a programme with the aim of utilizing that information to refine the learning procedure, while Omogbehin (2013) conceptualizes monitoring learners' advancement as an arrangement of linked actions with the

aims of figuring out what learners have achieved within a given set up standards.

Contemporary studies suggest that monitoring of instructions and student-learning by principal has a positive impact on teachers' practices and academic achievement. For instance, Leithwood, Seashore, Anderson, & Wahlstrom (2004), study about influence of leadership on student learning in the USA observe that in secondary schools with outstanding academic performance, their principals usually talk with individual teachers about the students' progress. Leithwood et al. further argue that learners' educational attainments were superior in schools where teachers made use of learners' progress records as a guide to refine their teaching. Similarly, Omogbehin (2013) contend that the goal of monitoring learning activities is to ensure quality.

Bambrick-Santoyo (2010), writing about the performance of schools driven by data in Jossey, United States of America, asserts that utilizing learners' progress information had a constructive effect on achievement. The author observed that in well-organized schools, principals and teachers always employ information on learners' progress to examine school development (Bambrick-Santoyo 2010). Boudett et al. (2005) also expressed a similar viewpoint that principals make use of students' evaluation information to provide feedback to parents concerning the progress of their children in specific subjects.

In a related development, Bays (2001) study on supervision of special education instruction in rural public-school districts in the United States, recommends that in order to assure positive learning outcomes for students, principals should interact with teachers on a daily basis with a focus on monitoring students learning progress. This recommendation by Bays (2001) further emphasizes further the need for principals to be talking to individual teachers about their students' progress.

1.2 Strategies used by Principals for Monitoring Teaching and Learning Progress

Recent studies indicate that various techniques were employed for the monitoring of teaching and learning activities in schools. In this direction, a study on the role of principal in monitoring students' progress in Southern California was undertaken by Omogbehin (2013). The study revealed the

various strategies employed to monitor the academic progress of students. Among the strategies identified, the two that stood out were: submission assessment records after every two weeks and presentation assessment results to colleagues during meetings. Other strategies of monitoring revealed by the study include classroom walkthroughs to observe teacher and students at work and principals' discussions with individual teachers about the progress of students.

In some developing countries principals' supervisory activities of monitoring progress of students were highly performed in public secondary schools Mbuso (2015). Jeptarus (2014) found that in Kenya principals often discuss the progress of students with individual teachers in addition to checking assessment records and exercise books. Moreover, Oduol (2006) contends that systematic monitoring of lesson attendance in public secondary schools will serve as a mechanism to boost learning.

Mbuso (2015) study in South Africa revealed that principals in public secondary schools monitor academic progress of students in their schools through weekly review of teacher files and verification of lesson attendance. Other strategies identified include class visits and checking students' class work weekly to determine the level of their academic progress (Al-Hosani, 2015; Benedict, 2013; Jeptarus, 2013; Zepeda, 2012; Aseka, 2016)

1.3 Challenges Principals Face in Monitoring Students Progress

Although studies have shown that principals make use of several strategies in an effort to monitor students' progress, it is not without challenges, (Zepeda, 2012). Mbuso (2015) study about monitoring students' progress in South African secondary schools established that principals face various challenges in monitoring students' academic progress. The main problem was that, in some schools, principals were full-time subject teachers. It has been observed that teaching loads often interfere with principals' time for supervising teachers (Kieleko et al. 2017; Mjimba, 2016; & Issah, 2012). This means they have limited time, yet they were expected to carry out their supervisory responsibilities. Another constraint revealed was that some teachers have a negative attitude towards monitoring of their instructional activities, especially where students progress was to be monitored in relation to the teacher's performance (Mbuso, 2015, Joseph, 2014).

Further to the above, it was found that some literate parents out rightly write their children's assignments, thereby making the principals checking of exercise books to determine their performance less effective. Consequently, learners' real ability cannot be ascertained as they did not do the work themselves. Additionally, the study revealed that absence of specific punishment provided by the ministry of education to deal with teachers who fail to comply with some regulations regarding monitoring teaching and students' progress was a challenge (Assefa, 2014; Mbuso, 2015, Ogununju, 2005).

II. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

In Nigeria certification of secondary school education is based on such standardized test as the West African Senior School Certificate Examination, (WASSCE). However, records indicated that many public secondary school students in Bauchi state were unable to obtain 5 credits in the subjects they took including English and Mathematics in several years. For instance, Osuo-Siseken et al. (2020) observed that between 2014-2018 Bauchi state had an average of 19.59% credit pass. Furthermore, reports by WASSCE Kingmakers (2020) indicated that Bauchi state occupied 34th position out of the 36 states of the nation in terms of WASSCE results pass rate. Consequently, there was a growing perception among stakeholders and the general public that efficient monitoring of students' progress by principals would have detected ineffective pedagogical practices applied by teachers before final examination. In regard to the foregoing, the current study sought to assess the effect of monitoring academic progress of students on pedagogical practices of teachers in public secondary schools in Bauchi state.

III. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- a. To determine the extent to which principals monitor student's progress in public secondary schools in Bauchi state
- b. To establish the effect of principals' monitoring of student progress on teachers' pedagogical practices in public secondary schools in Bauchi state

Research Question/Hypothesis

- a. What is the extent to which principals monitor student's progress in public secondary schools in Bauchi state?
- b. **H₀**: Principals' monitoring of students' progress has no significant effect on teachers' pedagogical practice in public secondary schools in Bauchi state
H_a: Principals' monitoring of students' progress has significant effect on teachers' pedagogical practice in public secondary schools in Bauchi state

IV. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study was guided by Leithwood Transformational Leadership Theory for Education. This theory was developed with a primary focus on principals' supervisory roles (Leithwood, 1994). Leithwood postulates that 'Transformational Leadership styles foster school leaders' ability to make the necessary school innovations that facilitate meeting accountability and performance improvement demands of stakeholders.' Leithwood (1994) Theory stresses that instructional leadership roles of principals enhance teachers' classroom behaviour and overall school improvement. Primarily, Leithwood linked transformational instructional leadership of principals to improvement in academic achievements of students, (Leithwood & Jantzi 2008). The theory proposes that the specific strategies used by principals who practice transformational leadership in schools

include: monitoring academic progress of students, visit to classrooms, and direct assistance to teachers, (Sagor 1992, Leithwood 1994, Leithwood and Jantzi 2008, Poplin 1992)

This study focused on monitoring academic progress of students as the independent variable, which was portrayed as one of the fundamental components of Leithwood (1994) Theoretical Model. Similarly, the current study postulates that the instructional supervision of monitoring academic progress by principals may inspire the application of effective pedagogical practices by teachers in public secondary schools.

V. METHODOLOGY

Descriptive cross-sectional survey and causal research designs were employed for this research. The study aimed to investigate the effect of principals' monitoring of students' progress on teachers' pedagogical practices. The study was conducted in one of the three geo-political zones of Bauchi state because it has the characteristics that were representative of the other zones. The target population consisted all the principals and teachers in public secondary schools in the

study locale. The samples collected through random sampling technique, comprised 29 principals and 384 teachers. The study has one research question and one hypothesis. Structured Questionnaire was used for data collection. The instrument was validated through expert's review. Cronbach's alpha reliability of the instruments stood at 0.87. The data were analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics with the aid of SPSS. Simple linear regression was used to test the null hypothesis at .05 alpha levels. Results of the analyses were presented in tables and text.

VI. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

One of the objectives of this study sought to determine the degree to which principals monitor student progress in public secondary schools in Bauchi state. Under this objective, the following sub-variables were measured: review of students' class work, review of students' records of attendance, review of students' assessment records and principal's discussion with teachers on students' progress. The results were presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Response of Principals and Teachers on Monitoring Students' Progress

