

**PRINCIPALS' LEADERSHIP EFFECTIVENESS AND THE MANAGEMENT OF  
PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN CROSS RIVER STATE, NIGERIA**

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**ABSTRACT**

*This study examined Principals' Leadership Effectiveness and Management of Public Secondary Schools in Cross River State, Nigeria. The purpose of the study was to investigate influence of principals' leadership effectiveness in the areas of instructional supervision, communication, and provision of instructional materials on the management of public secondary schools. Three research questions guided the study and three null hypotheses were formulated and tested. The review of literature was done under theoretical framework, conceptual framework and empirical studies. The study adopted survey research design. The population of the study comprised 12,930 principals and teachers from the 293 public secondary schools in the state. A sample of 1737 principals and teachers were taken for the questionnaire using multi-stage sampling technique of Principals' Leadership Questionnaire (PLEQ) with reliability coefficient of 0.97. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions. Chi-Square test was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The result showed that principals' leadership effectiveness do significantly impact on management of secondary schools in the areas of instructional supervision, communication, and provision of instructional materials in the management. Based on the findings of the study, it was recommended among others that principals should be adequately enlightened with more robust supervision strategies through seminars and conferences which may include classroom observation, analysis/strategy, post observation conferences and post conferences analysis and that Ministries of Education should make it mandatory for all school heads to be involved in students' evaluation in order to assess teachers' job outputs as well as students' academic performance.*

**KEYWORDS: Principals, Leadership, Effectiveness, Management, Public Secondary Schools, Cross River State, and Nigeria**

**Introduction**

The proper functioning of any organization depends to a very large extent on the ability of whoever is the leader to effectively utilize both the material and human resources to achieve the goals of such an organization. It is the leader that mobilizes human and material resources and creates the necessary climate for productivity. Therefore, leadership is of particular importance in an organization to the extent that without it, goals may be difficult to attain. Leadership is the process of influencing the activities of an organized group towards goal-setting and goal achievement.

The concept of principals' leadership effectiveness in Nigerian secondary schools is often used to express the overall school effectiveness in relation to the attainment of both normative and summative values in students as spelt out in the National Policy on Education (FGN, 2013). The school principal is the accounting officer of the school who is either praised or blamed depending on the degree of his/her effectiveness in influencing the relevant orders in and outside school to enhance teaching and learning.

Leadership of a school is about providing a vision and establishment what the future will be like as well as winning the supported vision of those who can make it happen. Ajibade (2015) observes that schools that do not have effective leadership from their principals will get stranded in complacency. In such situations, problems will not be confronted and solved, and opportunities will be misused. Principalship is the key to a good school environment and in achieving teaching and learning quality. A good leader is important to teachers, and it affects their decision about where to work. More effective principals are able to attract better employees to their schools (Rice, 2010). The word principal also means 'servant leadership' (Sergiovanni, 2016). This paints a picture of someone who is responsible for ministering to the needs of schools they serve. Thus, a principal must deal with the professional and technical experts in education, parents and community members, superintendents and students. With such important responsibilities and roles, school principals must implement their own duties responsibly and carefully otherwise mistakes would cause dissatisfaction among teachers. Consequently, it could lead to low achievement for the school management.

The duty of ensuring that effective teaching and learning takes place lies with the principal who employs various supervisory strategies such as classroom visitation, classroom observation, mentorship, workshop and micro-teaching to ensure effective and efficient service delivery. According to Osakwe (2010), instructional supervision is the art of over-seeing the teaching and learning process in order to ensure that the school is administered, managed and led in an effective manner to achieve the educational objectives. In secondary schools, the principal plays a critical role in the programme of instructional improvement through effective and efficient supervision of teachers' classroom instructional display. Through classroom visitation, classroom observation, mentorship, workshops and micro-teaching supervisory techniques, the principal is faced with the responsibility of supervising teachers generally to improve their instructional effectiveness. Osakwe (2010) adds that principals supervise and monitor teachers' competences no matter how proficient, they are deemed to be so as to provide students with quality learning. As important as instructional supervision is to the development of quality education, it has been observed that school principals often devote more of their time attending to visitors than supervising instruction (Weller, 2011). Consequently, interference of administrative functions seems to be an appendage to instructional supervisory functions of the school principals in achieving instructional objective of the school. It is, therefore, unfortunate that instructional supervisory functions recognized as the cardinal role of the school principal could be over-looked in the midst of a variety of roles.

Communication which is the process of conveying messages or information from one person to another is also a cardinal role used by school principals in managing educational institutions. According to Asemah (2010), communication is a very important tool used by management to exchange ideas, thoughts and opinions with employees. This can provide a basis for dismantling any element of distrust in employees. The author adds that the staff of any school wants to know what the school management is doing about the various matters affecting their welfare and their work. Communication is therefore, the only way in which the school principal

can eliminate suspicion and promote confidence in the staff. The principals' effectiveness to some extent is perceived to hinge on the manner in which decisions and policies of school management are communicated to teachers and students in the school organization. If the decisions and policies are communicated effectively through the appropriate channels, the principal may be perceived to be effective in the discharge of his/her duties, but if not, he/she may be perceived otherwise.

Similarly, provision of instructional materials is also one of the responsibilities of the school principal. Instructional materials may be seen as those objects and devices that have been systematically designed, produced and evaluated which the teacher uses to illustrate the point he/she wishes to emphasize in his/her lesson with the intention of facilitating learning (Nomigo, 2004). They include, chairs, chalk, chalkboard, table chart among others. The use of instructional materials provides teachers with interesting and compelling platforms for conveying information since they motivate learners more. Furthermore, the teacher is assisted in overcoming physical difficulties that could have hindered his/her effective presentation of a given topic since students could see, feel, smell or touch the real object or something similar to what the teacher talks about. For learning to take place, there is need for the teacher to sensitize students' senses of hearing, smelling, testing and touching. To do this, the teacher must use instructional materials provided to them by the school head (Ojunamiri, 2017). Provision of instructional materials in this context refers to the ability of the school principal to make available materials and devices such as chairs, chalk, chalkboard, tables and chart to be used in learning situations to supplement the written or spoken words in transmission of knowledge. The instructional materials could also be provided by teachers. Students could also be involved in provision of such materials. When such devices are adequate, teaching and learning goes on smoothly. On the contrary, without the provision of adequate instructional materials, it will be difficult to implement the school curriculum. Thus, it is the sole decision of the school principal to provide adequate materials for the development of the school.

