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Principals' Strategic Management and Students' Learning Outcome in Secondary Schools in Ondo State, Nigeria

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Abstract

The study examined the level of principals' and teachers' involvement in strategic management and determined the level of students' academic performance and constraints to strategic management in secondary schools in Ondo State, Nigeria. Four research questions and three hypotheses were formulated. Descriptive survey and ex-post facto research designs were adopted. 60 principals and 1200 teachers were sampled from 60 secondary schools using a multi-stage sampling technique. Participants completed instruments titled "Strategic Management Questionnaire" (SMQ) and "Students' Academic Performance Proforma" (SAPP). Data were analyzed using frequency count, percentage and Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient at an alpha level of 0.05. Results showed significant relationship between principals' and teachers' involvement in strategic management ($r\text{-cal}=0.912$, $p\leq 0.000$), significant relationship between principals' strategic management and students' academic performance ($r\text{-cal}=0.780$, $p\leq 0.000$), and significant relationship between teachers' strategic management and students' academic performance ($r\text{-cal}=0.593$, $p\leq 0.000$). Major constraints included teachers' excess workload (58.3%), shortage of instructional materials (65%), lack of instructional technology (56.7%), inadequate capacity development (56.7%), lack of students' textbooks (56.6%), congested class size (56.7%) and lack of motivation (60%). It was concluded that the state government in collaboration with other relevant stakeholders in education sector should employ an adequate number of qualified teachers, provide adequate learning facilities and materials, and organize capacity building workshops to improve principals' and teachers' skills in strategic management for sustainable improvement in students' academic performance in secondary schools.

Key Words: Strategic Management, Strategy Formulation, Strategy Implementation, Strategy Evaluation, Learning Outcome

1. Introduction

The secondary education in Nigeria is made up of two components, namely, the Junior Secondary Education, and the Senior Secondary Education, with a duration of 3 years respectively. The main goal of the Junior Secondary is to train students to acquire basic knowledge, national values, and skills for entrepreneurship and educational advancement. In the same vein, the Senior Secondary education aimed at the training of students for higher education, responsible citizenship, the world of work, wealth creation and entrepreneurship (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2013). The classification of Nigeria's secondary education into two segments makes strategic management an important tool in the implementation of a diversified curriculum for the attainment of short-term, medium-term and long-term goals.

Strategic management is a process that requires collaborative and conscious efforts of top management members in formulating purposeful goals, rational allocation of resources, selecting the best strategies for policies and programmes implementation, job supervision, personnel motivation, performance evaluation, policy review and coping with internal and external challenges in order to achieve organizational objectives within the stipulated time-frame. It is therefore imperative that the school principals adopt strategic management approach in coordinating human and material resources by ensuring that teachers possess the competence (knowledge, skills, and experience) and use the best-fit methods in performing their tasks in order to achieve the set goals and sustain quality performance and efficiency.

The school principal is expected to initiate and articulate time-bound plans, explore opportunities, develop human capital into an effective workforce, create an enabling environment and monitor curriculum implementation and other related activities to achieve overall success. Management of teaching workforce and non-human resources involves goal-oriented strategies and activities that are geared towards quality education which equipped students with the needed knowledge and skills to become educated and fulfill the goal of secondary education by achieving desirable academic results for higher education.

A good knowledge of strategic management will enable both the principals and teachers to imbibe the culture of quality service delivery, make policy formulation and decision making process participatory, facilitating better planning of the school policies, activities and programmes, and ensuring that resources are adequately provided and appropriately utilized for holistic implementation of the school strategic plans to achieve the set educational goals and produce quality output/desired results in secondary schools.

This study is also considered worthwhile, and its outcome would provide additional information that could be useful and further strengthen the capacities of principals and policymakers on school strategic management for better quality service delivery and achievement of desirable students' learning outcome in secondary schools.

2.1 Strategic Management Concept

Strategic management is a holistic system that involves the collaborative effort of the top management in identifying organization goals, developing programmes/activities, and using best-fit methods to implement plans, measuring performance and making necessary changes towards achieving the organization vision and mission. This management system also links strategic planning and decision making on day-to-day business operation (Gluck, Kaufman, & Walleck, 1982).

According to Drucker (1986), the prime task of strategic management is the thinking through the overall mission of a business, which is, asking the question, "What is our business?" This leads to the setting of objectives, the development of strategies, and the making of today's decisions for tomorrow's results. Goodstein, Nolan, and Pfeiffer (1992) viewed strategic management as the process by which the top management members of an organization envision its future and develop the necessary procedures for tasks performed in order to achieve the set goals.

Strategic management is an essential tool used by the school principal and the board of governors to prepare the long-term strategic plan (Bell, 2002). This is concerned with the strategic implementation of the strategies that have been created and actually work in practice in effecting the changes that would need to take place within the scope of the organisation (Johnson & Scholes, 2002).

Strategic management involves deploying an organisation internal strengths and weaknesses, taking advantage of its external opportunities and minimizing its external threats/problems to achieve the set goals (Adeleke, Ogundele & Oyenuga, 2008; Nwachukwu, 2006). This underscores the need for school principals to be strategic in management in order to take the full benefit of the inter-relationship that exists between the internal and external environment of the school to achieve academic competitiveness in teachers' instructional tasks and students' performance (Albanese & Van Fleet, 2013).

In New Zealand, government policy on education provides autonomy for the school principals to serve as Chief Executive Officers and therefore given the statutory responsibility to embark on school self planning, reporting, self-review, and appraisal process to ensure effective implementation of strategic plans and accountability in all aspects of the school management rather than being curriculum leaders alone in schools (OECD, 2007). This practice enables the school principals to dedicate a significant amount of time and efforts to school operations, target-setting, monitoring, human and non-human resources management in the day-to-day activities of schools. These practices have a significant impact on school principals' competitiveness and students' learning outcome in schools (Nicolas, Reneta, Raffaella & John, 2014).

