

## **PRINCIPALS' PERFORMANCE IN SUPPORTING STAFF DEVELOPMENT IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS**

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### **Abstract**

This study was conducted to ascertain principals' performance in supporting staff development in Ebonyi State secondary schools. A sample of 630 teachers completed a 12-item questionnaire designed for the study. Out of 630 copies of the questionnaire distributed, 606 copies representing about 96.2% return rate were properly completed and returned. Data were analysed using means, standard deviations and t-test statistics. The results of the study showed that principals' performance in supporting staff development in Ebonyi State secondary schools was ineffective. It was also found that there was a significant difference in the performance of principals in eight of the ten functions in supporting staff development in Ebonyi State secondary schools based on location of schools, but there was no significant difference in the performance of principals in two of the ten staff development functions based on gender. On the basis of the findings of this study, it was recommended among others; that there should be constant appraisals of principals' performance in supporting staff development in secondary schools. This might motivate them to support their staff to engage in programmes that will improve teaching and learning in school.

**Keywords:** Performance, Supporting, Staff, Development.

### **INTRODUCTION**

The school principal, according to Nzomiwu (1997), is primarily charged with the development of each and every member of the school, including the teaching staff. This is because teachers are the turning point around which all the school activities revolve (Lewis, 2002). This type of full development is not possible without a good school principal who has to coordinate activities within the school, including supporting staff development.

Within the framework of supporting staff development, the principal can focus a school on instructional improvement through meaningful in-service as follow-up assistance, peer observation, post observation analysis and conferencing focusing on skills introduced in workshop, providing orientation of new members of staff to the school system and maintaining good human relations with staff. Pigford (2007) submitted that leadership qualities of effective school leaders in supporting staff development include knowing what is going on in school to find out what teachers are doing and how well, organizing teacher-effectiveness training, creating collegial relationship with and among teachers and accommodating different teacher-personality styles.

In any educational organisation teachers are indispensable instrument because they have many roles to play in the effective realization of educational objectives. In line with this, Donaldson (2007) opined that teachers are the fulcrum around which the curriculum revolves. He further stressed that teachers are the heart and soul of the educational enterprise. Thus, any school principal that does not care for the welfare of his or her teachers is bound to lower the working morale of his or her teachers.

The quality of development of staff welfare may vary from person to person or even influenced by gender and the location of school. In other words male principals and female principals and those teaching in urban or rural secondary schools may have different initiatives in supporting staff development. The implication of the differences in the initiatives of the principals might also make staff development as perceived by the secondary school teachers to differ.

Researchers (Glickman, 1995; Bowman, 2002; Anderson and Nicholson, 2007; Ploghoft and Perkins, 2008; Egwu, 2009) over the years have reported varying qualities of performance among secondary school principals with regard to their role in instructional supervisory functions. Unfortunately, these reports have concentrated on general instructional supervision and no study has specifically reported the performance of secondary school principals in supporting staff development in Ebonyi State secondary schools. Secondly, the differences that might exist in the performance of principals in supporting staff development with regard to gender and location of school, both in Ebonyi State and elsewhere, have also been neglected. The study was therefore designed to ascertain the principals' performance in supporting staff development in Ebonyi State secondary schools. Two hypotheses were postulated for the study thus:

1. There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of rural and urban secondary school teachers on principals' performance in supporting staff development in Ebonyi State secondary schools, and
2. There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of male and female secondary school teachers on principals' performance in supporting staff development in Ebonyi State secondary schools.

## **METHODS**

### **Subjects and Setting**

Between September 2008 and January 2009, a descriptive survey was carried out among 630 (317 urban, 313 rural; 316 male and 314 female) teachers randomly drawn from forty-five secondary schools in Ebonyi State (Egwu, 2009). The secondary schools were selected from the three education zones in the state.

### **Instrument**

The researcher used a self-developed questionnaire titled, Principals' Performance in Supporting Staff Development Questionnaire (PPSSDQ), which consisted of 12 items arranged in two sections; A and B. Section A, contained two questions about the gender and location of respondents' schools. Section B, consisted of 10 items on principals' performance in supporting staff development.

Three experts in Measurement Evaluation and Educational Administration from Ebonyi State University were used for validating the PPCIQ. Thirty secondary school teachers (15 each from a rural school and an urban school) of both genders in Enugu State were used for test of reliability. The data yielded a Cronbach Alpha internal consistency coefficient of 0.981. The reliability coefficient was higher than Ogbazi and Okpala's (1994) criteria of .60 acceptable for good instruments.

### **Procedure**

The researcher administered the 630 copies of the questionnaire on the respondents in their staff room during break period and some other time during staff meeting. The respondents were requested to complete the questionnaire and return same to the researcher immediately. This method ensured a 100% return rate of the questionnaire.

