

Impression Management and Incentives as Political Instruments in the Administration of Secondary Schools in Rivers State of Nigeria

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Abstract: - The study examined impression management and incentives as political instruments in the administration of secondary schools in Rivers State. Two research questions and two null hypotheses guided the study. The study adopted a descriptive survey design. The population of the study comprised all the 7142 teachers in the 274 public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. The sample of the study was 421 (221 male teachers and 200 female teachers), drawn from a population of 7,142 teachers, using the proportionate stratified random sampling technique. A validated instrument titled *Impression management and Incentive as Political Instruments in Secondary School Administration Scale (IMISSAS)* with a reliability of 0.85 used for data collection. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions while z-test was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. It was found among others that principals' apply impression management to a high extent while incentives are applied to a very high extent in the administration of secondary schools in Rivers State. Consequently, the study concluded that impression management and incentives are veritable instruments in secondary school administration. It is recommended among others that the school principals should continue to use impression management, as a conciliatory measure for managing the inherent diversity of interest of teachers to ensure optimal productivity and commitment to goals in the school sector. The school principals should also continue to outline desirable incentives as compensation for teachers for a notable job performance.

Keywords: Impression management and Incentives as Political Instruments in the Administration of Secondary Schools in Rivers State of Nigeria

I. INTRODUCTION

Administration is concerned with the discharge of executive duties, by carrying out plans, policies and decisions, in order to fulfil the purpose of an organization. Also, administration involves controlling the efforts and coordinating the activities of employees in the day-to-day running of an organization, to achieve set goals and objectives (Peretomode, 2014). Therefore, administration takes place in accordance with some sort of rules or procedures and is also concerned with the design, the implementation of the systems and procedures, in order to help meet stated organizational objectives. In the words of Bua, Olatunde and Amough (2013), administration connotes the application of rules, procedures and policies, already planned to achieve organizational goals. Administrators are those who apply

rules, procedures and policies in a way that allows the accomplishment of defined common objectives, within an organizational setting. The foregoing implies that, principals have the sole duty to organizing the staff with which the various tasks in the various units will be carried out, the available tools and the equipment for executing planned course of action rest with it. Principals, also, have the duty of harmonizing human and material resources at the minimum cost of inputs.

For every educational institution or organization to achieve its desired goals and objectives, effort must be put in place, human and material resources must be adequately utilized. In a more succinct view, Ojo in Ekundayo (2010), avers that, school administration implies principal engagements in managing and administering the curriculum and teaching, pastoral care, discipline, assessment, evaluation and examinations, resource allocation, costing and forward planning, staff appraisal, relationship with the community, use of the practical skills necessary for surviving the policies of educational organizations, such as decision-making, negotiation, bargaining, communication, conflict handling, running meetings, and among others. Consequently, Johnson in Abdulrahman-Yusuf (2013) explains that school administration is the school's main governing body, which plays a major part in making decisions relating to students and the school's overall status. Also, there are several types of school administration, depending on the school's nature and these administrations oversee the school's development as well as the welfare of its students. More often, they are also the only entity that bridges the relationship between the school and the community.

Educational administrators are those who carry out or implement educational policies and programmes. So it is worthy to note that educational administrators, in the process of implementing policies, also engage in planning, organizing, directing, controlling and evaluating at a micro-level and contribute to policy formulation processes. Therefore, the concept of school administration in the view of Peretomode (2014) is the task of planning, organizing, directing and controlling human or material resources within the school sector.

Planning is the first process that takes place and an inevitable aspect of administration. It is the activity that is concerned with proposals for the future, with the evaluation of alternative proposals, and with the methods, by which these proposals may be achieved. From an educational viewpoint, planning is concerned with setting educational goals or objectives and determining the approaches by which the goals are to be achieved in the school sector. In this sense, planning determines where the school is going and the general approaches it will use to get to its destination. In education, planning is a well-articulated conceptualization of the education philosophy, goals, objectives and specifications, for short and long term objectives, including the implementation of the planned curricula and budget priorities for facilities management.

It is the responsibility of the principal to organize everyone to work. Organizing is a continuous activity of every school administration, once the formal structure of the school organization is established. This does not necessarily mean that, the very same structure will be in effect in the future, indefinitely. This suggests that, organizing is one of the concepts which the school principal has to pay continuous attention, so as to achieve desired goals and objectives. The school administrators apply directing as an administrative strategy.