In African country like Kenya, government's policy placed a premium on the involvement of school principals in strategic planning as a means of improving the quality of education service delivery and achieving the better academic performance of students (Ministry of Education, 2005). In spite of this policy, students' academic performance in national examinations in public secondary schools in Kenya has been deteriorating and not achieving the desired results (Yara & Wanjohi, 2011). Consequently, the stakeholders have shown serious concern and doubts over the efficiency of the government's policy and the extent of implementation of strategic plans in public secondary schools (Bernard, Carlos & Sharon, 2014). This situation has been caused by low capacity development and slow implementation of strategic plans by school principals, and inadequate involvement of other relevant stakeholders in the external environment in the process of developing the school strategic plans (Okwako, 2013). It was, therefore, suggested that government should invest more resources and build the capacity of principals to facilitate proper strategic plans implementation practices in public secondary schools in Kenya (Owino & Oloko, 2015).

In Nigeria, there has been a limited government's commitment on capacity development of principals in strategic management in secondary schools. The common practice is that the government recognizes the role of the School-Based Management Committee (SBMC) in the formulation of school development plan and giving of relevant advice to school principals on matters bothering on students' academic progress and welfare. However, education policy

formulation, project execution, and programmes evaluation are still centralized in the Ministry of Education. This seems to incapacitate the SBMC in education policy initiatives and drive in secondary schools. The principal being the instructional leader still carries the responsibility for the overall success or failure of the school management. This made the issue of principals' involvement in strategic management very symbolic in order to achieve the set educational goals in secondary schools.

The level of academic success recorded in an educational institution depends largely on the quality and commitment of its human resources to the use of appropriate strategies in the formulation, implementation, evaluation and review of educational policies, plans and programmes (Bitanje, Kipohumba & Magutu, 2010). In the school setting, principals are expected to integrate the viewpoints of teachers and other stakeholders through committee system, departmental operations, Parent-Teachers' Association and School-Based Management Committee participation in the setting of school vision, mission and educational objectives; carrying out situation analysis in identifying and securing quality inputs which include manpower and learning resources (materials, equipment, /infrastructural facilities), structuring and deploying appropriate resources for strategic implementation activities which cover effective coordination, curriculum instruction, class management, instructional time management, students' assessment, records management, motivation, capacity development and adaptation to change in order to achieve desirable students' learning outcome.

The performance feedback are evaluated and reviewed by the principal in collaboration with other top management members, so as to make the necessary adjustment and refocus on quality inputs to ensure best practices in the strategic implementation of learning activities and achieve a quality output that will satisfy the expectation of stakeholders from the secondary school system. The cyclical operation of the strategic management model is illustrated diagrammatically below.

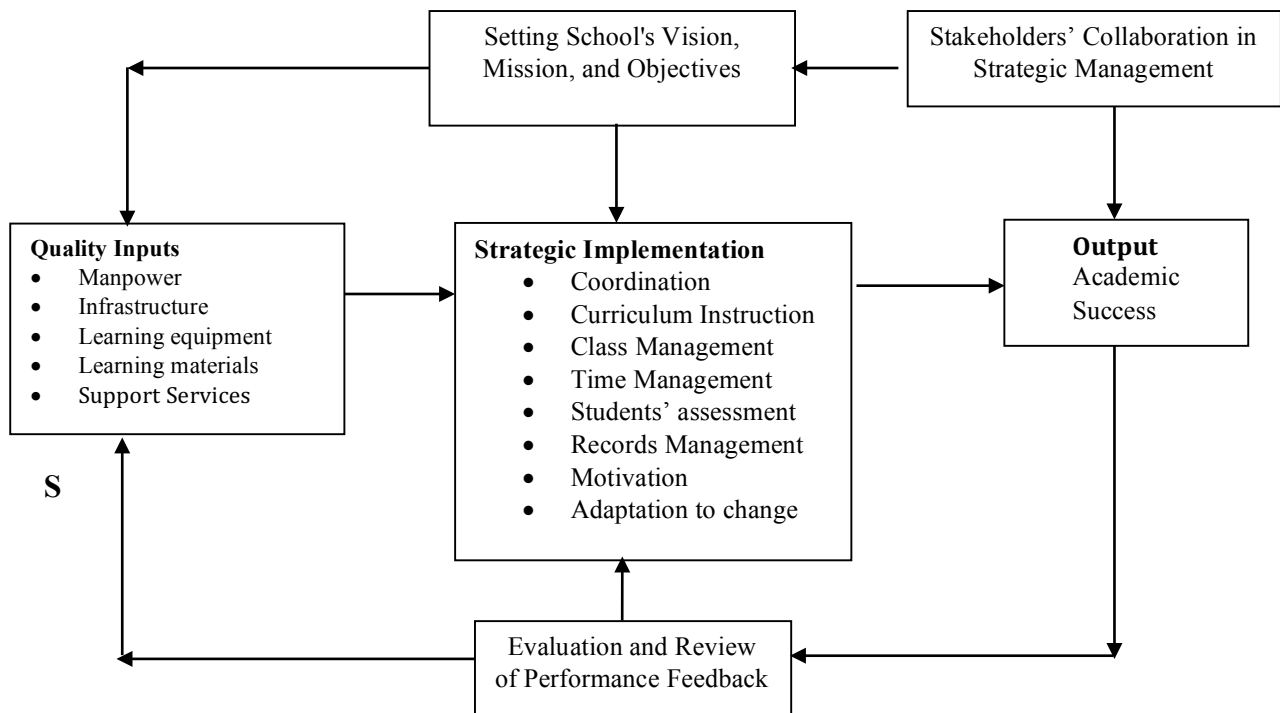


Figure 1: Strategic Management Model (SMM)

2.2 Strategic Management Process

Strategic management process consists of three stages which are categorized by Uvah (2005) as strategy formulation, strategy implementation, and strategy evaluation.

Strategy Formulation

The strategic formulation is the process of thinking ahead, and all educational managers should be involved with it. This enables the school principals to integrate the views of teachers in mapping out strategic plans and utilising available resources in managing internal and external challenges that are affecting education standard in secondary schools. It is through strategy formulation that the school principal can be pro-active in achieving the set goals (Adeleke, Ogundele & Oyenuga, 2008; Bryson, 1988 in Uvah, 2005).

