

ENHANCING TEACHERS' PERFORMANCE THROUGH PRINCIPALS' IMPLEMENTATION OF DISCIPLINARY MEASURES IN PUBLIC SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN RIVERS STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT: The study examined principals' utilization of disciplinary measures for improved teachers' performance in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria. The study had four objectives, four research questions, and four corresponding null hypotheses. The design of the study was descriptive survey design. The study population was the 333 principals of the 333 public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. The sample size was 100 principals (65 males and 35 females) representing 30% of the population. The sample was purposively chosen by the researcher for ease of access to the respondents from public senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt City, Ikwerrri, and Obio/Akpor Local Government Areas of Rivers State. The instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire constructed by the researcher and titled: "Principals' Utilization of Administrative Disciplinary Measures for Teachers' Improved Performance Questionnaire (PUADMITPQ). The reliability index of the instrument was determined using Pearson's Product Moment Correlation statistics on test-retest data obtained from a pilot study of 20 principals from the study population who were not part of the main study. The analysis gave a reliability coefficient of .89. The response pattern of the instrument was the modified 4 points form of Likert scale. The research questions were answered using descriptive statistics of mean and standard deviation whereas the hypotheses were inferentially tested using independent samples t-test at a significance level of .05. The study concluded that the use of administrative disciplinary measures by principals ensures that teachers do the right thing, the right way, and at the right time in the school system. It suggested among others that principals should implement disciplining of teachers with the aim of helping them improve on their job performance for the attainment of goals and objectives of the school, and not as a witch-hunting or vindictive measure.

Keywords: Discipline, Administrative Disciplinary measures, Teachers' Performance, Attendance Monitoring, Warning, Lesson Plans/Notes.

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INTRODUCTION

Indiscipline among teachers is eroding the quality and value of secondary education in Nigeria as a whole and in Rivers State in particular. Unethical behaviours like lateness to school,

absenteeism from school or from classes, truancy, use of school hours for personal business, indecent dressing, quarreling, and various other forms of misconducts that undermine the dignity of the teaching profession have become the common sight when one visits a typical public secondary school in Rivers State. This becomes really worrisome given how critical secondary level of education is in the country. The objectives of this level of education as contained in the national Policy on Education are so critical that if duly achieved, would produce graduands who are sound in both character and in learning, and who possess the competence for self-reliance and for meaningful contribution to their societies. This is achieved through the collaborative effort of teachers, school administrators, parents, the schools board, and other well-meaning members of the society who are all stakeholders of the school system. Unfortunately, teachers have not been playing their roles as expected by the school system and by the society and this has become a cause of concern to stakeholders in the state.

Teachers are at the helm of affairs in the transformation process of the recipients of secondary education, and as such are expected to model good character in their job performance and in their relationship with the school system. It is through teachers that the stated goals and objectives of secondary education are achieved. It has however been found that majority of teachers in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State come short in character and in delivery of their jobs, leading to poor teaching and learning in these schools and consequent upon poor student outcomes. The place of enforcing discipline in the school system is therefore very paramount if teachers must work in accordance with job ethics. Principals, who are the administrators of the secondary schools, therefore need to stand up to their roles as custodians of discipline in the schools, to ensure that teachers deliver their jobs in accordance with stipulated guidelines for effective realization of instructional objectives. Hence, this study is on the administrative strategies that could be leveraged by principals in enforcing discipline among public senior secondary school teachers in Rivers State.

According to Kulbir cited in Ndung'u (2017), a teacher is any person that undertakes the great task of educating the child who looks to him for knowledge, wisdom, manners, morals, inspiration, and enlightenment and so on. Teacher's job performance therefore, is the execution of teaching tasks and rendering of school support services by teachers. It has to do with the ability of a teacher to carry out his / her duties as a teacher. The teacher's job performance is so critical to the success of the school system because it is what determines the students' outcome. The importance of the teacher to the school system rightly made Nwankwoala (2019) to describe the teacher as the most important person in the instructional process. The process of shaping the students' lives academically, mentally, morally, socially, and in many other aspects in line with the broad objectives of the school system is driven by the teachers, hence, the emphasis on their job performance.

The school is an organization with the principal as the administrator. The smooth operation of any organization largely depends on the level of discipline enshrined in the system. Nasibi (2023) argued that the creation and development of a healthy organization has discipline as an integral part, and discipline is central to the smooth operation of any learning institution. Teachers, like any other employees, are expected to act in a responsible manner and perform their duties as expected. Teachers cannot be able to fulfill the noble task of directing the children towards adulthood and towards achievement of their potentials if the teacher frequently engages in professional misconduct. The principal as the sole administrator of the secondary school must thus ensure that all teachers carry out their duties dutifully in line with professional conducts in the school. The level to which the principal is able to enforce discipline among his staff

determines to a great extent how effective and efficient the staff become on their jobs. The administrative disciplinary measures whose potentials at improving teachers' performance in senior secondary schools in Rivers State are being examined in this study include: compulsory signing of staff attendance register; compulsory weekly submission of lesson plans/notes; compulsory signing of teachers' classroom attendance register, and warning. Although literature (Ahiri et al., 2019; Owan & Ekpe, 2019) has established the existence of relationship between administrative disciplinary measures and teachers' performance, there is however the need to really examine the nature of the relationship and the ways principals could leverage these disciplinary measures to improve teachers' performance in their schools. This is thus the crux of this study.

Statement of the Problem

Disciplinary problems have been one of the strongest challenges bedeviling effective administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State in recent times. Many studies that have attempted to diagnose and proffer solutions to the problems have moreover focused mostly on student indiscipline with the assumption that teachers are already disciplined and committed to their work of assisting learners realize their goals in both academic work and their socialization process. Little attention has been focused on teachers' indiscipline and how the school administration handles inverted or infracting teachers who have departed or are departing from the course of improving the learner's achievement through displays of de-motivating behaviours.

