

**PRINCIPALS' PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCIES AS PREDICTORS OF JOB  
PERFORMANCE OF TEACHERS IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS, IN  
SOUTHWEST, NIGERIA**

**<sup>1</sup>Aliyu R.T. & <sup>2</sup>Johnson Hannah B.**

<sup>1</sup>*Department of Science Education, Faculty of Arts and Education  
Lead City University, Ibadan, Nigeria*

<sup>2</sup>*Federal College of Animal Health and Production Technology  
Moor Plantation Ibadan, Nigeria*

**Abstract**

*This study focused on Principal professional competencies as predictors of job performance of teachers. Two research questions were raised and four hypotheses were formulated to find out the level of principals' competencies on human and materials resource management. The researcher reviewed relevant literature to establish the theoretical bases for the study. The descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. Through multistage sampling procedure (simple, purposive and disproportionate random sampling techniques), four states in the southwest geo-political zone of Nigeria were selected for the study. One thousand two hundred (1,200) respondents comprising of 816 teachers, 384 principals were selected as sample. The research instrument used for data collection was an adapted questionnaire titled: Principal Professional Competencies on Human Resource Management Scale (PPCHRMS) and Principal Professional Competencies on Material Resource Management scale (PPCMRMS). The instruments were subjected to face and content validity and Cronbach Alpha reliability estimates of .858, and .842 obtained. The data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics of mean and standard deviation for the stated research questions. Regression and t-test statistics were used for the stated hypotheses tested at 0.05 level of significance. The mean difference in the opinion of the principals and teachers regarding human resource were higher for principals ( $M= 2590.76$ ,  $SD= 244.459$ ) than teachers ( $M=2590.459$ ,  $SD= 237.300$ ),  $t(1198)=.035, p>.05$ . Levene's test indicated equal variance assumed ( $F=1.059$ ,  $p=.304$ ). Also, the mean difference in the opinion of the principals and teachers regarding material resource were lower for principals ( $M= 1848.23$ ,  $SD=$*

1277.304) than teachers ( $M=1951.28$ ,  $SD= 1246.818$ ),  $t(1198)=1.325, p>.05$ . Levene's test indicated equal variance assumed ( $F=3.423$ ,  $p=.065$ ). Hence, the major finding of the research indicated that the principal professional competencies showed high level of professionalism in human and material resource management and were significant to teachers' job performance. Recommendations were made such that principals should ensure planning and distribution of human and material resources are available in the school before resumption and that teachers should be shouldered with some responsibilities in the schools.

**Keywords:** Principals' Professional Competencies in Schools, Teachers' job performance,

### **Introduction**

The future of a country depends on the quality of education given to her citizens, because, education assures the future of the society and provides continuity. For this reason, educational managers responsible for educational institutions have important responsibilities in ensuring quality outputs. This is because educational system is in continuous interaction with social, political, cultural and economic systems which surround it (Abayomi, 2021). The emphasis by the public nowadays according to Wayne and Miskel (2008) is on efficiency, academic achievement and employment skills which require effective leadership from the principal. Abayomi (2021) argued that Nigeria is reaching a period where teaching is fast becoming the last hope for the hopeless, that is a profession for those who have nothing else better to do. This possesses a challenge for dynamic instructional leadership in Nigerian secondary schools where the head is expected to create a conducive atmosphere that will give both staff and students hope and encouragement

Leadership has been identified by researchers as a crucial factor in instructional effectiveness (Aja, 2016 and Akinfolarin, 2017). It is a major factor in determining the success and progress of an institution. It is the key to success in every organization because it can either influence the climate of the school positively or negatively. Without effective leadership, even an institution full of talented teachers will surely drift without purpose. It is therefore the key to achieving

collective excellence. It is the leader who most greatly affects the organisational climate and provides direction, motivation and inspiration for the school. In other words, the success of any institution depends largely on the ability of the leader to maintain a conducive environment for the development of its members. Instructional leadership differs from that of a school administrator or manager. Principals who pride themselves as administrators are too preoccupied in dealing with strictly administrative duties compared to those who are instructional leaders (Chidi and Patience, 2017 and Dare, 2009). It is through instructional leadership that the principal can ensure that standards are not only maintained, but also improved upon to achieve expected objectives. This requires that a leader must have mission and vision to effectively utilize both human and material resources to achieve the expected goals.