The top management members have the best perspective to understand the ramifications of strategy-formulation decisions fully. In a secondary school setting, the principal has the authority to commit resources necessary for the implementation of educational policies, curriculum, and other related programmes. This includes developing a vision and mission, identifying an organization's external opportunities and threats, determining internal strengths and weaknesses, establishing long-term objectives, generating alternative strategies, allocate resources, and choosing appropriate strategies to pursue educational objectives.

Since no organization has unlimited resources, the principal in collaboration with other top management members (vice principals, heads of departments, subject heads, class coordinators, and coordinators of committees) and the school-based management committee

must decide which alternative strategies will benefit the school most in order to achieve quality output and sustain long-term competitive advantages in instructional management and students' academic performance. In Nigeria, the government has a strong commitment to education policy formulation but slack in the implementation. This has perhaps been responsible for the relatively low level of achievement of the set educational goals in terms of quality of instructional delivery and students' academic performance in secondary schools.

Strategy Implementation

This requires the expertise knowledge, skills and experience of the school principal to establish specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bound (SMART) objectives, work scheduling, devise procedures, motivate employees, and allocate resources so that formulated policies and strategies can be effectively executed. The school principal is also expected to develop a strategy-supportive culture, create an effective organizational structure, communication procedure, budgets, and link employees' compensation to educational output in terms of students' academic performance. This is called the "action stage" of strategic management, which involves mobilising employees (teachers) and managers (subject heads, heads of departments) to put formulated strategies into concrete action through an effective teaching-learning process.

Strategy implementation activities affect all employees and managers in an organization. The teachers in every department must collaborate, brainstorm and decide on the modalities for implementing the school curriculum. Interpersonal skills are especially critical for successful strategy implementation. This raises questions, such as "What must we do to implement our part of the organization's strategy?" and "How best can we get the job done?". The challenge of implementation is to stimulate heads of departments and other teachers to build team spirit and work with absolute commitment, personal discipline, dedication, pride and enthusiasm toward achieving stated objectives.

In Nigeria, the level of the implementation of the national policy on education appears to be relatively low because of the quality gaps in learning facilities, instructional delivery, and management. These are partly attributed to the lack of government's strong commitment to strategic management in education which resulted in inadequate functional infrastructure, inadequate learning materials, low capacity development and inadequate motivation which make teachers disillusioned in the delivery of curriculum. The study by Achor (2013) on Benue and Kogi States, Nigeria revealed that poor funding, large class size, lack of technology support and non-training of teachers ranked highest among the problems affecting the implementation of Basic Education.

Okebukola (2011) reported that most of the public secondary schools in Nigeria are sub-standard in terms of quality of infrastructure, fittings, landscape and general school environment when measured against international standards and when compared with the conditions in equivalent schools in Europe, North America, Asia, South Africa and Egypt. These disparities could be partly attributed to limited attention being given to strategic management in Nigerian secondary schools. Despite these challenges, there was a significant improvement in the performance of candidates who sat for the WASSCE and obtained credit

level passes in five subjects, including Mathematics and English Language as reflected in 30.99% recorded in 2011 and 52.97 percent in 2016 (Adenipekun, 2016). This might not be unconnected with the increased stakeholders' collaboration and support services at the secondary school level.

Strategy Evaluation

This is the final stage in strategic management. Principals and teachers need to know when particular strategies are not working well; strategy evaluation is the primary means for obtaining this information. All strategies are subject to review and future modification because external and internal factors are constantly changing. Three fundamental strategy-evaluation activities are (i) reviewing external and internal factors that are the bases for current strategies, (ii) measuring performance, and (iii) taking corrective actions. These will enable both principals and teachers to make the necessary adjustment in the teaching-learning process in order to achieve the best learning outcome in secondary schools.

Strategy evaluation is needed because success today is no guarantee of success tomorrow. Success always creates new and different challenges; complacent can make organization experience setback and loose relevance in the production of desired quality products. The level of dilapidation of infrastructure, inadequate learning resources and relatively low level of students' academic performance in Nigerian secondary schools are matters of concern to stakeholders. It is therefore expedient that the school principals should devise an appropriate mechanism for continuous integration of significant stakeholders, effective monitoring, supervision, periodic evaluation and review of instructional management strategies to engender innovation into teaching and learning activities for better academic performance in secondary schools.

3.1 Statement of the Problem

Personal observations and experience as a Lead Evaluator in Quality Assurance in Education in Ondo State up till 2013 and professional interactions with principals and teachers during undergraduates' teaching practice supervision between 2014 and 2017 indicated varying degrees of inadequacies in principals' managerial strategies. These gaps had been partly attributed to the limited capacities of principals in school operations in the aspects of target setting, instructional planning, resource utilization, instructional supervision, evaluation and review of instructional tasks management strategies and students' performance. This study is also embarked upon because there is limited research finding on secondary school principals' strategic management practices in Africa and particularly in Nigeria context.

Principals' strategic management is linked with the teachers' role in the translation of educational policies and curriculum. However, the issue of the low level of students' academic achievement is still prevalent in Nigerian public secondary schools. This has been of much concern to the stakeholders. The trends in students' academic performance in Nigeria reflected the following percentage points: 30.99% was recorded in the year 2011 and 38.81% in 2012, also 36.57% was recorded in 2013 and 31.28% in 2014 while 38.68% was recorded in 2015 and 52.97 percent in 2016. The levels of performances indicated that the percentage of

students who obtained credit level passes in five subjects and above, including English Language and Mathematics in the Senior School Certificate Examinations conducted by the West African Examinations Council, was below 53 percent (Owadiae, 2011; Owadiae, 2012; Eguridu, 2014; Eguridu, 2015; Adenipekun, 2016). The relatively low level of academic achievement could be a reflection of poor or absence of strategic management, which emanated from lack of involvement of teachers in the decision-making process, unclear identification of school vision and mission, improper planning of school academic work to guide teaching and learning activities, lack of appropriate strategies for quality service delivery, poor evaluation techniques and lack of motivation of teachers.

