

Influence of Office Management Skills on Principals' Administrative Efficiency in Osun State Public Secondary Schools

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Abstract

Effective office management is crucial to organizational success, especially in today's educational environment. Despite the increasing administrative demands placed on educators, many educators lack formal training in office management. This results in inefficiencies, missed opportunities for student support, and an over-reliance on employed administrative staff for tasks that teachers or principals could manage independently. It is on this premise that this study examined the influence of office management skills on principals' administrative efficiency in Osun State public secondary schools. It used a descriptive survey design. The population of the study was 489 public secondary school principals in Osun State. The sample size was 93 public secondary school principals randomly selected from each of the 30 Local Government Areas, and one Area Office at Modakeke. The researcher employed stratified random sampling where the whole population was partitioned into 31 local government areas and three principals were randomly selected from each local government, and one area office through the hat and draw method of randomization. Data were collected using a researcher-designed questionnaire titled "Office Management Skills and Secondary School Principal's Efficiency" (OMSSSPE). The instrument contained 35 items, and its face and content validation of the instrument was done by three experts. The reliability coefficient of 0.79 was obtained by the use of Cronbach Alpha. The researcher distributed 93 copies of the questionnaire, and only 81 copies correctly filled were used for the analysis. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions. It was found that 15 office management skills were needed by educators (Mean=3.81; SD=.426); these skills were found to influence the efficiency of secondary school principals (Mean=3.75; SD=.331). It was concluded that office management skills are instrumental to the efficiency of secondary school principals. Researchers recommended that the Federal ministry of Education should collaborate with other stakeholders in education and office management to integrate office management skills into teachers' general education curricula.

Keywords: Educators, Efficiency, Management, Office, Skills

Introduction

Secondary school principals are increasingly required to perform administrative and managerial tasks alongside their teaching responsibilities, meanwhile, the ability to manage office-related duties efficiently has been observed to have a direct impact on the productivity principals and the institutions. Generally, a secondary school principal is broadly known as an education professional who facilitates learning, promotes intellectual development, and supports the academic, social, and emotional growth of students within formal educational settings.

Principals of secondary schools operate in dynamic environments where administrative efficiency is essential. Office management which includes tasks such as record-keeping, easy retrieval of documents, scheduling, correspondence, the use of digital tools, and office arrangement are very vital to the productivity and efficiency of schools, be it private or public. Office management is regarded as the process of planning, organizing, coordinating, and controlling office activities to achieve organizational objectives efficiently and effectively. It involves the administration of office functions within the categories of communication, documentation, scheduling, resource allocation, and the use of technology and personnel (Obasi & Eze, 2024).

In the context of this study, office management is a process, or a system created to ensure that academic and administrative operations run smoothly in support of the teaching and learning by enabling timely access to resources, accurate documentation, streamlined communication, and coordination of tasks among staff and students. According to Adeyemi (2023), office management skills are essential for maintaining order and enhancing the productivity of principals of secondary school in both academic and administrative duties. Similarly, Zhang & Thomas (2022) suggested that principals who are proficient in office technologies and time management practices should be able to demonstrate higher levels of instructional preparedness and student engagement. The integration of digital tools has also transformed office management in education. As argued by Ojo et al. (2021) that in this modern day, principals are expected to master digital filing systems, learning management platforms, and communication software to meet modern expectations. Moreover, a study by Ahmed & Yilmaz (2024) found that poor office management among principals contributes to missed deadlines, poor student feedback, and administrative conflicts, particularly in secondary school settings. The above highlight the growing importance of equipping secondary school principals with adequate administrative and office management competencies.

Effective office management is crucial to organizational success, especially in today's educational environment. Copex (2025), Obasi, and Eze (2024) highlighted several key areas where office management significantly contributes to operational efficiency and strategic growth of educators. According to Copex, office management ensures seamless coordination among departments and units, and facilitates clear communication and efficient administrative task execution. This alignment minimizes redundancies and accelerates project completion and directly impacts principal's productivity.