Directing is the continuous task of making decisions and embodying them in specific and general orders and instructions from an administrator. Also, directing involves ensuring cooperation among the staff, making sure that each staff contributes his/her mental or physical efforts for accomplishing the objectives of the educational sector. The principal should be able to foster unity, spirit of co-operation and good communication skills and channels among his subordinates for the realization of the organization's goals. One of the most critical activities of a school principal is to engage in the decision making process, because, it is the act of reaching a conclusion, regarding an issue, in the educational sector. However, it must be emphasized that educational decision making is an institutionalized process and a collective product rather than the result of any individual's choice. What really happens is that, in the first place, every decision is based on information, and secondly, the decision maker (administrator) is given information regarding the possible alternatives involved.

Controlling implies ensuring that everything in an organization is done in accordance with established rules and expressed commands. School organisations are established to achieve specific goals and the goals are expected to be attained as specified in terms of place, time, quantity, and quality. Once an educational sector formulates its objectives and prepares an action plan, which prescribes the courses of action to be followed, and starts its operation, then it is necessary to verify whether things are going as planned, to exercise authority over those who are responsible for the various functions, and to restrain those who deviate from the

determined courses of action. In this sense, control is a continuous activity, and is one of the basic components of an administration. The need for control should be taken into consideration and an effective control system should be developed into the educational structure.

Aspects of secondary school administration can be seen to comprise of the following; student personnel administration, staff personnel administration, school community relationship, instruction and curriculum development and school financial administration. Students' personnel refer to those relationships that exist between the students and the government, staff and the school principals. Schools, primarily exist in order to serve the needs of students and it is based on this reason that, all school programmes and principal's effort must be geared towards ensuring that, students attain their highest possible levels of academic achievement (Abraham, 2013). Also, established policies and procedures for dealing with pupil irregularities (conduct problem) are administered to students' personnel. Some of the list of student personnel administration include; admission of students, health services, disciplinary cases, guidance and counselling services, school attendance policies and procedures of student accounting and boarding services. Staff personnel administration: Staff personnel service is another aspect of secondary school administration and refers to the human resource of the school. In the school organization, staff personnel are concerned with the management, coordination of people at the work place and in formulating policies. Peretomode (2014) views staff personnel in the school organization to include all the teaching and non-teaching staff, schedule of teachers' assignments, evaluation of the performance of teachers, observation of teachers in their classroom, communicate the objectives of the school programme, develop *esprit de corps* among teachers and provide opportunities for professional growth of staff personnel. School community relationship: Abraham (2013) notes that every school is situated within a community and derives all that it requires for existence there from the personnel, that is (both staff and students), facilities and equipment, and funding are supplied by the community. Also, harmony must exist between the community for the goals of the school to be achieved and the school administrator is at the central position in order to ensure that there exists a good school-community relationship because the school cannot exist in isolation.

School financial administration: Financial administration has to do with the management of all income and expenditure of the school and in the words of Nnabuo, Okorie and Agabi (2008) school finance connotes the available resources to the school system and that it constitute one of the vital resources needed for effective functioning of the school. Financial resources must be sourced for, properly allocated among competing educational needs and adequately accounted for. Also, regular budgeting for use of school financial resources is a central aspect of school finance

management. In order to get administrative duties done, there is need for effective and efficient use of political instruments.

Impression management is the behavioural strategies that people use to create desired social images or identities. Secondary school principals use impression management as an instrument to control the reactions of others to one's image or personality in society. Impression management forms an integral part of the arena of instruments which school principals use to influence their employees (Goffman in Zia-Ur-Rehman & Javed, 2015). School principals use impression management as a strategic manoeuvre, for a competitively tensed school environment and the initiator of impression management has one intention, I must be appreciated and patronized. The realization of work place objectives requires creating impressions that are deemed to be favourable and attractive. Impression management originates from social psychology, which focused on behaviour of individuals mainly. The concept of impression management was introduced as 'The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life', suggesting that individuals have the objective to achieve congruence between their image and the image that is necessary for the desired goals in the school sector.

Interestingly, Terrell and Kwok (2011) views impression management (IM) as the study of how people attempt to manage or control the perceptions others form of them and that the goal of impression management in the school setting is to steer others' opinion or impression with the use of controlling information in either a personal or social situation. In addition impression management is being used in an individual setting and organizations use IM tactics to manage their image of the organization and cultivate a positive image with constituencies outside the organization. Impression management is also known as self-presentation. The process of impression management involves two steps. These are impression motivation and impression construction. Impression motivation is the condition under which organizations are motivated to influence its public impression. The important factors of the motivation are namely: the goal-relevance of impression, that is, how important it is, what others think of the person in order to achieve a goal, the value of the desired goal and the gap between the desired impression and the current impression. While impression construction is the process of determining the impression that an organization wants to provide and the manner in which they attempt to achieve this impression.

