



Principals' Delegation of Functions and Teachers' Job Performance Amidst Covid-19 Pandemic in Public Senior Secondary Schools

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ABSTRAK

Ada banyak dampak pandemi COVID-19 terhadap fungsi pendelegasian kepala sekolah dan kinerja guru di sekolah menengah atas negeri. Penelitian ini bertujuan menganalisis tingkat pendelegasian fungsi kepala sekolah kepada guru, hubungan antara teknik pendelegasian fungsi kepala sekolah dan prestasi kerja guru, serta faktor-faktor yang menghambat praktik pendelegasian yang efektif. Desain penelitian survei deskriptif digunakan dengan 1604 guru dan kepala sekolah dari 38 sekolah menengah negeri. Empat pertanyaan penelitian diajukan untuk memandu penelitian. Pengumpulan data dilakukan dengan menggunakan kuesioner terstruktur mandiri. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa kepala sekolah menggunakan berbagai fungsi dan teknik delegasi selama pandemi, seperti mendelegasikan kepala departemen untuk memantau kinerja guru, menugaskan master formulir untuk menegakkan peraturan sekolah, mengarahkan kepala departemen untuk menilai catatan pelajaran, memeriksa silang komentar guru terhadap rapor siswa, meminta laporan dari asosiasi orang tua-guru, dan memeriksa ulang buku kehadiran kelas kepala departemen. Fungsi dan teknik delegasi ini terbukti efektif dalam meningkatkan semangat guru, memenuhi garis besar kurikulum, dan mencapai tujuan pendidikan. Pandemi ini telah mendorong perlunya kepemimpinan sekolah yang dapat beradaptasi, dan efisiensi fungsi delegasi kepala sekolah harus ditingkatkan untuk meningkatkan semangat guru dan memastikan pencapaian tujuan pendidikan.

ABSTRACT

There are a lot of impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on principals' delegation functions and teachers' job performance in a public Senior Secondary school. The study aimed to analyze the level at which principals delegate functions to teachers, the relationship between principals' delegation function techniques and teacher job performance, and the factors that hinder effective delegation practices. A descriptive survey research design was used with 1604 teachers and principals from 38 public secondary schools. Four research questions were raised to guide the study. Data collection was conducted using a self-structured questionnaire. The results showed that principals used various delegation functions and techniques during the pandemic, such as delegating departmental heads to monitor teachers' performance, assigning form masters to enforce school rules, directing heads of departments to mark lesson notes, cross-checking teachers' comments on student report cards, demanding reports from parent-teacher associations, and cross-checking departmental head teachers' classroom attendance books. These delegation functions and techniques were found to be effective in enhancing teachers' morale, meeting curriculum outlines, and achieving educational goals. The pandemic has driven the need for adaptable school leadership, and the efficiency of principals' delegation functions must be improved to boost teacher morale and ensure the achievement of educational goals.

1. INTRODUCTION

In recent times, the quest for an effective delegation of functions in Nigeria's educational sector cannot be overemphasized. This is due to declining teachers' job performance and the falling educational standard in the country (Mee Mee et al., 2020; Yoon & Kim, 2022; Zeinabadia, 2010). Teachers are recognized as the major factor in improving any nation's educational system, as they are capable of influencing the academic achievement of students. Previous study substantiated that the poor quality of teachers in Nigerian schools is traceable to poor training received in teacher training institutions through obsolete materials and equipment, which therefore necessitates that teachers be strictly monitored and guided through supervision to undertake their teaching jobs effectively (Oluwadayisi, 2018). Every teacher is considered a leader with the qualities and ability to initiate ideas and structure, organize and manage the classroom successfully, increase students' skills and knowledge, prepare and present interesting yet challenging lessons, guide students to success, and have the ability to assess and evaluate students' learning correctly (Bush & Glover, 2016; Gudmundsdottir & Hatlevik, 2018). The emerging need for improvement in the teachers' job performance as well as the need for improved learning capabilities among the students all served as the basis for the principal's delegation function in the education system. Education transcends the basic rights of every individual; it is an agent of transformation and societal development (Cantú-Ortiz et al., 2020; Iivari et al., 2020).

