

Gender differences in personnel and financial administrative competencies needed by Principals in technical colleges in South East of Nigeria

Chinwe Enyi (Ph.D)¹, Iro S. Uwakwe (Ph.D)¹, Baptista Chinyere Chigbu (Ph.D)¹, Chukwuemeka Chukwu (Ph.D)¹,
Patricia Ukamaka Agu (Ph.D)^{1*}, Moses Onyemaechi Ede (MEd)¹

¹Department of Educational Foundations, University of Nigeria, Nsukka, Enugu State

*Corresponding Author: Patricia Ukamaka Agu, Department of Educational Foundations University of Nigeria, Nsukka.

Abstract

This study investigated the gender differences in personnel and financial administrative competencies needed by Principals in technical colleges in South East of Nigeria. A two part questionnaire consisting of 11 items was constructed by the researcher and validated by experts to gather data from 100 principals in 100 secondary schools using descriptive survey design. The scores from the respondents were analyzed, using mean and standard deviation to answer the research questions and the t-test statistic to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of probability. Major findings indicated that the principals, irrespective of gender, needed a variety of administrative competencies relating to: skills in having good personnel management by involving staff in decision-making and communicating freely with them and ability to manage school finance properly.

INTRODUCTION

In Nigeria, principals are charged with the responsibility of running the day-to day affairs of the technical colleges. Principal is the accounting officer and the chief executive of technical colleges (Alpha, 2005; Ogbonnaya, 2004). As an accounting officer, the principal oversees the day-to day management of the school. Stressing further, Ogbonnaya (2004) stated that the most important function of the principal is the instructional leadership role in the technical colleges. According to the author, this role is exercised as the principal plans organizes and promotes instruction. Another function is that principal ensures that fund is procured and judiciously used on various school programmes (Ogbonnaya, 2004). Principals according to Mgbodile (2006) are responsible for implementing educational programme in schools, ensuring that conducive atmosphere is created for learning. This explains that principals help to interpret policies in education into action. In view of the above, it can be deduced that the principal's key function is to promote education through effective administration of teaching and learning programmes. It is therefore expected that a principal must be competent enough in his administrative duties. With regards to the above, previous literature highlighted that successful administration of technical colleges need competent principals with appropriate administrative competencies (Baudinette, 2012; Eboka, (2012).

According to Dror and O' Brien (2010), administrative competencies of principals refer to the knowledge, skills and

abilities which the principals need to do their job effectively. They further stressed that administrative competencies also involve those range of personal characteristics (for example, personal values, motives and ideals) which administrators bring to bear upon their jobs. It is their opinion that these personal characteristics complement the professional competencies the principal needs for effective school administration. In a related view, Getha-Taylor (2012) refers to administrative competencies as those abilities which school administrators need in order to perform their job in a professional manner. Nnabuo (2010) sees it as the life wire of an educational institution. Thomson (2009) defined personnel administration as the management of human resources in relation to attracting staff, assigning duties to them and maintaining good labour relations with them. The emphasis is on the ability of administrators to achieve practical results. Given the above, and for the purposes of this study, administrative competencies refer to those personnel and professional abilities a principal needs in planning and implementing educational programmes in schools. For the purpose of this study, personnel administration is defined to mean the putting of human resources into effective use for the achievement of school objectives. Personnel administration competencies are the principals' abilities to manage all staff affairs in terms of determining their needs, delegating duties, resolving conflicts, maintaining effective communication, encouraging staff development and motivating them in various ways.

However for the purpose of this study, attention was focused on the following two administrative competencies-personnel and financial management competencies. The choice was informed by literature evidence which revealed that principals have problems with these administrative competencies in South East, Zone of Nigeria on administrative competency, as it relates to personnel administration. In what appears to be an overall view of personnel administration, Oboegbulem (2004) summarized it to embrace determining and satisfying personnel needs as well as improving staff services.