There are a number of variables that determine the construction of impression, namely, the way the organizations sees themselves, the way the organizations think they are seen by others, the impression an organization wants to give and the role constraints which tell organizations the expectations that society has (Wang, 2016). Corroboratively, Ginahand Akpotu (2016) hold the view that impression management at the level of school administrators is seen as conciliatory measure for managing the Inherent diversity of interest of employees and other stakeholders alike.

Incentive is one of the moral boosters that enable teachers to be committed and discharge their duties expectedly. School principal uses incentive as an act or promise for greater action to their teachers and it is also called a stimulus to greater action. To Ozoemena (2013), incentive is something which is given in addition to wages, that is additional remuneration or benefit to a teacher in recognition of achievement or better work. To Okendu (2012), school principals use incentive as an additional compensation to employees for a continuous job performance. Incentive could be classified into two major categories, non-financial, which include recognition, achievement, feeling of participation and pride in superior performance and these tend to encourage better performance in the organization. The second category is the financial incentive plan and this involves money which could be indirect or direct. Indirect incentive include such things as equitable pay structures, merit increases, profit sharing plans and other benefits that are financial in nature but are not directly dependent upon the contribution of an individual or group. Direct financial plans provide an opportunity for higher pay through increased productivity or effectiveness and they are based upon the concept of performance.

Massie and Douglas in Okendu (2012) report that principals have much effort, control and influence over external forces which comprises rewards and they found out that the application of one set of incentives or incentive system to all employees in a given job class may not be best from environmental standpoint. School principal apply incentive scheme, as a form of rewards to job performance of an individual or a team of teachers. Also incentives influence behaviour by offering pay as an inducement, also promotion serves as a form of reward for performance and it is an incentive for better performance. Performance incentives are payments made to an employee or a group of employees based on the amount of output or results achieved. Work incentive is advantageous to both management and employees. Heuristically, incentive plans are designed to promote greater achievement in terms of output, incentive assist in developing a productive work environment by rewarding those employees who contribute towards improving organizational output beyond certain predetermined standard. From the foregoing description of incentive structuring system, it could be noted that designing and structuring incentive schemes in the teaching profession based on individual and group performance is ideal.

Empirically, there was no work reviewed so far that investigated the use of impression management and incentive as political instrument in the administration of secondary schools in Rivers State. This study therefore, covered the gap by investigating principals' application of impression management and incentives in the administration of secondary schools in Rivers State.

Statement of the Problem

The performance of administrative task of principals in modern day secondary schools appears to be below expectation. The importance of administrative tasks in the effective and efficient school organization and goal achievement cannot be overemphasized. Principals seem to be failing in their various responsibilities by applying the wrong administrative instruments in the school system. Some of these instruments are social and political. The application of political instruments in the school system is targeted at actively involving the teachers, students and other functionaries in the school for enhanced productivity.

It is observed that, most of the principals do not know how to provide rewards to their teachers when needed for effective and efficient functioning of the school. This is indeed a serious issue, the emphasis principals can have all it takes to deliver but in a case where insufficient impression management and reward system is lacking there is bound to be low achievement. Therefore, this study would examine the extent to which principals apply impression management and incentives in the administration of secondary schools in Rivers State.

Objectives of the Study

The following objective guided the study:

1. determine the extent to which school principals apply impression management in the administration of senior secondary schools in Rivers State of Nigeria,
2. ascertain the extent to which school principals apply incentives in the administration of senior secondary schools in Rivers State of Nigeria,

Research Questions

The following research questions were answered in the study.

1. To what extent do school principals apply impression management in the administration of senior secondary schools in Rivers State of Nigeria?

2. To what extent do school principals use incentives in the administration of senior secondary schools in Rivers State of Nigeria?

Hypotheses

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

1. There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of less experienced and experienced teachers on the extent to which school principals apply impression management in the administration of senior secondary schools in Rivers State of Nigeria.
2. There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of male and female teachers on the extent to which school principals use incentives in the administration of senior secondary schools in Rivers State of Nigeria.

II. METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a descriptive survey. The population of this study comprised all the 7142 teachers in the 274 public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. The sample of the study is 421 (221 male teachers and 200 female teachers) drawn from a population of 7,142 teachers using the proportionate stratified random sampling technique. A validated instrument titled Impression Management and Incentive in Secondary School Administration Scale (IMISSAS) with reliability co-efficient of 0.85 was used for data collection. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions while z-test was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance

III. RESULTS

Research Question 1: To what extent do school principals apply impression management to in the administration of senior secondary schools in Rivers State of Nigeria?

