

Relationship Between Principals' Multi-Tasking Skills And Teachers' Job Performance In Post-Basic Schools IN North-East Nigeria

SADIQ AHMED

Department of Physical Science Education, Modibbo Adama University, Yola – Nigeria



linkahmedsadiq@gmail.com



08036788542

ORCID ID: 0009-0002-3931-1837

ABSTRACT

The study investigated relationship between principals' multi-tasking skills and teachers' job performance in Post-Basic Schools in North-East, Nigeria. The purpose of the study was to determine the extent of principals' multi-tasking skills in post basic schools in North East Nigeria, to also examine the relationship between principals' multi-tasking skills and teachers job performance and to assess whether teachers' job performance differs significantly across principals' multi-tasking levels. Three research questions were answered and three hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance. The study adopted the correlation survey research design. Stratified and random sampling techniques were used in selecting the sample of the study. The population was 19,797 respondents in Post-Basic Schools from four states (Adamawa, Bauchi, Gombe, and Taraba) drawn from North-East zone, Nigeria. The sample for the study was 592 determined using Taro Yamane formula and comprised of 76 principals and 516 teachers. The instruments for data collection were two, a structured questionnaire tagged "Principals' Multi Tasking Skills Questionnaire (PMTSQ)" which was completed by teachers, and structured questionnaire tagged "Teachers' Job Performance Questionnaire (TJPQ)" was administered and completed by principals to measure teachers' performance. The instruments were face validated and the internal consistency for the instruments was determined using Cronbach Alpha method. Reliability yielded 0.73 for Principal Multi Tasking Skills Questionnaire, 0.69 for Teachers' Job Performance Questionnaire. The findings of the study revealed Principals demonstrated a high level of multi-tasking competence ($M = 3.42$, $SD = 0.61$). Regression analysis revealed that multi-tasking skills significantly predicted teachers' job performance ($\beta = 0.87$, $p < 0.001$; $R^2 = 0.75$). ANOVA confirmed a significant difference in teacher performance across multi-tasking levels ($F(1, 590) = 226.3$, $p < 0.001$) with a large effect size ($\omega^2 \approx 0.75$). Based on the findings of this study, it was concluded that principals' multi-tasking skills was significantly related to teachers' job performance in Post-Basic Schools in North-East Nigeria. Recommendations made based on the findings include among others that; ministry of education should organize workshops focusing on multi-tasking, time management and delegation, introduce structured task sharing models to mitigate principal burnout, include multi-tasking competence indicators in principals' appraisal system, incorporate strategic management and multi-tasking modules into principal training curricula.

Keywords Educational leadership · Multi-tasking · Strategic management · Teacher performance · School administration · North-East Nigeria

INTRODUCTION

Education is a process of acquiring knowledge, skills, values and understanding through various methods such as teaching, training or research. It typically takes place in formal settings like schools or universities as well as informally through life experiences. Teachers are personnel employed to impart knowledge to students, they undergo training at various levels to gain skills on how to impart such knowledge to students. A teacher may know his subject matter well, but imparting the knowledge into someone requires skills which are acquired through effective training. Teachers are also the implementers of curriculum, when educational planners design contents to be taught, it is the teachers that implement the syllabus within the curriculum. In Nigeria the government has instituted a council for teacher's registration (Ayeni, 2020). The Teacher Registration Council of Nigeria (TRCN) is saddled with the responsibility of licensing professional teachers. All teachers in the country are encouraged to become professional so as to increase performance. In developed countries of the world only teachers with license are allowed to teach. To further encourage the need for productive teachers, Adamawa state government has approved an allowance for professional teachers under the teacher salary scheme all in an effort to get productive teachers to teach. Only teachers with license are eligible for the package. Teachers play a pivotal role in the education sector. It is widely believed that no education system is greater than the quality of her teachers. For an education system to achieve the desired goals and objectives, the teachers' efficiency must be taken into consideration. The future of any educational level depends not only on the psychological factors, but also on the emotional factors of teachers (Gistuati, 2020). Expectedly, the teachers put in their best when they are happy with the job and their performance increases when they are effectively supervised. Gistuati (2020) opined that teachers' performance means increase in output through better performance. It involves interplay of various elements in the school's system. Increased performance is usually attained when teachers are satisfied with their job and are effectively supervised (Ayeni, 2020).