### **Statement of the Problem**

It has been speculated by relevant stakeholders in education such as teachers, parents and ministries of education officials that most school principals in Cross River State are not effective in their leadership functions. This is seemingly demonstrated in their inability to adopt leadership styles that would motivate and encourage their subordinates in carrying out their duties effectively. For instance, teachers are worried that school principals devote more of their time attending to visitors than supervising instructional activities in the school. It is also the observation of teachers that some principals do find it difficult communicating with their staff at the appropriate time and this may have affected their job performance.

There is also the speculation by some teachers that principals do not like involving their subordinates in decision making as they feel their subordinates have no adequate knowledge to contribute to the management and development of the school; as a result, these subordinates may feel estranged and alienated and withdraw their contribution which may affect the proper coordination and discipline of students in the school to attain the stated goals. Parents too, seems not to be comfortable with the leadership position of some secondary school principals in Cross River State as they at times take disciplinary decisions against students without informing/ involving their parents. This seems to create ruffle between the school and host communities. Thus, affecting the contributions the host communities would have made to the development of the schools.

Despite the aforementioned speculations of teachers and other stakeholders on principals' leadership effectiveness in the management of public secondary schools Cross River State, the researcher observed that not much has been done on principals' leadership effectiveness in the management of public secondary schools in the area of study. The problem of this study therefore is: What is the impact of principals' leadership effectiveness on the management of public secondary schools in Cross River State?

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to investigate the influence of principals' leadership effectiveness on management of public secondary schools in Cross River State. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. find out how principals' leadership effectiveness influence on instructional supervision in secondary schools in Cross River State.
2. ascertain how principals' leadership effectiveness influence on communication in secondary schools.
3. determine how principals' leadership effectiveness influences on provision of instructional materials in secondary schools.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions guided the study:

1. In what ways does principals' leadership effectiveness influence on instructional supervision in public secondary schools in Cross River State?
2. What is the influence of principals' leadership effectiveness on communication in secondary schools in Cross River State?
3. What influence does principals' leadership effectiveness have on provision of instructional materials in secondary schools in Cross River State?

### **Hypotheses**

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

1. Principals' leadership effectiveness does not have significant influence on instructional supervision in secondary schools in Cross River State.
2. Principals' leadership effectiveness does not have significant influence on communication in secondary schools in Cross River State.
3. Principals' leadership effectiveness does not have significant influence on provision of instructional materials in secondary schools in Cross River State.

### **Literature Review**

Leadership effectiveness is the successful exercise of personal influence of one or more people with the aim of accomplishing organizational objectives through obtaining the followers' approval (Cooper, 2017). Leadership of any organization is about providing a vision and

establishment of what the future will be like as well as winning for the supported vision of those who can make it happen. Marshall (2014) defines leadership as a product of an environment made up of people. This suggests that leaders are expected to lead, offer a sense of direction, motivate others towards the accomplishment of goals and be concerned with helping others. Hersey, Blanchard and Johnson (1996) in Newstrom and Davis (2012) define leadership as a process of influencing the activities of a group or individuals' efforts toward goal achievement. This is to say that leadership is the process of influencing and supporting others to work enthusiastically toward achieving objectives.

Management has been viewed and described differently by different scholars. These scholars look at management from various points of view depending on the objectives to which an organization is set to achieve. The basic reason for the diversity in definition arises from the fact that most human endeavours apply themselves to management. According to Markson (2011), management is the field of human behaviour in which managers plan, organise, staff, direct and control human and financial resources in an organised group effort in order to achieve desired individual and group objectives with optimum efficiency and effectiveness. Pinga (2014) describes management in all business areas and organisational areas to mean the acts of getting people together to accomplish desired goals and objectives efficiently and effectively. According to Ibrahim (2013), management involves the sum total of all activities undertaken to achieve the goals and objectives of an individual or an organisation. It also includes the integration of efforts, design of organisational structure, acquisition or judicious use of resources, motivation of people, providing leadership, planning strategies, controlling, innovating and creating an environment in which individuals and group's goals can be achieved. Mayer (2011) states that management implies a social process involving a sequence of events and planning, organising, coordinating and controlling. All these events if well-coordinated and structured could not only result in judicious use of the limited resources available, but also ensure that the right objectives or desired outcomes are accomplished.

### **Principals' Leadership Effectiveness on Instructional Supervision in Secondary Schools**

Every organization either corporate or otherwise including the school exists essentially to achieve certain stated objectives. Thus, in order to achieve the stated goals and objectives of an organization, there is every need to put in place certain mechanisms towards ensuring its success. In the school system, one of the mechanisms to be put in place towards achieving the goals of behavioural change in both the staff and learners is supervision. In general, supervision is the help and guide given to principals and teachers with the aim of improving the teaching and learning situations for the benefit of teachers and learners. According to Osakwe (2010), instructional supervision is the art of overseeing the teaching and learning process in order to ensure that the school is managed in an effective manner to achieve the educational objectives. In secondary schools, the principal plays a critical role in the programme of instructional improvement through effective and efficient supervision of teachers' classroom instructional display. Through classroom visitation, classroom observation, mentorship, workshop and micro-teaching supervisory techniques, the principal is faced with the responsibility of supervising teachers generally to improve their instructional effectiveness.

The principal as a leader of a group of teachers in the school system has the function of interacting with teachers in order to improve the teaching-learning situation through instructional supervision. Instructional supervision is one of the processes by which school administrators attempt to achieve acceptable standards of performance and results. It is the tool

of quality control in the school system and a phase of school administration which focuses primarily on the achievement of appropriate expectations of the educational system (Peretomode, 2004). The author further states that the role of principals is to facilitate the implementation of the various learning programmes aimed at improving the learning situation. Teachers whether new or old on the job need necessary support in implementing the instructional programmes. Principals as school heads therefore, need to provide this support to teachers. They have to be involved in the implementation of instructional programmes by overseeing what teachers are doing with the students in the classroom. A good principal should devote himself or herself to supervise the teaching –learning processes in his school (Peretomode, 2004).

Audu (2019) adds that before, the role of external school supervisors were to visit schools once in a while and check teachers' mistakes in their discharge of duties and correct them. Teachers perceived it as a policing activity and often strained relationship between them and inspectors. As the number of schools increased, it became difficult for a few inspectors to visit all schools. Internal supervision was then preferred and principals became key supervisors in their schools. They were to take a major role in instructional supervision in order to improve the quality of learning. A study done by Musungu and Nasongo in 2018 found that in Kenya, the head-teachers' instructional role included checking lesson books, schemes of work, records of work covered, attendance, class attendance records and staff movement books. Waweru (2013) adds that in Nigeria, the roles played by the head-teacher include supervision of the approved curriculum, staff personnel, student personnel, supervision and promotion of school community relations and supervision of physical and material resource. According to Muchiri (2018), the head-teacher is responsible for all matters pertaining to the smooth running of the school. This implies that the principal also carries out instructional supervisory roles which include organization and monitoring of timetable, provision of instructional materials, and motivation of staff, supervision and monitoring to ensure that teachers are performing their duties for effective learning to take place.