### **Data Analysis**

The completed copies of the PPCIQ were examined for completeness of responses and copies that had incomplete responses were discarded. Out of 630 copies of questionnaire distributed 606 (305 urban, 301 rural; 304 male, 302 female) copies, representing about 96.2% return rate, were used for data analysis. Data were analysed using mean ( $\bar{x}$ ) score, standard deviation, and t-test. Mean and standard deviation were used to describe the data. A criterion mean ( $\bar{x}$ ) of 2.50 was set for the study. In this case a mean ( $\bar{x}$ ) score of 2.50 and above was adjudged effective performance in supporting staff development and a mean ( $\bar{x}$ ) score below 2.50 was adjudged ineffective performance in supporting staff development. Standard deviation was used to determine how the teachers' responses varied. Statistical differences between means were tested using the t-test statistic. An alpha level of 0.05 was set for the t-tests. All data analyses were done with Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 16.0 for Windows.

## RESULTS

**Table 1: Mean Ratings of Principals' Performance in Supporting Staff Development (n = 606)**

| Item | Statement   | $\bar{x}$   | SD         | Decision  |
|------|---|-------------|------------|-----------|
| 1.   | Principal encourages teachers for in service training   | 2.61        | .57        | E         |
| 2.   | Principal sponsors teachers for seminars and workshop   | 1.78        | .79        | IE        |
| 3.   | Principals organizes in house conference and seminars on important instructional programmes of the school | 1.74        | .79        | IE        |
| 4.   | Principal approves study leave for teachers to acquire higher degree in their area of specialization      | 3.47        | .55        | E         |
| 5.   | Principal assign duties and classes to teachers based on their professional abilities                     | 3.35        | .72        | E         |
| 6.   | Principal recommends teachers who have completed their in service training for promotion                  | 3.36        | .61        | E         |
| 7.   | Principal recognizes the need to support teachers and helps to develop teachers professionally.           | 2.37        | .51        | IE        |
| 8.   | Principal encourages teachers and staff inputs in scheduling staff development programmes                 | 1.85        | .72        | IE        |
| 9.   | Principal directs activities of teacher towards development of their potentials as teachers               | 1.91        | .76        | IE        |
| 10.  | Principal seek out information in order to help teachers grow and improve as professional                 | 1.72        | .63        | IE        |
|      | <b>Grand mean</b>   | <b>2.42</b> | <b>.59</b> | <b>IE</b> |

Table 1 shows that each of items 25, 28, 29 and 30 on principals' performance in staff development obtained a mean score above 2.50. On the other hand each of items 26, 27, 31, 32, 33 and 34 obtained a mean score below 2.50. This implies that the respondents rated principals' performance in items 25, 28, 29 and 30 effective while principals' performance in items 26, 27, 31, 32, 33, and 34 are ineffective. The grand mean score obtained is 2.42 and is below the criterion mean of 2.50 set for the study. This result implies that principals' performance in supporting staff development in secondary schools in Ebonyi State is ineffective.

