

# Factors Hindering Effective Administration in Public Secondary Schools in Delta State, Nigeria: A Case Study of Udu Local Government Area

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***Abstract-****This study examines the challenges faced by school principals and the socio-economic characteristics of teachers across various schools. Using Chi-Square statistical analysis, the study investigates the differences in issues such as authority challenges, staffing, infrastructure, student overpopulation, financial difficulties, supervision practices, and indiscipline across schools. The findings reveal that many challenges, including terrorization of authority, staffing problems, infrastructural issues, overcrowded classrooms, financial difficulties, and supervision practices, are experienced consistently across schools, suggesting the need for uniform policies. However, significant variations were observed in the relationships between school principals, teachers, and the community ( $p = 0.005$ ), as well as in the handling of student indiscipline ( $p = 0.001$ ). These results indicate that while general solutions may be applicable to some challenges, areas such as principal-teacher/community relations and indiscipline require targeted interventions. Addressing these specific issues could lead to improvements in school management and overall student outcomes.*

***Indexed Terms-*** *Nigeria education system, School administration, Staffing issues*

## I. INTRODUCTION

Education is globally acknowledged as a cornerstone of national development and a key driver of societal progress. In Nigeria, public secondary schools are integral to the country's educational system, serving as the foundation for developing future leaders and professionals. However, despite their critical role, the effective administration of public secondary schools is often hindered by a myriad of challenges. These

challenges are particularly evident in Delta State, where socio-economic, political, and institutional factors have compounded administrative difficulties. This study focuses on identifying the factors that hinder effective administration in public secondary schools in Udu Local Government Area, Delta State. One of the primary issues affecting the administration of public secondary schools is inadequate funding. Studies have consistently highlighted the insufficient budgetary allocations to education in Nigeria, which fall short of the 15-20% recommendation by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) [1]. This underfunding has resulted in dilapidated infrastructure, insufficient teaching materials, and poorly maintained school facilities. Consequently, school administrators are often constrained in their efforts to create a conducive learning environment.

Another significant factor is the shortage of qualified teachers and administrative personnel. Research indicates that public secondary schools in Nigeria suffer from a dearth of competent educators due to unattractive salaries, poor working conditions, and limited career development opportunities [2]. This deficiency leads to an overburdened workforce, negatively impacting the quality of education and the overall efficiency of school administration.

In addition to funding and staffing challenges, the lack of effective leadership and governance mechanisms further exacerbates administrative inefficiencies in public secondary schools. Many school administrators lack the requisite training and resources to implement modern management practices, thereby limiting their ability to address emerging challenges effectively [3]. Moreover, bureaucratic bottlenecks within the educational system often delay decision-making processes,

further impeding the smooth functioning of schools [4].

Socio-cultural factors also play a role in undermining effective administration. Issues such as parental apathy, gender disparities, and community interference in school management create additional burdens for school administrators [5]. For instance, in Udu Local Government Area, traditional practices and attitudes toward education often influence school policies, sometimes to the detriment of the overall system's efficiency.

The interplay of these factors has significant implications for the quality of education provided in public secondary schools in Delta State. As such, there is a pressing need to explore these challenges in-depth, with a view to proposing evidence-based solutions that can enhance the effectiveness of school administration in Udu Local Government Area and similar contexts.

## II. PREVIOUS WORK

Effective administration in public secondary schools is critical to achieving educational goals and ensuring quality learning outcomes. Numerous studies have examined factors affecting school administration in Nigeria, offering valuable insights into challenges, implications, and recommendations for improvement. A study conducted in Anambra State [6] identified key barriers to effective management in public secondary schools, including inadequate funding, poor infrastructure, insufficient digital training for teachers, and limited governmental support. These challenges significantly hindered schools' ability to adapt to the post-COVID-19 "new normal."