Observations made during some visits to some public secondary schools in Rivers State have shown that there seems to be poor administrative disciplinary management, which is leading to poor job performance of teachers in these schools. It was clearly observed that some teachers displayed various deviant behaviors, such as frequent lateness to school, voluntary absenteeism from school and from classroom even when they are present in the school, leaving the school environment during work hours for their own personal engagements, refusal to prepare lesson plans and notes for teaching, among others, which grossly undermine instructional effectiveness of teachers and result to poor learning outcomes and outright defeat of education objectives in these schools. Other negative impacts of such display of indiscipline by teachers have been found to include high drop-out rate, and high rate of examination malpractice, poor reading and writing cultures, indecent dressing, and truancy among students. The above situation is worrisome, hence the researcher decided to investigate administrative disciplinary measures to be adopted by principals to enhance teacher's job performances in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

Aim and Objectives of the Study

The aim of this study was to investigate the enhancement of teachers' performance through principals' implementation of disciplinary measures in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria. The specific objectives of the study include to:

- Ascertain the types of administrative disciplinary measures utilized by senior secondary school principals for improved teachers' performance in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

- Examine the extent principals' utilization of compulsory signing of staff attendance register as a disciplinary measure improves teachers' performance in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.
- Determine the extent principals' demanding for weekly submission of lesson plan/notes as a disciplinary measure improves teachers' performance in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.
- Evaluate the extent principals' utilization of warning as a disciplinary measure improves teachers' performance in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

Research Questions

The following research questions were posed to guide the study:

- What are the administrative disciplinary measures utilized by senior secondary school principals for improved teachers' performance in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State?
- To what extent does principals' utilization of compulsory signing of staff attendance register as a disciplinary measure improve teachers' performance in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State?
- To what extent does principals' demand for weekly submission of lesson plan/notes as a disciplinary measure improve teachers' performance in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State?
- To what extent does principals' utilization of warning as a disciplinary measure improve teachers' performance in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State?

Research Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated and statically tested at 0.05 level of significance.

- There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female principals on the types of administrative disciplinary measures utilized by senior secondary school principals for improved teachers' performance in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.
- There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female principals on the extent principals' utilization of compulsory signing of staff attendance register as a disciplinary measure improves teachers' performance in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.
- There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female principals on the extent principals' demanding for weekly submission of lesson plan/notes as a disciplinary measure improves teachers' performance in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.
- There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female principals on the extent principals' utilization of warning as a disciplinary measure improves teachers' job performance in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The theory is anchored in the Theory X model of Douglas McGregor's Theory X and Y, propounded in his 1960 book, "The Human Side of Enterprise" as cited in (Ololube, 2024). The theory X and Y acknowledged the existence of two categories of employees in every organization: the inherently deviant X employees, and the inherently compliant Y employees. The prevalent nature of the organization's employees thus informs the appropriate administrative style of the manager or administrator.

In McGregor's work, the theory X workers are a set of workers found in organizations, who are cold and introverted towards work. The theory X managers are therefore of the assumption that workers are lazy, indolent; unmotivated towards work; always shying away from responsibility; lack integrity; and prefer to just get by. These workers therefore need high control and strict disciplinary measure for them to be able to perform as expected.

Managers who adopt Theory-X assumptions have a tendency to structure, control and closely supervise their employees. These managers think that external control is clearly appropriate for dealing with unreliable, irresponsible and immature people. Such managers therefore appear to be more autocratic in approach and are seen as high disciplinarians (Ololube & Wome, 2025).

The relevance of theory X to this present study is that the theory highlights the inherent nature of majority of teachers in public secondary schools in Rivers State. Hating to work, shying away and avoiding responsibilities as much as possible, and hating to be fully committed, mostly coming late to work, often absent for the slightest reasons, seeing it as stressful to draw up lesson plans or appropriately form their lesson notes, and engaging in several other forms of unprofessional conducts, whilst always expecting pay at the end of every month. The theory therefore opined that such teachers would need principals to be highly structured, bureaucratic and authoritarian in his approach. It is only through the utilization of disciplinary measures that principals may be able to ensure that these teachers perform as expected in the school system.

CONCEPTUAL REVIEW

Discipline

According to the American Heritage Dictionary, the word discipline refers to training that is expected to produce a specified character or pattern of behaviour. At organizational level, it is the action(s) taken by the management to enforce organizational standards and the process of encouraging workers to move uniformly towards meeting the objectives of an organization (Okumbe cited in Ndung'u, 2017). In educational administration, it is the administrative action taken by education managers to encourage employees to follow the standards, rules and organizational (school) expectations enthusiastically (Gatababu, 2022; Okumbe cited in Ndung'u, 2017). It is arguably the most important component of running an educational institution and is manifested when the school becomes a harmonious, respectable and secure place where students behave responsibly, are aware of their actions and the consequences of these actions (Kibet et al. cited in Ndung'u, 2017).

As a matter of fact, discipline is a fundamental hallmark of the school system. The school itself is synonymous with discipline as discipline is always the first chord that strikes on parents' minds whenever they think about their children/wards and the school administrators or teachers.

In the opinion of Shiundu and Umulando cited in Ndung'u (2017), discipline also refers to the values that students and teachers are to live by within the school, family, the neighbourhood, the village and all the social units up to the nation and the entire world community.

Okumbe in Ndung'u (2017) identified seven principles of discipline in the school system which principals must adopt when dealing with cases of indiscipline in staff or the learners. They include:

- Prior knowledge of rules and regulations in a school;
- Immediate application of disciplinary action just after the infraction;
- Consistency in application;
- Objectiveness;
- Impersonal in application;
- Avoiding entrapment;
- Allowing right of appeal.

