



## IMPACT OF PRINCIPALS' YEARS AND ADMINISTRATIVE EXPERIENCE AND STUDENTS' ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN BAUCHI AND GOMBE STATES

**DR. BARAKATU ABDULLAHI**

*Educational Administration and Planning Unit,  
Department of Educational Foundations, Faculty  
of Education, Federal University Kashere, P.M.B.  
0182, Gombe State of Nigeria.*

### Abstract

**T**his study investigated the principals' years and administrative experience on students' academic performance in senior secondary schools in Bauchi and Gombe states in Nigeria. The study adopted the descriptive research designed of the correlation type. The population of the study comprised 166 senior secondary schools principals in the two states in urban areas. Purposive sampling technique was used to select 30 senior secondary schools principals to reflect those that put in five years of service as principals in senior secondary schools. This comprised fifteen principals who put in below ten years

and fifteen of those who have put in more than ten years. The instruments used to collect relevant data were principals' years of

### KEYWORDS:

*Impact, Principal, experience, years, administrative, students' academic performance and senior secondary schools.*

working and administrative check list and a self-designed questionnaire developed by the researcher titled *Principals' Years and Administrative Experience and Students' Academic Performance (PYAESAP)*. The questionnaire was validated by three

experts, one in the area of educational administration and planning, one in the measurement and evaluation and one in educational psychology all from educational foundations department. Their suggestions and recommendations were incorporated into the final version and the reliability coefficient index of 0.78 was obtained after test-re-test with two weeks interval. Data collected were analysed using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS). One hypothesis was formulated and tested. Pearson Product Moment Correlation (r) Coefficient analysis procedure was used to test the hypothesis at 0.05 significant levels. The results of the analysis showed that, there was significant correlation between principals' years and administrative experiences and students'

academic performance. Based on the findings, it was recommended among others that, school principals should obtain both years and administrative experience that will enable them perform maximally in the discharge of handling human and material resources which will positively enhance students' academic performance.

## **Introduction**

**S**chool organization is only good as its teachers and the entire achievement of students academically, therefore making sure every individual member of staff is happy, motivated and be able to face his or her primary responsibility has to be a priority to school experienced principals. Principal is in - charge of the entire programs of school, he or she is entrusted to look after the proper management of human and material resources to achieve maximum objectives. It is the responsibility of the principals to pose good interpersonal skills to manage the school program and ensure effective administration. Due to the challenges faced school principal, the principal need to be more proactive in managing the school. However, the newly appointed principal sometimes finds it difficult to lead the school human and material resources effectively because of inexperience in the practice of

administration. This may lead to trial and error administration Bryan (2019). The application of experience both on the job and administrative skills by the school principal makes the difference between success and failure (Sasongo, 2019).

### **Principals' Years and Administrative Experience and Students' Academic Performance in Senior Secondary Schools**

Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English (2005) defined experience as possessing of skills, value or knowledge due to doing something for a long period of time. Experience is very important in the educational enterprise more especially school principals. Adeogun (2016) stated that, in all organizations when there is vacant posts to be filled they always require a special number of years of experience. This shows the importance of experience in manpower productivity and effectiveness. It is obvious that new employees more especially school principals may not perform in some tasks because they have not got practical administrative experience. This category of employees will need some time of exposure to get the required experience in order to be more effective in the field of organizational leadership. Effective school principals have been shown to significantly improve the performance of all students at the school at least through their impacts on selection and retention of good teachers (Gregory, 2012).

A study conducted by Anit (2018) examined whether an experienced leader had an overwhelming advantage over the contrasting style of directive leadership in organizational and team effectiveness. Data were obtained through a survey and collected from 140 teams selected from 140 different secondary schools in northern Israel. The result of the structural equation model indicated a positive relation between directive leadership and organizational commitment as well as a positive relation between directive leadership and school-staff team in role performance. In addition, organizational commitment served as a mediator in the

directive leadership, the results indicated a positive relation between experience leadership and teachers' empowerment, and positive relation between experience leadership and school staff team innovation. These could lead to high teachers' performance and positive students' academic performance. This study is in harmony with the current study. They both examined the principals' experience and students' academic performance.

Study conducted in Canada by Kenneth, Patten and Lantzi (2017) described and reported the results of testing a new conception of how experienced leadership influences students' learning. Experienced principals increase students' learning by improving the condition or status of students. Evidence includes teachers' responses to an online survey (1,445 responses) measuring distributed experienced leadership practices in their schools grade 3 and 6 Maths literacy performance data were provided by the province's annual testing program. The 2006 Canadian census data provided a composite measure of experienced school leader which were used to test six hypotheses. The result indicated that the experience leadership had its greatest influence on students' performance. It should be noted that this study was conducted in Canada, United States of America and the current study was conducted in Bauchi and Gombe state in northern part of Nigeria.

