

GENDER AND EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION AS CORRELATES OF PRINCIPALS' PERFORMANCE IN THE MANAGEMENT OF SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN RIVERS STATE

Walson, Ominini Brother Asako¹ & Vita-Agundu, Uche Calista²

¹Department of Educational Management, Faculty of Education

Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, Rumuolumeni, Port-Harcourt, Nigeria

²Department of Educational Foundations, Faculty of Education, University of Nigeria,

Nsukka, Email: uche.asogwac@unn.edu.ng

Abstract

This study examined gender and educational qualification as correlates of principals' performance in the management of senior secondary schools in Rivers State. A correlational survey design was adopted for the study. Four research questions and two null hypotheses guided the study. The population of the study was all 289 principals of senior secondary schools in Rivers State. The sample was 289 principals. A census sampling technique was adopted for the study. The instrument for data collection was Principals Demographic Questionnaire (PDQ) and Principals' Performance Questionnaire (PPQ). The instrument was validated by two experts in the department of educational management, and guidance and counseling of Ignatius Ajuru University of education. A reliability index of 0.86 was obtained for (PPQ) using Cronbach Alpha method. Research questions one and two were answered using frequencies and percentage, while research questions three and four were answered using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMC). The two null hypotheses were tested using multiple regressions and associated t-test. The findings showed that most principals in senior secondary schools in Rivers State were males with first degree. The correlation between gender and educational qualification with principals' performance was substantial. Gender and educational qualification explained 22.85% and 13.32% respectively of the variance in principals' performance in the management of senior secondary schools. Gender and educational qualification had significant relationship with and predicted principals' performance in the management of senior secondary schools in Rivers State. The t-value for gender was (7.474, $P > 0.000$), while educational qualification was (15.897, $P > 0.000$) at $P > 0.05$. The study recommended that gender and educational qualification of teachers should be considered during the appointment of principals since they have significant relationships with principals' performance in the management of senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

Keywords: Principals, Gender, Educational Qualification, Management, Senior Secondary School, Performance

Introduction

Across the world, effective performance of duties perhaps is one of the foremost bases for organizational growth. Performance effectiveness is associated with management of resources in an organization. In secondary schools, principals carry out several tasks in the implementation of policies and programmes. Some of these task areas include fund management, instructional supervision, decision-making, conflict management, student personnel management, staff personnel management, communication, and public relations etc. Most research have demonstrated that the quality of education depends primarily on the way schools are managed, more that the abundance of available resources; and the overall capacity

of schools to improve teaching and learning is strongly influenced by administrative performance of the school administrator. In this regard, administrative performance has been considered in the achievements made by the school through effective management of resources even in times of crisis. School administrators like the principals in this regard has been considered for inspiring a pathway for hope through their performance in the effective management of resources in secondary schools. While most credit has been directed towards overall school leadership by schools administrators for optimum achievement of goals, studies related to school effectiveness have generated more specific controversial findings on gender and educational qualification influence.

It could be adduced that the extent to wish principals achieve set goals is perhaps a function of gender and educational qualification which is yet to be consensually determined by scholars. Hence, there is need to investigate the issue. Gender as used here refers to the socially constructed expectations for males and females behaviours which prescribe a division of labour and responsibilities between male and females. While some studies show evidence of male superiority over females in task performance, some others reported that females perform better in school administration. On the other hand, educational qualification refers to certified credentials owned by a person depicting requisite knowledge and skills acquired from training to enable him proficiently carry out his duties in his occupation. Educational qualification could be an obstacle to innovation. It could also bring about ingenuity in the performance of duties. This means that the performance of principals in the management of secondary schools could depend on educational qualification. The extent to wish principals effectively manage secondary schools perhaps could be a function of gender and educational qualification influence which is yet to be consensually determined by scholars. The extent gender and educational qualification have become factors in the performance of in the management of secondary schools is still a subject of concern and verification. Therefore, there is need to examine the relationship of these variables with performance of principals in the management of senior secondary schools in Rivers State to provide empirical evidence on the issue.

Conceptual Clarification

Performance

Performance is the ability to carry out assigned duties leading to the achievement of set goals. Principals' effective performance in the management senior secondary schools determines the achievement of educational objectives. Ibukun (2011) viewed principals' performance as the ability of the principal to manage human and material resources to attain educational goals in the cheapest possible manner. Principals' performance in this study refers to the frequency with which the principals execute tasks in various school administrative areas for the achievement of goals. Effective performance would lead to discipline and overall improvement in the teaching and learning process in the school system.