Table 1: Weighted mean and standard on the extent principals apply impression management to less experienced and experienced teachers in the administration of senior secondary schools

s/n	To what extent do school principals apply impression management in the administration of senior secondary schools?	Experienced teachers		Less experienced teachers		Mean set	Decision
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
1	School principal uses impression management as a strategic manoeuvre in the school environment.	3.28	.84	3.00	.00	3.14	HE
2	School principal initiates impression management with the intention to be appreciated.	2.90	.98	2.81	.70	2.86	HE
3	School principal uses impression management as a goal in the school setting to steer teachers’ opinion.	3.39	.61	3.54	.50	3.47	VHE
4	School principal uses impression management to present particular incentives to positive view of corporate performance particularly when performance is poor.	3.05	.85	1.59	.49	2.32	LE
5	School principal uses impression management as a managerial strategy to ensure optimal productivity in the school sector.	2.42	1.10	3.57	.49	2.99	HE
6	School principal uses impression management as an integral part of instruments to influence their teachers.	2.31	1.07	3.41	.63	2.86	HE

7	School principal have the objective to achieve congruence between the image and the image that is necessary for the desired goals in the school sector.	2.84	1.05	1.85	.68	2.35	LE
8	School principal uses impression management as an instrument to control the reactions of teachers in the school.	3.28	.80	3.50	.50	3.39	VHE
9	School principal uses impression management as conciliatory measure for managing the inherent diversity of interest of teachers.	2.34	1.06	3.37	.49	2.86	HE
10	Impression management is the behavioural strategies that school principals use to create desired social images in the school.	3.23	.59	1.69	.61	2.46	LE
	Grand mean and standard deviation	2.90	0.89	2.83	0.51	2.87	HE

Scale: 1.00-1.79: Very Low Extent (VLE), 1.80-2.49: Low Extent (LE), 2.50-3.19: High Extent (HE) and 3.20-4.00: Very High Extent (VHE)

Data on Table 1 show that items 3, 8 and 10 have mean ratings between 3.20 and 4.00, which showed that to very high extent, school principals apply impression management in the administration of secondary school in Rivers State. Again, items 1, 2, 5, 6 and 9 have mean ratings within the range of 2.50 and 3.10 which show that to high extent school principals apply impression management in secondary schools administration in Rivers State. Also, items 4 and 7 have mean ratings within the range of 1.80-2.40, which show that to a

low extent, school principals apply impression management in secondary schools administration in Rivers State. In summary, with an aggregate mean of 2.87, which falls between 2.50-3.10 secondary school teachers responded that, to high extent, secondary school principals apply impression management in the administration of secondary schools in Rivers State.

Research Question 2: To what extent do school principals use incentives in the administration of senior secondary schools in Rivers State of Nigeria?

Table 2: Weighted mean and standard on the extent principals apply the use of incentives to male and female teachers in the administration of senior secondary schools

s/n	To what extent do school principals use incentives in the administration of senior secondary schools?	Male teachers		Female teachers		Decision	
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
11	School principal uses incentive as a promise for greater action to their teachers.	3.45	.49	3.39	.49	3.42	VHE
12	Incentive provides zeal in the teachers for better performance in the school.	3.44	.52	2.37	1.13	2.91	HE
13	School principal uses incentives as external measures to influence motivation and behaviour of teachers.	3.50	.50	3.51	.55	3.51	VHE
14	School principal uses incentive as an additional compensation to teachers for a continuous job performance at the school.	3.08	.66	3.43	.49	3.26	VHE
15	Incentive is structured to provide direct motivation to teachers in the school in order to serve as an encouragement to achieve educational goals and objectives.	3.30	.75	3.41	.58	3.36	VHE
16	School principal apply incentive scheme as a form of rewards to job performance of teachers.	3.13	.89	3.33	.59	3.23	VHE
17	Incentives assist in developing a productive work environment by rewarding those committed teachers that contribute towards improving educational output beyond certain predetermined standard.	3.32	.81	3.39	.65	3.36	VHE
		3.32	0.66	3.26	0.64	3.29	VHE

Data on Table 2 show that items 11, 13, 14, 15, 16 and 17 have mean ratings between 3.20 and 4.00, which showed that to very high extent, school principals apply incentives in the administration of secondary school in Rivers State. Differently, item 12 has a mean rating of 2.91 within the range of 2.50 and 3.10 and which show that to a high extent, school principals apply incentives in secondary schools administration in Rivers State. In summary, with an aggregate mean of 3.29, which fall between 3.20-4.00 secondary school

teachers responded that, to very high extent, secondary school principals use incentive in the administration of secondary schools in Rivers State.

