

## **ROLES OF ADMINISTRATORS IN ENHANCING TEACHING AND LEARNING IN ILORIN SOUTH LOCAL GOVERNMENT PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS**

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### ***Abstract***

*The roles of school administrators towards enhancing effective teaching and learning cannot be overemphasized. Thus, the study examines the roles of administrators of public secondary schools in enhancing teaching and learning in Ilorin south local government public secondary schools, Kwara State. The paper examines the concept of school administrators and take into cognizance the qualities and roles of school administrators consecutively. The importance of school administration in teaching and learning as well as the challenges facing school administrators towards enhancing effective teaching and learning were also taken into cognizance while the strategies for enhancing school administration was not left out in the discussion. The study suggested among other that capacity building should be periodically organized for administrators of schools to enhance the efficacy of teaching and learning in the school system.*

**Keyword:** Roles, Administrators, Teaching, Learning, Teaching and Learning

### **Introduction**

Education is a common human activities necessary for achieving national development. Consequently, a nation without solid educational foundation from primary to secondary level may be heading to failure. According to Ajewole (2015) he states that a nation without a strong secondary or higher education is a nation without future. Ajimuse (2019) considered education as a vital instrument for change and national development. Thus, the importance of education in socio-economic development of a country cannot be overestimated. The actualization of national development through education to a larger extent depends on the efficacy of the school principals as administrators in the discharge of their roles as academic and administrative heads of schools.

Therefore, school administrators help to promote the academic and professional status of teachers by encouraging their in-service training to update them with the most current information on pedagogy, curriculum materials, school administration and management as knowledge is not static (Wills, 2014). They are as well saddled with the responsibility of motivating and stimulating both staff and students to encourage their optimum performance. It is also expected that school administrators become the source of inspiration to both staff and students for the achievement of school's goals (Ayeni, 2015).

However, owing to the challenges of the current education system in the country, school principals are concerned with more than management of both human and material resources available in their schools (Oladipo 2014). School administrators are directly responsible for school's instructional supervision. Such instructional supervision and management of human and material resources are expected to be handled by trained, qualified and experienced personnel for the achievement of the set out educational goals. The 21<sup>st</sup> Century secondary school administrators in Nigeria need to pay special attention to instructional leadership that will go a long way in encouraging positive performance of teachers and high academic success of students (Musibau, 2017).

School administrators also give appraisal to teachers in order to facilitate students' learning and their optimum academic success (Oyesola, 2014). Improving teaching methods and providing teachers with the necessary resources to enhance classroom management are the main goals of a principal's supervision (Ihuoma, 2015). It is well established that principals have a significant impact on classroom instruction and learning through their teachers. This is a result of the support and aid they provide to their teachers, which have a significant impact on enabling successful classroom instruction. It is expected of administrators to occasionally observe teachers' classroom instruction, develop and carry out a work plan, assess and supervise the modification of the school's educational programs, provide instructional materials, and manage human and material resources appropriately (Ahmed, 2011). Administrators occasionally assist with students' performance monitoring, curricular coordination, and, most importantly, advancing the academic standards of the school (Ball, 2016). The more often principals carry out these designated management, administrative, and instructional duties in schools, the better the educational objectives will be met.

The primary aim of any educational institution has is the improvement of the teaching and learning processes and all other activities of the school. The achievement of this aim is jointly carried out by the principal, the teacher and the entire members of staff of the school. The principal is however regarded as an administrator because of the way he handles, discipline and summons the affairs of the school while the teachers' activities help to determine the extent to which the school aims and objectives are achieved. School administration is a function so broad in scope that no one person should do alone. In which case, principal cannot carry out the administrative work alone, but delegate some duties to the teachers. In this situation of high expectations of each country's educational provision, those leading schools have an enormous responsibility. It is no wonder that the "school improvement movement of the past 20 years has put a great emphasis on the role of leaders." (OECD, 2001). "Effective school leaders are key to large-scale, sustainable education reform." (Fulani, 2022).

