

**TIME MANAGEMENT AND TASK DELEGATION AS PREDICTORS OF
PRINCIPALS' ADMINISTRATIVE EFFECTIVENESS IN PUBLIC SECONDARY
SCHOOLS IN ANAMBRA STATE, NIGERIA.**

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Abstract

The study investigated time management and task delegation as predictors of principals' administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools in Anambra State. Two research questions guided the study, and two null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance. The study adopted correlational research design. The population comprised all the 267 principals in the 267 public secondary schools in Anambra State. Due to the manageable size of the population, census sampling technique was employed. Two researcher-structured questionnaires titled "Principals' Time Management and Task Delegation Strategies Questionnaire (PTMTDSQ) and Principals' Administrative Effectiveness Questionnaire (PAEQ)" were used for data collection, after the face and content validation were determined. Cronbach Alpha was used to compute the collected data gotten through pilot test. PTMTDSQ yielded reliability coefficients of 0.98 and 0.80 for clusters A and B were, respectively, while PAEQ yielded reliability coefficient of 0.88. The researcher administered copies of the questionnaires directly on the respondents with the help of five research assistants. Simple linear regression analysis (R) was used to answer the research questions, while R was used to determine the extent of the prediction between the independent variables (Principals' time management and task delegation Strategies) and the dependent variable (principals' administrative effectiveness) in the study. Findings, among others revealed that time management, and delegation of tasks significantly predict principals' administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools in Anambra State. This implies that principals who actively adopt time management and tasks delegation are more likely to maintain high levels of administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools in Anambra State. The study recommends that the Anambra State Ministry of Education should encourage principals to adopt effective time management strategies since this has been shown to enhance their administrative effectiveness and improve the smooth running of school activities.

Keywords: Time Management, Task Delegation, Principals, Administrative Effectiveness, Public Secondary Schools.

Introduction

Education is a fundamental process through which individuals acquire knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes necessary for critical thinking and meaningful participation in society. It plays a vital role in personal development, promotes social responsibility, and prepares individuals for diverse career opportunities. According to Ikedimma, Oshia, Dike, (2024), education liberates and illuminates the path of every nation in pursuit of progress and development. Through education, learners are equipped with the capacity to adapt to societal changes and effectively address real-life challenges. Agogbua, Anyaeji, and Okonkwo (2021) opined that a properly administered education empowers individuals to confront problems, stimulates intellectual curiosity, nurtures the spirit of inquiry, and fosters creativity, self-reliance, and resourcefulness among its recipients. In Nigeria, the education system operates under the 9-3-4 structure, comprising basic education, secondary education, and tertiary education. This study is concerned with secondary school education, which occupies a critical position within this structure.

Secondary education refers to the level of education provided to learners immediately after the completion of primary education. It is designed for students who have successfully acquired foundational knowledge at the primary level. In Nigeria, secondary education is regarded as a key sector of the education system because it serves as the stage where learners consolidate basic academic skills while also acquiring cultural values and social competencies required for responsible citizenship. Additionally, secondary school education prepares students for higher education across various fields of specialization and enhances their skill sets, thereby contributing to improved labour productivity.

This underscores the fact that both tertiary institutions and the labour market rely heavily on the quality of graduates produced by secondary schools. Recognizing this importance, the Federal Republic of Nigeria (2013) outlined the major objectives of secondary education to include the development of specific competencies and skills that enhance individuals' quality of life and enable them to actively contribute to national economic development. Consequently, secondary school education in Nigeria is widely acknowledged as a prerequisite for improved

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quality of life, skilled manpower development, and a sine qua non for the nation's sustainable economic growth.

In Nigerian secondary schools, the principal occupies a central leadership position and is entrusted with ensuring the realization of the objectives of secondary education as outlined in the National Policy on Education. As the chief administrator of the school, the principal is responsible for establishing a supportive and conducive learning environment that promotes students' academic, social, and emotional development (Nwangwa and Memberr, 2021). Through effective leadership, principals significantly influence instructional quality, staff performance, and overall school effectiveness. Consequently, principals are expected to articulate and drive the vision that shapes school operations and development (Anukaenyi and Nwafor, 2023). The vision, mission, and core values formulated by principals serve as guiding frameworks that stimulate quality-driven strategies, encourage continuous innovation, and facilitate sustained improvement within the school system. By virtue of their position, principals remain pivotal to secondary school improvement, largely achieved through administrative effectiveness.