Activities The Principal...	Respondents	Disagree		Neutral		Agree	
		F	%	F	%	F	%
Checks students' exercise books weekly	Principals	17	58.6	5	17.2	7	24.1
	Teachers	215	57.8	37	10	120	33.3
Checks students' records of attendance weekly	Principals	4	13.8	3	10.3	22	75.9
	Teachers	60	16.1	50	13.4	263	70.5
Discussion with individual teacher about students' progress	Principals	15	51.7	5	17.2	9	31.0
	Teachers	275	73.9	45	12.1	52	14.0
Checking students' assessment records monthly	Principals	17	58.6	4	13.8	8	27.6
	Teachers	265	70.7	48	12.8	62	16.5

Source: Garba (2020)

Checking Students' Exercise Books

The data on Table1 shows that 17, (58.6%) of the principals do not check students' exercise books regularly to verify students' progress. On the part of teachers, 215, (57.8%) indicated that their principals did not check students' exercise books regularly. These responses indicate that both principals and teachers agreed that students' class work were not reviewed regularly in their schools. It is important that principals and teachers have a standard view for monitoring students' progress to succeed. Expressing related view, Zepeda (2012) warns that unless principals and teachers work collaboratively, monitoring students' progress cannot be successful. The result reveals that some principals in public secondary schools have neglected the checking of students' class work to verify how teaching was progressing.

Similar study by Paul et al. (2016) in Uganda revealed that majority of secondary schools' principals did not usually check students' exercise books. On the contrary, the study by Joseph (2014) Kenya revealed that the majority of principals checked students' notebooks to monitor progress made in terms of syllabus coverage. This deviation may be explained

by the differences in levels of commitment and competences of the principals.

Checking Students' Records of Attendance

The data on Table 1 also depicts the results of monitoring students' academic progress through checking their records of attendance. In this study respondents were asked to indicate the rate of checking students' attendance records in their schools. The results show that 263 out of 373 (70.5%) of teachers agreed that principals checked students' attendance usually every week. Also, majority 22 out of 29(75.9%) of the principals indicated that they checked students' attendance records in their schools every week. This finding was supported by the research findings of Joseph, 2014; Sekunda, 2013; Mbuso, 2015 and Aseka, 2016. The findings of the current study, revealed that majority of respondents confirmed that students' records of attendance were monitored well in their schools. This finding implied that principals in public secondary schools in Bauchi state checked students' attendance in order to monitor teaching and learning progress. Relating the importance of monitoring progress in schools, Grauwe (2007) observed that undertaking monitoring

students' progress in schools had spurred much of the major reorganization of education in England, New Zealand, and Australia.

Talking with Teachers on Students' Progress

Regarding the extent to which principals converse with individual teachers about students' progress, the data on Table 1 shows that majority 15 out of 29(51.7) of the principals indicated that they did not hold formal discussions with individual teachers about the progress of their students. On the part of teachers, also majority 275 out of 372 (73.9%) of teachers said that principals did not talk with individual teachers on the progress of their students. This result deviates from that of Al-Hosani (2015), whose study found the majority of teachers indicating that principals discussed the academic progress of students with relevant teachers in their schools.

Through talking with teachers on students' progress, the principals will be able to obtain first-hand information on students' performance in the school. On the other hand, teachers will view the principals as being open and approachable. This approach may likely help in enhancing teaching and students' learning. In the same vein, Leithwood, Seashore, Anderson, and Wahlstrom (2004), observe that in secondary schools with outstanding academic performance, their principals usually talk with individual teachers about the students' progress.

Furthermore, it is observed that the principal is in charge of not only promoting pedagogical practices of teachers but also for promoting good working relationships in the school by talking with the teachers (Al-Hosani, 2015). Similarly, Glickman et al. (2010) assert that the interpersonal relationship is a prerequisite condition for effective instructional supervision in schools. It was further observed that effective communication is key to developing a healthy interpersonal relationship in the learning environment (Simbano, 2015).

Similarly, Blaisé (2000) found that principals' effective communication with teachers emerged as one of the best principals' supervisory roles. Also, Bays (2001) contends that in order to assure positive learning outcomes for students, principals should be talking with individual teachers on their students' progress. These assertions by experts confirm that effective monitoring of students' academic progress entails collaboration and dialogue.