The perceived short-comings/inadequacies constituted gaps in school management and possibly caused low productivity (low level of teachers' commitment to different educational activities and programmes) while educational objectives that are set by the school principals are not fully achieved. There is, therefore, the need to carry out a research on the efficacies of principals' and teachers' involvement in strategic management in determining the impact on students' academic performance in secondary schools in Ondo State, Nigeria.

3.2 Research Questions

The following research questions were raised to guide the study.

- i. What is the level of principals' strategic management in secondary schools?
- ii. What is the level of teachers' strategic instructional management in secondary schools?
- iii. What is the level of students' academic performance in secondary schools?
- iv. What constraints are faced in strategic management in secondary schools?

3.3 Hypotheses

The following research hypotheses were formulated to guide the study.

- Ho₁: There is no significant relationship between principals' and teachers' strategic instructional management in secondary schools.
- Ho₂: There is no significant relationship between principals' strategic management and students' academic performance in secondary schools.
- Ho₃: There is no significant relationship between teachers' strategic instructional management and students' academic performance in secondary schools.

3.4 Research Method

The study examined the level of principals' and teachers' involvement in strategic management and determined the level of students' academic performance and constraints to strategic management in secondary schools in Ondo State, South West, Nigeria. Four research questions and three hypotheses were formulated. The study adopted the descriptive survey and *ex-post facto* research designs. The target population comprised all principals and teachers in public secondary schools in Ondo State, Nigeria. Multi-stage sampling technique was used to select six (6) Local Government Areas (LGAs) with two (2) LGAs randomly selected in each of the existing three (3) senatorial districts (Ondo North, Ondo Central, and Ondo South). Respondents consisted of 60 principals and 1200 teachers randomly sampled from 60 (20%) out of the existing 304 public secondary schools in Ondo State.

Data were collected using the "Strategic Management Questionnaire" (SMQ) and "Students' Academic Performance Proforma" (SAPP). The instrument utilized a four-point Likert rating scale classified as Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Fairly Agree (FA) and Disagree (D) with a value of 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively. The instrument consisted of a total of 30 structured questionnaire items. The questionnaire contained two sections (A and B). Section "A" of the instrument was divided into two sub-sections and contained 22 items constructed for teachers to rate principals' strategic management practices which cover variables such as school vision, mission and objectives, work plan, resource allocation and utilization, capacity development, learning facilities and materials, motivation, performance evaluation, feedback and review. The second part of section "A" elicited information from teachers on strategic instructional management which cover variables such as goal setting, timetable, scheme of work, curriculum delivery, capacity training, workloads, instructional materials, evaluation, feedback, and performance review. Section "B" of the instrument contained 8 items which elicited information from principals on constraints faced in instructional management. Also, the principals completed proformas on students' academic performance in the West African Senior School Certificate Examinations conducted by the West African Examinations Council (WAEC) between 2014 and 2016.

The researcher was assisted by two trained research assistants who helped in the administration of questionnaires. The researcher visited the sampled schools and solicited for the cooperation of the principals who gave permission to the researcher to contact teachers in their respective common departmental staff rooms and implored sampled respondents who completed the questionnaires. The completed questionnaires were collected from the respondents on the same day. The few respondents who could not fill the questionnaire on the spot were given opportunity till the next day when the researcher visited their schools to collect completed questionnaire. The administration of the instrument took ten (10) working days. This method enabled the researcher to achieve a 100% rate of return.

The research instrument was validated by experts in the Department of Educational Management, and Test and Measurement Unit, Faculty of Education, Adekunle Ajasin University, Akungba-Akoko. The reliability of the instrument was confirmed through test and re-test at an interval of two (2) weeks using two (2) secondary schools outside the Local Government Areas sampled for the study. The two set of data obtained were analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMCC); this yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.86, which confirmed the suitability of the questionnaire items constructed. Data were analyzed using frequency count and percentage to answer the research questions while the hypotheses were tested using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMCC) to determine the strength of the relationship between independent and dependent variables. The result was held significant at 0.05 levels, using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20.0.

4.0 Results

The results and discussions of data analyses are presented in two parts based on the research questions and hypotheses that were formulated for the study. Data collected on research questions were analysed using frequency count and percentage while hypotheses were tested

at 0.05 level of significance using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMCC). The results are presented in tables 1 – 7, and figures 2 – 4.

4.1 What is the level of principals' strategic management in secondary schools?

The analysis of data in Table 1 and Figure 2 on principals' strategic management reflects the following percentage points: Strongly Agree (11.1% to 37.3%), Agreed (14.4% to 38.5%), Fairly Agree (17.8% to 38.4%) and Disagree (9.5% to 36.9%). These indicated that an average number of principals were effective in strategic management as revealed in formulating school vision and mission, resource allocation, coordinating human resources, performance evaluation, feedback, and review. These were reflected in percentage points of strongly agree and agreed responses combined, which ranged from 56.7 to 72.7% in items 1, 3, 7, 10, 11 and 12.

Table 1: Principals' Strategic Management Practices in Secondary Schools

S/N	Items	SA	A	FA	D
		Freq. %	Freq. %	Freq. %	Freq. %
1.	Principals set the school vision and mission.	411 (34.2)	462 (38.5)	213 (17.8)	114 (9.5)
2.	Principals operate flexible strategic plans.	376 (31.4)	245 (20.4)	279 (23.3)	299 (24.9)
3.	Principals use strategic plan to allocate resources.	448 (37.3)	329 (27.4)	222 (18.5)	201 (16.8)
4.	Principals deploy strategies to achieve objectives.	189 (15.8)	226 (18.8)	342 (28.5)	443 (36.9)
5.	Principals monitor the utilization of resources.	238 (19.8)	385 (32.1)	292 (24.3)	285 (23.8)
6.	Principals adhere strictly to the strategic plans.	213 (17.8)	331 (27.6)	285 (23.8)	371 (30.9)
7.	Principals work with adequate human resources.	335 (27.9)	415 (34.6)	223 (18.6)	227 (18.9)
8.	Principals work with adequate financial resources.	133 (11.1)	173 (14.4)	461 (38.4)	433 (36.1)
9.	Principals and teachers set criteria for evaluation.	264 (22.0)	372 (31.0)	267 (22.2)	297 (24.8)
10.	Principals evaluate teachers' performance.	317 (26.4)	373 (31.1)	227 (18.9)	283 (23.6)
11.	Principals create a platform for teachers' feedback.	327 (27.2)	354 (29.5)	232 (19.3)	287 (23.9)
12.	Principals create a platform to review students' Performance.	433 (36.1)	381 (31.8)	267 (22.2)	119 (9.9)