Public secondary schools play crucial role in shaping the educational landscape and preparing students for the challenges of the future. Effective administration within these institutions is essential for creating an environment conducive to teaching and learning. The extent of quality control in the school or any other formal organization therefore depends on the extent to which its stakeholders are able to sustain the quality of educational services provided in the school over time. According to Okoye, Onyali and Ezeughor (2016), to realize goals and objectives of a Nigerian education, effective monitoring, supervision and quality control must be brought to fore. Furthermore, team building is another technique that principals or school administrators must adopt if they intend to control the quality task carried out by the teacher. Thus, the study examines the roles of administrators of public secondary schools in enhancing teaching and learning in Ilorin south local government, Kwara State.

## **Concept of school administrator**

School administrator is a person who oversees the daily operation of a school to ensure efficiency and effectiveness in educational industry. They ensure the school runs smoothly, efficiently and effectively through proper planning, organizing, coordinating and mobilization of men, materials and financial resources in the educational industry to improve teaching and learning. They provide guidance and direction to teachers and students as well making vital decisions that will be beneficial to the growth of the school, teachers and the learners. According to Hallinger et al, (2020) school administrators are instructional leader who support and evaluates teachers, develops and implements curriculum, and promote a culture of teaching and learning.

Macalisang (2023), affirmed that school administrators are proficient in their roles as educational leaders, responsible for establishing the school's mission, vision, goals, and objectives and creating an environment that supports teaching and learning. They are saddled with guiding schools toward achieving their vision and mission. According to Preston (2024), the highest responsibility of the school system rest on the shoulders of the school administrator. Essentially, he/ she must possess unique abilities and qualities for ensuring that school activities are carried out smoothly, members of staff are supported, right decisions are made for the stability and continuation of the school, and lot more. According to Preston (2024), for a school administrator to efficiently carry out his/her responsibilities he must possess qualities that include but not limited to:

1. **Good listener and team-builder:** An administrator must possess the skills of listening to other people opinions and views, most especially the teachers and the learners so as to understand their needs, ideas, challenges and feedbacks. As this will earn the administrator more respect from staffs and will limit the pressure of decision-making off the chest for some time. However, it is important for school administrators to acknowledge the power of teamwork and collaboration as second opinions make the difference most of the time.
2. **Problem solver:** school administrators usually face different situations every day, some of these problems might be something new and unexpected. Yet, an administrator must be able to think and act promptly on effective solutions that do not put other parties at a disadvantage. The key to a successful administrator lies in their problem-solving skills.
3. **Open to change and be flexible:** An administrator therefore must be ready to accept and adapt to change whenever a situation calls for it. The only thing that is constant in life is change. As the human society is growing, changes keep occurring from time to time. The school is not left out; a school administrator must therefore keep him/herself updated about the changes occurring in curriculum, policies, technology, media and other issues concerning the school.
4. **Effective Communication:** A school administrator must possess the ability to channel his/her views, opinion, ideas and perspective clearly, directly and honestly to other members of the school.
5. **Friendliness:** There is usually an intimidating aura when it comes to school administrators dealing with students. This is because, throughout history, the teacher-student or school head-student relationship has been quite a complex one that is never smooth or friendly.

## **Role of school administrators**

School administrators are key figures as they play an important role ensuring the success of an educational institution. They direct and supervise daily operations, ensuring that students receive a high-quality education in a secure and supportive setting. They lead, manage staff, implement policies, and allocate resources to enhance student learning. They are not just administrators but they are leaders with strong communication skill, interpersonal skills, high emotional intelligence and strategic thinkers. This enables school administrators to build and maintain positive relationships with teachers, students, parents, and the broader community.

Gupta (2021) states that school administrators perform the roles of organizing, running, controlling, managing and setting attainable objective towards the achievement of the school educational goals and objectives. They are committed and dedicated to promoting the academic success and welfare of students and foster a feeling of belonging and community support, candid criticism and open communication, advance diversity and inclusion, recognize and commend the work of both staff and students.