Findings of this study revealed that principals' having formal discussions with teachers on their student progress was least performed in public secondary schools in Bauchi state. Neglecting this vital role by the principals may have a negative impact on students learning. Therefore, principals should make deliberate efforts to improve upon having discussions with teachers on students' progress.

Checking Students' Assessment Records

The data on table 1 indicate that 17 out of 29 (58.6%) of the principals did not check students assessment records. This result was supported by 265 out of 375 (70.7%) of the teachers, who also said that their principals did not check students' assessment records regularly. Only about one-quarter, 62 out of 375 (16.5%) of teachers said their principals usually demand to see students' assessment records. The result implies that some principals have neglected the supervisory role of examining how students were progressing academically in public secondary schools of Bauchi state. Supporting these findings, a study by Wanzare (2012) revealed that principals in public secondary schools always seemed busy with administrative work to the detriment of the students' progress. Similarly, Hussen (2015) study found that monitoring students' progress by principals of secondary schools was irregular and rarely organized. Moreover, Simbano (2013) study also reported that teachers rated principals' supervision of students' progress as inferior in public secondary schools. However, the findings of this study were not in agreement with some reviews. It was reported that the majority of teachers said principals checked their records of marks on student's tests (Paul et al. 2016; Sekunda, 2013). These variations may be justified in terms of commitment and competence of principals, and the education laws peculiar to a given country or system. Monitoring students' progress records are very vital in that students' assessment data may be used to determine the school's academic achievement in general (Boudett, Murnane, City & Moody 2005). Furthermore, Bambrick-Santayo (2010) also asserts that in well-organized schools, principals and teachers always make use of students' progress information to determine the school development.

The results from the data on Table 1 were summarized to determine the extent to which principals perform supervisory activities of monitoring students' progress. In this regard, the results of the analysis on Table 1 revealed that supervision of students' records of attendance was highly accomplished in public secondary schools. This finding was confirmed when 22 out of 29 (75.9%) and 263 out of 375(70.5%) of principals and teachers respectively agreed that principals checked students' records of attendance weekly. On the other hand, the results from data in Table 4.18 indicated that many principals do not check students' exercise books. About this result, 17 out of 29(58.6%) of the principals and 215 out of 372(57.8%) of the teachers indicated that checking of students' exercise books was not practiced in their schools. These results imply that not many principals in public secondary schools checked students' exercise books regularly.

Accordingly, the data on Table 1 revealed that about 17 out of 29(58.6%) of the principals and 265 out of 375 of the teachers indicated that principals hardly check students' assessment records to ascertain their academic progress. Additionally, the data on Table 1 shows that very few 9 out of 27(31.0%) of the principals and 52 out of 372(13.9%) of the teachers

respectively agreed that principals discuss students' progress with the individual teacher in their schools. This finding revealed that the majority of principals did not find out about students' progress through discussions with class teachers. The study findings, therefore suggest that principals' supervision activities of checking of students' exercise books, reviewing students' assessment records and having discussions with the individual teachers on students' progress were least performed by many principals in Bauchi state public secondary schools (Garba, 2020).

Regression Analysis between Principals' Monitoring of Students' Progress and Teachers' Pedagogical Practices

The study also sought to examine the effect of principals' monitoring of students' progress on teachers' pedagogical practices. Under this objective the following null and alternate hypotheses were stated:

H₀: Principals' monitoring of students' progress has no significant effect on teachers' pedagogical practices in public secondary schools in Bauchi state

H_a: Principals' monitoring of students' progress has significant effect on teachers' pedagogical practices in public secondary schools in Bauchi state

Simple linear regression analysis was used to test the hypothesis at 0.05 alpha levels.

