



PRINCIPALS' MANAGERIAL SKILLS AND TEACHERS' JOB PERFORMANCE IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN AKWA IBOM NORTH-EAST SENATORIAL DISTRICT

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ABSTRACT

The study examined principals' managerial skills and teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North-East Senatorial District. Two research objectives and two research questions were raised with two research hypotheses formulated to guide the study. The study adopted a correlational survey design. The population for the study was 3,950 respondents from the 95 public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North –East Senatorial District. The sample size for the study was 364 respondents and the statistical tool used was stratified random sampling technique. The instrument used for the collection of data for the study was questionnaire titled "Principals' Managerial Skills and Teachers' Job Performance Questionnaire (PMSTJPO). The instrument was validated using face validity while the reliability coefficient yielded 0.78 for Principals' Managerial Skills (PMS) and Teachers' Job Performance (TJP) statistics. Pearson's Product Moment Correlation was used to test the earlier formulated null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. Results showed that decision-making skills and communication skills, had a significant relationship with the teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North-East Senatorial District. Therefore, the findings revealed a significant and positive relationship between principals' managerial skills and teachers' job performance, indicating that improvement in principals' managerial skills is associated with teachers' productivity and effectiveness. Based on these findings, it was recommended among other things that school principals receive continuous training from government in core managerial skills to foster more effective job performance of teachers.

Keywords: Managerial Skills, Job Performance, Public Secondary Schools, decision-making skills and communication skills

Introduction

Education remains central to individual and societal development and the quality of outcomes it produces depends heavily on the quality of school leadership (Ukoh, Usoro and Ukoima, 2026). As the head of the school, the principal occupies a unique position of influence, interpreting policy, executing instructional programmes and coordinating both human and material resources towards the achievement of institutional goals (Akporehe & Asiyai, 2023). Therefore, principals' managerial skills, understood as the special abilities through which schools are run, determine to a reasonable extent how effectively teachers perform their duties.

Among the many managerial skills principals draw upon, decision-making and communication stand out as particularly critical to teachers' work. Decision-making guides the school system



toward its established objectives, shaping curriculum implementation, resource allocation and conflict resolution; participatory decision-making, in particular, fosters shared ownership of school goals and staff motivation (Afolakemi & Adekemi, 2023). Communication, in turn, sustains clarity, transparency and mutual understanding between principals and teachers. Where communication is open, collaboration improves and conflict is reduced, with clear benefits for teachers' job performance (Goddy-Mkpa, 2020).

Despite continued government effort to improve teachers' job performance, instructional delivery in many public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North-East Senatorial District remains inconsistent, and communication gaps between principals and teachers persist. Since principals are the agents most directly responsible for guiding teachers toward institutional goals (Bukar, et al., 2015), understanding how their decision-making and communication skills relate to teachers' job performance in this senatorial district becomes necessary.

Statement of the Problem

In many public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North-East Senatorial District, teachers' overall performance appears closely tied to the quality of school leadership. Although principals occupy a central role in shaping school culture, communication and decision-making, there remains little clear understanding of how these specific managerial skills influence teachers' job performance. While some schools thrive under effective leadership, others continue to record low teacher morale and poor instructional delivery, suggesting inconsistent managerial competence among principals. Existing studies have addressed leadership broadly (Offor & Obiekwe, 2024; Harris & Jones, 2019), but empirical evidence on how principals' decision-making and communication skills specifically relate to teachers' effectiveness and commitment remains limited.

It is against this backdrop that this study seeks to fill the gap by examining the relationship between principals' managerial skills, specifically decision-making and communication, and teachers' job performance in Akwa Ibom North-East Senatorial District, with a view to informing principals' managerial training and improving the quality of education delivered in public secondary schools.

Purpose of the Study

This study determines the relationship between principals' managerial skills and teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North-East Senatorial District. Specifically, the study determines:

1. the relationship between principals' decision-making skills and teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North-East Senatorial District.
2. the relationship between principals' communication skills and teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North-East Senatorial District.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What is the relationship between principals' decision-making skills and teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North-East Senatorial District?
2. What is the relationship between principals' communication skills and teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North-East Senatorial District?



Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated to guide the study:

- H01 There is no significant relationship between principals' decision-making skills and teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North-East Senatorial District.
- H02 There is no significant relationship between principals' communication skills and teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North-East Senatorial District.

Review of Related Literature

The principal is the administrative head of the school, charged with overseeing daily operations, managing staff, communicating goals and ensuring the smooth running of the institution. Ibay and Pa-alisbo (2020) described managerial skills as the knowledge and ability of individuals in managerial positions to carry out specific management tasks, with skills that are developed through training and practical experience. Because these skills establish the conditions under which quality instruction and a positive learning culture can thrive, they are considered essential in any organisation (Tamhane & Ganesan, 2019). In the context of this study, principals' managerial skills refer to the capacity to plan, organise, coordinate, make decisions and communicate effectively in support of teachers' work towards school goals. Kruse et al. (2020) identify decision-making and communication, alongside other competencies, as central skills through which principals resolve the day-to-day challenges of school administration.