Source: Field Survey

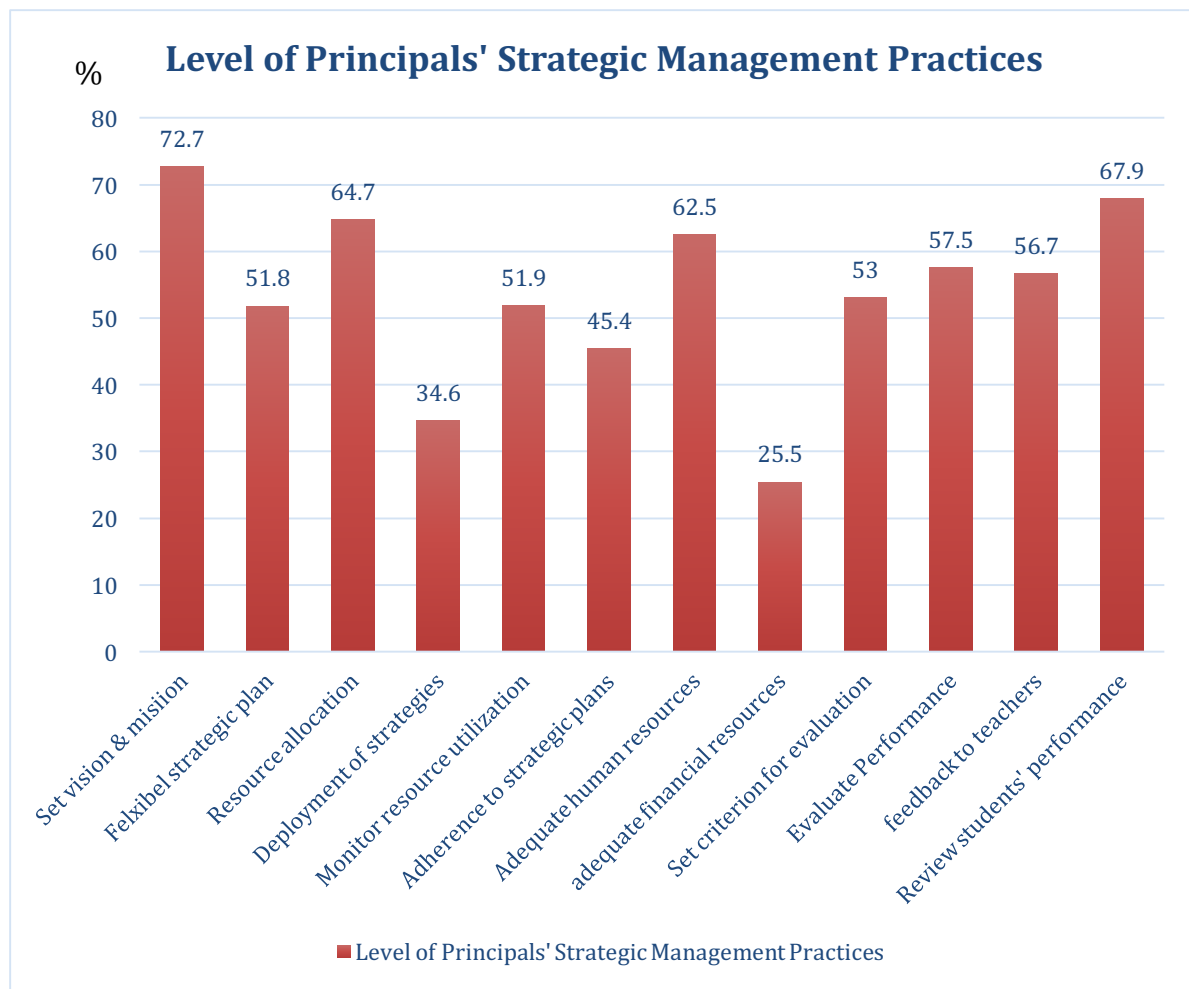


Figure 2: Bar Chart of Principals' Strategic Management Practices

4.2 What is the level of teachers' strategic instructional management in secondary schools?

The evidence from the data analysis presented in Table 2 and Figure 3 showed that the level of teachers' strategic instructional management reflected the following percentage points: Strongly Agree (20% to 44.8%), Agreed (18.4% to 48.8%), Fairly Agree (11.8% to 38.5%) and Disagree (5.9% to 45.9%). These indicated that an average number of teachers were effective in strategic management as revealed in the preparation of work plan and timetable, the scheme of work, workload, performance evaluation, feedback, and review. These were reflected in percentage points of strongly agree and agreed responses combined, which ranged from 51.1 to 82.2% in items 2, 3, 6, 8, 9 and 10.