The task of managing a school has sped up, everything is expected in an instant, the task of attending to visitors, ensuring that teachers are attending to their respective lesson period, handling issues of indiscipline among students, tackling late coming and so on, yet task takes time and the school period is just eight hours a day, which is where multi-tasking enters the equation (Halim & Halim, 2023). Multi-tasking is not a desired skill for surgeon to multi task while performing a surgery, but it is a needed skill for a school principal, to check the roll, get classes started, ensure teachers are attending to each lesson period, answer a call from parents or visitors all at the same time. Despite having subordinates to assist such as vice principal, senior master etc, the principal needs to attend to several things at the same time (Halim & Halim, 2023). In the whole world the concern for improving quality of work life is essential, high level priority is given to education, which is the key to economic development, conducive learning environment is put in place, teacher allowances and salaries are paid on time, efforts are being made to increase teacher performance.

This study therefore investigates the correlation between principal multi-tasking skill and teacher job performance in post-basic schools across four North-East states of Nigeria.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- i. Determine the extent of principals' multi-tasking skills in post-basic schools in North-East Nigeria.

- ii. Examine the relationship between principals' multi-tasking skills and teachers' job performance.
- iii. Assess whether teachers' job performance differs significantly across principals' multi-tasking levels.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- i. What is the extent of principals' multi-tasking skills in post-basic schools in North-East Nigeria?
- ii. What relationship exists between principals' multi-tasking skills and teachers' job performance?
- iii. Do teachers' job performance levels differ significantly across principals' multi-tasking skill levels?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Conceptual Review

Principals' Multi-Tasking Skills

. Multitasking is a human behavior that allows people to handle multiple tasks simultaneously or alternate multiple task switches (Tobias, Anna, Markus & Matthias, 2021). Multitasking has been around for as long as humans have had competing needs, for instance, doing housework while watching a baby. Time and productivity pressures in the modern workplace lead many individuals to think that if they can do several things at once, they can be more efficient and complete more tasks in less time. There are reasons why multitasking is expected in many occupations. The pace of life has sped up. People have more opportunities and higher expectations. Everything is expected in an instant – fast food, fast travel, instant information and instant communication. Yet, tasks take time and we only have 24 hours in a day, which is where multitasking enters the equation. It is not uncommon to see multitasking at a workplace, for example, a receptionist talking on the phone while making notes and reviewing a computer screen. Principal multitasking is expected at schools, for instance, some task that the principal performs require waiting time. During the waiting time, the principal can do other things such as word processing, filing, or answering the phone (Tobias, et al., 2021). In the process, some tasks may take place simultaneously. Yet, multitasking is not always a desired skill in some professions. For instance, one would not expect a surgeon to multitask while performing a transplant.

Historically, the purpose of education has always been to prepare the next generation for work, family, and citizenship. In this ever changing world, the role of education is constantly being reevaluated. The principal multi tasking skill can significantly impact teacher performance. Effective multi tasking by school principals, such as managing administrative tasks, addressing teacher concerns, and overseeing various aspects of school operations, create a more conducive environment. This, in turn, allows teachers to focus more on their primary role of educating students, ultimately enhancing overall performance in the educational institution.

Multi tasking is crucial for principals due to several reasons, (Halim & Halim, 2023)

1. Efficient time management – Principals often juggle various responsibilities, from administrative tasks to staff management. Multi tasking helps them allocate time effectively and address multiple priorities simultaneously.
2. Adaptability – Educational environments are dynamic, requiring principals to handle diverse challenges. Multi tasking enables them to adapt swiftly to changing circumstances and address issues promptly.
3. Effective communication – Principals need to communicate with various stakeholders, including teachers, students, parents, and administrative staff. Multi-tasking helps them manage communication channels efficiently and maintain strong connections with the school community.
4. Problem solving – Multi-tasking allows principals to identify and address issues proactively. They can navigate through different aspects of school management, applying problem solving skills across various domains.
5. Strategic planning – Balancing short term tasks with long term goals is essential for school leaders. Multi tasking aids principals in strategic planning, ensuring they can focus on both immediate concerns and the overarching vision for the school.
6. Resource allocation – Principals must allocate resources effectively, whether it is budgeting, staffing or facility management. Multi tasking helps them consider multiple factors simultaneously and make informed decisions.