In a study on appraisal of administrative competences of principals in Ebonyi State, Chukwu (2005), revealed that principals' inability to motivate their staff, affected the teachers' attitude to work. Isa (2007) made a similar observation about the principals in Federal Capital Territory, Abuja. Federal Ministry of Education wanted to close down and privatize all unity schools (including those in the South East) because of principals' inefficient administration,

resulting to poor staff performances and lowered academic standards (FME, 2009).

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Literature in the administration of secondary schools in Nigeria, particularly in South-East, reveals that principals have problems in many areas of school administration, traceable to the administrative incompetence of many of these principals themselves. Literature identified two critical administrative areas which principals seem to have competency problems with, and these are in the areas of personnel and financial management.

In the case of personnel management, the situation is not different services concerns are being expressed by the general public including parents in South-East, over the declining staff performances in schools especially as it affects their children's poor academic performances. As regards financial management, research results indicate prevailing cases of embezzlement, diversion of funds and abandonment of school projects, among others, all traceable to principals' incompetent financial management practices. If funds are not properly managed, it would only lead to inability of schools to provide basic teaching and learning activities. The competencies are personnel and financial competencies.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The main purpose of this study is to determine the gender differences in administrative competencies needed by principals of secondary schools for effective school administration in South Eastern States.

Specifically, the study sought to:

1. Determine the personnel management competencies needed by secondary school principals by gender.
2. Find out the financial management competencies needed by secondary school principals by gender.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study

1. What are the personnel management competencies needed by male and female principals of secondary schools in South-East states?
2. What financial management competencies are needed by male and female secondary school principals in South-East states?

Hypotheses

To guide the study, the following two hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance:

1. There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of male and female principals on personnel

management competencies needed by principals in secondary schools.

2. There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of male and female principals on financial management competencies needed by principals in secondary schools.

METHODOLOGY

The design of this study is a descriptive survey. According to Nworgu (1991), and Ali (1996) descriptive survey is one in which a group of people or items are studied by collecting and analyzing data from only few people or items considered to be representative of the entire group.

Population of the Study

The target population consists of all the principals in all public secondary schools in the five South Eastern States. The population of the principals was 1214, made up of 708 males and 506 females. The sample for this study consisted of 500 secondary school principals drawn from the public senior secondary schools of the South Eastern states (283 male and 217 female principals). To compose the sample, proportionate stratified random sampling technique was used.

Instrument of Data Collection

The instrument used in this study for data collection was a questionnaire, titled Administrative Competencies Questionnaire for secondary school principals in the South-East States of Nigeria. The questionnaire has two parts. Part A sought information on the personal data of the respondents such as state of origin, education zone, school, gender and professional status. Part B has five sections which sought information on relevant items on the competencies principals require. The instrument was given to two experts in Educational Administration and Planning as well as one in Measurement and Evaluation from Faculty of Education, University of Nigeria, Nsukka. Their comments, criticism, suggestions and modifications were incorporated into relevant items that gave the instrument its final structure and content. The reliability of the instrument, using Cronbach Alpha method. The data used for computing the reliability indices were obtained from the questionnaire instrument administered on a sample of twenty (20) principals whom the researcher randomly sampled from the 233 public secondary schools in Rivers State

Method of Data Collection/ Analysis

The researcher with the help of ten (10) trained research assistants visited the schools concerned to administer the questionnaires. The questionnaires were administered and collected back through direct delivery and retrieval method. This method ensured that the administered questionnaires

were returned without loss nor much delay. Interestingly all the 500 questionnaires, administered were returned.

Mean score and standard deviation were used in answering the research questions. Any response that attained a mean score of 2.50 above was accepted, while any one below it, was rejected. The t-test statistic was used to test the 2 hypotheses at 0.05 probability level. The null hypotheses were rejected when the t-calculated value was greater than t-critical value, otherwise the hypotheses were accepted and retained.

RESULTS

The results of the data collected are analyzed, based on the two research questions and two null hypotheses formulated to guide the study. Research question one: What are the personnel management competencies needed by males and females principals of secondary schools in South East States?