Charles, Chris and Kosgei (2012) suggests that principals need to effectively supervise teachers by ensuring that they are observed regularly; lessons are planned early; lessons are structured with an interesting beginning; revision of previous knowledge and teachers' use of voice variation and summary of major points at the end; teachers use backups/teaching aids properly; teachers have a good relationship with their students and teachers follow up the curriculum strictly. Effective instructional supervision aids head teachers in coordinating, improving and maintaining high teaching and learning standards in schools. Wanzare (2012) posits that principals play the role of supervisor from time to time by checking the teachers' classroom work and assessing their overall performance based on students' academic achievement. Principals are also charged with the duty of promoting the academic and professional status of teachers by availing them with current curriculum materials and in-service courses. They are expected to provide the right motivation and stimulation for staff and students to enhance academic achievement. They are also to use supervisor-teacher friendly methods moving away from the traditional method of control and authoritarianism (Wenzare, 2012). The traditional methods of inspection instill fear to teachers and lower their morale (Republic of Kenya, 1965). Principals therefore, ought to be sources of inspiration for teachers and their students.

Sharma, Yusoff, Kannan and Baba (2011) observe that a private cold war exists between teachers and supervisors whenever supervision is to take place. This negative relationship between supervisors and teachers describe the resentment teachers feel toward supervisors.

This resentment continues to be a major barrier in achieving benefit from the practice of supervision. Teachers' perceptions of supervisors are negative and they believe that supervisors are not of any valuable assistance but rather are used as a means to control and exert power on them. The authors assert that to teachers, the transactions that take place between supervisors and teachers constitute a waste of time. In many instances, the best evaluation that teachers give of their supervision is that it is not harmful. The second is that the character of relationships between teachers as a group and supervisors as a group can be described as a private cold war. Neither side trusts the other, nor is each side convinced of the correctness of the process. In other words, for many teachers, supervision is a meaningless exercise that has little value other than completion of the required evaluation form. Sharma, Yusoff, Kannan and Baba (2011) further stress that some teachers feel that supervisors only try to find fault in their classroom teachings and never tell them their strengths and this makes them feel insulted whenever their principals claims to find out shortcomings before students and tell them to improve upon such shortcomings without involving themselves towards the improvement process.

According to Onuma (2016), principals generally seem to spend more of their official hours on administrative functions to the detriment of effective supervision process and programmes of the school. Little seems to have been done by Ministry of Education, stakeholders in education and school principals to arrest the situation. Public outcry, reports and comments in print and electronic media alleging fallen standards of education in public secondary education reveal in part that internal supervision is probably not effectively carried out by school principals in North Central Zone of Nigeria. Onuma's (2016) study revealed that failure of the school principal to effectively supervise classroom instructions as a result of some administrative problems would impact negatively on teaching and learning as well as curriculum implementation. If the curriculum content is not covered, students are liable to get involved in examination malpractices. Onuma (2016) further stresses that principal's lack of supervisory techniques and inability to regularly supervise and maintain accurate record keeping indicates incompetency on the part of the principals. Active participation of sub-ordinates in supervisory activities does not only improve teaching and learning but also contributes to knowledge in the school system. Participation of vice principals in supervision of instruction establishes cordial relationship thereby creating good rapport between principals and vice principals (Onuma, 2016). Therefore, school principals, irrespective of school location should endeavour to carryout effective supervision of classroom instruction, monitor and support staff development through seminars and conferences. In turn this would improve teaching/learning and effective coverage of curriculum. This will ultimately improve students' academic achievement and general standard of education as well as teachers' perception of principals' leadership effectiveness.

### **Principals' Leadership Effectiveness on Communication in Secondary Schools**

Communication is the process in which a communicator attempts to convey an image to a communicatee. Communication system in any organisation like the school is very vital to the survival and smooth running of the organisation (Asemah, 2010). Through the use of language, mankind has been able to record past history and to transmit its culture from one generation to the other. This transmission exercise lies on communication process without which managerial, administrative and academic functions will not be possible in the school. Without effective communications, organisations will not be what it is, and functions will not be carried effectively towards goal achievement (Nakpodia, 2010). However, with the use of communication, man has helped himself or herself to build societies and other social groupings,

which contribute to his survival and to more enjoyable patterns of living. In all organisations, the transfer of information from one individual to another is necessary (Nakpodia, 2010). It is the means by which behaviour is modified, change is effected, information is made productive and goals are achieved. Without communication, the organisation cannot exist, for there is no possibility of others. Communication from the viewpoint of Koontz (1984) in Nakpodia (2010) is to effect a change and influence action towards the welfare of the enterprise. Therefore, the need for an effective channel of communication becomes imperative for the attainment of the organisational goals. This means that communication is the means by which people are linked together in an organisation.

The communication process follows a systematic procedure. It is a give and take method involving the sender and the receiver (Asemah, 2010; Nakpodia, 2006). Usually, the sender must have an idea to put across which makes it a 3-way grid – the sender, the message and the receiver. For better communication in school, the principal must, first and foremost, conceive an idea and relate such idea to his staff and expect response. In the school system, the principal does not work alone. He/she has to share information, transfer ideas and feelings through communication to enhance the collective co-operation of others within the school. The school principal must not only communicate downward management in thoughts and in decisions but also upward reactions and development in the ranks. In order to persuade, instruct, direct, request, inform and stimulate, the principal must engage in upward and downward communication. Hence, the importance of upward flow of communication in an educational organisation cannot be under estimated. It helps education administrators to get a feedback from the people that might be affected. These people represent an important source of ideas for improvement (Kokach, 2016).

The communication network is seen as being very significant to the life of the school. This is because it is a major avenue through which the school personnel gets an opportunity to identify and appreciate what the school is doing, the atmosphere in which it operates, what is expected from the school and the public. On the bases of these, principals design programmes that could make or mar the school system. Communication is thus important in an organization schools because it constitutes one of the chief means through which organizational members work together. It also helps to hold the organization together by making it possible for members to influence one another and to react to one another (Akomah, 2018). In secondary schools, it is with the help of communication that the principal is able to influence his subordinates. According to Nakpodia (2010), communication has been a great concern to school administrators. This is because a break in communication brings about a great havoc in the school system by way of administration. Most times, messages are not decoded properly such that the intended meaning is not interpreted correctly. Teachers do not put in their best into effective teaching as a result of lack of satisfaction emanating from communication gap between them and the principals in the schools and this breeds mix feelings concerning the leadership role of the school head.

