



## Comparative analysis of principals' disciplinary management practices for improving teachers' job performance of public and private secondary schools in Anambra State

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### Abstract

The study examined the comparative analysis of principals' discipline management practices for improving teachers' job performance of public and private secondary schools in Anambra State. The population of the study comprised of 13,505 teachers which is made up of all the 8,258 teachers in public Secondary Schools and 5,247 teachers in private secondary schools in the six education zones of Anambra State. A sample of 1,351 teachers made up of 825 from public secondary schools and 526 from private secondary schools representing 10% of the population were involved in the study. The instrument for data collection was a questionnaire, it was structured on a four-point rating scale of Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree and Strongly Disagree. The reliability of the instrument was determined using Cronbach's Alpha Reliability Co-efficient. The instrument was administered on 20 teachers in public secondary schools and 25 teachers in private secondary schools in Enugu State. A reliability co-efficient of 0.84 was obtained and indicated appropriate for the study. Mean and Standard deviation were used to answer the research questions and t-test was used to test the hypotheses. For the research questions, a decision rule was applied using a bench mark mean of 2.50. Any item with a mean score of 2.50 and above was considered as agreed while items below 2.50 was regarded as disagree. In testing the null hypotheses, if t-calculated is equal to, or greater than t-critical at 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis was rejected, but if otherwise, it was not rejected. The study revealed that similar staff disciplinary practices are adopted by principals for improving teachers' job performance in public and private secondary schools in Anambra state. It was also found that there is a significant difference in the mean ratings of public and private secondary school teachers on the principals' disciplinary practices for improving teachers' job performance in Anambra State. The findings revealed that, since school is a formal organisation where clear policies and disciplinary actions are applied for fairness, upholding standard and regulations in the school, which, when teachers see to be consistent, serve as disciplinary practice that improves their commitment and performance. Based on the findings and conclusion, the study recommended that Principals should establish a clear policy to guide teachers' behaviour as a standard and regulation for disciplinary practice in the school.

**Keywords:** Teachers' job performance, discipline

### Introduction

Discipline is an indispensable tool for achieving progressive success in any educational institution. In fact, no progressive education happens in a chaotic and unhealthy school environment. Particularly, discipline among teachers has implication to other educational stakeholders: students, teachers and principals. To the students, teachers' discipline aids in instilling value, moral, good behaviour and such promote academic performance. To the teachers, discipline enhances teachers' engagement; promote job performance, and a higher likelihood of reducing disciplinary issues among educational stakeholders. To the school principal, upholding discipline among teachers brings loyalty and healthy interpersonal relationships. Importantly, upholding discipline among teachers is vital because of their position among the other educational stakeholders. Teachers stand as middle-men among the other educational stakeholders. This is to say that indiscipline among teachers stands as a threat to national educational goal, school objectives, students' behaviours, students' academic performance and generally poor teachers' job performance. Therefore, teachers' discipline is critical for maintaining serene environment for teaching-learning exercise, it aids in achieving national secondary educational goal, upholding instruction and ensuring that all staff meet job expectations.

Discipline is the willingness to exhibit proper behaviour, conduct, attitude and character. In view of Okeke-James, *et al* (2023) <sup>[5]</sup> discipline are actions taken by school manager to exact control, orderliness and conducive school environment for educational purposes. It underlines orderliness, while its opposite leads to confusion, bad conduct, conflict and wrong behaviour. Practically, Kayode (2017) <sup>[3]</sup> stressed on the need to impose control on behaviour and attitude of school members which failure to uphold discipline result to indiscipline and unethical behaviours among staff. There is no doubt that teachers' discipline can lead to conflict when perceived as unfair, inconsistent, or overly punitive. If a staff feels that disciplinary actions are applied with bias or that they are being carried out with hatred and dishonestly, it can breed bitterness and damage existing trust between staff and management, thereby leading to conflict. Also, when some teachers are disciplined for the same actions that other staff get away with, such disciplinary act will create a sense of injustice and can lead to bitterness and a failure in trust by the teachers thereby encouraging conflict; again, if the disciplinary process is not clear or consistently applied, it can fuel suspicions of bias and unfairness, leading to conflict.

Despite the importance of maintaining discipline in the school, observations show that most teachers exhibit unethical behaviours such as character deformation, disobedience to the principal, dodging duties, truant and not discharging the primary assigned duties in the school in most secondary schools in Anambra State. At such most principals have adopted various disciplinary practices for managing such behaviours. Disciplinary practices of principals to teachers in public and private secondary schools appear to differ. In the private schools, the principal has autonomy to discipline the teachers the best way he deems fit, sometimes with threat, sanctions and deductions, or withholding the salary. This seems to make most private school teachers discharge their duties with fear, but leading to good job performance, unlike teachers in public school whose discipline appears to follow bureaucratic procedures and delay thereby making the teachers to perform below the expected job performance.

Teachers discharging their job performance below the expectation amidst various disciplinary management practices adopted by principals become the dissatisfaction of the researcher. Thus, the need to empirically compare principals' discipline management practices for improving teachers' job performance of public and private secondary schools in Anambra state.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study is to comparatively analyze disciplinary management practices adopted by principals for improving teachers' job performance in public and private secondary schools in Anambra state. Specifically, the study sought to compare:

1. Disciplinary practices of principals for improving teachers' job performance in public and private secondary schools in Anambra state.

### **Research Question**

What are the staff disciplinary practices of principals for improving teachers' job performance in public and private secondary schools in Anambra state?