A study conducted by Skria and Karen (2000) opined that, the leadership of the principal is known to be a key factor in supporting students' academic performance, but how experienced leadership is instructionally enacted by teachers is much less clear. This study examined how principal's experience is often present in principal – teacher interaction and teacher – teacher relationship to see how these may have an impact on teachers' classroom instructional practices. Data for this quantitative study were from a teacher survey development for the national research project, learning from leadership, funded by the Wallace Foundation. There are 4,165 completed surveys in the database,

which reflected responses from teachers in grade K - 12 in a sample of schools across the United States. Using a conceptual frame work based on various known components of effective schools today, a stepwise linear regression to examine the relationships among practices such as experienced leadership and professional community with contextual variables such as trust and efficacy. Findings revealed that, the presence of shared responsibility and professional community explains much of the strength among the three instructional variables. Year of experience have a clear impact on instructional practice. The findings create a clear picture of teacher - principal and teacher - teacher interactions that support learning, and how experienced principal have an impact on the instructional behaviours of teachers which has a direct relationship to improve students' academic performance. It should be noted that, this study was conducted in United States and the present study was conducted in northern part of Nigeria. The former used Stepwise Linear Regression to examine the relationship and the current study used Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient to establish the influence of principals' experience on students' academic performance in senior secondary schools in Bauchi and Gombe states.

A study was conducted by Kwong, Paula and Walker (2010) investigated Hong - Kong secondary school principals' job facets leading to overall job satisfaction of vice - principals of different career orientations and gender groups. The findings revealed that there were four main facets of satisfaction in rank order of influence on - overall satisfaction, "Professional Commitment" level of "Personal Challenge", sense of efficacy and sense of synchrony. The study also found that vice principal ship exhibited a higher degree of professional commitment, performing students' academic success, strong sense of efficacy and experienced lower levels of stress associated with professional challenge. It should be noted that this study was conducted in Hong - Kong and the present

study was conducted in northern part of Nigeria and used correlation analysis to establish the relationship between the variables under study.

### Objective of the Study

In order to guide the conduct of this study the researcher posed the following specific objective.

1. To find out the impact of principals' years and administrative experiences on students' academic performance in senior secondary schools in Bauchi and Gombe states.

### Research Question

The research question was set to guide the conduct of this research, thus;

1. What is the impact of principals' years and administrative experiences on students' academic performance in senior secondary schools in Bauchi and Gombe states?

### Research Hypothesis

In order to guide the conduct of this study, one research hypothesis was formulated, as follows:

Ho<sub>1</sub>: Principals' years and administrative experiences has no significant impact on students' academic performance in senior secondary schools in Bauchi and Gombe states.

### Data Presentation

Table 1: indicated principals' years of working and administrative experiences in senior secondary schools in Bauchi and Gombe states.

**Table 1: Principals' years of working and administrative experiences**

S/N	Years of teaching experience	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1.	Above 10 years of teaching experience	24	86 (%)

<b>2.</b>	5 – 10 years of teaching experience	2	7 (%)
<b>3.</b>	Below 5 years of teaching experience	2	27 (%)
<b>4.</b>	Above 10 years of administrative experience	7	23 (%)
<b>5.</b>	5 – 10 years of administrative experience	8	27 (%)
<b>6.</b>	Below 5 years of administrative experience	15	50 (%)
<b>7.</b>	Experience as Vice Principal	30	100 (%)
<b>8.</b>	Experience as Head of Department	12	40 (%)
<b>9.</b>	Experience as Committee Chairman	4	13 (%)
<b>10.</b>	Experience as Home/other Master	13	44 (%)
<b>11.</b>	Experience as Exam Officer	4	13 (%)

Table 1 showed that 86% of senior secondary school principals in Bauchi and Gombe states had above ten years of teaching experience, 7% were in the range of 5 - 10 years of teaching experience and 7% had below 5 years teaching experience. This data showed that the teaching experience with regard to being school principal is adequate.

The same table indicated that majority of school principals (50%) had less than 5 years of administrative experience, which showed that, they were not long in the administrative offices. Meanwhile, 27% of the senior secondary school principals had administrative experience between the range of 5 - 10 years and 23% of them had administrative experience of 10 years and above.

However, the data revealed that 100% of the senior secondary school principals had experience as vice principals before becoming principals, 44% of them had administrative experience as house/other masters, 40% had experience as Head of Departments, 13% acquired administrative

experience as committee chairmen and 15% were examination officers as well. This data however, showed that majority of the senior secondary school principals had acquired reasonable administrative experiences.

### Hypothesis One

Ho<sub>1</sub>: Principals’ years of working and administrative experiences has no significant impact on students’ academic performance in senior secondary schools in Bauchi and Gombe states.

This hypothesis was tested and presented in table 2.