Sarah (2015, 2016) opined that the principal is a leader who must plan, coordinate and supervise the affairs of the school, so that they run smoothly. The principal is the chief administrator of secondary school who is expected to effectively use various resources through the adoption of management principles and practices for the realization of school goals. If education system must achieve its national policies and goals, the school managers at all levels must ensure optimum management of human, material, financial and time resources (Shanka and Mary, 2017 and Njidda, 2019).

Management is the arrangement of available human and material resources for the achievement of desired goals and objectives (Nwune, Nwogbo and Okonkwo, 2016). It is the productive use of available resources in an efficient and effective manner geared towards goals realization. Okobia (2015) observed that school principals must possess a wide array of competencies in order to lead schools effectively towards the accomplishment of educational goals, which has led to changing expectations of what leaders need to know and must be able to do. Competency as opined by Wilmot and Hocker (2016) is the successful performance of a task through the use of knowledge, skills, attitude and judgment. It is the ability and required skills to accomplish given task. Managerial competency is the possession of necessary skills to effectively manage resources for productivity. Ikediugwu (2016) and Lipham (2016) outlined functions of school administrators as including management of instructional programmes,

staff personnel administration, students' personnel administration, finance and physical resource management and community relationship management. Effective management of human, material, time and financial resources is highly crucial for institutional sustainability and the development of school action plan.

The inaction of the principals towards professional activities which ranges from inadequate coverage of scheme of work, teachers' persistent lateness, frequent conflict, truancy among students, inadequate and damaged physical facilities, shortage of fund, unprecedentedly high fees charged on students among others results in problems such as loss of sense of direction, mass failure in examinations, examination malpractice, class absenteeism by both teachers and students, non-coverage of syllabus, wastage in human and material resources, teacher incompetence, role conflicts, high rate of dropout, and so on as evident in many secondary schools in Nigeria (Abayomi, 2021).

This however may be as a result of poor professional competencies of the principals in effective and efficient management of the key resources in the school system which are; human, material and financial resources. No meaningful institutional change can take place without effective management of resources. Premised on these challenges, the study aimed at examining the influence of principals' professional competencies as predictors of teachers' job performance in secondary schools in southwest, Nigeria.

### **Research Questions**

The study attempted to find answers to the following questions:

1. What is the level of professional competence of principals' in human resource management in Southwest Secondary schools in Nigeria?
2. What is the level of professional competence of principals' in materials resource management in Southwest Secondary schools in Nigeria?

### **Hypotheses**

This study was guided by the following hypotheses.

- H<sub>01</sub>** There will be no significant mean difference in the opinion of principals and teachers with regards to principals' professional

competencies in human resource management in secondary schools in southwest, Nigeria.

- H<sub>02</sub>** There will be no significant mean difference in the opinion of principals and teachers with respect of principals' professional competencies in material resource management in secondary schools in southwest, Nigeria.