The performance of principals in the management of secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria has remained questionable in contemporary times as there is still public outcry in the standard of education arising from low morale of teachers from dereliction to duty, indiscipline among students, and poor state of infrastructure. Several authors attributed it to the performance of school administrators in specific task areas like supervision of instruction, decision-making, communication, human resource management, plant management and conflict management etc. Evidence abound for poor infrastructure and teaching facilities, teachers poor attitude to work due to vacillating nature of principals like nagging, non-involvement of teachers in decision making and is indifferent about activities in the school. Indiscipline among staff and students are not uncommon. Students' performance in external

examination is low, student's unrest, insecurity, continuous rancor between staff and students, and illegal activities like embezzlement of funds, aiding and abetting in WAEC, extortion, and cheating are also perpetrated in senior secondary schools. Okujagu (2005), in an article titled "government goes tough with schools" questioned the management of secondary schools by principals for abdicating their functions and compromising their roles to the extent of aiding and abetting with students in public examinations which led to the removal of four principals and the relocation of several centres for the West African School Certificate Examination in Rivers State. He stated that principals have built a culture of collecting examination fees from students as implied source of revenue to aid them in perpetrating examination fraud. On Thursday 18th May, 2023, the Rivers State commissioner for Education Prof. C. Mmom suspended two principals in the ongoing WAEC examination for not allowing some students to enter into the examination halls for not paying illegal fees imposed on them. The level at which principals' compromise their roles in the management of secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria are appalling.

The ministry of education in Rivers State expressed with dismay in strong terms the high level of indiscipline in senior secondary schools and attributed it to the principals who are trustees for their laxity who compromised their roles in managing the affairs of their respective schools. This has not augured well in school management. Most Secondary Schools have been taken over by cults activities. An instance in Rivers State were two rival cult groups engaged themselves which led to the stabling to death of four students was reported (Obinna, 2013). Additionally, most schools have experienced dearth in infrastructure to the extent that classrooms, laboratories, libraries and playfields are going extinct. Some authors (Anyanwu, 2009) regard this as a development that does not promote an all-round development of the students. Adaeze (2013), in an article 'schools without playground' noted that the social skills that children develop on playground become lifelong skills that are carried forward into their adulthood. She pointed out that there is a general consensus that physical activities reduce the risk of psychological problems in students and fosters their self-esteem in learning. The performance of principal in ensuring that infrastructural facilities are improved and utilized optimally, and discipline and security restored in senior secondary schools for the achievement of desired educational objectives is very paramount. The more frequently principals carry out their functions in the management of schools, the higher their performance and the better for the achievement of school goals.

For principals to perform efficiently and effectively, they ought to possess certain qualities. They need to adopt certain management styles and be motivated (Oredien, 2004). In order words, they ought to possess certain personality characteristics. Peretomode (2001) noted also that demographic variables such as age, gender, educational qualification, experience and marital status, could be advantageous or disadvantageous in principals' performance of duties. In the Nigeria setting, according to Ibukun (2011), gender and educational qualification has been considered with other factors like age and experience in the appointment of teachers into position of principalship with the believe that these factors would make some individuals to be more effective than others. Therefore, in this study, there is the need to examine the relationship between gender and educational qualification and principals' performance in the management of senior secondary schools to provide empirical evidence on the relationship.

Gender

Gender refers to the socially constructed roles of men and women. Gender could also be described as the behavioral characteristics distinguishing between [masculinity \(males\)](#) and [femininity \(females\)](#) in any society. Nkwoacha (1990) defined gender as widely shared ideas

and expectations concerning men and women which typically refers to masculine and feminine characteristics and abilities. Gender, according to Olaleye (2001), is traceable to the 1976 University of Sussex workshop on the subordination of women where a consensus emerged that unlike sex, which is biologically determined, women subordination is socially constructed. Hence, while sex refers to the biological differentiation between males and females in terms of their reproductive functions, gender refers to the differentiation between the roles of men and women as socially constructed by society through socialization (Onyeonoru, 2005). Thus, while sex is biological and fixed, gender is varied in space and time and is culturally determined.