**Table 2: t-test Analysis of Urban and Rural Principals' Performance in Supporting Staff Development**

| Item | Statement   | Location | N   | $\bar{x}$ | SD  | df  | t-cal. | t-crit. | Dec.   |     |   |       |     |      |     |     |       |      |        |       |     |      |     |     |   |       |     |      |     |     |       |      |        |       |     |      |     |     |  |       |     |      |     |     |       |      |        |       |     |      |     |     |  |       |     |      |     |     |       |      |        |       |     |      |     |     |  |       |     |      |     |     |       |      |        |       |     |      |     |     |  |       |     |      |     |     |       |      |        |       |     |      |     |     |   |       |     |      |     |     |       |      |        |       |     |      |     |     |   |       |     |      |     |     |      |      |        |       |     |      |     |     |   |       |     |      |     |     |      |
|------|---|----------|-----|-----------|-----|-----|--------|---------|--------|-----|---|-------|-----|------|-----|-----|-------|------|--------|-------|-----|------|-----|-----|---|-------|-----|------|-----|-----|-------|------|--------|-------|-----|------|-----|-----|--|-------|-----|------|-----|-----|-------|------|--------|-------|-----|------|-----|-----|--|-------|-----|------|-----|-----|-------|------|--------|-------|-----|------|-----|-----|--|-------|-----|------|-----|-----|-------|------|--------|-------|-----|------|-----|-----|--|-------|-----|------|-----|-----|-------|------|--------|-------|-----|------|-----|-----|---|-------|-----|------|-----|-----|-------|------|--------|-------|-----|------|-----|-----|---|-------|-----|------|-----|-----|------|------|--------|-------|-----|------|-----|-----|---|-------|-----|------|-----|-----|------|
| 1.   | Principal encourages teachers for in service training   | Urban    | 305 | 2.51      | .50 | 604 | 4.69   | 1.96    | Reject |     |   |       |     |      |     |     |       |      |        |       |     |      |     |     |   |       |     |      |     |     |       |      |        |       |     |      |     |     |  |       |     |      |     |     |       |      |        |       |     |      |     |     |  |       |     |      |     |     |       |      |        |       |     |      |     |     |  |       |     |      |     |     |       |      |        |       |     |      |     |     |  |       |     |      |     |     |       |      |        |       |     |      |     |     |   |       |     |      |     |     |       |      |        |       |     |      |     |     |   |       |     |      |     |     |      |      |        |       |     |      |     |     |   |       |     |      |     |     |      |
|      |   | Rural    | 301 | 2.70      | .49 |     |        |         |        | 2.  | Principal sponsors teachers for seminars and workshop   | Urban | 305 | 1.79 | .78 | 604 | .30   | 1.96 | Accept | Rural | 301 | 1.78 | .79 | 3.  | Principals organizes in house conference and seminars on important instructional programmes of the school | Urban | 305 | 1.68 | .78 | 604 | 2.00  | 1.96 | Reject | Rural | 301 | 1.81 | .80 | 4.  | Principal approves study leave for teachers to acquire higher degree in their area of specialization | Urban | 305 | 3.49 | .57 | 604 | 1.26  | 1.96 | Accept | Rural | 301 | 3.44 | .54 | 5.  | Principal assign duties and classes to teachers based on their professional abilities          | Urban | 305 | 3.42 | .73 | 604 | 2.36  | 1.96 | Reject | Rural | 301 | 3.29 | .72 | 6.  | Principal recommends teachers who have complicated their in service training for promotion     | Urban | 305 | 3.47 | .56 | 604 | 4.32  | 1.96 | Reject | Rural | 301 | 3.26 | .63 | 7.  | Principal recognizes the need to support teachers and helps to develop teachers professionally | Urban | 305 | 2.24 | .49 | 604 | 6.68  | 1.96 | Reject | Rural | 301 | 2.51 | .50 | 8.  | Principal encourages teachers and staff inputs in scheduling staff development programmes   | Urban | 305 | 1.56 | .59 | 604 | 10.56 | 1.96 | Reject | Rural | 301 | 2.13 | .73 | 9.  | Principal directs activities of teacher towards development of their potentials as teachers | Urban | 305 | 1.64 | .88 | 604 | 9.62 | 1.96 | Reject | Rural | 301 | 2.19 | .76 | 10. | Principal seek out information in order to help teachers grow and improve as professional | Urban | 305 | 1.52 | .54 | 604 | 8.46 |
| 2.   | Principal sponsors teachers for seminars and workshop   | Urban    | 305 | 1.79      | .78 | 604 | .30    | 1.96    | Accept |     |   |       |     |      |     |     |       |      |        |       |     |      |     |     |   |       |     |      |     |     |       |      |        |       |     |      |     |     |  |       |     |      |     |     |       |      |        |       |     |      |     |     |  |       |     |      |     |     |       |      |        |       |     |      |     |     |  |       |     |      |     |     |       |      |        |       |     |      |     |     |  |       |     |      |     |     |       |      |        |       |     |      |     |     |   |       |     |      |     |     |       |      |        |       |     |      |     |     |   |       |     |      |     |     |      |      |        |       |     |      |     |     |   |       |     |      |     |     |      |