### **Methodology**

The descriptive survey research design was adopted for this study and the study targeted all principals and teachers in Southwest secondary schools, Nigeria. One thousand two hundred (1200) respondents formed the sample for this study from the population. The multi-stage sampling procedure was employed for the study. Simple random sampling technique was used to select four (4) states out of the six (6) from Southwest, Nigeria. Simple random sampling technique was also used to select three (3) local government areas (LGAs) each from the selected states making 12 LGAs altogether. Purposive sampling technique was employed to select 5 private schools and 5 public schools which had been in operation for the past ten years, each from the three selected LGAs making a total of 30 schools from each state. Therefore, the total schools used for the study were 120 secondary schools altogether. The principals were considered purposively for being there for at least 5 years while teachers were considered using the non-proportionate stratified random sampling technique to arrive at the 1200 respondents which formed the sample for the study (that is 384 principals and 816 teachers in the whole schools making a total of 1200 for the study was arrived at). The research instrument used for data collection was an adapted questionnaire titled: Principal Professional Competencies on Human Resource Management Scale (PPCHRMS) and Principal Professional Competencies on Material Resource Management Scale (PPCMRM). The sections was made up of 4-Likert point scale for the determination of the extent to which the respondents examine principals' professional competencies on teachers' job performance in Southwest secondary schools, Nigeria. The items was scaled as follows: Strongly Agree (SA) = 4 score Agree (A) = 3 score Disagree (D) = 2 score Strongly Disagree (SD) = 1 score. The instruments were subjected to face and content validity and Cronbach Alpha reliability estimates of .858, and .842 obtained. The statistic tests

used were both mean and SD for research question while the null hypotheses for t-test at 0.05 level of significance.

## Results and Discussion of Findings

### Research Question 1: What is the level of professional competence of principals' in human resource management in Southwest Secondary schools in Nigeria?

To answer the Research question one above table 1 is used.

**Table 1: Level of Professional competence on Human Resource Management**

Items	N	$\bar{x}$	Std. Dev	R
1. Principal provides incentives to students' to improve academic performance	1200	2.8533	1.1392	ME
2. He provides incentives for teachers' to increase their motivation to work	1200	2.9492	.42039	ME
3. Principal promotes teachers' welfare to increase their commitment to instructional tasks	1200	3.0017	.68706	HE
4. Principal ensures teachers' and students' discipline for effectiveness	1200	3.1275	.49137	HE
5. Principal orientates new staff and students on school activities and goals	1200	3.1533	.86146	HE
6. Principal involves teachers' in decision making for school improvement.	1200	3.1983	.86291	HE
8. He organizes seminars and workshops for professional advancement of teachers	1200	3.2783	.44837	HE
9. Principal supervises teachers' and students' in order to render professional guidance.	1200	3.3975	.73367	HE
10. Principal appraises staff in order to improve their job performance	1200	3.5275	.49945	HE
11. Principal delegates tasks to teachers'				

in order to give them sense of responsibility	1200	3.6450	.73559	HE
<b>Average Total</b>	<b>1200</b>	<b>3.213</b>	<b>.688</b>	<b>HE</b>

**R: Remarks; VHE: Very High Extent (3.50 – above); HE: High Extent (3.00-3.49); ME: Moderate Extent (2.50-2.99); LE: Low Extent (Below 2.50)**

Table1 showed that each of the items 1 to 10 on level of principals' professional competencies in human resource management obtained a mean score above 2.50. The above results implied that the respondents rated principals' professional competencies in human resource management as high. The grand mean score was 3.213, which was above the criterion of 2.50 set for the study while the standard deviation was .688 indicating that the respondents were not far from the mean and from one another in their responses. Also, the table above revealed that item10 had the highest mean of 3.645 while the least mean was that of item 1 with a mean score of 2.853. This result implies that the grand mean score of 3.213 indicated that principals' professional competencies in human resource management in secondary schools in southwest, Nigeria are on the high extent. Therefore, the level of professional competence of principals' in human resource management in Secondary schools in Southwest, Nigeria is to a high extent with the grand mean score of 3.213 against the above threshold.

