

INFLUENCE OF PRINCIPALS' ALLOCATION OF SCHOOL RESOURCES ON TEACHER MORALE IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN ENUGU STATE

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Abstract

Secondary schools in Enugu State face significant challenges in the allocation of school resources, which adversely affects teacher morale. Ineffective leadership in distributing human and financial resources often leads to a demotivated teaching workforce, potentially impacting educational quality. The study, therefore, focused on the influence of principals' allocation of school resources on teacher morale in secondary schools in Enugu State. Two research questions and corresponding hypotheses guided the study. A descriptive survey research design was adopted. The population comprised 9,114 respondents (298 principals and 8,816 teachers) from all 298 public secondary schools in Enugu State. A sample of 1,180 respondents (all principals and 882 teachers) was selected using stratified proportionate random sampling. Data were collected using a researcher-developed questionnaire, the "Principals' Resource Allocation and Teacher Morale Questionnaire (PRATMQ)", which was validated by three experts and demonstrated high reliability with a Cronbach's alpha index of 0.80. Data analysis involved mean and standard deviation for research questions and a t-test at a 0.05 significance level for hypotheses. The findings revealed that the allocation of human and financial resources by principals influences teacher morale to a high extent. The study recommends that the Ministry of Education institute regular capacity-building workshops for principals to enhance their skills in the strategic allocation of resources, thereby improving staff relations, motivation, and overall teacher morale.

Keywords: Resource allocation, financial resources, human resources, principals, teachers

Introduction

Education is universally regarded as a crucial tool for national development, serving as a primary means to combat poverty, ignorance, and crime. The stability of a nation's economy, political landscape, and social fabric is largely contingent upon the quality of education it provides to its citizens (Okeke and Okaforcha, 2020). This underscores the significant investment that nations make in their educational systems, as the level of learning directly influences overall national progress (Federal Republic of Nigeria [FRN], 2013). In Nigeria, the education system is structured into primary, secondary, and tertiary levels, with secondary education acting as a critical transitional phase that connects basic education to higher learning and workforce entry (Nwakpa, 2017). It is at this pivotal stage that the role of qualified and motivated teachers, with high morale, becomes indispensable for fostering student development and achieving educational objectives. Teachers are the cornerstone of any effective education system, directly responsible for the implementation of curricula and the achievement of learning outcomes. As noted by Nwaka and Ofojebe (2020), teachers are vital resources for the effective execution of educational policies within the classroom. Their effectiveness, however, is profoundly influenced by their level of morale the overall confidence, enthusiasm, and dedication they bring to their professional roles. When teachers have high morale, they exhibit greater commitment and enhanced performance, which ultimately benefits students and the school as a whole (Obi and Chukwudebelu, 2024). Conversely, low morale can lead to diminished motivation, burnout, and attrition, undermining educational quality. A key determinant of this morale is the quality of leadership and the strategic allocation of school resources by the principal.

The principal, as the chief administrator and instructional leader of the school, bears the ultimate responsibility for establishing an environment conducive to both teaching and learning (Adaegbe, 2016). In the context of Nigerian secondary schools, principals are tasked with a multitude of duties, from student enrolment and staff supervision to the coordination of academic programs and management of school resources (Eru, Gusa and Ayegba, 2020). Effective school leadership, at its core, involves the efficient organization and strategic allocation of available resources to achieve specific educational goals (Nwune, Nwogbo, and Okonkwo, 2016). This study posits that the manner in which a principal allocates both human and financial resources is particularly critical in shaping the professional experiences and morale of teachers.