The World Bank report on gender, conflict and development according to Bradberry (2016) viewed gender as socially construed roles ascribed to men and women as opposed to biological and physical characteristics, and which vary according to socioeconomic, political and cultural contexts, and are affected by other factors including age, class and ethnicity. They posited that gender roles are learned and negotiated, or contested and are therefore changeable. Although, there are differences in roles between men and women, both can also combine different roles individually over time, or even simultaneously.

Gender, therefore, refers to commonly shared expectations of how men and women should behave in various situations. These ideas and role expectations reflect and influence the different roles, social status, economic and administrative power of men and women in the society. Scholars have given contrasting views about gender differences in performance effectiveness among school administrators. According to Adenuga, Adenuga, & Ogunyemi (2020), the role of gender as a demographic variable in performance has been observed by some researchers and the results deduced from these are conflicting with no one definite relationship between gender and performance sticking out. Some have domineering capabilities to achieve the school goals. Females are assumed to be dependent on males for taking initiatives and for leadership. Since school leadership involves exercising the role of a leader or administrator, one wonders whether the socio-cultural influences that expose males to different problems solving situation and place females in subordinate position would affect the performance of the different genders in school administration. Although Saduwa (2011) maintained that gender has its own advantages and disadvantages for management effectiveness of an administrator, there is however, more emphasis on their capabilities. It is important to further examine the relationship between gender against the backdrop of contrasting views of scholars on gender stereotypes in leadership of educational institutions to obtain empirical evidence.

Scholars have given contrasting views about gender differences in performance effectiveness among school administrators. Daresh and Male (2000), reported that female principals are more effective and efficient in school administration because they extend their motherhood roles to the school environment. Uko (2002) noted male superiority over females as male principals usually apply their domineering capabilities to achieve the school goals. The assumption according to Ezeh (1997) is that males are superior to females in most things that count. Females are assumed to be dependent on males for taking initiatives and for leadership. Since principalship involves exercising the role of a leader or administrator in secondary schools, one is not sure whether the socio-cultural influences that expose males to different problems solving situations and place females in subordinate position would affect the performance of the different genders in school administration. These suggest that there could be fundamental differences in the leadership, beliefs and practices of male and female leaders. Ezeh further stated that it has been frequently claimed that female school administrators are more collaborative and relational. This means that female principals relate friendlier with teachers and students as well as the community where the school situates. There are indications that these assumptions may not be true always. Recent gender discourse, according to

Fadekemi and Isaac (2011), reveals growing skepticism with the validity of gender typecast of men as instrumental, bureaucratic and competitive and women as nurturing, relational and collaborative. To this extent, the performance of principals in the management of secondary schools could depend on gender which requires further empirical validation. Educational qualification may also influence principals' performance.

Educational Qualification

Educational qualification is the certified educational attainment from training of knowledge and skills acquired after a period of instruction by seasoned experts. Professional training exposes one to knowledge, skills, and values needed for effective job performance. Though educational qualification has some research evidence in support of its potential in improving principals' job performance, however, (Nwangwu, 2006), Ogbaji and Oti (2006) posited that educational qualification of principals has no impact on their job performance. According to Williams (2000), educational qualification is required for practice at a high level in certain jobs or professions. Okolo (2001) emphasized the need for training and development of newly appointed principals as a vital factor for principals to exercise positive influence, control and have authority over the behaviour of the teachers, students and the entire staff in the school. It is a symbol of one's intellectual maturity and experience not only in his management of school staff but also in management of other school activities (Onyejemezie, 1991). Kurshid (2006) opined that educational qualification is critical to efficient performance of school principal. According to Kalagbor (2004), educational qualification of a principal when juxtaposed with administrative effectiveness has some relationship. It serves as a means by which the principals' potentials for maximum effectiveness are assessed. Ellah (2004) commented on the issue of qualification of principals and noted that the academically qualified principals have shown the tendency to succeed more than their non-qualified counterparts in a situation where many things have to be managed. This is so because adequately qualified ones have the confidence and courage to use their initiative and to experiment. Ibukun (2011) reported that principals with educational qualifications are more productive than those without such qualification. It is believed that specialized training empowers and motivates such principals for better performance. Eyike (2001) also affirmed that principals who completed in-service trainings were more effective than those who did not. An important implication of this is that professionally trained principals perform their roles better than non-professionals in the management of secondary schools. From the foregoing, principals' educational qualification seems to have a relationship with their performance. This study provides an opportunity to examine this relationship. It is therefore important that the relationship between educational qualification and principals' performance in the management of senior secondary schools be examined in this study.