**Table 2: Impact of principals’ years of working and administrative experience on students’ academic performance**

Variables	No	$\bar{X}$	SD	df	Cal- r	p- value	Decision
Principals’ Experience	30	1.32	.87	29	.78	.44	Ho <sub>3</sub> rejected
Students’ performance	30	2.99	.73				

Results from table 2 revealed that calculated (r) value of .78 was greater than the p-value of .44 at 0.05 level of significant. Therefore, the hypothesis which stated that principals years of working and administrative experiences has no significant impact on students’ academic performance in senior secondary schools in Bauchi and Gombe states was rejected

### Discussions of the Findings

Ho<sub>1</sub>: Table 2 revealed that, principals’ years of working and administrative experiences was significantly and highly correlated with students’ academic performance. This meant that the hypothesis which stated that there was no significant impact of principals’ years of working and administrative experiences and students’ academic performance was

rejected. This means that the higher the principals' working experience the better the academic performance of students could be. It also signified that, where the principals' experience is lacking the academic performance of students could be correspondingly falling. As the saying goes experience is the best teacher, this signified the fact that, the more experience the school principals the more productive they could be. Academic activities could be seriously improved by experienced principals and it can positively impact students' academic performance. Adequate experience acquired by the school principals is a necessity and it can positively translate to students' academic performance. Majority of participants' to this study (78%) agreed that, years of working and administrative experience of school principals positively impact students' academic performance.

The finding agreed with Anit (2018) who found positive relationship between experience leadership and students' academic performance. The finding agreed with Kenneth, Patten and Lantzi (2007) they came up with a finding that experienced leadership influenced students' learning by improving the conditions of students.

This research finding agreed with Skria and Karen (2000) they found that experience of school principals' was significantly related to students' academic performance, their findings revealed that years of administrative experience have clear impact on instructional practice which directly improved students' academic performance.

Data generated from observation inventory (checklist) revealed that 50% of school principals had less than 5 years of administrative experience, which showed that they were not long in the administrative offices and that, they cannot perform at equal level with the experienced ones. In addition it appears to be no carefully calculated efforts by the supervisory unit from zonal education office and the ministry of education to supervise the general working experience of the school principals before appointment. Principals' working experience could

impact organizational productivity and leadership effectiveness. Experience principals could perform tasks more than new or inexperience ones and therefore they could impact positive students' academic performance.

### **Summary of Findings**

The findings of this study revealed that there was significant impacts of principals' years of working and administrative experiences on students' academic performance in senior secondary schools in Bauchi and Gombe states.

### **Conclusions**

Based on the findings of the study it was concluded that, principals' years of working and administrative experiences has positive impact on students' academic performance in senior secondary schools in Bauchi and Gombe states. The study revealed that, experienced leadership has significant impact on students' academic performance. The study came up with a finding which showed that, principals got better at their jobs with every year's experience. The finding of the study also provided evidence of a link between principals' years of working and administrative experience on students' academic performance particularly in senior secondary schools in Bauchi and Gombe states in Nigeria.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the findings of this research and the subsequent conclusion drawn from this study, the following recommendations were presented:

1. Government should consider both working and administrative experiences when appointing school principals, and ensure that principals fully utilize the experience they have acquired so as to

avoid shouldering the responsibility to a new or inexperienced officer who might be committing blunders and retarding the progress of the school, particularly in terms of students' academic performance.

2. Government and stake holders should appreciate and consider years of working and administrative experience of personnel when it comes to selection and promotions of school principals.

## **References**

- Adeagun, A. A. (2016). Training and experience as predictors of teachers' productivity in secondary schools in Nigeria. *International Journal of Educational Management. (IJEM)* 4 (1), 38 - 49
- Anit, S. (2018). Directive versus experienced leadership: Two complementary approaches to managing school effectiveness. *Journal of Educational Administration Quarterly* 4 (5), 77 - 80.
- Bryan, Y. (2019). Advice for the first time school principals. Online retrieved, <https://medium.com> 22/ October.
- Gregory, B. Eric, H. & Steven, G. R. (2013). School leaders' matter: measuring the impact of effective principals "Education next" 13 (1).
- Kenneth, L., Pattern, S. & Lanzi, D. (2007). Testing a conception of how experienced school leadership influences student learning. *Educational Administration Quarterly*. 46 (5), 671-706.
- Kwong, Y., Paula, K. & Walker, A. (2010). Secondary school vice principal commitment, challenge, efficacy and synchrony. *British Educational Research Journal*. 36 (4), 531-548.
- Longman dictionary of contemporary English, (2005). *Living dictionary* England. (4<sup>th</sup> ed.) Pearson: Education Ltd.
- Sasongo, O. E. (2019). The effect of school leaders' authentic leadership on teachers' job stress in Eastern part of Peninsular Malaysia. Online retrieved researchgate.net October, 22<sup>nd</sup>

Skria, L., Pedro, R. & James, J. S. (2000). Sexism, silence, and solutions: women superintendents speak up and speak out: *Journal of Educational Administration Quarterly*. 36 (1), 44-75.