**RQ 2: What is the level of professional competence of principals' in materials resource management in Southwest Secondary schools in Nigeria?**

**Table 2: Level of Professional competence on Material Resource management**

Items	N	$\bar{x}$	Std. Dev	R
1. Principal provides e-library facilities to aid teachers' and students' research	1200	2.7617	1.1773	ME
2. Principal equips classrooms and offices with needed furniture	1200	3.0883	.8819	HE
3. Principal maintains instructional materials for instructional				

	improvement	1200	3.1458	.6608	HE
4.	Principal enforces punishment on teachers and students' who vandalizes school facilities	1200	3.1467	.7227	HE
5.	Principal inculcates maintenance culture in school through proper orientation of staff and students'	1200	3.5775	.6888	VHE
6.	Principal procures physical and instructional materials for teaching and learning	1200	3.6783	.4673	VHE
7.	Principal ensures regular school cleanup for conducive leaning environment	1200	3.6842	.6682	VHE
<b>Average Total</b>		<b>1200</b>	<b>3.298</b>	<b>.752</b>	<b>HE</b>

**R: Remarks; VHE: Very High Extent (3.50 – above); HE: High Extent (3.00-3.49); ME: Moderate Extent (2.50-2.99); LE: Low Extent (Below 2.50)**

#### **Field Work, 2020**

Table 2 showed that each of the items 1 to 7 on principals' professional competencies in materials resource management obtained a mean score above 2.50. The above results implied that the respondents rated principals' professional competencies in materials resource management as high. The grand mean score was 3.298 (which fell within the range value of 2.50 and 3.49 was to a high extent), which was above the criterion of 2.50 set for the study while the standard deviation was .752 indicating that the respondents were not far from the mean and from one another in their responses. Also, the table above revealed that item 7 had the highest mean of 3.684 while the least mean was that of item 1 with a mean value of 2.762. This result implied that the grand mean score of 3.298 indicated that principals' professional competencies in materials resource management in secondary schools in southwest, Nigeria are on the high extent. Therefore, the level of professional competence of principals' in material resource management in secondary schools in southwest, Nigeria is to a high extent with the grand mean score of 3.298.



**Ho<sub>1</sub> :** There will be no significant mean difference in the opinion of principals and teachers with regards to principals’ professional competencies in human resource management in secondary schools in Southwest.

**Table 3a: Group Statistics on human resource management**

Staff	N	$\bar{x}$	Std Deviation	Std Error
Principal	384	2590.76	244.459	12.8445
Human Resource Teacher	816	2590.24	237.300	8.3072

**Summary table of independent samples t-test on human resource management**

**Table 3b: Levene’s Test t-test for equality of Mean**

Staff	F	sig	t	df	sig 2 tail	Decision	Remarks
Equal variances Ass	1.059	.304	.035	1198	.972	accept	Not sig
Human Resource Equal variances Not Assumed		.034	730.408	.973			

From the table 3 a and b above, the mean difference in the opinion of the principals and teachers regarding human resource were higher for principals (M= 2590.76, SD= 244.459) than teachers (M=2590.459, SD= 237.300),  $t(1198)=.035, p>.05$ . Levene’s test indicated equal variance assumed (F=1.059,  $p=.304$ ). Thus, it is not significant. The null hypothesis of no significant mean difference in the opinion of principals and teachers with respect of principals’ professional competencies in human resource in secondary schools in Southwest is therefore upheld. Thus, there is no significant mean difference in the opinion of principals and teachers with regards to principals’ professional competencies in human resource management in secondary schools.

**Ho<sub>2</sub>:** There will be no significant mean difference in the opinion of principals and teachers with regards to principals' professional competencies in material resource management in secondary schools.