Act of systematically allocating human and material resources as a function of office management reduces waste and maximizes output. Effective resource management leads to cost savings and improved profitability. Further to this, modern office management embraces digital tools and automation to streamline operations. The integration of technologies like artificial intelligence and office management software enhances decision-making and operational efficiency (Pinrom, 2025).

Office management contributes to strategic decision-making by analyzing data and forecasting organizational needs. Its insights are vital for long-term planning and adapting to market changes. Office management plays a pivotal role in maintaining compliance with regulations and standards. By implementing robust policies and procedures, effective office management helps mitigate risks and uphold organizational integrity (Remoik, 2024). Educational system that invests in robust office management practices is expected to be better positioned to navigate the complexities of the modern educational landscape.

A deficiency in office management skills among principals of secondary schools can have profound implications on the efficiency, morale, and overall performance of schools. A study by Ekundayo and Kolawole (2013) in Nigerian secondary schools found that poor time management impedes principals' ability to handle emergencies and respond to urgent tasks, thereby affecting their administrative effectiveness. Similarly, Garima (2025) explained that inadequate office management skills among educators can adversely affect teachers' job performance. Garima highlighted further that lack of effective communication skills as part of office management skill can lead to misunderstandings and a breakdown in trust among staff, students and parents. This erosion of trust can result in a negative school culture, decreased motivation among teachers and diminished student engagement. Educators without proper financial handling skills may struggle with budgeting, monitoring, and auditing of school finances. A study by Amos et al. (2021) emphasized that insufficient financial handling competencies as integral part of office management skills among school heads hinders provision of quality education.

Poor office management practices can lead to high rates of teacher turnover. An investigation into Rwandan public primary schools found that inadequate office administration and management skills contribute to a 20% annual teacher separation rate, which negatively affects student learning outcomes (Andrew, 2020). In another development, Olorunisola and Bello (2018) established that educators lacking in office management skills may find it difficult to effectively implement curricula. This challenge is often due to inadequate planning, resource allocation, and supervision, leading to sub-optimal teaching and learning experiences. Addressing these issues necessitates targeted professional development programs focusing on enhancing educators' office management competencies, such initiatives can lead to improved administrative efficiency, better teacher performance, and enhanced educational outcomes occasioned by the school principals.

A school principal is the administrative and educational leader of a school, responsible for the supervision of daily operations, the management of staff, the implementation of educational policies, and the preservation of a secure and productive learning environment. To guarantee academic excellence, they establish the school's vision and objectives, develop curriculum standards, and evaluate student performance (Career Explorer, 2025). Principals are anticipated to serve as instructional leaders, overseeing the development of curriculum and

instructional practices in addition to their administrative responsibilities. They are essential in the recruitment and evaluation of instructors, the establishment of school policies and culture, the management of the school budget and operations, and the representation of the school in the community.

The efficiency of secondary school principals is pivotal to the overall performance and effectiveness of educational institutions. Recent studies across various Nigerian states have highlighted key factors influencing secondary school principals' efficiency. Exploiting few among them, Akinola (2013) explained that principals in South Western Nigeria who possess strong technical, interpersonal, conceptual, and administrative skills significantly enhance school efficiency, particularly in student academic achievement. Goddey (2017) observed that in Ebonyi State, principals exhibiting transformation leadership behaviors such as intellectual stimulation and individualized consideration positively impact teachers' job performance. Similarly, Raji and Kwashabawa (2024) found a significant relationship between teachers' classroom management and principals' administrative efficiency in the North West zone, suggesting that collaborative efforts enhance school administration. Overall, the role of a school principal is multifaceted, requiring a balance of leadership, management, and interpersonal skills to effectively guide their schools toward academic success and a positive learning environment.

