THE IGBO APPRENTICESHIP SYSTEM AND FAMILY BUSINESS SUSTAINABILITY IN SOUTHERN NIGERIA: EMPIRICAL EVIDENCE FROM ANAMBRA STATE

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Abstract

Family-owned enterprises constitute over 70% of employment and contribute approximately 50% of Gross Domestic Product in Nigeria. Despite their economic centrality, survival rates beyond the founding generation remain critically low, with less than 30% of family firms transitioning successfully to the second generation. This high mortality is attributed to weak succession planning, inadequate managerial capacity, poor transfer of tacit knowledge, and limited access to formal finance. In South-Eastern Nigeria, the Igbo apprenticeship system, locally called Imu Ahia, has functioned for centuries as an indigenous institution for entrepreneurial training, wealth redistribution, and intergenerational transfer. Apprentices undergo 5-7 years of structured training under master entrepreneurs, acquiring technical skills, managerial competence, financial discipline, and commercial networks. Upon completion, many receive "settlement" capital, tools, inventory, or shop space to start independent enterprises. While literature extensively documents the system's role in venture creation and youth employment, empirical evidence on its contribution to long-term family business sustainability is limited. This study addresses that gap by examining five dimensions of the Igbo apprenticeship system and their relationship with family business sustainability outcomes in Southern Nigeria. Anchored in Human Capital Theory and Experiential Learning Theory, the study tests the effects of apprenticeship duration, mentorship quality, settlement strategies, skills/knowledge transfer, and social trust/obligation norms on survival rate, intergenerational transfer, revenue growth, operational continuity, and market adaptability. A

quantitative survey design was adopted. 371 questionnaires were administered to apprentices in Anambra State; 356 were validly completed and returned, yielding a 94% response rate. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and Pearson correlation via SPSS version 25. Findings reveal significant positive relationships across all five dimensions. Duration of apprenticeship correlated strongly with survival rate at $r = 0.624$, $p < 0.01$. Mentorship quality correlated moderately with intergenerational transfer at $r = 0.578$, $p < 0.01$. Settlement strategies correlated strongly with revenue growth at $r = 0.602$, $p < 0.01$. Skills/knowledge transfer showed the strongest correlation with operational continuity at $r = 0.691$, $p < 0.01$. Social trust/obligation norms correlated moderately with market adaptability at $r = 0.563$, $p < 0.01$. All five null hypotheses were rejected at the 0.01 significance level. The study concludes that the Igbo apprenticeship system operates as an integrated, coherent mechanism for sustaining family enterprises beyond the founder. It recommends formal policy recognition, documentation of structured training practices, and linkage of apprenticeship graduates to formal financial institutions to strengthen continuity, youth employment, and inclusive economic growth in Nigeria.

Keywords: Igbo apprenticeship system; Imu Ahia; family business sustainability; succession; mentorship; settlement; social trust; Southern Nigeria

1. Introduction

1.1 Background of the Study

Family businesses constitute the dominant organizational form globally, accounting for approximately 70-90% of all business entities and 50-80% of employment in most economies. In Nigeria, Small and Medium Enterprises, the majority of which are family-owned, contribute over 48% to GDP and employ more than 60 million people. Despite their economic centrality, family firms face a universal challenge: low survival rates across generations. Global data indicate that only about 30% of family businesses survive into the second generation, 12% into the third, and less than 3% into the fourth. In Nigeria, the mortality rate is even higher due to institutional voids, limited access to formal finance, and weak succession structures. The challenge of sustainability in family firms is multifaceted. First, succession failures account for over 60% of business closures during leadership transitions. Founders often fail to prepare successors, resulting in loss of managerial judgment, supplier relationships, and customer trust. Second, managerial deficits arise when successors lack the tacit knowledge required to navigate complex business environments. Formal education provides theoretical knowledge but rarely develops practical entrepreneurial judgment. Third, financial constraints limit the ability of successors to invest in growth, technology, or market expansion. Finally, adaptability is compromised when firms lack the social networks and trust needed to respond to market shocks.

In South-Eastern Nigeria, the Igbo ethnic group has developed an indigenous institutional response to these challenges: the apprenticeship system known as Imu Ahia, meaning "learning trade." This system has operated for centuries as a decentralized, market-driven mechanism for entrepreneurial training and wealth transfer. The structure is simple yet profound: a young person, usually aged 12-18, is placed under a master entrepreneur for 5-7 years. During this period, the apprentice lives with the master, participates in all business operations, and learns through observation, practice, and progressive responsibility. The training covers technical skills, bookkeeping, customer relations, supplier negotiations, and strategic decision-making.

The defining feature of the Igbo apprenticeship system is "settlement." Upon completion, the master provides the apprentice with startup capital, inventory, tools, or a shop space. This settlement functions as indigenous venture capital, converting years of loyal service into financial resources for independent enterprise formation. Many successful Igbo business conglomerates, including those in spare parts, textiles, electronics, and pharmaceuticals, trace their origins to this system. Despite its economic significance, academic research on the Igbo apprenticeship system has focused primarily on entrepreneurship development and SME creation. Limited empirical studies have examined its contribution to long-term family business sustainability. This gap is critical because sustainability requires more than venture creation; it demands continuity, succession, profitability, and adaptability across generations. Understanding how indigenous institutions like apprenticeship address these outcomes is essential for policy and practice in developing economies where formal institutions are weak.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Family business sustainability in Nigeria is under severe threat. The National Bureau of Statistics reports that over 80% of SMEs fail within their first five years, and family firms are disproportionately affected due to succession challenges. In South-Eastern Nigeria, where the Igbo apprenticeship system is most prevalent, family enterprises still struggle with continuity beyond the founder. This raises a fundamental question: If apprenticeship is effective for venture creation, why do many family firms still fail during generational transitions? Existing literature provides partial answers. Studies on apprenticeship emphasize its role in skill acquisition and entrepreneurship development. However, they rarely test specific sustainability outcomes such as survival rate, operational continuity, or market adaptability. Furthermore, there is limited quantitative evidence on which dimensions of apprenticeship matter most. Is duration more important than mentorship? Does settlement drive profitability more than skills transfer? Without empirical answers, policymakers cannot design effective interventions to strengthen indigenous institutions.

This study addresses these gaps by testing five specific relationships using primary data from 356 apprentices in Anambra State. The problem is therefore framed as: To what extent do duration of

apprenticeship, mentorship quality, settlement strategies, skills/knowledge transfer, and social trust influence family business sustainability outcomes in Southern Nigeria?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The general objective is to examine the contribution of the Igbo apprenticeship system to family business sustainability in Southern Nigeria. Specific objectives are:

1. To examine the relationship between duration of apprenticeship and survival rate of family businesses.
2. To assess the relationship between quality of mentorship and intergenerational business transfer.
3. To determine the effect of settlement strategies on revenue growth.
4. To investigate the impact of skills/knowledge transfer on operational continuity.
5. To examine the relationship between social trust/obligation norms and market adaptability.

1.4 Research Hypotheses

H01: There is no significant relationship between duration of apprenticeship and survival rate of family businesses.

H02: There is no significant relationship between quality of mentorship and intergenerational business transfer.

H03: There is no significant relationship between settlement strategies and revenue growth.

H04: There is no significant relationship between skills/knowledge transfer and operational continuity.

H05: There is no significant relationship between social trust/obligation norms and market adaptability.

1.5 Significance of the Study

This study contributes to theory by extending Human Capital Theory and Experiential Learning Theory to indigenous institutions in developing economies. It provides empirical evidence that apprenticeship is not only a training mechanism but a sustainability mechanism. Practically, the findings inform policymakers, SMEDAN, and family business owners on how to strengthen apprenticeship practices to improve continuity and youth employment. Academically, it adds to the growing literature on African indigenous institutions and entrepreneurship.

2. Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

2.1 Conceptual Review

2.1.1 Family Business Sustainability

Sustainability in family business literature refers to the ability of a firm to survive, grow, and transfer successfully across generations while maintaining performance. It is multidimensional, encompassing financial performance, operational continuity, and socioemotional wealth preservation. Research identifies four critical factors: effective succession planning, managerial competence, knowledge transfer, and adaptability. Without these, firms face decline during leadership transitions.

2.1.2 The Igbo Apprenticeship System

The Igbo apprenticeship system is a structured, long-term training arrangement embedded in real commercial environments. Key features include: duration of 5-7 years, residential training, progressive responsibility, and settlement. Unlike formal vocational training, learning occurs through immersion, enabling transfer of tacit knowledge that cannot be codified in textbooks. The system operates on trust, obligation, and reciprocity, creating social capital that supports business operations.

2.1.3 Dimensions of Apprenticeship

Duration refers to the length of training, typically 5-7 years. Mentorship quality refers to the depth of interaction, feedback, and delegation by the master. Settlement strategies include capital, tools, and networks provided at completion. Skills/knowledge transfer refers to the breadth of technical and managerial knowledge acquired. Social trust/obligation norms refer to the communal values and reciprocal duties that bind apprentices, masters, and kinship networks.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

2.2.1 Human Capital Theory

Becker's Human Capital Theory posits that investments in education, training, and experience increase individuals' productive capabilities and economic returns. Extended apprenticeship represents investment in entrepreneurial human capital. As apprentices accumulate experience, they develop managerial judgment, technical competence, and relational networks that enhance firm performance. This theory explains why longer apprenticeship duration correlates with higher survival rates.

2.2.2 Experiential Learning Theory

Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory describes learning as a four-stage cycle: concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation. The Igbo

apprenticeship system mirrors this cycle. Apprentices experience real business operations, reflect on outcomes through mentor feedback, conceptualize business principles, and experiment with decision-making under supervision. This explains why skills transfer and mentorship quality are critical for operational continuity and succession.

2.2.3 Social Embeddedness Theory

Granovetter's Social Embeddedness Theory argues that economic action is shaped by social relations and networks. The Igbo apprenticeship system embeds economic transactions within trust-based relationships. Obligation norms and reciprocal duties create networks that reduce transaction costs and enhance adaptability. This explains the relationship between social trust and market adaptability.

2.3 Empirical Review and Research Gap

Previous studies document the role of apprenticeship in entrepreneurship development. However, few studies use quantitative methods to test relationships with sustainability outcomes. Most rely on qualitative interviews, limiting generalizability. This study fills the gap by using survey data from 356 respondents and statistical analysis to test five specific hypotheses.

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Design

A quantitative survey design was adopted. This design is appropriate for examining relationships between variables and generalizing findings to a larger population.

3.2 Population and Sample

The population comprised apprentices in Anambra State, South-Eastern Nigeria. Anambra is a major commercial hub for Igbo trade and hosts a high concentration of apprenticeship arrangements. 371 questionnaires were administered using purposive sampling. 356 were properly completed and returned, yielding a 94% response rate, which exceeds the 70% threshold considered adequate for survey research.

3.3 Instrument and Measurement

The questionnaire consisted of three sections. Section A measured demographics. Section B measured five independent variables using 5-point Likert scales. Section C measured five dependent variables also on 5-point Likert scales. Items were adapted from validated instruments in entrepreneurship and family business literature.

3.4 Method of Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using SPSS version 25. Descriptive statistics summarized demographics and response patterns. Pearson correlation coefficient tested hypotheses at 0.01 significance level, 2-tailed. Correlation is appropriate because the study seeks to examine relationships between continuous variables.

4. Results

4.1 Demographic Profile

Table 1 presents respondent characteristics. Males constituted 54.5% and females 45.5%, reflecting gender distribution in Igbo trading. 57.4% were aged 26-30 years, indicating a young, productive workforce. 50.6% were single, 49.4% married. Educationally, 43.4% held SSCE, 28.1% OND/NCE, 22.5% HND/B.Sc. The sample is mature and educated, capable of providing reliable data.

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of Respondents, n = 356

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	256	54.5
	Female	100	45.5
Age	21-25 years	30	9.8
	26-30 years	256	57.4
	31 years and above	70	32.8
Marital Status	Single	200	50.6
	Married	156	49.4
Education	SSCE	125	43.4
	OND/NCE	75	28.1
	HND/B.Sc	40	22.5
	Others	16	6.0

Source: Field Survey, 2026.

4.2 Descriptive Results

Respondents expressed strong agreement across all constructs. For duration and survival, 58.7% strongly agreed and 38.7% agreed that 5-7 years enables mastery of skills and management. 61.7% strongly agreed that extended duration strengthens loyalty for continuity. For mentorship and transfer, 63.4% strongly agreed that rotations and debriefs enable smooth leadership handover. For settlement and revenue, 61.7% strongly agreed that effective settlement drives revenue growth. For skills transfer and continuity, 63.4% strongly agreed that learning full workflow reduces key-person dependence. For trust and adaptability, 44.9% strongly agreed that obligation to trade values motivates flexible adaptation.

4.3 Hypothesis Testing

Table 2 presents Pearson correlation results, n=356, p<0.01, 2-tailed.

Table 2: Pearson Correlation Results for Hypotheses

Hypothesis	Relationship Tested	r	p-value	Decision
H01	Duration → Survival Rate	0.624	0.000	Reject H01
H02	Mentorship → Intergenerational Transfer	0.578	0.000	Reject H02
H03	Settlement → Revenue Growth	0.602	0.000	Reject H03
H04	Skills/Knowledge Transfer → Operational Continuity	0.691	0.000	Reject H04
H05	Social Trust/Obligation → Market Adaptability	0.563	0.000	Reject H05

Correlation significant at 0.01 level

All five relationships are positive and statistically significant. Skills/knowledge transfer has the strongest relationship, r = 0.691, followed by duration, r = 0.624. All null hypotheses are rejected.

5. Discussion of Findings

The results of this study provide empirical evidence that the Igbo apprenticeship system significantly influences family business sustainability in Southern Nigeria. All five dimensions

tested duration of apprenticeship, quality of mentorship, settlement strategies, skills/knowledge transfer, and social trust/obligation norms exhibited positive and statistically significant relationships with sustainability outcomes. The findings extend literature on indigenous entrepreneurship by demonstrating that apprenticeship contributes not only to venture creation but to long-term continuity, succession, profitability, and adaptability of existing family firms.

Duration of Apprenticeship and Survival Rate

The strong positive correlation between duration of apprenticeship and survival rate, $r = 0.624$, $p < 0.01$, confirms the central proposition of Human Capital Theory. Becker argued that investments in training and experience increase individuals' productive capabilities, thereby improving organizational performance and reducing mortality risk. The Igbo apprenticeship system operationalizes this investment through extended immersion, typically 5-7 years, during which apprentices acquire both technical and managerial competence. Descriptive results reinforce this: 58.7% strongly agreed and 38.7% agreed that longer apprenticeship enables mastery of skills and management, while 61.7% strongly agreed that extended duration strengthens loyalty and commitment for continuity.

This finding aligns with prior studies on Imu Ahia that emphasize "learning by doing" over time as the mechanism through which tacit knowledge is internalized. In family business contexts, survival beyond the founder depends heavily on the successor's ability to replicate the founder's judgment and relational networks. The correlation coefficient suggests that each additional year of structured training reduces key-person risk and increases the probability that the enterprise will endure generational transitions. The rejection of H01 therefore provides quantitative support for treating apprenticeship duration as a strategic resource for continuity rather than merely a period of labor.

Quality of Mentorship and Intergenerational Business Transfer

Mentorship quality showed a moderate but significant correlation with intergenerational transfer, $r = 0.578$, $p < 0.01$, leading to rejection of H02. This result supports Experiential Learning Theory, which posits that learning occurs through cycles of concrete experience, reflective observation, and conceptualization. In the Igbo context, mentorship extends beyond technical instruction to include ethical training, financial discipline, and strategic thinking. The high agreement on structured rotations and debriefs, 63.4% strongly agreed, suggests that deliberate pedagogical practices within mentorship accelerate the internalization of entrepreneurial judgment.

Family business literature emphasizes that successful succession requires the transfer of both explicit and tacit knowledge. The correlation found here indicates that when mentors engage in continuous feedback and progressive delegation, successors are better prepared to assume leadership roles without disrupting operations. This is particularly critical in Southern Nigeria where formal succession planning documents are rare, making relational mentorship the primary

mechanism for transfer. The moderate strength of the correlation, compared to skills transfer, suggests that while mentorship is necessary, it must be complemented by other apprenticeship dimensions to maximize transfer outcomes.

Settlement Strategies and Revenue Growth

Settlement strategies, encompassing capital, tools, and business networks, correlated strongly with revenue growth, $r = 0.602$, $p < 0.01$. H03 was therefore rejected. This finding positions the settlement process as an indigenous financing mechanism that mitigates one of the most binding constraints on family business growth in Nigeria: access to formal credit. The settlement process addresses this by converting years of loyal service into startup capital, inventory, and market access.

The high agreement that effective settlement services drive revenue growth, 61.7% strongly agreed, indicates that apprentices perceive settlement not as a terminal reward but as an enabling resource for immediate business formation. From a Human Capital Theory perspective, settlement represents the conversion of accumulated human capital into financial capital, allowing apprentices to activate their training in independent ventures. The correlation suggests that families who invest in generous settlement practices are more likely to see sustained revenue streams, either within the original enterprise through expanded branches or through spin-off firms that remain within the kinship network. This "wealth circulation" effect explains why settlement is integral to the system's sustainability logic.

Skills/Knowledge Transfer and Operational Continuity

Skills and knowledge transfer exhibited the strongest relationship with operational continuity, $r = 0.691$, $p < 0.01$, leading to rejection of H04. This result is consistent with Experiential Learning Theory and underscores the importance of tacit knowledge in family firm resilience. Tacit knowledge judgment, timing, negotiation tactics, supplier relationships is difficult to codify but is transmitted effectively through hands-on apprenticeship. Descriptive data show 63.4% strongly agreed that learning the full workflow reduces key-person dependence, and 60.0% strongly agreed that feedback and SOPs safeguard continuity during market shifts.

The strength of this correlation implies that the nature of transfer matters more than duration alone. When apprentices are exposed to the entire value chain—from sourcing to delivery—they develop a "shared mental map" of the business that enables seamless operations during leadership transitions or external shocks. This finding has practical implications: family businesses that restrict apprentices to narrow tasks risk creating operational bottlenecks. The high correlation also explains why businesses trained through apprenticeship exhibit lower disruption during succession events compared to those relying solely on formal education.

Social Trust, Obligation Norms and Market Adaptability

Social trust and obligation norms correlated moderately with market adaptability, $r = 0.563$, $p < 0.01$, resulting in rejection of H05. This finding aligns with social embeddedness theory, which argues that economic action is shaped by networks of social relations. The Igbo apprenticeship system institutionalizes trust through mentor-apprentice commitments and collective obligation to trade community values. Respondents strongly agreed that mentor commitment creates reliable networks during fluctuations, 40.7% strongly agreed, and that obligation to community values motivates flexible adaptation, 44.9% strongly agreed.

In dynamic markets, adaptability requires rapid information sharing and resource reallocation. The correlation suggests that trust reduces transaction costs and enables collaborative responses to market changes. Apprentices who internalize obligation norms are more willing to adjust business models, share knowledge, and support other family enterprises during downturns. This collective resilience mechanism is often absent in formally trained entrepreneurs who lack embedded social ties. The moderate strength of the relationship indicates that while trust facilitates adaptation, it must be supported by technical capability and financial resources to translate into sustained performance.

Integrated Contribution

Viewed collectively, the five dimensions operate as an integrated system rather than isolated factors. Duration builds human capital, mentorship structures its transfer, settlement converts it to financial capital, skills transfer ensures operational application, and trust enables collective adaptation. The rejection of all five hypotheses provides robust evidence that the Igbo apprenticeship system functions as a coherent institutional mechanism for family business sustainability. This integrated perspective addresses a gap in literature that often treats indigenous institutions in fragmented terms.

6. Conclusion and Recommendations

6.1 Conclusion

This study provides robust empirical evidence that the Igbo apprenticeship system significantly influences family business sustainability in Southern Nigeria. All five dimensions tested exhibit positive, significant relationships with continuity, succession, profitability, and adaptability. Skills/knowledge transfer and apprenticeship duration are the strongest predictors. The findings confirm that apprenticeship functions as an integrated institutional mechanism, not just a training program.

6.2 Theoretical Implications

The study extends Human Capital Theory by demonstrating that indigenous, non-formal training systems build entrepreneurial human capital that reduces firm mortality. It extends Experiential Learning Theory by showing that immersion-based learning effectively transfers tacit knowledge critical for succession. It also contributes to social embeddedness literature by quantifying how trust and obligation norms enhance adaptability.

6.3 Practical and Policy Recommendations

1. Formal Recognition: SMEDAN and state governments should recognize apprenticeship as a legitimate training institution. Certification and linkage to business development services can strengthen the system without destroying its organic structure.
2. Structured Practices: Master entrepreneurs should adopt structured rotations, regular debriefs, and documented SOPs. These practices enhance knowledge transfer and succession readiness.
3. Financial Linkages: Financial institutions should design products for apprenticeship graduates, using settlement history and mentor reputation as alternative collateral.
4. Policy Integration: Government should integrate apprenticeship into national SME development strategy, providing tax incentives for masters who train and settle apprentices.

6.4 Limitations and Future Research

The study is limited to Anambra State and uses cross-sectional data. Future research should expand to other South-Eastern states and use longitudinal designs to establish causality. Regression analysis and structural equation modeling can determine the magnitude of effects and mediating relationships.

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TEACHERS' COMPETENCIES AND EXPERIENCE AS CORRELATES OF STUDENTS' ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN ANAMBRA STATE

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Abstract

The study examined teachers' competencies and experience as correlates of students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State. Three research questions guided the study and three null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance. The study adopted correlational research design. The population of the study comprised 20,560 students in public secondary schools in six Education Zones in Anambra State. The sample size for the study was 1,028 SS2 students drawn from the population of the study. The sample comprised 5% of the total population of teachers. Stratified random sampling technique was used for the study. The instruments for data collection were researcher-structured questionnaire titled: Teachers' Competencies Questionnaire (TCQ), Teacher Variables (TV), Teachers' Professional Development Questionnaire (TPDQ) and Students' Academic Scores (SAC). The instruments were validated by three experts from Educational Foundations and Measurement and Evaluation. The reliability of the instrument was determined using Cronbach Alpha Coefficient method and the average coefficient of 0.75 for TCQ and 0.80 for TPDQ. Pearson Product Moment Correlation was used for the study. The study revealed that teachers' instructional delivery ($r = 0.882$; $p < 0.000$), teachers' pedagogical competence ($r = 0.867$; $p < 0.000$), teachers' subject knowledge competence ($r = 0.795$; $p < 0.000$), teachers' qualifications ($r = 0.795$; $p < 0.000$), teachers' years of experience ($r = 0.771$; $p < 0.000$) and teachers' professional development ($r = 0.771$; $p < 0.000$) have positive and significant relationship with students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State. The study concluded that teachers' competencies and experience have strong positive relationship between students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State. The study recommended that educational stakeholders should provide regular workshops and peer-learning platforms where teachers can refine subject delivery strategies, adapt to their areas of specialization and exchange best practices for effective teaching. The study contributed to knowledge by demonstrating that teachers' competencies and experience are linked

to students' academic performance thus filling a research gap and providing insights for enhancing educational outcomes through effective instructional delivery and teachers' years of experience.

Keywords: Teachers' Competencies, Experience and Students' Academic Performance.