Table 1: Mean Rating of Male and Female Principals on Personnel in Nigeria Practices Needed

S/N	Items	Male principals n = 283			Female Principals n = 217		
		\bar{X}	SD	DEC	\bar{X}	SD	DEC
1	Ability to determine the school personnel needs of tutorial and non tutorial staff	3.30	.70	Accept	3.14	1.03	Accept
2	Ability to delegate duties and authority to capable staff	3.16	.87	Accept	2.86	.86	Accept
3	Involving staff in decision making	3.93	.89	Accept	3.18	.96	Accept
4	Ability to communicate freely and effectively with his/her staff	3.27	.84	Accept	2.92	.84	Accept
5	Ability to provide staff needs	3.24	3.38	Accept	3.24	.96	Accept
6	Ability to recognizing staff efforts in teaching and learning	3.21	.84	Accept	2.90	.77	Accept
7	Skills in resolving conflicts without fear or favour	2.91	.82	Accept	2.90	1.00	Accept
8	Principals motivates his staff	2.95	.98	Accept	3.02		Accept
9	Ability to share experiences with colleague	2.04	.94	Accept	3.14	.86	Accept
Grand Mean		3.14		Accept		3.08	Accept

From data in table 1, one can see that all the ten items were highly rated by both the male and female principals. Items 1 to 4 were rated 3.30, 3.16, 2.93, 3.27 with standard deviations of .70, .87, .89 and .84 respectively by the male and female principals. Items 6 to 10 were also rated 3.24, 3.21, 2.91, 2.95, 2.04 and 3.34 with standard deviation of .38, .84, .82, .98, .94 and .77 respectively by the male and female principals. Given the grand mean of 3.14 for male principals and 3.08 for female principals, it could be seen that all the respondents agreed to the suggested competencies.

Therefore, it is the opinion of the male and female principals that the personnel management competencies needed by principals of secondary schools in South East State include: determining the personnel needs of tutorial and non tutorial

staff, ability to delegate duties and authority to capable staff, ability to communicate freely, ability to share learning experience with colleagues, involving staff indecision making, recognition of staff efforts in teaching and learning, resolving conflict without fear or favour, and ability to encourage appropriate professional development.

Research Question 2

What financial management competencies are needed by male and female secondary school principals in South East States?

The data for providing answers to the above research question are presented in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Mean Ratings of Male and Females Principals on Finance in Nigeria Practices Needed

S/N	Items	Male principals n = 283			Female principals n= 217		
		\bar{X}	SD	DEC	\bar{X}	SD	DEC
10	Ability to source fund for the development of the school	3.14	.80	Accept	2.80	.92	Accept
11	Skills in budget preparation based on available resources	3.19	.67	Accept	3.14	.87	Accept
12	Ability to allocate funds according to needs	3.20	.85	Accept	3.03	.92	Accept
13	Working within the constraints of the school budget	3.02	.85	Accept	3.09	.94	Accept
14	Knowledge of accounting laws, rules and procedures	3.04	.95	Accept	3.08	.96	Accept
15	Ability to keep financial records	3.26	.99	Accept	3.09	1.00	Accept
16	Ability to present book of accounts	3.19	.77	Accept	3.23	.69	Accept
17	Ability to keep close check on financial expenditure	3.15	.80	Accept	3.01	.93	Accept
18	Keeping and reprinting of financial recording	3.21	1.97	Accept	3.04	.89	Accept
Grand Mean		3.16	.39	Accept	3.06	.38	Accept

Table 2 presented the mean ratings of male and female principals on financial management competencies needed by them. As could be seen from the table, all the nine items were highly rated by both male and female principals. The mean ratings of items 10 – 13 ranged from 3.02 to 3.26, for the male principals, while the mean ratings of the items for the female principals ranged from 2.80 to 3.26 for the male principals while the mean ratings of the items for the female principals ranged from 2.80 to 3.23. These mean ratings are above the cut off points of 2.50 on four point ratings scale. This is an indication that in their opinions, the financial management competencies needed by these principals include: ability to source found for the development of schools, skills in budget preparation based on available resources ability to allocated funds according to needs, working within the constraints of school budgets ability and knowledge of financial management, ability to keep close check on financial expenditure ability to keep financial records and ability to resent book of accounts.