Senior Secondary School

Senior secondary school is a three year form of education which children receive after basic education programme of continuous nine years streaming before proceeding to the tertiary level of education. According to the National Policy of Education (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2014), senior secondary education is the form of education attended by children after junior secondary education and before tertiary education. Senior secondary educations exist within the ambits of the law and are supervised by the Ministry of Education and its State agencies. For instance Section 18(3)b of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 2011 as amended provides for the existence of free secondary education while the Nigerian Educational Edicts and laws promulgated in 1955 and 1965 covered the rights of Secondary Education. The education laws promulgated by the states in the Federation laid down rules

and regulations in respect of administration and management of secondary schools with the aim of preparing the individual as a prospective citizen and corporate member of the society; preparing the individual as a prospective worker and producer; and preparation of the individual to embrace utilization of leisure and development of his personality (Igwe, 2003).

These aims agree with the provisions of the National Policy on Education (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2004) on the National Objectives of Education. These are:

inculcation of the right type of values and attitudes for the survival of the individual and the Nigerian society; training of the mind in building valuable concepts, generalizations and understanding of the world around us; acquisition of appropriate skills, attitudes and competencies both mental and physical, as equipment for the individual to live and contribute to the development of the society; and acquisition of relevant and balanced knowledge of facts about local and world phenomena (P.8)

For the attainment of these objectives, senior secondary school curriculum has been developed to suit such desires which are to be implemented by the principal with the corporation of competent teachers.

The authority of the senior secondary school principal, according to Ogbonnaya (2009), is viewed in the position occupied as well as the functions performed. The principal implements the educational programmes of the school, liaise with government to provide facilities and equipment, keeps records, both statutory and non-statutory in addition to creating a conducive teaching and learning atmosphere in schools. These are summed up by Ogbonnaya cited in Mgbodile (2004) into five areas, namely: Development and implementation of educational programmes, development of teaching staff, student relation function, community relation function and financial function. Similarly, Ocho and Okeke (1997) classified these functions into five namely: management of instructional programme, staff-personnel administration, student-personnel administration, financial and physical resource management. Stoner (2002) noted that supervision of the teaching and learning process, decision making, conflict resolution, communication, record keeping, fund management, plant management, public relations, compliance to legal stipulations, and utilization of ICT resources are tasks areas of school management. The effective management of these task areas is important for sustainable national development in secondary schools in Nigeria.

Concept of Management

Management is the process of getting things done through the use of human and material resources. Olga (2011) described management as a process of co-ordinated activities involving planning, organizing, directing the activities of an organization to determine and accomplish stated objectives with the use of human beings and other material resources. The United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO cited in Ogunu (2000) described management as a social process designed to ensure co-operation, participation, intervention and involvement of others in the effective achievement of predetermined objectives of an organization. In the view of Peretomode (1996), management is a process involving a sequence of co-ordinated events like planning, organizing, coordinating, controlling, directing or leading in order to use available human and material resources to achieve desirable outcomes in the fastest and most efficient way. From these definitions, it is deduced that management is a social process by which organizational goals are achieved

through planning, organizing, leadership and coordinated efforts of human resources. Thus, management in this context is about the planning, organizing, coordinating and stimulating available human and material resources in public secondary schools towards enhancing sustained functional for the acquisition of skills and aptitudes for lifelong living and national development

The management of senior secondary schools has attracted much public attention in contemporary times in Nigeria due to the deplorable state of infrastructure and the quality of graduates that are fed into the tertiary institutions (Uko, 20115). By implication of its curriculum which is comprehensive, senior secondary schools are expected to be the fortified strength in the hierarchy of the educational systems (Kantabura, 2010). Similarly, Walson and Okanu-Igwela (2017), noted that a look at most senior secondary schools in Nigeria would reveal that they are deplorable and not conducive for teaching and learning. This situation does not augur well for the wellbeing of the educational system. Not only does this situation has negative influence on sustainable development in meeting the needs of the present generation and also compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs. The outcry in the management of senior secondary schools in Rivers State could be attributed to the influence of gender and educational qualification of principals which will be verified in this study.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of the study is to examine gender and educational qualification as correlates of principals' performance in the management of senior secondary schools in Rivers State. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. Determine the gender profile of the principals of senior secondary schools in Rivers State?
2. Determine the educational qualification profile of the principals of senior secondary schools in Rivers State?
3. Determine the correlation coefficient between gender and principals' performance in the management of senior secondary schools in Rivers State?
4. Determine the correlation coefficient between educational qualification and principals' performance in the management of senior secondary schools in Rivers State?