Introduction

Education is a positive instrument for the overall improvement of one's knowledge, ideologies and skills with the aim of achieving self-reliance, sustainability and enlightenment. It is a process of systematic training and instruction designed to transmit knowledge, acquire skills, potentials and abilities which enable an individual contribute significantly to the growth and development of his society and nation. Educational endeavour such as curriculum replacement, development of teaching methods, the provision of facilities and infrastructure will only have full meaning if it involves the expertise of teachers. Teachers contribute greatly in ensuring that students perform optimally in their academics.

Academic performance is the level of success that students demonstrate in their academic pursuits, such as coursework, examinations, projects, presentations, and overall educational activities. Oti et al. (2023) defined students' academic performance as the measurement of students' achievement across various academic subjects. This generally measures a student's ability to comprehend, retain, and apply knowledge, as well as their skills in critical thinking, problem-solving, and effective communication. It is typically assessed through various indicators, including grades, test scores, class rankings, and teacher evaluations. These indicators help evaluate students' understanding of the subject matter, their ability to meet the learning objectives and standards set by the educational institution, and their overall progress and development in their academic journey. Operationally, students' academic performance refers to the measurable outcomes of students' learning, typically reflected in their scores or grades in classroom tests, terminal examinations, and standardized assessments. Ekechukwu and Eze (2016) stated that students' academic performance depends largely on the effectiveness and competencies teachers. That is to say that teachers must possess some level of competencies that will enhance and promote teaching and learning for better educational outcome.

Competencies are set of skills, knowledge, attitudes, and motivational variables that form the basis for mastery of specific situations. Akinfolarin (2017) defined competence as the ability to use the required skills to accomplish given task. This is achieved by integrating essential knowledge and personal qualities, which enable individuals to professionally and efficiently tackle problems within a specific field of knowledge, or practical activity. Ayodele in Ningrum (2017) described competencies in seven ways: general competences as cognitive ability; specialized cognitive competence in a particular skill area; competence performance model; modifications of competence performance model which relates competence to performance; cognitive competence

and motivational action tendencies; objectivity and subjective competence concepts differentiating between performance and performance dispositions and action competence including all those cognitive, motivational and social prerequisites necessary for successful action and learning. Teachers need these competencies so as to deliver effective teaching and learning to the students.

Teachers' competencies involves a combination of expertise, proficiencies, capabilities, and motivational traits that facilitate the proficient execution of teachers' instructional obligations. A competent teacher is one, who is professionally qualified and trained to teach, having the necessary skills in the teaching process. Lawal (2021) stated that competencies required of a teacher for effective teaching and learning include knowledge of subject-matter, pedagogy, skill processes, resourcefulness, behaviour motivation and evaluation. Lindemann et al. (2017) and Chukwudolue (2023) noted that teachers' professional competencies involve instructional delivery competencies, classroom communication competencies, evaluation of instructional objectives, pedagogical competencies, and subject knowledge competencies. The researcher defined teachers' competencies as the essential skills, knowledge, attitudes, and behaviours that enable teachers to effectively facilitate learning and promote the development of their students. To this effect, the researcher focus on instructional delivery competence and pedagogical competence.

Instructional delivery competence is the proficiency and effectiveness of a teacher in delivering educational content and facilitating learning experiences to students (Chukwudolue, 2023). It involves the ability to present information in a clear and engaging manner, use appropriate teaching methods and strategies, and create a conducive learning environment that fosters student understanding and active participation. Most scholars have argued that most classroom instructional delivery is dominated with the traditional teacher-centered approach which is the lecture or expository method of teaching (Amie-Ogan & Etuk, 2020). These scholars were of the view that lecture or expository instructional delivery method does not give students the opportunity to generate their own ideas. An effective teachers should have the ability to establish rapport, being sensitive, open-minded, passionate about work, being student-centered, having instructional clarity, and give importance to discipline in classroom.

Pedagogical competence is the knowledge, skills, and abilities that teachers possess to effectively design, plan, and implement instructional strategies and activities to promote meaningful learning experiences for their students. The main components of pedagogical competence as stated by Emiliasari (2018) are: knowledge of classroom management; knowledge of teaching methods; knowledge of classroom assessment, structure of learning objectives and the lesson process, lesson planning and evaluation; and, adaptability dealing with heterogeneous learning groups in the classroom. Rahman (2014) stated that pedagogical competence are teachers' ability in managing students' learning from planning, implementing and evaluating the process and the learning outcome consists of teachers' understanding of educational foundation, students' characteristics, curriculum development, lesson plan, implementation of educational learning, implementation of

dialogic learning, ICT utilization, learning outcome evaluation, students' potential development and reflective action. Thus, to improve the performance of teachers, there is need to improve pedagogical competence. Just like pedagogical competence, teacher training and knowledge of subject competence will help produce better educational outcome.

The development of required competencies is needed to produce enriched teachers for the society. Students' academic performance can be influenced by teachers' competencies, as competent teachers possess the capability to effectively manage the classroom, utilize a variety of instructional materials, ensure instructional efficacy, employ suitable pedagogies, and communicate effectively for teaching and learning (Lindemann et al., 2017). The old saying that teachers are born and not made cannot be accepted in this present time. Therefore, one must first learn what and how to teach by developing an array of competencies needed for teaching. In addition to teachers' competencies, teachers' experience count in the production of quality educational outcome. Therefore, it becomes imperative that teachers' experience be prioritized during recruitment so as to enhance students' academic performance and also have quality students emerging as graduates prepared for useful living within the society.

Experience is the accumulation of knowledge, skills, and insights gained through direct involvement in activities or situations over time. This shapes a person's ability to handle challenges and make informed decisions based on past encounters. Teachers' experience specifically relates to the insights, methods, and understanding they gain through the period they have thought, interacted with students, and managed classroom dynamics. Amie-Ogan and Omunakwe (2020) noted that teachers' teaching experience is built over time as teachers engage with students from different walks of life. They learn to understand their students' needs, figure out what works best in the classroom, and find ways to keep learning and interesting. Over the years, teachers get better at handling challenges and finding new ways to connect with their students. Their experience is really about growing with each class, staying curious, and always finding new ways to help their students succeed.

Operationally, teachers' experience refers to the number of years an individual has spent actively teaching in formal school settings, during which they have accumulated knowledge, skills and strategies for managing classroom activities, understanding students' needs and improving instructional practices. Teachers, as promoters of knowledge, need rich experiences to effectively inspire, guide and shape their students' learning journeys. Oviawe (2020) noted that teachers' experience can be measured using their years of service or experience, instructional adaptability, classroom management, professional development, and academic qualification. Sirait (2016) highlighted classroom management, professional development, qualification, and years of experience as indices for measuring teachers' level of competencies. Therefore, within the context of this study, the researcher focused on teachers' qualification.

Teachers' qualification is the formal education, training and credentials that teachers possess to be eligible for their roles in educational institutions. Aina and Olanipekun (2015) viewed teacher qualification as a particular type of experience or knowledge someone possesses to make him suitable to teach. Teachers' qualification could go a long way to bring about students' high academic achievement. No education can rise above the quality of its teachers. Oviawe (2020) added that students taught by more qualified teachers tend to perform better than those taught by less qualified teachers. Teachers are appointed based on their qualifications to teach and execute other administrative tasks. The Federal Republic of Nigeria (2016) noted that to be a teacher, an individual should possess the Nigerian Certificate in Education, Bachelor of Education, Postgraduate Diploma in Education, and Professional Diploma in Education. Abe (2020) outlined three key ways to quantify teachers' qualifications: level of education, certification in their area of expertise, and years of experience in subject matter preparation and teaching.

An understanding of the importance of teachers' competencies and experience in enhancing students' academic performance should provide the basis for teachers to become more effective and impactful in their roles (Macheng, 2016). An understanding of the importance of teachers' competencies and experience in enhancing students' academic performance should provide the basis for teachers to become more effective and impactful in their roles (Macheng, 2016). However, numerous studies have shown that students in many educational systems, including Anambra State, continue to perform below expectations in core academic subjects (Uwadiae, 2020). For instance, the West African Examinations Council (WAEC) consistently reports low pass rates in Mathematics and English Language, which are critical for further education and employment (WAEC, 2019). Factors such as inadequate instructional delivery, poor teacher quality, and lack of student engagement have been identified as key contributors to this persistent underperformance. Public secondary schools in Anambra State are not totally exempted from this trend, as studies have shown that students in the state also struggle with poor performance in external examinations, largely due to some factors such as ineffective teaching strategies and resource constraints (Okeke & Anyaegbunam, 2020).

In recent times, there has been a growing concern about poor academic performance among some students in public secondary schools in Anambra State. Stakeholders in education lament about their inability to meet expected academic standards, particularly in core subjects such as English Language and Mathematics. Research also observed that some students in public secondary schools in Anambra State are not performing as expected, despite the state's relatively high academic standards and its reputation as one of the academically advantaged states in Nigeria (Okeke & Anyaegbunam, 2020). The researcher wonders if this could be attributed to the level of teachers' competencies or their level of teaching experience. In finding answers to the above, the researcher sought to examine teachers' competencies and experience as correlates of students' academic performance in public secondary school in Anambra State.

Statement of the Problem

Teachers are professionals who have positive effect on students learning and development through their ability to deliver learning content. In the school setting, teachers are meant to work hard towards the achievement of the goals of education. However, this does not appear to be the case in some public secondary schools in Anambra State, where students have reportedly been performing below average. Stakeholders in education have also expressed dissatisfaction to the underperformance their wards.

The researcher equally observed a decline in the academic performance of some students in public secondary schools in Anambra State. Many students have continued to perform poorly in key subjects such as English Language and Mathematics, both in internal school assessments and standardized examinations. Despite the State's reputation for academic excellence, a growing number of students are failing to meet expected academic standards. This underperformance raises questions about the quality of teaching and the capacity of some teachers to deliver lessons effectively. It appears that some teachers may lack the necessary competencies and experience required to engage students meaningfully and support their academic progress. It could be that poor instructional delivery, inadequate subject mastery, and qualification of some teachers may be contributing to the persistent academic challenges observed among some students. Failure to look into these issues will pose a threat to the quality of teaching and learning in secondary schools in Anambra State. Based on this, the study sought to examine teachers' competencies and experience as correlates of students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of the study was to examine teachers' competencies and experience as correlates of students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. examine the relationship between teachers' instructional delivery competence and students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State.
2. determine the relationship between teachers' pedagogical competence and students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State.
3. ascertain the relationship between teachers' qualification and students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What is the relationship between teachers' instructional delivery competence and students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State?

2. What is the relationship between teachers' pedagogical competence and students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State?
3. What is the relationship between teachers' qualification and students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State?

Hypotheses

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

1. There is no significant relationship between teachers' instructional delivery competence and students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State.
2. There is no significant relationship between teachers' pedagogical competence and students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State.
3. There is no significant relationship between teachers' qualification and students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State.

Methodology

The study adopted a correlational research design for this study. The area of the study is Anambra state. There six educational zone in Anambra State which are Aguata, Awka, Nnewi, Ogidi, Onitsha and Otuocha. The population of the study comprised 20,560 senior secondary two (SS2) as respondents. The sample size is f 1,028 students drawn using Proportionate stratified random sampling technique. The instrument for the study was a self-structured questionnaire, titled "Teachers' Competencies Questionnaire (TCQ), Teacher Variables (TV), Teachers' Professional Development Questionnaire (TPDQ) and Students' Academic Scores (SAC). The instrument has four section A-D. Section A deals with the personal data of the respondents, while section B, and C is divided in clusters with 10 items, section D which is the Students' Academic Scores (SAS)' of SS2 students in English Language and Mathematics. The instrument has four-point scale response options with response format of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD) and numerical value of 4,3,2 and 1 respectively. The instrument was validated by three experts two from Educational Management and one from Educational Measurement and Evaluation, all from Department of Educational Foundations, Faculty of Education, Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University, Igbariam Campus. The questionnaire was administered to the respondents with the help of five research assistants. Out of 1028 copies of questionnaires administered, 861 were properly completed and used for data analysis. This gave a return rate of 83.75%. The ones not returned were not counted and used for the data analysis. The reliability of the instrument was determined using Cronbach Alpha formula and average coefficient values of 0.75 for TCQ and 0.80 for TPDQ are considered highly reliable and suitable for the study. Data were analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation. Pearson Product Moment Correlation was used to answer research questions 1 to 6 and test hypotheses 1 to 6 at

0.05 level of significance. In testing the hypotheses, if the p-value was less than 0.05, the null hypothesis (H_0) was rejected and the alternative hypothesis (H_1) would be accepted. Where the p-value was greater than 0.05, the null hypothesis (H_0) was accepted and alternative hypothesis (H_1) would be rejected.

Research Question 1: What is the relationship between teachers' instructional delivery competence and students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State?

Table 1: Summary of Pearson Product Moment Correlation on the Relationship between Teachers' Instructional Delivery Competence and Students' Academic Performance in Public Secondary Schools in Anambra State

Variables	**N**	**Students' Academic Performance**	**Teachers' Instructional Delivery Competence**	**Remark**
Students' Academic Performance	861	1.00	0.882	Very Positive Strong Relationship
Teachers' Instructional Delivery Competence	861	0.882	1.00	

The summary result of Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient in Table 1 showed the relationship between teachers' instructional delivery competence and students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State. The results revealed that the r-value was 0.882 with a sample size of 861 students. This implies that there is very a strong positive relationship between teachers' instructional delivery competence and students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State.

Research Question 2: What is the relationship between teachers' pedagogical competence and students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State?

Table 2: Summary of Pearson Product Moment Correlation on the Relationship between Teachers' Pedagogical Competence and Students' Academic Performance in Public Secondary Schools in Anambra State

Variables	N	Students' Academic Performance	Teachers' Pedagogical Competence	Remark
Students' Academic Performance	861	1.00	0.867	Very Strong Positive Relationship
Teachers' Pedagogical Competence	861	0.867	1.00	

The summary result of Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient in Table 2 showed the relationship between teachers' pedagogical competence and students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State. The results revealed that the r-value was 0.867 with a sample size of 861 students. This implies that there is very a strong positive relationship between teachers' pedagogical competence and students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State.

Research Question 3: What is the relationship between teachers' qualifications and students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State?

Table 3: Summary of Pearson Product Moment Correlation on the Relationship between Teachers' Qualifications and Students' Academic Performance in Public Secondary Schools in Anambra State

Variables	N	Students' Academic Performance	Teachers' Qualifications	Remark
Students' Academic Performance	861	1.00	0.765	Strong Positive Relationship
Teachers' Qualifications	861	0.765	1.00	

The summary result of Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient in Table 3 showed the relationship between teachers' qualifications and students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State. The results revealed that the r-value was 0.765 with a sample size of 861 students. This implies that there is a strong positive relationship between teachers' qualifications and students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State.

Test of Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant relationship between teachers' instructional delivery competence and students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State

Table 4: Summary of Pearson Product Moment Correlation on the Test of Significant Relationship between Teachers' Instructional Delivery Competence And Students' Academic Performance in Public Secondary Schools in Anambra State

Variables	N	Students' Academic Performance	Teachers' Instructional Delivery Competence	P-Value	Remark
Students' Academic Performance	861	1.00	0.882	0.000	Significant
Teachers' Instructional Delivery Competence	861	0.882	1.00		

The summary result of Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient in Table 4 showed the significant relationship between teachers' instructional delivery competence and students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State. The results revealed that the r-value was 0.882 with a sample size of 861 students. More so, the p-value is at 0.000 which indicated that the null hypothesis was rejected while the alternative was retained. Thus, there is a significant relationship between teachers' instructional delivery competence and students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State. This indicated that there is a very strong positive and significant relationship between teachers' instructional delivery competence and students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant relationship between teachers' pedagogical competence and students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State

Table 5: Summary of Pearson Product Moment Correlation on the Test of Significant Relationship between Teachers' Pedagogical Competence And Students' Academic Performance in Public Secondary Schools in Anambra State

Variables	N	Students' Academic Performance	Teachers' Pedagogical Competence	P-Value	Remark
Students' Academic Performance	861	1.00	0.867	0.000	Significant
Teachers' Pedagogical Competence	861	0.867	1.00		

The summary result of Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient Table 5 showed the significant relationship between teachers' pedagogical competence and students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State. The results revealed that the r-value was 0.867 with a sample size of 861. More so, the p-value was at 0.000, which means that the null hypothesis was rejected and the alternative was retained since the p-value (0.000) was less than 0.05. Thus, there is a significant relationship between teachers' pedagogical competence and students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State. This implies that there is a very strong, positive and significant relationship between teachers' pedagogical competence and students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State.

Hypothesis 4: There is no significant relationship between teachers' qualifications and students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State

Table 6: Summary of Pearson Product Moment Correlation on the Test of Significant

Relationship between Teachers' Qualification and Students' Academic Performance in Public Secondary Schools in Anambra State

Variables	N	Students' Academic Performance	Teachers' Qualifications	P-Value	Remark
Students' Academic Performance	861	1.00	0.765	0.000	Significant
Teachers' Qualifications	861	0.765	1.00		

The summary result of Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient in Table 6 showed the significant relationship between teachers' qualifications and students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State. The results revealed that the r-value was 0.771 with a sample size of 861 students. More so, the p-value is at 0.000, which indicates that the null hypothesis was rejected and the alternative was retained since the p-value (0.000) was less than 0.05. Thus, there is a significant relationship between teachers' qualifications and students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State. This implies that there is a strong, positive and significant relationship between teachers' qualifications and students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State.

Discussion

Findings on the relationship between teachers' instructional delivery competence and students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State revealed that there is a high positive and significant relationship between teachers' instructional delivery competence and students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State. The findings of the study is in line with the findings of Okiridu and Godpower (2021) that revealed that there is a significant relationship between teachers' workload and instructional delivery. A teacher with strong instructional delivery competence can create a conducive learning environment and adapt their approach to meet the diverse needs of their students, ultimately leading to enhanced learning outcomes. Similarly, Zhang and An (2024) found a significant positive correlation between instructional competence, responsibility, and satisfaction. Their study further revealed that while teachers' overall instructional competence is strong, there is still a need to strengthen the systematic transmission of core knowledge and incorporate student feedback. Moreover, although teachers demonstrated a high sense of responsibility toward students, their level of professional

recognition requires improvement. Therefore, schools should establish a system that integrates training, communication, cultural identity, performance appraisal, and environmental optimization to enhance the quality of education and foster teacher development.

Findings on the relationship between teachers' pedagogical competence and students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State revealed that there is a high positive and significant relationship between teachers' pedagogical competence and students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State. The findings of the study is in line with the findings of Hanifah et al. (2019) that indicated that all facets of both professional and pedagogical competencies were notably well-developed and proficient among teachers. Purnama and Lismayant (2021) also revealed that teachers' pedagogical competence as a determinant of students' motivation required possession of knowledge of the subject matter, use of appropriate teaching methods, and use of instructional materials in the teaching and learning process. The results also revealed that teachers' pedagogical competence required teacher–student positive relationships, use of positive reinforcement and incentives, and teacher personality to motivate students towards business education. This suggests that pedagogical competence does not only enhance students' cognitive achievement but also plays a critical role in shaping their motivation, engagement and overall learning experience. Consequently, strengthening teachers' pedagogical skills should remain a top priority in educational policy and professional development programs, as it directly translates to improved student outcomes.

Findings on the relationship between teachers' qualification and students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State revealed that there is a high positive and significant relationship between teachers' qualification and students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State. The findings of the study is in line with the findings of Muhammad (2021) revealed that all teachers' academic qualification and experience when taken together made significant effects on students' achievement. The findings is in tandem with the findings of Oludapo and Oludapo (2021) teachers' qualifications influenced students' academic performance in basic science. Abe (2020) supported this finding by noting that teachers' level of education is crucial factor to determine student achievement. Through rigorous coursework and study, teachers gain a deep understanding of educational principles, subject-specific content, and instructional methodologies. These findings strongly suggest that prioritizing teacher qualification is not just a policy requirement but a decisive factor in driving students' academic success. Hence, sustained investment in teacher education and professional development is essential for long-term improvement in the quality of learning outcomes.

Conclusion

The study investigated teachers' competencies and experience as correlates of students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State. Based on the findings of the study, the

study concluded that teachers' competencies and experience have strong positive relationship between students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made.

1. Since teachers' instructional delivery competence positively influences students' performance, schools should intensify capacity-building programs that further strengthen teachers' teaching skills and classroom strategies.
2. Policy makers should prioritize continuous investment in pedagogical training as a key component of educational reforms, so as to ensure that teachers are equipped to sustain both cognitive achievement and student-centered learning experiences.
3. Schools management are encouraged to invest in continuous teacher education programmes, such as postgraduate studies, professional certifications and regular training, to strengthen teachers' knowledge base and instructional competence.

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ACADEMIC BRIEF AS A STRATEGIC INSTRUMENT FOR EFFECTIVE UNIVERSITY MANAGEMENT IN NIGERIA: HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT, IMPORTANCE AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

By

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Abstract

This paper examines the academic brief as a strategic planning instrument for effective university management in Nigeria. The paper traces the historical development of the academic brief within the Nigerian university system and discusses its evolution as an essential document for institutional planning, programme development, quality assurance, and sustainable growth. It explains the concept of an academic brief and highlights its importance in guiding academic planning, human resource development, infrastructure planning, financial management, institutional expansion, monitoring and evaluation, evidence-based decision-making, and regulatory compliance. Finally, practical recommendations are offered to strengthen the preparation, implementation, periodic review, and digitalization of academic briefs in Nigerian universities. The paper concludes that an up-to-date and well-implemented academic brief is indispensable for achieving academic excellence, institutional stability, quality assurance, and sustainable university development in Nigeria.

Keywords: Academic brief, university management, academic planning, higher education, strategic planning, Nigerian universities, quality assurance.

Introduction

Universities are established to promote teaching, research, innovation, and community service. Achieving these objectives requires careful planning, effective leadership, prudent resource management, and continuous quality improvement. Consequently, universities develop strategic planning documents that provide direction for institutional development and ensure that academic programmes are implemented in an organized, efficient, and sustainable manner. Among these planning documents, the academic brief occupies a central position because it serves as the blueprint for the academic development of a university. The concept of the academic brief emerged alongside the expansion of university education in Nigeria after independence. When the first

generation universities including University of Ibadan, Ahmadu Bello University, University of Nigeria, and University of Lagos were established, institutional planning was relatively simple because the number of universities and academic programmes was limited. As enrolment increased and the higher education sector expanded during the 1970s and 1980s, there was a growing need for more comprehensive planning documents that could guide academic development, infrastructure provision, staffing, financial planning, and programme implementation.

The establishment of the National Universities Commission as the principal regulatory agency for university education strengthened institutional planning by introducing standards for programme development, resource verification, accreditation, and quality assurance. Universities were subsequently required to prepare comprehensive academic planning documents, including academic briefs, as part of the requirements for the establishment of new universities, faculties, colleges, schools, departments, institutes, and academic programmes. Over time, the academic brief became an indispensable component of university administration because it provides detailed information on the institution's philosophy, vision, mission, governance structure, academic programmes, staffing requirements, enrolment projections, physical facilities, financial implications, implementation strategies, and long-term development plans.

Today, virtually all public universities in Nigeria prepare and periodically review their academic briefs through their Academic Planning Units or Directorates of Academic Planning. The document is widely used during institutional planning, programme development, accreditation, resource verification, budgeting, monitoring and evaluation, and strategic decision-making. It also assists university management in aligning institutional development with national higher education policies and the Benchmark Minimum Academic Standards issued by the National Universities Commission. Despite its importance, relatively few scholarly publications have examined the academic brief as a strategic management instrument within Nigerian universities. Most existing discussions focus on accreditation, quality assurance, curriculum development, or institutional planning without giving adequate attention to the academic brief itself. This creates a gap in the literature regarding its historical evolution, institutional significance, and contribution to effective university management. It is against this background that this paper examines the historical development of the academic brief in Nigerian universities, explains its conceptual foundations and analyses its importance for university management

2.0 Conceptual terms

2.1 Concept of university management

University management is the systematic process of planning, organizing, coordinating, directing, and evaluating the human, financial, physical, technological, and academic resources of a university to achieve its teaching, research, community service, and innovation goals efficiently, effectively, and in accordance with institutional policies and national educational objectives.