It may be noted that “ability to keep financial records” received the highest mean rating of 3.26 from the male principals, while the female principals rated ability to present book of accounts highest with a mean rating of 3.23.

On the other hand, the male principals rated item 13 (working within the constraints of school budgets) as the least needed

financial management competency with a mean rating of 3.02, while the female principals had the lowest preference for item 20 (ability to source found for school development) with the lowest mean rating of 2.80 Although there is no uniformity in the mean ratings of both male and female principals, there is the general agreement that all the suggested competencies are needed by the two groups. This is confirmed by the grand mean ratings of 3.16 for males and 3.06 for females.

Hypothesis One

There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of the male and female principals on personnel management competencies required by principals in secondary schools ($p < 0.5$).

To test the above null hypothesis, a t-test analysis of the difference between the mean scores fro male and female principals were calculated and the result is shown on table 3 below.

Table 3: t-test Analysis of the difference between the Mean ratings of male and female principals on the required personnel management competencies (Item-by item analysis).

Table 3: t-test Analysis of the Difference between the Mean Ratings of Male and Female Principals on the Required Personnel Management Competencies (Item-by Item Analysis).

S/N	Items	Groups	\bar{X}	SD	t-Cal	t-Crit	Dec																																																																																																									
10	Ability to delegate duties and authority to capable staff.	Male	3.30	.70	3.49	1.96	Reject																																																																																																									
		Female	3.05	.82				11	Involving staff in decision making	Male	3.16	.87	1.92	1.96	Accept	Female	3.14	1.03	12	Ability to communicate freely and effectively with staff	Male	2.93	.89	-1.71	1.96	Accept	Female	2.86	.86	13	Ability to build team spirit among staff	Male	3.27	.84	3.07	1.96	Reject	Female	3.18	.96	14	Recognizing staff efforts in teaching and learning	Male	3.24	3.38	1.86	1.96	Accept	Female	2.92	.84	15	Skills in resolving conflicts without fear or favour	Male	3.21	.84	1.66	1.96	Accept	Female	3.24	.96	16	Leaving staff to do things in their own way	Male	2.91	.82	1.29	1.96	Accept	Female	2.90	.77	17	Not sharing experience with staff	Male	2.95	.98	3.60	1.96	Reject	Female	3.02	1.00	18	Ability to encourage appropriate professional development	Male	2.04	.94	-1.92	1.96	Accept	Female	3.14	.86	19	Ability to sources fund for the development of the school	Male	3.34	.77	.974	1.96	Accept	Female	3.28	.83		Total	Male	3.14	.42	1.79
11	Involving staff in decision making	Male	3.16	.87	1.92	1.96	Accept																																																																																																									
		Female	3.14	1.03				12	Ability to communicate freely and effectively with staff	Male	2.93	.89	-1.71	1.96	Accept	Female	2.86	.86	13	Ability to build team spirit among staff	Male	3.27	.84	3.07	1.96	Reject	Female	3.18	.96	14	Recognizing staff efforts in teaching and learning	Male	3.24	3.38	1.86	1.96	Accept	Female	2.92	.84	15	Skills in resolving conflicts without fear or favour	Male	3.21	.84	1.66	1.96	Accept	Female	3.24	.96	16	Leaving staff to do things in their own way	Male	2.91	.82	1.29	1.96	Accept	Female	2.90	.77	17	Not sharing experience with staff	Male	2.95	.98	3.60	1.96	Reject	Female	3.02	1.00	18	Ability to encourage appropriate professional development	Male	2.04	.94	-1.92	1.96	Accept	Female	3.14	.86	19	Ability to sources fund for the development of the school	Male	3.34	.77	.974	1.96	Accept	Female	3.28	.83		Total	Male	3.14	.42	1.79	1.96	Accept	Female	3.08	.34						
12	Ability to communicate freely and effectively with staff	Male	2.93	.89	-1.71	1.96	Accept																																																																																																									
		Female	2.86	.86				13	Ability to build team spirit among staff	Male	3.27	.84	3.07	1.96	Reject	Female	3.18	.96	14	Recognizing staff efforts in teaching and learning	Male	3.24	3.38	1.86	1.96	Accept	Female	2.92	.84	15	Skills in resolving conflicts without fear or favour	Male	3.21	.84	1.66	1.96	Accept	Female	3.24	.96	16	Leaving staff to do things in their own way	Male	2.91	.82	1.29	1.96	Accept	Female	2.90	.77	17	Not sharing experience with staff	Male	2.95	.98	3.60	1.96	Reject	Female	3.02	1.00	18	Ability to encourage appropriate professional development	Male	2.04	.94	-1.92	1.96	Accept	Female	3.14	.86	19	Ability to sources fund for the development of the school	Male	3.34	.77	.974	1.96	Accept	Female	3.28	.83		Total	Male	3.14	.42	1.79	1.96	Accept	Female	3.08	.34																	
