

DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES AS DETERMINANTS OF HEAD TEACHERS' SUPERVISORY PRACTICES IN PUBLIC PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN SOUTH EASTERN NIGERIA

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Abstract

The study investigated demographic variables as determinants of head teachers' supervisory practices in public primary schools in South Eastern Nigeria. Two specific objectives with corresponding research questions guided the study and two hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance. The study adopted an ex-post facto research design. The population of the study was 5,453 head teachers from 5,453 public primary schools in South Eastern Nigeria. The sample size for the study was 373 head teachers in 373 public primary schools in South Eastern Nigeria. Data collected for the study were analyzed using Means and Standard Deviation to answer the research questions while independent t-test and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) were used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. Findings of the study revealed that, there is a significant difference between the mean responses of head teachers on supervisory practices based on marital status and income level in public primary schools in South Eastern Nigeria. Based on the findings, it was recommended among others that, the Government and Primary

school administrators must critically consider the job type in relation to the marital status of head teachers in order to have a maximum output in terms of supervision. Head teachers get inspired more when they are paid commensurate income to what they are doing. Hence, there is an urgent need to motivate and reward head teachers so as to improve supervision.

Keywords: demographic variables, supervisory practices, head teachers, public primary schools

Introduction

The National Policy on Education in Nigeria described primary education as the bedrock of other levels of education including the secondary and tertiary institutions. It is the primary level of education that determines the success or failure of the whole school system (FRN, 2016). The improvement in pupils' performance at the primary level will allow greater transition of pupils into secondary school. Anero (2014) concludes that primary education is a preparatory ground for the child to acquire basic life skills that would assist the child throughout life. The head teacher is the administrative head of the primary school. The head teacher is responsible for the management of primary schools in different tasks such as instructional supervision. Head teachers as administrators of primary schools are charged with the responsibility of mobilizing appropriate human and material resources to achieve the organizational goals. As a supervisor, the head teacher should be visible in all the nooks and crannies of the school. According to Esia-Donkoh and Baffoe (2018), head teachers are expected to perform instructional tasks such as lesson observation, orientation of new staff, monitoring punctuality and regularity, checking school records, and conducting in-service training. The head teacher has the sole responsibility to see that academic activities of the school are carried out as planned through constant supervision. This is because school supervision is a vital process involving the combination of expert knowledge and experiences which is directed to improve the teaching and learning activities. Corroborating on this view, Nakpodia, (2011) states that if the teachers are not supervised regularly, effectiveness in instruction will be adversely affected and the instructional purposes may not be well realized. This will result to low quality of instructions and invariably teachers lack of commitment to their jobs.

Effective supervision of instruction ensures that teachers teach what they are supposed to teach and the pupils learn what they are supposed to learn. The head teacher must see that meaningful learning takes place in all classes and that teachers are teaching what they are supposed to teach and are undertaking the teaching in a manner that the pupils understand and enjoy their lessons. No wonder Olorode and Adeyemo (2012) explained that supervision incorporates checking, enquiry, fact-finding, keeping watch, survey, correction, prevention, inspiration, guidance, direction, diagnosis, and improvement. Similarly, Eya and Chukwu (2014) observed that supervision of instruction is effective if it achieves its stated objectives, which is quality instructional delivery. Anything to the contrary means the failure of the programme of supervision. Through effective supervision, available resources meant for public schools at all levels are properly channelled to the teaching and learning processes of education. This will in turn give the nation the desired and required graduates, equipped with requisite knowledge and skills to bring about massive economic recovery in Nigeria education industry and serve as a feeder to other sectors of the economy (Iyang & Hassan, 2018). The objectives of educational institutions are achievable when the standard of teaching and learning is improved. The standard of teaching and learning would improve when there is efficient monitoring and supervision of schools. Contributing to this view, Obiweluozor, Momoh and Ogbonna (2013) acknowledged that effective supervision aims at identifying certain areas that if well supervised, would help improve quality of public primary education in South Eastern Nigeria