|      |   | Rural    | 301 | 1.78      | .79 |     |        |         |        | 3.  | Principals organizes in house conference and seminars on important instructional programmes of the school | Urban | 305 | 1.68 | .78 | 604 | 2.00  | 1.96 | Reject | Rural | 301 | 1.81 | .80 | 4.  | Principal approves study leave for teachers to acquire higher degree in their area of specialization      | Urban | 305 | 3.49 | .57 | 604 | 1.26  | 1.96 | Accept | Rural | 301 | 3.44 | .54 | 5.  | Principal assign duties and classes to teachers based on their professional abilities                | Urban | 305 | 3.42 | .73 | 604 | 2.36  | 1.96 | Reject | Rural | 301 | 3.29 | .72 | 6.  | Principal recommends teachers who have complicated their in service training for promotion     | Urban | 305 | 3.47 | .56 | 604 | 4.32  | 1.96 | Reject | Rural | 301 | 3.26 | .63 | 7.  | Principal recognizes the need to support teachers and helps to develop teachers professionally | Urban | 305 | 2.24 | .49 | 604 | 6.68  | 1.96 | Reject | Rural | 301 | 2.51 | .50 | 8.  | Principal encourages teachers and staff inputs in scheduling staff development programmes      | Urban | 305 | 1.56 | .59 | 604 | 10.56 | 1.96 | Reject | Rural | 301 | 2.13 | .73 | 9.  | Principal directs activities of teacher towards development of their potentials as teachers | Urban | 305 | 1.64 | .88 | 604 | 9.62  | 1.96 | Reject | Rural | 301 | 2.19 | .76 | 10. | Principal seek out information in order to help teachers grow and improve as professional   | Urban | 305 | 1.52 | .54 | 604 | 8.46 | 1.96 | Reject | Rural | 301 | 1.93 | .64 |     |   |       |     |      |     |     |      |
| 3.   | Principals organizes in house conference and seminars on important instructional programmes of the school | Urban    | 305 | 1.68      | .78 | 604 | 2.00   | 1.96    | Reject |     |   |       |     |      |     |     |       |      |        |       |     |      |     |     |   |       |     |      |     |     |       |      |        |       |     |      |     |     |  |       |     |      |     |     |       |      |        |       |     |      |     |     |  |       |     |      |     |     |       |      |        |       |     |      |     |     |  |       |     |      |     |     |       |      |        |       |     |      |     |     |  |       |     |      |     |     |       |      |        |       |     |      |     |     |   |       |     |      |     |     |       |      |        |       |     |      |     |     |   |       |     |      |     |     |      |      |        |       |     |      |     |     |   |       |     |      |     |     |      |
|      |   | Rural    | 301 | 1.81      | .80 |     |        |         |        | 4.  | Principal approves study leave for teachers to acquire higher degree in their area of specialization      | Urban | 305 | 3.49 | .57 | 604 | 1.26  | 1.96 | Accept | Rural | 301 | 3.44 | .54 | 5.  | Principal assign duties and classes to teachers based on their professional abilities                     | Urban | 305 | 3.42 | .73 | 604 | 2.36  | 1.96 | Reject | Rural | 301 | 3.29 | .72 | 6.  | Principal recommends teachers who have complicated their in service training for promotion           | Urban | 305 | 3.47 | .56 | 604 | 4.32  | 1.96 | Reject | Rural | 301 | 3.26 | .63 | 7.  | Principal recognizes the need to support teachers and helps to develop teachers professionally | Urban | 305 | 2.24 | .49 | 604 | 6.68  | 1.96 | Reject | Rural | 301 | 2.51 | .50 | 8.  | Principal encourages teachers and staff inputs in scheduling staff development programmes      | Urban | 305 | 1.56 | .59 | 604 | 10.56 | 1.96 | Reject | Rural | 301 | 2.13 | .73 | 9.  | Principal directs activities of teacher towards development of their potentials as teachers    | Urban | 305 | 1.64 | .88 | 604 | 9.62  | 1.96 | Reject | Rural | 301 | 2.19 | .76 | 10. | Principal seek out information in order to help teachers grow and improve as professional   | Urban | 305 | 1.52 | .54 | 604 | 8.46  | 1.96 | Reject | Rural | 301 | 1.93 | .64 |     |   |       |     |      |     |     |      |      |        |       |     |      |     |     |   |       |     |      |     |     |      |
| 4.   | Principal approves study leave for teachers to acquire higher degree in their area of specialization      | Urban    | 305 | 3.49      | .57 | 604 | 1.26   | 1.96    | Accept |     |   |       |     |      |     |     |       |      |        |       |     |      |     |     |   |       |     |      |     |     |       |      |        |       |     |      |     |     |  |       |     |      |     |     |       |      |        |       |     |      |     |     |  |       |     |      |     |     |       |      |        |       |     |      |     |     |  |       |     |      |     |     |       |      |        |       |     |      |     |     |  |       |     |      |     |     |       |      |        |       |     |      |     |     |   |       |     |      |     |     |       |      |        |       |     |      |     |     |   |       |     |      |     |     |      |      |        |       |     |      |     |     |   |       |     |      |     |     |      |
