

PRINCIPALS' LEVEL OF EXPERIENCE AND FAECES MANAGEMENT PRACTICES IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN CROSS RIVER STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract: Proper faeces management and adequate sanitation have become the focal agenda in Nigeria and globally due to faeces related infections. Nigerian secondary schools lacked access to improved faeces management facilities due to poor funding and mismanagement. This leads to the practice of open defecation in bushes near the school premises and pollution of the school environment. This study therefore, examined 'Gender of school principals' and faeces management practices in secondary schools in Cross River State, Nigeria'. To achieve this purpose of the study, one specific objective was raised to guide the study which was converted to research question and then transformed into hypothesis. Related literatures were reviewed in line with the variable of the study. The design used for the study was survey research design. This design was chosen because it describes current situation and events as they occur presently and also permits generalization to be drawn from a representative sample of the population. The research area is Cross River State, Nigeria. The target population of the study was 273 principals of public secondary schools in the three Education Zones of Cross River State (Ministry of Education, Calabar, Cross River State; 2015/2016 academic year). The instrument used for data collection was the questionnaire, which was designed by the researcher to test the items. Cronbach Alpha method of reliability was used to determine the reliability estimate of the instrument which ranged from 0.64 to 0.85. Independent t-test analysis was used for data analysis. The findings of the study revealed that gender of school principals' significantly influence their faeces management practices in secondary schools in Cross River State, Nigeria. It was recommended among others that Principals of public secondary schools in the State should ensure that more toilet facilities are provided in their schools to meet the demand of both male and female staff and students; and should be made accessible to them to prevent the dangers involved in moving long distances especially in the rural areas before using the facilities.

Keywords: Principals, level of experience, Secondary schools, Faeces, Management

Introduction

Principals' level of experience may play a vital role in the management of the school system in Nigeria. It is belief that principals with more years of teaching experience may have significant influence in their faeces management practices than those with fewer years of experience. Ike (2000) submits that principals with longer years of

teaching experience perform better in mobilizing both the non-teaching and teaching staff towards attainment of school goals and objectives (faeces management inclusive).

Proper faeces management practices in secondary schools in Cross River State may promote clean and healthy school environment for teaching and learning among students. Principals' years of teaching experience may assist in effective administration, proper supervision of school sanitation, construction of school toilets and in the evacuation of faeces in the toilets when they are filled up. They may also help to prevent students from open defecation in the field, bushes and uncompleted buildings around the school premises.

As administrative heads in secondary schools, their work experiences may enable them to know the type of information to give to their wards on proper management of faeces which may go a long way to prevent faecal-borne diseases in their schools. Their years of teaching experience may also assist them to liaise with relevant agencies like environmental health officers in their zone to choose a better sanitary facility that may serve them for a long period of time in their schools.

Durosaro (1998) opines that the school principal, as a leader must be prepared to integrate roles and personnel to achieve the desired goal of managing faeces in the school. The accomplishment of these functions depends solely upon his or her administrative leadership and management skills. Principals with longer teaching experience perform better than their colleagues when it comes to management of faeces within the school (Bass, 2003).

Principals' years of teaching experience have a positive influence in reducing health hazards associated with poor faeces management by providing more sanitary facilities, provision of sanitation materials and ensuring proper supervision of such toilet facilities on regular basis (Oyelola, Babatude & Odunlade, 2009). It was also discovered that principals with longer years of service-maintained toilet facilities in schools based on experience than those with fewer years of service. Principals of secondary schools should adopt management strategies that will aid to improve school environmental hygiene and consequently managed faeces in schools properly. The researcher therefore seeks to investigate principals' level of experience and faeces management practices in secondary schools in Cross River State, Nigeria.

Objective of the study

1. To investigate how principals' level of experience influences faeces management practices in secondary schools in Cross River State.

Research Question

1. To what extent does principals' level of experience influence their faeces management practices in secondary schools in Cross River State?

Research Hypothesis

1. Principals' level of experience does not significantly influence their faeces management practices in secondary schools in Cross River State.

Methods

This study used survey research design. This design was chosen because it provides quantitative description of the features of the whole population through a chosen sample. It also permits generalization to be drawn from a representative sample of the population. The research area is Cross River State, Nigeria.

The target population of the study involved principals of public secondary schools in the three Education Zones of Cross River State. They are 273 principals in public secondary schools in Cross River State (Ministry of

Education, Calabar, Cross River State; 2015/2016 academic year). The instrument used for data collection was the questionnaire, which was designed by the researcher to test the items. The instrument had two sections, A and B. Section A dealt with demographic data while section B provided information on gender of school principals' and their faeces management practices. Cronbach Alpha method of reliability was used to determine the reliability estimate of the instrument. Here the researcher ensured that each item requiring response was usually given different numerical score. The reliability coefficient ranged from 0.64 to 0.85. The data was analyzed using independent t-test and was interpreted accordingly.