Principals' administrative effectiveness refers to the extent to which school leaders efficiently utilize human, financial, and material resources to attain predetermined goals and objectives. It encompasses the coordination of activities, allocation of resources, formulation of clear goals, and implementation of appropriate strategies aimed at maximizing productivity while maintaining a conducive working environment. Administrative effectiveness, often described as effective administration, involves purposeful planning, organizing, directing, and controlling of school operations. Onyekazi, Ezeaku, and Anyaeche (2022) described effective school administration as the systematic deployment of available human and material resources in the execution of educational programmes in line with established educational policies for the achievement of educational goals. Similarly, effective administration entails efficient planning, organization, and influence over staff and other resources to realize institutional objectives. Okaforcha (2021) defined effective school administration as the successful achievement of predetermined educational goals through optimal utilization of available resources.

Furthermore, effective administration involves the competent coordination of personnel, tasks, and resources to ensure efficiency and smooth functioning within an organization. It requires sound leadership, strategic decision-making, and the ability to foster positive outcomes. Nwafor and Egboka (2020) noted that administrative effectiveness in schools is strengthened when leaders are able to manage competing responsibilities, make prompt and informed decisions, and adopt supportive practices that enhance staff motivation and student achievement. This effectiveness is further reinforced by strong organizational abilities, appropriate delegation of duties, and sustained open communication within the school community (Ukaogba and Nwankwo, 2020). However, maintaining these practices consistently depends largely on principals' ability to manage stress, as leaders who effectively regulate stress are more likely to remain focused, resilient, and accessible despite increasing professional demands.

Scholars have recommended several stress management strategies for effective school administration. Ngerem and Chinedum (2020) emphasized that principals who apply strategies such as effective time management, delegation of duties, emotional regulation, relaxation techniques, and seeking social support are better able to reduce stress and enhance administrative effectiveness. Panigrahi (2018) also identified strategies including workload reduction, work-life balance, use of technology, effective communication, attention to security concerns, and task prioritization as critical for managing stress among school leaders. Similarly, Asuquo, Ogbeche, Udeh, and Owan (2023) highlighted task delegation and effective time management as essential strategies for coping with occupational stress in secondary school administration. Based on these perspectives, the present study focused on time management strategies, task delegation strategies.

Time management is a vital stress management strategy that enables principals to balance diverse responsibilities while maintaining productivity. Efficient time management involves deliberate allocation of time to school activities in ways that enhance administrative efficiency and effectiveness (Victor, 2017). Principals are required to supervise instructional activities, manage staff, implement policies, and attend to students' and parents' concerns within limited timeframes. Ineffective time management can result in excessive workload, missed deadlines, and heightened stress, ultimately affecting school performance. By prioritizing tasks, setting realistic goals, developing structured schedules, and minimizing distractions, principals can improve efficiency and reduce work-related stress (Benstowe and Obianwu, 2023). The use of

planners, digital calendars, and time-blocking techniques further supports effective time utilization, ensuring that critical tasks receive adequate attention.

Delegation of tasks involves assigning responsibilities to competent staff members to improve efficiency, reduce workload, and enhance overall school management. As a stress management strategy, delegation enables principals to distribute duties appropriately, thereby focusing on strategic leadership responsibilities. Bull (2013) stated that effective delegation to vice principals, heads of departments, and administrative officers allows principals to concentrate on critical decision-making functions. According to Ngerem and Chinedum (2020), delegation not only reduces principals' workload but also promotes staff empowerment, teamwork, professional development, and organizational efficiency. Failure to delegate effectively can increase stress levels and hinder principals' emotional stability.

Existing literature consistently demonstrates that principals' intentional use of stress management strategies, such as time management, and delegation, is strongly associated with improved administrative behaviour and job performance. Principals who consciously apply these strategies are more likely to enhance leadership effectiveness, reduce burnout, promote positive school climates, improve teacher productivity, and indirectly enhance students' academic outcomes (Asuquo et al., 2023). Conversely, principals who fail to adopt or consistently apply stress management strategies are more susceptible to excessive stress, burnout, poor decision-making, and weak administrative performance. These challenges often manifest in poor school organization, low staff morale, reduced teacher productivity, and declining student achievement.