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study.

1. What is the gender profile of the principals of senior secondary schools in Rivers State?
2. What is the educational qualification profile of the principals of senior secondary schools in Rivers State?
3. What is the correlation coefficient between gender and principals' performance in the management of senior secondary schools in Rivers State?
4. What is the correlation coefficient between educational qualification and principals' performance in the management of senior secondary schools in Rivers State?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance.

1. Gender do not significantly relate with or predict principals' performance in the management of senior secondary schools in Rivers State.
2. Educational qualification does not significantly relate with or predict principals' performance in the management of senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

Methodology

The study adopted a correlational survey design. Four research questions and two null hypotheses guided the study. The population of the study was 289 principals of senior secondary schools in Rivers State. The sample was 289 determined using census sampling technique. The instrument for data collection was Principals Demographic Questionnaire (PDQ) and Principals Performance Questionnaire (PPQ) with 25 question items. The instrument was validated by experts in the Department of Educational Management and Guidance and Counseling of Ignatius Ajuru University of Education. A reliability index of 0.86 was obtained for (PPQ) using Cronbach Alpha method. Research questions one and two were answered using frequencies and percentage, while research questions three and four were answered using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMC). The two null hypotheses were tested using MAMCOVA (Multiple regressions and associated t-test). The demographic data of the principals were coded as follows: Gender: male = 1, female = 2; Educational qualification: Ph.D = 4, M.Ed/M.Sc =3, B.Ed/B.A/B.Sc =2; Dip/N.C.E=1.

Results

The findings are presented below in line with the research questions and hypotheses that guided the study.

Research Question One: What is the gender profile of the principals of senior secondary schools in Rivers State?

Table 1: Frequencies and percentage of principals' gender in senior secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria.

Category	Frequencies	Percentage
Male	188	65.05
Female	101	34.95
Total	289	100.00

Table 1 revealed that 188 principals (65.05%) were males while 101(34.95%) were females. Most principals in senior secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria were Males.

Research Question Two: What is the educational qualification profile of the principals of senior secondary schools in Rivers State?

Table 2: Frequencies and percentage of principals' educational qualifications in South-South Nigeria.

Category	Frequencies	Percentage
Ph.D	6	2.08
M.Sc/ M.A/M.Ed	104	35.97
B.Sc/B.A/B.Ed/B.Sc(E)	178	61.59
Dip/NCE	1	0.36
Total	289	100.00

Table 2 showed that only 6(2.08%) of the principals had Ph.D; 104(35.97%) had second degree such as M.Sc/M.A/M.Ed; 178(61.59%) have first degree like B.Sc/B.A/B.Ed/B.Sc(E); and

only 1(0.36%) principal had Diploma or NCE. Most of the principals in senior secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria had first degree.

Research Question Three: What is the correlation coefficient between gender and principals' performance in the management of senior secondary schools in Rivers State?

Table 3: Correlation Coefficients between gender and principals' performance in the management of senior secondary schools in Rivers State

Variables			r^2	Percentage
Gender	Pearson	.478**	0.228484	22.8484%
	Correlation	.000		
	Sig. (2-tailed)			

Table 3 showed the correlation coefficient between gender and principals' performance in the management of senior secondary schools in Rivers State. The correlation coefficient between gender and principals' performance was substantial (.478**). The positive sign implies that male principals were more effective in the management of senior secondary schools in Rivers State than female principals. Gender accounted for 22.85% of the variance in principals' performance in the management of senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

Research Question Four: What is the correlation coefficient between educational qualification and principals' performance in the management of senior secondary schools in Rivers State?