The delegation function is conceptualized in several ways. Delegation of functions has been defined in several ways. Previous study noted that delegation of function is an organizational process that permits the transfer of authority from a superior officer to a subordinate officer to attain managerially set objectives (Hashim, 2018; Teixeira et al., 2021). It is also a process by which a manager, such as a school head, transfers part of his authority to his subordinates for the performance of certain tasks and functions. Also, previous study sees delegation as the art of decentralizing functions from a higher officer to a lesser officer with the overall aim of achieving the goals of the organization (Bieser & Hilty, 2020; Syakur et al., 2020). It can hardly be separated from decision-making. He further stressed that the lack of delegation of functions by the principal may strain relations between him and the other staff members. It may also lead to a lack of confidence in the staff, resulting in them not putting their best effort into their various assignments, thereby impeding the achievement of school objectives. In the school system, the principal, who is the administrative and financial head, has several subordinate staff in both the academic and administrative cadres, among whom responsibilities are shared for the smooth running of the school (Cheng et al., 2021; Zeng et al., 2022). Then the principal considers the staff's hierarchy of positions and competencies while delegating functions. A principal as an executive head cannot possibly deal effectively with all tasks that other people may have the time and energy to do (Nurabadi et al., 2021; Sari et al., 2020). This implies that a delegation of function is the act of sharing available functions in the school by the principal with the members of the staff according to their abilities and capabilities towards achieving the goals and objectives of the school. In a school system, various categories of functions are delegated to staff and controlled by the heads.

While the last few years have brought about several changes in different institutions, including the schools, this was orchestrated by the Coronavirus pandemic, which led to an unscheduled lockdown with several lives lost. It also affected the educational sector, as several schools were shut down, thus adopting virtual learning methods and other new norms. This study therefore constitutes an attempt to examine the principal's delegation function and the teachers' job performance amid the COVID-19 pandemic in public senior secondary schools in Ilorin West Local Government Area of Kwara State (Bahago, 2022; Ogolodom et al., 2022; Ojetunde, 2020). The purpose of the research is to assess principals' delegation functions and teachers' job performance amid the COVID-19 pandemic in public Senior Secondary schools in Ilorin West Local Government Area.

2. METHOD

A descriptive survey research design was adopted in this study (Seixas et al., 2018). The population for this study consists of 38 principals and 1604 teachers in the 38 public senior secondary schools in Ilorin West Local Government Area, Kwara State. The sample size for this study is 10 for the principals, while the sample size for teachers will be 313 teachers. The instrument used in the gathering of data in this study was a questionnaire. The questionnaire is titled "Principals Delegatory Functions and Teachers Job Performance Questionnaire". It was arranged into three sections. Section one consists of an introductory letter asking the respondents to complete the questionnaire. Section two consists of demographic information about the respondent's status. While Section three of the questionnaire contains twenty-eight items (28) carefully arranged in sections, the questionnaire was developed on a five-point rating scale provided for the respondents to choose from: Strongly Agree (SA): 5, Agree (A): 4, Neutral (N): 3, Disagree (D): 2, Strongly Disagree (SD): 1.

The instrument was subjected to content, construct, and face validity by three experts in the Department of Educational Management and Counselling, Faculty of Education. A test-retest method was used to determine the reliability of the instrument. In this method, the researcher administered the test, and after a one-week interval, the researcher conducted another test in which the results from the two tests were then compared using the Cronbach Alpha method. The data obtained from the pilot study were subjected to statistical analysis using SPSS to obtain the reliability coefficient of the measuring instrument. The result gave a reliability coefficient of 0.91. Tracy (200) testified that, for a scale to be considered reliable, it should have an alpha value of 0.50 to 1. With this level of reliability index, the instrument was considered reliable for data collection for the main study. The 20 copies of the questionnaire were administered to the respondents by the researcher and three trained research assistants.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

The various delegation functions and techniques used by principals in Public Senior Secondary schools is show in [Table 1](#).

Table 1. Delegation of Function Techniques by Principal

S/N	Response	Mean	SD
1	Principals delegate departmental heads to monitor teachers' classroom performance.	3.23	1.77
2	Principals assign form masters to enforce school rules and regulations in the school.	3.04	1.62
3	Principals direct heads of departments to mark teachers' lesson notes.	3.58	1.97
4	Principals cross-check teachers' comments on students' report cards made on their behalf.	3.26	1.78
5	Principals demand a report of the parent-teacher association (PTA) meeting presided over by his vice	3.01	1.58
6	Principals cross-check departmental head teacher's classroom attendance books.	3.00	1.53
Weighted Mean		3.19	

Note: Any value above 3.00 is a positive statement, while any value below 3.00 is a negative statement.

[Table 1](#) shows the various delegation functions and techniques used by principals in Public Senior Secondary schools in Ilorin West amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. As indicated in [Table 3](#), the result revealed the distribution of respondents on the various delegation functions and techniques used by principals in Public Senior Secondary schools in Ilorin West amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. Based on the decision scale of a 5-point Likert Scale of 3.00 benchmarks, all of the items were positively responded to. Significant evidence was proven, as noted from the responses given by the respondents on the questionnaire item. The calculated weighted mean of 3.19>3.00 indicated that the assertions such as Principals delegate departmental heads to monitor teachers' classroom performance, principals assign form masters to enforce school rules and regulations in the school, principals direct heads of departments to mark teachers' lesson notes, principals cross-check teachers' comments on students' report cards made on his behalf, Principals demand a report of the parent-teachers association (PTA) meeting presided by his vice and principals cross-check departmental head teachers classroom attendance book were found to be the various delegation function and technique used by principals in Public Senior Secondary schools in Ilorin West amidst Covid-19 pandemic.