In Anambra State, increasing concerns have been raised regarding the administrative effectiveness of principals in public secondary schools. Issues such as ineffective teacher supervision, poor time utilization, weak delegation of duties, strained interpersonal relationships, and delayed or inappropriate administrative decisions suggest that some principals may be struggling to manage the demands of their roles. These challenges appear to be linked to stress arising from heavy workloads, limited resources, and growing expectations from government authorities, parents, and the community. Supporting this concern, Onyekazi, Ohamobi, Osegbue, Oguejiofo, Anagor, and Anyaeche (2024) found that inconsistent application of stress management strategies, particularly in task prioritization, was associated with lower teacher

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performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State. This highlights the likelihood that inadequate stress management among principals undermines administrative effectiveness and overall school performance.

Despite substantial evidence linking stress management strategies, such as time management and task delegation, to administrative effectiveness, empirical studies establishing the predictive strength of principals in management of time and task delegation on administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools in Anambra State remain limited. This gap constrains policymakers and educational administrators in designing targeted interventions to enhance principals' performance. It is against this background that the present study examined time management and delegation of tasks as predictors of their administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools in Anambra State.

Statement of the Problem

Administrative effectiveness is central to the successful functioning of secondary schools. Principals are charged with a wide range of responsibilities, including planning and coordinating school activities, supervising teachers, managing students, maintaining discipline, fostering effective communication, relating with parents and the wider community, and ensuring the proper implementation of government educational policies. When these responsibilities are carried out effectively, schools are better positioned to achieve their stated educational goals.

However, in Anambra State, increasing concern has been expressed regarding the administrative effectiveness of principals in public secondary schools. Observations and reports of inadequate supervision of teachers, poor student discipline, ineffective communication, weak delegation of duties, strained interpersonal relationships, delayed decision-making, and poor school–community relations indicate that some principals may be finding it difficult to cope with the growing demands of their administrative roles. These shortcomings often have negative implications for teaching and learning processes, thereby diminishing overall school performance.

One major factor that may be contributing to these challenges is stress. School principals are confronted with multiple sources of stress, including excessive workload, shortage of

teaching staff, large student enrolment, pressure from government authorities, increasing demands from parents, and inadequate resources. When such stress is poorly managed, it can adversely affect principals' physical and emotional well-being, impair judgment, and weaken their capacity to perform administrative functions effectively. Although stress is a common experience among school principals, their approaches to managing stress vary considerably. While some principals adopt constructive stress management strategies such as effective time management, and delegation of responsibilities, others may rely on ineffective or unhealthy coping mechanisms. Despite the significance of stress management in school leadership, there is limited empirical evidence on the extent to which principals' time management and task delegation strategies predict their administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools in Anambra State. It is against this background that the present study investigated time management and delegation of tasks as predictors of their administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools in Anambra State.

Research Questions

This study was guided by the following research questions:

1. To what extent do principals' time management strategies predict their administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools in Anambra State?
2. To what extent do principals' delegation of tasks strategies predict their administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools in Anambra State?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance:

1. Principals' time management strategies do not significantly predict their administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools in Anambra State.
2. Principals' delegations of tasks strategies do not significantly predict their administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools in Anambra State.

Methods

The study adopted correlational research design. The population of the study comprised all the 267 principals in the 267 public secondary schools in Anambra State (PPSSC, 2024). All the 267 principals in the 267 public secondary schools in Anambra State were used in the study. Due to the manageable size of the population, the study involved the entire population of

