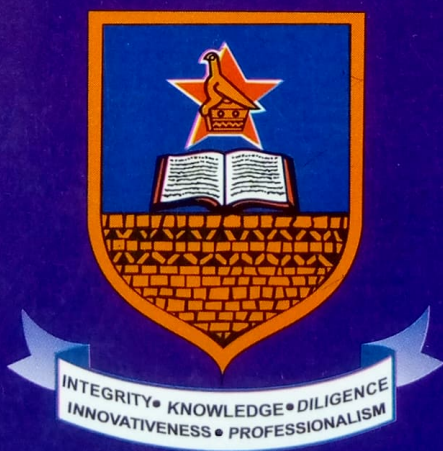


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# **Principals' Administrative Skills as Predictors of Effectiveness in Secondary Schools in Ilorin South Local Government, Kwara State, Nigeria**

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## **Abstract**

*This article examined principals' administrative skills as predictors of effectiveness in secondary schools in Ilorin South Local Government, Kwara State, Nigeria. The researcher randomly selected a study sample of ten schools and 250 teachers. Two sets of questionnaire were used to collect data. The data collected were analysed using mean, standard deviation and Pearson Product Moment Correlation Statistics. The finding revealed that there was a significant relationship between principals' administrative skills and school effectiveness in Ilorin South Local Government, Kwara State, Nigeria. It was concluded that the higher the principals' technical skill, the higher would be the level of school effectiveness or otherwise.*

**Keywords:** administrative skills, conceptual, technical, human relation, predictor.

## **Introduction**

Education plays multi-faceted roles in society and the nation at large. It is expected to build the character of learners, to be informed about what is worthwhile, socially acceptable, desirable and purposeful about themselves, their environment and society. Education is the total process of human learning by which knowledge is imparted, faculties trained and skills developed. It is the veritable instrument for social and political mobilisation and the acquisition of important technical skills (Olalude, 2011).

It is the ultimate desire of every organisation to achieve the predetermined goals for which it was established, and for these goals to be achieved, all hands must be on deck; the leader and the led must work together in the same direction. Most importantly, the leader must be in charge by being a motivator and having what requires to ginger the subordinates towards commitment that would lead to the attainment of the stated organisational goals. In a school setting, particularly secondary schools, the principal is the leader and administrator who is responsible for directing the affairs of the school towards goal attainment. According to Dittimiya (1998), the role of the principals is to facilitate the implementation of the various learning programmes aimed at improving the learning situation. The school principal, therefore, needs to provide effective support to teachers and involve in the implementation of instructional programmes by overseeing what teachers and their students are doing within the classroom lessons. Owan and Agunwa (2019) argue that, administrative skills can be taken to mean the ability of the school principal to carry out managerial functions to achieve the established goals.

School effectiveness is when set goals and objectives of a school programme are accomplished. Iyer (2011) stated that the extent to which a school consistently achieves observable positive outcomes from students is a parameter for measuring its effectiveness. Akinola (2013) stressed that, as a leader, administrative skills required by a school principal to achieve success are conceptual, interpersonal and technical. In Knapp (2007)'s views, administrative skill helps a school principal to use both energy of the employees and time to achieve the pre-determined results. Kochamba and Murray (2010) emphasized that administrative skill of a principal is significant to the achievement of school effectiveness. The study conducted by Supovitz, Sirinides and May (2010) revealed that possession of technical skill is a key to promoting smooth interpersonal relationship among the staff and effectiveness. Arong and Ogbadu (2010) believed that for schools to be effective, there is a need for principals to possess technical skills. Muraina (2014) stated that a school principal needs conceptual skill to

be able to provide instructional leadership to students and teachers and manage school facilities in a way, which would lead to realisation of effectiveness. Eniola (2003) posited that the success of school principal in school effectiveness could be determined by how he possesses and judiciously uses conceptual skill.