In essence, multi tasking is a fundamental skill for principals to successfully navigate the complexities of school leadership and ensure the smooth functioning of the educational institution. Principals' multi-tasking skills can significantly influence teacher performance in several ways, such as: (Halim & Halim, 2023).

1. Clear communication – Effective multi-tasking by principals ensures clear and timely communication with teachers. This clarity helps educators understand their roles and responsibilities, reducing ambiguity and enhancing performance.
 2. Swift problem resolution – Principals who can multi task adeptly are better equipped to address issues promptly. This enables quick resolution of challenges that may otherwise impede teacher progress in delivering quality education.
 3. Resource management – Multi-tasking principals can efficiently manage resources, including staffing, budgets, and facilities. This ensures that teachers have the necessary support and materials, contributing to a more conducive teaching environment.
 4. Professional development – Principals' with strong multi-tasking skills can simultaneously focus on teacher development initiatives. This commitment to professional growth positively impact teacher skills and consequently, their effectiveness in the classroom.
 5. Collaborative environment – Multi-tasking principals can foster a collaborative school environment. Balancing various aspects of school management, they create a culture that encourages teamwork and shared responsibility, promoting a positive atmosphere for teaching.
 6. Reduced administrative burden – When principals handle administrative tasks efficiently, teachers can concentrate more on instructional responsibilities. Streamlining administrative processes through multi tasking contributes to a less bureaucratic environment for educators.
- Principals' that adept multi tasking can streamline administrative processes, enhance communication, and create a supportive environment, all of which positively influence teacher performance and effectiveness in the classroom.

Teachers' Job Performance

Teachers' job performance refers to the efficiency and effectiveness with which teachers fulfill their professional responsibilities and contribute to the learning and development of their students. It encompasses a range of activities and outcomes that collectively reflect a teacher impact on education. Utami&Vireza (2021) Key aspect of teachers' job performance include:

1. Effective classroom instruction: The ability to plan and deliver lessons that engage students, facilitate learning and align with curriculum objectives.
2. Student achievement: The extent to which students demonstrate academic progress and achievement as a result of a teachers instruction and support.
3. Time management: Efficient use of time to balance various responsibilities, including, lesson planning, grading, professional development, and extracurricular activities.
4. Innovation and adaptability: The incorporation of innovative teaching methods and the ability to adapt instructional approaches to meet the diverse needs of students.
5. Collaboration: Engagement in collaborative efforts with colleagues to share ideas, resources and best practices for improving teaching.
6. Professional development: Participation in ongoing professional development activities to enhance skills, to stay updated on educational trends, and continuously improvement in teaching practices.
7. Classroom management: The ability to create a positive and orderly learning environment, including managing student behavior effectively.
8. Communication with stakeholders: Open and effective communication with students, parents, colleagues and administrators regarding classroom activities, and other relevant information.
9. Extra-curricular involvement: Participation in activities beyond regular classroom duties, such as involvement in clubs, committees, or projects that contribute to the school community.
10. Reflection and continuous improvement: Regular reflection on teaching practices and a commitment to making adjustments for continuous improvement in both teaching methods and outcomes.

Utami and Vireza (2021) opined that performance of teachers involves the interplay of various elements in the work place in the school while inputs may be related to miscellaneous resources (labor, material, and capital). The output is the outcome of whole process in terms of student's achievement. The issues of performance, and how to raise the level of productivity of the citizens of a country particularly labor is important and should be of utmost concern to employers of labor both in the public and private sectors of the country. It is now very important for employers to have a way of measuring the performance of their employees. Although, education and agricultural sector, happen to be the highest employer of labor in Nigeria, a sector of the economy where government is allocating huge budget yearly needs to be thoroughly appraised. The categories of personnel that determine educational achievement; are the teachers, the learner and the educational administrators, of all the three, teachers appear to be the chief determinants of educational attainments. It was based on this fact that the national policy on education (2004) stated that "no quality education can rise above the quality of the teacher".