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of less experienced and experienced teachers on the extent to which schools principals apply impression management in the administration of senior secondary schools in Rivers State of Nigeria.

Table 1: Summary of z-test Analysis on the mean ratings of experienced and less experienced teachers on the extent school principals apply impression management in the administration of secondary schools in Rivers State of Nigeria.

Gender	N	Mean	SD	Df	z-cal.	p-value	Alpha level	Decision
Experienced teachers	367	2.90	0.83	419	1.98	.04	0.05	Hypothesis is rejected
Less experienced teachers	54	2.83	0.51					

Table 1 showed that experienced teachers have mean and standard deviation scores of 2.90 and 0.83 while the less experienced teachers have mean and standard deviation scores of 2.83 and 0.51. With a degree of freedom of 419, the calculated z-value of 1.98 is significant because the probability value of 0.04 is less than the alpha level of 0.05. Therefore, there is a significant difference between the mean ratings of less experienced and experienced teachers on the

extent to which schools principals apply impression management in the administration of senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of male and female teachers on the extent to which schools principals' use incentives in the administration of senior secondary schools in Rivers State of Nigeria.

Table 2: Summary of z-test Analysis on the mean ratings of male and female teachers on the extent school principals use incentive in the administration of secondary schools in Rivers State of Nigeria

Gender	N	Mean	SD	Df	z-cal.	p-value	Alpha level	Decision
Male teachers	218	3.32	0.66	419	1.70	.09	0.05	Hypothesis is accepted
Female teachers	203	3.26	0.64					

Table 4 showed that male teachers have mean and standard deviation scores of 3.32 and 0.66 while the female teachers have mean and standard deviation scores of 3.26 and 0.64. With a degree of freedom of 419, the calculated z-value of 1.70 is not significant because the probability value of 0.09 is greater than the alpha level of 0.05. Therefore, there is no significant difference between the mean ratings of male and female teachers on the extent to which schools principals use incentives in the administration of senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

IV. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS AND IMPLICATIONS

The findings of the study are discussed as shown below:

Impression Management and Administration of School

The finding showed that, school principals apply impression management in the administration of senior secondary schools in Rivers State to a high extent. Moreso, the hypothesis showed that there is a significant difference between the mean ratings of less experienced and experienced teachers on the extent to which schools principals apply impression management in the administration of senior secondary schools in Rivers State. The study is supported by Nwabueze, Odum and Nwabueze (2016) and Amadi (2014). The researchers reported that principals make use of work relationship, group cohesion, corporation, pleasant organizational climate and social competence to effectively achieve their administrative functions. It is worthy to note that, the use of impression management in the area of social skills and competence has a high positive relationship with effective administrative practices. The result implies that, school principals that

develop operational skills have the potentials to manage administrative functions with some levels of precision and accuracy. It also implies that, the use of impression management as a developmental tool can facilitate better work relationships, increase group cohesiveness, avoid offending co-workers and create a more pleasant organizational climate. The result of the hypothesis is depicting the fact that, experience is not a significant factor in the administration of secondary schools in Rivers State. This could be stemming from the fact that, schools that have a working structure and teachers require little or no motivation or experience by the principals to be effective.

Use of Incentives and Administration of Schools

It was found that school principals use incentives in the administration of senior secondary schools in Rivers State to a very high extent. The result showed that there is no significant difference between the mean ratings of male and female teachers on the extent to which schools principals use incentives in the administration of senior secondary schools in Rivers State. The findings of the study are in consonance with Amadi (2014) and Ogbonnaya (2015). The researchers reported a high positive high relationship between reward and effective leadership in the school. Moreso, the researchers reported that adequate compensation of teachers by the school principals bring about job satisfaction and job accomplishment. The hypothesis has shown that reward remains reward no matter whether it is given by a male principal or a female principal. The reason is simply because if the actual required is given, based on outputs more productivity is expected. By implication, school principals

who are achieving the organizational goals and objectives are those that are rewarding a deserving performance that repeat itself in an increased measure. Efficient school administration is a product of proper monetary and non-monetary incentives on their teachers who are doing well in job areas.

V. CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of this study, it was concluded that principals' effective and efficient applications of impression management and incentives are very vital in the administrative expectations in secondary schools in Rivers State. The study also concluded that application of impression management to a high extent as well as incentives to a very high extent is chief in the administration of secondary schools in Rivers State.

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings and conclusion of this study, the following recommendations were made:

1. The school principals should use impression management, as a conciliatory measure for managing the inherent diversity of interest of teachers to ensure optimal productivity and commitment to goals in the school sector.
2. The school principals should also continue to outline desirable incentives as compensation for teachers for a notable job performance.

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