Annie and Mpho (2014) observe that some school heads do not communicate with their teachers on issues that affect instruction or other aspects of school management. Even though the school heads are seen as the most important and influential personalities in any school; it is the way they communicate with their teachers that will assist teachers to know what is expected of them and cooperate with the management to enable it attained it pre-determined goals. The authors also stress that it is the school head that creates organisational conditions under which people are motivated to do their best. Annie and Mpho (2014) found that good communicating



leaders were characterised by frequent monitoring and feedback to their teachers. The implication is that school heads who do not have any laid down communication strategies make their instructional leadership not to be effective. The authors reported their interview with teachers that channels of communication seem not to be clearly defined and this makes certain teachers to perceive them as being autocratic leaders. In a few isolated incidents, it was alleged that school heads do not have any laid down communication strategies. In a study by Memisoglu and Uylas (2015), teachers' negative perception of principals' leadership roles emanated from the communication difficulties, which usually resulted in teachers developing a feeling of isolation as individuals or in small groups with common purpose or interest. The authors suggested that to control teachers' feelings for a better satisfaction and performance, the principals have to provide all the necessary needs of their staff to motivate them and enhance their performance. Research by Harris, Day and Hadfield (2013) supports the basic principles of effective schooling. By implication, effective principals point to some other variables which must be considered in any analysis of principals' leadership. Their work showed that principals', who were effective, achieved success because they held and communicated their visions and values clearly to all the stakeholders in the school. This is to say that, even in Cross River State, Nigeria, the effectiveness of the principal must stem from effective communication.

### **Principals' Leadership Effectiveness in Provision of Instructional Materials in Secondary Schools**

Instructional materials may be defined as those objects and devices that have been systematically designed, produced and evaluated which the teacher uses to illustrate the point he/she wishes to emphasize in his/her teaching with the intention of facilitating learning (Nomigo, 2004). Ibeneme (2000) defines instructional materials as those teaching aids used for practical demonstration in the class situation by students and teachers. Ikerionwu (2010) defines instructional materials as objects or devices that assist teachers to present a lesson to learners in a logical manner. Fadeiye (2015) defines instructional materials as visual and audio-visual aids, concrete or non-concrete, used by teachers to improve the quality of teaching and learning activities.

Agina-Obu (2015) submits that instructional materials such as chairs, chalk, chalkboard, tables chart, flip chart drawings appeal to the sense organs during teaching and learning. Instructional materials are essential and significant tools needed for teaching and learning of school subjects to promote teachers' efficiency and improve students' performance. They make learning more interesting, practical, realistic and appealing. They also enable both the teachers and students to participate actively and effectively in lesson sessions. They give room for acquisition of skills and knowledge and development of self- confidence and self- actualization.

Isola (2010) describes instructional materials as objects or devices that assist the teachers to present their lessons logically and sequentially to the learners. Oluwagbohunmi and Abdu-Raheem (2014) observe that instructional materials are devices used by teachers to aid explanations and make learning of subject matter understandable to students during the teaching learning process.

Eniayewu (2015) posits that it is very important to use instructional aides for instructional delivery to make students acquire more knowledge and promote academic standard. In addition, Ajayi and Ayodele (2011) stress that availability of instructional materials is

necessary to achieving effectiveness in educational delivery and supervision in the school system. Ogbondah (2018) laments on the gross inadequacy and underutilization of instructional materials that is necessary to compensate for the inadequacies of sense organs and to reinforce the capacity of dominant organs. The author suggests that teachers should endeavour to provide locally made materials in substitution for the standard ones to deliver their lessons.

Enaigbe (2019) notes that basic materials such as textbooks, essential equipment like computer, projectors, television and video are not readily available in many schools. In a study, Olumorin, Yusuf, Ajidagba and Jekayinfa (2010) found that instructional materials help teachers to teach conveniently and the learners to learn easily without any problem. They further report that instructional materials have direct contact on all sense organs. Kochhar (2012) also reports that instructional materials are very significant teaching and learning tools. Kochhar suggest the need for teachers to find necessary materials for instruction to supplement what textbooks provide in order to broaden concepts and arouse students' interests in the subject.

According to Abolade (2019), instructional materials are cheaper to produce and are useful in teaching a large number of students at a time. They also encourage learners to pay proper attention and enhance their interest. However, Akinleye (2010) confirms that effective teaching and learning require a teacher to teach the students with instructional materials and use practical activities to make learning more vivid, logical, realistic and pragmatic. Esu, Enuokoha and Umoren (2014) agree that instructional materials are indispensable to the effective teaching and learning activities. Ekpo (2014) also support that teaching aids are always useful in supporting the sense organs.

According to Abiodun-Oyebanji and Adu (2017), instructional materials are all things that are used to support, facilitate, influence or encourage acquisition of knowledge, competency and skills. Abdu-Raheem (2014) encourages teachers to improvise teaching aids because they enhance learners' full participation in the lesson, gives room for inquiry, problem-solving, discussion and clarification of issues and ideas among students and the teacher. Riveire (2016) notes that improvisation is a valuable teaching tool. Afolabi and Adeleke (2010) identified non-availability, inadequacy and non-utilization of learning materials as a result of teacher's poor knowledge as factors responsible for the use of lecture method. They recommended that students, teachers, parents, Parent Teacher Association, government and philanthropists should be involved in improvising instructional materials for teaching and learning in schools. Therefore, Ogbondah (2018) advocates teachers' resourcefulness and encourages them to search for necessary instructional materials through local means to supplement or replace the standard ones. Oso (2011) suggests that the best way for teachers to make use of their manipulative skills is to improvise so as to achieve their lesson objectives to a reasonable extent.

Jekayinfa (2012) identifies the importance of improvisation of instructional materials as making learning concrete and real. It substitutes one thing for another, allows the students to participate in the production of materials, economical and more teacher-student resource oriented. Abdu-Raheem (2014) submits that improvisation of locally made teaching aids could assist to improve quality of graduates turned out from schools and standard of education generally. Abdu- Raheem and Oluwagbohunmi (2015) also corroborated the idea that resourceful and skilful teachers should improvise necessary instructional materials to promote academic standards in Nigerian schools. The ability of the school principal to make available materials and devices such as chairs, chalk, chalkboard, tables chart to be used in learning

situations to supplement the written or spoken words in transmission of knowledge is needed in order to achieve the goals of a school.