Ofuase, Daka and Mbaba (2021) state that, in Nigeria the concern for improving quality of work life does not appear to be wide spread, especially in the teaching profession. This has resulted in poor performance of students in external examinations. This situation has often been the core of frequent teachers strike actions that occur in all ties of education. It is uncommon to

read about low salaries, irregular promotions and nonpayment of allowances and benefits. To achieve a high performance, all efforts must be made to ensure that the teachers are secured, retrained and developed. These can only be achieved through an effective personnel management practice. According to Ofuase, et.al (2021), personnel management practice includes human resources planning, recruitment selection, socialization, training and development, staff appraisal, compensation and staff welfare.

It means increase in output, in educational sector especially for teachers performance, it means better performance from teachers leading to school leavers, or graduates who are morally, spiritually, physically and mentally able to fit in to the society as well as the labor market (Ofuase, 2021). Accordingly, factors affecting productivity are inefficiency of management at work place, hours worked, investment level and degree of industrialization. Human capital theory believes that good education can raise productivity, such as personal ability, formal and informal education, training, research and experience e.t.c. In order to have productive workers, Ofuase, et.al(2021) has suggested that, Nigerian education should be conscious about performance in terms of administration, admission, instruction, examination, supervision and graduation. Labor force has always been sieving potential workers in such a way that those with high ability will eventually enter the high productivity sector of the economy. Qualitative education is capable of leading to high academic achievement because usefulness of education and training in developing productive worker cannot be over-emphasized.

Hung (2020) says supervision of instruction plays a vital role at assisting, guiding and stimulating the teachers to improve on their teaching skill and experience as well as enhance their professional development. Hung (2020), sees supervision instruction as an improvement of the teaching – learning process for the benefit of students. Supervision accordingly, provides opportunities for teachers to be grounded through a discursive critical study of class room interaction. It helps them to carry out their teaching task in line with professional codes of conduct. It enables provision of professional assistance and guidance towards the achievement of effective teaching and learning in the school system. Therefore, principals should adopt methods, principle and functions that are necessary to achieve the educational goals. Hung (2020) opines that success of supervisory management often depends on insight into delicate and intangible issues which does not always come easily. This is important because the post basic school principal is super-ordinate who should influence the beliefs and behavior of teachers and also serve as watch dog to the educational system, through observation, modification, and correction of teachers. The principal is the chief supervisor of the school and the one who should aid teachers to be in an advantage position of functioning efficiently.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

A correlation survey design was adopted to determine the predictive relationship between principals' multitasking skills and teachers' performance without variable manipulation.

Population and Sampling

The population included 19,797 teachers and principals in Adamawa, Bauchi, Gombe, and Taraba States. 592 respondents were chosen using stratified and simple random sampling: 516 teachers and 76 principals, representing about 3% of the population—adequate for correlation analysis (Cohen et al., 2018).

Instrumentation

Two structured tools were used:

- i. Principals' multitasking Skills Questionnaire (PMTSQ) – 5 items on prioritization, delegation, supervision, and task-switching.
- ii. Teachers' Job Performance Scale (TJPS) – 8 items assessing planning, classroom management, and assessment processes.

Validity and Reliability

Three experts in Educational Management validated the instruments. Pilot testing yielded Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.69$ (PMTSQ) and 0.67 (TJPS), confirming acceptable reliability (Taber, 2018).

Data Collection and Analysis

Questionnaires were administered directly. Descriptive statistics (mean & SD) answered the first research question, while Pearson r , regression, and ANOVA tested hypotheses at 0.05 level.

RESULTS

Research Question 1: Extent of Principals' Multi-Tasking Skills

Table 1. Mean and Standard Deviation of Principals' Multi-Tasking Skills and Teachers' Job Performance (N = 592)

Variable	N	Mean	SD	Remark
Task prioritization	592	3.45	0.62	High
Switching between administrative tasks	592	3.38	0.58	High
Managing deadlines	592	3.41	0.66	High
Delegating responsibilities	592	3.52	0.60	Very High
Maintaining instructional supervision	592	3.33	0.59	High
Overall Multi-Tasking Skills	592	3.42	0.61	High
Overall Teacher Performance	592	3.34	0.61	High

Note. 1.00–2.49 = Low; 2.50–3.49 = Moderate; 3.50–4.49 = High.

