Education

Principal's managerial skills and teachers attitude to work in public secondary schools in Niger state

Abubakar Yahaya

Department of Educational Management, Faculty of Education, Federal University of Education, Kontagora, Nigeria

Corresponding author: Abubakar Yahaya

Received 8 Sep 2026; Accepted 19 Oct 2026; Published 2 Nov 2026

DOI: https://doi.org/10.64171/JAES.6.6.18-21

Abstract

The study investigated the relationship between principals' managerial skills and teachers' attitude to work in public secondary schools in Niger State. The research design adopted for this study was descriptive survey type. The population of the study comprised of all the principals and teachers in public secondary schools in Niger State. The sample of 5 principals and 90 teachers were selected using simple random sampling technique. A questionnaire instrument titled "Principals' Managerial Skills and Teachers' Attitude to Work Questionnaire (PMSTAWQ)" was used to collect data. Four hypotheses were postulated to guide the study. The research hypotheses were tested using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMCC). The findings of the study revealed that: there was a significant relationship between principal's interpersonal skills, supervisory skills, administrative skills, pedagogical skills and teachers' attitude to work. Based on the findings of the study, it was recommended that; School principals should promote their interpersonal relationship with their staff, embark on leadership training so as to develop their supervisory skills, embark on professional training in order to promote their administrative skills and forester more effort towards attaining better qualifications in education in order to improve their mastering of subject matter.

Keywords: Principal, Managerial skills, Teachers, Attitude, Work

Introduction

Today's educational institutions are more complex and sophisticated requiring erudite leadership due to global economic competitiveness, as leaders are confronted with unpredictable challenges, which require different degree of leadership management. Effective management of teachers may be assumed to be achievable through leadership behavior, which promotes their commitment and productivity. Although, employees' performance can be highly affected by many factors arising from within and outside school context. In an educational system, the principal and teacher are the enabler and motivator. Secondary schools are formal public organizations charged with the responsibility of preparing the younger ones after their primary school career for useful living within any society and equipping them for higher education (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2013) [6]. Attainment of these goals requires a commitment from highly qualified and motivated teachers.

The problem of principal-teachers relationship has been an issue of great concern to stakeholders in education. Ofoegbu (2004) [10] stated that this concern stem from the performance of secondary school students in external examinations which have been worrisome to parents, administrators and the general public. He further asserted that the yardstick for measuring standard of education and administrative responsibility is students' performance in internal and external examinations.

The conduct of the school and the quality of their products are seen by some as a reflection of the level of administrative performance of their principals. This is in reflection of the quality of interpersonal relationship, level and degree of supervision, monitoring of delegated functions, instructional activities in the school, planning of school procrammes and routine administration in the school.

In the context of secondary school administration, the principal is seen as the executive head that develop and implement the educational programmes of the school. The principal keep school records as well as create a conducive teaching and learning atmosphere in school. Dale and Fox 2008 [4] asserted that the success of any school, whether public or private depends largely on the extent to which individual talents and efforts are harnessed towards co-operative endeavours. The success he stressed lies on motivation and commitment of the members to group goals and objectives. Hence, the attitude of teachers/staffs is a characteristic component of teacher personality. An attitude is a framework that affects how a person thinks and acts about the world. If a teacher has a negative attitude towards education, his job or students, it may influence his performance as an educator (Spector, 2000) [11].

The quality of teaching is a function of the love, dedication and devotion of the teacher towards the subject and students. The principal managerial skill is also a huge determinant that determines the range at which the teachers/staffs will be of positive influence on students. The quality of any teaching programme cannot rise above the quality of its teachers. In the school system, principal managerial skill is a tool in the hands of the principals as the executive head in staff personnel administration. No matter the size of the school, whether big or small, the principal cannot execute all the functions alone; he needs to explore his leadership responsibility to his staff for effective school administration.

Currently, observations have shown that most principals have not been realizing the lofty goals set for their respective schools. This failure has been attributed to poor managerial skills relating to interpersonal relationship and supervision of teaching and non-teaching activities I the school. Poor managerial attitude maybe responsible for frosty relationship between principals and teachers, laxity among staff and ineffective implementation of school programmes. Therefore, the study examined principal's managerial skills and teachers' attitude to work in public secondary schools in Akoko South West Local Government Area of Ondo State.

Literature review

Managing teachers is that part of school management which is concerned with teachers at work and their relationship within the educational enterprise. Omebe (2001) is of the view that well managed teachers will always look for better ways to do their teaching job; they are more quality oriented and more productive. Management of teachers can be through the adoption of these management strategies: Supervision, in-service training and involvement in decision making process among others. Hence, any teacher that enjoys the influence of the above named strategies is bound to give all his best in discharging his or her duty because he would derive the satisfaction of being a teacher.