Table 2: Regression Model Summary of Monitoring Progress and Pedagogical Practices

Model	R	R-Squared	Adjusted R Squared	p-value
1	.315	.099	.097	.000
a. Predictors: (Constant), Monitoring of students' progress				
b. Dependent Variable: Teachers pedagogical practices				

The results of the model summary in Table 2 show the value of R ($r = 0.315$). This result indicates there was a moderate correlation between principals' monitoring of students' progress and teachers pedagogical practices. The coefficient of determination given by R- Squared, ($R^2 = .099$), indicates the amount of variation in teachers pedagogical practices that can be accounted for by principals' activities of monitoring students' progress. Since this model has only one input variable, the study used R^2 estimate. It can be seen the results in Table 2 reveals that 9.9% variation in teachers' pedagogical practices was explained by principals' activities of monitoring students' progress. In other words, the effect size suggests that monitoring students' progress in public secondary schools in Bauchi state may enhance teachers' pedagogical practices. An Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was used for testing the significance of the model. The results were presented in Table 3.

Table 3: ANOVA Test for Monitoring Students' Progress and Pedagogical Practices

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	2095.428	1	2095.428	40.005	.000
	Residual	19061.12	373	51.102		
	Total	21156.54	374			
a. Dependent Variable: Teachers pedagogical practices						
b. Predictors: (Constant), monitoring students' progress						

Table 3 tells whether or not the model (with monitoring students' progress as the independent variable) was a significant predictor of teachers' pedagogical practices. Table 3 shows ANOVA results of $F=40.005$ with 1 and 373 degrees of freedom and, F being significant at less than .05 level. Since the significance value is less than $p = .000 < .05$, it suggests that the regression model can significantly predict teachers' pedagogical practices. The regression equation established from this output may be stated as $F(1,373) = 40.005, p = .000 < .05$. The result revealed that the model was significant. Further, the coefficient of determination (Table 4) tells how the predictor variable (monitoring students' progress) contributed to the model.

Table 4: Regression Coefficient for Monitoring Students Progress and Pedagogical Practices

Coefficients						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
		1	(Constant)	49.257		
	Monitoring progress	.748	.117	.315	6.403	.000
a. Dependent Variable: Teachers pedagogical practices						

Table 4, the regression coefficient is the equation that provides information about the change in the value of the dependent variable corresponding to the unit change in the independent variable. The constant (49.26) represent the y-intercept with a slope of 0.75. The regression equation found from this table could be stated as:

Teachers pedagogical practices (Y) = 49.26 + 0.75 Principals' monitoring students' progress (X = .748).

Where Y is the estimated value of the dependent variable, and X is the value of the independent variable.

The results of the regression coefficient indicate that a unit (1%) increase in monitoring the progress of student led to .75% increase in teachers' practices. These outcomes suggest that monitoring academic progress of students significantly

predicted transformation in teachers' pedagogical practices. See table 4 ($b=.75$, $t=6.40$, $p>.05$).

Regression analysis in this study revealed that value of teachers' pedagogical practices increased with the increase in the value of monitoring academic progress of students. These findings suggest that principals' monitoring of students' progress has positive, significant effect on pedagogical practices of teachers in public secondary schools. Based on these revelations, the study rejected the null hypothesis (H_0), that monitoring students' progress has no significant effect on teachers' pedagogical practices. Therefore, the alternate hypothesis (H_a) that monitoring students' progress has significant effect on teachers' pedagogical practices in public secondary schools was accepted by the study.

The findings of this study were in congruence with those of Al-Hosani (2015) and Paul et al. (2016) conducted in United Arab Emirate and Uganda respectively. The studies also revealed that the relationship between monitoring students' progress and teachers' pedagogical practices in public secondary schools was positive and statistically significant. It was also observed that active monitoring of students' progress facilitates improvement in teaching and learning (Tesfaw and Hofman, 2014; Omogbehin, 2013; Halverson, 2010 and Bambrick-Santoyo, 2010). In other words, findings of these scholars imply that the more students' progress is monitored, the more teachers' pedagogic practices were enhanced. Findings of the current study also established the fact that consistent principals' monitoring of students' progress enhances the teachers' pedagogic practices.

VII. CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of this study, it was concluded that monitoring the academic progress of students implemented by principals has significant effect on pedagogical practices of teachers in public secondary schools in Bauchi state

VIII. RECOMMENDATION

The study recommended that principals should intensify activities of monitoring students' academic progress. That the Ministry of Education, Bauchi state should organize a training workshop on modern strategies of monitoring students' academic progress for principals in public secondary schools.

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