



Full Length Research Paper

Efficiency theories, their applicability and effects on Nigerian Secondary Schools, a case study of Cross River State

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This paper examined the applicability of Efficiency theories in Nigeria secondary schools. Theory and Administration were fully conceptualized. It was realized that Efficiency theories could be applied to some extent in Nigerian secondary schools. Recommendations were made as to how best these theories could be applied in secondary schools. Conclusion was made.

Keywords: Efficiency theory, Nigeria, Cross River State, Secondary Schools, Academic achievement, applicability.

INTRODUCTION

People at various times and places have attempted to explain the meaning of theory. The Chambers Universal Learners Dictionary describes theory as an idea which has not been proved to be correct. According to Ukeje (1984), the development of a theory is the process whereby one endeavours to find out most satisfactory description of reality; the process whereby we endeavour to find out the explanation that satisfies most of our understanding of phenomenon (Hoy and Miskel, 1982 and Schilling and Koetting, 2001).

A theory provides a way of testing or verifying the truth. A theory therefore, aims at synthesizing and integrating empirical data for maximum clarification and unification. Every individual uses theories daily based on personal assumptions and postulates them at varying degrees. He

makes deductions about facts and truth. The social scientist, the legal practitioner, the engineer, the medical practitioner, the educator, all use theories. These theories may be based on their personal experience and/or philosophy of life. In educational administration, theories are used as academic predictions to describe and explain regularities in behaviour of an individual or groups within an organization. This is done through a set of principles. Every administrator especially the secondary school principal should be vested in the principles and theories of administration and utilize the knowledge for the enhancement of his administration.

Efficiency Theories

The scientific management approach was championed by Frederick Taylor and his associates. Taylor, who has been an industrial labourer, a clerk, a machinist, a foreman, a chief draftsman and then a chief engineer, had reached the highest peak in American society

through hard work. The climax came when he published his book in 1911 titled, 'The Principles of Scientific Management'. Taylor wanted to translate his experiences into reality. Taylor believed that men could be posited like a machine to achieve maximum production. Human beings were programmed like machines to suit the job descriptions. Taylor and his group believed that man was motivated by economic gains alone and did not think of his physiological, psychological or sociological needs. The work was defined daily for each worker and his tools and conditions of work given him. His pay was tied to the completion of his work and the fulfillment of its terms. Failure to complete it on schedule was subject to punishment, while the early achiever was rewarded accordingly. An unskilled worker with a strong physiological make up could earn higher or equal amount to the skilled worker with a weaker physiological make-up.

Taylorism dehumanized workers and equates people to machines. The physiological, sociological and psychological aspects of human beings were ignored. Workers were recruited and placed in the hands of technicians who programmed their work behaviour like puppets we watch over the television. Workers should always be treated and respected with human dignity. They said that tools and materials should be kept close to the operator as much as possible.

Administration

Edem (1987) states that "administration involves planning activities which aim at the fulfillment of the goals of a particular organization". This organization could be a commercial firm, hospital, bank, or a school. Aderounmu and Ehiemator (1981) describe public administration as the art of organizing and managing men and materials to attain the goals of teaching and learning (McCarty et al., 2001). They stated further that educational administration is a branch of public administration. They describe educational administration as being essentially a service activity or tool through which the fundamental objectives of the educational processes may be fully and efficiently realized. It is geared towards the attainment of goals of teaching by teachers and learning by students.

Ezeocha (1990) describes an administrator as "a co-ordinator who has to organize activities in such a way that things must work smoothly, quickly and effectively." He does this to get the objectives and goals of an organization fulfilled. His functions involve effective planning, organizing, supervising, controlling, evaluating, communicating and decision-making.

These functions hold good for a public administrator, hospital administrator, church administrator and educational administrator. An educational administrator could be a Vice Chancellor of a University, a Provost of a College of Education, a Rector of the Seminary or

Polytechnic, a secondary school Principal and a Head Master of a Primary school.

This study was carried out as an investigation whose result will help further expose school proprietors to imbibe or jettison Taylor's efficiency theories in order to boost educational achievements in students in their institutions.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Study area

This is made up of entire Cross River State of Nigeria which is bounded in the South by the Republic of Cameroon, North by Benue State of Nigeria, West by Akwa Ibom State of Nigeria and the Atlantic Ocean and West by Ebonyi State of Nigeria. The area is displayed on Figure 1. School enrollment in the state is grown in the last decade such that Cross River State is no more in the list of educationally backward states of Nigeria.

Population and Sampling technique

The population of this study consists of the entire senior secondary school masters from principal master grade in the research area. The sampling technique used was a stratified random sampling. The population was stratified into local governments and school levels. Each local government was represented by two schools randomly selected; each school was represented by five staff resulting in a sample size of one hundred and eighty respondents.