However, Nwosu (2009) revealed that the methods of selection of school heads in Nigeria does not consider demographic variables. This process of selection is unsatisfactory and gives room for concern. The implication of this anomaly according to Ominini (2021) is that most of the school leaders grope around and often use trial and error methods in the day- to-day school administration. Similarly, Ominini also agrees that there are theoretical and empirical connections among these demographic and personality variables and performance. This statement is supported by Adu and Olaoye (2014) when they reported that the behavioural traits of the designated school managers is crucial in determining school success. In fact, they influence the behaviour of subordinate and other school participants. They initiate programmes, set policy and obtain material and

fiscal resources; they motivate and support school improvement. Araoyinbo (1995) cited in Adu and Olaoye have sought to relate the success or failure of school leaders to professional traits such as years of training, experience and personal characteristics like age, sex, race and income. No wonder, Gbadamosi, (2013) noted that demographic variables are the personal characteristics of a given population that shows distinctions in the performance of a given task which in turn defines a person productivity. They include the age, sex, marital status, educational qualification, work experience and income. For instance, there is the general proposition that marital status may be linked to performance in the work place. This is because family responsibilities may be a hindering factor to effective performance. The married head teachers may show more dedication to their work because they have dependants whom they need to take care of. According to Khurshid, Qasmi and Ashuraf (2012), marital status affects the self-efficacy of teachers and that married male and female teachers have high self-efficacy that will lead to high job performance. The aforementioned views and observations revealed that married school heads are more efficient in their supervisory duties than their unmarried counterparts. In addition, Mohammed, Haque and Rashid (2013) reported that married teachers were more committed to their work than unmarried teachers. However, in another study, Lekha and Magesh (2016) found out that unmarried employees can perform more efficiently than married employees since their commitment towards their family and other circumstances are considerably less when compared to the married employees.

In another development, Ayodele and Olorunsola (2012) agreed that with increasing income, the level of job satisfaction is also increased. Sharma and Bajpai (2011) reported that job satisfaction increased or decreased with increase or decrease in pay satisfaction. The authors explain that workers would have positive affect about their work or profession if they are well paid. On the contrary, Awang and Ahmed (2010) argued that remuneration have a very low correlation with job satisfaction compared to other factors. In a similar vein, Wekesa and Nyaroo (2013) averred that inadequate payment packages make many head teachers dissatisfied, thus leaving their supervisory roles. Good income on the other hand attracts, motivates and retains head teachers for the attainment of school goals. Good

income package is significant factor affecting head teacher supervisory roles in school.

Okonta Iwuagwu, and Okogbo (2016) investigated marital status of head teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Edo state, Nigeria. The result showed that marital status has influence on the job performance of secondary school teachers in Edo State. The difference is that the previous study investigated head teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Edo state, Nigeria while the present study investigated demographic variables as determinants of head teachers' supervisory practices in public primary schools in South Eastern Nigeria. In one study, Mocheche, Adhiambo and Bosire (2018) investigated marital status as a predictor of job satisfaction of public secondary school teachers in Kisii Central Sub-County. It was established that marital status had an influence on job satisfaction where the married were much happier in their jobs than the single. The difference between the previous and present study is that the previous study was conducted in a secondary school, while the present study was conducted in a primary school. The previous study investigated marital status as a predictor of job satisfaction of public secondary school teachers in Kisii Central Sub-County, while the present study investigated demographic variables as determinants of head teachers' supervisory practices in South Eastern, Nigeria. Similarly, Adeoye, Akoma and Binuyo (2014) carried out a study on marital status as determinants of job satisfaction: a case study of Nigeria workers. The results indicated that there is a significant difference between the marital status and Job Satisfaction as $(F_{3,396}) = 6.499, p < .05$ and a combined contribution of 20.8. The difference between the previous and present study is that the previous study investigated marital status as determinants of job satisfaction: a case study of Nigeria workers in Ikenne Local Government of Rivers State, South-South Nigeria while the present study investigated demographic variables as determinants of head teachers' supervisory practices in public primary schools in South Eastern Nigeria. The previous study used multiple regression to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance while, the present study used t-test and ANOVA to test the hypotheses.