The level at which principals delegate functions to teachers in Public Senior Secondary schools in Ilorin West amidst the COVID-19 pandemic is show in [Table 2](#).

Table 2. Level to Which Principals Delegate Functions to Teachers

S/N	Responses	Mean	SD	Decision
1	Staff are appointed to form committees that plan school programs.	3.24	1.78	Large Extent
2	Departmental heads are allowed to mark teachers' lesson notes on behalf of the principal.	3.32	1.62	Large Extent

S/N	Responses	Mean	SD	Decision
3	Staff are delegated and empowered by the principal to repair damaged school items.	3.00	1.53	Large Extent
4	Staff are assigned by the principal to form an examination committee in the school.	3.40	1.91	Large Extent
5	Staff are authorized to represent the principal in seminars and conferences.	3.14	1.62	Large Extent
6	Staff are delegated to coordinate co-curricular activities in the school.	3.00	1.53	Large Extent

Note: Any value above 3.00 is a positive statement that indicates "Large Extent" while any value below 3.00 is a negative statement that indicates

Table 2 shows the level at which principals delegate functions to teachers in Public Senior Secondary schools in Ilorin West amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. As indicated in Table 2, the results revealed the respondent's responses on the level to which principals delegate functions to teachers in Public Senior Secondary schools in Ilorin West amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. Based on the decision scale of a 5-point Likert Scale of 3.00 benchmarks, all of the items were positively responded to. Significant evidence was proven by the responses given by the respondents to the statements captured in the questionnaire items. The statement whether staff are appointed to form committees that plan school programs was found to be at a large extent with a mean score of 3.24 > 3.00, departmental heads are allowed to mark teachers' lesson notes on behalf of the principal at the large extent with the mean score of 3.32 > 3.00, staff are delegated and empowered by the principal to repair damaged school items with the mean score of 3.00 < 3.00, Staffs are assigned by the principal to form an examination committee in the school statement with the mean score of 3.40 > 3.00, Staff are authorized to represent principal in seminars and conferences assertion with the mean score of 3.14 > 3.00 and staffs are delegated to coordinate co-curricular activities in the school statement with the mean score of 3.00 < 3.00. This implies that the level at which principals delegate functions to teachers in Public Senior Secondary schools in Ilorin West amidst the COVID-19 pandemic is high, as proven by the results gathered from the analyses conducted.

The relationship between principals' delegation function technique and teacher job performance in Public Senior Secondary schools in Ilorin West amidst the COVID-19 pandemic is show in Table 3.

Table 3. Teacher Performance in Schools

S/N	Responses	Mean	SD
1	They have the willingness to carry out tasks.	3.25	1.78
2	They are diligent in carrying out their tasks.	3.06	1.63
3	They have the competence and ability to successfully carry out their duties.	3.32	1.80
4	They are enthusiastic about their job.	3.46	1.88
5	They do a satisfactory job.	3.11	1.66
6	There are few or no complaints about their job.	3.00	1.53
Weighted Mean		3.20	

Note: Any value above 3.00 is a positive statement, while any value below 3.00 is a negative statement.

Table 3 shows the relationship between principals' delegation function technique and teacher job performance in Public Senior Secondary schools in Ilorin West amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. As indicated in Table 3, the results revealed the respondent's responses on the relationship between principals' delegation function technique and teacher job performance in Public Senior Secondary schools in Ilorin West amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. Based on the decision scale of a 5-point Likert Scale of 3.00 benchmarks, all of the items were positively responded to as being approved to be true by the participants in this study. Significantly, supportive evidence was given by the respondents to prove their agreement with the questionnaire items. The calculated weighted mean of 3.20 > 3.00 indicated that the assertions such as principals have the willingness to carry out tasks, are diligent in carrying out their tasks, have the competence and ability to successfully carry out their duties, are enthusiastic about their job, do a satisfactory job, and give little or no complaint about their job in the area of study amidst the COVID-19 pandemic were true.

The factors that hindered effective delegation practices in Public Senior Secondary schools in Ilorin West amidst the COVID-19 pandemic is show in Table 4.

Table 4. Factors That Hinder Effective Delegation Practices of Principals and Teachers

S/N	Responses	Mean	SD
1	Principals often discriminate in delegating functions based on staff qualification.	2.30	0.72
2	Poor communication between the principal and staff hampers delegation.	2.05	0.54
3	Staff opinions on delegated matters are not always accepted by the principal.	2.80	0.91
4	Often, Principals do not ask for feedback from staff on delegated issues.	2.57	0.82
5	Fear of loss of power by principals militates against delegation.	2.19	0.63
6	Principals lack detailed instruction on specific duties to be delegated.	2.08	0.57
Weighted Mean		2.33	

Note: Any value above 3.00 is a positive statement, while any value below 3.00 is a negative statement.