A questionnaire was used to gather information for the study. The instrument was twenty five item questionnaires, structured in a Likert's scale (0 - 4). The highest that could be obtained from a particular respondent was 100, similar to the grade that could be obtained from examination. This was compared with the results of the monk examinations of West African Examination Council Results obtained from the principals of the schools investigated. The results obtained from the questionnaire and that from academic achievement were analysed using regression analysis in Microsoft office excel 2010.

Figure 1. map of cross river state showing 18 local government area that form the study area.

RESULTS

There was a positive significant correlation between application of efficiency theories and level of academic achievements in Nigerian Secondary schools. The calculated r^2 value of 0.76325648 at 16 degree of freedom was higher than the table value of 0.561 ($p < 0.01$). The trend of the relationship is shown on Figure 2.

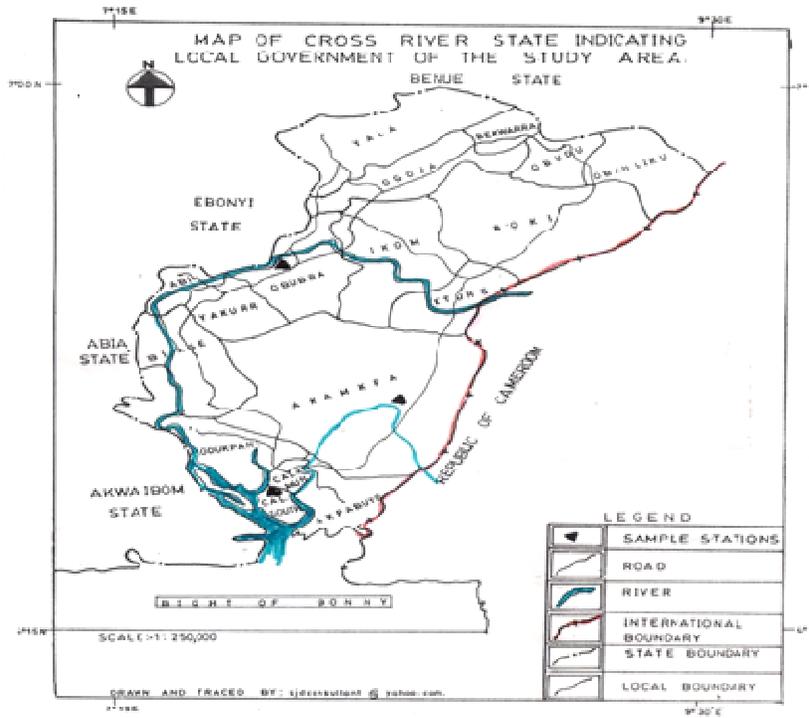


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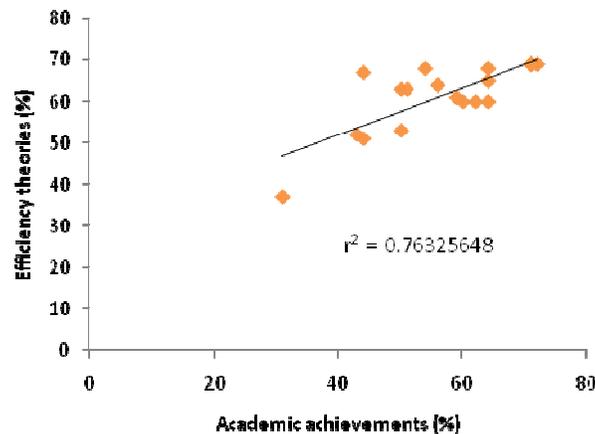


Figure 2. The correlation between application of efficiency theories and academic achievement among school in Cross River State

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DISCUSSION

Inputs in the education production function are characteristics of the teaching and learning environment,

while outputs are generally defined in terms of students' test scores (Worthington and Andrew, 2001). The process of acculturation started in the home, and primary school is continued in the secondary school. Apart from the academic pursuits, the teacher's work is to inculcate the community and national values in the students.

According to Worthington and Andrew (2001), ineffective use of inputs, such as labour and capital, are usually characterised by technical inefficiency, inputs

beyond institutional control, such as students' talent and socioeconomic status home and genetic based and may create the appearance of technical inefficiency.