13	Ability to build team spirit among staff	Male	3.27	.84	3.07	1.96	Reject																																																																																																									
		Female	3.18	.96				14	Recognizing staff efforts in teaching and learning	Male	3.24	3.38	1.86	1.96	Accept	Female	2.92	.84	15	Skills in resolving conflicts without fear or favour	Male	3.21	.84	1.66	1.96	Accept	Female	3.24	.96	16	Leaving staff to do things in their own way	Male	2.91	.82	1.29	1.96	Accept	Female	2.90	.77	17	Not sharing experience with staff	Male	2.95	.98	3.60	1.96	Reject	Female	3.02	1.00	18	Ability to encourage appropriate professional development	Male	2.04	.94	-1.92	1.96	Accept	Female	3.14	.86	19	Ability to sources fund for the development of the school	Male	3.34	.77	.974	1.96	Accept	Female	3.28	.83		Total	Male	3.14	.42	1.79	1.96	Accept	Female	3.08	.34																												
14	Recognizing staff efforts in teaching and learning	Male	3.24	3.38	1.86	1.96	Accept																																																																																																									
		Female	2.92	.84				15	Skills in resolving conflicts without fear or favour	Male	3.21	.84	1.66	1.96	Accept	Female	3.24	.96	16	Leaving staff to do things in their own way	Male	2.91	.82	1.29	1.96	Accept	Female	2.90	.77	17	Not sharing experience with staff	Male	2.95	.98	3.60	1.96	Reject	Female	3.02	1.00	18	Ability to encourage appropriate professional development	Male	2.04	.94	-1.92	1.96	Accept	Female	3.14	.86	19	Ability to sources fund for the development of the school	Male	3.34	.77	.974	1.96	Accept	Female	3.28	.83		Total	Male	3.14	.42	1.79	1.96	Accept	Female	3.08	.34																																							
15	Skills in resolving conflicts without fear or favour	Male	3.21	.84	1.66	1.96	Accept																																																																																																									
		Female	3.24	.96				16	Leaving staff to do things in their own way	Male	2.91	.82	1.29	1.96	Accept	Female	2.90	.77	17	Not sharing experience with staff	Male	2.95	.98	3.60	1.96	Reject	Female	3.02	1.00	18	Ability to encourage appropriate professional development	Male	2.04	.94	-1.92	1.96	Accept	Female	3.14	.86	19	Ability to sources fund for the development of the school	Male	3.34	.77	.974	1.96	Accept	Female	3.28	.83		Total	Male	3.14	.42	1.79	1.96	Accept	Female	3.08	.34																																																		
16	Leaving staff to do things in their own way	Male	2.91	.82	1.29	1.96	Accept																																																																																																									
		Female	2.90	.77				17	Not sharing experience with staff	Male	2.95	.98	3.60	1.96	Reject	Female	3.02	1.00	18	Ability to encourage appropriate professional development	Male	2.04	.94	-1.92	1.96	Accept	Female	3.14	.86	19	Ability to sources fund for the development of the school	Male	3.34	.77	.974	1.96	Accept	Female	3.28	.83		Total	Male	3.14	.42	1.79	1.96	Accept	Female	3.08	.34																																																													
17	Not sharing experience with staff	Male	2.95	.98	3.60	1.96	Reject																																																																																																									
		Female	3.02	1.00				18	Ability to encourage appropriate professional development	Male	2.04	.94	-1.92	1.96	Accept	Female	3.14	.86	19	Ability to sources fund for the development of the school	Male	3.34	.77	.974	1.96	Accept	Female	3.28	.83		Total	Male	3.14	.42	1.79	1.96	Accept	Female	3.08	.34																																																																								
18	Ability to encourage appropriate professional development	Male	2.04	.94	-1.92	1.96	Accept																																																																																																									
		Female	3.14	.86				19	Ability to sources fund for the development of the school	Male	3.34	.77	.974	1.96	Accept	Female	3.28	.83		Total	Male	3.14	.42	1.79	1.96	Accept	Female	3.08	.34																																																																																			
19	Ability to sources fund for the development of the school	Male	3.34	.77	.974	1.96	Accept																																																																																																									
		Female	3.28	.83					Total	Male	3.14	.42	1.79	1.96	Accept	Female	3.08	.34																																																																																														
	Total	Male	3.14	.42	1.79	1.96	Accept																																																																																																									
		Female	3.08	.34																																																																																																												