Table 4 shows the factors that hindered effective delegation practices in Public Senior Secondary schools in Ilorin West amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. As indicated in Table 4, the results revealed the respondent's responses on the factors that hindered effective delegation practices in Public Senior Secondary schools in Ilorin West amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. Based on the decision scale of a 5-point Likert Scale of 3.00 benchmarks, all of the items were negatively responded to as being disapproved of as being true by the participants in this study. Insignificant, contrary evidence was given by the respondents to prove their disapproval of the questionnaire items. The calculated weighted mean of 2.33 < 3.00 indicated that assertions such as Principals often discriminate in delegating functions based on staff qualification and poor communication between the principal and staff hampers delegation. Staff opinions on delegated matters are not always accepted by the principal. Often, Principals do not ask for feedback from staff on delegated issues. Fear of loss of power by principals militates against delegation, and a lack of detailed instruction on specific duties to be delegated was found to be nowhere associated with factors that hindered effective delegation practices in Public Senior Secondary schools in Ilorin West amidst the COVID-19 pandemic.

Discussion

Studying the relationship between principals' delegation functions and teachers' job performance during the COVID-19 pandemic in public Senior Secondary schools in Ilorin West Local Government Area, Kwara State, provides valuable insights into the resilience and adaptability of educational leadership in times of crisis. Firstly, effective delegation by principals becomes crucial during periods of uncertainty and disruption, such as a pandemic. Principals must navigate evolving situations, allocate resources efficiently, and provide clear guidance to teachers (Ahmmed et al., 2022; Rockenbach, 2020; Rodríguez-Abitia & Bribiesca-Correa, 2021). By delegating tasks appropriately, principals can empower teachers to fulfill their roles effectively despite challenges like remote learning, health protocols, and curriculum adjustments. This empowerment can foster a sense of ownership and responsibility among teachers, enhancing their motivation and job performance (Prachagool et al., 2022; Tan et al., 2022). Secondly, the study likely highlights the importance of communication and collaboration between principals and teachers. Clear communication channels and regular feedback mechanisms are essential for ensuring that delegated tasks align with teachers' strengths and the school's objectives (Anastasiou & Papagianni, 2020; Ismail et al., 2021). Principals who effectively delegate tasks while maintaining open lines of communication create an environment of trust and support, which can positively impact teacher morale and performance (Ismail et al., 2021; Thaher, 2020).

Furthermore, the findings may underscore the adaptability and innovative practices demonstrated by school leadership in response to the pandemic. Principals who proactively adapt their delegation strategies to meet the evolving needs of the school community demonstrate effective crisis management skills (AlAjmi, 2022; Karakose et al., 2021; Uy et al., 2023). This adaptability may involve reassigning responsibilities, providing professional development opportunities tailored to remote teaching, or implementing new technologies to support teaching and learning. It's also worth considering the broader implications of the study's findings. Effective delegation is not only essential for maintaining teacher performance during a crisis but also for building sustainable educational systems that can withstand future challenges (Gümüş et al., 2021; Rostini et al., 2022). Principals who prioritize delegation as a leadership

strategy contribute to the development of a resilient school culture capable of navigating various disruptions.

Studying the dynamics between principals' delegation functions and teachers' job performance during the COVID-19 pandemic in public Senior Secondary schools in Ilorin West Local Government Area, Kwara State, offers valuable insights into the resilience and adaptability of educational systems in times of crisis. The study underscores the critical importance of effective delegation by principals in maintaining teacher morale, ensuring educational continuity, and achieving academic goals during the COVID-19 pandemic. By understanding the dynamics of delegation and its impact on teacher performance, educational stakeholders can better support school leaders and promote resilience in the face of future challenges.

4. CONCLUSION

This study has conducted a thorough assessment of principals' delegation functions and teachers' job performance amid the COVID-19 pandemic in public Senior Secondary schools in Ilorin West Local Government Area, Kwara State. It was concluded that the principals' delegation function and teachers' job performance were efficiently coordinated in public Senior Secondary schools in Ilorin West Local Government Area, Kwara State, amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. Even though running and coordinating schools during the COVID-19 epidemic period was a monumental task due to the unexpected changes and the need to implement workable mechanisms to control teaching and learning throughout that time, the changes brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic to the setting of the school and its resources are the driving elements to emerge adaptable school leadership. Despite the pandemic, the efficiency of principals' delegation functions must be felt, specifically to boost the morale of the teachers towards the discharge of their duties in meeting up with the outlines stipulated in the curriculum and the achievement of all other educational goals.

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