However, strict adherence to these principles by secondary school principals is not always the case as some principals often find themselves entrapped after undertaking unprocedural disciplinary actions. In line with the shepherd's "rod and staff" analogy, there are two aspects of discipline exercised within the school system: the first aspect is concerned with administrative guidance given to subordinates so that they do not vie off the track of expected organizational conducts; and the second aspect is concerned with punishment meted out to errant staff or students to get them back on track. According to Moles in Ndung'u (2017), school discipline has two main goals: (i) to ensure the safety of staff and students; and (ii) to create a conducive environment for teaching and learning. Thus, school discipline aims at making a school safe where learning can be conducted in a friendly environment free of violence, intimidation, or fear. Onyali (2024) therefore averred that discipline in the school system is the sum of educative efforts, including the teaching process, the process of character shaping, submission to rules and authority as well as the development of trust.

Administrative Disciplinary Measures

Administrative disciplinary measures in public senior secondary schools in River state in the context of this study refers to modalities or measures put in place by the school administration to ensure that teachers maintain disciplined conducts in the discharge of their duties. Disciplined conduct of teachers in instructional delivery, attitude towards work, and in general idiosyncrasies in the work place is, as a matter of fact, a prerequisite for effective job performance. These administrative disciplinary measures fall within the purview of teachers' disciplinary management.

As humans, erring is inevitable. This reality is amplified in scenarios where one serves as a subordinate, or is a follower, trying to work with rules laid down by someone else. Sometimes, even best intentions of the employee, when judged in the light of organizational modalities, end up becoming unacceptable. The organization's code of ethics/conduct therefore becomes the checklist by which all activities and performance of the employee are verified and vetted. Teachers, therefore, beyond just making efforts to be committed to the school and in the discharge of their instructional duties, must seek to abide by the school administrations' *modus operandi*. Since teachers are human, and every human is a complex being, there must be times

when some of them (teachers) will exhibit some behavior that is not necessary for the smooth running of the school. Such behaviors which are unacceptable must be managed by those with the powers and those saddled with the responsibility. The administrative disciplinary measures are therefore used by the principals to minimize or eliminate such behaviours.

According to Bacal cited in Owan and Ekpe (2019), disciplinary measures which can be used by the head teachers or employers to control the discipline of teachers include: development of a code of conduct; warnings, reprimand, dismissal, suspension, deprivation of privileges, salary deductions, query, and demotion. For Ezeugbor and Eboatu (2018), the types of disciplinary measures adopted by principals on infracted teachers include warning, interdiction, suspension, termination, dismissal, compulsory Retirement, and demotion. However, all of these identified measures mainly apply in cases of confirmed infraction. This study takes a holistic look at disciplinary measures that both prevent infraction and as well as those that remedy infraction. Hence the study looks at the preventive and curative administrative disciplinary measures that enhance teachers' performance with focus on instructional delivery in public senior secondary schools. Hence, the administrative disciplinary measures considered in the study include compulsory signing of attendance register, weekly submission of lesson notes, compulsory signing of teachers' class attendance register, and warning.

Teachers' Performance

The success of an educational system depends largely on the performance of teachers, who can be considered as the backbone of the system (Amin et al., 2013; Khan et al., 2022). Job performance according to Motowidlo and Van Scotter cited in Li et al. (2018) is the set of behaviours an individual performs toward achieving the goals of an organization. In the educational context, teachers' performance can be defined as the actions they perform in schools in order to achieve educational goals (Hwang et al., 2017; Limon & Sezgin-Nartgun, 2020). Teachers' performance entails (1) what they are to do (2) when they do it and (3) how they do it.

In broader terms, teachers' job performance is the contribution teachers make to the achievement of educational goals and objectives (Limon & Sezgin-Nartgun, 2020), while in some studies it is limited to teaching behaviour (Bashir et al., 2017; Okeniyi cited in Amin et al., 2023), it however applies not only to the classroom or school, but to all settings where students are present (Shaikh et al., 2022). So, teachers' job performance can be regarded as multidimensional (Ali & Haider, 2017; Amin et al., 2023; Mehmood et al., 2023; Limon & Sezgin-Nartgun, 2020; Yusoff et al., 2024). Some of the significant dimensions within the context of this study include: scheme of work development and preparation for lessons; instructional delivery; student evaluation; extracurricular activities; effective leadership and classroom management; motivation and discipline; collaboration with school administrators; communication; administrative duties; and finding solutions to students' problems and guidance (Mehmood et al., 2023).

The various dimensions of teachers' performance were captured and summarized in three main dimensions by Bhat and Beri (2016) and Yusoff et al. (2024). These three dimensions include:

- Task performance;
- Contextual performance; and
- Adaptive performance

Table 1: The dimensions and their sub-dimensions as they pertain to this study

S/N	The major dimensions of teachers' performance	The Sub-dimensions of teachers' performance
1	Task performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Scheme of work development ▪ Instructional delivery ▪ Students' assessment and evaluation ▪ Classroom management
2	Contextual performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Relationship with staff ▪ Collaboration with administration ▪ Communication
3	Adaptive performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Administrative duties ▪ Guidance and counseling ▪ Use of new technology as instructional aid ▪ Extracurricular activities

Source: Deductive conceptualization by the study (2022)

Influence of Administrative Disciplinary Measures on Teachers' Performance

Several studies have established the existence of relationship between administrative disciplinary measures and staff performance in various organizations. Owan and Ekpe (2019) carried out a study to examine disciplinary management in public primary schools and teachers' job effectiveness in Yakurr Local Government Area, Cross River State. The study revealed that warning, suspension, and dismissal have significant relationships respectively, to primary school teachers' job effectiveness. In the same vein, Ahiri et al. (2019) conducted a study which aimed at analyzing and describing the effect of teachers' work discipline on teachers' performance. The study results showed a positive and significant effect of teachers' work discipline on teachers' performance. From reviews of several other studies on the subject matter, it is deduced that administrative disciplinary measures influence teachers' performance in the following ways:

Positive Influences

- Improved classroom management: Administrative disciplinary measures can promote a well-managed classroom environment, leading to improved teacher performance.
- Increased accountability: Disciplinary measures can hold teachers accountable for their actions, promoting a sense of responsibility and improving performance.
- Enhanced professionalism: Administrative disciplinary measures can encourage teachers to maintain high levels of professionalism, leading to improved performance.
- Reduced teacher burnout: Fair and consistent disciplinary measures can reduce teacher burnout by promoting a sense of security and stability.