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| 5.   | Principal assign duties and classes to teachers based on their professional abilities                     | Urban    | 305 | 3.42      | .73 | 604 | 2.36   | 1.96    | Reject |     |   |       |     |      |     |     |       |      |        |       |     |      |     |     |   |       |     |      |     |     |       |      |        |       |     |      |     |     |  |       |     |      |     |     |       |      |        |       |     |      |     |     |  |       |     |      |     |     |       |      |        |       |     |      |     |     |  |       |     |      |     |     |       |      |        |       |     |      |     |     |  |       |     |      |     |     |       |      |        |       |     |      |     |     |   |       |     |      |     |     |       |      |        |       |     |      |     |     |   |       |     |      |     |     |      |      |        |       |     |      |     |     |   |       |     |      |     |     |      |
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| 6.   | Principal recommends teachers who have complicated their in service training for promotion                | Urban    | 305 | 3.47      | .56 | 604 | 4.32   | 1.96    | Reject |     |   |       |     |      |     |     |       |      |        |       |     |      |     |     |   |       |     |      |     |     |       |      |        |       |     |      |     |     |  |       |     |      |     |     |       |      |        |       |     |      |     |     |  |       |     |      |     |     |       |      |        |       |     |      |     |     |  |       |     |      |     |     |       |      |        |       |     |      |     |     |  |       |     |      |     |     |       |      |        |       |     |      |     |     |   |       |     |      |     |     |       |      |        |       |     |      |     |     |   |       |     |      |     |     |      |      |        |       |     |      |     |     |   |       |     |      |     |     |      |
|      |   | Rural    | 301 | 3.26      | .63 |     |        |         |        | 7.  | Principal recognizes the need to support teachers and helps to develop teachers professionally            | Urban | 305 | 2.24 | .49 | 604 | 6.68  | 1.96 | Reject | Rural | 301 | 2.51 | .50 | 8.  | Principal encourages teachers and staff inputs in scheduling staff development programmes                 | Urban | 305 | 1.56 | .59 | 604 | 10.56 | 1.96 | Reject | Rural | 301 | 2.13 | .73 | 9.  | Principal directs activities of teacher towards development of their potentials as teachers          | Urban | 305 | 1.64 | .88 | 604 | 9.62  | 1.96 | Reject | Rural | 301 | 2.19 | .76 | 10. | Principal seek out information in order to help teachers grow and improve as professional      | Urban | 305 | 1.52 | .54 | 604 | 8.46  | 1.96 | Reject | Rural | 301 | 1.93 | .64 |     |  |       |     |      |     |     |       |      |        |       |     |      |     |     |  |       |     |      |     |     |       |      |        |       |     |      |     |     |   |       |     |      |     |     |       |      |        |       |     |      |     |     |   |       |     |      |     |     |      |      |        |       |     |      |     |     |   |       |     |      |     |     |      |
| 7.   | Principal recognizes the need to support teachers and helps to develop teachers professionally            | Urban    | 305 | 2.24      | .49 | 604 | 6.68   | 1.96    | Reject |     |   |       |     |      |     |     |       |      |        |       |     |      |     |     |   |       |     |      |     |     |       |      |        |       |     |      |     |     |  |       |     |      |     |     |       |      |        |       |     |      |     |     |  |       |     |      |     |     |       |      |        |       |     |      |     |     |  |       |     |      |     |     |       |      |        |       |     |      |     |     |  |       |     |      |     |     |       |      |        |       |     |      |     |     |   |       |     |      |     |     |       |      |        |       |     |      |     |     |   |       |     |      |     |     |      |      |        |       |     |      |     |     |   |       |     |      |     |     |      |
|      |   | Rural    | 301 | 2.51      | .50 |     |        |         |        | 8.  | Principal encourages teachers and staff inputs in scheduling staff development programmes                 | Urban | 305 | 1.56 | .59 | 604 | 10.56 | 1.96 | Reject | Rural | 301 | 2.13 | .73 | 9.  | Principal directs activities of teacher towards development of their potentials as teachers               | Urban | 305 | 1.64 | .88 | 604 | 9.62  | 1.96 | Reject | Rural | 301 | 2.19 | .76 | 10. | Principal seek out information in order to help teachers grow and improve as professional            | Urban | 305 | 1.52 | .54 | 604 | 8.46  | 1.96 | Reject | Rural | 301 | 1.93 | .64 |     |  |       |     |      |     |     |       |      |        |       |     |      |     |     |  |       |     |      |     |     |       |      |        |       |     |      |     |     |  |       |     |      |     |     |       |      |        |       |     |      |     |     |   |       |     |      |     |     |       |      |        |       |     |      |     |     |   |       |     |      |     |     |      |      |        |       |     |      |     |     |   |       |     |      |     |     |      |