Subroto (2013) conducted a study on income and implications of teacher performance to improve the quality of education in the elementary school of Surabaya City, Kenya. The study found that salary influenced

teachers' performance and also influenced quality education at elementary school. The difference between the reviewed study and the present study is that the previous study was on income and implications of teacher performance to improve the quality of education in the elementary school of Surabaya City, Kenya while the present study investigated demographic variables as determinants of head teachers' supervisory practices in public primary in South Eastern Nigeria. Fozia and Ali (2016) conducted a study on the impact of teachers' financial compensation on their job satisfaction at higher secondary level in both public and private sectors Islamabad. The study revealed that mostly higher secondary schools have fixed pay system while few have variable pay system. The study also discovered that teachers' salary does not link with their productivity while teachers agree that the attraction and retention of employee depend on the compensation.

The success of public primary education depends largely on the quality of learning instruction given to the learner. Today, most of the public schools are seen as grounds where children are used to run errand for their teachers while other social vices have become very prevalent in the school system. It has also been observed that often times, pupils perform poorly in academics especially external exams. All these shortcomings have been blamed on the teachers. It is also observed that lack of commitment on the part of teachers sometimes manifest in the form of lateness to school and leaving school before the actual closing time. Also, most of the time, pupils are seen roaming the school premises, while some are sent on errands by the teachers when they ought to be in class. These acts by the teacher are indicative that the quality of supervision in the school is generally poor and could hinder the attainment of school objectives. Since available literature has shown that demographic factors like educational qualification, experience, age, gender, specialization, marital status and income influence head teachers' performance in the supervision of primary schools, therefore, this study seeks to investigate the potential implications of demographic variables, specifically focusing on marital status and income level, on the supervisory practices of head teachers in South Eastern Nigeria's primary schools. By examining these variables, the study aims to discern their influence on the commitment and effectiveness of head teachers in their supervisory roles, ultimately contributing to the enhancement of primary education outcomes in the region.

The main objective of the study was to investigate how demographic variables determine head teachers' supervisory practices in South-Eastern Nigeria. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. ascertain how marital status of head teachers determine their supervisory practices in public primary schools in South Eastern Nigeria
2. establish how income of head teachers determine their supervisory practices in public primary schools

Research Questions

The following research questions were posed to guide the study:

1. What is the mean response of head teachers' marital status on their supervisory practices in public primary schools in South Eastern Nigeria?
2. What is the mean response of head teachers' income on their supervisory practices in public primary schools?

Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance:

1. There is no significant difference between the mean responses of head teachers' supervisory practices based on their marital status in public primary schools in South Eastern Nigeria.
2. There is no significant difference between the mean responses of head teachers' supervisory practices based on their income in public primary school

Methodology

The study adopted an ex-post facto research design. The population of the study comprised 5453 head teachers of public primary schools in South Eastern, Nigeria. The sample size for the study was 373 head teachers. The sample size was determined using Taro Yamane 1969 sample size determination formula to arrive at the sample size of 373 head teachers. Taro Yamen's formula was used to select the required number of head teachers per states for fair representation. In selecting the sample, sampling was done in multi-stages. At the first stage, proportionate stratified

sampling technique was used. This was to ensure that, contribution of each state in the population was exactly its proportionate contribution in the sample. In other words, it was done to ensure that proportionate number of head teachers in the five states was represented in the sample. By this technique, 67 head teachers were selected from 67 public primary schools in Abia State, 80 from 80 public primary schools in Anambra State, 57 from 57 public primary schools in Ebonyi State, 101 from 101 public primary schools in Enugu State and 93 from 93 public primary schools Imo State. Thus, a total of 373 head teachers was used for the study. The questionnaire titled “Demographics, of Head Teachers’ and Supervisory Practices Questionnaire (DEHTSPQ)” had two sections namely, sections, A and B. section A contained information on demographics of head teacher while, section B contained items on supervisory practices. The instrument was validated by experts in test and measurement and in educational administration and planning. The reliability of the instrument was established using Cronbach Alpha method and a reliability of 0.8 was obtained. Data collected was analysed using descriptive statistics of Mean and Standard Deviation to answer the research questions while, independent t-test and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) were used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. Independent t-test was used to test hypotheses 2 while ANOVA was used to test hypothesis 1. For the test of hypotheses, the decision was based on P-values and Alpha values. When $P < .05$, the null hypothesis was rejected and considered “Significant” and when $P > .05$, the null hypothesis was not rejected and considered “Not Significant”.