### **Statement of the problem**

Secondary education in Nigeria where youths are to be prepared for useful living and higher education has probably not been able to realise its numerous objectives and this has been manifested in the products of this level of education. In most cases, as it is seen in secondary schools in Ilorin-South Local Government, Kwara State, students and teachers come to school and leave at will. Some principals in secondary schools do not monitor moral decadence among students and teachers because they have their share of indiscipline. A study by Awwalu and Yusof (2012) showed that there is a continuing decline in the value and efficiency of secondary school education delivery in Nigeria. Teachers no longer teach their students effectively as they concentrate on their private businesses. Oftentimes, most of these teachers are seen hawking wares within school premises during official school hours. Some absent themselves from classes to the detriment of their students while some refuse to write their notes of lesson as well as carrying out other assigned responsibilities. This poor attitude to work, among other derelictions of duty by secondary school teachers, is likely to lead to poor job performances. These problems, according to Oleforo, Ikpe and Bassey (2015), are due to poor supervisory skills of school principals. It, therefore, appears as if the school principal charged with the responsibility of utilising the available resources to achieve school goals does not possess the administrative skills required.

### **Purpose of the study**

The study aimed at establishing the relationship between principals' administrative skills and effectiveness in Ilorin South Local Government, Kwara State, Nigeria. The following research questions were raised: What is the level of principals' administrative skills in secondary schools in Ilorin-South Local Government Area,

Kwara State? What is the level of school effectiveness in secondary schools in Ilorin-South Local Government Area, Kwara State? The study hypothesised that there is no significant relationship between principals' conceptual skills and effectiveness, principals' technical skills and effectiveness and principals' human relation skills and effectiveness in secondary schools in Ilorin South Local Government. Oluwadare (2011); Sule (2013); Oleforo, Ikpe Bassey (2015) have worked on variables related to this study, but none of them focused on the principal administrative skills as a predictor of effectiveness in secondary schools in Ilorin South Local Government Area.. This justified the need to carry out this study.

## Methodology

The study examined principals' administrative skills as predictors of effectiveness in secondary schools in Ilorin South Local Government. The study adopted descriptive survey of correlation type. This enabled the researchers to collect adequate information from the sample derived from the entire population of the study.

The population of the study consisted of all the 1 138 teachers, principals, vice principals and heads of departments in the 21 secondary schools in Ilorin-South Local Government Area as at June, 2020. Ten secondary schools and 250 teachers were randomly sampled for the study.

Two sets of researcher-designed questionnaires entitled Principals' Administrative Skills Questionnaire and School Effectiveness Questionnaire were used to collect data from the participants. The instrument contained items that helped to obtain data from the participants and they were based on the four-point Likert rating scale. The two sets of questionnaire were validated by three experts in the Department of Educational Management, University of Ilorin,. Twenty copies of each of the instrument were administered to some teachers, principals, vice principals and heads of departments who were not part of the study. Cronbach's Alpha was used to analyse the data and reliability coefficients of 0.79 and 0.74 for PASQ respectively.

## **Data analysis**

The data collected were analysed using descriptive statistics of mean and standard deviation for the two research questions while inferential statistics of Pearson moment correlation statistic at 0.05 level of significance was used to test the three hypotheses formulated. Likert rating scale of Strongly Agree (SA) = 4 points, Agree (A) = 3 points, Disagree (D) = 2 points and Strongly Disagree (SD) = 1 point was used for scoring. All the analyses were carried out with the use of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS).

## **Answering research questions**

**Research Question 1:** What is the level of principals' administrative skills in secondary schools in Ilorin South Local Government, Kwara State, Nigeria?