University management is the art and science of mobilizing and coordinating people, resources, policies, and institutional processes to ensure the effective administration, sustainable development, and overall success of a university in fulfilling its core mandates of teaching, research, community engagement, and knowledge creation.

University management is the continuous process of making strategic decisions, coordinating academic and administrative activities, allocating institutional resources, and providing effective leadership to ensure that a university achieves excellence in teaching, research, innovation, and community service while maintaining quality standards and accountability. University management is the comprehensive administration of a university through effective planning, policy implementation, supervision, coordination, monitoring, and evaluation of academic and non-academic operations to promote institutional growth, good governance, quality education, and sustainable development.

2.2 Concept of academic brief

An academic brief is a comprehensive academic development document that outlines a university's philosophy, vision, mission, objectives, academic pattern, organizational structure, and projections for future academic and physical growth. It serves as the blueprint for the orderly development of the institution (Ahmadu Bello University, 2022). An academic brief is a strategic planning document that specifies the long-term direction of a university by defining its academic programmes, supporting infrastructure, staffing requirements, enrolment projections, and implementation strategies required to achieve institutional goals (Ahmadu Bello University. 2022). An academic brief is an official university planning document prepared to guide academic management, programme development, quality assurance, resource allocation, and institutional decision-making in accordance with the guidelines of the National Universities Commission (NUC) (National Universities Commission, n.d.). An academic brief is a comprehensive institutional planning document that provides detailed information on the establishment, organization, implementation, monitoring, and future expansion of academic programmes while ensuring the systematic growth and sustainability of the university (University of Benin, n.d.).

An academic brief is a regulatory planning document that contains baseline institutional data, academic policies, development projections, and programme plans required for resource verification, accreditation, quality assurance, and compliance with National Universities Commission standards (University of Lagos, 2025). From the above, in this paper academic brief is a comprehensive strategic planning document that provides the framework for the establishment, operation, management, evaluation, and sustainable development of a university by defining its academic philosophy, programmes, human resources, infrastructure, financial requirements, governance structure, and long-term development priorities. An academic brief is a comprehensive planning document that outlines the philosophy, vision, mission, objectives, governance structure, academic programmes, admission policy, staffing requirements, physical facilities, financial

projections, student enrolment estimates, research priorities, and implementation strategies of a university. It serves as the academic blueprint upon which institutional development is built. Before a university introduces new programmes or expands existing ones, the academic brief provides the necessary information for planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation. For university management, the academic brief is more than an administrative requirement; it is a strategic management instrument that supports evidence-based decision-making. It enables management to coordinate academic activities, allocate resources efficiently, maintain quality standards, comply with regulatory requirements, and pursue sustainable institutional development. Without a well-prepared academic brief, universities are likely to experience uncoordinated expansion, duplication of programmes, poor resource utilization, inadequate staffing, and declining academic quality.

Method

The strategic instrument for effective university management in Nigeria. Thee paper is a position paper that adopted a systematic literature review-based method. The method allows to collect and review the related previous literature from various online sources. With the aid of digital platform, the researcher collected secondary information to generate knowledge on this topic from 2015-2025. The position paper followed qualitative narrative design method. The researcher has visited different online sites to collect the previous literature and analyze strategic instrument for effective university management in Nigeria. The previous findings are critically analyzed and presented in different themes as on the strategic instrument for effective university management in Nigeria.

Inclusion and exclusion criteria

Inclusion

This output of the literatures on the strategic instrument for effective university management in Nigeria presents an in-depth study and result that can infer conclusion on the topic. The study includes: online publication; conference paper, journals sorted from from reputable international journals such as CEON, Elsevier, Hindawi, JSTOR, IEEE, Learn Techlib, SAGE, Nebraska and Springer.

Exclusion

Also, the literature review excludes information from edited books, preprints, monographs, information below 2015 and book chapters.

Result and discussion on Strategic Instrument for Effective University Management in Nigeria

The following discussion highlights the importance of the academic brief to effective university management.

Provides Strategic Direction for Institutional Development

One of the greatest contributions of an academic brief is that it provides a clear strategic direction for the university. Every successful institution requires a long-term vision supported by carefully defined goals, objectives, and implementation strategies. The academic brief serves as the document that communicates these priorities to university management and other stakeholders. Through the academic brief, management identifies the institution's academic philosophy, developmental priorities, expected areas of growth, and future aspirations (Iwerebor 2023). These clearly defined priorities enable university administrators to make decisions that are consistent with the institution's mission rather than responding to short-term pressures or personal interests. Strategic planning also enables management to anticipate future challenges such as increasing student enrolment, technological changes, labour market demands, and global developments in higher education. Instead of making reactive decisions, management can proactively develop policies and programmes that prepare the institution for future realities. A clearly articulated strategic direction promotes institutional stability because successive administrations can build upon existing development plans instead of abandoning ongoing projects. This continuity contributes to sustainable growth and strengthens public confidence in the university.

Guides Academic Planning and Programme Development

Academic planning is one of the primary responsibilities of university management, and the academic brief serves as the foundation for this responsibility. It provides detailed information regarding the establishment, organization, expansion, review, and evaluation of academic programmes. The document specifies the faculties, colleges, schools, departments, and programmes to be established, including their objectives, admission requirements, graduation requirements, curriculum structure, and expected learning outcomes. This enables management to develop programmes that respond to national development priorities and international academic standards. The academic brief also assists management in determining the appropriate sequence for introducing new programmes. Rather than establishing programmes based solely on public demand or political pressure, management relies on evidence contained in the academic brief to ensure that necessary facilities, qualified academic staff, laboratories, workshops, libraries, and financial resources are available before programme commencement.

Facilitates Programme Accreditation and Regulatory Compliance

Maintaining academic standards is a major responsibility of university management. The academic brief contributes significantly to this responsibility by providing comprehensive documentation required during programme accreditation and institutional quality assurance exercises. Regulatory agencies assess whether universities possess adequate academic staff, physical facilities, instructional resources, library holdings, laboratories, administrative structures, and financial capacity to sustain academic programmes. Most of this information is documented in the academic

brief. Because the document outlines programme objectives, staffing plans, curriculum design, enrolment projections, infrastructure requirements, and implementation schedules, it enables management to demonstrate institutional preparedness during accreditation visits. The academic brief also helps management identify deficiencies before accreditation exercises occur. Where gaps exist in staffing, infrastructure, or learning resources, corrective measures can be implemented in advance, thereby improving accreditation outcomes.

Supports Effective Resource Allocation

Every university operates under financial and material constraints that require prudent management of available resources. The academic brief serves as an essential planning tool for allocating these limited resources efficiently. The document identifies the specific needs of every faculty, department, programme, and support unit. These needs include personnel, classrooms, laboratories, office accommodation, equipment, library resources, information technology facilities, and operational funding. With this information, management can prioritize expenditure based on institutional needs rather than subjective judgments. Resource allocation guided by the academic brief minimizes duplication of projects, reduces waste, and ensures equitable distribution of resources across academic units. Departments with urgent infrastructural or staffing deficiencies can receive timely intervention while maintaining fairness throughout the institution. The academic brief strengthens financial accountability because expenditure decisions are linked to approved institutional plans. This enhances transparency in budgeting and enables governing councils and other oversight bodies to monitor the effective use of university resources.

Enhances Infrastructure Development and Physical Planning

The quality of university education depends largely on the availability of adequate teaching, learning, research, and administrative facilities. The academic brief provides management with comprehensive information required for systematic infrastructure planning and development. The document specifies the number and types of lecture theatres, classrooms, laboratories, workshops, studios, libraries, hostels, offices, medical facilities, sporting facilities, and other physical structures required to support academic activities. This enables management to develop infrastructure according to projected student enrolment and programme expansion. Infrastructure development guided by the academic brief reduces the likelihood of constructing unnecessary buildings while ensuring that priority projects receive adequate funding and timely completion. It also prevents congestion in classrooms and laboratories by aligning physical facilities with enrolment growth. The academic brief further supports long-term campus planning by providing projections for future expansion. University management can therefore acquire land, develop utility services, improve transportation networks, and expand physical infrastructure in an orderly manner rather than responding to emergencies. Well-planned infrastructure improves the learning environment, enhances staff productivity, strengthens institutional image, and contributes to the overall quality of teaching, research, and community service.

Assists Human Resource Planning

Human resources are the backbone of every university. The quality of teaching, research, community service, and administration depends largely on the competence and adequacy of academic and non-academic staff. The academic brief provides university management with a systematic framework for planning human resources required to achieve institutional goals (Omoniyi, 2020). The document specifies the number of academic staff needed in each faculty, college, school, institute, and department based on student enrolment projections and programme requirements. It also indicates the categories of staff required, including professors, associate professors, senior lecturers, lecturers, technologists, laboratory scientists, librarians, administrative officers, and other support personnel. This enables management to recruit the right calibre of personnel at the appropriate time. The academic brief assists management in succession planning. By projecting future staffing needs, the university can identify departments that may experience shortages due to retirement, resignation, or expansion. Appropriate recruitment and staff development programmes can then be initiated to ensure continuity in academic activities. The document also supports staff training and capacity building. Where new academic programmes or emerging disciplines are introduced, management can organize workshops, conferences, postgraduate sponsorships, and professional development activities to equip staff with the knowledge and skills required for effective service delivery. The university develops a competent workforce capable of sustaining academic excellence.

Promotes Quality Assurance and Academic Excellence

Quality assurance has become a major concern in higher education because universities are expected to produce graduates who possess the knowledge, skills, values, and competencies required for national development and global competitiveness. The academic brief contributes significantly to the establishment and maintenance of quality assurance systems within the university. The document clearly outlines academic standards relating to programme objectives, curriculum content, admission requirements, staffing qualifications, student assessment procedures, graduation requirements, teaching facilities, and learning resources. These standards provide benchmarks against which institutional performance can be assessed. University management uses the academic brief to monitor compliance with approved academic policies and minimum standards. Regular internal reviews help identify deficiencies in teaching, research, curriculum implementation, student support services, and infrastructure. Appropriate corrective measures can then be introduced before external quality assurance exercises take place (Olubunmi. 2015). The academic brief encourages a culture of continuous improvement. As societal needs, technological innovations, and labour market expectations evolve, management can periodically review and update academic programmes to ensure continued relevance. This process strengthens institutional reputation, enhances graduate employability, and improves the university's national and international standing.

Improves Financial Planning and Budget Preparation

Financial sustainability is essential for the successful operation of every university. Effective financial planning requires accurate information regarding institutional priorities, projected expenditures, expected enrolment, staffing requirements, infrastructure development, and operational costs. The academic brief provides this information in a comprehensive and organized manner. University management relies on the academic brief during annual budgeting and medium-term financial planning (Ogunode, & Abubakar, 2021). Because the document specifies the resources required for each academic programme and administrative unit, it enables management to prepare realistic budgets that reflect institutional priorities rather than arbitrary estimates. The academic brief also supports capital budgeting by identifying infrastructure projects required over a specified period. Instead of undertaking unplanned construction projects, management can prioritize investments based on programme needs, student population growth, and available financial resources. The document assists management in mobilizing funds from government agencies, development partners, donor organizations, alumni associations, and private investors. Clearly documented institutional plans increase stakeholder confidence because they demonstrate transparency, accountability, and prudent financial management.

Supports Institutional Expansion and Sustainable Growth

Universities continually evolve in response to changing educational needs, scientific discoveries, technological advancement, and national development priorities. Expansion, however, must be carefully planned to avoid overstretching available resources. The academic brief provides the framework for managing institutional growth in a systematic and sustainable manner. Whenever management intends to establish new faculties, colleges, departments, institutes, research centres, or academic programmes, the academic brief provides the justification, implementation strategy, staffing requirements, infrastructure needs, financial implications, and projected student enrolment. This enables expansion to occur in an orderly manner. The document also ensures that institutional growth remains consistent with the university's vision and mission. Instead of expanding merely to increase student enrolment or generate additional revenue, management evaluates whether proposed developments contribute to academic excellence and national development objectives. The academic brief helps prevent excessive expansion that may compromise educational quality. By carefully assessing available human, financial, and physical resources before introducing new programmes, management reduces the likelihood of overcrowded classrooms, inadequate staffing, insufficient laboratories, and declining academic standards. Planned institutional expansion strengthens organizational stability, improves resource utilization, and positions the university to respond effectively to future educational demands.

Strengthens Evidence-Based Decision-Making

Effective university management depends on timely, accurate, and reliable information. Decisions relating to academic programmes, staffing, infrastructure, finance, student enrolment, and institutional development should be supported by credible evidence rather than personal opinion or political influence. The academic brief serves as one of the most reliable sources of such information. The document contains detailed data on programme requirements, enrolment projections, staffing levels, facility needs, curriculum structure, financial implications, and institutional priorities. University management uses these data to evaluate policy options and determine the most appropriate course of action. Evidence-based decision-making reduces uncertainty and minimizes the risk of costly administrative mistakes. For example, before approving a new academic programme, management can assess whether adequate staff, classrooms, laboratories, libraries, and financial resources are available. Decisions based on factual information are more likely to produce positive outcomes than those based on assumptions. The academic brief also promotes transparency and accountability in governance. Since major administrative decisions are guided by documented institutional plans, stakeholders including governing councils, regulatory agencies, staff unions, students, and development partners can better understand the rationale behind management decisions. The use of the academic brief as a decision-making tool enhances administrative efficiency, promotes responsible leadership, and supports the long-term sustainability of the university.

Promotes Regulatory Compliance

Universities operate within national regulatory frameworks established to maintain minimum academic standards and ensure the delivery of quality higher education. Compliance with these regulations is essential for institutional credibility, programme recognition, and public confidence. The academic brief plays a significant role in helping university management comply with the requirements of regulatory agencies and government policies. The academic brief documents the institution's academic philosophy, programme objectives, curriculum structure, admission requirements, staffing plans, student enrolment projections, infrastructure, governance arrangements, and implementation strategies. These components provide evidence that the university has carefully planned its academic activities before implementation. Management uses the academic brief to ensure that newly introduced programmes conform to approved academic standards and national education policies. It also serves as a reference document during resource verification, accreditation exercises, programme reviews, and institutional assessments conducted by regulatory bodies. Where deficiencies are identified, management can implement corrective measures before formal evaluations are conducted. Continuous review of the academic brief enables the university to respond to changes in higher education policies, technological developments, and emerging academic priorities. This proactive approach reduces the likelihood

of regulatory sanctions, protects institutional reputation, and strengthens stakeholder confidence in the university's academic system.

Facilitates Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation are essential components of effective university management because they provide information on whether institutional goals and academic objectives are being achieved. The academic brief serves as a benchmark against which university performance can be measured. The document establishes measurable targets relating to student enrolment, staff recruitment, infrastructure development, programme implementation, research activities, community service, and financial investment. University management periodically compares actual performance with these planned targets to determine the level of achievement. Where implementation gaps are identified, appropriate corrective actions can be introduced to improve institutional performance. For example, if the academic brief projects the recruitment of additional lecturers for a new programme but recruitment has not taken place, management can prioritize staffing before the programme expands further. Monitoring based on the academic brief also enhances institutional learning. It enables management to identify successful practices, recognize implementation challenges, and improve future planning processes. Universities become more efficient, accountable, and responsive to changing educational needs. Monitoring and evaluation supported by the academic brief provide valuable information for governing councils, regulatory agencies, funding organizations, and development partners interested in assessing institutional performance.

Encourages Institutional Stability and Continuity

Frequent changes in university leadership may disrupt institutional development if there is no comprehensive planning document to guide successive administrations. The academic brief promotes continuity by providing a long-term framework for academic development regardless of changes in management (Ogunode, 2025). The document outlines the university's long-term academic priorities, infrastructure plans, staffing projections, research agenda, and programme development strategies. Incoming administrators can therefore continue implementing existing development plans instead of introducing unnecessary policy changes that may hinder institutional progress. Institutional continuity enhances confidence among academic staff, students, governing councils, government agencies, and development partners because they can observe consistency in policy implementation and organizational direction. This stability also promotes efficient utilization of resources by ensuring that ongoing projects are completed rather than abandoned. Continuity in planning minimizes administrative conflicts arising from inconsistent policy decisions. Management is able to build upon previous achievements while making improvements where necessary. This contributes significantly to sustainable institutional development and long-term organizational success.

Promotes Accountability and Transparency

Accountability and transparency are essential principles of good university governance. University management is responsible for ensuring that financial, human, and material resources are utilized efficiently in pursuit of institutional objectives. The academic brief strengthens accountability by clearly defining institutional priorities, expected outcomes, implementation timelines, and resource requirements. Because the document specifies what should be achieved within a given period, stakeholders can assess whether management has fulfilled its responsibilities. Governing councils, regulatory agencies, government officials, academic staff, students, alumni, and development partners can compare institutional performance with the targets outlined in the academic brief. The academic brief also promotes transparency in budgeting, programme development, infrastructure projects, and staff recruitment. Decisions are based on documented institutional needs rather than personal interests or external pressures. This reduces opportunities for arbitrary decision-making and enhances public confidence in university administration. Accountability supported by the academic brief encourages prudent financial management, strengthens institutional integrity, and promotes responsible leadership across all levels of university administration (Ogunode, 2024).

Enhances Institutional Competitiveness and Reputation

The global higher education environment has become increasingly competitive as universities compete for students, qualified academic staff, research funding, international partnerships, and institutional recognition. Universities with comprehensive academic briefs are better positioned to respond effectively to these challenges. A well-developed academic brief demonstrates that the university possesses a clear vision, strategic direction, effective planning mechanisms, and commitment to quality education. These characteristics attract prospective students, highly qualified staff, researchers, donor agencies, development partners, and investors seeking collaboration with well-managed institutions. The academic brief also supports the development of innovative academic programmes that respond to national priorities and global trends. Universities that regularly review and update their academic briefs are more capable of introducing interdisciplinary programmes, adopting emerging technologies, promoting entrepreneurship, and strengthening research productivity. Systematic planning contributes to improved institutional performance in teaching, research, innovation, community engagement, and graduate employability. These achievements enhance the university's reputation nationally and internationally, thereby increasing its competitiveness within the global higher education system.

4.0 Conclusion and Recommendations

The academic brief remains one of the most important strategic planning documents in university administration. It serves as the academic blueprint that guides the establishment, growth, management, and continuous improvement of the institution. Through the academic brief,

university management is able to formulate long-term strategies, plan academic programmes, recruit appropriate personnel, allocate resources efficiently, develop infrastructure, maintain quality standards, comply with regulatory requirements, and evaluate institutional performance.

The document also strengthens evidence-based decision-making, promotes accountability and transparency, facilitates monitoring and evaluation, and ensures continuity in institutional development despite changes in leadership. In an era characterized by rapid technological advancement, increasing student enrolment, globalization, and growing expectations for quality higher education, universities require comprehensive academic briefs to remain effective, relevant, and competitive. Based on the findings, the study recommends the following:

1) University management should review and update the academic brief periodically to reflect emerging national education policies, technological innovations, labour market needs, and global best practices.

2) Every proposed faculty, college, school, department, institute, centre, or academic programme should be established only after adequate provision has been made in the academic brief.

3) Universities should strengthen the capacity of Academic Planning Units through regular training in strategic planning, institutional research, quality assurance, monitoring, and evaluation.

4) Governing Councils should ensure that major administrative, financial, and academic decisions are guided by the provisions of the approved academic brief.

5) The Academic Planning Unit should monitor the implementation of the academic brief and prepare periodic reports for university management to facilitate evidence-based decision-making.

6) Universities should adopt digital platforms for the preparation, storage, updating, and monitoring of academic briefs to improve accessibility, data accuracy, collaboration, and institutional efficiency.

7) Regular consultation with academic staff, students, professional bodies, employers, alumni, industry representatives, and regulatory agencies should be encouraged during the preparation and revision of academic briefs to ensure that institutional plans remain relevant and responsive to societal needs.

8) University management should align annual budgets, infrastructure development projects, staff recruitment, and programme expansion with the priorities identified in the academic brief to promote efficient utilization of resources and sustainable institutional development.

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EXTENT OF IMPLEMENTATION OF EDUCATION MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEMS (EMIS) IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN ANAMBRA STATE

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ABSTRACT

The Anambra State secondary school system in undergoing transformation in terms of information management. This has created some challenges which affected the school management in terms of the quality of information being disseminated or used in managing the schools. In the light of this, the researcher was prompted to ascertain the implementation of education management information systems in secondary schools in the state. Four research questions guided the study and four null hypotheses were tested. The study adopted the descriptive survey research design. Population of the study comprised 261principals in the 261 public secondary schools in Anambra state. The entire population was studied. The instrument for data collection was a researcher-developed questionnaire titled "Implementation of Education Management Information Systems Questionnaire" (PIEMISQ). The instrument was validated by three experts and its reliability was determined using Cronbach alpha method. This yielded internal consistency coefficients of 0.72, 0.74, 0.75 and 0.74 respectively for the four sections of the instrument. Data were collected through direct hand-delivery process using five research assistants. Data collected were analyzed using mean ratings and standard deviations to answer the research questions, while the t-test statistics was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. Findings among others indicated that principals of secondary schools in Anambra State do not implement EMIS in planning staff personnel issues, students' personnel issues, instructional materials and curriculum issues in their schools. It was recommended among others that secondary school principals in the state should undergo in-service training in the implementation of EMIS in planning staff personnel issues, students' personnel issues, instructional materials and curriculum issues in their schools. The implications of the findings were discussed and conclusion was drawn with accompanying suggestions for further studies.

Keywords: Anambra, State, Nigeria, secondary, school, system, Education, Management, Information

INTRODUCTION

Background to the Study

In Nigeria as in other developing country of the world, governments have always accorded a high premium to education. This is well acknowledged in international declarations to which Nigeria is a signatory. The Nigerian constitution in addition to vital legislation and other legal documents also have some sections specifically enacted to promote education. This promotion of the educational sector has given rise to the emerging growth in the population of school children. This growth in education in the country is generally characterized by difficulties and problems in two basic areas of quality of data and the management support system.

The quality of data and information in education has been a focus of concern due to a number of reported errors inaccuracies inconsistencies and misinterpretations (Carlisle, 2016). According to Mali (2015), the inability of management to provide an adequate support system has likewise contributed to the seriousness of the problem. The poor survey structures, frequent changes of concepts and definitions of objectives, the lack of trained and qualified staff, poor direction and organization and a shortage of hardware and software are among the most obvious areas which have not been addressed by managers (Lipham & Hoch, 2014). In the education system, this needs to be addressed using the fast-expanding technology in order to make education being offered relevant.

The fast-changing requirements of education brought about by rapid technological advancement have created a wide gap between what the school provides and what the society demands. In brief, the problems of access, equity, quality and relevance in education can be addressed using various approaches which require a decision support system. To enable the policy and decision- makers to determine the seriousness of these problems, the magnitude and extent of education services needed and the realistic number of resources to deliver these services efficiently and effectively, they must have accurate, reliable and timely information on the state of education in the state and the country at large. The dearth of empirical data generated through a functional and carefully designed system has resulted in the need for an education management information system (EMIS).