The item-by item analysis show that the calculated t-values ranging from -1.71, -1.92, 1.29, 1.66, 1.86 and 1.92, were less than the critical values of 1.96 on seven of the ten items on personnel management competencies required by principals of secondary school while items 10, 13 and 17 with the range of 3.07, 3.49, and 3.60 respectively were greater than the table value of 1.96 at the probability level of 0.05. The null hypothesis with respect to items 11, 12, 14, 15, 16, 18, and 19 is not significant while the hypothesis with respect to item 10, 13, and 17 is significant. This shows that both categories of respondents express similar opinions with regard to involving staff in decision making, ability to communicate freely and effectively with staff, recognizing staff efforts in teaching and learning, skill in resolving conflict without fear or favour, leaving staff to do things in their own ways, ability to encourage appropriate professional development and ability to source finds for each development of the school. The null hypothesis with respect to items 10, 13, and 17 are significant

since their calculated t-values of 3.49, 3.07 and 3.60 are greater than the table value of 1.96 at 0.05 probability level, implying the rejection of the items by the respondents.

Hypothesis Two

There is no significant difference between ratings of male and female principals on financial management competencies required by principals ($p < 0.5$).

To test the above null hypothesis, a t-test, analysis of the differences between the mean scores of male and female principals was calculated and the result is shown on table 8.

Table 4 Showing t-test analysis of the difference in mean ratings of male and female principals on required financial management competencies (Item-by-Item Analysis).

Table 4: Showing t-test Analysis of the Difference in Mean Ratings of Male and Female Principals on Required Financial Management Competencies (Item-by-Item Analysis)

S/N	Items	Groups	X	SD	t-Cal	t-Crit	Dec
20	Skills in budgets preparation based on available resources	Male	3.14	.80		1.96	Reject
					3.19		
21	Ability to allocate funds according to needs	Female	2.80	.92			Accept
		Male	3.19	.67	1.92	1.96	
22	Ability to allocate funds according to needs	Female	3.14	.87			Accept
		Male	3.20	.85	-1.71	1.96	
23	Working within the constraints of the school budget	Female	3.03	.92			Reject
		Male	3.02	.85	3.07	1.96	
24	Knowledge of accounting laws, rules and procedures	Female	3.09	.94			Accept
		Male	3.04	.97	1.86	1.96	
25	Ability to keep financial records	Female	3.08	.96			Accept
		Male	3.26	.99	1.66	1.96	
26	Ability to present book of accounts	Female	3.09	1.00			Accept
		Male	3.19	.77	1.29	1.96	
27	Ability to keep close check on financial expenditure	Female	3.23	.69			Reject
		Male	3.15	.80	3.60	1.96	
28	Keeping and reporting on financial reports	Female	3.01	.93			Accept
		Male	3.21	1.92	-1.92	1.96	
	Grand Mean	Female	3.04	.89			
		Male	3.16	.39	1.83	1.96	Accept
		Female	3.06	.38			

The analysis show that calculated t-values for items 21, 23, 24, 26 and 28 are 1.26, -2.11, -.078, -1.31 and .208 respectively are less than the critical (table) value of 1.96 on the five items. The items include: ability to allocate funds according to needs, ability to build team spirit among staff, knowledge of accounting laws, rules and procedures, ability to present book of accounts and ability to keep reports and financial recordings. The null hypothesis is accepted with respect to these items. Therefore, there is no significant difference between the mean ratings of male and female principals on financial management competencies with respect to these items.