In order to answer this research question, mean of the responses of the teachers to each item on the questionnaire that addressed the level of principal administrative skills was calculated and 2.5 was used as benchmark. The outcome of the analysis reveal thus:

**Table 1: Result showing the Level of Principals' Administrative Skills in Secondary Schools in Ilorin South Local Government, Kwara State, Nigeria**

| S/N | Items                                                                    | SA % | A%   | D%   | SD%  | X           | SD   |
|-----|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|------|------|------|-------------|------|
|     | <b>My school principal:</b>                                              |      |      |      |      |             |      |
| 1.  | is sensitive to teachers needs in the school                             | 53.0 | 35.2 | .9   | 10.9 | 3.30        | .94  |
| 2.  | involves teachers when making decisions that affect them                 | 33.5 | 52.6 | 11.3 | 2.6  | 3.17        | .73  |
| 3.  | manages conflict among staff within the school                           | 33.5 | 52.6 | 9.6  | 4.3  | 3.15        | .764 |
| 4.  | compliments teachers for special effort or accomplishments.              | 41.7 | 39.1 | 8.3  | 10.9 | 3.12        | .96  |
| 5.  | listens and communicates on issues concerning the teachers               | 41.3 | 40.0 | 10.9 | 7.8  | 3.15        | .90  |
| 6.  | organises workshop and seminars for teachers to improve teaching skills. | 51.7 | 41.3 | 3.5  | 3.5  | 3.41        | .72  |
| 7.  | helps plan and organ ise teachers scheme of work.                        | 43.5 | 33.5 | 12.6 | 10.4 | 3.10        | .99  |
| 8.  | assesses the instructional activities in class from time to time         | 42.2 | 39.6 | 13.0 | 5.2  | 3.19        | .85  |
| 9.  | helps in students' evaluation                                            | 28.7 | 57.8 | 5.7  | 7.8  | 3.07        | .81  |
| 10. | seeks to create an atmosphere that encourages creativity and initiatives | 43.9 | 40.4 | 6.5  | 9.1  | 3.19        | .92  |
| 11. | takes note of factors that affect teachers' performance in the school.   | 41.7 | 38.7 | 6.1  | 13.5 | 3.09        | 1.01 |
| 12. | gives teachers suggestions as to how they can improve their teaching.    | 39.1 | 48.3 | 7.8  | 4.8  | 3.22        | .79  |
| 13. | welcomes ideas of other teachers                                         | 39.1 | 45.2 | 8.3  | 7.4  | 3.16        | .86  |
| 14. | trusts teachers and delegate responsibilities to them.                   | 35.2 | 44.8 | 12.6 | 7.4  | 3.08        | .88  |
| 15. | defines goals to be accomplished by the teachers                         | 43.9 | 47.8 | 3.5  | 4.8  | 3.31        | .76  |
|     | <b>Grand mean</b>                                                        |      |      |      |      | <b>3.18</b> |      |

0.00-2.50 = Low; 2.51 and above = High

Table 1 shows a grand mean score of 3.18, which is greater than 2.50 set as the benchmark for determining the level of principals' administrative skills. Hence, 3.18 shows that the level of principals' administrative skills was high in Ilorin South Local Government Area.

**Research Question 2:** What is the level of effectiveness in secondary schools in Ilorin South Local Government, Kwara State, Nigeria?

**Table 2: Result Showing the Level of Effectiveness in Secondary Schools in Ilorin South Local Government**

| S/N | Items                                                             | SA % | A %  | D %  | SD   | X           | S.D |
|-----|-------------------------------------------------------------------|------|------|------|------|-------------|-----|
|     | <b>Teachers in my school:</b>                                     |      |      |      |      |             |     |
| 1.  | have thorough knowledge and understanding of his teaching subject | 46.5 | 45.7 | 7.8  | -    | 3.39        | .63 |
| 2.  | attend class regularly                                            | 53.5 | 30.9 | 15.7 | -    | 3.38        | .74 |
| 3.  | inform and explain clearly                                        | 38.7 | 45.7 | 15.7 | -    | 3.23        | .70 |
| 4.  | initiate new instructional methods                                | 23.5 | 45.7 | 23.0 | 7.8  | 2.85        | .87 |
| 5.  | grade student academic work objectively                           | 38.7 | 53.5 | 7.8  | -    | 3.31        | .61 |
| 6.  | give class work and test thoroughly and on time                   | 37.8 | 47.0 | 15.2 | -    | 3.23        | .69 |
| 7.  | show concerns about students' assessment                          | 16.1 | 68.7 | 7.8  | 7.4  | 2.93        | .73 |
| 8.  | monitor students' academic progress                               | 15.7 | 60.9 | 15.7 | 7.8  | 2.84        | .78 |
| 9.  | easily identifies students learning problems                      | 30.4 | 30.4 | 31.3 | 7.8  | 2.83        | .95 |
| 10. | take individual differences into consideration while teaching     | 22.2 | 46.5 | 15.7 | 15.7 | 2.75        | .97 |
| 11. | stimulate students to learn through classroom management          | 30.4 | 46.1 | 15.7 | 7.8  | 2.99        | .88 |
|     | <b>Grand mean</b>                                                 |      |      |      |      | <b>3.06</b> |     |