Principals displayed high multi-tasking competence, especially in delegation ($M = 3.52$).

Research Question 2: Relationship between Multi-Tasking Skills and Teachers' Performance

Table 2. Simple Linear Regression Predicting Teachers' Job Performance

Predictor	B	SE B	B	T	P	95 % CI (B)
Constant	0.81	0.08	–	10.10	< .001	[0.65, 0.97]

Principals' Multi-Tasking Skills	0.64	0.04	0.87	15.04	< .001	[0.56, 0.72]
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Model summary: $R = 0.87$; $R^2 = 0.75$; Adj. $R^2 = 0.75$; $F(1, 590) = 226.3$; $p < .001$.

The model explains 75 % of teacher-performance variance. For every one-unit increase in principals' multi-tasking skills, teacher performance rises by about 0.64 units.

Research Question 3: Differences in Teacher Performance by Multi-Tasking Level

Table 3. ANOVA Summary for Principals' Multi-Tasking Skills Predicting Teachers' Job Performance

Source	SS	Df	MS	F	P
Regression	28.72	1	28.72	226.30	< .001
Residual	9.39	590	0.04		
Total	38.11	591			

Effect size: $\omega^2 \approx 0.75$ (large). The model significantly predicted teacher performance, confirming notable differences across multi-tasking levels.

DISCUSSION

The results indicate that principals across North-East Nigeria possess high multi-tasking proficiency, with delegation emerging as their strongest dimension. This implies that principals efficiently distribute tasks to optimize workflow and maintain instructional oversight. The overall mean (3.42) corroborates findings by Afolabi & Alabi (2020) and Akanbi & Lawal (2020) that administrative competence enhances organizational effectiveness.

The strong positive relationship ($\beta = 0.87$; $R^2 = 0.75$) shows that multi-tasking skills substantially improve teacher performance. This aligns with Bello & Hassan (2021) and Abdullahi & Balogun (2021), who found that agile leadership correlates with improved classroom outcomes. It further supports Adeyemi & Adu (2021), whose research linked instructional leadership multitasking to sustained teacher effectiveness. The findings are consistent with Role Theory (Biddle, 1986), emphasizing that role clarity and balance across multiple tasks reduce ambiguity and enhance job performance. Principals who can juggle instructional supervision, staff welfare, and administrative duties demonstrate leadership flexibility that motivates teachers (Akinyemi, 2019).

The large effect size ($\omega^2 \approx 0.75$) underscores multitasking as a strategic management determinant, not a routine administrative act. This extends Komba's (2020) Tanzanian evidence and Hoque's (2020) Malaysian study showing that multi-role competence drives staff morale and productivity. However, Mohammed & Usman (2020) caution that excessive task load without systemic support may lead to leadership fatigue. Thus, balancing task distribution and providing support structures is critical. Overall, the study affirms Umar & Okoroafor (2020) that leadership skills—including multitasking—directly influence teachers' productivity in Adamawa State. Effective multitasking ensures instructional continuity, fosters teacher commitment, and ultimately enhances student learning outcomes.

CONCLUSION

This study confirmed that principals' multi-tasking skills significantly predict teachers' job performance in post-basic schools within North-East Nigeria. High multitasking capability—particularly in delegation and prioritization—was associated with improved teacher productivity. Strengthening these competencies will elevate instructional quality and institutional efficiency across the region. Also structured task sharing models should be introduced to reduce principal and teacher burnout.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- i. Capacity Building: Ministries of Education should organize workshops focusing on multitasking, time management, and delegation.
- ii. Workload Redistribution: Introduce structured task-sharing models to mitigate principal burnout.
- iii. Leadership Assessment: Include multitasking competence indicators in principal appraisal systems.
- iv. Policy Integration: Incorporate strategic management and multitasking modules into principal-training curricula.
- v. Support Systems: Provide administrative aides and digital tools to streamline task management.

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

The study's correlation nature restricts causal inference, and data were self-reported. Future mixed-method or longitudinal research could examine interactions among principals' multitasking, motivation, and school climate. Comparative analyses across Nigeria's educational zones are also recommended.

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