## **Theoretical Framework**

### **Robert House's (1971) Path-Goal Theory of Leadership**

The path-goal theory, also known as the path-goal theory of leader effectiveness or the path-goal model, is a leadership theory developed by Robert House, an Ohio State University graduate, in 1971 and revised in 1996. The theory states that a leader's behavior is contingent on the satisfaction, motivation and performance of his or her subordinates. The revised version also argues that the leader engages in behaviors that complement subordinate's abilities and compensate for deficiencies. According to House (1971), the path-goal theory can be classified as a form of instrumental leadership.

The theory assumes that the manager's job is to guide workers to choose the best paths to reach their goals as well as the organizational goals. The theorist argues that leaders will have to engage in different types of leadership behaviors depending on the nature and the demands of a particular situation. It is the leader's job to assist followers in attaining goals and to provide the direction and support needed to ensure that their goals are compatible with the organization's goals.

The path-goal theory is a leadership participation method, where the leader does what he or she can to clear a path for group members to act. This is done by delineating clearly what is to be done, removing obstacles and rewarding those who perform well. The levels in intensity a leader may do these things will vary according to the circumstances. The follower may be more motivated or capable, or the work to be done could be easy or difficult. The leadership styles in this method can vary from being dictatorial to the leader being participatory and House (1971) states that these styles include supportive, directive, participative and achievement-orientated. A leader facilitates the group by appealing to a group member's self-esteem and making the task enjoyable or at least palatable.

A leader simply may direct the group to do the task with a contingency theory approach. At some points, a leader may engage in a participative leadership style, where he or she takes suggestions from the group on how to do work. This assumes that the members are knowledgeable. A leader may set standards and goals and urge the group to attain them. This style is used usually for tasks that are more complex. Whatever the case, the assumption is that the leader knows what is best in the way of accomplishing something.

The theory also assumes that the leader is rational and that there are ways that can work positively for a situation. House (1971) states that for leaders to be effective, they need to engage the behaviors that complement subordinates' environments and capabilities in a manner that compensates for deficiencies and is instrumental to subordinates satisfaction, individual and work unit's performance. The author admits that there have been no specific tests of any theory of how a leader's behavior affects followers.

The 1996 version of the theory expands to eight classes of leader behavior that he says will help leadership performance. In addition, the behavior can be substituted for each other depending upon the circumstances. House adds that group members can be empowered through delegation of authority and work facilitation (developing task autonomy). There is an enhanced

group decision process and interaction among members. House emphasizes that value-based leadership motivates workers to achieve their goals and is justified if it enhances their performance.

Path-goal theory assumes that leaders are flexible and that they can change their style, as situations require. The theory proposes two contingency variables. These are such as environment and follower characteristics that moderate the leader behavior-outcome relationship. Environment is outside the control of the follower-task structure, authority system, and work group. Environmental factors determine the type of leader behavior required if the follower outcomes are to be maximized. Follower characteristics are the locus of control, experience and perceived ability.

Personal characteristics of subordinates determine how the environment and leader are interpreted. Effective leaders clarify the path to help their followers achieve goals and make the journey easier by reducing pitfalls. Employee's performance and satisfaction are positively influenced when the leader compensates for the shortcomings in either the employee's or the work setting. According to House (1971), the theory is useful because it reminds leaders that their central purpose is to help subordinates to define and reach their goals in an efficient manner. The theory is relevant to this study because it could guide principals to understand that to clarify the path, they must know the processes involved and have the vision on how to achieve the goals of the school. To be able to remove obstacles for achievement of the school's goals from the path of the followers, the principal must have the necessary skills to know when there are obstacles, what to do, and how to do it.

Critics are of the opinion that even with House's 1996 modifications, the path-goal theory is leader-centered, and if something happens to him or her, the organization may collapse. There cannot be too much dependence on the leader for an organization's survival. Further, as House admits, the whole concept of path-goal needs to be tested. The path-goal theory still is undemocratic and it remains to be seen whether the modifications would work in environments where group members are independently-oriented, intelligent and knowledgeable. This led to the review of a more democratic theory that embraces the opinion of the subordinates.

### **Research Methodology**

This study employed an ex-post facto research design to investigate the relationship between principals' leadership effectiveness and the management of public secondary schools in Cross River State, Nigeria. The target population included 12,930 principals and teachers from 293 public secondary schools, with a purposive sampling technique utilized to select a sample of 1,737 respondents, ensuring relevant firsthand information. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire titled "Principals' Leadership Effectiveness Questionnaire (PLEQ)", comprising of 15 items across three clusters addressing various leadership dimensions, along with a semi-structured interview schedule to validate quantitative findings. The instruments underwent face and content validation by three experts, ensuring clarity and relevance. Reliability was established through a pilot test, yielding Cronbach's alpha coefficients ranging from 0.96 to 0.99 for the clusters and an overall coefficient of 0.97, indicating high internal consistency. Data collection involved three trained research assistants who administered the questionnaires across the sampled schools, retrieving them immediately to minimize loss. Quantitative data were analyzed using mean, standard deviation, and chi-square tests at a 0.05 significance level, while qualitative data from interviews were examined through content

analysis and logical analysis, following grounded theory methodologies. A cut-off point of 2.50 was set for decision-making, with mean scores above this threshold considered positive, thus facilitating a comprehensive understanding of the principals' leadership effectiveness in managing secondary schools.