However, the data show that there was a significant difference between the opinions of the male and female and female principals on four of the items. These items are 20, 22, 25 and 27 whose t-test values are above the critical (table) values of 1.96. This means that the respondents rejected “skills in budget preparation based on available resources (3.19), working within the constraints of schools budgets (3.21),

ability to keep financial records (4.11) and ability to keep close check in financial expenditure (2.16)” as required competencies for financial management. Therefore the null hypothesis with respect to these items is rejected.

DISCUSSION

Data indicate wide acceptability of the items by the respondents, with regard to the personnel management competencies needed by the principals. On individual items basis, analysis revealed that in such areas as principals’ skills in determining staff needs, delegation of duties to staff, involvement of staff in decision making, communicating freely with staff, recognition of staff efforts and encouraging staff development, male principals accepted with overall means score of 3.14, while the females accepted with 3.08. As could be discerned from the ratings, all the items were rated above the 2.50 criterion point, while the standard deviation ranged from .70 to .94 for most items. To this end, one may

conclude that both male and female principals did not vary much in their ratings and acceptability of the needed competencies.

Results showed that there was no significant difference in the mean ratings of both male and female principals on the personnel management competencies needed by them. Anikweze (2005) conducted a study of principalship and leadership challenges in Nigerian post-primary schools in Adamawa State. Using a sample of 320 principals, Anikweze identified principals', poor knowledge of personnel management techniques as a major challenge in school administration. Based on the findings, he recommended that a successful personnel management will largely depend on principals', ability to motivate their staff, identity with their problems, encourage personal development and assigning relevant duties to them. Although Anikweze's study population and place of study differ slightly from the present one, the similarities in the results further stress the fact that personnel management competencies needed by principals are largely similar.

As regards financial management, it was identified as one of the key areas of school administration, hence the need to seek respondents' opinion on the competencies needed by the principals in this area. Responses of principals on the needed financial competencies showed that the mean ratings of the male principals, ranged from 3.02 to 3.26 on the suggested nine (9) items, and 2.80 to 3.23 for females on the same items. While the males accepted principals' ability to keep financial records with the highest mean rating of 3.26, the female accepted the same item on the mean rating of 3.09. This is not surprising, because Ogbonnaya (2002) had also noted these competencies as crucial in financial management with respect to provosts of colleges of Education. This shows that these competencies are not just limited to secondary schools, but also to tertiary institutions.

It was also gathered from this study that such other financial management competencies as, ability to source and allocate funds, keeping and reporting on financial records, keeping close check on financial records, work within budget constraints and having knowledge of accounting laws, are needed by the respondents. When the data on the above findings were subjected to t-test on item by item analysis, a slightly different result emerged. Three (3) of the nine (9) items were rejected. This means that the male and female principal differed on their opinions on such financial management competencies as skills in budgets preparation based on available resources, working within budget constraints, and ability to keep close check on financial expenditure incidentally. These findings did not agree with Adasu (2009) findings on correlates of effective principalship in Dekina Education Zone of Kogi State. Using a sample of 200 principals and 550 teachers, Adasu (2009), identified, ability of school principals to plan budgets based on requirements of good financial management. Oredein (2006) and Oboegbulem (2007) had made similar findings about effective principals' leadership in financial management.

In all, it may however be reasonable to conclude that all the suggested financial management competencies are needed by

the principals, except that three (3) of them did not receive statistical significance and could therefore be said to be rejected in a statistical sense. The 3 items however received means ratings above the mid-point of 2.50 in the rating scale.

