



LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PRACTICES AND SECONDARY SCHOOL EFFECTIVENESS FOR SUSTAINABLE GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT IN CALABAR MUNICIPALITY AREA OF CROSS RIVER STATE

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed at determining the influence of leadership Development Practices and secondary School Effectiveness for sustainable growth and development in Calabar Municipal Area of Cross River State. Two research questions were stated to direct the study. Descriptive survey design was adopted. The population of the study consists of 32 principal and vice Principals in 16 schools. The sampling technique adopted for this study was census. The sample size is 32 principals and vice principals. Questionnaire title Leadership Development Practices and Secondary School Effectiveness Questionnaire (LDPSSEQ) was used for data collection. A reliability estimate of 0.61 and 0.76 was obtained using Cronbach alpha. Mean and standard deviation was used in data analysis. The result revealed a positive influence of succession planning, ($x=3.92$, $SD=0.56$) mentoring ($x=3.91$, $SD=0.55$) on school effectiveness. It was therefore recommended that the Ministry of Education should provide opportunities for leadership growth and development through on-the-job training, reflective practices, and assigned field experience in order to enhance school effectiveness.

KEYWORD: Leadership Development Practices, succession planning, mentoring.

INTRODUCTION

Education is the bedrock of development of any nation. This is the reason that a government invest in the education of citizens.

Secondary education, a sub-set of the education level is very necessary in human capital formation. It therefore, presupposes that the provision of qualitative education is the sine quo non for the attainment of the goals for secondary

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education.

It has been observed in the recent past that secondary education in Calabar Municipal area are not living up to expectation in delivering quality products expected of the system. Many problems seem to be bedeviling the secondary school system thereby making the system ineffective. Schools need to be able to deliver the good tidings expected of them at every point in time. School effectiveness in this contexts refers to the extent to which schools are able to accomplish their predetermined objectives. School effectiveness transcends beyond student passing their final examinations. It also encompasses students attainment in other domains of learning (the affective and the psychomotor domains). According to Barele (2002), these other domains apart from having influence on the cognitive achievement, also make the beneficiary of the education system, live a fulfilled life and contribute meaningfully to the development of the society.

Observations have shown that today, there is persistent poor performance of students in both internal and external examinations (Adeyemi 2008) has shown in his research the extent of the poor performance of students in public examinations. The mass failure of students in public examinations has no doubt made parent lose confidence in the ability of the public school to produce good products. Observations have also shown that there is a high rate of indiscipline in the secondary schools. According to Oladele (2016), there is evidence of student's moral paucity that are more conspicuously seen in the high crime in the society and that of higher institutions.

Developing leaders is a formidable challenge for today's global organization, be it the school or business environment. The deficit of leadership talent is widely cited as the greatest limits of growth. It is on this note that, Sunday, Obogo and Adie (2021) stated that individual, groups including government have in various ways engaged in activities aim at improving the level of our national development. Cracking the code on developing effective leadership has the potential of conferring incredible competitive advantage and organizational increase, profitability and organizational development (Hundle, 2008).

Headship in school is usually for a period of time. Despite the huge responsibility, a school principal will not serve a school forever, there will be changes in the personnel caused by retirement of the principal. Good school management requires that the administrative

head hands over to a successor at the end of the tenure of office. The change in the principal creates a situation known as leadership succession (Okpa, Okoi and Uchendu, 2016).

One of the most significant factors affecting the life of a school and the strength of it improvement is the leadership succession (Hargreaves, 2005). The cost of building an effective school administrator through appropriate placement, transitional guidance, and mentoring is small compared to the cost of repairing the damage done by an ill-prepared leader. In fact, any funds channeled into creating a quality mentoring programme could be viewed as a cost-effective way to run the school (Wallace, 2009).

The idea of finding a successor to a serving principal in the school organization is a process that should be carefully planned and executed methodically. Building infrastructural leadership capacity in our secondary schools should be the function of the Ministry of Education. Unfortunately, because of the large number of school leaders who are eligible to retire and the number each year of those who choose to do so, leadership development practices is becoming imperative for all systems (Fink & Brayman 2004).

This study is limited to the following leadership practices; these are succession planning and mentoring. The essence of succession planning is for school systems to have plans in place that can address the issue of the need for leadership that continuously cultivates future leaders who are skilled in the abilities to bring about continuous improvement. (Okpa, Okoi & Uchendu, 2016).

Succession planning ensures that future leaders are prepared by developing a pool of people with a range of leadership competencies. The focus is on future requirement and providing high potential and high performing employees with developmental experiences that will enable them to meet the future demand of the organization. It is based on this that Rothwell (2010) stated that succession planning ensures leadership continuity in key positions, retaining and developing intellectual and knowledge capital for the future and to also encourage individuals.

Another leadership development practices is mentoring this involve a more knowledgeable and more experienced person developing some specific skills that will enhance the less experienced person's professional and growth. Okpa, Okoi & Uchendu (2016) stated that mentoring plays a nurturing role in guiding those new in administrative positions through the first

critical years and in providing them tools and skills needed in actual practice. The mentoring strategy of succession planning entails pairing an experienced and highly successful educator with a less experienced colleague. Regular interaction between both allows the discussion of professional goals, new idea, as well as effective strategies that may lead to the achievement of school goals and improvement in students learning (Mgbekem 2004).

Realizing the importance of the position and to minimize the effect of poor leadership is a critical need to plan ahead for the perfect fit for effective succession, it is based on this that this study aimed at determining the influence of leadership development practices and secondary school effectiveness for sustainable growth and development in Calabar Municipality Council of Cross River State.

STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

The issue of secondary school effectiveness has caused so much attention. Observations have shown that today, there is a persistent poor performance of students in both internal and external examinations. The mass failure of students in public examinations has no doubt made parents lost confidence in the ability of the public schools to provide good products that will contribute to the development of the society.