Decision-making involves identifying a problem and selecting the most appropriate course of action from available alternatives, and it lies at the core of effective school management (Obiekwe et al., 2020). Afolakemi and Adekemi (2023) describe decision-making as one of the key responsibilities of school administrators, covering both curricula and non-curricula matters. Principals are therefore expected to make timely, informed and strategic decisions on teaching, resource allocation and conflict resolution. Involving teachers in this process tends to build shared ownership of school goals and greater motivation, whereas poor decision-making skills are linked to low morale and mistrust.

Principals may adopt different approaches to decision-making, ranging from autocratic styles, in which decisions are made with little staff input, to more participatory or democratic approaches, in which staff share in decision-making through meetings and consultation (Northouse, 2013). Where decisions are made autocratically, teachers are more likely to feel excluded, whereas participatory decision-making tends to strengthen teachers' commitment and job performance.

Empirical evidence supports the link between principals' decision-making skills and teachers' job performance. Thus Offor and Obiekwe (2024), in a correlational study of 703 teachers in Anambra State, found a high and significant relationship between principals' participatory decision-making behaviour and teachers' job performance, and recommended that principals should hold regular meetings to involve teachers in key decisions. Similarly, Yambo (2022) found that principals' decision-making skills influenced academic outcomes in teacher training colleges in Nyanza Region, Kenya, and recommended continuous training for principals in decision-making. Wordah and Ekwesianya (2020) likewise reported a moderate and significant positive relationship between principalship decision-making and teachers' job performance among 1,392 respondents in



Rivers State, recommending that principals adopt participatory decision-making styles to boost teachers' morale and service delivery.

Communication is the process through which principals transmit information, ideas and instructions to staff, providing a sense of direction as to what is expected of them (Goddy-Mkpa, 2020). The author stated further that it may flow downward from principal to staff or upward as feedback from staff to principal, and effective communication is achieved when ideas, feelings and instructions are transmitted and received in a manner that produces the desired response. Bwoi (2026) further describes communication as a transactional process that allows participants to relate to and manage their environment by exchanging ideas and reinforcing attitudes and behaviours. Clear and open communication reduces conflict, encourages collaboration and helps principals articulate expectations and provide feedback, all of which contribute to a positive work environment and improved teachers' job performance.

Ikpe and Ekanem (2020), in a study of 1,152 teachers across 63 public secondary schools in Eket Senatorial District Akwa Ibom, found a significant relationship between administrators' communication ability and effective school management, encompassing planning, decision-making, supervision and control. This finding underscores the extent to which principals' communication skills underpin effective management and ultimately, teachers' job performance.

Research Method

This study adopted a correlational research design, considered appropriate for identifying and measuring the relationship between the independent and dependent variables.

The study was conducted in Akwa Ibom North-East Senatorial District, which comprises nine Local Government Areas: Ibiono Ibom, Itu, Uyo, Ibesikpo Asutan, Nsit Atai, Nsit Ibom, Etinan, Uruan and Nsit Ubium. The population consisted of 95 principals and 3,900 teachers drawn from ninety-five public secondary schools in the district (State Secondary Education Board, Akwa Ibom State, 2024/2025), giving a total population of 3,995. Using the Taro Yamane formula, a sample of 364 respondents was drawn through proportional stratified random sampling, with the population divided into principal and teacher strata.

The instrument for data collection was a researcher-developed questionnaire titled "Principals' Managerial Skills and Teachers' Job Performance Questionnaire (PMSTJQP)", made up of two sections. The first section elicited demographic information while the second addressed the two research questions on principals' managerial skills and teachers' job performance. Items on principals' managerial skills were rated on a 4-point scale (Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree), while items on teachers' job performance were rated on a 4-point frequency scale (All the Time, Most of the Time, Some of the Time, Not at All). The instrument was validated by three research experts in the Department of Business Education and the Department of Curriculum Studies, Educational Management and Planning, University of Uyo. A trial administration to 30 students outside the study sample area was analysed using Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.78.

Following due permission from school authorities, the researcher assisted by trained research assistants, administered and retrieved the questionnaires directly from respondents. Of the 364 copies distributed, 350 were correctly completed and used for analysis, representing an attrition rate of 14 copies. Data were analysed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) to answer the research questions and test the null hypotheses at the .05 level of significance.



Therefore the null hypothesis was rejected where the calculated r-value exceeded the critical r-value, and retained otherwise.

Results

Research Question 1

Table 1: Pearson Product Moment Correlation for the Relationship between Decision making skills and Teachers' Job Performance N=350

Variable	$\sum X$ $\sum Y$	$\sum X^2$ $\sum Y^2$	$\sum xy$	r-cal	Remark
Decision making skills (X)	7567	164527			
			236743	.726	strong relationship
Teachers' job performance (Y)	10905	342501			

The entries in Table 1 reveal the type and strength of relationship between principals' decision-making skills and teachers' job performance. The results reveal that the calculated r-value of .726 is strong in nature. Therefore, the result means that there is a strong and positive relationship between principals' decision-making skills and teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North-East Senatorial District.