| 8.   | Principal encourages teachers and staff inputs in scheduling staff development programmes                 | Urban    | 305 | 1.56      | .59 | 604 | 10.56  | 1.96    | Reject |     |   |       |     |      |     |     |       |      |        |       |     |      |     |     |   |       |     |      |     |     |       |      |        |       |     |      |     |     |  |       |     |      |     |     |       |      |        |       |     |      |     |     |  |       |     |      |     |     |       |      |        |       |     |      |     |     |  |       |     |      |     |     |       |      |        |       |     |      |     |     |  |       |     |      |     |     |       |      |        |       |     |      |     |     |   |       |     |      |     |     |       |      |        |       |     |      |     |     |   |       |     |      |     |     |      |      |        |       |     |      |     |     |   |       |     |      |     |     |      |
|      |   | Rural    | 301 | 2.13      | .73 |     |        |         |        | 9.  | Principal directs activities of teacher towards development of their potentials as teachers               | Urban | 305 | 1.64 | .88 | 604 | 9.62  | 1.96 | Reject | Rural | 301 | 2.19 | .76 | 10. | Principal seek out information in order to help teachers grow and improve as professional                 | Urban | 305 | 1.52 | .54 | 604 | 8.46  | 1.96 | Reject | Rural | 301 | 1.93 | .64 |     |  |       |     |      |     |     |       |      |        |       |     |      |     |     |  |       |     |      |     |     |       |      |        |       |     |      |     |     |  |       |     |      |     |     |       |      |        |       |     |      |     |     |  |       |     |      |     |     |       |      |        |       |     |      |     |     |   |       |     |      |     |     |       |      |        |       |     |      |     |     |   |       |     |      |     |     |      |      |        |       |     |      |     |     |   |       |     |      |     |     |      |
| 9.   | Principal directs activities of teacher towards development of their potentials as teachers               | Urban    | 305 | 1.64      | .88 | 604 | 9.62   | 1.96    | Reject |     |   |       |     |      |     |     |       |      |        |       |     |      |     |     |   |       |     |      |     |     |       |      |        |       |     |      |     |     |  |       |     |      |     |     |       |      |        |       |     |      |     |     |  |       |     |      |     |     |       |      |        |       |     |      |     |     |  |       |     |      |     |     |       |      |        |       |     |      |     |     |  |       |     |      |     |     |       |      |        |       |     |      |     |     |   |       |     |      |     |     |       |      |        |       |     |      |     |     |   |       |     |      |     |     |      |      |        |       |     |      |     |     |   |       |     |      |     |     |      |
|      |   | Rural    | 301 | 2.19      | .76 |     |        |         |        | 10. | Principal seek out information in order to help teachers grow and improve as professional                 | Urban | 305 | 1.52 | .54 | 604 | 8.46  | 1.96 | Reject | Rural | 301 | 1.93 | .64 |     |   |       |     |      |     |     |       |      |        |       |     |      |     |     |  |       |     |      |     |     |       |      |        |       |     |      |     |     |  |       |     |      |     |     |       |      |        |       |     |      |     |     |  |       |     |      |     |     |       |      |        |       |     |      |     |     |  |       |     |      |     |     |       |      |        |       |     |      |     |     |   |       |     |      |     |     |       |      |        |       |     |      |     |     |   |       |     |      |     |     |      |      |        |       |     |      |     |     |   |       |     |      |     |     |      |
| 10.  | Principal seek out information in order to help teachers grow and improve as professional                 | Urban    | 305 | 1.52      | .54 | 604 | 8.46   | 1.96    | Reject |     |   |       |     |      |     |     |       |      |        |       |     |      |     |     |   |       |     |      |     |     |       |      |        |       |     |      |     |     |  |       |     |      |     |     |       |      |        |       |     |      |     |     |  |       |     |      |     |     |       |      |        |       |     |      |     |     |  |       |     |      |     |     |       |      |        |       |     |      |     |     |  |       |     |      |     |     |       |      |        |       |     |      |     |     |   |       |     |      |     |     |       |      |        |       |     |      |     |     |   |       |     |      |     |     |      |      |        |       |     |      |     |     |   |       |     |      |     |     |      |
|      |   | Rural    | 301 | 1.93      | .64 |     |        |         |        |     |   |       |     |      |     |     |       |      |        |       |     |      |     |     |   |       |     |      |     |     |       |      |        |       |     |      |     |     |  |       |     |      |     |     |       |      |        |       |     |      |     |     |  |       |     |      |     |     |       |      |        |       |     |      |     |     |  |       |     |      |     |     |       |      |        |       |     |      |     |     |  |       |     |      |     |     |       |      |        |       |     |      |     |     |   |       |     |      |     |     |       |      |        |       |     |      |     |     |   |       |     |      |     |     |      |      |        |       |     |      |     |     |   |       |     |      |     |     |      |