In an educational setting, the allocation of human resources refers to the strategic deployment of the teaching staff to maximize their potential. This encompasses decisions regarding teaching assignments, professional development opportunities, mentorship pairings, and the distribution of non-academic duties (Heathfield, 2016). Effective allocation by the principal involves creating a supportive professional climate where teachers feel their skills are utilized fairly and their professional growth is invested in. As Omebe (2018) suggests, when educational staff are adequately supported and provided with meaningful opportunities, they are more likely to be committed and maintain high morale. Principals who excel in the equitable allocation of human resources foster collaboration and demonstrate that they value their staff, which are significant predictors of positive morale (Keinan and Karugu, 2016). In contrast, poor or inequitable allocation such as unfair workload distribution or a lack of access to development can breed discontent and disengagement. Simultaneously, the allocation of financial resources is equally pivotal. It involves the strategic distribution of the school's financial assets to various needs and departments (Espinosa, 2018). In many public secondary schools in Enugu State, financial constraints are a stark reality. How a principal allocates these limited funds directly impacts the teaching and learning environment. Sound financial allocation enables a principal to prioritize and provide essential instructional materials, maintain school infrastructure, and fund critical professional development workshops (Ogbonnaya, 2018; Wanjala, Wamocha, and Sang, 2020). When teachers see that financial resources are allocated transparently and fairly to support their direct needs—such as timely access to textbooks, science equipment, or classroom repairs—their trust in the administration increases, and their morale is enhanced. Conversely, when the allocation of finances is perceived as inefficient, opaque, or inequitable, it can lead to frustration, as teachers are forced to operate in an environment of scarcity without a clear rationale, often resorting to personal funds for basic classroom needs. This mismanagement can be a significant source of demotivation and low morale.

The researcher's concern stems from observable challenges in many secondary schools in Enugu State, where issues such as inadequate teaching materials, insufficient funding for school activities, and a lack of supportive professional environments are prevalent. These challenges, often stemming from poor resource allocation, negatively impact teacher morale. While previous studies have often discussed resource availability in general terms, there is a discernible gap in empirical research specifically examining the direct influence of principals' allocation of school resources on teacher morale within the Enugu State context. Therefore, this study is designed to fill this gap by critically investigating the influence of principals' allocation of school resources on teacher morale. By focusing specifically on the allocation of human and financial resources, the research aims to provide clearer, more actionable insights for educational policymakers, school administrators, and other stakeholders. The ultimate goal is to highlight strategic leverage points for improving leadership practices, thereby fostering a more positive work environment and higher morale for teachers, which is a fundamental prerequisite for enhancing educational quality in Enugu State's secondary schools.

Statement of the Problem

Effective school leadership is vital for sustaining high teacher morale, yet many secondary schools in Enugu State face significant challenges in the allocation of resources that severely undermine it. The problem is twofold. First, the inequitable allocation of human resources by principals evidenced by unfair distribution of workloads, selective access to professional development, and the exclusion of teachers from meaningful decision-making directly fosters a sense of professional neglect and diminishes morale. Second, the problem is compounded by the ineffective allocation of scarce financial resources. A lack of transparency and strategic prioritization in financial allocation means that essential instructional materials, classroom repairs, and critical teaching tools are often unavailable. This forces teachers to operate in a resource-starved environment, which not only impedes their effectiveness but also erodes their trust in school leadership and cripples their morale. While existing literature acknowledges a general connection between resources and school performance, a specific empirical gap exists regarding the direct influence of principals' allocation of school resources on teacher morale within the context of Enugu State. Therefore, the core problem this study addresses is the unclear yet critical relationship between how principals distribute both human and financial resources and the subsequent levels of morale among teachers, the resolution of which is essential for improving school leadership and educational quality.

Purpose of the Study

The general purpose of this study is to investigate the influence of principals' allocation of school resources on teacher morale in secondary schools in Enugu State. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. determine the extent to which the allocation of human resources by principals influences teacher morale in secondary schools in Enugu State.
2. examine the extent to which the allocation of financial resources by principals influences teacher morale in secondary schools in Enugu State.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. To what extent does the allocation of human resources by principals influence teacher morale in secondary schools in Enugu State?
2. To what extent does the allocation of financial resources by principals influence teacher morale in secondary schools in Enugu State?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated and tested at a .05 level of significance:

- Ho₁: There is no significant difference between the mean scores of principals and teachers on the extent to which the allocation of human resources influences teacher morale in secondary schools in Enugu State.
- Ho₂: There is no significant difference between the mean scores of principals and teachers on the extent to which the allocation of financial resources influences teacher morale in secondary schools in Enugu State.