Statement of the Problem

Despite the increasing pedagogical and administrative demands placed on principals of secondary schools, many principals lack formal training in office management because the typical Nigerian teacher education curriculum had been observed to not specifically list office administration/management as a core subject. This results in inefficiencies, missed opportunities for student support, and over-reliance on employed administrative staff for tasks that teachers or principals could manage independently if given the proper training and tools thereby saving time and other vital resources of the school.

Effective office management is critical for the successful administration of public secondary schools. Principals, as the chief executives of the schools are expected to possess strong office management skills that would enable them to plan, organize, coordinate, and control administrative tasks efficiently. However, in many public secondary schools, particularly in developing countries like Nigeria, there is growing concern about the declining efficiency of school principals, often linked to deficiencies in essential office management competencies such as time management, communication, delegation, record-keeping, easy retrieval of records and documents relating to staff and students, and use of modern technology.

Several studies have identified that inadequate office management skills of principals can lead to poor school administration, low teacher morale, ineffective supervision, delayed decision-making, and general disorganization within the school environment (Ekundayo & Kolawole, 2013; Amos, Ephrahem, & Bhoke-Africanus, 2021). Despite training programmes and policy interventions, gaps persist in the practical application of office management knowledge, affecting the operational flow of schools and academic outcomes. This study therefore examined the influence of office management skills on the efficiency of public secondary school principals. To the best knowledge of the researchers, the study of the influence of office

management skills on the efficiency of secondary school principals has never been conducted using Osun State as a case study.

Purpose of the Study

The specific purposes of this study were to:

1. identify the core office management skills needed by secondary school principals for administrative efficiency; and
2. examine the influence of office management skills on secondary school principals' administrative efficiency.

Research Questions

1. What are the core office management skills needed by secondary school principals?
2. What is the influence of office management skills on secondary school principals' administrative efficiency?

Methodology

This study adopted a descriptive survey design. The population consisted of 489 public secondary school principals in Osun State. The sample size was 93 public secondary school principals randomly selected from each of the 30 Local Government Areas and one Area Office at Modakeke. Researchers employed stratified random sampling, The population was partitioned into 31 local government areas, from which three principals were randomly chosen from each local government using the hat- and- draw randomization method. Data were collected through a self- designed questionnaire titled "Office Management Skills and Secondary School Principal's Efficiency" (OMSSSPE). which contained 35 items. The questionnaire was divided into two sections, and was structured based on a 4- point modified Likert-type rating scale: Strongly Needed (SN) rated 4 points, Needed (N) scored 3 points, Not Needed (NN) given 2 points, and Strongly Not Needed (SNN) assigned 1 point for section one; Strongly Agree (SA) 4 points, Agree (A) 3 points, Disagree (D) 2 points, and Strongly Disagree (SD) 1 point for section two. The face and content validation of the instrument was conducted by three experts in Business Education (Office Technology and Management Specialist), Educational Administration and Management, and Test and Measurement, and their corrections and observations were incorporated into the final draft of the instrument. The reliability of the instrument was assessed through statistical analysis of the data collected during the pilot study, Cronbach Alpha method was used to determine internal consistency and reliability of the instrument. A reliability coefficient of 0. 79 was obtained. The researcher distributed 93 copies of the questionnaire, and only 81 correctly filled copies were used for analysis. Descriptive statistics of mean and standard deviation were employed to answer the research questions. Mean scores between 3. 25 - 4. 00 were considered Strongly Needed (SN)/Strongly Agree (SA), 2. 50 – 3. 24 categorized as Needed (N)/Agree (A), items with scores between 1. 75 – 2. 49 were classified as Not Needed (NN)/Disagree (D), and 1.00 – 1.74 are labeled as Strongly Not Needed (SNN)/Strongly Disagree (SD).

Result

The results of data analysis were presented according to the research questions.

Research Question One: What are the core office management skills needed by educators?