Negative Influences

- Decreased teacher morale: Overly harsh or unfair disciplinary measures can decrease teacher morale, leading to decreased performance.
- Increased stress: Administrative disciplinary measures can create stress and anxiety for teachers, negatively impacting performance.
- Decreased autonomy: Overly restrictive disciplinary measures can limit teacher autonomy, leading to decreased motivation and performance.

- Teacher turnover: Excessive or unfair disciplinary measures can lead to teacher turnover, resulting in decreased performance and institutional knowledge.

Principals' Utilization of Administrative Disciplinary Measures for Teachers' Improved Performance

This session examines four major administrative disciplinary measures, what they entail, how they are implemented by principals and how they may influence teachers' performance in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. These strategies include compulsory signing of attendance register, compulsory submission of lesson plans/notes, compulsory signing of class attendance for teachers, and the use of warning.

Principals' Utilization of Compulsory Signing of Attendance Register for Teachers' Improved Job Performance

The adoption of an attendance register for teachers is one of the disciplinary measures adopted by principals of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State to regulate teachers' daily attendance to school and to monitor and minimize the challenge of teachers' absenteeism and lateness. This register also monitors teachers' movement in and out of schools in the state. This register shows the time of arrival and departure of the teachers on each day. The teachers sign the register regularly in the morning before resumption (on arrival) and afternoon (on departure) every day. Time of arrival of the late comers is indicated. In most cases, once teachers' statutory arrival time to work is reached, a red line is ruled immediately after the last entrant on the register, so that latecomers' names get to appear below the red line. From experience as a teacher, every teacher frantically makes concerted effort to beat the resumption time to ensure that their names get on the attendance register before the principals' red line. As such, the attendance register inculcates in the teachers the discipline of punctuality. Failure to write one's name on the attendance register becomes the teacher's own cross to bear, as it means automatic record of absenteeism for the day, which may attract some stringent measures from the school management.

The strength or power of the attendance register as a disciplinary measure employed by school principals is in the reinforcement that comes with the records therein. The attendance register's information is used by school principals to both punish defaulting teachers and to reward performing teachers at the end of the term or session. In some cases, the most punctual teachers for the session or the teachers with highest mark of presence are acknowledged and rewarded, while teachers with poor record either suffer penalties of varying degrees as may be deemed fit by the school administration. Bassey et al. (2020) rightly affirmed that the attendance register has implication on the salary received at the end of the month by teachers in some schools.

The job performance of teachers begins with their availability on duty. Availability in this regard encompasses both attendance and punctuality. The attendance register as an administrative disciplinary measure serves as a form of extrinsic motivation to teachers, causing them to be on duty as and when due (Ndifon & Cornelius-Ukpepi, 2024). It must be stated that absenteeism is one the biggest challenge that public schools face nowadays in Rivers State. Its consequences are numerous on the school. Absent teachers are a burden on the school principal and the rest of the staff in the sense that the drop in productivity is counterproductive for the

school system (Thierry, 2020). Lack of strict guidelines to guarantee attendance at work can result in open conflict between teachers. The tension may probably lead to an uncomfortable work environment, slow productivity and excessive turnover. The attendance register is therefore one of the tools adopted by Principals to ensure or motivate teachers to be present on duty.

Punctuality aims at ensuring that teachers attend school daily and also complete their working hours (Engle cited in Thierry, 2020). Punctual teachers are valuable assets to any school that wants to be performant. Teachers who do not respect punctuality constitute mere burdens on the system and do not contribute much to the overall productivity of the school. Some authors (White cited in Thierry, 2020; Edwards cited in Thierry, 2020) believe that a man's intellectual or moral character can be measured with his capacity to keep appointment. To this regard, Thierry (2020) saw punctuality as a key condition to succeed in life. The advantages of punctuality at work are numerous and include: respect of others; helps establish strong work ethics and enhance productivity, credibility and professionalism. Punctuality also help teachers to be better organized and better composed for the activities of the day. Punctual teachers are never in a hurry trying to catch up lost time. Hence, the attendance register has a way of boosting teacher performance with respect to punctuality.

Principals Utilization of Compulsory Submission of Lesson Plans/Notes for Improved teachers' Performance

The teacher's most fundamental duty in the school is classroom teaching. Effective teaching however requires high level of expertise premixed on good planning of the lesson to be taught, excellent lesson delivery and mastery of the tenets of students' evaluation on the lesson taught. Besides, there is the educational curriculum from which teachers' lessons must be drawn and every lesson has objectives which must be sufficiently achieved. It therefore becomes obvious that there are standards to be followed by teachers in the business of lesson delivery, and effective observance of every set standard in the school system always requires discipline. This discipline must verily be seen in the teacher's adoption of a lesson plan for every lesson, which has been found to be a veritable tool for effective instructional delivery (Hanane, 2016; Moradi, 2019).

Unfortunately however, most public secondary school teachers falter in the adoption of the lesson plan for their teaching. Some teach without any plan at all, while for others, the lesson plan and notes do not follow the institutional standard. Either of these situations is detrimental to the goal of classroom instruction. Given the criticality of the teacher's excellent performance in instructional delivery to effective school administration, one of the principal's most important tasks is to serve as an instructional supervisor to the teacher (Ekpenyong, 2017; Oyewole & Ehinola, 2024; Shuaibu, 2016) , and this comes with ensuring that discipline takes its root in the instructional activities of the teacher. One way through which principals achieve this is by demanding for weekly submission of the teachers' Lesson Plans and Notes.