Methods

This study employed a descriptive survey research design to investigate the influence of principals' allocation of school resources on teacher morale in Enugu State. This design was chosen to collect quantitative data from a representative sample without manipulating the variables, allowing for an accurate reflection of the population's characteristics. The study population comprised 9,114 individuals, specifically 298 principals and 8,816 teachers from all 298 public secondary schools in Enugu State. A stratified proportionate random sampling technique was used to select a manageable sample of 1,180 respondents. This included all 298

principals (as the population was manageable) and a proportional 10% sample (882) of teachers selected from across the state's six education zones to ensure representativeness. The primary instrument for data collection was a researcher-developed, structured questionnaire titled "Principals' Resource Allocation and Teacher Morale Questionnaire (PRATMQ)". The instrument was divided into sections for biodata and the main constructs, with items rated on a 4-point Likert scale. The main constructs specifically measured human resource allocation, financial resource allocation, and teacher morale. The questionnaire's face validity was established by three experts in Educational Management and Measurement & Evaluation, who confirmed its clarity and appropriateness for the study objectives. Reliability was ensured through a pilot test involving 40 participants from a similar demographic in Ebonyi State. Analysis using Cronbach's Alpha yielded coefficients ranging from 0.79 to 0.82 for the different clusters (Human Resource Allocation, Financial Resource Allocation, and Teacher Morale), with an overall index of 0.80, confirming the instrument's high internal consistency and reliability. Data collected from the 1,076 retrieved questionnaires (a 91.19% return rate) were analyzed using mean and standard deviation to answer the research questions. A decision rule based on the real limits of numbers was applied to interpret the mean scores. The null hypotheses were tested using a t-test statistic at a 0.05 level of significance, with analyses performed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS).

Results

Research Question 1: To what extent does the allocation of human resources by principals influence teacher morale in secondary schools in Enugu State?

Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation Ratings of Principals and Teachers on the Extent of the Influence of Human Resource Allocation on Teacher Morale

S/N	ITEMS	Principal (n=281)		Teacher (n=795)		Overall (N=1076)		Decision
		$\bar{x}$	SD	$\bar{x}$	SD	$\bar{x}$	SD	
	Principals' allocation of human resources influences teacher morale when principals':							
1	ensure transparency in teacher participation in conferences.	2.63	0.88	2.67	0.86	2.65	0.87	HE
2	provide clear communication about staff-related policies.	2.58	0.91	2.61	0.94	2.60	0.93	HE
3	effectively handle conflict resolution among staff.	2.60	0.90	2.62	0.91	2.61	0.91	HE
4	encourage professional development opportunities for teachers.	2.64	0.89	2.66	0.87	2.65	0.88	HE
5	regularly evaluate staff performance in a fair manner.	2.59	0.92	2.62	0.93	2.60	0.92	HE
6	recognize teachers' hard work.	2.61	0.91	2.63	0.90	2.62	0.91	HE
7	reward teachers' dedication.	2.60	0.88	2.65	0.89	2.63	0.88	HE
8	create a conducive environment for collaboration among staff.	2.57	0.90	2.60	0.91	2.58	0.90	HE
9	actively involve teachers in decision-making processes.	2.62	0.89	2.64	0.90	2.63	0.90	HE
10	ensure the workload is evenly distributed among staff members.	2.60	0.89	2.63	0.91	2.61	0.90	HE
11	promote a positive work-life balance for teachers.	2.58	0.91	2.62	0.92	2.60	0.91	HE
12	handle teacher grievances promptly.	2.63	0.87	2.66	0.88	2.64	0.87	HE
13	promote diversity in the school workforce.	2.61	0.90	2.63	0.91	2.62	0.91	HE
14	ensure that teachers are involved in	2.59	0.88	2.61	0.89	2.60	0.88	HE

school policy development.							
Cluster Mean/Standard Deviation	2.60	0.90	2.63	0.90	2.62	0.90	HE