principals who served as research participants in the study. Thus, the census technique was adopted in this study. Two researcher-structured questionnaires titled "Time Management and Task Delegation Strategies Questionnaire (TMTDQ) and Principals' Administrative Effectiveness Questionnaire (PAEQ)" were used for data collection. The first instrument TMTDQ contained 14 items spread across two clusters (A and B) to elicit data on principals' stress management strategies. Cluster A contained seven items on time management strategies, and Cluster B contained seven items on delegation of tasks strategies. The items are anchored on a four-point rating scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD), with corresponding weightings of 4, 3, 2, and 1. The second questionnaire PAEQ was structured to elicit data on principals' administrative effectiveness. The instrument contained 33 items placed on 4 points scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD), with corresponding weightings of 4, 3, 2, and 1, respectively. The face and content validation of the instruments was determined. Two lecturers in the Department of Educational Management and Policy and one in the Department of Educational Foundations (Measurement and Evaluation Unit) all in Faculty of Education, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka validated the instrument. The data used for computing the reliability indices were obtained by administering 20 copies of the questionnaire to a sample of 20 principals in public secondary schools in Enugu State. The choice of Enugu State was based on the fact that Anambra and Enugu States share similar characteristics in their educational system. Cronbach Alpha was used to compute the collected data gotten through pilot test; as it was considered most appropriate for determining the internal consistency of the instrument. The reliability coefficients for clusters A and B were 0.98 and 0.80, respectively. The reliability coefficient of Principals' Job Effectiveness Questionnaire (TJEQ) was 0.88. The researcher administered copies of the questionnaires directly on the respondents with the help of five research assistants. The research assistants were briefed and instructed on how to administer and retrieve copies of the questionnaire from the respondents. Out of the 267 copies administered, 260 copies were retrieved duly completed, and used for data analysis. This gave a return rate of 97.63%, which the researcher considered adequate for the study. Simple linear regression analysis (R) was used to answer the research questions. The R was used to determine the extent of the prediction between the independent variables (principals' time management and task delegation) and the dependent variable (principals' administrative effectiveness) in the study. Muijs' (2004) cited in

Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007) suggestion for assessing the goodness of fit of regression model using squared regression coefficient (R^2) was adopted for the research questions. Where: 0 - 0.1 = weak, 0.1- 0.3=modest, 0.3 - 0.5 = moderate, > 0.5 = strong. For the hypotheses, p-value was used to determine the significance of the prediction. The decision rule was: a null hypothesis was not upheld where the calculated p-value is less than the stipulated level of significance (p-value <.05). A null hypothesis was upheld where the calculated p-value was greater than the stipulated level of significance (p-value >.05). All analyses were carried out using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) Version 25.

Results

Research Question 1: To what extent do principals' time management strategies predict their administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools in Anambra State?

Table 1. Summary of Simple Regression Analysis with principals' time management strategies as Predictor of their administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools in Anambra State

	R	R^2	Adj. R^2	B	SE B	β
Constant				37.70	3.87	
Time Management	.70	.49	.48	2.48	.15	.70

The summary of the simple regression analysis as shown in the above table indicates that principals' time management strategies moderately predict their administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools in Anambra State. This is shown by the regression coefficient ($R = .70$) and the coefficient of determination ($R^2 = .49$) which indicates that principals' time management explained 49% of the variance in their administrative effectiveness.

Research Question 2: To what extend do principals' delegation of tasks predict their administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools in Anambra State?

Table 2. Summary of Simple Regression Analysis with principals' delegation of tasks as Predictor of their administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools in Anambra State

	R	R ²	Adj.R ²	B	SE B	β
Constant				59.25	2.19	
	.74	.55	.55			.74
Delegation of Tasks				.189	.10	

Table 2 shows that the simple regression coefficient (R) is .74 while the coefficient of determination (R²) is .55. This indicates that principals' delegation of tasks is a moderate predictor of their administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools in Anambra State.

Hypothesis 1: Principals' time management strategies do not significantly predict their administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools in Anambra State.

Table 3. Test of Significance of Simple Regression Analysis with Principals' time management strategies as Predictor of their administrative effectiveness

	R	R ²	Adj.R ²	B	SE B	B	T	F	p
Constant				37.70	3.87		9.74		.00
	.70	.49	.48			.70		249.17	.00
Time Management				2.48	.15		15.78		.00

As shown in table 3 above, the simple regression coefficient (R) is .70 while the R² is .49. The F-ratio associated with these is 249.17 and the P-value = .00, since the P-value is less than the stipulated 0.05 level of significance, it was decided that principals' time management is a significant predictor of their administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools in Anambra State. The null hypothesis was therefore rejected.

Hypothesis 2: Principals' delegation of tasks strategies will not significantly predict their administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools in Anambra State.

Table 4. Test of Significance of Simple Regression Analysis with Principals' delegation of tasks as Predictor of their administrative effectiveness

	R	R ²	Adj.R ²	B	SE B	B	T	F	p
Constant				59.25	2.19		26.94		.00
	.74	.55	.55			.74		326.27	.00
Principals' Delegation of Tasks				1.89	.10		18.06		.00

Analysis in Table 4 shows that the simple regression coefficient (R) is .74 while the R² is .55. The F-ratio associated with these is 326.27 and the *P*-value = .00, since the *P*-value is less than the stipulated 0.05 level of significance, it was decided that principals' delegation of tasks is a significant predictor of their administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools in Anambra State. The null hypothesis was therefore rejected.