Results

Research Question One: What is the mean response of head teachers’ marital status on their supervisory practices in public primary schools in South Eastern Nigeria?

To answer this research question, responses of head teachers’ marital status on their supervisory practices in public primary schools in South Eastern Nigeria was collected and analyzed with the result presented in Table 1

Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation of Responses of Head Teachers' Marital Status on their Supervisory Practices in Public Primary Schools in South Eastern Nigeria

S/N	Marital status	N	Mean	SD	Rank
1	Married	217	3.48	0.83	1st
2	Unmarried	19	2.89	1.04	4 th
3	Separated	11	2.98	0.99	3rd
4	Widowed	126	3.36	0.98	2nd

Table 1 shows the mean responses of head teachers' marital status on their supervisory practices in public primary schools in South Eastern Nigeria. Data presented in Table 1 revealed that the married primary school head teachers have mean response of 3.48 and SD = 0.83; unmarried has 2.89 and SD = 1.04; separated has 2.98 and SD = 0.99 and widowed have 3.36 and SD = 0.98. It can be seen that based on the rank, the mean response on supervisory practices of married head teachers was the highest, followed by widowed, then separated and unmarried.

Research Question Two: What is the mean response of head teachers' income on their supervisory practices in public primary schools in South Eastern Nigeria?

To answer this research question, responses of head teachers' income on their supervisory practices in public primary schools in South Eastern Nigeria was collected and analyzed with the result presented in Table 2

Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation of Responses of Head Teachers' Income on their Supervisory Practices Based on Income in Public Primary Schools in South Eastern Nigeria

S/N	Income	N	Mean	SD	Rank
1	Level 11- 13	101	2.86	1.03	2 nd
2	Level 14 & Above	272	3.50	0.84	1 st

Table 2 shows the mean responses of head teachers' income on their supervisory practices in public primary schools in South Eastern Nigeria.

Data presented on Table 2 revealed that the primary school head teachers of level 11 – 13 have a mean response of 2.86 and SD = 1.03 while those of level 14 & above have 3.50 and SD = 0.84. It can be seen based on the rank that the mean response on supervisory practices of head teachers with income between level 14 and above was higher (3.50) compared to those of level 11 - 13 (2.86).

Hypothesis One: There is no significant difference in the mean responses of head teachers on their supervisory practices based on marital status in public primary schools in South Eastern Nigeria

Table 3: One-Way ANOVA of the Mean Responses of Head Teachers on their Supervisory Practices based on Marital Status in Public Primary Schools in South Eastern Nigeria

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig	Remark
Between groups	16.552	3	5.507	917.833	.000	Significant
Within groups	2.271	370	0.006			
Total	18.823	373				

df= degree of freedom, F=F-ratio, Sig=P-value

Table 3 is a One-way ANOVA of the mean responses of head teachers on their supervisory practices based on marital status in public primary schools in South Eastern Nigeria. From the analysis, the df = 373; F = 917.833 and P-value or sig=.000. Since the P-value of .000 is less than the alpha-level of .05 ($p < .05$), the test statistic is significant therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. This implies that there is a significant difference among the mean responses of head teachers on their supervisory practices based on marital status in public primary schools in South Eastern Nigeria

Hypothesis Two: There is no significant difference in the mean responses of head teachers on their supervisory practices based on income in public primary schools in South Eastern Nigeria