The lesson plan has been defined by Wordu (2021) as a detailed account or description of a course of teaching or instruction by a teacher or an instructor, which is planned as a daily guide to direct the students' learning. According to him, the teacher's lesson plan is to include: (1) what the students are supposed to learn (goal of lesson); (2) Determining materials that will be used (Instructional materials); (3) How the goal will be achieved (Method or procedure); and (4) How to measure the achievement of this goal (Test, Assignment, Homework). The Lesson Note on the other hand is a detailed account of all the activities of the teacher and the students. It is the

one that the teacher gives to the students. In public senior secondary schools in Rivers state, both the Lesson Plan and the Lesson Note are joined together. The lesson plan however precedes the note. The Note of Lesson is the development of the Lesson Plan. This contains the detailed development of all the lesson objectives communicated in the plan, examples, diagrams, and evaluations (assignment, homework or tests). Each teacher has a Long Note or Exercise book for each subject. This is where the Lesson Plan and Note for every week's work is written. This notebook is what is to be submitted to the principals on weekly basis for check – used as an administrative disciplinary measure.

Drawing up a lesson plan with the making of the lesson note is one of the most cumbersome, most difficult, and most tiring works of most teachers. A lot of teachers would rather teach directly from text books; and some would rather prefer to read/study the topic to be taught and then stand before the class and teach it off hand instead of sitting to first make a lesson note. This is because the making of a lesson note actually takes a lot of time and mental energy. As such, most public secondary school teachers do not have that self-discipline to sit down and make the lesson note, and especially when it is something that has to be repetitious every week. Majority of others who prepare the note may just do it shabbily without following the set educational and institutional standards for the making of lesson notes. This puts effective lesson delivery at jeopardy – exposing the teacher and the students to a lot of unsavoury experiences in class during the instructional delivery process, such as missing out on important points; beating about the bush; vying off the lesson objectives; improper utilization of instructional time, etc. (Moradi, 2019).

The importance of the lesson plan to teachers' effectiveness in instructional delivery cannot be overemphasized. Some of its relevance, which makes principals take it very seriously with the teachers include:

- The lesson plan helps teachers to outline and articulate the objectives of the lesson. This helps in the organization of the lesson, which facilitates teachers and students activities and interaction in the lesson
- The lesson helps teachers to prepare, plan for the lesson and upgrade knowledge, and not just only the residual one (Singh cited in Hanane, 2016). One of the contents of the lesson plan is instructional materials. The instructional materials like textbooks and other information sources actually help in enhancing the teacher's knowledge bank. This is of high importance in the business of education.
- Through planning, the teacher organizes and structures instructional activities to stimulate the cognitive activation of students. Moradi (2019) argued that through planning teachers are expected to create both the visible structure of a lesson and the deep structure of learning.
- The lesson plan helps teachers to avoid digression.
- It promotes learner-centred teaching which allows feedback from the students (Wordu, 2021).
- It promotes effective coverage of the scheme of work.
- It encourages effective evaluation of the lesson in terms of stated objectives.
- It assists teachers in the management of the class (Hanane, 2016)
- The lesson plan also encourages a systematic and logical conclusion of the lesson.
- In a case of teacher's absenteeism, with a lesson plan on ground, it becomes easier for any teacher that is assigned to cover up for the absent teacher. This is also the case in

situations where a new teacher is employed by a school on a subject. The lesson plans of previous teachers prove very handy for a start for the new teacher.

The importance of the lesson plan to the school system is simply inexhaustible. Ensuring that teachers are up to date with their lesson plans through weekly demand for submission to the principals' tables is thus an administrative disciplinary measure employed by principals of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

Principals' Utilization of Compulsory Signing Teachers' Class Attendance Registers for Improved Teachers' Performance

The teachers' class attendance register is a register that is kept in the classroom with each classroom prefect and is to be signed by every teacher at the end of their scheduled lesson period on the class timetable. This register contains entry time and exit time of the teacher. It is used to monitor and regulate teachers' classroom attendance. The necessity for this register is because teachers in public secondary schools are highly capable of absconding from classes. They may be present in school but miss their instructional sessions with students. Principals therefore use this register to instill the discipline of classroom attendance on teachers. Not just that they must attend classes, but they must also ensure to cover their period, and through this register, principals keep track of teachers' performance with respect to class attendance and delivery of lessons.

Principals' Utilization of Warning for Improved Teachers' Performance

Warning is an administrative disciplinary measure of alerting teachers of some misconduct or act of indiscipline found in his action, found inappropriate by the head principal. It can be expressed in an oral or written form. Discipline is supposed to be constructive. Its goal is to guide teachers to improve the performance or correct inappropriate behaviors and not to punish the teachers (Ewah, 2017). According to Ground Report (2019), there are two types of warnings which include oral warning and written warnings. The oral warning is used when an offence is not that serious or when a teacher is offending for the first time. The principal invites him, talks to him, cautions him and warns him to desist from such actions in the future. Sometimes, the warning may also come when the principal has made efforts in the past at mildly correcting the teacher and the teacher has failed in effecting the desired changes in his/her conduct.

The principal may resort to verbal warning, and sometimes this is done with a firm or aggressive tone to show how seriously displeased the principal is with that conduct of the teacher. In some cases, this may come with some form of threat just to instill fear in the teacher to avoid future reoccurrence of the said misconduct. The warning could also be issued in the presence of some other teachers to serve as witness. All of these are done to ensure that the faulting teacher takes the warning seriously and make amends. Written warning on the other hand, is used when the offence committed by the teacher is not an offence that the principal can just warn him verbally and let him go. He is issued a query. He replies the query and explains reasons for his action. The query and his response are filed in the staff file for future references. After considering his response, a written warning also is issued to him and a copy of the warning letter also documented in the staff file.

A written warning should be clearly labeled so that the nature of the document is fully understood. A warning letter according to Owan and Ekpe (2019) generally describes:

deficiencies, problems, or offenses, changes expected, immediate consequences, if applicable, future consequences if expected changes are not made and sustained, an evaluation date that allows the teacher a reasonable amount of time to demonstrate an acceptable level of substantial change for performance concerns. Immediate correction is expected for misconduct. Specifics concerning complaints from any source will be addressed only insofar as they are helpful in bringing about a change and will be balanced against the confidences and expectations of other persons.