Sipho (2007) in a study on the managerial role of the principal in whole school evaluation in the context of disadvantaged schools in Kwazulu-Natal at the University of South Africa reveals that the managerial role of the principal includes: instructional management and support; providing leadership, facilitating meaningful change; supervision, evaluation, building and maintaining a winning team, developing human resources; staff appraisal; monitoring the implementation of educational policies, monitoring of learner progress; managing curriculum and instruction and promoting a positive school climate. Positive interpersonal relationships at work have an advantageous impact on both organizational and individual variables. Research has demonstrated that friendships at work can improve individual employee attitudes such as job satisfaction, job commitment, engagement and perceived organizational support (Zagenczyk, Scott, Gibney, Murrell, & Thatcher, 2010) [12]. In addition, employee's negative work attitudes can be mitigated when leaders and peers act as confidantes to discuss bad and unpleasant work experiences (Morrison, 2009; Song & Olshfski, 2008) [7, 9].

Valued work relationships can influence organizational outcomes by increasing institutional participation, establishing supportive and innovative climates, increasing organizational productivity and indirectly reducing the intent to turnover (Crabtree, 2004; Ellingwood, 2001; Song & Olshfski, 2008) [3, 5, 9]. In a study of government workers in South Korea and the United States, Song and Olshfski (2008) [9] found that in both countries friendships between superiors and subordinates positively affect work attitudes. Supervision in school is defined as helping teachers exercise their right, and their responsibility, to promote continued growth (Nolan & Hoover, 2008) [8]. Blasé and Blasé (2004) [1] view supervision as a combination of supervisory beliefs and educational philosophies with the purpose of building trust, empowering teachers, and fostering reflection. They maintained that supervision should be inquiry orientated, and it should encourage teachers' voices as well as acknowledges the context and complexity of teaching (Blasé and Blasé, 2004) [1].

Supervision is considered a key to success in schools. Ebmeier (2003) [2] produced research that linked teacher efficacy to supervision. He defined efficacy as an individual's belief about his or her own capabilities to achieve a certain end. According to his work, supervision activities that teachers felt were supportive of their roles included providing feedback, encouragement, emotional support, reinforcement, as well as modeling experiences. If more classroom observations occurred, teachers felt they had more efficacies. Using scales to measure a principal's supervision, a principal's support of teaching, and teacher's satisfaction with working conditions, the conclusions drawn from the data determined that a principal supervisory behaviors and the efficacy beliefs of 28 teachers in that principal's school were remarkably similar (Ebmeier, 2003) [2]. To guide the study, two research questions and hypotheses were formulated and postulated respectively.

Objectives of the study

The following objectives were raised for the purpose of this study:

- Does principal's interpersonal skills determines teacher's attitude to work in schools?
- Is there any relationship between principal's supervisory skills and teacher's performance in schools?
- What is the relationship between principal's administrative skills and teacher's attitudes to work in schools?
- To find out the relationship that exists between principal's pedagogical skill and teacher's attitude to work in schools?

Research hypotheses

- There is no significant relationship between principals' interpersonal skill and teachers' attitudes to work in Niger state public secondary schools.
- There is no significant relationship between principals' supervisory skill and teachers' attitudes to work in Niger state public secondary schools.
- There is no significant relationship between principals' administrative skill and teachers' attitudes to work in Niger state public secondary schools.
- There is no significant relationship between principals' pedagogical skill and teachers' attitudes to work in Niger state public secondary schools.

Methodology

The research design adopted for this study was a descriptive survey type which looks into the quality of managerial skills on teacher's attitude to work among secondary schools in Niger state. The targeted population for this study covered all public secondary schools in Niger State. The sample for the study was randomly selected, 5 principals and 90 teachers were used. A

questionnaire instrument titled "Principals' Managerial Skills and Teachers' Attitude to Work Questionnaire PMSTAWQ) was used to elicit relevant information from selected respondents. The instrument was given to two educational administrations and planning experts in the Department of Educational Management, Federal University of Education Kontagora for validation and the validity index obtained after their corrections was 0.76. one way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to test the four hypotheses due to the heterogeneity nature of the respondents. All the hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance.

Hypothesis testing

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant relationship between principal's interpersonal skill and teachers' attitude to work.

Table 1: Relationship between principal's interpersonal skill and teachers' attitude to work

Variables	N	Df	P.	r.cal	r.tab
Principal's interpersonal skill teachers' attitude to work	95	93	0.05	0.577	0.205

Significance at 0.05

The results presented on table 1 revealed that the calculated r value (r.cal) 0.577 is greater than the table value (r. tab) 0.205 at 0.05 level of significance. This signifies that a significant relationship exists between principal's interpersonal skill and teachers' attitude to work. The tested hypothesis is therefore rejected.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant relationship between principal's supervisory skill and teachers' attitude to work.