According Anderson (2014), an EMIS is an organized group of information and documentation services that collects, stores processes analyze and disseminates information for educational planning and management. It is a collection of component parts that include inputs processes outputs and feed backs that are integrated to achieve a specific objective. In the same view, Carlisle (2016) opined that it is a system for managing a large body of data and information that can be readily retrieved, processed, analyzed, and made available for use and dissemination. It is a tool that uses systems theory, together with developments in computerization, to create a comprehensive approach to the collection and use of vast quantities of information on the

education and training system. As the potential users of data, managers are systematically provided with accurate and timely information so that decision-making, planning, project development and other management functions and operations can be carried out effectively (Mali, 2015). In stressing the importance of EMIS, United Republic of Tanzania (URT, 2011) observed that it is imperative that all educational managers and programme implementers be conscious and capable of performing or managing their information systems either manually or with computers. The latter is preferred considering the new knowledge and power of the information age.

The main purpose of an EMIS is to integrate information related to the management of educational activities, and to make it available in comprehensive yet succinct ways to a variety of users (UNESCO, 2010). These include teachers, principals, curriculum planners, inspectorate officials, financial controllers, planners, policy advisers and political leaders, as well as parents and students. In this way, the combined information resources of the EMIS are at the service of the entire community. According to UNESCO (2008), the specific purpose of EMIS is to integrate the various sources of educational management information into one coordinated system to serve the entire country.

According to UNESCO (2010), every country has some kind of functioning "EMIS" no matter how limited and rudimentary the data collected may be. In some poorer countries, the EMIS is highly manual. An annual statistical report may be the principal manifestation for general public consumption. In establishing an EMIS, existing administrative units and services - e.g., education statistics units, or those that manage teachers' salaries, financial accounts and other administrative information - would not be merged physically or organizationally (URT, 2011). Instead, efforts would be devoted to rationalize and strengthen existing structures and processes and to improve the coordination of information flows (Cole, 2013). All activities in the handling of educational management information are to be placed and coordinated within the same EMIS network. According to Good (2013), a network structure is an essential part of an EMIS. It is built around the need to link together – to facilitate the flow of information - all of the agencies and individuals involved in the collection, processing, storage, analysis, dissemination and use of education information sound or informed decision-making.

Managing education through informed decision-making requires the availability of accurate and timely information which links together resource inputs to education teaching and learning conditions and processes and appropriate indicators of the knowledge acquired by students (URT, 2010). According to UNESCO (2008), in some countries the widespread use of information-based decision-making has resulted in more effective and efficient planning and the identification of new information needs. In others however failure to supply information that is timely and reliable has contributed to management inefficiencies and reluctance on the part of decision-makers to use information. For example, in Tanzania (also applicable to Nigeria) some State Ministries of Education know that data collection from most does not function properly and thus they do not

trust it (URT, 2010). URT further stated that this is also true of other senior decision-makers in education and other ministries. Yet, paradoxically, school principals and other education managers sometimes suffer from too much information this is not useable or timely. For example, valuable findings from an annual school census may not be fully exploited because of the large quantity of data collected (URT, 2011). Also, the data may be collected, tabulated and disseminated in a form difficult to interpret and use especially for people with limited understanding of statistics (UNESCO, 2010). There is a need for well-organized data presentation and data interpretation standards to provide managers with useful and relevant information (Mali, 2015). This suggested the establishment of education management information systems (EMIS).

Ideally in Nigeria, the design and establishment of an EMIS is expected to be preceded by appropriate policy development legislation and relevant administrative decisions (Campbell, 2018). Again, government commitment through the Ministry of Education is of major importance in the first instance. This ideal prerequisite situation is particularly necessary where EMIS is to be established by unifying and expanding existing information structures and services. According to UNESCO (2010), in some countries, these services already undertake independent ongoing information activities for which they have sole responsibility. Hence a set of well coordinated and clearly defined legislative and administrative measures would be the first requirement in order to bring these services together under the same EMIS. This was achieved in Nigeria in 2007 with the establishment of EMIS policy in the country.

A vibrant, robust and functional EMIS is critical for ensuring effectiveness and efficiency in the education sector at the school, local government, state and national levels (Federal Ministry of Education, FME, 2009). Furthermore, FME (2009:9) stated that the purpose of EMIS is to support the achievement of the goals of education as articulated in the National Policy on Education based on the following objectives:

1. streamlining the data flow process from school to LGA to State to the Federal level data relating to education inputs, activities, teachers and student-based outcomes;
2. responding, in a timely manner, to the administrative, management and policy information needs appropriate to the roles of schools, LGAs, States and the Federal Ministry of Education in the educational system;
3. developing and reporting on key indicators to monitor the achievement of national educational standards and annual targets of:
    a. LGAs at the school and school committee levels
    b. States at the LGA level
    c. National at the State level; and

4. Providing the basis for the Federal Ministry of Education to report on the status of education in Nigeria using national and international benchmarks and comparative global reporting and analysis.

In order to achieve the above objectives, school principals play important roles in terms of development and implementation of EMIS. The sequential activities necessary for the development and implementation of a functional EMIS in schools have been highlighted by FME (2009). First is definition of the national development goals; statement of mission and objectives of the education system; and setting short and long-range targets. This is followed by policy decision for purposes of implementation and monitoring. The third stage is identification of data needs and requirements while the fourth stage is the establishment of databases and the design of monitoring/data gathering forms. After this come data and information collection and data processing, followed by data dissemination and report generation. The last stage for development and implementation of EMIS is evaluation of the output. The results of the evaluation process are the basis for the strengthening of the system. In the light of the above, it is necessary to assess principals' implementation of EMIS in their schools.

Assessment, according to Ogunu (2000) involves making quantitative and qualitative judgments about the extent to which a programme implementation satisfies set criteria or standards. In this regard, assessment as a process which systematically and objectively attempts to determine the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness and impact of project activities in the light of set objectives. In this study, assessment means a control system, allowing for determination of progress of principals in the implementation of EMIS in their schools.

In the Nigerian context, a principal is the manager or the administrative head of secondary school (Anyamebo, 2015). He is in charge of administering the day-to-day business of the school. According to Pathak (2008), a principal is the chief executive or head of a secondary school. He manages the human and material resources of the school. Anukam and Anukam (2006) that school principals are in charge of staff management, students' management, instructional programmes management, school financial management, school infrastructural management and management of school-community relationship.

In the implementation of EMIS in secondary schools, UTR (2010) and UNESCO (2008) posited that the principals are expected to effectively control matters relating to staff, students, school finance, accounting, achievement and mental measurement, supervision, guidance services, curriculum construction, building and housing problems, community relation and other technical activities involved in modern high school administration through proper documentation and transmission of accurate data. Furthermore, according to UNESCO (2010) and URT (2011), the basic issues for consideration in the implementation of EMIS are those that concern the operational tasks areas of school management. In this study, they include: staff personnel issues, student

personnel issues, curriculum and management of instructional materials. The aim is to assess the extent the principals have used EMIS in managing them.

Staff personnel in secondary school system comprise all teaching and non- teaching staff. Members of staff need to be current in the subject matter and in new techniques of teaching. According to Murgor (2015), most of the ICT technical staff initial training was not in computers, but in other technical fields such as electronics, librarianship, or other education courses and later on switch over to managing computers, creating a continuity and credibility gap between professions. It is the principal's responsibility to establish a process that will ensure that every staff contributes maximally to the effectiveness of the school. EMIS help the principal in determining performances of teachers and success of the school (Telem & Buvitski, 2005). This can be achieved through a programme of staff development. The need to train and or develop members of staff in school emanated from the need to correct deficiencies or to keep them abreast with new development and emerging challenges that relate to their job performance. Instructively, principals' implementation of EMIS in staff personnel management is a precursor to students' personnel management.

Student personnel management involves assisting students to perform through creation of good environment for learning, supportive aids like teaching facilities, good classroom, sport facilities and students' clubs and unions. Accordingly, Quimn (2002) reported that instructional leadership roles of the principals in terms of providing resources, instructional support, communication, and being physically present at school are essential to providing an atmosphere that enhanced students' successes and academic achievements. More importantly, the principals of the 21st century education through the use of EMIS are required to encourage, motivate and energize the students towards the creation of effective learning environments leading to continuous improvement in schools and students' performances. Expectedly, continuous improvement of students' performances is sequel to a proper curriculum and instructional management. This brings to the fore the use of EMIS by principals in handling issues related to curriculum management.

Curriculum management is also an administrative practice of school principals. Sun, Geemers and Joag (2007) affirmed that national goal setting in terms of students' outcomes which were reflected in the national curriculum and school text books was a key factor that influenced students' performance. Instructively, information regarding students' performance can be recorded using EMIS. Egwunyenga (2009) observed that not all information can be considered as records until they satisfy such characteristics as genuineness and authenticity, that is, the information that records give must be true, correct and original; records must be comprehensive, accessible and secured. Matters relating to curriculum management cannot be concluded without reference to instructional materials.

Instructional materials refer to all the items that can help the teacher to accomplish the teaching task. These items include audio materials, visual materials and audio-visual materials. Instructional materials are very vital to the achievement of educational objectives. Accordingly, principals are

expected to use EMIS in guiding the teachers to use instructional materials judiciously and guard against the over-utilization of instructional materials. EMIS implementation could be affected by school location.

The level of implementation of EMIS by principals in terms of staff personnel management, student personnel management, management of instructional material and curriculum and instructional management in Anambra state seem to differ based on the location of the existing schools. Thus, in Anambra state, secondary schools are located in both urban and rural areas. Most secondary schools especially in the rural areas do not electricity or any alternative power supply, yet, EMIS cannot function effectively power supply. Again, some of the schools both in urban and rural areas lack facilities to accommodate EMIS equipment. This leads to poor data generation and management.

According to FME (2009) the bane of the education system is the inability to produce credible data on time which has its root in the fact that schools lack everything that is basic to data generation. The manifestations, according to FME (2009:8) include: almost total lack of school record books; teachers who have not been trained to keep records; teachers who do not understand why they should keep these records and fill the forms that come to them regularly; lack of monitoring to expose non-compliance; absence of any serious sanction for failing to perform; pressure from various sources for schools to falsify educational returns; and reliance on out-dated technology.

Apart from the negative manifestations from the schools, there are also non-cooperation with accredited authorities by private school proprietors and other independent managers of some educational institutions; lack of human capacity; lack of appropriate equipment; and lack of funds for procuring even the most basic item to deliver a credible EMIS across the country (FME, 2009), Anambra state inclusive.

The existing situation particularly in Anambra state is worrisome. In most schools in the state, the filing systems remain manually based and disorganized. In addition, schools and villages that are essentially the sources of data and information are highly dispersed and isolated by seas, rivers, forests and other natural and manmade barriers. The transportation and communication facilities are not able to facilitate the transmission of reports from the source to the users. In addition to the above, Aniemeka (2017) reported that the trends in enrolment indicate the rapid expansion of the formal and non-formal education sectors which makes it difficult to keep track of developments in the education system in Nigeria and Anambra state in particular.

The emerging demands for reliable, up-to-date and timely data and information by local and international users have alerted data producers and providers to improve their management efforts to meet these demands. This has resulted in disparities in the provision of education in the state. According to Anyamebo (2015) the disparities are further worsened by lack of information that would describe objectively the pace of progress and resource requirements between and among

education zones, local governments, townships and villages. In Nigeria and Anambra state in particular, the economic situation has reached a critical level which in effect has forced the government to reduce educational expenditures (Aniemeka, 2017). As a result, the resources for educational provision have been declining, the demand for both formal and non-formal education has been gaining momentum in the state. According to Agom (2013), the inability of the school system to provide adequate facilities and the needed qualified manpower, the quality of education data has been tremendously affected. In the light of the above, this study assessed principals' implementation of Education Management Information Systems in secondary schools in Anambra state.

Statement of Problem

The National Council on Education (NCE) in 2007 approved EMIS to support the effective management of the education system at the Federal, State, and Local Government levels to improve the performance of the education system as a whole and of students in particular. EMIS is also expected to provide the basis for monitoring the effectiveness and efficiency of the educational system at all levels. For many years EMIS in Nigeria and Anambra state in particular could not perform optimally. Data were either not available or unreliable and could therefore not form the basis for planning and decision making. The data management situation in Anambra state secondary schools, at best, is chaotic as operators in the system have different sets of data for such indicators as enrolments, number of teachers and lots more.

In addition to the above, different agencies and international development partners collect and use different and discordant data on similar indicators. The result is that decision-making is not evidence based. Similarly, no reasonable planning could be done. Personal experience of the researcher showed that the State in particular suffers embarrassments because it could not transmit valid data on critical indicators such as school staff, students, instructional materials, curriculum and instruction to such world bodies as the World Bank, UNESCO and UNICEF. One wonders how EMIS is being implemented in such critical areas.

Matters are not helped by the tendency for the state, local government authorities and schools from which the data originate to falsify or inflate data in anticipation of more federal funding or funds from international donors. All this complicate the data management situation in the state and indeed lead to confusion and huge gaps in availability of data or the reliability of available data. Again, the implementation of EMIS in urban and rural secondary schools in South East states is not known. To clear the confusion and bridge the gap, this study assessed EMIS implementation in secondary schools in Anambra state.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study is to assess principals' implementation of Education Management Information Systems in secondary schools in Anambra state. Specifically, the study determined extent of:

1. implementation of Education Management Information Systems in staff personnel management issues in secondary schools in Anambra state.
2. implementation of Education Management Information Systems in student personnel management issues in secondary schools in Anambra state.
3. implementation of Education Management Information Systems in instructional materials management issues in secondary schools in Anambra state.
4. implementation of Education Management Information Systems in curriculum management issues in secondary schools in Anambra state.

Justification for the Study

This study when completed is expected to be beneficial to student, principals, policy makers, state governments and future researchers. The study would also provide essential information on implementation of EMIS by principals in secondary schools in Anambra state.

The study would give solace to the diverse needs of students in the sense that the understanding of the implementation of EMIS by principals of secondary schools in Anambra state will equip the students with the necessary and needed intellectuality to work as principals and school managers at graduation. It would also serve the students as authoritative educational material for further research in this study area.

The outcome of the study would also be beneficial to the principals by pooling together and providing them with disparate strands of thought on the implementation of EMIS in the state. This would theoretically contribute to knowledge by supplementing existing literature in emphasizing the need for accurate and reliable educational data and information for the purpose of measuring and guiding the performance of education systems.

For policy makers and general education system, the work would augment the database and also provide scholarly directions for effective education development policy and action. This is because when implementation of EMIS Anambra state is ascertained, it would help in engendering policies that would address the sustainable implementation of EMIS.

The study will be of importance to the state government because it would contribute to the awareness on the state of EMIS in Anambra state and the outcome can be utilized by stakeholders, the state government and various donor agencies to strengthen the process of EMIS in the state for

better management and resource allocation decisions, thereby improving the educational sector in general.

The results of the study would help future researchers as it would bring to their knowledge whether there are differences in urban and rural principals' implementation of EMIS in the area of the study. When this is done, they would be motivated for further research in the same area and other areas.

For this work to achieve the above, fund is needed. The fund will cover things like instrument construction, validation and reliability test. The fund will also cover the cost of transportation for questionnaire administration and data analysis. The outcome of the research will also be published with fund. The details of the fund needed are shown in the research budget.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What is the extent of implementation of EMIS in staff personnel management in secondary schools in Anambra state?
2. What is the extent of implementation of EMIS in students' personnel management in secondary schools in Anambra state?
3. What is the extent of implementation of EMIS in instructional materials management in secondary schools in Anambra state?
4. What is the extent of implementation of EMIS in curriculum management in secondary schools in Anambra state?

Hypotheses

The following hull hypotheses were tested at .05 level of significance:

1. Principals of secondary schools in urban and rural areas in Anambra state will not differ significantly in their mean ratings on the extent they implemented the EMIS in staff personnel management.
2. Principals of secondary schools in urban and rural areas in Anambra state will not differ significantly in their mean ratings on the extent they implemented the EMIS in students' personnel management.
3. Principals of secondary schools in urban and rural areas in Anambra state do not differ significantly in their mean ratings on the extent they implemented the EMIS in instructional materials management.

4. Principals of secondary schools in urban and rural areas in Anambra state do not differ significantly in their mean ratings on the extent they implement the EMIS in curriculum management.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

In this chapter, concepts, theories and empirical studies that are related to the study were reviewed. The review was done under the following subheadings:

Conceptual Framework

- Education Management Information System (EMIS)
- Guideline for Establishing Education Management Information System in Schools
- Stages in the Development of Education Management Information System
- Implementation of Education Management Information System

Theoretical Framework

Information Systems Theory (IST)

Empirical Studies

- Education Management Information System
- Staff and Students Personnel Management Issues
- Curriculum and Instructional Materials Management Issues

Summary of Review of Related Literature

Conceptual Framework

Education Management Information System (EMIS)

The acronym EMIS stands for "Educational Management Information System". Patel (2007) stated that EMIS is the information system which materialized in South African Education to bring about improvement in information disparities which existed prior to 1994.It is a collection of component parts that include inputs processes outputs and feed backs that are integrated to achieve a specific objective. Wako (2003) opined that the Education Information System is a concept imported from the business world that is used to process information to ensure effective management of education.

According to Koofi (2007), EMIS is an "organised group of information", a centre or a unit that collects, stores, integrates, processes, organises, analyses, manages and distributes information for educational planning and management. Koofi added that EMIS includes the concept of comprehensive data, which are accessible by computer and available for analysis, for processing and decision-making purposes. It is responsible for the promotion and use of information for policy

planning and implementation, decision-making, and the monitoring and evaluation of an education system. It provides timely, cost effective and user appropriate information to support educational planning and management (Connal, 2005). It is a system for managing a large body of data and information that can be readily retrieved, processed, analyzed, and made available for use and dissemination (Villanueva, 2003). It is a tool that uses systems theory, together with developments in computerization, to create a comprehensive approach to the collection and use of vast quantities of information on the education and training system. As the potential users of data, managers are systematically provided with accurate and timely information so that decision-making, planning, project development and other management functions and operations can be carried out effectively.

Operationally, EMIS is defined as an organized group of information and documentation services that collects, stores, processes, analyses and disseminates information for educational planning and management. It is an organized, structured and integrated information system which aims to provide information from all related sources required by the management level in enabling them to make precise, effective organizational planning, directions, control and also to perform relevant and related activities.

Stages in the Development of Education Management Information System

According to UNESCO (2010) and URT (2011), well-planned and designed EMIS will facilitate the undertaking of sequential activities relative to the development of a functional EMIS, which can be presented in stages as shown below:

First stage: definition of the national development goals; statement of mission and objectives of the education system; and setting short and long-range targets. These are usually reflected in the national development plan of the country. From these goals, the national objectives of education are formulated to synchronize with the national vision for development in a given time frame. The mandates of the Constitution on education and other relevant educational legislation have to be carefully reviewed with reference to the development of the management information system.

Second stage: policy decision for purposes of implementation and monitoring. The resources needed to establish the EMIS are identified at this stage of the development. It is critical to determine the appropriate manpower to operate the system, the cost of services and activities, the overall structure, the timetable of activities and the overall strategies of implementation.

Third stage: identification of data needs and requirements. The necessary data needed to support the various measures in determining the attainment of the objectives of the system shall be carefully identified through consultations with the different sectors, and key official school administrators and other potential data users. This will ensure that the data requirements and needs of the policy and decision-makers and other key users are taken care of while at the same time minimizing overloads of unnecessary data. The specific purpose and use of these data shall be m a d e clear at this stage of the process.

Fourth stage: establishment of databases. A database is an integrated collection of data and information, organized and stored in a manner that facilitates retrieval. Both manual and computer-based databases determine the nature of the files or the filing system. Proper labeling of these databases and the corresponding data elements is necessary for easy viewing and access to the hard/printed copies. The label is patterned after the cluster of similar data or related to the major component of the programme students, teachers, curriculum, finances, physical facilities and equipment, and others.

Fifth stage: design of monitoring/data gathering forms. These forms are designed to capture the required and needed data identified during the third stage of development. The designer of the questionnaire has the option to choose the appropriate modes and channels of collecting data from various sources. Forms are pilot-tested to ensure that the instructions, data definitions and data elements requested are understood by the data providers before these forms are administered on a wider or national scale.

Sixth stage: data and information collection. A Manual of Operation has to be prepared to spell out the essential information about data collection in terms of the objectives the schedule of activities, guidelines for conducting the survey/data gathering, the duties and responsibilities of the monitors/ surveyors and supervisors, the specific instructions on how to administer the questionnaire including definition of terms, and the collection or submission of completed questionnaire forms. It is also at this stage that training takes place for those w h o will be involved in data gathering activities both at the national and sub-national levels for purposes of uniformity and common terms of reference.

Seventh stage: data processing. A system of data verification and control procedures should be applied before processing takes place. These forms are verified as to the accuracy and consistency of the data entries. All data elements are coded according to the system designed by the programmer. A training session may take place at this stage to train data encoders/data entry operators to interpret instructions, define data elements and apply software in uniform ways. The specifications of the reports to be generated from the processed data are also defined at this stage.

Eighth stage: data dissemination and report generation. The packaging of these data into statistical bulletins, compendia, reports, profiles and others will help facilitate the dissemination and use of the data by the users. At the national level, the Ministers, legislators, the members of Cabinets/ Parliaments and heads of international bodies need this information for policy making, legislation, programme development and other national concerns. According to Mali (2015), the middle-level manages, including bureaucrats, need it for organization and control, project implementation, budget preparation, programming, monitoring and evaluation. At the operational level, coordinators, local organizations/ units and desk offices need information for their day-to-day operations, supervision, reporting, action planning, and advocacy and mobilization activities. The general public, such as the business sector the community, the professionals, the students, the

media and academic or educational institutions are considered interest groups for data consumption and information users who participate in sustaining the development process.

Ninth stage: evaluation of the output. The ultimate end of an EMIS is to produce relevant and timely information of good quality. Towards this end, an evaluation mechanism should be designed to identify the strengths and shortcomings encountered in the development and operation of the EMIS (URT, 2010). The results of the evaluation process are the basis for the strengthening of the system.

Theoretical Framework

One theory titled information systems theory (IST) propelled this study.

Information Systems Theory (IST)

The information systems theory was developed by Tim Bryce in 2009. The assumptions of information systems theory are as follows:

1. Regardless of the type of system, be it an irrigation system, a communications relay system, an information system, or whatever, all systems have three basic properties:
A. A system has a purpose - such as to distribute water to plant life, bouncing a communications signal around the country to consumers, or producing information for people to use in conducting business or in the implementation of a programme.

B. A system is a grouping of two or more components which are held together through some common and cohesive bond. The bond may be water as in the irrigation system, a microwave signals as used in communications, or, as data in an information system. The cohesive bond enables the group members work together.

C. A system operates routinely and, as such, it is predictable in terms of how it works and what it will produce. All systems embrace these simple properties. Without any one of them, it is, by definition, not a system.

2. The sub-systems of the system simply define logically WHAT data must be processed, WHEN it must be processed, and who will consume the information (aka "end-users"), but it most definitely does not specify HOW the sub-system is to be implemented. Figure 1 presents the information systems theory (IST).