Principals' use of warning as a disciplinary measure can help in improving teachers' performance in a number of ways, some of which include:

- Increased focus: A warning from the principal can help the teacher focus on areas that need improvement, leading to better performance.
- Enhanced professionalism: A principal's warning can encourage teachers to maintain high levels of professionalism, leading to improved performance.
- Reduced complacency: When teachers are warned by principals, it can help them avoid complacency and stay motivated to perform better.
- Warning sometimes acts as feedback to teachers, which helps them to better direct their ways of doing things in the school system. It shows to them that the principal is displeased with their performance, and could help them in reviewing their activities for better performance.

It is moreover very important that principals communicate clearly and specifically about the issues and expectations involved. Focus of warning must be on specific behaviours or actions that need improvement, rather than making personal attacks. Additionally, there is the need for principals to provide support and resources to help teachers improve their performance in areas where they have been warned.

Review of Related Empirical Studies

Owan and Ekpe (2019) carried out a study to examine disciplinary management in public primary schools and teachers' job effectiveness in Yakurr Local Government Area, Cross River State. Three null hypotheses were formulated accordingly to guide the study. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. Census technique was adopted in selecting the entire population of 98 primary school managers which comprised of 49 head teachers and 49 deputy head teachers across 49 public primary schools available in the area. A questionnaire tagged: "Disciplinary Control in Public Primary Schools and Teachers' Job Effectiveness Questionnaire (DCPPSTJEQ)" designed and administered by the researcher was used as an instrument for data collection. The null hypotheses were all tested at .05 level of significance using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Analysis. Findings from the study revealed that warning, suspension, and dismissal have significant relationships respectively, to primary school teachers' job effectiveness. This study relates to the present study in focus and design, but differs in scope and method of data analysis.

Thierry (2020) carried out a study on the impact of punctuality and attendance policy on organizational performance. The purpose of the study was to fill the gap in literatures that only emphasized on the usefulness of punctuality and attendance in public institutions like secondary schools without addressing the impact of "African Time" on organizational performance. The

study adopted a correlational design. The population of the study was 4,107 personnel of public institutions in that year. The sample for the study was 200 employees drawn from the study population. A questionnaire instrument was used, which had a response of 80%. The study found that the overall regression model was significant. This means that punctuality and attendance at work have a significant impact on organizational performance. It appears that 75% of respondents believe that there is an inverse relationship between punctuality and performance. Thus, tardiness impacts negatively on performance. The above analysis also indicated that punctuality and performance have a positive correlation which means that as punctuality increases, employee performance also goes up. This presupposes again that disciplinary procedures should be tailored to enhance punctuality and performance-driven goal. This study relates with the present study in focus but differs in design and method of data analysis.

Moradi (2019) carried out a study to investigate the teacher's attitudes towards the effects of lesson plan on classroom management. The study adopted a descriptive survey design. The study population comprised of 570 teachers of secondary schools, out of which a sample size of 160 respondents were randomly sampled. A questionnaire instrument was used for the study. The questionnaire had two parts, the first part had 6 items and the second part had 6 items too and was applied randomly, too. Besides, the data analyzing was performed in SPSS (version, 21) and brought out the mean and standard deviation. Finally, the findings revealed the importance and role of lesson planning on classroom management numbered as follows: (1) Lesson planning is the most appropriate skill that the teacher needs to create a successful instructional exercise. (2) The effective teacher is the one who plans effective lessons. (3) Preparation is the most important thing a teacher does. The study relates with the present study in design, method of data collection, and method of data analysis. It however deviated in scope and focus.

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted the descriptive survey research design. The population of the study was the 333 principals of the 333 public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. The sample size was 100 principals (65 males and 35 females) representing 30% of the population. The sample was purposively chosen by the researcher for ease of access to the respondents from public senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt City, Ikwerri, and Obio/Akpor Local Government Areas of Rivers State. The instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire constructed by the researcher and titled: "Principals' Utilization of Administrative Disciplinary Measures for Teachers' Improved Performance Questionnaire (PUADMITPQ). The instrument was validated by two lecturers of the department of Educational Management in Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, Port Harcourt. The reliability index of the instrument was determined using Pearson's Product Moment Correlation statistics on test-retest data obtained from a pilot study of 20 principals from the study population who were not part of the main study. The analysis gave a reliability coefficient of .89. The response pattern of the instrument was the modified 4 points form of Likert scale. The research questions were answered using descriptive statistics of mean and standard deviation whereas the hypotheses were inferentially tested using independent samples t-test at a significance level of .05.

RESULTS

Research Question 1: What are the administrative disciplinary measures utilized by senior secondary school principals for improved teachers' performance in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State?

Table 1: Mean ratings of male and female principals on the administrative disciplinary measures utilized by senior secondary school principals for improved teachers' performance

s/n	Items	Male Principals		Female Principals		Mean Set		Decision
		\bar{X}_1	SD ₁	\bar{X}_2	SD ₂	Mean	SD	
1	Compulsory daily signing of teachers' attendance register	3.53	.541	3.50	.541	3.52	.541	High Extent
2	Demanding for weekly lesson plan/notes	2.80	.529	2.82	.529	2.81	.528	High Extent
3	Compulsory signing of teachers' classroom attendance	2.69	.444	2.58	.445	2.64	.444	High Extent
4	Use of warning	2.70	.554	2.64	.556	2.67	.554	High Extent
5	Suspension of teachers	1.26	.638	1.30	.611	1.28	.624	High Extent
Grand Mean		2.54	.543	2.57	.536	2.56	.537	High Extent

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female principals on the types of administrative disciplinary measures utilized by senior secondary school principals for improved teachers' performance in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

Table 2: T-test of significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female principals on the types of administrative disciplinary measures utilized by senior secondary school principals for improved teachers' performance

Gender	N	Mean	SD	t	DF	Sig.	Decision
Male Principals	65	2.54	.543	.010	98	.992	H ₀₁ Upheld
Female Principals	35	2.57	.536				
Total	100						

Significance level of .05

The data in Table 1 reveals that the grand mean rating of the examined items was $2.54 \pm .543$. Since this value is greater than the criterion mean of 2.50, it means majority of the respondents agreed that the items were adopted by principals as administrative disciplinary measures for improved teachers' performance. The table shows that only Item 5 was not utilized by principals. Table 2 further revealed that there was no significant difference in mean ratings of male and female principals in that regard [$t(98) = .010$, $p = .992 > .05$]. Since p is greater than the significance level value, H₀₁ was upheld.