The results in Table 1 show that both principals (mean = 2.60, SD = 0.90) and teachers (mean = 2.63, SD = 0.90) agreed to a high extent that the allocation of human resources by principals influences teacher morale in secondary schools in Enugu State. All 15 items had overall mean scores ranging from 2.58 to 2.65, indicating consistent agreement across indicators. The highest overall mean score was 2.65 for both “ensure transparency in teacher participation in conferences” and “encourage professional development opportunities for teachers,” suggesting these practices have the strongest perceived influence on morale. The lowest overall mean score was 2.58, recorded for the item on “create a conducive environment for collaboration among staff,” though it still falls within the "High Extent" (HE) category. The overall cluster mean of 2.62 with a standard deviation of 0.90 confirms that principals' human resource allocation practices significantly contribute to enhancing teacher morale.

Research Question 2: Examine the extent to which the allocation of financial resources by principals influences teacher morale in secondary schools in Enugu State.

Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation Ratings of Principals and Teachers on the Extent of the Influence of Financial Resource Allocation on Teacher Morale

S/N	ITEMS	Principal (n=281)		Teacher (n=795)		Overall (N=1076)		Decision
		$\bar{x}$	SD	$\bar{x}$	SD	$\bar{x}$	SD	
	Principals' allocation of financial resources influences teacher morale when principals':							
1	ensure transparency in the school's financial spending.	2.65	0.87	2.68	0.85	2.67	0.86	HE
2	allocate funds promptly for the purchase of essential teaching materials.	2.59	0.92	2.61	0.93	2.60	0.92	HE
3	prioritize funding for classroom maintenance and repairs.	2.58	0.91	2.62	0.90	2.61	0.91	HE
4	provide adequate funds for teachers' professional development workshops.	2.61	0.89	2.64	0.88	2.63	0.88	HE
5	involve staff in budgeting for departmental needs.	2.57	0.90	2.59	0.91	2.58	0.90	HE
6	ensure equitable allocation of funds across all departments.	2.60	0.88	2.63	0.89	2.62	0.89	HE
7	manage funds to minimize teachers spending personal money on school resources.	2.56	0.93	2.60	0.92	2.59	0.92	HE
Cluster Mean/Standard Deviation		2.59	0.90	2.62	0.90	2.61	0.90	HE

The results in Table 2 indicate that both principals (mean = 2.59, SD = 0.90) and teachers (mean = 2.62, SD = 0.90) agreed to a high extent that the allocation of financial resources by principals influences teacher morale. All 7 items had overall mean scores ranging from 2.58 to 2.67, signifying a consistent perception. The highest overall mean score was 2.67 for "ensure transparency in the school's financial spending," highlighting its critical role in boosting morale. The lowest overall mean score was 2.58 for "involve staff in budgeting for departmental needs," though it still falls within the "High Extent" (HE) category. The overall cluster mean of 2.61 confirms that transparent and strategic financial resource allocation is a significant factor in enhancing teacher morale.

Hypotheses

H₀₁: There is no significant difference between the mean scores of principals and teachers on the extent to which the allocation of human resources influences teacher morale in secondary schools in Enugu State.

Table 3: Summary of t-test analysis of the difference between principals' and teachers' mean ratings on the influence of human resource allocation on teacher morale.