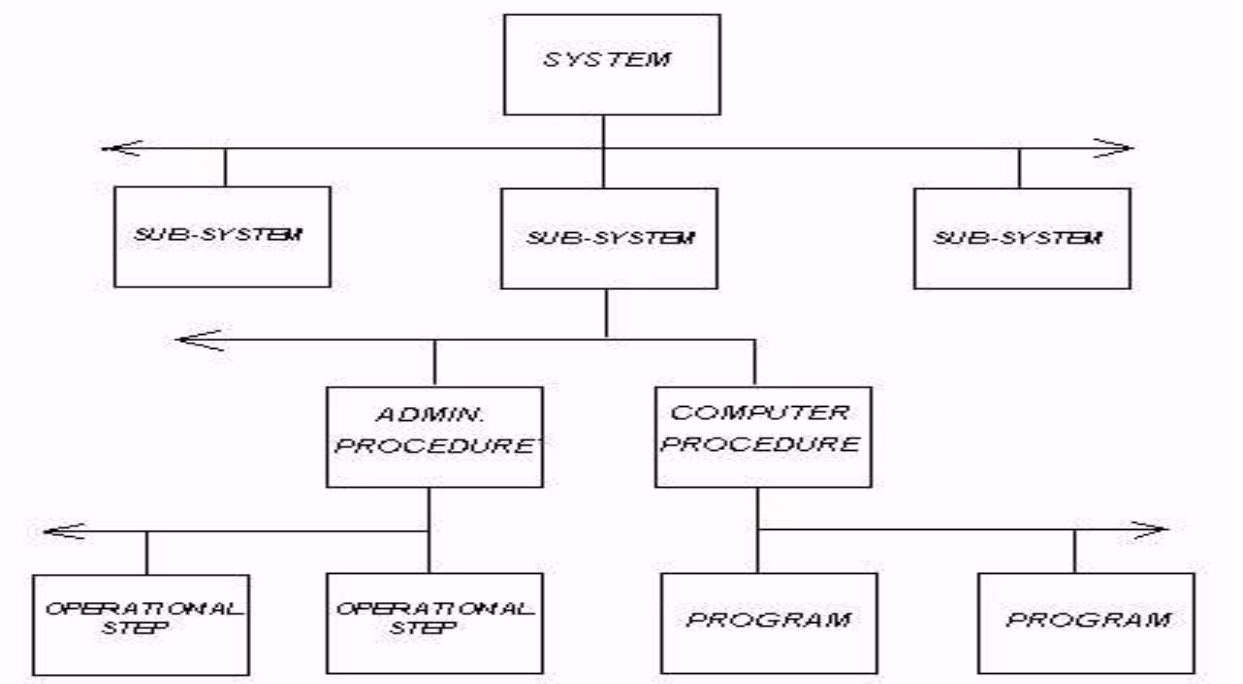


Fig. 1: Information Systems Theory (IST); Source: Tim B. (2009).

According to the theory, developers determine a suitable approach for physically implementing each sub-system. This decision should ultimately be based on practicality and cost effectiveness. Sub-systems can be implemented using manual procedures, computer procedures (software), office automation procedures, or combinations of all three. Depending on the complexity of the sub-system, several procedures may be involved. Regardless of the procedures selected, developers must establish the precedent relationships in the execution of the procedures, either sequentially, iteratively, of choice (thereby allowing divergent paths). By defining the procedures in this manner, from start to end, the developers are defining the "work flow" of the sub-system, which specifies HOW the data will be physically processed (including how it is to be created, updated, or referenced). Each level represents a different level of abstraction of the system, from general to specific (aka, "Stepwise Refinement" as found in blueprinting). This means design is a top-down effort. As designers move down the hierarchy, they finalize design decisions. So much so, by the time they finish designing the level for a computer procedure, they should be ready to write programme source code based on thorough specifications, thereby taking the guesswork out of programming. The hierarchical structure of an information system is essentially no different than any other common product.

This theory is relevant to the current study. It states how data can be generated and handled in the course of implementation of EMIS. It could be generated manually or through the use of

computers. It also shows how to manage or handle information from all aspects of the school as a system.

Empirical Studies

In this section some studies related and are relevant to the present study are reviewed. They are grouped under EMIS, staff and students, personnel issues and curriculum and instructional materials issues.

Studies on Education Management Information System

A number of studies have been conducted on Education Management Information System (EMIS). These studies are reviewed below.

Al-Mamary and Nor Aziati (2014) examined factors affecting successful adoption of management information systems in organizations towards enhancing organizational performance in Malaysia. Two research questions and two hypotheses guided the study. The researchers surveyed 276 respondents using a structured questionnaire. Their data was analyzed using factor analysis and regression model of the ordinary least square. Findings revealed that technological factors, organizational factors, people factors, that affect MIS adoption in organizations. Their study is related to this study on the ground that it centre on adoption of MIS but it differs from this study in that this study assesses the implementation of Education Management Information System (EMIS) by principals in the rural and urban areas.

Munirat, Mohammed and Kazeem (2014) investigated the impact of Management Information System (MIS) on the Performance of Business Organization in Nigeria. The study also took cursory look at the various challenges of MIS in Nigeria. It was guided by three research questions and two hypotheses. The study was a descriptive survey on 320 selected firms using a structured questionnaire. The data for the study were analysed using the Z-test. Findings revealed that lack of MIS software and program, lack of innovation and invention, poor government policies, poor technological equipment and advancement, lack of managerial skill on ITS, poor knowledge of information technology, rigidity in MIS process and poor data base management. The findings of the study were related to the present study as it took cursory look at the various challenges of MIS in business organization but it differs from this study in that this study compares and assesses the implementation of Education Management Information System (EMIS) by principals in the rural and urban areas.

Shah (2014) examined the impact of management information systems (MIS) on school administration in Nigeria: What the literature says. The study is a content analysis on the Impact of MIS in school administration. The study highlighted both the success and challenges of MIS on school administration and management. The positive impact of MIS were identified to include: better accessibility to information, more efficient administration, higher utilization of school

resources, reduction in workload, better time management, and improvement in the quality of reports. The challenges to MIS use include: lack of time, lack of confidence or skills, lack of training, lack of senior management support, and lack of technical support. However, this study compares and assesses the implementation of Education Management Information System (EMIS) by principals in the rural and urban areas.

Staff and Students Personnel Management Issues

Udeani (2008) carried a study on the principals' application of personnel management skills in Enugu state. The purpose of the study was to determine the extent to which the principals applied the skills for effective personnel management. The study adopted the descriptive survey research design. The target population was made up of all the 253 principals in the state and information about them was elicited from the teacher. Six research questions and three null hypotheses guided the study. The instrument titled questionnaire of personnel management skills of principals was used to get responses from the teachers. This was rated using a modified Likerts 4 points rating scale. A mean score of 2.50 was accepted. The mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research question while the t-test was used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 significant level.

The result revealed that the principals applied the personnel management skills effective staff orientation, motivation, delegation of duties, staff professional development, human relations, staff security only to the least extent. The study further revealed that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of the principals' application of personnel management skills for effective for staff motivation, human relations and staff professional development with regards to school location, principals' gender and experience in that order. This study is related to the current study. Both used the same descriptive design and also investigated staff personnel management. They however differ in some respects. The former investigated principals' application of personnel management skills for effective for staff motivation but the latter focused on principals' application of EMIS in staff personnel issues among other variables.

Omeje (2006) studied improvement strategies for students' personnel services in Enugu state post-primary schools' management board. The study answered five research questions and tested five null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The study was a descriptive survey and the respondents consisted of 225 senior administrative staff and 231 principal of Enugu state post - primary schools management board. A twenty-nine–item questionnaire was used at the instrument for data collection. Mean scores were used to answer the research questions, while t-test was to test the five null hypotheses formulated.

The major findings of the study showed among others, that the improvement strategies for ensuring the recruitment of qualified staff include advertising teaching vacancies, basing appointment strictly on academic qualifications, good health and subjecting the candidates for appointment to oral and written tests in English and in the area of specialization of each candidate. The results of

the study also revealed that no significant difference exists between the opinions of the senior administrative staff and the principals of schools on the recruitment of qualified staff, staff welfare, staff appraisal, staff development/in-service training and disciplines of staff. The study by Omeje is related to this work. They both studied students' personnel management using descriptive survey. They however differ in respondents. The former used senior administrative staff as respondents while the current study utilized principals as its respondents. Again, the former investigated improvement strategies for students' personnel services in Enugu state post- primary schools' management board while the current investigated extent of principals' application of EMIS in students' personnel issues.

Nwadialo (2004) investigated the personnel management practices of principals in the public and private senior secondary schools in district six of Lagos state. The study employed a descriptive survey research deigns. The population is comprised of 4,026. A total of 156 respondents were sampled for the study using random sampling techniques representing 150 teachers and 6 principals. It was further categorized into 90 teachers in the public schools, and 60 teachers in the private schools and 6 principals in the six sampled schools in the three zone of district six of Lagos state. Five research questions and three null hypotheses guided the study. The instrument used for data collection was questionnaire titled personnel management practices of principals in the public and private secondary schools (PMPPPS). The instruments were analyzed using mean and standard deviation for the research question while the null hypotheses were analyzed with t-test statistics at 0.05 level of significance. The results of the data analysis revealed that principal and teachers agreed that availabilities of facilities and equipment are relevant in actualizing educational goals since there is a relationship between academic performance of student and nature of the school plant. It was also found that supervisory and monitoring services play very important roles in personnel management practices in schools as they improve instructional effectiveness. This reviewed work is related to the current study. Both of them investigated personnel management practices. Both of them also used descriptive research design. They however differ in some respects. The current is an assessment study conducted in public secondary schools while the former is a comparative study involving both public and private secondary schools.

Ogakwu (2004) compared the students' personnel practices of public and private secondary schools in Enugu state with emphasis on planning practices, recruitment procedures, extent of provision of required physical facilities and equipment, sources of fund, school community relationship, supportive role of parent teachers' association (PTA), supervisory control measures and communication process carried out within the schools. To carry out the study, eight research questions were posed and eight hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance. An 80-item questionnaire was administered to 289 principals and 824 teachers in public and private secondary schools in Enugu State.

The data obtained from the study were analyzed using mean, standard deviation, ANOVA and t-test. The findings of the study indicated that planning is made well ahead of time by ministry of education, completed before the commencement of public secondary schools while planning in private schools were not made ahead of time and that public secondary schools recruit most professional teachers while private secondary schools recruit most unprofessional teachers. This study is related to the current work. They studied personnel practices in secondary schools using descriptive research design. They however differ in approach. The former compared the students' personnel practices of public and private secondary schools but the current assessed principals' application of EMIS in students' personnel issues as part of the variables.

Curriculum and Instructional Materials Management Issues

In 2007, Jahangiri, Mucciolo, Choi and Spielman carried out an assessment of curriculum implementation in the U.S. Dental Schools and the value of triangulation. The purpose of the study was to identify commonly used methods of assessing teaching effectiveness and to suggest the use of a triangulation model for evaluating teaching effectiveness. A twelve-question multiple-choice survey was created with four options per question plus a comments section.

The survey was sent electronically via the American Dental Education Association (ADEA) to academic deans of all U.S. dental schools in July and again in August, 2007. Each school was allowed only one submission. The surveys were tabulated and analyzed to determine commonly used methods of teaching effectiveness for an actual response rate of 63 percent.

The major findings of the study are as follows:

1. The triangulation method for assessing teaching effectiveness was potentially performed by only 19% of the responding schools;
2. The three most commonly used evaluation methods identified as "performed routinely" were all from the student evaluation category (written evaluations, exit surveys and exam results);
3. The self-evaluation category was found to be least utilized area of assessment (31%) as compared to the peer (78%) and student (81%) categories.
4. Fewer than half of the responding schools routinely evaluated clinical teaching effectiveness (42%); and
5. To improve the assessment of teaching effectiveness, the use of a triangulation model is suggested, whereby evaluation methods from all three categories of students, peers, and self- are performed routinely.

This work is related to the current study. Both of them studied curriculum as a variable. They however differ in some respects. The former was an assessment of curriculum implementation but the current assessed principals' application of EMIS in curriculum management issues.

Jing-Ming (2009) investigated the effects of multimedia as instructional resources on the Reading Comprehension and English Words Learning of Taiwanese Students. The main purpose of this study was to improve the reading comprehension and to increase the English vocabulary of students with the sub-goal of encouraging them to strive for success. The design of the study was quasi-experimental. The area of the study was Taichung City in Taiwan. The population of the study was all the English Language in elementary schools in Taichung City. The sample for the study comprised eight (8) students in elementary schools in Taichung city. The instrument for the study were Assessment of English word recognition, English word listening, comprehension, English word lip-reading administered as multiple-choice questions, Likert scaled attitude questionnaire, and multimedia stories of Taiwanese including famous models, professors, teachers, athletes, a computer programme with an illustrator and leader. The experimental procedure involved two itinerant teachers visiting the eight students separately for two hours a week, and taught the students a story for about an hour each week. The results revealed that their attitude was positive and significantly improved toward English language learning. This reviewed work is related to the current study. They focused on instructional materials. They were also carried out at secondary school level. Their major difference is in the area of design. The design of the reviewed study was quasi-experimental and ANOVA was used in testing the hypotheses. On the other hand, the current study adopted descriptive research design and the hypotheses were tested using t-test.

Gentry, Chinn, and Moulton (2005) examined the effectiveness of instructional multimedia materials when used with children who are deaf. The purpose of the study was to access the relative effectiveness of print, sign, and pictures in the transfer of reading related information to children who are deaf by means of personal computers and CD-ROM generated stories in four different formats: print only, print plus pictures, print plus sign language, and print plus pictures plus sign. The design of the study was a repeated measure design. The area of the study was Louisiana and Texas. The population of the study consists of all the deaf students in Louisana and Texas, United States of America. The sample for the study comprised twenty-eight deaf students between ages 9-18 who were recruited from the mainstream settings and from residential, non-integrated school settings. Media formats included printed words, pictures and sign language. Multimedia options allowed the participants to access specific prompts presented in each of four treatments:

- Treatment 1: print only
- Treatment 2: print and pictures
- Treatment 3: print and digital video of sign language
- Treatment 4: print, pictures, and digital video of sign language

Analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used in data analysis.

The results of the study revealed significant differences between treatments at a p value of .00001 ($df = 3$; $F = 22.27$). That is, participants performed significantly differently when retelling stories presented to them through the different treatment options. There were no significant differences between treatment 1 and treatment 3 nor were there significant differences between treatment 2 and treatment 4. The results also indicated that comprehension was weakest when the stories were presented in a print-only format but comprehension was strongest when stories were presented in the print with pictures. The work by Gentry, Chinn, and Moulton is related to the current study. The two works focused on instructional materials. They however differ in design and respondent. The former was quasi-experimental with deaf students as respondents but the latter is a descriptive study with principals as respondents.

Summary of Review of Related Literature

The literature was organized under the following headings; conceptual framework, theoretical framework and empirical studies. Concept of Education Management Information System was reviewed. The stages in the development of education management information system were also discussed. The theory that propelled the work was also reviewed. From the literature reviewed so far, researchers have investigated studies Educational Management Information System from various stand points and varying literary perspectives. However, there is paucity of literature on the assessment of principals' implementation of Educational Management Information System (EMIS) particularly in South East states, thus, creating strands of gap to be filled by this study. Firstly, this study fills a geographical gap, in the sense that none of the previous studies assessed principals' implementation of EMIS in South East states in particular. Secondly, it also fills a contextual gap because the studies were not conducted on school principals which are the primary source of data. Furthermore, considerable issues in EMIS implementation (staff personnel management, students' personnel management, instructional materials management and curriculum and instructional management) were not studied in the previous studies. In order to bridge the aforementioned gaps this study therefore assessed principals' implementation of education management information system in secondary schools in South East States with a focus on staff personnel management, students' personnel management, instructional materials management and curriculum and instructional management.

RESEARCH METHOD

This chapter presents the procedures adopted for the study. This was discussed under the following sub-headings: research design, area of the study, population of the study, sample and sampling technique, instrument for data collection, validation of the instrument, reliability of the instrument, method of data collection and method of data analysis.

Research Design

The descriptive survey research design was adopted for this study. According to Nworgu (2015) a descriptive survey design is research in which data are collected from a sample of a population with a view of finding out the relative opinion, belief, attitude, and status of that population about a phenomenon. This design is deemed appropriate for this study because the researcher collected data from the respondents through a few representatives and analyzed them in order to assess principals' application of Education Management systems (EMIS) implementation in secondary schools in Anambra state. Again, Luena (2017) and Nwangwu, Ememe and Obike (2013) who carried out similar studies utilized descriptive survey research design.

Area of the Study

This study was carried out in Anambra state. Anambra is a state in south-eastern Nigeria. Its name is an anglicised version of the original 'Oma Mbala', the native name of the Anambra River. The capital and seat of government is Awka. The state is bounded by Delta state to the west, Imo state to the south, Enugu state to the east and Kogi state to the north. Anambra is the eight most populated state in the Federal Republic of Nigeria. The state has a population of 4,055,048 people according to the last census (NPC, 2006) with a land mass of 1,870 square meters.

There are 21 Local Government Areas in the state and the indigenous language of the people is predominantly Igbo. The inhabitants of the area are mainly civil servants and business men, the rural areas are, however, predominantly inhabited by farmers, petty traders and craftsmen. Anambra state comprises six education zones namely Aguata, Awka, Nnewi, Ogidi, Onitsha, and Otuocha education zones. The State Post Primary Schools Service Commission at Awka centrally controls public secondary schools in the state.

The researcher decided to use Anambra state as the area of the study because the state has EMIS offices in the ministry, PPSC headquarters and in the zones. Secondly, the state mandates principals of secondary schools to embrace EMIS. The researcher observed problems of data processing in the state education sector and information management problems especially in public secondary schools in Anambra State.

Population of the Study

The population for this study was 261 respondents. This is made up of all the 106 principals in urban and 155 principals in rural public secondary schools in the State. The data are as obtained from the Post Primary School Service Commission (PPSSC) Anambra state in Awka in June, 2019. The population distribution of the principals according to education zones is shown in the Appendix.

Sample and Sampling Technique

There was no sample. The population size was manageable and as a result used as the sample of the study. Thus, the entire 261 respondents that formed the population of the study were studied.

Instrument for Data Collection

The instrument for data collection is a structured questionnaire designed by the researcher through interaction with experts and review of related literature in relation to the purpose and research questions guiding the study. The instrument consisted of two parts: A and B. Part 'A' dealt with background information of the respondents which encompasses personal data while Part 'B' contained items that addressed the core subject matter of research question and it's divided into four sections, A, B, C and D. Section 'A' sought information on principals' implementation of EMIS in staff personnel issues; Section 'B' focused on principals' implementation of EMIS in student personnel issues. In the same manner, Section 'C' contained items on principals' implementation of EMIS in instructional issues; while Section 'D' contained items on principals' implementation of EMIS in curriculum issues in the schools. The questionnaire items are structured on a four-point rating scale of Very High Extent – 4 points, High Extent – 3 points, Low Extent – 2 points and Very Low Extent – 1 point. The instrument contained 30 items.

Validation of the Instrument

To ascertain the validity of the instrument developed for the study, the purpose of the study, research questions, research hypotheses and the instrument were given to three experts, two in the Department of Educational Management and Policy, and one in the Department of Educational Foundations (Measurement and Evaluation Unit), all in Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University, Igbariam Campus for validation. They were requested to validate the instrument with reference to the appropriateness of the items, their wordings and construct. The experts were also requested to examine the items in respect of their relevance, clarity, content coverage and their appropriateness in addressing the purpose of the study. The inputs of these authorities were incorporated by the researcher in modifying the items and in producing the final copies of the instrument. For instance, the expert in measurement and evaluation suggested the restructuring of the topic, research questions and hypotheses. The purpose of the study was also restructured based on the advice of the same expert. For all the items, the same expert suggested making each item personal since each respondent knows about what directly relates provision of instructional resources. The expert also restructured the response options from SA, A, D, and SD to VHE, HE, LE, and VLE. In the same manner, the expert in Educational Management and Policy suggested that item 10 of the original draft be moved to another cluster. Again, the expert in measurement and evaluation suggested the restructuring of the lead statements and re-arrangement of some of the items.

Reliability of the Instrument

The reliability of the instrument was established using Cronbach alpha method. Copies of the questionnaire for the study were administered to twenty-five (25) principals of secondary schools in Enugu State which were outside the area of study. The internal consistency of the items in the clusters was determined using Cronbach statistics. The alpha coefficients of 0.72, 0.74, 0.75 and 0.74 with the overall co-efficient of 0.74 were obtained respectively for the sections A, B, C and D. In line with Nworgu (2015) who stated if the correlation co-efficient obtained in an instrument is up to .60 and above, the instrument should be considered good enough to be used for a study. Therefore, the instrument was deemed reliable.

Method of Data Collection

The researcher administered the instruments directly to the respondents with the help of five research assistants. The research assistants were instructed on how to distribute and collect copies of the questionnaire from the respondents. Before moving to the respondents, permission was sought from the principals through a letter of introduction from the researcher's Head of Department. The researcher and the assistants met the respondents in their various locations and copies of the questionnaire were administered on them. The researcher and the assistants waited for the respondents to attend to the questionnaire and offered assistance where necessary. The completed copies were collected on the spot. Follow up visits were made in some cases where the respondents could not submit on the spot. The distribution and collection of the questionnaire lasted for two weeks. All the 261 copies of the instrument administered were correctly filled, retrieved, and used for data analysis.

Method of Data Analysis

Mean scores and standard deviations were used to answer the research questions while t- test was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. In analyzing the data for research questions, mean rating of 2.50 was used in taking decisions. Mean ratings from 2.50 and above were regarded as high extent while those below 2.50 were regarded as low extent.

In analyzing the data for the hypotheses, the t- test was used to test the hypotheses at the 0.05 level of significance. The choice of t-test is in line with the recommendation of Howith and Cranner (2011) that the use of t-test is suitable for a sample with two variables and emphasis is not on effect or relationship. Since the sample has two variables and emphasis in the study is not on effect or relationship, the choice of t-test is therefore appropriate for the study. As a rule, the hypothesis was not accepted if the calculated t-value was equal or greater than the table t-value while when the calculated t-value was less than the table t-value, the null hypotheses was accepted.

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

In this chapter, data collected were presented and analyzed. The results were presented according to the research questions and hypothesis.

Research Questions

Research Question1: What is the extent of principals' implementation of EMIS in planning staff personnel issues in secondary schools in Anambra State?

Table 1: Mean Ratings on Principals Implementation of EMIS in Staff Personnel issues in Secondary Schools in Anambra State. N=261

S/N	EMIS Implementation in Staff Personnel Issues. I use EMIS	Mean	Sd.	Remarks
1	in ascertaining the number of academic staff in my school.	2.62	0.11	High Extent
2	in ascertaining the number of non-academic staff in my school.	2.51	0.10	High Extent
3	in planning the salary of the staff.	1.61	0.09	Low Extent
4	in identifying absentee members of staff.	2.32	0.11	Low Extent
5	in ascertaining and confirming the length of service of every member of staff.	2.53	0.09	High Extent
6	in identifying regular attendee members of staff for the purpose of re-enforcement.	2.54	0.10	High Extent
7	for a daily record of the classroom activities of academic staff.	2.11	0.08	Low Extent
8	for a daily documentation of activities of non-academic staff.	2.09	0.12	Low Extent
	Mean of Means	**2.29**	**0.1**	**Low Extent**

Table 1 presents principals mean ratings on their implementation of EMIS in staff personnel management issues in secondary schools in Anambra State. Item 1 has mean rating of 2.61 and sd

of 0.11, item 2 has mean rating of 2.51 and 0.11 sd. Furthermore, item 5 has mean rating of 2.53 and sd of 0.09 while item 6 has 2.54 mean rating with sd of 0.10. All the mean ratings for these items 1; 2; 5 and 6 are above the cut-off mark of 2.50 and indicated that the principals use EMIS in ascertaining the number of academic and non-academic staff in their schools. They also implement EMIS in ascertaining and confirming the length of service of every number and staff are as well in identifying regular attendee numbers of staff for the purpose of reinforcement.