Research Question 2: To what extent does principals' utilization of compulsory signing of staff attendance register as a disciplinary measure improve teachers' performance in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State?

Table 3: Mean ratings of male and female principals on the extent principals' utilization of compulsory signing of staff attendance register as a disciplinary measure improves teachers' performance

s/n	Item	Male Teachers		Female Teachers		Mean set		Decision
		\bar{X}_1	SD_1	\bar{X}_2	SD_2	Mean	SD	
6	Compulsory signing of teachers' attendance registers compels teachers to be present in school.	3.54	.553	3.55	.554	3.55	.552	High Extent
7	Compulsory signing of the attendance registers boosts teachers' punctuality.	3.44	.551	3.48	.556	3.46	.553	High Extent
8	Compulsory signing of attendance register makes teachers have more respect for school time.	3.48	.515	3.51	.530	3.49	.522	High Extent
9	Compulsory signing of the attendance register boosts teachers' commitment to professional practice.	3.54	.553	3.55	.554	3.55	.552	High Extent
10	Compulsory signing of attendance registers gives principals' data on teachers that need help with managing their time.	3.48	.515	3.51	.530	3.49	.522	High Extent
Grand Mean		3.50	.537	3.52	.545	3.51	.540	High Extent

Hypothesis Two: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female principals on the extent principals' utilization of compulsory signing of staff attendance register as a disciplinary measure improves teachers' performance in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

Table 4: T-test of significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female principals on the extent principals' utilization of compulsory signing of staff attendance register as a disciplinary measure improves teachers' performance

Respondent's Portfolio	N	Mean	SD	T	DF	Sig.	Decision
Male Principals	65	3.50	.421	-.385	98	.701	H ₀₂ Upheld
Female Principals	35	3.52	.424				
Total	100						

Significance level of .05

Data presented in Table 3 shows that the grand mean set of the 5 examined items was $3.50 \pm .537$, which is greater than the criterion mean of 2.50. As such, majority of the respondents agreed that principals' utilization of compulsory signing of staff attendance register as a disciplinary measure to a high extent improved teachers' performance. Table 4 data further revealed that there was no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female principals in that regard [$t(98) = -.385$, $p = .701 > .05$]. The p value being greater than the significance value of .05 implies that H₀₂ was upheld.

Research Question 3: To what extent does principals' demand for weekly submission of lesson plan/notes as a disciplinary measure improve teachers' performance in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State?

Table 5: Mean ratings of male and female principals on the extent principals' demand for weekly submission of lesson plan/notes as a disciplinary measure improves teachers' performance

s/n	Items	Male Teachers		Female Teachers		Mean set		Decision
		\bar{X}_1	SD_1	\bar{X}_2	SD_2	Means	SD	
11	Principals' demand for weekly lesson plan/notes makes teachers to be up and doing in preparing them and this improves teachers' performance.	2.74	.553	2.80	.554	2.77	.552	High Extent
12	It helps teachers to stick to the syllabus in developing lesson content and this improves their performance.	3.44	.551	3.40	.556	3.42	.553	High Extent
13	It helps teachers in complying with best teaching practices for improved performance.	2.78	.515	2.70	.530	2.74	.522	High Extent
14	It helps teachers to make better use of their time for improved performance.	2.94	.553	3.32	.554	3.13	.552	High Extent
15	It helps teachers to avoid digression in lesson delivery.	3.48	.515	3.50	.530	3.49	.522	High Extent
Grand Mean		3.07	.537	3.14	.545	3.11	.540	High Extent

Hypothesis Three: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female principals on the extent principals' demanding for weekly submission of lesson plan/notes as a disciplinary measure improves teachers' performance in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

Table 6: T-test of significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female principals on the extent principals' demanding for weekly submission of lesson plan/notes as a disciplinary measure improves teachers' performance

Respondent's Portfolio	N	Mean	SD	t	DF	Sig.	Decision
Male Principals	65	3.07	.537	1.96	98	.341	H ₀₃ Upheld
Female Principals	35	3.14	.544				
Total	100						

Significance level of .05

The data in Table 5 revealed that the grand mean set of the five examine items was 3.11±.540. Since this value is greater than the criterion mean, it implies that majority of the respondents agreed that principals' demand for weekly submission of lesson plan/notes as a disciplinary measure to a high extent improved teachers' performance. Table 6 further revealed there was no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female principals in that respect, with the null hypotheses being upheld [$t(98)=1.96$, $p=.341>.05$].

Research Question 4: To what extent does principals' utilization of warning as a disciplinary measure improve teachers' performance in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State?