Table 3: Correlation Coefficients between educational qualification and principals' performance in the management of senior secondary schools in Rivers State

Variables			r^2	Percentage
Educational Qualification	Pearson	.365**	0.133225	13.3225%
	Correlation	.000		
	Sig. (2-tailed)			

Table 4 showed the correlation coefficient between educational and principals' performance in the management of senior secondary schools in Rivers State. The correlation coefficient between educational qualification and principals' performance was substantial (.365**). The positive sign implies that principals with higher educational qualifications were more effective in the management of senior secondary schools in Rivers State than those with lower qualifications. Educational qualification accounted for 13.32% of the variance in principals' performance in the management of senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

Hypothesis One: Gender do not significantly relate with principals' performance in the management of senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

Table 5: Model Summary for gender and principals' performance

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
	.726 ^a	.527	.517	10.69232

In Table 5 above, the coefficient of determination (R^2) is 0.527. This indicates that 52.7% of the variance in principals' performance is caused by variations in the predictor variable. Therefore, 52.7% of the variance in principals' performance is predicted by gender.

Table 6: Analysis of Variance of gender on principals' performance

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	24352.749	4	6088.187	53.253	.000 ^b
Residual	21836.205	192	114.326		
Total	46188.954	194			

a. Dependent variable: principals' performance

b. Predictors: (Constant), Gender

Table 6 showed that F-value of 53.253 is significant at 0.000. This indicated that the gender was significantly related to principals' performance in the management of senior secondary schools in Rivers State. Therefore, the null hypothesis of no significant linear relationship between gender and principals' performance in the management of senior secondary schools in Rivers State was rejected.

Table 7: t-Values on gender and principals' performance in the management of senior secondary schools in Rivers State

		Coefficients^a		t	Sig.
		Unstandardized Coefficients	Standardized Coefficients		
Model		B	Std. Error	Beta	
1	(Constant)	10.349	1.385		.000
	GENDER	-.052	.153	-.045	.735

a. Dependent Variable: PRINCIPALS' PERFORMANCE

To determine if the predictor variable was significantly related to or predicted principals' performance in the management of senior secondary schools in Rivers State, the t-value was presented in table 7. The t-value for gender was (7.474, $P > 0.000$). Gender had significant relationship ($P < 0.05$) with and predicted principals' performance in the management of senior secondary schools in Rivers State. The regression equation for predicting principals' performance is $Y = .052x + 10.35$ i.e ($Y' = Bx + a$) where "x" is principals' performance in the management of senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

Hypothesis Two: Educational qualification does not significantly relate with principals performance in the management of senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

Table 8: Model Summary for educational qualification and principals' performance

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
	.384 ^a	.148	.143	14.24618

Table 8 showed the coefficient of determination (R^2) is 0.148. This indicates that 14.3% of the variance in principals' performance is caused by variations in the predictor variable. Therefore, 14.3% of the variance in principals' performance is predicted by educational qualifications.

Table 6: Analysis of Variance of educational qualifications on principals' performance

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	7685.573	1	7685.573	38.724	.000 ^b
Residual	38503.381	195	198.471		
Total	46188.954	196			

a. Dependent variable: principals' performance

b. Predictors: (Constant), Educational qualifications

Table 9 showed that F-value of 38.724 is significant at 0.000. This indicated that the educational qualification was significantly related to principals' performance in the management of senior secondary schools in Rivers State. Therefore, the null hypothesis of no significant linear relationship between educational qualification and principals' performance in the management of senior secondary schools in Rivers State was rejected.

Table 10: t-Values on educational qualifications and principals' performance in the management of senior secondary schools in Rivers State

		Coefficients^a		t	Sig.
		Unstandardized Coefficients	Standardized Coefficients		
Model		B	Beta		
1	(Constant)	35.826		15.897	.000**
	EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION	1.401	.384	5.795	.000**

a. Dependent Variable: PRINCIPALS' PERFORMANCE

To determine if the predictor variable was significantly related to or predicted principals' performance in the management of senior secondary schools in Rivers State, the t-value was presented in table 10. The t-value for educational qualification was (15.897, $P > 0.000$). Educational qualification had significant relationship ($P < 0.05$) with and predicted principals' performance in the management of senior secondary schools in Rivers State. The regression equation for predicting principals' performance is $Y = 1.401 + 35.83x$ i.e ($Y' = Bx + a$) where "x" is principals' performance in the management of senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

Discussion of Findings

Gender and educational qualification profile of principals in the management of senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

The findings of the study revealed that most principals in senior secondary schools in Rivers State were males with first degree. Out of the 289 principals in senior secondary schools in Rivers State, 188(65.05%) were males and 101(34.95%) were females. The findings corroborate with that of Walson (2015) in a study on demographic and personality correlates of principals in the management of secondary education in South-South, Nigeria. He found out that out of 310 principals of secondary schools in South-South, Nigeria, 201 principals (64.8%) were males while 109(35.2%) were females. However, in a study by Adenuga et al. (2020) on the influence of job embeddedness and gender on job characteristics and turnover intention of academic staff of public universities the gender profile of male and female lecturers was 685 (49.1%) and 710(50.9%) respectively.