On the other hand, item 3 has mean ratings of 1.61 and sd of 0.09. Similarly, item 4 has mean ratings of 2. 32 and sd of 0.11 while item 7 has mean ratings of 2.11with sd. of 0.08 and item 8 has mean ratings of 2.09 with sd of 0.12. All the mean ratings for these items 3; 4; 7 and 8 are below the cut-off mark of 2.50 and indicated that the principals do not implement EMIS in planning staff salary, in identifying absentee member of staff for daily records of the classroom activities of academic staff and for daily documentation of activities of non-academic staff.

The standard deviation scores of the principles ranged between 0.08 and 0.12 with an overall mean of 0.1. This shows that the scores cluster around their mean and indicated that the principals did not vary significantly in their ratings. Again, the mean of means for the items is 2.29. This falls below the cut-off mark of 2.50 and indicated that the principals do not use EMIS in staff personnel management issues in secondary schools in Anambra State.

Research Question 2: What is the extent of principals' implementation of EMIS in planning student personnel issues in secondary schools in Anambra State?

Table 2: Mean Ratings on Principals Implementation of EMIS in Student Personnel Issues in Secondary Schools in Anambra State. N=261

S/N	EMIS Implementation in Student Personnel Issues. I use EMIS	Mean	Sd.	Remarks
9	in ascertaining the number of students in my school.	2.24	0.12	Low Extent
10	in ascertaining the number of WAEC candidates in my school.	2.43	0.09	Low Extent
11	in collecting the academic records of students in my school.	1.47	0.11	Low Extent
12	in analysing the academic performance of students on a termly basis in my school.	2.36	0.11	Low Extent
13	in planning the number of students to admit at the beginning of a new academic session.	2.04	0.10	Low Extent
14	in identifying absentee students in my school.	2.63	0.12	High Extent

15	for the dissemination of termly results of students.	2.52	0.11	High Extent
16	for keeping records of behavioural disposition of students for appropriate decisions in my school.	2.56	0.10	High Extent
	Mean of Means	**2.41**	**0.11**	**Low Extent**

Results in Table 2 indicate principals' ratings on their use of EMIS in students' personnel management issues. Item 14 has mean rating of 2.63 and sd of 0.12; item 15 has mean rating of 2.52 and sd of 0.11 while item 16 has mean rating of 2.56 and sd of 0.12. The mean ratings for items 14, 15 and 16 are therefore above the cut-off mark of 2.50 and indicated that the principals use EMIS in identifying absentee students in the schools, they use EMIS for the dissemination of termly results of students and for keeping records of behavioural disposition of the students for appropriate decisions in the school.

On the other hand, item 9 has mean rating of 2.24 with sd of 0.12; item 10 has mean rating of 2.43 with sd of 0.09; item 11 has mean rating of 2.47 with sd of 0.11; item 12 has mean rating of 2.36 with sd of 0.11 while item 12 has mean rating of 2.04 with sd of 0.11. All the mean ratings for items 9, 10, 11, 12 and 13 are below the cut-off mark of 2.50 and indicated that the principals do not use EMIS in ascertaining the number of students or the number of WAEC candidates in their schools. In the same manner, they do not implement EMIS in analyzing the academic performance of students on termly, basis or in planning the number of students to admit at the beginning of a new academic session.

The standard deviation of the principals ranged between 0.09 and 0.12 with the overall Sd. of 0.11. The Sd. mean of means indicate that the principal did not vary significantly in their ratings of the items. Similarly, the mean of means for the items is 2.41 which fall below the cut-off mark of 2.50. This indicates that the principals do not use EMIS in students' personnel issues in secondary schools in Anambra State.

Research Question 3: What is the extent of principals' implementation of EMIS in planning instructional materials t issues in secondary schools in Anambra State?

Table 3: Mean Ratings on Principals Implementation of EMIS in Instructional Material Issues in Secondary Schools in Anambra State. N=261

S/N	EMIS Implementation in Instructional Material Issues. I use EMIS	Mean	Sd.	Remarks
17	in planning the instructional materials for instructional delivery.	2.30	0.11	Low Extent
18	in managing instructional materials in my school.	2.51	0.12	High Extent
19	in documenting the instructional materials that are used over a period of time.	2.69	0.10	High Extent
20	documenting the instructional materials that are purchased over a period of time.	2.68	0.11	High Extent
21	in ascertaining the instructional materials that are best suited for a particular subject.	2.46	0.10	Low Extent
22	in organizing instructional materials in line with educational level of the students.	2.57	0.12	High Extent
	Mean of Means	**2.52**	**0.11**	**High Extent**

Results in table 3 indicate principals' ratings of their implementation of EMIS in instructional materials management issues in secondary schools in Anambra State. Item 18 has mean rating of 2.51with sd of 0.12; item 19 has mean rating of 2.69 with sd of 0.10; item 20 has mean rating of 2.68 with sd of 0.11and item 22 has mean rating of 2.57 with sd of 0.12. All the mean ratings for items 18, 19, 20, and 22 respectively are above the cut-off mark of 2.50. The ratings indicated that the principals use EMIS in managing instructional materials and in documenting the instructional materials that are used over a period of time. The ratings also indicated that the principals use EMIS in organizing instructional materials in line with educational levels of the students.

On the other hand, item 17 has mean rating of 2.30 with sd of 0.11 and item 21 has mean rating of 2.46 with sd of 0.10. The mean ratings for items 17 and 21 are therefore below the cut-off mark of 2.50. They indicate that the principals do not use EMIS in planning the instructional materials for instructional delivery or in ascertaining the instructional materials that are best suited for a particular subject.

The standard deviation scores ranged between 0.10 and 0.12 with the overall Sd. of 0.11. The scores are close to one another and to the overall Sd. The range of the scores indicates that the

principals did not vary significantly in their ratings of the items. The mean of means for the cluster is 2.52 which is above the cut-off mark of 2.50. This means that the principals use EMIS in instructional material issues in secondary schools in Anambra State.

Research Question 4: What is the extent of principals' implementation of EMIS in planning curriculum issues in secondary schools in Anambra State?

Table 4: Mean Ratings on Principals Implementation of EMIS in Curriculum Issues in Secondary Schools in Anambra State. N=261

S/N	EMIS Implementation in Curriculum Issues. I use EMIS in:	Mean	Sd	Remarks
23	planning the content of curriculum.	2.11	0.11	Low Extent
24	analysing the content of curriculum.	2.46	0.10	Low Extent
25	organizing the content of curriculum in line with their learning experiences.	2.34	0.12	Low Extent
26	evaluating the extent to which content of curriculum has been achieved.	2.40	0.10	Low Extent
27	evaluating the instructional strategies.	2.17	0.11	Low Extent
28	planning the teaching methods in line with the curriculum content.	2.42	0.11	Low Extent
29	assessing the extent to which the objectives of the curriculum has been achieved.	2.39	0.12	Low Extent
30	the documentation of lesson presentation.	2.32	0.10	Low Extent
	Mean of Means	**2.33**	**0.11**	**Low Extent**

Results in Table 4 indicate principals' ratings on their implementation of EMIS in curriculum and instructional management issues in secondary schools in Anambra State. Item 23 has the mean rating of 2.11with sd of 0.11; item 24 has the mean rating of 2.46 with sd of 0.10; item 25 has the mean rating of 2.34 with sd of 0.12 while item 26 has the mean rating of 2.40 with 0.10. Similarly, item 27 has the mean rating of 2.17; item 28 has the mean rating of 2.42 with sd of 0.11; item 29 has the mean rating of 2.39 with sd of 0.12 while item 30 has the mean rating of2.32 with sd of 0.10. All the mean ratings for items 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29 and 30 respectively are below the

cut-off mark of 2.50. This means that the principals do not use EMIS in curriculum issues in secondary schools in Anambra State.

The scores of the standard deviation ranged between 0.10 and 0.12 with the overall Sd. mean of 0.11. The range of these scores indicates closeness of the principals' ratings. Similarly, the mean of means for the items is 2.33 which is below the cut-off mark of 2.50. This means that the principals do not use EMIS to a low extent in curriculum issues.

Testing of Null Hypotheses

$H0_1$: Principals of secondary schools in urban and rural areas in Anambra State do not differ significantly in their mean ratings on the extent they implemented the EMIS in planning staff personnel issues.

Table 5: t-test of Principals Implementation of EMIS in Staff Personnel Issues in Secondary Schools in Anambra State.

Group	Sample Size	$\bar{X}$	SD.	df.	t-Cal.	t-Crit.	Decision
Urban	106	3.16	0.10				
				259	1.98	±1.9650	Significant (S)
Rural	155	2.85	0.11				

The result as shown in Table 5 revealed that, the t-test calculated is 1.98, while the t-test critical table value is ±1.9650. Thus, the t-calculated is greater than the critical observed table value which is ±1.9650 and falls within the rejectable region. The null hypothesis (H_0) of no significant difference in the mean ratings is thus rejected indicating that there is significant difference in their mean ratings on the ways they have implemented the EMIS in staff personnel issues in secondary schools in Anambra State.

$H0_2$: Principals of secondary schools in urban and rural areas in Anambra State do not differ significantly in their mean ratings on the extent they implemented the EMIS in planning students' personnel issues.

Table 6: t-test of Principals Implementation of EMIS in Student Personnel issues in Secondary Schools in Anambra State.

Group	Sample Size	$\bar{X}$	SD.	df.	t-Cal.	t-Crit.	Decision
Urban	106	2.18	0.11				
				259	1.98	±1.9650	Significant (S)
Rural	155	2.13	0.13				

The result as presented in Table 6 showed that, the t-test calculated is 1.98, while the t-test critical table value is ±1.9650. This value calculated is greater than the critical observed table value which is ±1.9650 and falls within the rejectable region. The null hypothesis (H_0) of no significant difference in the mean ratings is thus rejected indicating that principals of secondary schools in urban and rural areas in Anambra State differed significantly in their mean ratings on the ways they have implemented the EMIS in students' personnel issues in secondary schools in Anambra State.

$H0_3$: Principals of secondary schools in urban and rural areas in Anambra State do not differ significantly in their mean ratings on the extent they implemented the EMIS in planning instructional material issues.

Table 7: t-test of Principals Implementation of EMIS in Instructional Material issues in Secondary Schools in Anambra State.

Group	Sample Size	$\bar{X}$	SD.	df.	t-Cal.	t-Crit.	Decision
Urban	106	1.83	0.11				Not
				259	1.97	±1.9650	Significant (NS)
Rural	155	1.75	0.10				

In Table 7, the result showed that, t-test calculated is 1.97, while the t-test critical table value is ±1.9650. This value calculated is greater than the critical observed table value which is ±1.9650 and falls within the rejectable region. The null hypothesis (H_0) of no significant difference in the mean ratings is thus rejected indicating that principals of secondary schools in urban and rural

areas in Anambra State differed significantly in their mean ratings on the ways they have implemented the EMIS in instructional materials issues in secondary schools in Anambra State.

H04: Principals of secondary schools in urban and rural areas in Anambra State do not differ significantly in their mean ratings on the extent they implemented the EMIS in planning curriculum issues.

Table 8: t-test of Principals Implementation of EMIS in Curriculum Issues in Secondary Schools in Anambra State

Group	Sample Size	$\bar{X}$	SD.	Df.	t-Cal.	t-Crit.	Decision
Urban	106	2.18	0.12				
				259	1.98	±1.9650	Significant (S)
Rural	155	2.21	0.10				

In Table 8, the result showed that, t-test calculated is 1.98 while the t-test critical table value is ±1.9650. This value calculated is greater than the critical observed table value which is ±1.9650 and falls within the rejectable region. The null hypothesis (H_0) of no significant difference in the mean ratings is thus rejected indicating that, principals of secondary schools in urban and rural areas in Anambra State differed significantly in their mean ratings on the ways they have implemented the EMIS in curriculum issues in secondary schools in Anambra State.

Summary of Findings

Based on the data presentation and analysis, the following summaries of findings are made:

1. Principals of secondary schools in Anambra State implement EMIS to a low extent in planning staff personnel issues in their schools.
2. Principals of secondary schools in Anambra state implement EMIS to a low extent in planning students' personnel issues in their schools
3. Principals implement EMIS to a high extent in planning instructional material issues in secondary schools in Anambra State.
4. Secondary school principals in Anambra state implement EMIS to a low extent in planning curriculum issues in their schools
5. There is significant difference in the mean ratings of principals in urban and rural areas on the extent they have implemented EMIS in planning staff personnel issues on their schools.

6. There is significant difference in the mean ratings of principals in urban and rural areas on the extent they have implemented EMIS in planning students' personnel issues on their schools.
7. There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of principals in urban and rural areas on the extent they have implemented EMIS in planning instructional materials issues on their schools.
8. There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of principals in urban and rural areas on the extent they have implemented EMIS in planning curriculum issues on their schools.

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The findings of this study were discussion and conclusion made. The implication of the findings and recommendations were made along with elicitations and suggestion for further studies.

Discussion of Findings

The findings of the study were discussed under the following subheadings:

1. Implementation of EMIS in Staff Personnel Issues
2. Implementation of EMIS in Students' Personnel Issues
3. Implementation of EMIS in Instructional Material Issues
4. Implementation of EMIS in Curriculum Issues

Implementation of EMIS in Staff Personnel Issues

The first finding of this study was that principals of secondary schools in Anambra state do not implement EMIS in staff personnel issues. Further finding indicated that secondary school principals in urban and moral differed significantly in their mean ratings on the ways they have implemented EMIS in staff personnel issues.

EMIS is a good innovation in the Nigerian education system. The fact that the principals do not implement it in staff personnel issues in their school points to the fact that most of the principals may not have really understood what EMIS is all about even though it has lasted over eleven years. In the same manner, they differed significantly in their mean vetting probably because all of them do not pass through the same experience, given the location of their schools.

The findings of this study are supported by Joseph (2018) who found that principals did not implement EMIS to any extent in the management of staff in their schools. The finding of this study differed from Luenan (2012) who found that location of school did not significantly affect principals' implementation of EMIS in their school. The reason for the difference in the finding

could be attributed to the level of development in the countries the studies were conducted. Luenan studied Europe but the current study was in Nigeria which is still a developing country.

Given the requirements for the establishment of EMIS, one could have thought that principals in urban and rural areas could not have differed in their mean ratings but the finding was on the country. The difference in the mean ratings could be attributed to or electricity problems and security challenges facing EMIS equipment in some villages.

Implementation of EMIS in Students' Personnel Issues

This study also found that principals in secondary school in Anambra state do not implement EMIS in students' personnel issues. Further findings of the study inculcated that, principals of school in urban and rural areas differed significantly in their mean rating on ways they implement EMIS in students' personnel issues in their schools.

Like the pervious discussion, one is not surprised at the finding of this study because the knowledge of EMIS is seems to be too low among school administration in Nigeria and Anambra state in particular. A policy introduced in 2007 ought to have been mastered by the people by now but in the Nigerian experience, the people that introduce the policy are sometime far from the implementers. The principals may not have implemented EMIS in the student personnel issues probably became they may not be aware of the policy, the date of introduction notwithstanding.

Given the requirement and operations of EMIS one expected a significant difference in the mean ratings of principals in urban and rural secondary schools. They differed probably became they have low knowledge of EMIS which probably contributed to its non-implementation in managing students' personnel issues in the secondary school. Again, EMIS need electricity to function but this is lacking in some rural areas in the state.

The finding of this study is supported by kamile (2018) who found that principals did not utilize EMIS principals in managing student issues in their school. Similarly, koofi (2018) also found that male and female principals did not differ significantly in their mean rating on the implementation of EMIS. The current study focused on location as moderator variable, the no significant difference in koofi's study attributed to gender which is not important to the current work.

Implementation of EMIS in Instructional Material Issues

This study found that secondary school principals in Anambra state implement EMIS in instructional material issues. The findings from the hypothesis indicated that the principals in urban and rural areas in the state differed significantly in their mean ratings on the ways they implement EMIS in instructional material issues.

It is encouraging to find that principals of secondary school in Anambra state implement EMIS in planning instructional materials. One significant aspect of EMIS is record- keeping and data

transmission. It shows that the principals keep records of instructional materials in their schools and use the records in handling such materials. It also shows that they transmit the information or data relating to the instructional material to appropriate quarters. Their knowledge of EMIS and implementation practices are evident in the data analysis for the third hypothesis that indicated significant difference in their mean ratings. On extent they implement EMIS in handling of instructional material issues in their schools. This shows that, though they implement EMIS in handling instructional material issues, the operation in urban and rural areas are not the same.

The finding of this study was supported by Ahaeto (2018) who found that principals utilized EMIS in handling instructional materials in their schools. Again, Telem and Buvitski (2017) also found that school location has significant impact on principals' implementation of EMIS. This probably accounted for the insignificant differences in the mean ratings of principals in urban and rural areas on ways they implement EMIS in planning materials issues in their schools.

Implementation of EMIS in Curriculum and Instructional Issues

This study found that secondary school principals in Anmbra State do not implement EMIS in curriculum issues in their schools. Data analysis for the fourth hypothesis revealed that secondary school principals in the urban and rural areas in Anambra State differed significantly in their mean ratings on ways they implement EMIS in curriculum issues in their schools.

The finding of the study is quite educative. It shows that most of the principals in the state may not have gotten adequate knowledge of EMIS and its operations. This could be the reason why they did not implement it in the curriculum issues. The same view seemed to be expressed in the hypothesis that indicated significant difference in the mean ratings of the principals in urban and rural areas on ways they implement EMIS in curriculum issues.

The finding of this study is supported by Mugerezi (2019) who found that EMIS is not well implemented in the areas of curriculum implementation. Again, Trucano (2016) found significant difference in the mean ratings of urban and rural school principals in the implementation of EMIS in managing instructions.

Conclusion

The conclusion of this study is that principals in public secondary schools in Anambra State implement EMIS in instructional material issues. They do not implement EMIS in planning staff personnel, students' personnel and curriculum issues. Furthermore, they differed in their mean ratings on the ways they implement EMIS in the issues assessed.

Implications of the Study

The findings of this study have implications for school principals. The findings also have implications for ministry of Education and policy makers.

The first implication of this study is for the principals. They need to understand the components and operations of EMIS. The fact that the principals do not implement EMIS in their schools to a high extent implies that they do not have functional EMIS in their schools. They cannot implement what they do not have. Even if they have EMIS in their schools, they must have the knowledge of the principals and skills needed to make it functional.

The second implication is for educational planners. The principals that supply data for educational planning do not operate functional EMIS in their schools. This implies that the educational planners may not plan based on reliable data. This will make their planning activities difficult especially at this information driven age where information is more of digital than manual. The educational planners need to encourage school principals to embrace EMIS so that they can come up with functional plans guided by EMIS.

The third implication of the findings is for the ministry of education. The ministry needs to equip the schools with EMIS facilities. The ministry also needs to equip school principals with the knowledge and skills needed to operate functional EMIS. This could be done through capacity building workshops or seminars. This will go a long way in the implementation of EMIS in the schools.

The last implication of the study is for education policy makers. Policies are made to be implemental and proper implementation requires that implement be properly informed. The education policy maker whether at federal or state level need to have a common understanding with principals who in the case of EMIS are the major stake holding in terms of implementation. Handing down policies to people (who may not have knowledge of the policy) to implement may result in the non-implementation of the policy. There need to be a kind of collaboration between the policy makers that introduced EMIS and school principals who will implement the EMIS in their schools.

Recommendations

Based on the results of the study and discussion that followed, the following recommendations are made:

1. Principals should undergo in-service training in the implementation of EMIS in planning staff personnel issues, students' personnel issues, instructional materials and curriculum issues in their schools.
2. The Ministry of Education that introduced EMIS into the Nigerian educational system should properly educate principals through seminars or workshops on the implementation of the policy in secondary schools

3. Principals should implement EMIS in planning staff personnel issues in their schools.
4. The principals should try to implement EMIS to a high extent in planning student's personnel issues.
5. Principals should implement EMIS to a high extent in planning curriculum and instruction in their schools.
6. The state ministry of Education should empower principal through seminars or other forms of in-service training to effectively implement EMIS in their schools.

Limitations of the Study

There were some limitations during the execution of the study but they do not in any way invalidate the findings of the study.

1. The findings of this study cannot be applied in the general administration or management of the school. Though the study examined staff personnel management, students' personnel issues, instructional material and curriculum, the aspects covered are issues related to EMIS implementation. School management or administration was not studied.
2. The findings of the study may not be over generalized to schools outside Anambra state. This is because the provision of facilities and capacity building for the implementation of EMIS may differ from state to state. Accordingly, the problems and prospects of EMIS across the states of the federation may not be entirely the same.

Suggestions for further studies

The following suggestions were made for further research.

1. A replication of the present study in another level of education and in another state of the federation to enable and in another state of the federation to enable accurate generalization of the findings.
2. Availability of facilities for the implementation of EMIS in public and private secondary schools in Anambra State
3. A comparative analysis of EMIS in public and private secondary schools in Anambra state
4. In-service training needs of principals for the implementation of EMIS in secondary schools in Anambra state
5. Evaluation of the implementation of EMIS principles in secondary schools in any state of the federation or geographical zone.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1

Department of Educational Foundations

Faculty of Education

Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University

Anambra State.

Dear Respondents,

LETTER OF INTRODUCTION

The researcher is carrying out a research work on Implementation of Education Management Information Systems (EMIS) in secondary schools in Anambra State.

The research is strictly for academic purpose and the confidentiality of your information is assured. Kindly assist me in getting the required information she would need for a successful completion of the study.

Thanks, in anticipation for your favourable consideration.

Yours faithfully,

Researcher

Appendix 2

PRINCIPALS' IMPLEMENTATATION OF EDUCATION MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEMS QUESTIONNAIRE (PIEMISQ)

Part A: Background Information

Please supply the following information and tick good (√) in the column as it applicable to your school location.

Location of School (a) Urban ☐ (b) Rural ☐

Part B: Questionnaire items.

Instruction: The items below are on principals' implementation of EMIS in secondary schools in Anambra State. As a school principal, you are required to tick (√) the right option that expresses your implementation of EMIS in your school. Use the following codes: Very High Extent – 4 points, High Extent – 3 points, Low Extent – 2 points and Very Low Extent – 1 point.

	Section B: Staff Personnel Management Issues	**Response Options**			
S/N	**EMIS Implementation in Staff Personnel Issues. I use EMIS**	**VHE**	**HE**	**LE**	**VLE**
1	in ascertaining the number of academic staff in my school.				
2.	in ascertaining the number of non-academic staff in my school.				
3.	in planning the salary of the staff.				
4.	in identifying absentee members of staff.				
5.	in ascertaining and confirming the length of service of every member of staff.				
6.	in identifying regular attendee members of staff for the purpose of re-enforcement.				
7.	for a daily record of the classroom activities of academic staff.				
8.	for a daily documentation of activities of non-academic staff.				

	Section B: Students' Personnel Management Issues	Response Options

S/N	EMIS Implementation in Student Personnel Issues. I use EMIS	VHE	HE	LE	VLE
9.	in ascertaining the number of students in my school.				
10.	in ascertaining the number of WAEC candidates in my school.				
11.	in collecting the academic records of students in my school.				
12.	in analysing the academic performance of students on a termly basis in my school.				
13.	in planning the number of students to admit at the beginning of a new academic session.				
14.	in identifying absentee students in my school.				
15.	for the dissemination of termly results of students.				
16.	for keeping records of behavioural disposition of students for appropriate decisions in my school.				