Table 2 shows that the t-calculated for each of items 26 and 28 is less than t-critical of 1.96. Since the t-calculated is less than the t-critical value, the null hypothesis is accepted. This means that there is no significant difference in principals' performance in supporting staff development in urban and rural secondary schools for items 26 and 28. On the hand, for each of items 25, 27, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33 and 34 the t-calculated is greater than t-critical of 1.96. Since the t-calculated is greater than the t-critical value the null hypothesis is rejected. This means that there is a significant difference in the

mean rating of teachers in principals' performance in supporting staff development in urban and rural secondary schools in Ebonyi State for items 25, 27, 29, 30-34.

**Table 3: t-test Analysis of Male and Female Teachers Principals' Performance Supporting Staff Development**

| Item | Statement   | Location | N   | $\bar{x}$ | SD  | df  | t-cal. | t-crit. | Dec.   |
|------|---|----------|-----|-----------|-----|-----|--------|---------|--------|
| 1.   | Principal encourages teachers for in service training   | Male     | 304 | 2.47      | .50 | 604 | 6.85   | 1.96    | Reject |
|      |   | Female   | 302 | 2.74      | .46 |     |        |         |        |
| 2.   | Principal sponsors teachers for seminars and workshop   | Male     | 304 | 1.74      | .78 | 604 | 1.17   | 1.96    | Accept |
|      |   | Female   | 302 | 1.81      | .79 |     |        |         |        |
| 3.   | Principals organizes in house conference and seminars on important instructional programmes of the school | Male     | 304 | 1.65      | .76 | 604 | 2.85   | 1.96    | Reject |
|      |   | Female   | 302 | 1.83      | .82 |     |        |         |        |
| 4.   | Principal approves studs' leave for teachers to acquire higher degree in their area of specialization     | Male     | 304 | 3.42      | .59 | 604 | 2.14   | 1.96    | Reject |
|      |   | Female   | 302 | 3.52      | .50 |     |        |         |        |
| 5.   | Principal assign duties and classes to teachers based on their professional abilities                     | Male     | 304 | 3.51      | .55 | 604 | 5.57   | 1.96    | Reject |
|      |   | Female   | 302 | 3.20      | .83 |     |        |         |        |
| 6.   | Principal recommends teachers who have complicated their in service training for promotion                | Male     | 304 | 3.31      | .60 | 604 | 2.40   | 1.96    | Reject |
|      |   | Female   | 302 | 3.42      | .60 |     |        |         |        |
| 7.   | Principal recognizes the need to support teachers and helps to develop teachers professionally            | Male     | 304 | 2.32      | .47 | 604 | 2.28   | 1.96    | Reject |
|      |   | Female   | 302 | 2.42      | .55 |     |        |         |        |
| 8.   | Principal encourages teachers and staff inputs in scheduling staff development programmes                 | Male     | 304 | 1.76      | .78 | 604 | 2.87   | 1.96    | Reject |
|      |   | Female   | 302 | 1.93      | .65 |     |        |         |        |
| 9.   | Principal directs activities of teacher towards development of their potentials as teachers               | Male     | 304 | 1.83      | .83 | 604 | 2.79   | 1.96    | Reject |
|      |   | Female   | 302 | 1.99      | .68 |     |        |         |        |
| 10.  | Principal seek out information in order to help teachers grow and improve as professional                 | Male     | 304 | 1.69      | .66 | 604 | 1.06   | 1.96    | Accept |
|      |   | Female   | 302 | 1.75      | .59 |     |        |         |        |

Table 3 shows that the t-calculated for each of items 25, 27-33 is greater than the t-critical of 1.96. Since the t-calculated is greater than the t-critical value; the null

hypothesis is rejected for the items. This means that there is a significant difference in the mean rating of male and female teachers in principals' performance in supporting staff development for the given items. On the other hand, the t-calculated for each of items 26 and 34 is less than t-critical of 1.96. Since the t-calculated is less than t-critical value, the null hypothesis is accepted for the given functions. This means that there is no significant difference in the mean rating of male and female teachers in principals' performance in supporting staff development in secondary schools in Ebonyi State for the given functions.

## **DISCUSSION**

Results of the study on Table 3 showed that six (6) out of the 10 instructional leadership functions of principal in supporting staff development had mean scores below the criterion mean of 2.50. These results revealed that principals' performance in supporting staff development was ineffective. This was evident from the grand mean score of 2.42 which is below the cut off score of 2.50 set for the study. The ineffective performance could show that principals were not doing their best in respect to their functions in supporting staff development in secondary schools in Ebonyi State.

The results were not expected because teachers are indispensable instrument in any educational organization. They are the 'heart and soul' of the educational enterprise and they have many roles to play in the effective realization of educational objectives. Since principals were not doing their best in supporting staff development, the teachers may not be encouraged or motivated to carry out their duties diligently. This could hamper the effectiveness of teaching and learning process and consequently affects student performance. Donaldson (2007) agreed with the above when he reported that most principals have not taken time to study and assess their staff needs as to discover their areas of deficiencies and great points. He stated that no meaningful changes in teaching and learning process can be achieved in the absence of effective welfare scheme for teachers in order to improve their working morale.