Table 2: Teachers' strategic instructional management in secondary schools

S/N	Items	SA	A	FA	D
		Freq. %	Freq. %	Freq. %	Freq. %
1.	Teachers are involved in the setting of school goals and objectives.	240 (20.0)	336 (28.0)	364 (30.3)	260 (21.7)
2.	Teachers are involved in the preparation of school work plan and timetable.	293 (24.4)	368 (30.7)	462 (38.5)	77 (6.4)
3.	Teachers prepare a scheme of work.	401	586	142	71

		(33.4)	(48.8)	(11.8)	(5.9)
4.	Teachers used technology facilities for curriculum delivery.	-	222	427	551
			(18.5)	(35.6)	(45.9)
5.	Teachers are given capacity training.	271	280	283	366
		(22.6)	(23.3)	(23.6)	(30.5)
6.	Teachers are adequately engaged with subject workloads.	537	391	169	103
		(44.8)	(32.6)	(14.1)	(8.6)
7.	Teachers engaged students in the use of instructional materials/textbooks.	283	221	308	388
		(23.6)	(18.4)	(25.7)	(32.3)
8.	Teachers' instructional tasks are evaluated.	320	293	321	266
		(26.7)	(24.4)	(26.8)	(22.2)
9.	Teachers give regular feedback to students.	269	381	224	326
		(22.4)	(31.8)	(18.7)	(27.2)
10.	Teachers have the platform to review students' academic performance.	367	356	233	244
		(30.6)	(29.7)	(19.4)	(20.3)

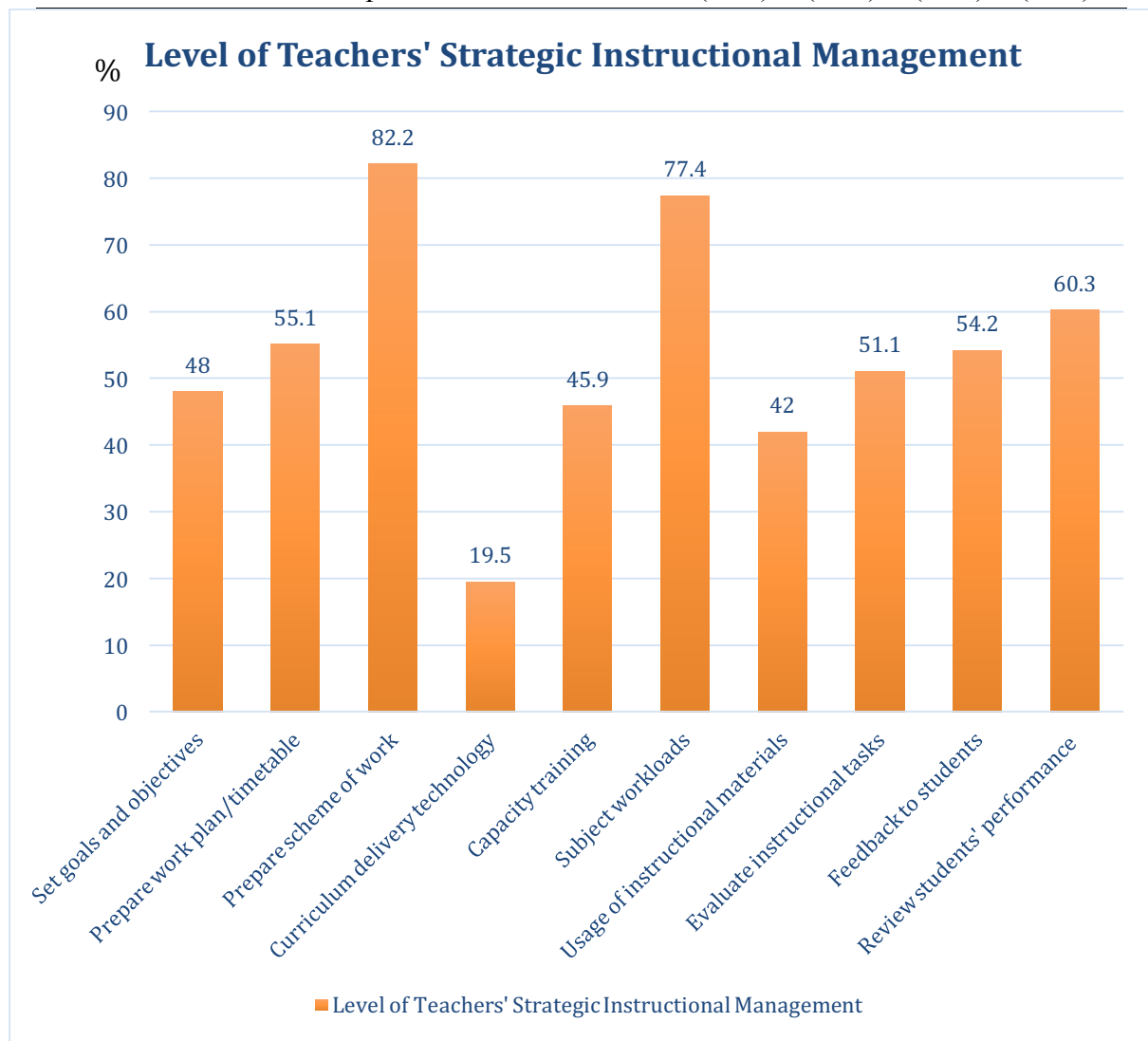


Figure 3: Bar Chart of Teachers' Strategic Instructional Management

4.3 What is the level of students' academic performance in secondary schools?

Data presented in Tables 3, showed a weighted average of students' academic performance for three academic sessions (2014 – 2016). The result indicated that 21.59% of the candidates made five credits and above, while 29.30% made less than five credits and 49.11% made an ordinary pass. The percentage of students who failed was 18.2%.

Table 3: *Weighted average level of students' academic performance in WASSCE from 2014 - 2016*

Performance Grades	Five (5) Credits including Eng. and Maths.	Five (5) Credits including either Eng. or Maths.	Five (5) Credits without English & Maths.	Less than Five (5) Credits	Candidates without any Credits (Ordinary passes)	Total
No. of Candidates	488	989	2050	4788	8026	16341
Weighted Average (%)	2.99	6.05	12.55	29.30	49.11	100%

Source: Field Survey

4.4 What are the constraints to strategic management in secondary schools?

The analysis of data in Table 4 and Figure 4 on constraints faced in strategic management reflected the following percentage points: strongly agree (25.0 - 38.3%), agree (18.3 – 33.3%), fairly agree (18.3 - 31.7%) and disagree (16.7 – 23.3%). These indicated that strategic management is constrained with excess workload (58.3%), inadequate capacity development (56.7%), shortage of instructional materials (65%), lack of students' textbooks (56.6%), lack of instructional technology (56.7%), congested class size (56.7%) and lack of motivation (60%). These were reflected in percentage points of strongly agree and agreed responses combined, which ranged from 56.7 to 65% in items 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7 and 8.