In Lagos State, research [7] into the factors hindering effective management of public senior secondary schools found significant correlations between well-equipped laboratories ( $r = 0.663$ ), adequate funding ( $r = 0.492$ ), and school physical facilities ( $r = 0.463$ ) with effective school management. It also emphasized that adequate funding positively impacted academic performance ( $r = 0.172$ ). Another study [8] in Delta State highlighted that the government's efforts to provide quality education were hampered by inadequate school facilities and

funding. These challenges contributed to poor academic performance, as evidenced in WASSCE results. Additional factors, such as natural disasters, the COVID-19 pandemic, and student truancy linked to cultism, further exacerbated the situation.

An investigation into the Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme in junior secondary schools in Delta State [9] found that inadequate financing ( $r = 0.68$ ), challenges posed by rural locations ( $r = 0.70$ ), lack of teacher professionalism ( $r = 0.72$ ), insufficient experience ( $r = 0.65$ ), and poor supervision ( $r = 0.74$ ) significantly hindered the programme's effectiveness. In Rivers State, research [10] showed that effective administration of public senior secondary schools was influenced by factors such as adequate funding, access to laboratory equipment, proper power supply, effective management of instruction, school-community relations, and personnel management. The study highlighted the importance of consistent communication, proper motivation of staff, and enforcement of discipline to enhance administration.

In Bauchi State, findings [11] revealed that school principals often struggled with teacher management and creating a conducive learning environment. Issues such as concentrated authority and inadequate financial oversight were identified. Recommendations included improved division of labor, better human relations, and stronger discipline to enhance school administration.

A study conducted in Kwara State [12] showed a significant relationship between school-related factors and administrative effectiveness in public senior secondary schools, with an overall mean score of 3.63 and a p-value of 0.000, indicating statistical significance. It concluded that improving factors such as classroom management and educational facilities could significantly enhance administrative performance.

Research in Ondo State [13] found that the location of schools significantly impacted the administrative performance of principals. The study concluded that geographic settings played a key role in how effectively principals managed their schools and recommended that governments organize seminars, workshops, and conferences for principals to improve

their administrative capabilities. In Anambra State, another study [14] revealed that teacher factors, student factors, and infrastructural factors significantly impacted the effectiveness of school principals. Recommendations included ensuring teacher adherence to professional ethics, prioritizing moral education for students, and fostering respect and positive attitudes within schools.

In Delta State, a study [15] investigating the implementation of education policies in secondary schools found that principals and teachers faced challenges such as insufficient resources and bureaucratic bottlenecks. The study recommended policy adjustments and training programs to address these challenges.

Finally, research [16] into the link between principals' administrative strategies and managerial effectiveness in Delta State revealed that planning and motivational strategies were strong predictors of effectiveness. Communication and disciplinary strategies also played a significant role, and it was recommended that in-service training programs be organized for principals to enhance their administrative skills.

### III. METHODOLOGY

This study adopts a descriptive research design, which is suitable for capturing the current state of educational administration within Udu Local Government Area (LGA), Delta State, Nigeria. The design enables a systematic collection, analysis, and interpretation of data regarding the roles of school principals, vice-principals, and teachers, as well as the administrative challenges they face. The study employs both qualitative and quantitative data collection methods through the use of structured questionnaires, allowing for a holistic view of the challenges impacting effective school management in the region.

#### A. Study Area

The study was conducted within Udu Local Government Area (LGA) in Delta State, Nigeria. Udu LGA is located about 10 minutes from Osubi Airport and is bounded by Warri, the state's major economic hub. This area, with a population of approximately

250,000, is predominantly inhabited by the Urhobo ethnic group. The region is characterized by a tropical rainforest climate and a strong agricultural sector, which influences local socio-economic conditions and infrastructure development. These factors are important when considering the educational environment in Udu, especially as they relate to resource allocation and school management.

#### B. Population and Sampling

The population of this study consisted of principals, vice-principals, and teachers from government secondary schools in Udu LGA. A stratified random sampling technique was employed to ensure that the sample reflects the diversity of school management and instructional practices. The sample size was calculated to be 100 respondents, comprising 20% principals and vice-principals, and 80% teachers. Stratified sampling was chosen to ensure that the perspectives of both administrative and teaching staff were adequately represented, offering insights into the challenges faced at both leadership and operational levels within the schools.