0.00-2.50 = Low; 2.51 and above = High

Table 2 shows the grand mean score of 3.06, which is greater than 2.50 set as the benchmark for determining the level of effectiveness. Hence, 3.06 shows that the level of effectiveness was high in secondary schools in Ilorin South Local Government.

### Hypotheses testing

Research hypotheses were generated in the course of this study, and they were tested using the Pearson's Product-Moment Correlation (PPMC) at 0.05 alpha level.

$H_0$ : There is no significant relationship between principals' conceptual skill and effectiveness in secondary schools in Ilorin South Local Government.

In order to test this hypothesis, the PPMC of responses of the teachers to each item on the questionnaire that ensuring the relationship

between principals' conceptual skill and effectiveness in secondary schools was calculated.

**Table 3: Result Showing the Relationship between Principals' Conceptual Skill and Effectiveness in Secondary School in Ilorin South Local Government**

| Variable                      |                                             | Principals' conceptual skills | School effectiveness |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------|
| Principals' conceptual skills | Pearson Correlation<br>Sig. (2-tailed)<br>N | 1<br><br>230                  | .030<br>.650<br>230  |
| School Effectiveness          | Pearson Correlation<br>Sig. (2-tailed)<br>N | .030<br>.650<br>230           | 1<br><br>230         |

Table 3 shows the calculated r-value (.650) while the p-value (0.30) is less than the significant level (.05). Hence, hypothesis one ( $H_{o1}$ ) is rejected. This implies that there was a significant relationship between principals' conceptual skill and effectiveness in secondary schools in Ilorin South Local Government.

$H_{O2}$ : There is no significant relationship between administrators' technical skills and teachers' job performance in secondary schools in Ilorin South Local Government Area.

In order to test this hypothesis, the PPMC of responses of the teachers to each item on the questionnaire that ensuring the relationship between administrators' technical skills and teachers' job performance in secondary schools was calculated.

**Table 4: Result Showing the Relationship between Principals' Technical Skill and Effectiveness in Secondary Schools in Ilorin South Local Government**

| Variable                    |                                             | Principals' technical skills | School effectiveness |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------|
| Principals' technical skill | Pearson Correlation<br>Sig. (2-tailed)<br>N | 1<br><br>230                 | .041<br>.438<br>230  |
| School effectiveness        | Pearson Correlation<br>Sig. (2-tailed)<br>N | .051<br>.438<br>230          | 1<br><br>230         |

Table 4 shows the calculated r-value (.438) while the p-value (0.41) is less than the significant level (.05). Hence, hypothesis two ( $H_{02}$ ) is rejected. This implies that there was a significant relationship between principals' technical skill and effectiveness in secondary schools in Ilorin South Local Government.

$H_{03}$ : There is no significant relationship between principals' human relation skill and effectiveness in secondary schools in Ilorin South Local Government.

In order to test this hypothesis, the PPMC of responses of the teachers to each item on the questionnaire that ensuring the relationship between administrators' human relation skills and teachers' job performance in secondary schools was calculated.