Table 4: *Constraints faced in strategic management in secondary schools*

S/N	Items	SA Freq. %	A Freq. %	FA Freq. %	D Freq. %
1	Teachers have an excess workload	17 (28.3)	18 (30.0)	12 (20.0)	13 (21.7)
2	Lack of capacity development	18 (30.0)	16 (26.7)	13 (21.7)	13 (21.7)
3	Lack of instructional materials	19 (31.7)	20 (33.3)	11 (18.3)	10 (16.7)
4	Lack of students textbooks	23 (38.3)	11 (18.3)	13 (21.7)	13 (21.7)
5	Congested class size	21 (35.0)	13 (21.7)	12 (20.0)	14 (23.3)

6	Lack of good classroom infrastructure	15 (25.0)	13 (21.7)	19 (31.7)	13 (21.7)
7	Lack of motivation	22 (36.7)	14 (23.3)	11 (18.3)	13 (21.7)
8	Lack of instructional technology	16 (26.7)	18 (30.0)	13 (21.7)	13 (21.7)

Source: Field Survey

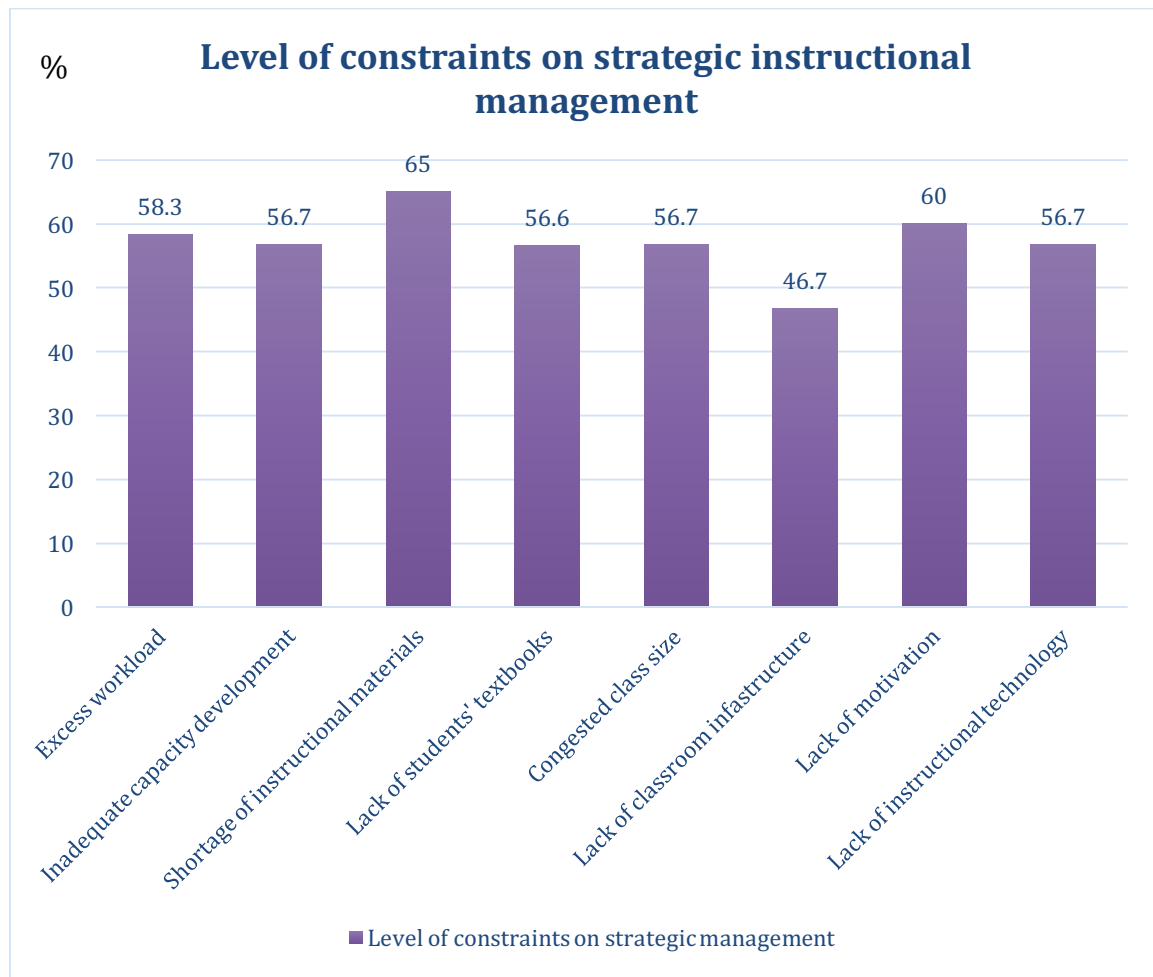


Figure 4: Bar Chart of Constraints on Strategic Instructional Management

4.5 Relationship between principals' strategic management and teachers' strategic instructional management in secondary schools.

The result presented in table 5 revealed that the calculated r-value (0.912) was greater than the critical-value (0.000) at $p < 0.05$ is significant. Hence, the null hypothesis (H_0) of no significant relationship is rejected. This implied that there is a significant relationship between principals' strategic management and teachers' strategic instructional management in secondary schools.

Table 5: *Relationship between principals' strategic management and teachers' strategic instructional management in secondary schools*

Variable	N	Mean	Std	r	Sig
Principals' Strategic Management	1200	2.9567	0.97669	0.912	0.000
Teachers' Strategic Instructional Management	1200	2.8442	0.93396		

4.6 Relationship between principals' strategic management and students' academic performance in secondary schools.

The weighted average of principals' strategic management and students' academic performance correlated on table 6 revealed that the calculated r-value (0.780) was greater than the critical-value (0.000) at $p < 0.05$ is significant. Hence, the null hypothesis (H_0) of no significant relationship is rejected. This implied that there is a significant relationship between principals' strategic management and students' academic performance in secondary schools.