Table 1

Responses to the Core Office Management Skills Needed by Principals

S/N	Items	\bar{X}	S.D.	Remarks
1	I need skill for tracking grades, attendance, and behavioral records	3.96	.214	SN
2	I need classroom and resource scheduling skill	3.95	.235	SN
3	I need record management (student grades, attendance, lesson plans) skill	3.93	.278	SN
4	I need event planning (parent meetings, school functions, field trips) skill	3.89	.341	SN
5	I need skill for maintenance of accurate student and staff records	3.88	.386	SN
6	I need email and phone communication skill	3.85	.399	SN
7	I need time management skill for balancing teaching and administrative tasks	3.84	.402	SN
8	I need MS Word, Excel, and PowerPoint skill	3.80	.425	SN
9	I need memo, report, and meeting note writing skill	3.79	.489	SN
10	I need data entry and student information systems' (SIS) skill	3.78	.490	SN
11	I need data privacy and security compliance skills	3.76	.504	SN
12	I need skill for managing petty cash or fundraisers	3.73	.521	SN
13	I need skill to operate classroom technologies and equipment (projectors, smart boards, printers)	3.72	.529	SN
14	I need budgeting skill for classroom and unit supplies	3.65	.583	SN
15	I need skill for tracking resources/materials	3.62	.594	SN
	Grand Weighted Average	3.81	.426	SN

The significant majority of respondents expressed very strong opinions on all of the items. The fact that all mean scores fell inside the planned judgment range of 3.25 to 4.00 reflects this strong opinion. This is shown by the average mean of 3.81 and the average standard deviation of 0.426. The implication of this is that all the itemized office management skills are were strongly needed by secondary school principals.

Research Question Two: What is the influence of office management skills on efficiency of educators?

Table 2

Responses to the Influence of Office Management Skills on Principals' Administrative

S/N	Items	\bar{X}	S.D.	Remarks
16	Office management skills save time when retrieving past information or reports.	4.00	.000	SA
17	Office management skills keep disruptions minimal, supporting smoother school operations.	4.00	.000	SA
18	Office management skills enable quick and effective handling of administrative or classroom issues.	3.98	.211	SA
19	Office management skills supports accurate tracking of student progress and attendance for your efficiency.	3.92	.219	SA
20	Office management skills reduce stress and errors caused by disorganization.	3.89	.291	SA
21	Office management skills improve preparedness for classes and meetings.	3.87	.302	SA
22	Office management skills prevent clashes in schedules and missed deadlines.	3.87	.302	SA
23	Office management skills assist in keeping teaching materials, records, and schedules in order.	3.86	.314	SA
24	Office management save time and effort with digital tools for grading and lesson's presentations.	3.83	.321	SA

25	Office management skills avoid waste and improves access to necessary tools.	3.80	.340	SA
26	Office management skills help educators prioritize tasks (lesson planning, grading, meetings).	3.78	.351	SA
27	Office management skills streamline tasks like data entry, communication, and lesson delivery.	3.77	.358	SA
28	Office management skills facilitate creation of realistic lesson plans and academic calendars.	3.71	.364	SA
29	Office management skills reduce time wastage and avoids last-minute rush.	3.66	.378	SA
30	Office management skills ensure clear interaction with colleagues, students, and parents.	3.62	.382	SA
31	Office management skills reduce burnout by managing workload.	3.58	.439	SA
32	Office management skills promote efficient sharing of responsibilities with colleagues or assistants.	3.53	.446	SA
33	Office management skills ensure optimal use of teaching aids, classroom supplies, and budgets.	3.48	.496	SA
34	Office management skills improve pacing and delivery of curriculum.	3.41	.522	SA
35	Office management skills allow me to focus on teaching and student support.	3.37	.583	SA
	Grand Weighted Average	3.75	.331	SA

Table 2 revealed that larger size of respondents were resolute in their responses to items on the Table, majority of them strongly agreed to all items. This agreement is obvious as all mean scores ~~are~~ were equal or above the fixed decision value of 3.25. This indicates that there is low disparity from the mean in the respondents' responses. The average mean and standard deviation of 3.75 and 0.331 respectively are indicators to this fact. The inference from this is

that in the opinion of respondents, office management skills influence the efficiency of secondary school principals.