Results

Hypothesis one

Principals' level of experience does not significantly influence their faeces management practices in secondary schools in Cross River State. The independent variable in this hypothesis was principals' level of experience categorized into four levels. The level of experience was operationalized as the years of teaching experience. The dependent variable was faeces management practices. One-Way Analysis of Variance was used to test the hypothesis; the results are presented in table 1. The results of the data analysis in table 1 showed that there was a significant influence of principals' level of experience on their faeces management practices in secondary schools ($F = 2.876, P < .05$). This implies that principals within the range of years of teaching experience 16-25 have a higher mean than those with 10-15 and above 25 years. Based on this, the null hypothesis earlier stated was therefore rejected. From the post-hoc test for multiple comparisons of the mean to determine the mean difference that produce the significant difference, the LSD result in table 2 revealed the finding.

The finding from table 2 revealed that the principals between the years of teaching experience of 16-20 and above 25 showed significance difference in their faeces management practices ($MD = .919, P < .05$). Also, principals with 21-25 and above 25 years of teaching experience also indicate significant difference in their faeces management practices ($MD = .943, P < .05$).

TABLE 1

Summary of one-way analysis of variance of the influence of principals' level of experience on their faeces management practices in secondary schools in Cross River State

Level of experience	N	\bar{X}	SD
Between 10-15	30	14.80	2.85
Between 16-20	68	15.26	2.42
Between 21-25	59	15.29	2.67
Above 25	113	14.35	2.23
Total	270	14.83	2.48

Source of Variation	SS	df	MS	F	Sig.
Between groups	51.823	3	17.274	2.876	.037*
Within groups	1597.677	266	6.006		

Total 1649.500 269

*Significant at $P < .05$, $F = 2.876$

TABLE 2

Post-hoc comparison of principals' level of experience on their faeces management practices in secondary schools in Cross River State

Principals' year of experience (i)	principals' year of experience (j)	mean difference (i-j)	sig.
Between 10-15	between 16-20	-.46471	.388
	between 21-25	-.48814	.375
	above 25	.45487	.367
Between 16-20	between 10-15	.46471	.388
	between 21-25	-.02343	.957
	above 25	.91957*	.015
Between 21-25	between 10-15	.48814	.375
	between 16-20	.02343	.957
	above 25	.94300*	.017
Above 25	between 10-15	-.45487	.367
	between 16-20	-.91957*	.015
	between 21-25	-.94300*	.017

*= mean difference is significant at 0.05 level

Discussions

Principals' level of experience and faeces management practices in secondary schools

The findings of the study revealed that principals' level of experience significantly influenced their faeces management practices in secondary schools ($F = 2.876$, $P < .05$). This implies that principals within the range of years of teaching experience 16-25, have a higher mean than those with 10-15 and above 25 years. Again, principals between the years of teaching experience of 16-20 and above 25, showed significant difference in their faeces management practices ($MD = .919$, $P < .05$). Also, principals with 21-25 and above 25 years of teaching experience also indicate significant difference in their faeces management practices ($MD = .943$, $P < .05$).

The finding is in line with the view of Muraina (2014) who states that principals' level of experience plays a vital role in the management of school system especially in faeces management practices. He further reveals that there existed significant relationship between principals' managerial skills and administrative effectiveness in secondary schools. The more principals' years of teaching experience increases, they become vasatie in different

areas of administration. This as a result, increases their knowledge in their faeces management practices in their schools.

Bass (2003) also submits that principals with longer years of teaching experience perform better than their colleagues when it comes to administrative efficiency and also in the area of faeces management in their schools. Experience, it is said is the best teacher. Studies have indicated that principals with much experience in school administration utilize the experience to manage faeces in their schools.

Authors have supported the findings discovered in this study when they observed that in public schools in Cross River State, principals who have managed schools for many years tend to know the problems affecting the schools, the policies governing the schools, including effective ways of managing faeces in their schools. They also used the experience to apply the best techniques suitable in the management of the school system in terms of general sanitation and faeces management (Fan, Bisong & Edu, 2013).

The researcher also supported this finding by stating that principals with longer years of teaching experience perform better in the running of the school system including the management of faeces in their schools.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, the researcher observed and discovered that gender of school principals did not significantly influence their faeces management practices in secondary schools. He was of the opinion that female carried out sanitation at home and even in the school environment such as sweeping of classrooms, school compounds and cleaning of toilets. This means that they are supposed to keep the school environment clean and maintain proper faeces management practices than their male counterparts.

To yield positive faeces management practices in secondary schools, principals have to maintain adequate school sanitation such as clearing of grasses, sweeping of school environment, cleaning of toilet facilities and classrooms and maintaining conducive learning environment. This will ensure proper aesthetic of the school environment that will promote high academic performance in school and also to prevent them from suffering from faeces related diseases as a result of poor faeces management practices.

Recommendations

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

1. Principals should ensure that more toilet facilities are provided in their schools to meet the demand of both male and female staff and students; and should be made accessible to them to prevent the dangers involved in moving long distances especially in the rural areas before using the facilities.
2. Principals should carry out routine inspection of sanitary facilities in their schools to ensure that they are kept clean always so that users may not contract infections when using them.
3. Principals should ensure regular cleaning of the school premises by involving both male and female students so as to give their schools a befitting out-look.
4. Principals of public secondary schools in the State should have positive attitudes toward faeces management and ensure that there is separate apartment for staff and students.

5. Principals should carry out adequate sanitation in their schools in order to improve latrine conditions and ensure proper management of faeces generally in their schools.

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