Table 6: *Relationship between principals' strategic management and students' academic performance in secondary schools*

Variable	N	Mean	Std	r	Sig
Principals' Strategic Management	60	2.9567	.97669	0.780	0.000
Students' Academic Performance	60	5.1375	2.14375		

4.7 Relationship between teachers' strategic instructional management and students' academic performance in secondary schools.

The weighted average of teachers' strategic instructional management and students' academic performance correlated on table 7 revealed that the calculated r-value (0.593) was greater than the critical-value (0.000) at $p < 0.05$ is significant. Hence, the null hypothesis (H_0) of no significant relationship is rejected. This implied that there is a significant relationship between teachers' strategic instructional management and students' academic performance in secondary schools.

Table 7: *Relationship between teachers' strategic instructional management and students' academic performance in secondary schools*

Variable	N	Mean	Std	r	Sig
Teachers' Strategic Instructional Management	60	2.8442	0.93396	0.593	0.000
Students' Academic Performance	60	5.1375	2.14375		

4.8 Discussions

The extent to which the principals had been using strategic management was investigated in the study. The ratings of secondary school principals by teachers in table 1, indicated that an average number of principals were effective in strategic management in the components of school vision and mission, resource allocation, coordinating human resources, performance evaluation, feedback and review to improve teachers' instructional tasks performance.

The principals' strategic management approaches also reflected the following percentage points: inflexible strategic plans (48.2%), ineffective deployment of resources (65.4%), inadequate monitoring of resources (48.1%), non adherence to strategic plans (54.6%), and lack of financial resources to implement strategic plans (74.5%). It could, therefore, be inferred that 50% of the principals have fully adopted strategic management and committed to the implementation of strategic plans. The correlation between principals' strategic management and teachers' strategic instructional management has been due to the unwavering commitment by principals to achieve the set educational goals. Also, 50% of the principals lack the capacity to implement, monitor and drive sustainable strategic plans. This situation has perhaps been responsible for the relatively low level of success recorded in students' academic performance between 2014 and 2016 academic sessions as indicated in table 3.

The findings of the study in table 2, also indicated that an average number of teachers were effective in strategic instructional management as revealed in the preparation of work plan and timetable, the scheme of work, workload, performance evaluation, feedback, and review. However, the tasks that were fairly performed by teachers included: the corporate setting of school goals, usage of technology facilities and instructional materials, and capacity development. It could be deduced from the findings that teachers' involvement in strategic instructional management are still inadequate and could impair effective teaching and learning processes in secondary schools. The concordance relationship between teachers' instructional management and students' academic performance is an indication that both the teachers and students are affected by deficiencies in strategic management. Many of the students are not equipped with the necessary learning materials by their parents, while many of the secondary schools are ill-equipped for learning.

The analysis of data in table 4 revealed a significant relationship between principals' strategic management and students' academic performance. Principals are the driving force in secondary schools, and their strategies occupy centre stage in the teaching and learning processes. However, the mean score of 2.96 recorded on principals' strategic management

implied that majority of the principals are still striving to improve the teaching-learning process. It could also be deduced that the level of students' academic performance is a reflection of principals' commitment to strategic management. The in-depth interviews conducted with the principals corroborated the findings in table 2; the viewpoints revealed that infrastructural facilities are inadequate and the grants-in-aid to schools are very irregular. The class size is congested and ranged from 60-70 students per class in many schools. These deficiencies constituted hindrances to effective classroom management, teaching-learning process and supervision of curriculum instruction.

The challenges that are faced by the schools in strategic management are evident in table 4, which included excess workload (58.3%), inadequate capacity development (56.7%), shortage of instructional materials (65%), lack of students' textbooks (56.6%), lack of instructional technology (56.7%), congested class size (56.7%) and lack of motivation (60%). These deficiencies constituted impediments to principals' strategic management and teachers' instructional tasks management. The shortcomings will no doubt demoralise teachers and cause a setback in the implementation of the curriculum. The challenges would also make principals to be incapacitated in the supervision and monitoring of teachers' instructional tasks. These situations are likely to be responsible for the relatively low academic performance of students who obtained credit level passes in five subjects including English Language and Mathematics in the Senior School Certificate Examinations which has often been an average (50%) in Nigeria. There is, therefore, a great task ahead of school principals and other stakeholders in the education sector in giving desired attention to strategic management in order to improve students' academic performance in secondary schools.

5.1 Conclusion

In light of the findings, it could be concluded that an average number (50%) of the principals are very resourceful and pro-active in strategic management while 50% of principals have limited capacity in strategic management. Inadequate learning resources also constituted a major challenge that incapacitated teachers' instructional task performance and contributed largely to the relatively low level of students' academic performance. These phenomena account for the low level of achievement of the set educational goals. The principals being instructional leaders are expected to give adequate attention to teachers' active involvement in the strategic-management process in order to bridge the capacity gap in instructional management and ensure sustainable improvement in a teaching-learning process for the achievement of better academic standard and the attainment of the set goals in secondary schools.

5.2 Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusion of the study, the following recommendations are made in order to achieve sustainable strategic management for the better academic performance of students in secondary schools.

- The school authority should provide constant and comprehensive feedback on students' academic performance to parents and encourage them to provide the required textbooks and other learning materials for their children/wards.

- The government in collaboration with other relevant stakeholders in education should demonstrate total commitment to the implementation of education policy by employing an adequate number of qualified teachers, provide adequate learning facilities and materials, and organize capacity building workshops to improve principals' and teachers' skills in strategic management to improve students' academic performance in secondary schools.
- The government should release the grants-in-aid to school principals as at when due to enabling educational managers (Principals) provide necessary materials for quality teaching-learning process and sustainable improvement in students' academic performances in secondary schools.
- The government should give adequate autonomy and capital grants to the school-based management committee to improve the condition of school infrastructure for quality education service delivery.

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