To determine the sample size, Taro Yamane's formula for sample size calculation was used:

$$n = \frac{N}{1+N(e^2)}$$

Where:

$n$  = sample size

$N$  = total population

$e$  = margin of error (5%)

For a total population of 133, the calculated sample size was approximately 100 respondents.

#### C. Data Collection Instrument

The primary instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire, designed to capture relevant information regarding the demographic characteristics of the respondents, as well as their experiences and challenges in school management. The questionnaire included sections on school governance, resource management, staff relations, student discipline, and other relevant administrative aspects.

The instrument was subjected to content validity testing by a panel of five experts in educational administration. Based on their feedback, modifications were made to improve clarity and relevance to the study objectives. The reliability of the instrument was tested using Cronbach's alpha, yielding a coefficient of 0.75, which is considered acceptable for this type of research.

*D. Data Collection Procedure*

Data collection was carried out over a period of two weeks. The researcher visited the selected government secondary schools in Udu LGA and distributed the questionnaires to the respondents. Prior to data collection, the researcher obtained permission from the relevant school authorities and ensured that all participants were informed of the purpose of the study. Respondents were assured of confidentiality and provided their informed consent. Completed questionnaires were collected on-site to ensure a high response rate.

*E. Data Analysis*

The collected data were analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistical methods. Descriptive statistics, including frequencies and percentages, were used to summarize the demographic characteristics of the respondents and to identify trends in administrative practices. To test for significant relationships between categorical variables, Chi-square analysis was employed. The Chi-square test was used to determine if there were significant differences in the challenges faced by different groups of respondents (principals, vice-principals, and teachers). The Chi-square formula is expressed as:

$$\chi^2 = \sum \frac{(O - E)^2}{E}$$

$\chi^2$  Represents the Chi-square statistic, which quantifies the difference between observed frequencies and expected frequencies in categorical data.

*O*: This represents the observed frequency.

*E*: This denotes the expected frequency

The expected frequency can be expressed mathematically as follows:

$$E = \frac{N \times (\text{Row Total} \times \text{Column Total})}{\text{Total Responses}}$$

Where *N* is the total number of observations or responses collected in the survey or study.

IV. RESULTS AND INTERPRETATION

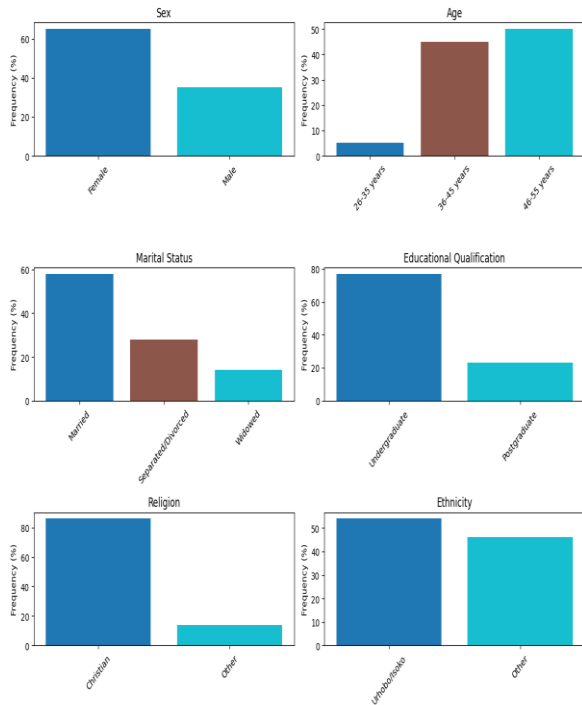
This section presents the findings from the study on the challenges faced by school principals and the socio-economic characteristics of the respondents. The analysis used statistical tools, such as the Chi-Square test, to determine significant and non-significant differences across schools in various areas. The findings cover a range of issues, including authority, staffing, infrastructure, student overpopulation, financial difficulties, supervision, and discipline. The discussion will provide insights into these results and suggest possible improvements.