The human machinists advocates for promotion by productivity. In Nigeria, one serves a number of years before promotion. No matter how hard working you are in your teaching or school management, promotion comes at the same time for every body of the same set. In Taylor's theory, payment should be commensurate with performance. This theory advocates that, the authority articulate a clear school mission, has a visible presence in classrooms and hallways, holds high expectations for teachers and students, spend a major portion of the day working with teachers to improve instruction, is actively involved in diagnosing instructional problems and Creates a positive school climate. This is only possible where the teacher receives pay based on the amount of work done. These principles was shared by Sadker, and Zittleman, (2010).

Results from this work revealed that schools owned by religious and other private organisations are advocates of application of efficient theories and were placed higher in academic achievements as well. Private owners of schools do not pay their workers on social basis, unlike government, who combines capitalist tendency with the socialist one.

In Nigeria public schools, salary is the same for people of the same rank or level irrespective of performance. Different teachers have different periods of work load in a week. Mathematics and English language teachers have a heavier work load because these subjects are taught daily to students. There are few teachers in Mathematics and English in the secondary schools system. The human machines did not believe that human beings differ physiologically and so need rest for effective production. Tatlor got one way out of every thing. He saw his scientific method as good for every worker. He could not see the authority of the manager or administrator being influenced by society, personal health or a domestic problem of a worker.

It may be observed that Fayol's administrative management theory is an expansion of Taylor's Theory. The fundamental differences between the two was that in Taylors' view workers are seen as machines that have no social needs in addition to the monetary needs, while Fayol's administrative theory sees workers from the economic, social and psychological perspectives. According to him administrative behaviour consists of different functions which he defined as follows:

To plan: which means to study the future and arrange plan of operation

To organize: means to build up materials and human organization of the business

To command: means to make the staff do their work.

To coordinate: means to unite and correlate all the organizational activities into one successful whole.

To control: means to see that every thing is done in

accordance with the rules of the enterprise and instructions given.

Luther Gulick and Urwick articulated and amplified those functions of administration stated by Fayol. Gulick asked the questions, 'what is the work of the chief executive'. He answered "POSDCORD", that is P – Planning, O – organizing, S – staffing, D – Directing, Co-ordinating, R – reporting and B- Budgeting.

In the Nigerian secondary school situation, the educational administrator in this case needs to recruit the right type of staff, induct the staff and give him/her tools for work. This leads to efficiency. A teacher going to teach the next day, prepares his learning experiences, writes his lesson notes, chooses the right type of instructional materials, and the method of teaching before hand. A supervisor of instruction plans the best strategy for supervision before leaving his office. Efficient planning yields efficient results. One thing with Nigerian administrators is that they are sometimes in the rush and so cannot plan properly.

Organizing is the establishment of an appropriate machinery or organ to carry out the functions In the secondary school system, the Principal, Vice Principal Academic and Administration, heads of departments of subject areas supervise the work. All these sub-organs of the school in various ways make sure that the work of teaching and learning are effectively done.

Management gives an effective leadership to teaching system. There are three main type of leadership – autocratic, democratic or laissez-faire. There is also situational leadership. If subordinates are used to the super ordinates' leadership styles there is a tendency to take him/her for granted. That is why situational one is good for use at times (Sherer et al., 2006).

The educational administrator brings to a successful whole the activities of every body. The school principal does that in his school. The Vice Chancellor does it; likewise the Provost and Rector do the same thing.

Communication is a very important channel. Every school administrator should be conscious of this basic fact. Nigerian school administrators are inclusive. If a principal does not communicate properly with students and staff, his school work will not be carried out effectively.

Correct budgeting has something to do with prudent management of fiscal resources allocation, office space and equipment. In Nigerian universities, polytechnics, colleges of education and secondary schools, the heads of the institutions and the Governing Councils prepare a budget including the needs of the institution for the following year in terms of staff needs, material needs. It is defended and approved by government. Without this budget prepared, approved and acted upon, the institution cannot function. Objectives then will not be realized.

There is hierarchy in educational set-up of the scientific management theory, but human relations and

behavioural science approaches are more easily adapted to Nigerian school system than the scientific methods.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Very competent principals should be trained to head the secondary schools. Personality trait of the administrators/principals should be that of a model to teachers and students.
2. There should be regular seminars, workshops organized for principals during the vacations since these are agents of quality control in schools. Theories and practice of administration should be taught to administrators.
3. The government should take serious action against the staff who commits grievous offences like embezzlement, fraud, alcoholism, drug addiction or sexual immorality to name only a few.
4. Teachers who work hard should be given earlier promotions than others of the same rank or level. The educational authorities should not wait to promote everybody at the same time.

CONCLUSION

It was observed that discipline for erring workers and rewarding for those that work hard and was proposed by Taylor in his efficient theories. This has a lot to improve academic achievement in Nigeria. This will also check against individuals without the know how and the physical ability to work hard as teachers.

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