CONCLUSION

This study revealed how principals perceive the competencies needed by them in various administrative areas. As regards personnel management competencies, the following ones were identified by the principals: determining staff needs, delegating duties to capable staff, involving staff in decision-making and communicating freely with them, recognizing staff efforts and motivating them, resolving staff conflicts objectively, sharing experiences with them and encouraging appropriate professional development.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusion of this study, the following recommendations are made:

1. As regards personnel administration, principals are encouraged to adopt the following competencies: involving staff in decision-making, delegating functions to capable ones, communicating freely with staff, recognizing and encouraging staff efforts, sharing experiences with staff encouraging staff developments and resolving conflicts without favouritism.
2. Since financial management is one of the crucial aspects of school administration, principals should explore the following identified competencies in financial management sourcing funds for school development, preparing budgets, keeping close checks on financial expenditure and keeping accurate financial accounts and records.

REFERENCES

- [1] ANIDS (2010). Developing all sectors simultaneously. Retrieved from <http://www.ananmbrastate.ng.organd> retrievedon8march,2011.
- [2] Chukwu, J. O. (2005). Motivational factors needed by school teachers for result – oriented UBE programme: *The Nigerian Universal Basic Educational Journal*, 2 (1), 31 – 35.
- [3] Dror, E. & O'Brien, J. (2010). Defining the role of the primary principal in Ireland: *A report by Hay group management consultants*. Dublin: Mewmount House.
- [4] Eboka, C. O. (2012). Principals' leadership style and organisational climate in secondary schools. *Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis. University of Nigeria Nsukka*.
- [5] Ebonyi Voice (2010). Ebonyi education ministry suspends principals. *Ebonyi Voice* 5 (3).

- [6] Federal Ministry of Education (2009). Nigerian Education Sector. *Analysis Report Abuja. FME.*
- [7] Getha, F. W. (1991). *Shop management.* New York: Harper and Row.
- [8] Getha-Taylor, H. (). Identifying collaborative competencies. *Review of Public-personnel Administration.* 103, March 7.
- [9] Isa, L. A. (2007). Teachers motivation and attitude to work in secondary schools. *Lagos Journal of Educational Administration and Planning* 3 (1), 174 – 178.
- [10] Mgbodile, T. O. (2006). International leadership in schools. In T. O. Mgbodile (ed) *Fundamental in educational administration and planning* 140 – 148. Enugu: Magnet Business Enterprise.
- [11] Nnabuo, P. O. M. (2010). Educational management: *Theoretical perspectives on practice and Research.* Port Harcourt: Bengray Pub. Co.
- [12] Oboegbulem, A. I. (2004). Staff personnel administration in Mgbodile, T. O. (ED). *Fundamentals in educational administration and planning* Enugu: Magnet Business Enterprise.
- [13] Oboegbulem, A. I. (2007). Management of school funds by secondary school principals for effective job productivity. *Lagos Journal of Educational Administration and Planning* 3 (1), 109 – 116.
- [14] Ogbonnaya, N. O. & Alpha, L. S. (2005). Appraisal of administrative competencies of secondary school principals in Anambra and Enugu States, *Unpublished Ph.D Thesis, University of Nigeria, Nsukka.*
- [15] Ogbonnaya, N. O. (2000). *Foundation of education finance. (Second Edition)* Nsukka Hallman Publishers.
- [16] Ogbonnaya, N. O. (2002). Administrative competency needs of provost of Colleges of Education. *International Journal of Educational Planning and Administration (IJEP)* 1(2), 43 – 55.
- [17] Ogbonnaya, N. O. (2003). Nature and scope of educational administration. In Mgbodile, T. O. (Ed) *Fundamentals in Administration and Planning* Enugu: Magnet Business Enterprise.
- [18] Okeke, B. A. (2001). *Gender and technology in Africa: A challenge for education. Paper presented at the Roma Mehta Lecture Rad Chiff, Feb. 8.*
- [19] Thomson, E. (2009). Staff development in secondary schools in Imo State: Teachers, perception of principals performances. *Unpublished M.Ed Dissertation, University of Nigeria, Nsukka.*