Table 1.0 Socio-Economic Characteristics of Respondents

Category	Frequency (%)	Observation
Sex	Female: 65%, Male: 35%	Female teachers dominate.
Age	26-35 years: 5%, 36-45 years: 45%, 46-55 years: 50%	Majority of teachers are experienced (36-55 years).
Marital Status	Married: 58%, Separated/Divorced: 28%, Widowed: 14%	A majority are married (58%).
Educational Qualification	Undergraduate: 77%, Postgraduate: 23%	Most hold undergraduate degrees.
Religion	Christian: 86%, Other: 14%	Christianity is the dominant religion.
Ethnicity	Urhobo/Isoko: 54%, Other: 46%	Urhobo/Isoko ethnic group is the largest.

From this table, it is evident that female teachers constitute the majority, with a significant portion falling within the experienced age range of 36-55 years. Additionally, most respondents hold undergraduate qualifications, with Christianity being the predominant religion among them.

Figure 1: Socio-Economic Characteristics of Respondents (Age, Marital Status, Religion, and Ethnicity)



Chi-Square Test Results and Interpretation

The following Chi-Square test results highlight the statistical significance (or lack thereof) of various challenges faced by school principals. The tests help to identify whether these challenges are uniformly experienced across schools or whether there are variations that require targeted interventions.

Table 1.1 Chi-Square Test Results

Table	Chi-Square Statistic	p-value	Conclusion
4.2.1	3.42	0.181	No significant difference in challenges faced by school principals.
4.2.2	2.97	0.396	No significant difference in staffing problems.
4.2.3	5.32	0.15	No significant difference in availability of infrastructural facilities.
4.2.4	1.68	0.190	No significant difference in the problem of overcrowded classrooms.
4.2.5	1.45	0.485	No significant difference in financial challenges.
4.2.6	0.03	~1	No significant difference in school supervision practices.

4.2.1 Terrorizations to School Principal's Authority	3.42	0.181	No significant difference in challenges faced by school principals.
4.2.2 Staffing Problem	2.97	0.396	No significant difference in staffing problems.
4.2.3 Infrastructural Facilities	5.32	0.15	No significant difference in availability of infrastructural facilities.
4.2.4 Over Population of Students	1.68	0.190	No significant difference in the problem of overcrowded classrooms.
4.2.5 Finance	1.45	0.485	No significant difference in financial challenges.
4.2.6 Effective and Efficient Supervision	0.03	~1	No significant difference in school supervision practices.

4.2.7 School Principals/Teachers/Community Relations	7.87	0.005	Significant difference in principal-teacher/community relations.
4.2.8 Indiscipline Problems	36.1	0.001	Significant difference in indiscipline problems across schools.

The Chi-Square results indicate that several challenges faced by school principals are consistent across schools. For instance, issues such as terrorization of authority (p-value = 0.181), staffing problems (p-value = 0.396), infrastructural issues (p-value = 0.15), student overpopulation (p-value = 0.190), financial problems (p-value = 0.485), and supervision & monitoring practices (p-value = 1.000) show no significant differences, suggesting that these challenges are uniformly experienced across schools. However, two key areas stand out for their variability. The p-value of 0.005 for school principals' relationships with teachers and the community highlights a significant difference across schools, implying that some schools are struggling more with this aspect than others. Similarly, the p-value of 0.001 for indiscipline problems indicates significant variation in how schools handle student discipline, with some facing much greater difficulties than others. These findings suggest that while certain issues require general solutions across schools, areas like principal-teacher/community relations and student indiscipline might benefit from more tailored approaches. Addressing these specific challenges could help improve school management and student performance overall.

CONCLUSION

This study highlighted the significant challenges faced by school principals, as well as the socio-economic characteristics of the respondents. While

many issues, such as staffing, authority challenges, and financial difficulties, were found to be consistent across schools, significant differences were observed in the areas of principal-teacher/community relations and indiscipline problems. These differences suggest the need for targeted interventions, particularly in schools where these issues are more pronounced.

The findings point to the importance of addressing these specific areas through tailored strategies that can enhance school management and improve student outcomes. Additionally, further research could explore more in-depth the factors influencing these variations across schools, as well as assess the effectiveness of interventions aimed at improving principal-teacher/community relationships and managing student discipline.

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