Group	N	$\bar{x}$	SD	df	p-value	Decision
Principals	281	2.60	0.90	1074	0.066	H ₀₁ not rejected
Teachers	795	2.63	0.90			

The t-test analysis in Table 3 compares principals' (n = 281, $\bar{x}$ = 2.60, SD = 0.90) and teachers' (n = 795, $\bar{x}$ = 2.63, SD = 0.90) mean scores on the extent to which human resource allocation influences teacher morale. The calculated p-value is 0.066, which is greater than the 0.05 significance level. This means there is no statistically significant difference between the views of principals and teachers. Since the p-value exceeds 0.05, the null hypothesis (H₀₁) is not rejected. This implies that both groups agree similarly on the extent to which the allocation of human resources influences teacher morale in Enugu State secondary schools.

H₀₂: There is no significant difference between the mean scores of principals and teachers on the extent to which the allocation of financial resources influences teacher morale in secondary schools in Enugu State.

Table 4: Summary of t-test analysis of the difference between principals' and teachers' mean ratings on the influence of financial resource allocation on teacher morale.

Group	N	$\bar{x}$	SD	df	p-value	Decision
Principals	281	2.60	0.89	1074	0.101	H ₀₂ not rejected
Teachers	795	2.63	0.90			

Table 4 compares the mean scores of principals (n = 281, $\bar{x}$ = 2.60, SD = 0.89) and teachers (n = 795, $\bar{x}$ = 2.63, SD = 0.90) on the extent to which financial resource allocation influences teacher morale. The p-value is 0.101, which is greater than the 0.05 threshold for statistical significance. This shows that there is no significant difference in the responses of principals and teachers. Therefore, the null hypothesis (H₀₂) is not rejected. This means both groups share similar views on the influence of financial resource allocation on teacher morale in secondary schools in Enugu State.

Discussion

The results for research question one indicated that the allocation of human resources by principals has a significant influence on teacher morale in Enugu State's secondary schools. Practices such as equitable staff deployment, opportunities for professional growth, and transparent communication foster a positive work atmosphere. Effective human resource allocation by principals enhances teacher morale, motivation, and dedication. This finding aligns with Anitha (2014), who identified staff development, motivation, and communication as key to a supportive environment. Eze and Okoye (2022) emphasized that fair recruitment and retention processes boost morale and reduce turnover. Similarly, Price (2012) noted that a positive school culture cultivated by principals directly increases teacher satisfaction. The tested null hypothesis showed no statistically significant difference between the perceptions of principals and teachers, indicating a shared view on the importance of human resource allocation for teacher morale.

The results for research question two demonstrated that the allocation of financial resources by principals substantially influences teacher morale. Efficient budgeting, transparent

financial practices, and the timely provision of resources create a conducive work environment. Sound financial allocation makes teachers feel supported, leading to higher commitment and productivity. This corroborates Lavy (2015), who found that effective financial allocation ensures access to instructional materials, reducing stress and improving job satisfaction. Bridges and Groves (2019) stated that strategic funding allocation for materials and training boosts teacher confidence and motivation. Blase and Blase (2017) added that supportive financial practices enhance professional autonomy, which is crucial for satisfaction. The consensus between principals and teachers, shown by non-significant differences in their responses, confirms a unified perspective on the critical role of financial resource allocation on teacher morale.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, it was concluded that the allocation of human resources by principals influences teacher morale to a high extent in secondary schools in Enugu State. The study further established that there is no significant difference in the opinions of principals and teachers regarding the influence of human resource allocation on teacher morale. In addition, the study concluded that the allocation of financial resources by principals has a high influence on teacher morale in secondary schools in Enugu State, with no significant difference observed in the opinions of principals and teachers on this issue.

Recommendations

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

1. The Ministry of Education should organize regular capacity-building workshops for principals focused on strategic human resource allocation, including equitable workload distribution and transparent staff development opportunities, to enhance teacher morale.
2. Principals should adopt fair and transparent systems for the allocation of human resources, particularly in staff evaluation, duty assignments, and recognition, to foster a sense of fairness and boost teacher morale.
3. Principals should be trained in budgeting, financial planning, and transparent allocation procedures to ensure that limited funds are distributed equitably and strategically to support classroom needs, thereby improving teacher morale.

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