	Section C: Instructional Material Issues	Response Options

S/N	EMIS Implementation in Instructional Material Issues. I use EMIS	VHE	HE	LE	VLE
17.	in planning the instructional materials for instructional delivery.				
18.	in managing instructional materials in my school.				
19.	in documenting the instructional materials that are used over a period of time.				
20.	documenting the instructional materials that are purchased over a period of time.				
21.	in ascertaining the instructional materials that are best suited for a particular subject.				
22.	in organizing instructional materials in line with educational level of the students.				

Section D: Curriculum Management Issues	Response Options

S/N	EMIS Implementation in Curriculum Issues. I use EMIS in:	VHE	HE	LE	VLE
23.	planning the content of curriculum.				
24.	analysing the content of curriculum.				
25.	organizing the content of curriculum in line with their learning experiences.				
26.	evaluating the extent to which content of curriculum has been achieved.				
27.	evaluating the instructional strategies.				
28.	planning the teaching methods in line with the curriculum content.				
29.	assessing the extent to which the objectives of the curriculum has been achieved.				
30.	the documentation of lesson presentation.				

Appendix 3:

Instrument Reliability

Scale: Reliability coefficient for Section A

Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	25	100.0
	Excluded[a]	0	.0
	Total	25	100.0

a. List wise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.7231	8

RELIABILITY /VARIABLES=c1 c2 c3 /SCALE

('Reliability coefficient for Section C') ALL

/MODEL=ALPHA.

Reliability

Scale: Reliability coefficient for Section B

Case Processing Summary

	N	%
Valid	25	100.0
Excluded[a]	0	.0
Total	25	100.0

a. List wise deletion based on all variables
in the procedure.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
0.7433	8

RELIABILITY /VARIABLES=d1 d2 d3 d4 d5 d6 d7 d8 d9 d10 d11

/SCALE('Reliability coefficient for Section D') ALL /MODEL=ALPHA.

Reliability

Scale: Reliability coefficient for Section C

Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	25	100.0
	Excluded[a]	0	.0
	Total	25	100.0

a. List wise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.75421	6

RELIABILITY /VARIABLES=e1 e2 e3 e4 e5 e6 e7

/SCALE('Reliability coefficient for Section E') ALL /MODEL=ALPHA.

Reliability

RELIABILITY /VARIABLES=f1 f2 f3 f4 f5 f6

/SCALE('Reliability coefficient for Section F') ALL /MODEL=ALPHA.

Reliability

Scale: Reliability coefficient for Section D

Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	25	100.0
	Excluded[a]	0	.0
	Total	25	100.0

a. List wise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.741322	8

RELIABILITY /VARIABLES=g1 g2 g3 g4 g5 g6 g7

/SCALE('Reliability coefficient for Section G') ALL /MODEL=ALPHA.

STRUCTURED AND UNSTRUCTURED RECOGNITION AS PREDICTORS OF TEACHERS' JOB COMMITMENT IN STATE PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN SOUTH EAST, NIGERIA

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Abstract

The study examined structured and unstructured recognition as predictors of teachers' job commitment in state public secondary schools in South East, Nigeria. Two research questions guided the study and two null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance. The study adopted correlational research design. The population of the study consist 33,570 teachers in 1,410 state public secondary schools in 21 education zones in South East, Nigeria. The sample of 1,678 teachers in 282 state public secondary schools in 21 education zones in South East, Nigeria was used for the study. Simple random sampling technique was used for the study. The instruments for data collection are questionnaire titled: Recognition Questionnaire (RQ) and Teachers' Job Commitment Questionnaire (TJCQ). The instruments were subjected to face and construct validation. Face validation was done by three experts. The reliability of the instrument was done using Cronbach Alpha method and the average coefficients were established at 0.80 for RQ and 0.84 for TJCQ. Simple linear regression statistical tool was used to answer the research questions and test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The findings of the study revealed that structured and unstructured recognition positively and significantly predicted teachers' job commitment in state public secondary schools in South East, Nigeria. The study concluded that recognition is a positive and significant predictor of teachers' job commitment in state public secondary schools in South East, Nigeria. Based on the findings, the study recommended that teachers' hard work in state public secondary schools in South East, Nigeria should be adequately recognized and rewarded to keep their morale high for school activities in the region. Teachers who put in their best for the actualization of school goals and objectives should be given short or long term recognition, in line with the school policies, in order to encourage other staffs to be diligent, engaged and committed to their duties.

Keywords: Structured recognition, unstructured recognition, teachers' job commitment, state public secondary schools, South East, Nigeria

Introduction

Teachers are considered basic and very powerful instruments in any education system and as such they are the mainstay of the education system. They are however, charged with the responsibilities of ensuring that learning is sufficient and effective in order for students to discover their potentials maximally. Thus, the success and failure of educational activities highly depends on teachers' job commitment.

Teachers' job commitment is the level of loyalty and responsibility that teachers demonstrate towards their profession, their students and the educational institution they work for. It encompasses a range of attitudes and behaviours that reflect the teachers' strong belief in the importance of their role in shaping young minds and contributing to the overall growth and development of their students. Eze et al. (2024) explained that teachers' job commitment is the level of enthusiasm for tasks assigned to teaching staff in the school. When teachers are genuinely committed to their job, they are more likely to go above and beyond to create a positive learning environment, continually improve their teaching methods and support their students' individual needs. Adinna et al. (2024) explained that job commitment of teachers could be determined by their proper execution of basic tasks and additional responsibilities assigned by the principals, active involvement in school functions, punctuality to work, remaining in school till the closing hour and willingness to help students to learn. Manafa and Adinna (2023) submitted that motivated teachers appear to have a social connection with their coworkers, are intellectually prepared to contribute, are present and active and like exercising their individuality at work. Committed teachers are punctual and regular at work in such a way that they get to their schools on time and they are present on all working days, attendance at meetings and all other school functions such as assemblies, sports days and music festivities among others (Okaforcha et al., 2025).

Teachers' job commitment is crucial for fostering productive and supportive educational environment that benefits both students and the broader school community. Ifediorah Okeke and Okaforcha (2019) asserted that job commitment in teachers also encompasses their emotional and intellectual involvement in their teaching tasks, which directly affects students' outcomes and school effectiveness. A committed teacher is actively engaged in their work, showing a high level of involvement in planning lessons, delivering instruction and participating in school activities (Ughamadu et al., 2024). Teachers with high job commitment are focused on enhancing students' learning outcomes, often going beyond the standard curriculum to meet the needs of their students. Okoli et al. (2024) highlighted that committed teachers are more likely to engage in innovative practices, work beyond stipulated hours and take personal responsibility for students' success. This commitment area involves two essential components namely pride in one's being in the teaching job and a strong desire for professional development. In fact, after joining the profession they should fully understand as long as they are there, they have to develop pride knowing that this is a Nobel job charged with great responsibilities as the society hands over its students to this system

for their wholesome education. Obi et al. (2025) posited that job commitment in teachers involves a proactive approach in lesson delivery, students' mentoring and participation in school development activities. It is characterized by a teacher's continuous effort to fulfill their professional responsibilities and obligations, reflecting a strong attachment to their institution and students. in this study, teachers' job commitment referred to teachers' willingness to dedicate effort toward students' achievement and institutional goals. It is the dedication that teachers believe or perceive towards particular work and the job they carry out in the school. When committed teachers are rewarded for their positive input in the school in form of recognition, their commitment level increases

The traditional approach of recognition is the type that is carried out through gifts and monetary appreciation. Recognition is good indication that the behaviour of the staff is valued. Agah and Yakubu (2024) observed that teachers' recognition is common in schools for principals to get more of the teachers' and students' behaviour they recognise and appreciate. They are capable of eliciting good work performance needed to maintain commitment in the school. Agah and Yakubu further averred that recognitions can be as candid as a pat-on-the-back and a genuine compliment. It can also be as simple as a 'thank you', praises, applause or a friendly greeting at work. They also listed various forms of recognition to include social recognition, public and private recognition, written and verbal praise, day-to-day recognition, gift cards, structured recognition, performance-based recognition and effort-based rewards, among others.

Recognition can also be in form of involvement in decision-making. Adeyemi and Afolakemi (2022) submitted that getting employees involved in decision-making is a sure shot way of making them feel important and boosting their morale. Adeyemi and Afolakemi further added classified recognition as structured and unstructured recognition to the participation of decision-making. Participation in the decision-making process gives each teacher the opportunity to voice their opinions and to share their knowledge with others. The expression of viewpoints opens dialogue between co-staff, with each staff bringing their individual strengths to a project (Obi & Ebelechukwu, 2024). It is also a good way to gather information about the employees as to how they work in a team environment and where training may be necessary, all of which leads to an increase in effectiveness, and ultimately an increase in good teamwork and commitment. Obi and Ebelechukwu categorized recognition as leadership recognition, performance recognition, formal recognition, unstructured recognition and managerial recognition. In this study, Adeyemi and Afolakemi (2022)'s types of recognition will be adopted which is structured and unstructured recognition.

Structured recognition, like the name implies, is a very deliberate and conscious approach to recognizing and rewarding individual teachers in schools. Adeyemi and Afolakemi (2022) argued that school authorities or school principals are most likely to be in charge of this type of praise. Think of awards like 'staff of the month or awards given for years of service. There are several

benefits to structured awards. The main attraction is that these awards have a lot more weight to them. If a teacher wins an award like staff of the month or best staff of the year, they will likely want to make a big deal out of it. Teachers seek this kind of large-scale praise because they know that it truly validates their hard work. Thus, a programme to formalize peer recognition, like 'staff of the month' or 'most helpful colleague,' helps foster a culture of appreciation. It is also a good way to gather invaluable insights about team dynamics, individual strengths and the collective pulse of the school. On the other hand, Olaoye and Odunyemi (2023) submitted that structured recognition is scarce. For example, the principal can only make one teacher 'staff of the month' every month and this gives the principal limited chances to recognize other staff every month if that is the only form of appreciation. Teachers vying for that coveted spot will be frustrated if they are continually passed up for it.

Unlike structured recognition, unstructured recognition is casual and impromptu. It is typically handled top-down or peer-to-peer. Adeyemi and Afolakemi (2022) opined that an unstructured approach removes some of the unnecessary boundaries of traditional staff appreciation like staff of the month. Using peer-to-peer or even less official types of top-down recognition are all ways to accomplish this type. For example, one can praise their team when they do something amazing without giving them a formal award for it. Team members can recognize each other and build team camaraderie. Some common forms of unstructured recognition as portrayed by Adeyemi and Afolakemi (2022) include receiving daily praises, day-to-day encouragement, positive confirmations, regular acknowledgement, daily verbal praise, informal praise, and small compliments among others. Agah and Yakubu (2024) noted that unstructured recognition is well-loved by employees because it feels more authentic and genuine than structured recognition. Plus, it is easy to do and typically does not require much effort to carry out. Okwueze (2023) noted that unstructured recognition comes in so many forms, and it all pulls the organisation forward. Despite the fact that, not all recognition is created equal, each situation would feel good to a teacher for different reasons. To this end, a mix of both types of recognition (structured and unstructured) might be required to meet different teachers' needs and achieve a culture of appreciation which could promote job commitment of teachers in schools.

Teachers' level of commitment to their jobs among some state public secondary school teachers in South East, Nigeria appears to be fluctuating. The multiplier effects of the declining level of job commitment of teachers are visible in their level of dedication to their daily tasks as they engage in more responsibilities without adequate appreciation from the principals. The uncommitted attitude of teachers towards their job may be traceable to inadequate practices of work recognition and appreciation which might be demotivating factors among teachers in some state public secondary school teachers in South East, Nigeria. The inappropriate recognition in some state public secondary school teachers in South East, Nigeria may leads to teachers' low productivity and poor performance which may also breed misunderstanding, suspicion, mistrust, rumors, creates conflict between the management and members of teachers which might be bring out low

commitment of teachers. The study therefore sought to find out the predictive value of recognition on teachers' job commitment in state public secondary school teachers in South East, Nigeria.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of the study is to examine structured and unstructured recognition as predictors of teachers' job commitment in state public secondary schools in South East, Nigeria. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. find out the predictive value of structured recognition on teachers' job commitment in state public secondary schools in South East, Nigeria.
2. determine the predictive value of unstructured recognition on teachers' job commitment in state public secondary schools in South East, Nigeria.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What is the predictive value of structured recognition on teachers' job commitment in state public secondary schools in South East, Nigeria?
2. What is the predictive value of unstructured recognition on teachers' job commitment in state public secondary schools in South East, Nigeria?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses will be tested at 0.05 level of significance:

1. Structured recognition does not significantly predict teachers' job commitment in state public secondary schools in South East, Nigeria.
2. Unstructured recognition does not significantly predict teachers' job commitment in state public secondary schools in South East, Nigeria.

Research Methods

The study was carried out in state public secondary schools in South East, Nigeria. Two research questions guided the study and two null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance. The study adopted correlational research design. The population of the study consist 33,570 teachers in 1,410 state public secondary schools in 21 education zones in South East, Nigeria. The sample of 1,678 teachers in 282 state public secondary schools in 21 education zones in South East, Nigeria was used for the study. Simple random sampling technique was used for the study. The instruments for data collection are questionnaire titled 'Recognition Questionnaire (RQ) and Teachers' Job Commitment Questionnaire (TJCQ).' The instruments were subjected to face and construct validation. Face validation was done by three experts, one in Measurement and

Evaluation, two in the Department of Educational Foundations, all in the Faculty of Education, Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University, Igbariam Campus while construct validation was carried out with Principal Component Analysis approach using SSPS version 26 and the results showed that the construct validity was met. The reliability of the instrument was done using Cronbach Alpha method and the average coefficients were established at 0.80 for RQ and 0.84 for TJCQ. Direct method of data administration was utilized by the researcher together with nine research assistants. Out of 1,678 copies of the instrument administered, 1,597 copies representing 95% of the instrument were correctly completed and returned. Simple linear regression statistical tool was used to answer the research questions and test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

Results

Research Question One: What is the predictive value of structured recognition on teachers' job commitment in state public secondary schools in South East, Nigeria?

Table 1: Summary of Simple Regression Analysis on the Predictive Value of Structured Recognition on Teachers' Job Commitment in State Public Secondary Schools in South East, Nigeria

	Unstandardized β	Std. Dev. β	Standardized β	Decision
Constant	34.942	3.151		
Structured Recognition	0.675	0.205	0.652	Positive
r 0.652				
r^2 0.608				
Adj. r^2 0.576				

The summary of the simple regression analysis as shown in Table 1 indicated that the regression line has a positive intercept as presented by the constant value of 34.942. This means that if all the variables are held constant or fixed (zero) at the expense of structured recognition, teachers' job commitment will be valued at 35%. The analysis showed that structured recognition positively predict teachers' job commitment in state public secondary schools in South East, Nigeria as shown by the regression coefficient (r = 0.652). Furthermore, the standardized beta was also values at β = 0.652 which revealed that structured recognition is a positive predictor of teachers' job commitment in state public secondary schools in South East, Nigeria. This implied that a unit advancement in structured recognition led to 65% advancements in teachers' job commitment in state public secondary schools in South East, Nigeria. The coefficient of determination (r^2) value

of 0.608 indicated that the explanatory power of the variable was moderately strong. This implied that 61% of the variations in teachers' job commitment in state public secondary schools in South East, Nigeria were accounted for by the variations in structured recognition. The adjusted r^2 supported the claim of the r^2 with a value of 0.576 indicating that 58% of the total variation in teachers' job commitment was explained by structured recognition. Thus, adjusted r^2 supported the statement that the explanatory power of teachers' job commitment moderately depends on structured recognition in state public secondary schools in South East, Nigeria.

Research Question Two: What is the predictive value of unstructured recognition on teachers' job commitment in state public secondary schools in South East, Nigeria?

Table 2: Summary of Simple Regression Analysis on the Predictive Value of Unstructured Recognition on Teachers' Job Commitment in State Public Secondary Schools in South East, Nigeria

	Unstandardized β	Std. Dev. β	Standardized β	Decision
Constant	31.817	3.724		
Unstructured Recognition	0.646	0.226	0.621	Positive
r 0.621				
r^2 0.572				
Adj. r^2 0.533				

The summary of the simple regression analysis as shown in Table 2 indicated that the regression line has a positive intercept as presented by the constant value of 31.817. This means that if all the variables are held constant or fixed (zero) at the expense of unstructured recognition, teachers' job commitment will be valued at 32%. The analysis showed that unstructured recognition positively predict teachers' job commitment in state public secondary schools in South East, Nigeria as shown by the regression coefficient (r = 0.621). Nevertheless, the standardized beta is also values at β = 0.621 which revealed that unstructured recognition is a positive predictor of teachers' job commitment in state public secondary schools in South East, Nigeria. This implies that a unit improvement in unstructured recognition led to 62% improvements in teachers' job commitment in state public secondary schools in South East, Nigeria. The coefficient of determination (r^2) value of 0.572 indicated that the explanatory power of the variable was moderately strong. This implied that 57% of the variations in teachers' job commitment in state public secondary schools in South East, Nigeria were accounted for by the variations in unstructured recognition. The adjusted r^2 supported the claim of the r^2 with a value of 0.533 indicating that 53% of the total variation in

teachers' job commitment was explained by unstructured recognition. Thus, adjusted R^2 supports the statement that the explanatory power of teachers' job commitment moderately depends on structured recognition in state public secondary schools in South East, Nigeria.

Test of Hypotheses

Hypothesis One

H_{01}: Structured recognition does not significantly predict teachers' job commitment in state public secondary schools in South East, Nigeria.

Table 3: Test of Significance on the Simple Regression Analysis on Significant Predication of Structured Recognition on Teachers' Job Commitment in State Public Secondary Schools in South East, Nigeria.

	Unstandardized β	Std. Dev. β	Standardized β	t-value	p-value	Decision
Constant	34.942	3.151		25.208	0.000	
Structured Recognition	0.675	0.205	0.652	28.435	0.000	**Significant**
r 0.652						
r^2 0.608						
Adj. r^2 0.576						
F 45.852					0.000	

The summary of the test of significance of simple regression analysis as shown in Table 3 showed that the regression line is held at constant at the value of 34.942(35%), the simple regression coefficient (r) is valued at 0.652(65%) while the r^2 is valued at 0.608(61%) and Adjust r^2 is valued at 0.576(58%). The F-ratio associated with regression is valued at 45.852, while the t-test is valued at 28.435 and the p-value = 0.000. Since p-value (0.000) is less than the specified level of significance 0.05, the study therefore rejected the null hypothesis that structured recognition does not significantly predict teachers' job commitment in state public secondary schools in South East, Nigeria and accepted the alternative hypothesis that structured recognition significantly predicts teachers' job commitment in state public secondary schools in South East, Nigeria.

Hypothesis Two

H_{02}: Unstructured recognition does not significantly predict teachers' job commitment in state public secondary schools in South East, Nigeria.

Table 4: Test of Significance on the Simple Regression Analysis on Significant Predication of Unstructured Recognition on Teachers' Job Commitment in State Public Secondary Schools in South East, Nigeria.

	Unstandardized β	Std. Dev. β	Standardized β	t-value	p-value	Decision
Constant	31.817	3.724		23.108	0.000	
Unstructured Recognition	0.646	0.226	0.621	25.672	0.000	**Significant**
r 0.621						
r^2 0.572						
Adj. r^2 0.533						
F 42.829					0.000	

The summary of the test of significance of simple regression analysis as shown in Table 4 showed that the regression line is held at constant at the value of 31.817(32%), the simple regression coefficient (r) is valued at 0.621(62%) while the r^2 is valued at 0.572(57%) and Adjust r^2 is valued at 0.533(53%). The F-ratio associated with regression is valued at 42.829, while the t-test is valued at 26.672 and the p-value = 0.000. Since p-value (0.000) is less than the specified level of significance 0.05, the study therefore rejected the null hypothesis that unstructured recognition does not significantly predict teachers' job commitment in state public secondary schools in South East, Nigeria and accepted the alternative hypothesis that unstructured recognition significantly predicts teachers' job commitment in state public secondary schools in South East, Nigeria.

Discussion of Findings

Findings on the predictive value of structured recognition on teachers' job commitment in state public secondary schools in South East, Nigeria revealed that structured recognition has a positive predictive value of 0.652 on teachers' job commitment in state public secondary schools in South East, Nigeria. This means that advancement in structured recognition will bring about 65% advancements in teachers' job commitment in state public secondary schools in South East, Nigeria. The study also showed that structured recognition significantly predicted teachers' job

commitment in state public secondary schools in South East, Nigeria. The finding is in line with the findings of Sunoma et al. (2022) that the yearly evaluation of teachers' activities creates a culture where high standards are celebrated. Thus, performance awards empower teachers to perform their best at work. Olaoye and Odunyemi (2023) findings revealed that showcasing teachers' work performance is a good vibe for their commitment and create a great atmosphere for them to continue working hard. Teachers develop emotional connections to their workplace when recognized with their work input on regular basis. This is in agreement with the findings of Manafa and Adinna (2023) that structured appreciation, particularly from school leaders, significantly lowers teachers' burnout and emotional exhaustion, directly reducing turnover. Similarly, Obionu et al. (2024) findings indicated that monthly bonuses to teachers promote their desire to continue working hard. In the findings of Obi and Ebelechukwu (2024), teachers feel genuinely esteemed when management share with others their good work performance and congratulating teachers for a job well done on monthly basis reinforces their good behaviours in schools. The similarities found in these studies are as a result of the fact that structured recognition for teachers boosts job satisfaction, reduces burnout, and improves retention by fostering a sense of value and enhancing work engagement and commitment. It increases teachers' motivation, leading to better classroom engagement, enhanced students' performance and improved job commitment of teachers.

Findings on the predictive value of unstructured recognition on teachers' job commitment in state public secondary schools in South East, Nigeria revealed that unstructured recognition has a positive predictive value of 0.621 on teachers' job commitment in state public secondary schools in South East, Nigeria. This means that improvement in unstructured recognition will bring about 62% improvements in teachers' job commitment in state public secondary schools in South East, Nigeria. The study also showed that unstructured recognition significantly predicted teachers' job commitment in state public secondary schools in South East, Nigeria. The positive and significant findings are as a result of the fact that providing unstructured recognition to teachers (informal, spontaneous and unscripted appreciation) serves as a crucial protective factor against burnout and a powerful motivator. Unlike formal awards, unstructured recognition (like, a handwritten note, verbal praise, or a spotlight in a meeting) acts as immediate validation of a teacher's hard work, enhancing job satisfaction and high work engagement. The finding is in line with the findings of Dashwep and Macha (2022) that teachers receiving daily praises make them to strive for even greater achievements. This is in agreement with the findings of Olaoye and Odunyemi (2023) that genuine appreciation for hard work reminds teachers why they love their profession, effectively combating feelings of being undervalued. In the findings of Manafa and Adinna (2023), they indicated that recognition reduces compassion fatigue and burnout, acting as a crucial emotional support mechanism in high-stress roles. Positive confirmations from their principal motivate their desire to continue working hard and positive comments when offering feedback from their principal creates an atmosphere of upliftment. Okwueze (2023) study revealed that regular acknowledgement from the principal boost teachers' morale for more good work. Small

compliments from colleagues create a culture where high standards are celebrated. Similarly, Obi and Ebelechukwu (2024) indicated that day-to-day encouragement from the school principal reinforces teachers' specific good behaviours and simple messages of expressing gratitude from principal keep teachers constantly assured. Agah and Yakubu (2024) established that daily verbal praise and constant sense of gratitude from the principal energize teachers for greater performance and creates a great atmosphere for their high performance. Teachers feel more supported to try new methods when they know their efforts will be appreciated, even if they are not part of a formal, structured award scheme. This finding agreed with Okaforcha and Ifediorah Okeke (2025) that teachers' motivation improves significantly in environments where recognition is valued. Teachers who received recognition intend to improve in punctuality, lesson preparation, classroom engagement and overall work engagement.