Borida (2022) highlights the roles of a school administrator as to include the under listed;

1. Implementation of school curriculum: The curriculum sets clear and measurable goals for students and teachers. This helps them understand what goal is to be achieved at the end of the session or a course in school. The school administrators hereby ensure that all curricula and extra curricula activities that goes on in school are geared towards the achievement of set curriculum goal of the school. He/she sees to it that the class is moving according to the set timeline and curriculum standards are met when following the classroom schedule.
2. Monitoring school finances: It is the duty of a school administrator to ensure that all funds that comes in to the school is not misappropriated. They make decisions on budget which is decided at the beginning of the academic year. School administrators take care of the allocation of funds for the smooth running of the school.
3. Enhance interpersonal relationships within the school: The school administrator helps in fostering relationships with teachers, students, parents, and the wider community. They possess communication and interpersonal skills that helps in maintaining positive relationship between members of the school.
4. Cultivating a positive school culture: School administrators play a vital role in cultivating a positive school culture by promoting inclusivity, encouraging open dialogue, recognizing the efforts of both staff and students, creating an environment where everyone feels valued. This fosters a sense of belonging among members of the school and contribute to a thriving academic environment.

Robinson (2017), equally highlights the following roles of school administrators:

1. Overseeing teachers and heads of departments: school administrators are necessary for the successful and effective management of a school. A good administrator ensures smooth and stable implementation of the school system through good recruitment of teachers and heads of departments, consistent monitoring of the staff's workload, and making the necessary amends when things do not go as planned.
2. Decision-making: School administrator is directly responsible for leading both the teaching staff and the students to work better and succeed. Therefore, a school administrator demonstrates the importance of unity and collaboration in times of crises or

change. In any organization, a good leader possesses and reveals strong and proactive decision-making skills during times of need.

3. Enhance and encourage students' achievement and academic progress: an effective leader in any organization has a positive and faithful mindset with those around him/her. That is why a school administrator is one of the pillars for keeping the school up and running; he/she should consistently embolden students to do their best and encourage progress and growth within any student. This will definitely keep the school a positive environment for existing students who might need inspiration from time to time and will embrace the newcomers into a safe and healthy learning environment.
4. Promotes accountability: school administrators ensure well-documented processes, procedures and record keeping. Detailed school records provide parents with peace of mind that their child's academic and personal development is being looked after, as well as their general safety and daily wellbeing.
5. Monitoring and supervision of staff: a key element of administration is the ability to organize the staff's tasks and monitor their workload. The school head does not sit in his office expecting everything to manage itself. Usually, a school administrator should supervise the staff, their assigned tasks, have a round of the classrooms and ensure everything is working according to plan.
6. Communicating with parents: school administrators preserve a connection with the parents. A keen school administrator should consistently organize parent-teacher meeting to keep the parents updated about their children's progress, information and important announcements.
7. Provide feedbacks: feedbacks given to teachers is necessary for the healthy development of the staff, and also about how not giving constructive criticism can be a nightmare for teachers working at the school. That is why giving proper and detailed feedback will make your teachers working appreciate you and will lead to effective results.
8. Building a teamwork culture: as a school head, try as much as you can to give your attention to building a good rapport with the staff. This will help make the work environment less stressful and more comfortable for all those involved. Keep reminding your staff that you are all together in the same boat and that you are working towards a common goal. These concepts will stay in their minds and will drive them towards hard work and dedication.
9. Establishing ground rules: with good leadership comes a solid system. That is why before the academic year, make sure to carry out orientation sessions for current teachers and new teachers where you can implement the rules needed for dealing with students. Be on the same boat regarding discipline, student support, teaching techniques, and everything related to student-teacher relationship. This will maintain a unified voice for the students which helps in creating a cooperative spirit.
10. Planning and dividing workload: do not forget to keep a neat schedule for the tasks you need to be divided among the teachers. When everything is planned from the beginning of the academic year, things run smoothly throughout and inconveniences are kept to a minimum

### **Challenges of school administrators**

School administrators face various challenges that impact their effectiveness and the overall success of their schools. These include;