## Result, Analysis and Discussion of Data

### Answers to Research Questions

**Question One:** In what ways do principals' leadership effectiveness influence instructional supervision in public secondary schools in Cross River State

**Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation Scores of the influence of Principals' Leadership Effectiveness on Instructional Supervision in Public Secondary Schools**

S/N	Items Description	N	SA	A	D	SD	M	SD	Dec.
1	Principals' classroom Visitation enhances teachers' classroom control in my school.	107	44	33	12	18	2.92	.90	Accepted
2	Principals' classroom observation enhances discipline in my school	107	71	25	7	4	3.54	.71	Strongly Accepted
3	In my school, principals' mentorship enhances teachers' job performance	107	796	470	310	161	3.09	1.00	Accepted
4	In my school, organization of workshop by the principal influences teachers' use of instructional materials	107	490	739	271	237	2.85	.98	Accepted
5	In my school, conference by the principal enhances teachers use of effective teaching methods	107	161	107	474	237	2.85	.98	Accepted
<b>Cluster Mean</b>							<b>3.08</b>		<b>Accepted</b>

Table 1 shows that the mean ratings of items 1-5 are 2.92, 3.54, 3.09, 2.85 and 3.01 with the corresponding standard deviations of 0.90, 0.71, 1.00, 0.98 and 0.84 respectively. From Table 1, the respondents accepted that principals' classroom visitation enhance teachers' classroom control in their schools. Teachers were also of the opinion that principals' classroom observation enhances discipline in their schools. The respondents further agreed that in their schools, principals' mentorship enhances teachers' job performance. In addition, the respondents also opined that in their schools, organization of workshop by the principals influences teachers' use of instructional materials. Moreover, the respondents were also agreed that that organization of conference by school principals enhance teachers' use of effective teaching methods in their schools. The cluster mean of 3.08 was above the cut-off point of 2.50. This means principals' leadership effectiveness do influence instructional supervision in secondary schools in Cross River State

**Table 2: How Principals’ Use Instructional Supervision to Enhance Effective Management of Secondary Schools**

S/NO	Interview Description	Freq.	Percent. (%)
1	Monitoring of Teachers enhance effective management of secondary schools	40	40.
2	Marking of lesson plans/notes enhance effective management of secondary schools.	50	50.0
3	Provision of training and retraining of teachers enhance effective management of secondary schools.	10	10.0
<b>Total</b>		<b>100</b>	<b>100.0</b>

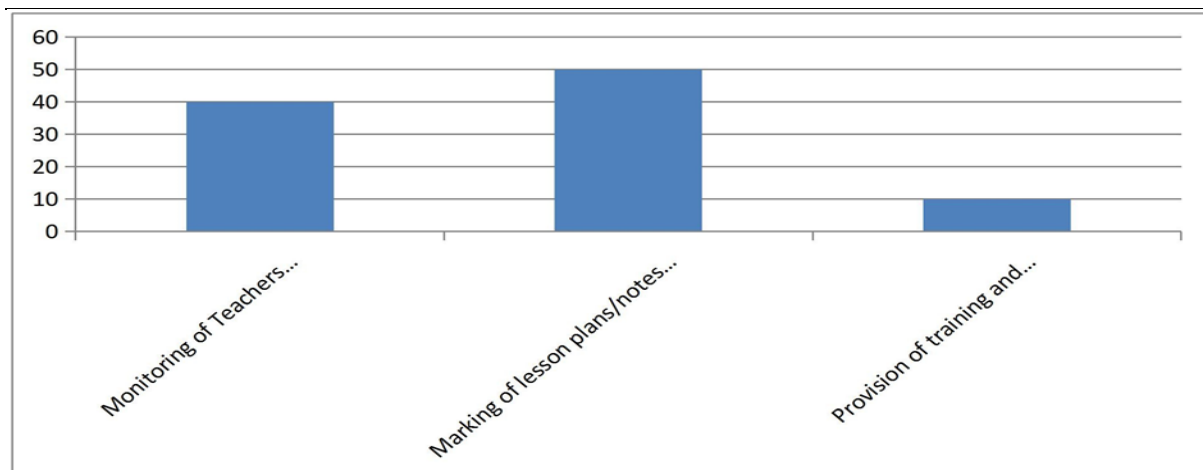


Figure 1: Bar Chart showing how principals’ use of instructional supervision to enhance effective management in secondary schools.

Table 2 and figure 1 revealed that 40(40.0%) respondents reported that monitoring of teachers to enhance effective management of secondary schools, 50(50.0%) respondents were of the opinion that marking of lesson plans and notes enhance effective management of secondary schools and 10(10.0%) respondents view provision for training and retraining of teachers to enhance effective management of secondary schools.

**Question Two:** What is the influence of principals’ leadership effectiveness on communication in public secondary schools?

**Table 3: Mean and Standard Deviation Scores of the principals’ leadership effectiveness on communication in public secondary schools**

S/N	Items Description	N	SA	A	D	SD	M	SD	Dec.
6	In my school, principal’s communication with teachers on time brings more confidence	1737	785	620	201	131	3.19	.91	Accepted
7	Effective communication in my school, influences teachers quick submission of results.	1737	636	726	234	141	3.07	.91	Accepted

8	In my school, free flow of communication between the principal and teachers improves Principal/teacher relationship.	1737	752	615	244	167	3.15	.92	Accepted
9	In my school, free flow of communication between the principal and subordinate reduces examination malpractice.	1737	523	775	272	167	2.95	.92	Accepted
10	In my school, proper communication influences students to report erring students to the school management.	1737	325	1074	185	153	2.90	.80	Accepted
<b>Cluster Mean</b>							<b>3.05</b>		<b>Accepted</b>

Table 3 shows that the mean ratings of items 6-10 are 3.19, 3.07, 3.15, 2.95 and 2.90 with the corresponding standard deviations of 0.91, 0.91, 0.92, 0.92 and 0.80 respectively. Item by item analysis showed that respondents were of the opinion that in their schools, principals' communication to teachers on time brings more confidence. Respondents also unanimously agreed that effective communication in their schools influence teachers quick submission of results. The respondents further affirmed that free flow of communication between the principals and teachers improves principal/teacher relationship in their schools. In addition to that, the respondents opined that in their schools, free flow of communication between principals and Subordinates reduce examination malpractice. Moreover, their responses showed that proper communication influences students to report erring students to school management. The cluster mean of 3.05 was above the cut-off point of 2.50. This means that principals leadership effectiveness have influence communication in public secondary schools.