Discussion of Findings

Principals' Time Management Strategies and Administrative Effectiveness

The findings of this study in table 1 reveals that principals' time management strategies moderately predict their administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools in Anambra State. The analysis of the hypothesis in table 3 reveals that principals' time management strategies significantly predict their administrative effectiveness. Therefore, the two results showed that principals in secondary schools in Anambra agreed that time management strategies moderately and significantly predict their administrative effectiveness. This means that the more principals plan their daily activities in advance, set realistic deadlines, prioritize tasks, ensure time-bound meetings, avoid procrastination, use scheduling tools the more they achieve administrative effectiveness. These strategies enable principals to coordinate school activities efficiently, reduce role overload, and enhance decision-making, thereby contributing significantly to their administrative performance. The moderate predictive strength observed may

be linked to the complex nature of school administration in public secondary schools, where principals often face external constraints such as limited resources, large student populations, staff shortages, and policy demands. While effective time management improves coordination and decision-making, other factors such as emotional control, staff cooperation, and institutional support also contribute to overall effectiveness.

These findings align with the study of Ekundayo and Kolawole (2013), Akinfolarin (2017), and Ogunbiyi, Adepoju, and Oshinowo (2017), which all demonstrated that principals' time management strategies significantly influence their administrative effectiveness. These studies highlighted that planning, prioritizing, and scheduling tasks enhance coordination, reduce workload, and improve school performance. This finding is so because it is believed that effective time management is a key factor in strengthening administrative outcomes in secondary schools. The present study therefore reinforces the view that time management remains a foundational administrative skill for principals, particularly in demanding school environments like those found in Anambra State.

Principals' Delegation of Tasks and Administrative Effectiveness

The results of the simple regression analysis in table 2 indicate that principals' delegation of tasks moderately predicts their administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools in Anambra State. The test of hypothesis two as shown in table two revealed that principals' delegation of tasks significantly predicts their administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools in Anambra state. These confirm that principals' delegation of tasks moderately and significantly predicts their administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools in Anambra State. This implies that when principals assign responsibilities effectively, trust staff to handle

delegated duties, provide clear instructions, delegate non-essential tasks, follow up to ensure completion, grant decision-making authority, and encourage teamwork collectively reflect the practical ways principals delegate responsibilities. Effective delegation enables principals to reduce workload pressure, build staff capacity, promote teamwork, and ensure efficient completion of tasks, thereby enhancing overall administrative performance. The moderate level of prediction may be attributed to challenges commonly associated with delegation in public secondary schools, such as inadequate staff capacity, resistance to additional responsibilities, or lack of accountability among some staff members. Despite these challenges, effective delegation promotes shared responsibility, staff empowerment, and collective ownership of school goals, all of which contribute positively to administrative effectiveness.

These findings agree with the study of Okeke and Obiezue (2025), which found that principals' delegation of tasks positively influences teachers' job performance and, by extension, administrative effectiveness. Their findings emphasized that assigning responsibilities appropriately, providing clear instructions, and fostering trust among staff contribute to better school management and improved performance outcomes. Their work also emphasized that clear communication, trust, and follow-up are critical components of successful delegation. The present study extends this understanding by confirming that delegation is not merely a managerial tool but a stress management strategy that strengthens administrative efficiency and school functioning.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, it was concluded that time management, and delegation of tasks significantly predict their administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools in Anambra State. Each of these strategies was shown to have a positive relationship

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with principals' ability to effectively plan, coordinate, supervise, and make decisions that enhance school administration. It was further concluded that the effective application of time management and delegation of tasks contribute to improved leadership outcomes, including better staff relations, enhanced teaching and learning environments, and increased administrative efficiency. This implies that principals who actively adopt time management and tasks delegation are more likely to maintain high levels of administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools in Anambra State.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the researcher made the following recommendations:

1. The Anambra State Ministry of Education should encourage principals to adopt effective time management strategies since this has been shown to enhance their administrative effectiveness and improve the smooth running of school activities.
2. Principals should be trained by Post Primary Schools Service Commission of Anambra State of how to assign responsibilities appropriately to teachers and other staff members in order to reduce work overload, foster teamwork, and improve school management outcomes.

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