**Table 5: Result Showing the Relationship between Principals' Human Relation Skill and Effectiveness in Secondary Schools in Ilorin South Local Government**

| Variable                         |                                             | Principals' human relation skill | School effectiveness |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------|
| Principals' human relation skill | Pearson Correlation<br>Sig. (2-tailed)<br>N | 1<br><br>230                     | .039<br>.555<br>230  |
| School Effectiveness             | Pearson Correlation<br>Sig. (2-tailed)<br>N | .039<br>.555<br>230              | 1<br><br>230         |

Table 5 shows the calculated r-value (.555) while the p-value (0.39) is less than the significant level (.05). Hence, hypothesis three ( $H_{03}$ ) is rejected. This implies that there was a significant relationship between principals' human relation skill and effectiveness in secondary schools in Ilorin South Local Government.

### Discussion of findings

The findings of the study from the Research Question 1 answers revealed that the level of principals' administrative skills was high. This implies that the principals in secondary schools in Ilorin South Local Government Area were doing well and up to the task in discharging their administrative responsibilities. Findings revealed that the school heads were sensitive to their teachers' needs, complementing teachers' efforts towards goal attainment. Results indicated that the school heads were effective listeners and always communicated issues concerning teachers.

It was also revealed from the findings of the study that the level of effectiveness of secondary schools in Ilorin South Local Government Area was equally high but not to the level of principals' administrative

skills. The high level of secondary schools' effectiveness in the Local Government Area connotes that the schools were staffed with teachers that were academically sound and with high level of commitment which has been resulting in high level of academic standard in the schools. The teachers were discovered to initiate new instructional methods and easily identify students' learning problems.

In the Hypothesis 1 tested, the findings revealed that principals' conceptual skills have a significant relationship with effectiveness of secondary schools in Ilorin South Local Government Area. This implies that the possession of conceptual skills by the secondary school principals in the Local Government Area has resulted in the effectiveness of the schools. The fact that those principals were found to be analytical and creative has been the motivating factor for teachers which gingers them up to be committed as an aspect of school effectiveness. This finding is in line with the view of Robertson, Carlos and Shui (2003) that the success of any organisation is linked to employees' commitment. In addition, the view of Mechanic (2014) also supports this finding that a committed employee definitely works hard towards the actualisation of the goals of the organisation.

The finding from the Hypothesis 2 tested also revealed that principals' technical skill has significant relationship with effectiveness of secondary schools in Ilorin South Local Government Area. This means the higher the principals' level of technical skills, the higher the level of school effectiveness would be. It was discovered that the possession of technical skill by the school principals determines the school effectiveness in the Local Government Area. The principals were found to be competent and knowledgeable with respect to the activities specific to school as an organisation. This has enabled the principals to influence the behaviour of the school staff towards the attainment of school goals, which could be taken to mean school effectiveness. This was corroborated by Abdulmumin (2017) who opined that the school principal, as an educational leader, influences teachers and other staff in the school for successful operations of teaching and learning in the school. Hypothesis 3 tested revealed that there is significant relationship between principals' human relation

skills and effectiveness of secondary schools in Ilorin South Local Government Area. It was discovered that the more the human relation skill of principals, the more the effectiveness of secondary schools in the area. The human relation skills of the school principals in the Local Government Area was found to be high and it has been the determinant of school effectiveness. Those principals were found to be effective in working with various categories of staff and able to meet the goals achieved with maximum cooperation from their staff. The principals were discovered to be able to achieve this through effective communication. This was corroborated by Nwankwo and Luis (2002), who stated that keeping everyone informed is a positive way of ensuring effective leadership, cooperation, coordination, support and commitment.

## Conclusions

Secondary schools are established to achieve certain goals and the principals are the leaders in the secondary school system saddled with the responsibilities of ensuring the attainment of school goals. The study concluded that:

- the levels of principals' administrative skills and school effectiveness in Ilorin South Local Government Area were acceptable and up to standard;
- the principals' conceptual skills determine effectiveness of secondary schools in Ilorin South Local Government Area;
- the higher the principals' technical skills, the higher would be the level of school effectiveness or otherwise; and
- secondary school effectiveness in Ilorin South Local Government Area is predicated on the possession of human relation skills by school principals.

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