1. School administrator's battles with insufficient funds to support school operations, infrastructure, and resources: The efficacy of public schools is impacted by the various obstacles that administrators must overcome. One significant issue is dealing with financial limitations, which can restrict access to essential resources and impair the quality of education (Odden & Picus, 2014). Managing resources and allocating funds requires administrators to make difficult choices while aiming for fair and fulfilling educational opportunities.
2. School administrators face the problem of shortage of qualified teachers, particularly in certain subjects: Addressing teacher shortages and high turnover rates is another major concern. Maintaining educational continuity and quality requires hiring and keeping highly qualified teachers, claim Sutchter et al. (2019). Effective tactics for luring gifted educators, fostering a positive work atmosphere, and offering continual chances for professional growth must be developed by administrators.
3. Another difficulty facing school administrators is putting new policies into effect. According to Darling-Hammond et al. (2020), substantial planning and coordination are needed when making changes to educational policies. Administrators must overcome these obstacles by creating precise implementation strategies, offering chances for professional growth, and encouraging cooperation between interested parties.
4. Technology integration into the school setting: Another difficulty for school administrators is adjusting to the rapidly evolving educational landscape, which is influenced by research findings, technological developments, and changing social norms. Fullan (2017) asserts that administrators need to integrate new teaching strategies, prioritize continuous learning, and cultivate an innovative and continuous improvement culture.
5. School administrators also have to deal with concerns of equality, diversity, and student well-being. Lindsey et al. (2018) emphasize that fostering inclusive environments that assist various student populations is crucial to fostering both academic achievement and social-emotional development. To meet these demands and advance a strong school culture, administrators must create plans.

### **Strategies for enhancing school administrators' roles**

Okezue (2013) enumerated the following strategies for enhancing administrators' roles:

1. Teachers' involvement in decision-making: administrators who ignores the participation of staffs in decision making experiences poor teachers commitment and this could affect the academic performance of the learners.
2. Proper delegation of duties: administrators should assign duties to the teachers, so as to make them to be more committed to their work and this will also reduce the workload of the school administrator.
3. Open communication: effective communication skills plays a crucial role in effective running of the school and as well as increases teachers' job performance.
4. Administrator' involvement in staff welfare: administrators should endeavour to be fully involved in the welfare of their staffs especially in taking care of their needs both mentally and financially.

5. Parent and community engagement: build stronger relationships with parents and the community through regular communication, involvement opportunities, and outreach programmes.
6. Time management and prioritization: effective time management and prioritization to focus on high-impact tasks and responsibilities.
7. Emotional intelligence and self-awareness: develop self-awareness, empathy, and social skills to effectively manage conflict, build trust, and foster a positive school culture.

## **Conclusion**

School administrators play a vital role in enhancing teaching and learning in public secondary schools. Their leadership and management skills are essential for creating a positive and productive learning environment that supports the academic achievement and personal growth of all students. For effectiveness of these noble roles, administrators are expected to monitor school finances, set curriculum standards, cultivate positive school culture and enhance interpersonal skills. The extent of each principal's effectiveness and efficiency in each of these identified roles have been found to positively correlate teachers' effectiveness in the teaching and learning processes. This in turn has a rippling effect on students' positive academic achievement in school. Administrators' effectiveness and efficiency is however challenged by the problems of lack of sufficient funds, shortage of staffs, inadequate school building, and the management of student's behaviour, discipline and safety among others.

## **Suggestions**

Based on the study, the following suggestions were made:

1. Government should provide adequate funding to support school operations, infrastructure and resources.
2. Government should recruit more qualified and professional teachers to work in the school.
3. School administrators should implore the government to improve infrastructures in the school and they should also maintain school facilities including classrooms, laboratories and sport facilities.
4. School administrators should develop and implement policies and procedures to promote positive student behaviour and discipline.
5. School administrators should provide access to technology, such as computers, internet, and digital resources to support teaching and learning.
6. School administrators should build and maintain relationships with the local community, including parents, businesses, and community organizations.

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