**Table 4: School Principal use of Communication as an Effective Means for School Management**

S/NO	Interview Description	Freq.	Percent. (%)
1	Face to face or virtual communication technique can be used to achieve effective school management	20	20.0
2	Video or verbal, digital or non-digital communication can be used to achieve effective school management.	25	25.0
3	Internal feedback mechanism can be used to achieve effective school management	55	55.0
<b>Total</b>		<b>100</b>	<b>100.0</b>

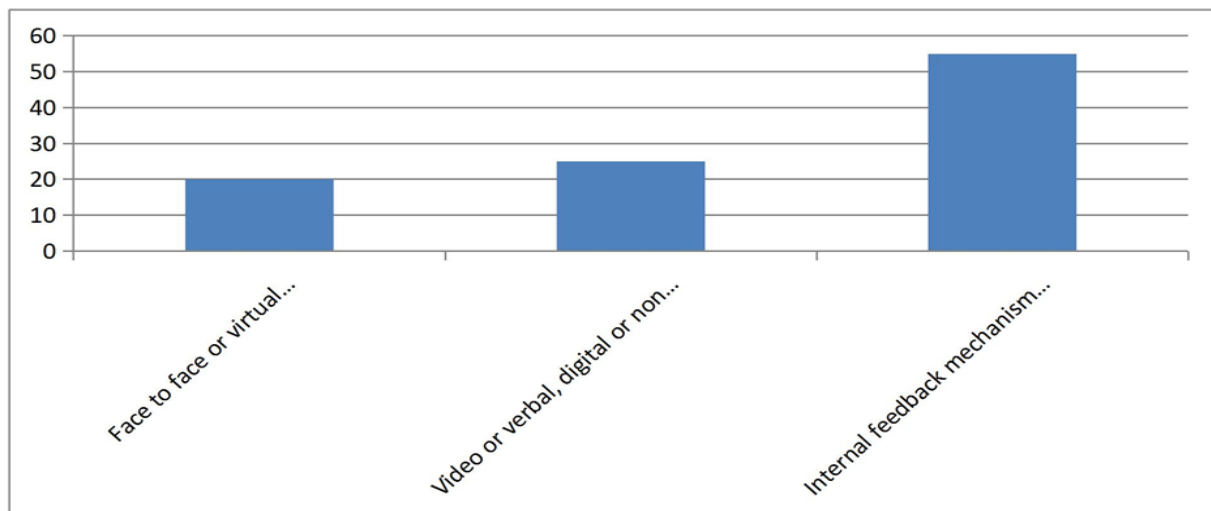


Figure 2: Bar Chart showing school principal use communication as an effective means for school management.

Table 4 and figure 2 showed that 20(20.0%) interviewers opined that face to face or virtual communication technique can be used to achieve effective school management, 25(25.0%) reported that video or verbal, digital or non-digital communication can be used to achieve effective school management while 55(55.0%) stated that internal feedback mechanism can be used to achieve effective school management.

**Question Three:** What influence does principals' leadership effectiveness have on provision of instructional materials in public secondary schools?

**Table 5: Mean and Standard Deviation Scores of the Impact of Principals' Leadership Effectiveness on Provision of Instructional Materials in Secondary Schools**

S/N	Items Description	N	SA	A	D	SD	M	SD	Dec.
11	In my school adequate provision of textbooks by the principal enhances effecting teaching and learning	1737	790	656	189	102	3.23	.86	Accepted
12	In my school, principals' adequate provision of chalk influences teachers job performance	1737	563	825	230	119	3.05	.85	Accepted
13	Provision of computers by the principal influences proper records keeping in my school	1737	758	657	222	100	3.19	.87	Accepted
14	Provision of projector by principals influences effective delivery of lessons in my school	1737	402	882	265	188	2.86	.89	Accepted
15	Principal's provision of television in my school enhances students' comprehension	1737	485	1001	125	126	3.06	.80	Accepted
<b>Cluster Mean</b>							<b>3.08</b>		<b>Accepted</b>

Table 5, revealed that the mean ratings of items 11-15 are 3.23, 3.05, 3.19, 2.86 and 3.06 with the corresponding standard deviation scores of 0.86, 0.85, 0.89, 0.89, 0.80 respectively. From



the results, the respondents were of the opinion that in their schools, adequate provision of textbooks by the principals enhances effective teaching and learning. They also agreed that principals' adequate provision of chalk influences teachers job performance in their schools. The respondents also said that provision of computers by the principals influence proper records keeping in their schools. They further agreed that provision of projector by principals influence effective delivery of lessons in their schools. Moreover, the respondents agreed that principals' provision of televisions in their schools enhances students' comprehension. The cluster mean of 3.08 was above the cut-off point of 2.50. This implied that principals leadership effectiveness have impact on the provision of instructional materials in secondary schools.

**Table 6: Principal Provision of Instructional Materials to Influence School Management prompt provision of teaching aids school management**

S/NO	Interview Description	Freq.	Percent. (%)
1	effective school management	35	35.0
2	Involvement of teachers in the improvisation of instructional materials influence school management	20	20.0
3	Financial support to teachers to acquire instructional materials influences school management	45	45.0
<b>Total</b>		<b>100</b>	<b>100.0</b>

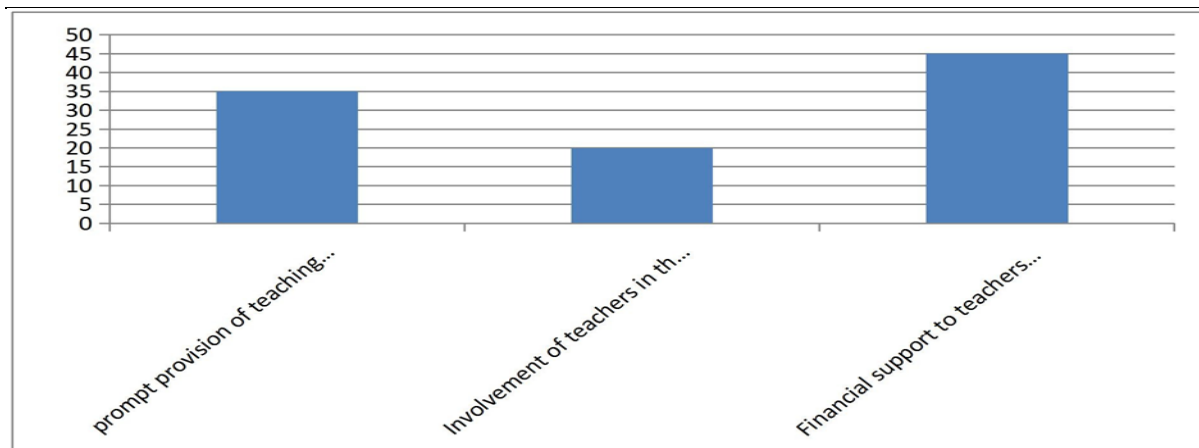


Figure 3: Bar Chart showing principal provision of instructional materials to influence school management.

Table 6 and figure 3 revealed 35(35.0%) reported that prompt provision of teaching aids to teachers influence effective school management, 20(20.0%) said that involvement of teachers in the improvisation of instructional materials influence school management and 45(45.0%) were of the opinion that financial support to teachers to acquire instructional materials influences school management.