Table 2: Relationship between principal's supervisory skills and teachers' attitude to work

Variables	N	Df	P	r.cal	r.tab
Principal's supervisory skill teachers' attitude to work	95	93	0.05	0.615	0.205

Significance at 0.05

The results as presented on table 2 showed that a significant relationship exists between principal's supervisory skill and teachers' attitude to work. This is because the calculated r value (r. cal.) which is 0.615 is greater than the table value (r. tab.) 0.205 obtained at 0.05 level of significance. On this basis, the null hypothesis tested is rejected.

Hypothesis 3: There is no significant relationship between principal's admnistrative skill and teachers' attitude to work.

Table 3: Relationship between principal's administrative skills and teachers' attitude to work

Variables	N	Df	P	r.cal	r.tab
Principal's supervisory skill teachers' attitude to work	95	93	0.05	0.536	0.205

Significance at 0.05

The results presented on table 3 revealed that the calculated r value (r.cal) 0.536 is greater than the table value (r. tab) 0.205 at 0.05 level of significance. This signifies that a significant relationship exists between principal's administrative skill and teachers' attitude to work. The tested hypothesis is therefore rejected.

Hypothesis 4: There is no significant relationship between principal's pedagogical skill and teachers' attitude to work.

Table 4: Relationship between principal's pedagogical skills and teachers' attitude to work

Variables	N	Df	P	r.cal	r.tab
Principal's supervisory skill teachers' attitude to work	95	93	0.05	0.424	0.205

Significance at 0.05

The results presented on table 4 revealed that the calculated r value (r.cal) 0.424 is greater than the table value (r. tab) 0.205 at 0.05 level of significance. This signifies that a significant relationship exists between principal's pedagogical skill and teachers' attitude to work. The tested hypothesis is therefore rejected.

Discussion of findings

Hypothesis one which states that there is no significant relationship between principal's interpersonal skill and teachers' attitude to work was rejected. This infers that the interpersonal skill of principal influences the teachers' attitude to work.

This finding supports the position of another researcher. Positive interpersonal relationships at work have an advantageous impact on both organizational and individual variables. Research has demonstrated that friendships at work can improve individual employee attitudes such as job satisfaction, job commitment, engagement and perceived organizational support (Zagenczyk, Scott, Gibney, Murrell, & Thatcher, 2010) [12]. In addition, employee's negative work attitudes can be mitigated when leaders and peers act as confidantes to discuss bad and unpleasant work experiences (Morrison, 2009; Song & Olshfski, 2008) [7, 9]. Also, in a study of government workers in South Korea and the United States, Song and Olshfski (2008) [9] found that in both countries friendships between superiors and subordinates positively affect work attitudes.

Hypothesis two which states that there is no significant relationship between principal's supervisory skill and teachers' attitude to work was rejected. It was found that a significant relationship exists between principal's supervisory skill and teachers' attitude to work. The finding is in line with Ebmeier (2003) [2] who undertook research that linked teacher efficacy to supervision. He defined efficacy as an individual's belief about his or her own capabilities to achieve a certain end. According to his work, supervision activities that teachers felt were supportive of their roles included providing feedback, encouragement, emotional support, reinforcement, as well as

modeling experiences. If more classroom observations occurred, teachers felt they had more efficacies.

Hypothesis three which states that there is no significant relationship between principal's administrative skills and teacher's attitude to work was rejected. The findings is in line with Aliyu and Bello (2023) who undertook research that teacher's efficiency can be traced to principal's administrative potentials in term of theories implementation motivational strategies, change in policy implementation which give the principal the potential influence on the attitude of teachers to work positively.

Hypothesis four which states that there is no significant relationship between principals' pedagogical skill and teacher's attitude to work was equally rejected. The rejection was based on the potential of the principals as regards understanding the lesson plan, mastering of subject matter and better utilization of teaching aids.

Conclusion

From the findings of the study, it is concluded that a significant relationship between principals' managerial skills and teachers' attitude to work with reference to interpersonal relationship and supervision. This is because all the variables of principals managerial skills tested are significantly related to teachers' attitude to work. Thus, it is imperative that school principals are equipped with these managerial skills through on the-job-training to further enhance the performance of teachers under them by engendering a positive attitude towards work in the school system.

Recommendations

- School organization should pay more attention to the attitude and behaviours their employees and its leadership style so as to create pleasant experience for all categories of employees.
- The principals may also need more training on leadership style as this may aid their supervisory and interpersonal skills to do more on job attitude of teachers.
- This finding has implications for the development of loyal employees and incentive strategy. In view of this, principals should make effort to reach out to every member of the school organization irrespective of their demographic profiles. This can help in making them better committed to the organization.
- Star performers among teachers should be recognized and compensated accordingly in order to encourage a culture of good attitude and commitment.
- Aligning the personal needs of the employees with those of the organization can be helpful in the development of loyal workforce and performance driven system.
- One strategy for engendering valued interpersonal relationships at work is to involve teachers in the decision making process through committee system.
- Finally, school principals should invest more in uplifting their managerial capacity as this will enhance staff management practices.

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