Research Question 2

Table 2: Pearson's Product Moment Correlation for the relationship between Communication skills and teachers' job performance

Table 2: Pearson Product Moment Correlation for the Relationship between Communication skills and Teachers' Job Performance N=350

Variable	$\sum X$ $\sum Y$	$\sum X^2$ $\sum Y^2$	$\sum xy$	r-cal	Remark
Communication skills (X)	7465	160379			
			233539	.660	strong relationship
Teachers' job performance (Y)	10905	342501			

The entries in Table 2 reveals the type and strength of relationship between principal Communication skills and teachers' job performance. The results reveal that the calculated r-value of .660 is strong in nature, therefore, the result means that there is a strong and positive relationship between principals' Communication skills and teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North-East Senatorial District.

Hypothesis 1

Table 3: Pearson Product Moment Correlation Analysis for the relationship between principals' decision-making skills and teachers' job performance



Table 3: Pearson Product Moment Correlation for the Relationship between Decision-making Skills and Teachers' Job Performance N=350

Variable	$\sum X$ $\sum Y$	$\sum X^2$ $\sum Y^2$	$\sum xy$	r-cal	r-Crit	Remark
Decision-making skills (X)	7567	164527				
			236743	.726	.000	strong relationship
Teachers' job performance (Y)	10905	342501				

* = Significant at $P < 0.05$, $df = 350$.

The entries in Table 3 revealed that the r-value of .726 with its corresponding p-value of .000 is less than 0.05 level of significance with 350 degrees of freedom. The result is significant. Therefore, the null hypothesis which claims that "there is no significant relationship between decision making skills and teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North-East senatorial District" is rejected. This result implies that there is a significant relationship between the decision-making skills and teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North-East Senatorial District.

Hypothesis 2

Table 4: Pearson's Product Moment Correlation for the relationship between communication skills and teachers' job performance N=350

Table 2: Pearson Product Moment Correlation for the Relationship between Communication skills and Teachers' Job Performance N=350

Variable	$\sum X$ $\sum Y$	$\sum X^2$ $\sum Y^2$	$\sum xy$	r-cal	Remark
Communication skills (X)	7465	160379			
			233539	.660	strong relationship
Teachers' job performance (Y)	10905	342501			

* = Significant at $P < 0.05$, $df = 350$.

The entries in Table 4 revealed the r-value of .660 with its corresponding P-value of .000 is less than the 0.05 level of significance with 350 degrees of freedom. The result is significant. Therefore, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significance relationship between principals' communication skills and teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North-East Senatorial District is rejected. This result implies that there is a significant relationship between communication skills and teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North-East Senatorial District.

Findings

Based on the analysis of data, the following findings emerged:

1. There is a strong, positive and statistically significant relationship between principals' decision-making skills and teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North-East Senatorial District.



2. There is a strong, positive and statistically significant relationship between principals' communication skills and teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North-East Senatorial District.

Discussion of Findings

The findings that a strong, positive relationship exists between principals' decision-making skills and teachers' job performance affirms that it is through sound decision-making that the school system is guided towards its established objectives. This supports Afolakemi and Adekemi's (2023) view that decision-making is among the key responsibilities of school administrators, spanning both curricula and non-curricula matters. Principals who make timely decisions on teaching, resource allocation and conflict resolution, and who involve teachers in the process, tend to build shared ownership of school goals and stronger staff motivation.

The findings that communication skills are similarly related to teachers' job performance affirms the centrality of communication in transmitting ideas, instructions and direction within the school. This aligns with Goddy-Mkpa's (2020) view that communication skills are essential for clarity, transparency and mutual understanding between principals and teachers. Clear, open communication reduces conflict encourages collaboration and sustains a positive work environment, all of which support optimal teachers' job performance.

Conclusion

The findings show that principals' decision-making and communication skills bear a strong, positive and statistically significant relationship with teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North-East Senatorial District. Principals who adopt participatory and strategic decision-making strengthen resource allocation and give teachers a sense of ownership over school goals, which in turn boosts morale, innovation and accountability. Principals whose communication is clear, timely and reciprocal reduce misunderstanding among staff and build stronger principal-teacher relationships that support better job performance. Improving these two managerial skills should therefore be treated as a priority in efforts to raise teachers' job performance in the district.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are made:

1. Principals should adopt participatory decision-making practices, actively involving teachers in decisions on curriculum implementation, resource allocation and conflict resolution, to strengthen ownership of school goals and improve job performance.
2. Principals should strengthen open, two-way communication with teachers, ensuring that school policies, programmes and expectations are clearly and promptly communicated, to build trust and enhance teamwork toward established objectives.
3. State Secondary Education Boards should organise regular training and retraining programmes for principals on decision-making and communication skills, given their demonstrated relationship with teachers' job performance.

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