On the other hand, it was found out in this study that most principals in Rivers State had first degree. The educational qualification profile of principals revealed that out of 289 principals 6(2.08%) of the principals had Ph.D; 104(35.97%) had second degree such as M.Sc/M.A/M.Ed; 178(61.59%) have first degree like B.Sc/B.A/B.Ed/B.Sc(Ed.); and only 1(0.36%) principal had Diploma or NCE. This finding also corroborated with that of Walson (2015) which revealed that most principals' secondary schools in South-South, Nigeria also had first degree. Out of the 310 principals of secondary schools in South-South, Nigeria, 3(1%) of the principals had Ph.D; 93(30%) had second degree such as M.Sc/M.A/M.Ed; 213(68.7%) have first degree like B.Sc/B.A/B.Ed/B.Sc(Ed.); and only 1(3%) principal had Diploma or NCE.

Gender and Educational qualification as correlates of principals' performance in the management of senior secondary schools

The findings of this study showed that there was correlation between gender principals' performance in the management of senior secondary schools in Rivers State. The correlation coefficient between gender and principals' performance was substantial (.478**). Male principals were more effective in the management of senior secondary schools in Rivers State than female principals. Gender explained 22.85% of the variance in principals' performance in the management of senior secondary schools in Rivers State. These findings corroborate with Ezeh (1997) in a study on the relationship between teacher's demographic variables and classroom management, reported males superiority to females in most things that count in classroom management because of domineering capabilities to achieve the school goals. He further reported that female school administrators are more collaborative and relational. This means that females relate better with subordinates, teachers and students as well as the community where the school situates. Similarly, Anyanwu, (2009) in a study on examination of gender's influence on teachers' productivity in secondary school teachers in Delta State, Nigeria, reported that male teachers were generally more productive than their female counterparts in rural areas, while the female perform best in urban schools than their male teachers. However, these findings negate that of Olaleye (2001) who in a study on the influence of gender differences of principals in their effectiveness in school-community relations in secondary schools in Osun State, Nigeria, reported that the gender of the principals had no impact on their ability to establish good community relations. Both female and male principals perform equally well and employed similar leadership behaviour in this regard.

On the other hand, the findings of this revealed that the correlation coefficient between gender and principals' performance was substantial (.365**). Principals with higher

educational qualification were more effective in the management of senior secondary schools in Rivers State than female principals. Educational qualification explained 13.32% of the variance principals' performance in the management of senior secondary schools in Rivers State. These findings corroborated with Walson (2015) partly as the correlation coefficients between educational qualification principals and performance in decision making (-.134*) was substantial though educational qualification was negative. This means that the lower the educational qualification of principals the more effective they were in decision-making. Educational qualification explained 1.80% of the variance in principals' performance in decision making.

Gender and Educational qualification as predictors of principals' performance in the management of senior secondary schools

The findings of this study showed that gender and educational qualification had significant relationship with and predicted principals' performance in the management of senior secondary schools in Rivers State. The t-value for gender was (7.474, $P > 0.000$), while educational qualification was (15.897, $P > 0.000$) at $P > 0.05$. These finding agreed with that of Okpe (2010), on the influence of demographic variables and school climate on principals' job performance in public secondary schools in South-East, Nigeria. The results showed that educational qualification, experience and gender jointly had significantly influence principals' job performance. The results of this study also agreed with some aspects of the findings of Okpalugo (2008) and Wagbara (2005) that there was a significant relationship with principals' age, gender, experience, qualification, marital status and students' achievement. Specifically, schools administered by married principals with higher qualifications had the best results.

Conclusion

The following conclusions were drawn based on the research findings. Principals' performance in the management of senior secondary schools is usual concern of the principals in their day-to-day management of their schools. Therefore, considering the inevitable nature of school administration in the world which senior secondary school is no exemption, government should be aware that the management of schools is highly dependent on their demographic factors like gender and educational qualifications.

Recommendations

The study recommended that gender and educational qualification of teachers should be considered during the appointment of principals since they have significant relationship with principals' performance in the management of senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

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