Discussion of Findings

Finding on research question one (Table 1) revealed that the office management skills needed for the efficiency of secondary school principals were skills for tracking grades and records, classroom and resource scheduling, records management skill, meeting and school event planning skill, maintenance of students and staff records, email and hone communication skill, computer and time management skill, minutes and report writing skill, student information system (SIS) skill, data privacy and security skill, basic financial management skill, classroom technology skill, budgeting and resource tracking skill. This finding is in-tandem with the findings of the study conducted by Ademiluyi (2016) who identified office technology and management, office automation, communication, and computer skills as highly relevance to secretaries and other every office holders which secondary school principals are part and parcel. Similarly, Ekundayo and Kolawole (2013) found that principals with strong time management skills exhibited higher administrative effectiveness. However, challenges such as emergency situations and unexpected demands from educational authorities can impede effective time management. Similarly, Asogwa and Ozomenam (2023) found that digital employ-ability skills, such as electronic record management, operation of digital office equipment, and proficiency in Microsoft Word, are crucial for office managers in electronic offices.

Finding on research question two (Table 2) revealed that office management skills influence the efficiency of secondary school principals. Based on the findings of this study, the researchers strongly believe that office management skills are pivotal in enhancing the efficiency and overall performance of principals. These skills not only support the administrative functions of principals, but also contribute significantly to their ability to create organized, productive, and responsive learning environments. It is the conviction of the researchers that the presence or absence of strong office management skills significantly influences an principals' efficiency, as the demands on principals continue to evolve, so must their skill sets. This finding correlates with the findings of Chukwu (2024) who established that principals' communication skills significantly influence effective personnel management in secondary schools. In the same vein, Offem, Ushie, and Ononiwu (2022) observed that principals' leadership and managerial skills enhance teachers' classroom management and productivity in public secondary schools. Further to the above, Oluwunmi, and Gbarayeghe (2022) who found that office layout elements such as reliable internet access, ergonomic furniture, and spatial arrangements substantially impact efficiency of secondary school principals. In the same vein, Adu, and Duku (2023) established that administrative communication influences principals' task performance and the attainment of school objectives. Principals' use of different communication channels was found to facilitate valuable decision-making and improve teaching outcomes. Further to this, Obi, and Shuaibu (2021) examined the impact of staff development programs in office management on lecturers in Northwestern Nigeria, it was found that such programs significantly enhanced lecturers' job performance, particularly in instructional planning. Balafama, (2023) also found that principals' communication skills accounted for 79.9% of the variance in administrative

effectiveness, while problem-solving skills accounted for 66.1%. These findings underscore the critical role of office management skills in school administration. This is explained through the model below:

Conclusion

This study examined the influence of office management skills on efficiency of public secondary school principals, in Osun State. The study has two purposes and two research questions that guided the study. The investigation revealed that office management skills play a crucial role in enhancing the efficiency and overall performance of secondary school principals. Previous empirical evidences consistently support that competencies such as time management, communication, problem-solving, and digital literacy significantly influence how effectively principals perform both administrative and instructional duties. These skills enable smoother classroom management, better instructional planning, and more productive school environments. Moreover, strong office management skills contribute to improved job satisfaction, reduced workload stress, and more effective use of institutional resources. Therefore, equipping secondary school principals with essential office management skills through targeted training and professional development programs is imperative for advancing educational outcomes and institutional success.

Recommendations

The following were recommended sequel to the findings and conclusion of the study:

1. Government, through Federal Ministry of Education, should collaborate with other stakeholders to integrate office management skills into general teacher education curricula.
2. Ministry of Education in collaboration, and all stakeholders should regularly evaluate and improve on better office systems for the efficiency of secondary school principals.

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