**Table 4a: Group Statistics on material resource management**

Staff	N	$\bar{x}$	Std. Deviation	Std Error
Principal	384	1848.23	1277.3044	65.1821
Material Resource				
Teacher	816	1951.28	1246.8178	43.6474

Summary table of independent samples t-test on material resource management

**Table 4b Levene's Test t-test for equality of Mean**

Staff	F	sig	t	df	sig 2 tail	Decision	Remarks
Equal							
variances Ass	3.423	.065	-1.325	1198	.185	accept	Not sig
Material Resource							
Equal variances							
Not Assumed			-1.314	734.111	.189		

From tables 4 a and b above, the mean difference in the opinion of the principals and teachers regarding material resource were lower for principals (M= 1848.23, SD= 1277.304) than teachers (M=1951.28, SD= 1246.818),  $t(1198)=1.325, p>.05$ . Levene's test indicated equal variance assumed (F=3.423,  $p=.065$ ). Thus, it is not significant. The null hypothesis of no significant mean difference in the opinion of principals and teachers with respect of principals' professional competencies in material resource in secondary schools in Southwest is therefore upheld. Thus, there is no significant mean difference in the opinion of principals and teachers with regards to principals' professional competencies in material resource management in secondary schools in Southwest, Nigeria.

### Discussion of findings

Based on the results on tables 1 and 3, secondary school principals in southwest have professional competencies in human resource management through delegation of tasks to teachers', ensuring

teachers' and students' discipline, providing incentives for teachers' appraising staff, promoting teachers' welfare and supervising teachers' and students' in order to render professional guidance. The grand mean score of 3.213 indicated that principals have professional competencies in human resource management in secondary schools insouthwest, Nigeria. Also, the analysis of hypothesis one which solicited the responses of the two groups of respondents in respect of human resource management practices in the secondary schools indicated no significant differences in the opinions of respondents. This means that no significant mean differences existed in the opinions of the respondents with regards to human resource management. This agreed with the opinion that promotion of teachers' professional development was one of the most influential human behaviour (Sarah, 2016). Hence, it was discovered that principals were involved in human resource management of various types. However, this finding contradicted a finding that says that human resource management strategies have not been adequately adopted by principals for secondary schools improvements (Abayomi, 2021 and Shanka et al, 2017).

Results on tables 2 and 4 showed that respondents' highly agreed with all items indicating that principals' ensure regular school clean up, enforces punishment on teachers and students' who vandalizes school facilities, procure physical and instructional materials, maintains instructional materials, equip classrooms and offices with needed furniture and inculcate maintenance culture in school through proper orientation of staff and students' in schools in the southwest, Nigeria, while respondents' moderately agreed with an item which indicated that principals' moderately provided e-library facilities. The grand mean score of 3.298 indicated that principals' do have professional competencies in material resource management in secondary schools in the southwest, Nigeria. Also, the analysis of hypothesis two which solicited the responses of the two groups of respondents in respect of material resource management practices in schools in the southwest indicated no significant differences in the opinions of respondents. This means that no significant mean differences existed in the opinions of the respondents with regards to material resource management. This was in contrast with the finding that revealed that many material resource management strategies have not been adequately adopted by principals for secondary schools

improvements (Ikediugwu, 2016). However, it was congruent with other scholars' opinions (Chidi, et al 2017).

### **Conclusion**

- i. It was also observed in human resource management that the organization of staff development by principals to improve students and teachers' skills and knowledge in their various subject areas was not adequate enough to enhance their performance.
- ii. E-library facilities in material resource management were inadequately provided to teachers and students to enhance their performance in teaching and learning.

### **Recommendations**

The principals as managerial leaders are charged with the responsibility of promoting human and material resource management in their institutions. Their human and material leadership practices are paramount if the objectives of secondary education are to be meaningfully translated into reality. In the light of this and on the basis of the findings highlighted earlier, the researcher wishes at this juncture, to make the following recommendations.

- i. There is need to establish more e-library facilities (material resource management) to equip principals and teachers with needed skills and knowledge. This will help to acquaint them with procedures and practices needed in their schools.
- ii. Principals should ensure planning and distribution of human and material resources are available in the school before resumption to avoid delays in implementing school programmes and poor attendance by staff and students at the beginning of each term or session.
- iii. Principals should delegate authority to teachers and students based on certain criteria such as competence, experience, interest, fairness and consultation with relevant personnel in schools to avoid unhealthy conflict among staff and students.

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