Table 7: Mean ratings of male and female principals on the extent principals' utilization of warning as a disciplinary measure improve teachers' performance

s/n	Items	Male Teachers		Female Teachers		Mean set		Decision
		\bar{X}_1	SD_1	\bar{X}_2	SD_2	Mean	SD	
16	Principals' use of warning helps teachers to retract their wrong steps and this improves their performance.	2.64	.553	2.65	.554	2.65	.552	High Extent
17	Warning serves as feedback to teachers for better performance.	3.04	.551	2.78	.556	2.91	.553	High Extent
18	Warning from principal helps teachers focus on areas that they need improvement, leading to better performance	2.60	.515	2.70	.530	2.65	.522	High Extent
18	Principals' warning helps teachers to maintain professionalism, leading to improved performance	2.76	.553	3.04	.554	2.90	.552	High Extent
20	Warning from principals helps teachers to avoid complacency and stay motivated for improved performance.	2.62	.515	2.80	.530	2.71	.522	High Extent
Grand Mean		2.73	.537	2.79	.545	2.76	.540	High Extent

Hypothesis Four: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female principals on the extent principals' utilization of warning as a disciplinary measure improves teachers' job performance in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

Table 8: T-test of significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female principals on the extent principals' utilization of warning as a disciplinary measure improves teachers' performance

Respondent's Portfolio	N	Mean	SD.	t	DF	Sig.	Decision
Male Teachers	65	2.73	.421	-.185	98	.801	H ₄ Upheld
Female Teachers	35	2.79	.424				
Total	100						

Significance level of .05

Data presented in Table 7 shows that the grand mean set of the 5 examined items was $2.76 \pm .540$, which is greater than the criterion mean of 2.50. As such, majority of the respondents agreed that principals' utilization of warning as a disciplinary measure to a high extent improved teachers' performance. Table 8 data further revealed that there was no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female principals in that regard [$t(98) = -.185$, $p = .801 > .05$]. The p value being greater than the significance value of .05 implies that H₀₄ was upheld.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Administrative Disciplinary Measures Utilized by Principals for Improved Teachers' Performance

The first research question sought to ascertain the administrative disciplinary measures utilized by principals for improved teachers' performance in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. The findings showed that principals utilized measures such as compulsory daily signing of teachers' attendance register, demanding for weekly lesson plan/notes, compulsory signing of teachers' classroom attendance, and use of warning. It was further found that majority of the male and female principals that made up the study subjects had similar view on principals' utilization of these measures. This finding is in line with that of Owan and Ekpe (2019), which revealed that principals' utilization of disciplinary practices such as warning, suspension, and dismissal had significant relationships respectively, to primary school teachers' job effectiveness. The present study moreover showed that principals did not really utilize suspension in disciplining teachers. This is because principals in public schools in Rivers State lack the power to suspend teachers. The most they could do is to report deviant teachers to the schools board, following laid down procedures.

Extent Principals' Utilization of Compulsory Signing of Staff Attendance Register as a Disciplinary Measure Improves Teachers' Performance

The study in this regard showed that principals' utilization of compulsory signing of staff attendance register as a disciplinary measure improved teachers' performance to a high extent. It further revealed that majority of the respondents shared the same opinion concerning this position. Following the finding of the study, compulsory signing of staff attendance registers as a disciplinary measure helped in improving teachers' performance through: raising teachers' attendance rate to school, boosting teacher punctuality, causing teachers to have more respect for school time, boosting teachers' commitment to professional practice, and furnishing principals with teachers' attendance data which could be used for informed decision making towards improving teachers' attendance performance. The findings of the study agree with Thierry (2020) who found that strong attendance policies at work places boosted staff attendance and punctuality and helped to address the impact of "African Time" on organizational performance.

Extent Principals' Demand for Weekly Submission of Lesson Plan/Notes as a Disciplinary Measure Improves Teachers' Performance

The study in this regard found' demanding for weekly submission of lesson plan/notes ensured that principals' demanding for weekly submission of lesson plan/notes as an administrative disciplinary measure improved teachers' performance to a high extent, and majority of the respondents were in agreement on this position. The findings of the study revealed that teachers' performance was improved in this regard because principals demanding for weekly submission of these records: made teachers to be up and doing; made them stick to the syllabus in developing lesson contents; made them comply with best instructional practices; enabled them to put their time to better use; and helped them to avoid digression. These findings are in tandem with Moradi (2019) who asserted that the lesson planning is the most important activity of the teacher as it determines a teachers' instructional effectiveness in the classroom.

Extent Principals' Utilization of Warning as a Disciplinary Measure Improves Teachers' Performance

The study in this respect found that principals' utilization of warning as a disciplinary measure improved teachers' performance to a high extent, and majority of the respondents were unanimous on this position. When principals use warning as disciplinary measure on teachers, the study reveals that it has the potential of helping teachers retract their steps for improved performance. Warning also serves as feedback to teachers and helps them to stay focused on areas that they need to improve. Additionally the study found that warning helps teachers to maintain professionalism and helps them to avoid complacency, all of which leads to improved performance. These findings are supported by that of Agesa (2015) who found that warning was effective when teachers' offences of deviances are still minor but have the potential of expanding to something deleterious to school mission and vision. As such warning helps to prevent bigger damages from being done by teachers.

CONCLUSION

Conclusively, teachers, like every other employee in public organizations are prone to indiscipline behaviour. If left without strong supervision and clear disciplinary provisions, the tendency of truancy and professional misconducts are high, all of which come to the detriment of effective job performance. Administrative disciplinary measures such as compulsory signing of attendance registers, compulsory submission of weekly lesson plans/notes, compulsory signing of teachers' class attendance registers and warning are needed to help them do the right thing, the right way, and at the right time.

Suggestions

Based on the discourse of the study, the following suggestions are made:

- Principals should effectively maintain disciplinary measures like compulsory signing of attendance registers, compulsory submission of weekly lesson plans/notes, compulsory signing of teachers' class attendance registers and warning to nip behaviour of teachers and enhance their job performance in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.
- Principals should implement disciplining of teachers with the aim of helping them improve on their job performance for the attainment of goals and objectives of the school, and not as a witch-hunting or vindictive measure.
- School staff should periodically make teachers' indiscipline a point of discussion in their staff meetings with a view to suggesting solutions on how they could best be managed in the school system.
- School management boards should carry out a thorough diagnosis of the problem of teacher indiscipline, with the view to finding lasting solutions to them.
- Indiscipline teachers should be invited by school principals once in a while for one on one heartfelt discussion of their challenges which inform their behaviours. This could better help in solving the problem.

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