Conclusion

Recognition is necessary in an era of continuous change and improvement. It is seen as an opportunity to involve many teachers in solving the complex educational problems of modern times. A wider range of demands can be addressed by using a collaborative approach than by individual and isolated efforts. The study therefore concluded that recognition are positive and significant predictors of teachers' job commitment in state public secondary schools in South East, Nigeria.

Recommendations

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

1. Teachers' hard work in state public secondary schools in South East, Nigeria should be adequately recognized and rewarded to keep their morale high for school activities in the region. Teachers who put in their best for the actualization of school goals and objectives should be given short- or long-term recognition, in line with the school policies, in order to encourage other staffs to be diligent, engaged and committed to their duties.
2. School authorities in conjunction with secondary school principals in state public secondary schools in South East, Nigeria should constantly motivate teachers by giving out awards and unstructured recognitions to high performing teachers in their respective schools to motivate them to be engaged and committed to their task.

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CLASSROOM LEARNING ENVIRONMENT AND STUDENTS' WRITING COMPETENCE IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE IN PRIVATE SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN ANAMBRA STATE

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Abstract

This study investigated the classroom learning environment – teacher support, collaborative learning environment, and psychological learning environment – as correlates of students' writing competence in English Language among senior secondary school students in private secondary schools in Anambra State. Three research questions and three null hypotheses guided the study. A correlational survey design was adopted. The population comprised 24,267 Senior Secondary 2 English Language students in the 917 government-approved private secondary schools across the six education zones of Anambra State, from which a sample of 394 students was drawn using the Taro Yamane formula and proportionate stratified random sampling. Data were collected using the Classroom Learning Environment Scale (CLES, $\alpha = .79$) and the Students' Writing Competence Rating Scale (SWCRS, $\alpha = .94$), achieving a 98.2% return rate. Data were analysed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient to answer the research questions and test of significance of Pearson to test the hypotheses at the 0.05 level. Findings revealed a moderate positive and significant relationship between teacher support and writing competence ($r = .48$, $p < .05$), a very low, non-significant positive relationship between collaborative learning environment and writing competence ($r = .07$, $p > .05$), and a low positive but significant relationship between psychological learning environment and writing competence ($r = .22$, $p < .05$). The study concluded that teacher support is the most important dimension of the classroom learning environment associated with students' writing competence in this context, while collaborative learning environment, as

currently implemented, is not, and recommended that teachers cultivate supportive instructional relationships and redesign collaborative writing activities with clearer structure and objectives.

Keywords: *Classroom Learning Environment, Students' Writing Competence, English Language.*

Introduction

Writing competence is widely recognised as one of the most important language outcomes in contemporary education because it serves as the primary medium through which learners communicate ideas, demonstrate understanding, and participate in academic discourse. It refers to the ability to produce coherent, grammatically accurate, and purposeful written texts that effectively communicate meaning to intended audiences (Rahimi & Zhang, 2022). Despite its importance, it remains a persistent challenge for many learners, with studies continuing to report weaknesses in students' ability to develop ideas adequately, organise texts coherently, apply appropriate vocabulary, and maintain grammatical accuracy (Goshu & Gebremariam, 2024; Rahimi & Zhang, 2022). Huang (2023) found that learners' writing performance is associated with their emotional engagement and interaction with teachers, while Wu et al. (2020) reported that low motivation and writing anxiety often hinder active participation in writing activities.

Contemporary educational scholars increasingly acknowledge that students' writing competence is not determined solely by linguistic ability or instructional content, but also by the quality of the classroom conditions under which learning occurs. The classroom learning environment refers to the totality of physical, social, emotional, psychological, and pedagogical conditions that shape learners' experiences within the classroom, encompassing teacher-student interaction, peer relationships, instructional support, classroom climate, learner participation, collaboration, and emotional safety. It has been conceptualised as a multidimensional construct involving supportive instructional relationships, collaborative interaction, and emotional safety (Huang, 2023; Myhill et al., 2023; Wang & Troia, 2023), and positive classroom climates are said to promote academic engagement, confidence, and achievement, whereas unsupportive conditions may generate anxiety, disengagement, and poor outcomes (Maxwell et al., 2017; Reynolds et al., 2017).

Writing is a cognitively demanding and socially situated activity that exposes learners' linguistic competence, reasoning ability, and creativity to public evaluation. Learners may therefore experience fear of criticism, writing anxiety, or reluctance to participate when classroom conditions are unsupportive, whereas classrooms characterised by encouragement, collaboration, feedback, and emotional safety may promote willingness to experiment with ideas, revise, and participate in communicative activities. The classroom learning environment may thus influence writing competence through three interconnected pathways: supportive environments enhance motivation and engagement; collaborative environments create opportunities for peer interaction, feedback exchange, and shared meaning-making; and psychologically supportive environments

influence confidence, self-efficacy, and emotional safety. For this study, classroom learning environment refers to the instructional, social, collaborative, and psychological conditions existing within English Language classrooms that influence students' participation, interaction, engagement, confidence, and writing competence development, examined through the three dimensions of teacher support, collaborative learning environment, and psychological learning environment.

Teacher support refers to the extent to which teachers provide instructional assistance, academic guidance, emotional encouragement, constructive feedback, responsiveness, and scaffolding that facilitate students' learning. In language classrooms, it involves helping learners clarify ideas, overcome linguistic challenges, and develop confidence; students who perceive their teachers as encouraging and responsive may be more willing to ask questions, experiment with ideas, and revise their written work, whereas limited support may constrain writing development by reducing opportunities for individualised guidance. Empirical evidence generally supports a positive relationship with writing outcomes. Goshu and Gebremariam (2024), in a quasi-experimental study of 63 Ethiopian ninth-grade students, found that teacher–student writing conferences significantly improved organisation, vocabulary, and writing mechanics. Wang and Troia (2023), studying 346 American students nested within 41 classrooms, found that varied, differentiated teaching tactics positively moderated the relationship between writing motivation and achievement, while excessive classroom management activity negatively affected achievement. Zhang and Hyland (2022) and Zhao (2025) found that teacher feedback, alongside peer and automated feedback, promoted engagement with writing and the development of deep writing skills, and Zhang and Zou (2024) emphasised teacher support in promoting self-regulated learning behaviours. In the Nigerian context, Adebayo et al. (2024) found that teacher-supported classroom activities such as essay practice and vocabulary-building exercises were identified by most students as the most effective means of improving writing, while Ojo et al. (2024) found that peer and teacher correction strategies jointly shaped students' writing development.

Collaborative learning environment refers to classroom conditions that encourage interaction, cooperation, shared learning, peer engagement, and collective problem-solving. Contemporary theories of language learning emphasise that knowledge is constructed through social interaction and shared meaning-making, so classrooms that promote collaboration give learners opportunities to discuss ideas, negotiate meaning, exchange feedback, and co-construct texts, which may increase confidence and motivation by reducing the isolation commonly associated with writing. A substantial body of research links collaborative strategies to improved writing achievement. Khatib and Meihami (2015) found that collaborative writing significantly improved the writing performance of Iranian EFL learners; Ochoma and Ugboja (2022), Ebibi et al. (2025), and Ukaegbu and Mohammed (2025) reported significant positive effects of collaborative or cooperative strategies on essay and composition writing in Nigeria; and Akinwamide and Oguntade (2023), Chinyere et al. (2025), and Ijoko et al. (2024) reported similar effects for the

Think-Pair-Share strategy. Most of these studies, however, were experimental interventions involving deliberately structured cooperative strategies rather than the naturally occurring, unstructured collaboration typical of ordinary classrooms, a distinction of particular relevance to the present correlational study.

Psychological learning environment refers to the emotional and affective conditions that shape learners' perceptions, confidence, safety, belongingness, motivation, and willingness to participate, encompassing experiences of emotional support, trust, acceptance, and freedom from excessive fear or anxiety. Because writing is inherently a high-risk communicative activity, particularly in a second language, psychologically unsupportive conditions may discourage learners from expressing ideas freely, whereas supportive classrooms encourage them to view mistakes as part of the learning process rather than as evidence of failure. Myhill et al. (2023) found that students responded positively to greater autonomy, choice, and collaborative writing environments, with increased confidence and motivation to write. Chen et al. (2026), in a longitudinal study of 468 Mandarin-speaking EFL learners, found that earlier writing self-efficacy positively predicted subsequent use of self-regulated strategies, which in turn predicted lower anxiety and higher writing performance, and Kahvand et al. (2025) found that positive psychology-based instruction significantly improved the narrative writing of 60 Iranian EFL learners. Reynolds et al. (2017) and Maxwell et al. (2017), in large-scale studies in the United Kingdom and Australia respectively, found that school climate predicted achievement in writing and numeracy through students' psychological identification with their school. These studies suggest a broad, though not uniformly strong, relationship between psychological climate and writing outcomes.

Private secondary schools have become an important component of educational provision in Nigeria, complementing government efforts in expanding access to secondary education. Since writing competence develops through classroom interactions and learning experiences, understanding the conditions associated with writing development in these schools is of both educational and scholarly significance. However, most of the studies reviewed examined deliberately designed interventions in university, EFL, or public school contexts, and limited empirical evidence exists regarding how the classroom learning environment, as a naturally occurring instructional condition rather than an experimentally manipulated intervention, relates to students' writing competence in English Language within private secondary schools in Anambra State. It is this gap that the present study addressed.

Statement of the Problem

Writing competence is a fundamental objective of English Language education because it enables learners to communicate ideas effectively, demonstrate academic understanding, and participate meaningfully in academic discourse. In Nigeria, where English functions as both the official language and the principal medium of instruction, competence in writing is particularly important for academic success. Despite the recognised importance of writing competence, concerns

regarding students' writing proficiency continue to attract scholarly attention, with common challenges including inadequate development of ideas, poor organisation of written texts, inappropriate vocabulary use, and grammatical inaccuracies.

Contemporary writing research suggests that writing development is influenced not only by learners' linguistic abilities but also by the classroom conditions in which writing instruction occurs, with classrooms characterised by teacher support, collaborative interaction, and positive psychological conditions linked to greater writing engagement, motivation, and achievement. However, the extent to which these environmental conditions contribute to students' writing competence remains unclear in many secondary school contexts. Existing studies of classroom climate variables have often concentrated on broad academic achievement or on public school and Western or Asian contexts, leaving limited evidence on their direct relationship with writing competence within private secondary schools in Anambra State, where instructional conditions and management structures differ substantially from public institutions. It was this need that motivated the present study, which sought to investigate the classroom learning environment as a correlate of students' writing competence in English Language in private secondary schools in Anambra State.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study was to investigate the classroom learning environment as a correlate of students' writing competence in English Language in private secondary schools in Anambra State. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. find out the relationship between teacher support and students' writing competence;
2. investigate the relationship between collaborative learning environment and students' writing competence; and
3. determine the relationship between psychological learning environment and students' writing competence.

Research Questions

The following research questions were raised to guide the study:

1. What is the relationship between teacher support and students' writing competence in English Language in private secondary schools in Anambra State?
2. What is the relationship between collaborative learning environment and students' writing competence in English Language in private secondary schools in Anambra State?
3. What is the relationship between psychological learning environment and students' writing competence in English Language in private secondary schools in Anambra State?

Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses, relating to English Language in private secondary schools in Anambra State, were tested at the 0.05 level of significance:

1. There is no significant relationship between teacher support and students' writing competence.
2. There is no significant relationship between collaborative learning environment and students' writing competence.
3. There is no significant relationship between psychological learning environment and students' writing competence.

Theoretical Framework

Sociocultural Theory (Vygotsky, 1978)

Sociocultural Theory, propounded by Lev Vygotsky (1978), holds that learning occurs first on the social plane before it is internalised by the individual, and introduced the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), the gap between what a learner can do alone and what can be achieved with guidance from a more knowledgeable other. Teachers and peers serve as mediators who provide timely support that is gradually withdrawn as learners gain independence. The theory explains how classroom learning environment contributes to writing competence: teacher support provides the encouragement, guidance, and scaffolding essential within the learner's ZPD; collaborative learning environment positions classmates as co-constructors of meaning during writing tasks; and psychologically supportive environments create the trust and emotional safety necessary for the social exchanges through which learning is internalised.

Cognitive Process Theory of Writing (Flower & Hayes, 1981)

Flower and Hayes (1981) proposed that writing is a complex cognitive activity involving three recursive processes, planning, translating, and reviewing, that operate within the limits of working memory, with skilled writers constantly monitoring and evaluating their own progress. The theory relates to the present study because supportive classroom conditions influence cognitive engagement during writing: teacher support provides the guidance, clarification, and feedback that support planning and reviewing; collaborative environments encourage discussion capable of enhancing reflection; and psychologically supportive environments reduce writing anxiety and encourage the concentration and persistence the recursive work of writing requires. The theory offers limited insight, however, into the social and motivational origins of learners' willingness to engage in these processes, a gap addressed by Constructivist Learning Theory.

Constructivist Learning Theory (Bruner, 1961)

Bruner (1961) proposed that learners actively construct knowledge rather than passively receive it, emphasising discovery learning, scaffolding, and the structuring of learning experiences so that learners can build on prior understanding, with teachers functioning as facilitators who design tasks that promote inquiry, self-direction, and critical thinking. The theory is relevant because it emphasises supportive, learner-centred classroom conditions: teacher support provides scaffolding consistent with Bruner's facilitator role; collaborative environments encourage the exchange of ideas central to constructivist pedagogy; and psychologically supportive environments encourage confidence, active participation, and independent thinking. Together with Sociocultural Theory and the Cognitive Process Theory of Writing, it provides justification for investigating how classroom learning environment relates to students' writing competence.

Research Method

The study adopted a correlational survey research design, considered appropriate because the study sought to determine the nature and degree of relationship between classroom learning environment and students' writing competence as they naturally occur in private secondary schools, without manipulation of the variables. The study was conducted in Anambra State, South-East Nigeria, an area selected because of persistent concerns, reflected in WAEC Chief Examiners' Reports, regarding students' grammatical expression, paragraph development, organisation of ideas, and writing mechanics. The population comprised 24,267 Senior Secondary 2 English Language students in the 917 government-approved private secondary schools across the six education zones of Anambra State (Aguata, Awka, Nnewi, Ogidi, Onitsha, and Otuocha) for the 2025/2026 academic session. The Taro Yamane formula was applied to determine a sample of 279 schools and a corresponding student sample of 394, both selected through proportionate stratified random sampling across the six zones. Writing competence was examined in terms of idea development, organisation, grammatical accuracy, vocabulary use, coherence, and writing mechanics.

Data were collected using two instruments: the Classroom Learning Environment Scale (CLES) and the Students' Writing Competence Rating Scale (SWCRS). The CLES contained 30 items across three 10-item clusters measuring teacher support, collaborative learning environment, and psychological learning environment respectively, while the SWCRS contained 40 items measuring students' writing competence. Both were structured on a 4-point scale of Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree, weighted 4, 3, 2, and 1 respectively. Face and content validity were established by three experts from the Departments of English Language, Measurement and Evaluation, and Educational Foundations at Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University, Igbariam, whose recommendations were incorporated into the final instruments. A trial test administered to 20 English Language students in private secondary schools in neighbouring Enugu State, chosen for its similarity to Anambra State, yielded Cronbach Alpha coefficients of .79 for the CLES and .94 for the SWCRS, both adequate for the study. The researcher, assisted by five

trained research assistants who were practising secondary school teachers, administered 394 copies of the instruments directly to respondents; 387 copies were properly completed and retrieved, giving a return rate of 98.2%.

Research questions were answered using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient, interpreted using Nworgu's (2015) guideline whereby coefficients of ±.00–.19 indicate a very low relationship, ±.20–.39 a low relationship, ±.40–.59 a moderate relationship, ±.60–.79 a high relationship, and ±.80 and above a very high relationship. The three null hypotheses were tested using the test of significance of Pearson's r at the 0.05 level, with the null hypothesis rejected where the obtained p-value was equal to or less than 0.05. All analyses were conducted using SPSS version 26.

Results and Discussion

Research Question One: What is the relationship between teacher support and students' writing competence in English Language in private secondary schools in Anambra State?

Table 1: Pearson's Correlation and Test of Significance between Teacher Support and Students' Writing Competence (N=387)

Variables	1	2	p-value	Remark
1. Teacher Support	1.00	0.48	.000	Moderate Positive; Significant
2. Students' Writing Competence	0.48	1.00		

Source: *Researcher's Compilation, 2026*

Table 1 shows that the correlation between teacher support and students' writing competence yielded r = 0.48, p = .000, indicating a moderate, positive, and statistically significant relationship. The null hypothesis was therefore rejected.

Research Question Two: What is the relationship between collaborative learning environment and students' writing competence in English Language in private secondary schools in Anambra State?

Table 2: Pearson's Correlation and Test of Significance between Collaborative Learning Environment and Students' Writing Competence (N=387)

Variables	1	2	p-value	Remark
1. Collaborative Learning Environment	1.00	0.07	.192	Very Low Positive; Not Significant
2. Students' Writing Competence	0.07	1.00		

Source: *Researcher's Compilation, 2026*

Table 2 shows that the correlation between collaborative learning environment and students' writing competence yielded r = 0.07, p = .192, indicating a very low, positive, but statistically non-significant relationship. The null hypothesis was therefore not rejected.

Research Question Three: What is the relationship between psychological learning environment and students' writing competence in English Language in private secondary schools in Anambra State?

Table 3: Pearson's Correlation and Test of Significance between Psychological Learning Environment and Students' Writing Competence (N=387)

Variables	1	2	p-value	Remark
1. Psychological Learning Environment	1.00	0.22	.000	Low Positive; Significant
2. Students' Writing Competence	0.22	1.00		

Source: *Researcher's Compilation, 2026*

Table 3 shows that the correlation between psychological learning environment and students' writing competence yielded r = 0.22, p = .000, indicating a low, positive, but statistically significant relationship. The null hypothesis was therefore rejected.

Summary of Findings

Findings of the study can be summarized as follows:

1. Teacher support had a moderate, positive, and significant relationship with students' writing competence in English Language in private secondary schools in Anambra State (r = .48, p < .05).

2. Collaborative learning environment had a very low, positive, but non-significant relationship with students' writing competence ($r = .07$, $p > .05$).
3. Psychological learning environment had a low, positive, and significant relationship with students' writing competence ($r = .22$, $p < .05$).

Discussion of Findings

Analysis of data on teacher support revealed a moderate, positive, and significant relationship with students' writing competence in private secondary schools in Anambra State. This finding is consistent with Huang (2023), who found that positive teacher-student relationships significantly influence learners' emotional engagement and writing performance, and with Goshu and Gebremariam (2024), who found that teacher-student writing conferences significantly improved learners' organisation, vocabulary use, and writing mechanics. The likely explanation is that teacher support operates on multiple dimensions simultaneously: academically, supportive teachers provide scaffolding that helps students overcome specific linguistic and rhetorical challenges, while emotionally, teacher support reduces writing anxiety and builds confidence, increasing students' willingness to participate in challenging writing tasks and persist through revision.

Analysis of data on collaborative learning environment revealed a very low, non-significant relationship with writing competence. This finding diverges from Khatib and Meihami (2015), Ochoma and Ugboja (2022), Ebibi et al. (2025), and Ukaegbu and Mohammed (2025), who all found significant, often substantial, positive effects of collaborative or cooperative learning strategies on writing achievement. However, those studies predominantly examined deliberately structured experimental interventions, such as formally assigned cooperative groups or Think-Pair-Share protocols, whereas the present study measured the naturally occurring collaborative environment as routinely experienced in ordinary classrooms. Where collaboration occurs informally or incidentally, rather than as a deliberate pedagogical strategy with clear objectives, shared criteria, and guided interaction protocols, its potential to improve writing outcomes may be substantially diminished. Additionally, in private secondary schools where examination performance is heavily emphasised, students and teachers may prioritise individual writing practice over collaborative activities, further limiting its influence.

Analysis of data on psychological learning environment revealed a low, positive, and significant relationship with writing competence. This finding is consistent with Myhill et al. (2023), who found that positive writing environments enhance learners' motivation to write, and with Reynolds et al. (2017) and Maxwell et al. (2017), who associated supportive classroom climates with increased engagement and achievement. The low magnitude suggests that a psychologically supportive climate operates primarily as an enabling condition rather than a direct instructional driver of writing competence: it creates the emotional safety necessary for students to take risks in

their writing, but does not in itself provide the specific instructional guidance and evaluative criteria through which writing skills are directly developed. Its influence, though real and significant, is therefore channelled mainly through motivational and affective pathways.

Considered together, the findings show that the three dimensions of classroom learning environment relate very differently to students' writing competence. Teacher support demonstrated a moderate and significant relationship, psychological learning environment a low but significant relationship, while collaborative learning environment showed no statistically significant relationship at all. Within the private secondary school context of Anambra State, the dimension most directly tied to individualised instructional interaction, teacher support, is therefore more powerfully associated with writing competence than dimensions dependent on peer-mediated interaction or on general emotional climate. The non-significant finding for collaborative learning environment is particularly noteworthy given the generally positive findings in the experimental literature, and suggests that collaboration, as informally practised in many of these classrooms, has not yet been structured deliberately enough to produce a measurable relationship with writing outcomes. Teacher support thus constitutes the most consistently important, and most readily actionable, dimension of the classroom learning environment for supporting writing competence in this context.

Conclusion

Based on the findings, the study concludes that the classroom learning environment is a meaningful, though unevenly distributed, correlate of students' writing competence in private secondary schools in Anambra State. Teacher support emerged as the most important dimension, exerting a moderate positive influence on writing competence, while psychological learning environment exerted a smaller but still significant influence. Collaborative learning environment, by contrast, did not demonstrate a significant relationship with writing competence as currently experienced in these classrooms, suggesting that peer collaboration in this context has not yet been harnessed as a deliberate, structured pedagogical strategy capable of meaningfully advancing students' writing development.

Recommendations

1. Teachers and school administrators should deliberately cultivate supportive teacher-student relationships in English Language classrooms, including individualised guidance, emotional encouragement, and constructive commentary on drafts, given the moderate positive and significant relationship teacher support demonstrated with writing competence.
2. Collaborative writing activities should be redesigned with more deliberate structure, clear learning objectives, and explicit assessment criteria, since the collaborative learning environment did not demonstrate a significant relationship with writing competence in this

study; teachers should ensure that collaborative activities are purposefully organised rather than incidental.

3. Teachers and school administrators should deliberately cultivate psychologically supportive classroom environments that reduce writing anxiety, build students' confidence, and encourage active participation in writing activities, as psychological safety is an important, if modest, enabling condition for writing development.
4. School administrators should organise regular in-service training and workshops for English Language teachers focused on supportive teacher-student interaction, effective feedback provision, and the deliberate design of structured collaborative writing tasks.
5. Curriculum planners and educational policymakers should develop clear guidelines and classroom-management frameworks that promote supportive teacher-student relationships and psychologically safe classroom climates as core components of effective English Language writing instruction in secondary schools.

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