### Test of Hypotheses

The chi-square test of goodness-of-fit was used to test the three hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. In a situation whereby the  $\chi^2$  -calculated was equal to or greater than the  $\chi^2$ -critical at the significance level of 0.05 and the degree of freedom, the null hypothesis of no significant impact was not accepted. On the other hand, if the  $\chi^2$  -calculated was less than the  $\chi^2$ -critical at the same alpha level and degree of freedom, the null hypothesis was accepted.

**Hypothesis One:** Principals' leadership effectiveness does not have significant influence on instructional supervision in public secondary schools in Cross River State, Nigeria.

**Table 7: Chi-Square Test of the influence of Principals' Leadership Effectiveness on Instructional Supervision in Public Secondary Schools**

Responses	SA	A	D	SD	Total	df	X <sup>2</sup> cal.	x <sup>2</sup> crit.	P-val.	Remark
Observed	443	904	192	198	1737	3	771.999 <sup>a</sup>	7.815	.000	Sign.
Expected	434.3	434.3	434.3	434.3						

Table 7 shows that  $\chi^2\text{-cal.}=771.999^a > 7.815$ ;  $P < .05$  with 3 degree of freedom. Thus, the null hypothesis which stated that principals' leadership effectiveness do not have significant influence on instructional supervision in public secondary schools in Cross River State, Nigeria was rejected. This result clearly shows that principals' leadership effectiveness has significant influence on instructional supervision in public secondary schools in Cross River State, Nigeria.

**Hypothesis Two:** Principals' leadership effectiveness does not have significant influence on communication in public secondary schools.

**Table 8: Chi-Square Test of the influence of Principals' Leadership Effectiveness on Communication in Secondary Schools**

Responses	SA	A	D	SD	Total	df	X <sup>2</sup> cal.	x <sup>2</sup> crit.	P-val.	Remark
Observed	785	620	201	131	1737	3	699.815 <sup>a</sup>	7.815	.000	Sign.
Expected	434.3	434.3	434.3	434.3						

Table 8 reveals that  $\chi^2\text{-cal.}=699.815^a > 7.815$ ;  $P < .05$  with 3 degree of freedom. Thus, the null hypothesis which stated that principals' leadership effectiveness do not have significant impact on communication in public secondary schools was rejected. This result implies that principals' leadership effectiveness have significant impact on communication in public secondary schools.

**Hypothesis Three:** Principals' leadership effectiveness does not have significant influence on provision of instructional materials in public secondary schools.

**Table 9: Chi-Square Test of the influence of Principals' Leadership Effectiveness on Provision of Instructional Materials in Public Secondary Schools**

Responses	SA	A	D	SD	Total	df	X <sup>2</sup> cal.	x <sup>2</sup> crit.	P-val.	Remark
Observed	790	656	189	102	1737	3	797.395 <sup>a</sup>	7.815	.000	Sign.
Expected	434.3	434.3	434.3	434.3						

Table 18 shows that the  $\chi^2\text{-cal.}=797.395^a > 7.815$ ;  $P < .05$  with 3 degree of freedom. Thus, the null hypothesis which stated that principals' leadership effectiveness do not have significant impact on provision of instructional materials in public secondary schools was rejected. This

means that principals' leadership effectiveness have significant influence on provision of instructional materials in public secondary schools.

### **Discussion of Findings**

This research work examined principals' leadership effectiveness on the management of public secondary schools in Cross River State, Nigeria and made the following findings as it is discussed:

The first finding revealed that principals' leadership effectiveness do significantly influence on instructional supervision in public secondary schools in Cross River State, Nigeria. This finding agrees with Tshabalala (2013) who reported that school teachers perceived principals' classroom instructional supervision in a positive way. The preference for the frequency of supervision of instruction, type of supervisors and purposes of supervision all point to the fact that teachers perceived supervision in a positive way. Similarly, Iroegbu and Etudor-Eyo (2016) also found significant difference in teachers' performance based on principals' effectiveness in classroom observation, analysis/strategy, post-observation-conference and post-conference analysis. The findings further revealed that when teachers are supervised, they perform their duties more efficiently and this boosts the output of the school. The researcher discovered during the fieldwork that the major role of the principal was to facilitate the implementation of the various learning programmes aimed at improving the learning situation. In this regard, principals as school heads were seen providing teachers with the needed support in implementing the instructional programmes. This made teachers of these schools to perceive principals' leadership effectiveness to significantly impact on instructional supervision in secondary schools.

Secondly, the results revealed that principals' leadership effectiveness do significantly influence on communication in secondary schools. This finding is consistent with previous research by Nakpodia (2010) who found that the principals' effective use of communication influences teachers' job performance in secondary schools. This implies that when principals communicate their subordinate on time, it helps them to do their job better and more efficiently. The researcher's current observation during the fieldwork revealed that school principals' who had laid down communication strategies makes their instructional leadership to be very effective and efficient. Thus, teachers' positive perception of principals' leadership roles emanated from the effective communication channels which resulted to teachers better satisfaction and performance.

The third finding also revealed that principals' leadership effectiveness have significant influence on the provision of instructional materials in public secondary schools. This finding corroborated Yaibu (2012) who found that adequate provision of instructional materials by school principals significantly influence teachers' job performance. The result of the study further revealed that teachers were more committed to their job and performed better when instructional materials were provided for them by the head-teachers. The researcher's current observation affirmed that instructional materials provided by the school principal promote teachers' efficiency and improves students' performance. Teachers of public secondary schools felt positive about their head-teacher as they were able to provide devices that assisted them to present lessons to learners with ease and in a logical manner.

## Conclusion

This study has examined the influence of principals' leadership effectiveness on the management of public secondary schools in Cross River State, Nigeria. It was concluded that principals' leadership effectiveness had significantly influence on the management of public secondary schools in Cross River State in the areas of instructional supervision, communication, and provision of instructional materials.

## Recommendations

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

1. Principals should be adequately trained and enlightened with more robust supervision strategies through seminars and conferences which may include classroom observation, analysis/strategy, post-observation conference and post conference analysis.
2. Principals should ensure that communication is effectively carried out to enhance discipline and maintain law and order.
3. School heads should always ensure that instructional materials are available for their staff so as to enhance their job performance.

## Limitations

This study relied upon principal's leadership effectiveness. The teachers might be limited by their understanding of scope of the principals' duties. The researcher investigated the leadership effectiveness of principals only in Cross River State, Nigeria which is also another factor to be considered that hinder effectiveness of this research work. An additional limitation was added following the data collection and analysis. The timing of the survey may have made the teachers to be biased responses. The teachers were asked to complete the structured questionnaire for certain period or hours which time was not enough for respondents to think and tick effectively the best opinion knowing to them.

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