Observations have shown that there is so much laxity, absenteeism, lateness and low commitment on the part of teachers. Observations have also shown that there is a high rate of indiscipline in the secondary schools. The perceived ineffectiveness of the secondary schools in Calabar Municipal Local Government area could be attributed to several factors such

as lack of motivation, none payment of regular salaries, lack of staff development programmes etc, but this study was restricted to leadership development practices as a potent factor in school effectiveness. Therefore, to what extent does leadership development practices influence school effectiveness in Calabar Municipal council?

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following research questions were stated to guide this study.

1. To what extent does succession planning influence school effectiveness?
2. To what extent does mentoring influence school effectiveness?

METHODOLOGY

This study adopts description survey design. The population of the study consist of thirty two principals and vice principals. The sampling technique adopted for this study was census. Sixteen (16) principals and sixteen (16) vice principals were use as sample size given a total of 32 respondents. Questionnaire titled: Leadership Development Practices and School effectiveness Questionnaire (LDPSEQ) was used for data collection. The questionnaire was divided into two sections A and B. Section A considers demographic data of respondents while section B was 12 items statement, six items for each variable. A reliability estimate of 0.61 and 0.75 was obtained using Cronbach alpha reliability.

RESEARCH QUESTION

To what extent does succession planning influence school effectiveness?

Table 1: Mean and standard deviation of respondent on succession planning and school effectiveness

S/N	Items	Mean	SD	Decision
1	The organization is in excellent condition to manage succession	4.71	0.98	Agree
2	The board evaluates its process to manage its own leadership succession	3.81	0.78	Agree
3	The board reviews and updates its governance plan (including term limit)	4.22	0.86	Agree
4	The ministry knows when it need to start to create a viable plan for succession	2.87	0.28	Disagree
5	There is systematic means to identify possible replacement needs from retirement or other predictable losses	4.08	0.35	Agree
6	Objectives have been established for succession planning in the school organization	3.98	0.16	Agree
TOTAL/AVERAGE		3.92	0.56	

The result in table one showed the views of the respondents on leadership development practices in terms of succession planning and school effectiveness. The result showed a mean rating of 4.71, 4.22, 4.09, and 4.08 with a standard deviation of 0.98, 0.86, 0.35 and 0.16 respectively. This result implies that there is a positive influence of succession planning on school effectiveness. The result of the table also

showed a mean rating of 3.81 and 2.87 with a standard deviation of 0.78 and 0.28 below the total average scores of 3.92. These two items reveal that succession planning as a measure of leadership development practice is relatively low.

RESEARCH QUESTION

To what extent does mentoring influence school effectiveness?

Table 2: Mean and standard deviation of respondents based on mentoring and school effectiveness.

S/N	Items	Mean	SD	Decision
1	There is a carefully formulated materials that new work through when they first commence at this school	4.03	0.82	Agree
2	Careful consideration is given to the pairing of mentors with new teachers	3.48	0.29	Disagree
3	Mentor and new teacher have sufficient time allocated to meet and work together.	3.95	0.41	Agree
4	School leaders provide active, direct support for both new teacher and mentor.	3.98	0.75	Agree
5	Mentor and new teacher work in close physical proximity	4.06	0.31	Agree
6	Mentor and new teacher are teaching the same subject, level/class	4.00	0.74	Agree
TOTAL/AVERAGE		3.91	0.55	

The result of table 2 shows that the news of the respondents of leadership development practices in terms of mentoring and school effectiveness shows a mean rating of 4.03, 3.95, 3.98, 4.06 and 4.00 with a standard deviation of 0.83, 0.41, 0.75, 0.31 and 0.74 respectively which is relatively high in terms of mentoring with the mean ratio of 3.48 and the standard deviation of 0.29 shows relatively low in terms of mentoring and school effectiveness. The result therefore implies that mentoring as a measure of

leadership developing practice has an influence on school effectiveness.

DISCUSSION

The result of research question one revealed a positive influence of succession planning as a leadership development practice measure in school effectiveness. The result of this study implies that teachers and vice principals who have not acted as a principal have very limited and inaccurate perception of the role. Succession planning entails giving teacher's opportunities to

develop and understanding of leadership roles such as providing information session outlining information of particular jobs (Fink and Brayman 2004).

The result of this finding also implies that acting in a leadership role has a significant and positive impact on teacher's leadership aspirations. Schools can increase acting leadership opportunities, these can be short term, or four days while the principal attends a conference, or longer term while a senior staff member is on leave. Even short term acting experiences have a positive impact if they are genuine leadership opportunities and not simply sitting in the principal's chair and contacting them via their mobile phone every time a decision has been made. Longer term acting positions can be noted around a number of staff, providing two or three staff members the opportunity to act in a leadership role for a month to a term at a time. It is on this basis getting finding that Wallace (2009) stated that the idea a finding a successor to a serving principal in the school organization is a process that should be carefully planned and executed methodically. It is on this note that Okpa, Okoi and Uchendu, (2016), stated that despite the huge responsibility, a school principal will not serve a school forever, there will be changes in the personnel caused by retirement of the principal. Thus, school management requires that the administrative head hands over to a successor at the end of the tenure of office. The change in the principal creates a situation known as leadership succession.

CONCLUSION

Strategic succession planning at a school level would increase leadership aspiration and application rates, therefore many opportunities for acting in leadership role need to be provided, Mentoring promotes healthy and positive relationship between mentees and mentors which in turn builds community capacity.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Ministry of Education should provide opportunities for leadership growth and development through on-the-job training,

reflective practices, and assigned field experience in order to enhance school effectiveness.

2. Schools should develop a well-structural monitoring programme for young or new teachers as a means of preparing and training future leaders.

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