Ozigi (1977) stated that teachers are the main determinant of quality in education; therefore, if they are uncommitted, uninspired, unmotivated, and antisocial, the whole nation is doomed. If they are ignorant in their disciplines and impart wrong information, they are not only useless but also dangerous. However, Sergovanni (1987) asserted that the effectiveness of a principal directly depends on the leadership quality provided by the principal directly to the teachers. Therefore, the principal must be concerned with the quality of instruction as well as staff welfare. He must empower teachers to improve school effectiveness. However, the best way to empower the staff could be to support them to develop themselves through staff development programmes through in-service programmes such as workshops, seminars and conferences.

Results of the study in Table 8 showed that the t-calculated for eight (8) out of the ten (10) instructional leadership functions of principals' performance in supporting staff

development in respect to location were greater than the t-critical value of 1.96. The eight (8) functions include: in-service training, in-house conference and seminars, assigning of duties and function to teachers, recommending teachers for promotion, developing teachers professionally, scheduling staff development programmes, directing activities of teachers and helping teacher to grow. Thus, the null hypothesis was rejected. These findings imply that there is a significant difference in the mean rating of teachers in principals' performance in supporting staff development in respect to urban and rural secondary schools.

However, two (2) of the functions of instructional leadership showed t-calculated values were less than the t-critical value of 1.96. The functions included sponsoring teachers for seminars and workshop and approving study leave for teachers. Thus, the null hypothesis was accepted. These findings imply that there was no significant difference in principals' performance in supporting staff development in urban and rural schools with regard to the two functions.

The significant difference could be related to the observed laxity within school administration and managements; principals are not performing their supposed functions as regards staff development. This deficiency may likely hamper the teaching learning process. However, principals should strive to reverse this situation because of the relevance of teachers in the school system. Teachers are the fulcrum around which the curriculum revolves as such should be taken care of or else their working morale might be low which will in turn hinder effective instruction.

Results of the study on Table 13 showed that the t-calculated values of 8 out of the 10 instructional leadership functions of principals in supporting staff development with respect to gender were greater than the t-critical value of 1.96. These functions included: encouraging teachers for in-service training, organizing in-house conference and seminars on importance of instructional programmes, approving study leave for teachers, assigning duties and classes to teachers, recommending teachers for promotion, helping teachers to develop professionally, scheduling teachers for developmental programmes and helping teachers to develop their potentials. Thus, the null hypothesis was rejected for these functions. These results imply that there is a significant difference in the mean performance of male and female principals in supporting staff development in secondary schools in Ebonyi State for the given functions. However, two of the functions, namely: sponsoring teachers for seminars and workshops and helping teachers grow as professionals indicated that the t-calculated values were less than the t-critical value of 1.96; therefore, the null hypothesis was accepted for the given functions. These results imply that there are no significant differences in the mean performance of male and female principals in supporting staff development in the two functions.

These differences proved the fact that schools principals were not performing their instructional functions as regards supporting staff development. This deficiency might be attributed to fact that principals perform more of administrative duties than supervising instruction because principals seem to be faced with a wide variety of duties and as such instructional leadership functions could be lost sight of in the midst



of these challenges. However, principals should strive to encourage teachers to discharge their duties better. These could be achieved through supporting staff development programmes. The results were unexpected considering the fact that teachers are indispensable instrument in any educational organization. No school system can function without teachers.

## **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION**

One important way of improving classroom teaching and learning in the education industry is through giving support to staff by principals of schools in their bid to exhibit instructional leadership functions. When teachers are supported to develop through staff development programmes, they are likely to perform well in the classroom. When teachers perform well in classroom, students are also likely to better from the teaching provided by teachers. The findings of this study demonstrated that principals' performance in supporting staff development in secondary schools in Ebonyi State was ineffective. However it was found that there was a significant difference in the performance of principals in eight out of ten functions in supporting staff development in secondary schools in Ebonyi State based on location of schools, but there was no significant difference in the performance of principals in two out of ten supporting functions in secondary school in Ebonyi State based on gender.

It was recommended among others; that there should be constant appraisals of principals' performance in supporting staff development in secondary schools. This might motivate them to support their staff to engage in programmes that will improve teaching and learning in school.

One limitation of the study is that lack of complete control over the subjects during the period of supplying the information needed for the study might have exerted some influence on the results. This is because during the period the subjects were filling out the questionnaire, some of the subjects might have influenced the opinion of others. The teachers surveyed represent an important group of the state's population and information generated will be useful in the planning of future staff development programmes in secondary schools in Ebonyi State.

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