Table 2: Independent t-test Mean Responses of Head Teachers on their Supervisory Practices based on Income in Public Primary Schools in South Eastern Nigeria

Income	N	Df	T	F	Sig	Alpha Level	Remark
Level 11-13	101	373	-62.311	28.738	.000	.05	Significant
Level 14 & above	272						

**N=Sample, df=Degree of freedom, t=t-calculated, F = F-ratio
Sig=P-value**

Table 4 shows the independent t-test of the mean responses of head teachers on their supervisory practices based on income in public primary schools in South Eastern Nigeria. From the analysis, the $df = 373$; $F=28.738$, $t = -62.311$ and p -value or $sig=.000$. Since the p -value of $.000$ is less than the alpha-level of $.05$ ($p < .05$), the test statistic is significant therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. This implies that there is a significant difference in the mean responses of head teachers on their supervisory practices based on income in public primary schools in South Eastern Nigeria

Discussion of Findings

The finding revealed that the analysis of the corresponding research question showed that the mean responses on supervisory practices of married head teachers was the highest, followed by widowed, then separated and unmarried participants in public primary schools in South Eastern Nigeria. This means that in terms of marital status, married head teachers adopt better supervisory practices of teachers, pupils and the learning environment than those who are widowed. In addition, the supervisory practices of head teachers that are separated was found to be better than those who are unmarried. This finding corroborates that of Iwuagwu, Okogbo and Okonta (2016) who reported that marital status has influence on the job performance of secondary school teachers. Similarly, the finding agrees with that of Mocheche, Adhiambo and Bosire (2018)

who found that marital status had an influence on job satisfaction where the married were much happier doing their jobs than the single. The finding is similar to the study of Adeoye, Akoma and Binuyo (2014) that there is a significant difference between the marital status and job satisfaction. The finding of the present study suggests that marital status affects work performance particularly the supervisory practices of head teachers. Married and widowed head teachers can supervise more efficiently than separated and unmarried head teachers. Consequently, the above findings and explanations have further highlighted the fact that marital status of head teachers of primary school is linked to their performance in school supervision.

The second finding of the study revealed that the mean responses on supervisory practices of head teachers with income between level 14 and above was high compared to those of level 11 – 13 in public primary schools in South Eastern Nigeria. The implication of this is that the supervisory practices of head teachers who are between Grade Level 14 and above are better than those who are between Grade Level 11 – 13. This finding agrees with that of Subroto (2013) whose study on income and implications of teacher performance to improve the quality of education in the elementary school found that salary influenced teachers' performance and also influenced quality education at the elementary school level. The finding however disagrees with that of Fozia and Ali (2016) who found that teachers' salary does not link with their productivity. The finding of the present study suggests that income is a vital tool for enhancing head teachers' supervisory practices because it is the key element for teachers' work motivation. Public primary school head teachers are motivated by what they consider as reward for their performance or responsibility. Generally, many people perform their duty to a large extent when their efforts are valued and they are properly recognised. When head teachers are paid commensurate income to what they are doing, they get motivated to do more. When head teachers feel that their efforts are appreciated and the school has a good compensation structure, teachers' work motivation and commitment would improve. The greater the reward offered to the teachers, the greater the levels of their performance. This therefore explains the significant difference in the supervisory practices between head teachers of Grade Level 11 – 13 and those of Grade Level 14 and above. Hence, head teachers' income has influence on supervision.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, it was concluded that demographic variables such as marital status and income are determinants of supervisory practices of head teachers in public primary schools in South Eastern Nigeria. These demographic variables play a significant role in the supervisory practices of head teachers. This means that the quality of supervision in public primary schools is explained by the head teachers' demographic variables.

Recommendations

Primary school administrators must critically consider the job type in relation to the marital status of teachers in order to have a maximum output in terms of supervision. Therefore, counselors could be employed to help school heads deal with marital and psychological problems. Head teachers get inspired more when they are paid commensurate income to what they are doing. Hence, there is an urgent need to motivate and reward head teachers so as to improve supervision.

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