### **Hypothesis**

The hypothesis was tested at 0.05 level of significance

1. There will be no significant difference in the mean ratings of public and private secondary school teachers on staff disciplinary practices of principals for improving their job performance.

### **Methods**

The study adopted the descriptive survey design. The population of the study consisted of 13,505 teachers which is made up of all the 8,258 teachers in public Secondary Schools and 5,247 teachers in private secondary schools in the six education zones of Anambra State. A sample of 1,351 teachers made up of 825 from public secondary schools and 526 from private secondary schools representing 10% of the population were involved in the study. For public schools, it comprises of 5 out of 52 schools for Aguta zone, 7 out of 65 schools for Awka Zone, 5 out of 50 schools for Nnewi zone, 4 out of 40 schools from Ogidi zone, 3 out of 33 schools from Onitsha zone and 3 out of 28 schools from Otuocha zone. For private school it comprises of 9 out of 86 schools in Aguata zone, 12 out of

121 schools for Awka Zone, 19 out of 191 schools for Nnewi zone, 21 out of 206 schools from Ogidi zone, 19 out of 186 schools from Onitsha zone and 5 out of 54 schools from Otuocha zone.

Using simple random sampling technique 10% of teachers from each zone were drawn from the sampled schools. The composition was made thus: Out of 1,335 teachers in public schools in Aguata education zone, 134 were selected and out of 430 private secondary teachers in the Aguata zone, 43 were selected. Out of 2,003 teachers in public secondary schools in Awka education zone, 200 teachers were selected and out of 726 teachers in private schools in the Awka zone, 73 teachers were selected. Out of 1,330 teachers in public secondary in Nnewi education zone, 133 teachers were selected and out of 1,337 teachers in private secondary school in the Nnewi education zone, 134 teachers were selected. Out of 1,295 teachers in public secondary schools in Ogidi education zone, 129 teachers were selected and out of 1,236 teachers in private schools in Ogidi zone, 124 teachers were selected. Out of 1,543 teachers in public schools in Onitsha education zone, 154 teachers were selected and out of 1,302 teachers in private schools in the Onitsha zone, 130 teachers were selected. Out of 752 teachers in public secondary schools in Otuocha education zone, 75 teachers were selected and out of 216 teachers in private schools in the Otuocha education zone, 22 teachers were selected. The instrument for data collection was a questionnaire which was structured on a four-point rating scale of Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree and Strongly Disagree. The reliability of the instrument was determined using Cronbach, s Alpha Reliability Co-efficient. To do this, the instrument was administered on 20 teachers in public secondary schools and 25 teachers in private secondary schools in Enugu State. A reliability co-efficient of 0.84 was obtained and indicated appropriate for the study. The mean scores were used to answer the two research questions. A mean of 2.50 was adopted as the agreement level for the items.

Mean and Standard deviation were used to answer the research questions and t-test was used to test the hypotheses. For the research questions, a decision rule was applied using a bench mark mean of 2.50. Any item with a mean score of 2.50 and above was considered as agreed while items below 2.50 was regarded as disagree. In testing the null hypotheses, if t-calculated is equal to, or greater than t-critical at 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis was rejected, but if otherwise, it was not rejected.

### **Results**

Data analysis presented in table 1 revealed that the mean ratings of public and private secondary schools' teachers for all items were above the cut off mean of 2.50 indicating agreement with the items as staff disciplinary practices for improving teachers' job performance.

The cluster standard deviation score stood at 0.72 and 0.33 for public schools and private schools' teachers respectively is closer to the mean indicating similarity in their responses. The cluster means of 3.16 and 3.46 for public and private secondary schools' teachers respectively were above 2.50 indicating agreement with most of the items and this showed that similar staff disciplinary practices were adopted by principals for improving teachers' job performance in public and private secondary schools in Anambra state.

**Table 1:** Mean Ratings and Standard deviation scores on the staff disciplinary practices of principals for improving teachers' job performance

| SN | Items  | Teachers in public secondary schools (n=825) |      |        | Teachers in private secondary schools (n=526) |      |        |
|----|--|--|------|--------|---|------|--------|
|    |  | Mean   | SD   | Remark | Mean  | SD   | Remark |
| 1. | Teachers are enlightened on job behaviours for effective teaching.   | 3.32   | 0.65 | Agree  | 3.40  | 0.55 | Agree  |
| 2. | Prompt reprimand are given to correct any form of misbehaviour of teachers to enhance good attitude while teaching.              | 3.39   | 0.60 | Agree  | 3.47  | 0.53 | Agree  |
| 3. | Teachers are educated on school discipline for effective job performance   | 3.40   | 0.66 | Agree  | 3.49  | 0.54 | Agree  |
| 4  | Constructive feedbacks are given to teachers to support effective job performance  | 3.28   | 0.69 | Agree  | 3.43  | 0.56 | Agree  |
| 5  | Teachers' disciplinary problems are resolved so that teaching will not be hindered   | 3.32   | 0.70 | Agree  | 3.43  | 0.56 | Agree  |
| 6  | There is zero tolerance for any form of teacher's indiscipline by the principal.   | 3.35   | 0.99 | Agree  | 3.47  | 0.55 | Agree  |
| 7  | Teachers' attendance to classes are monitored and taken regularly as part of measures to determine dedication to job performance | 3.45   | 0.64 | Agree  | 3.52  | 0.54 | Agree  |
| 8  | Teachers involved in examination malpractice are disciplined according to the relevant laws of the school.                       | 3.32   | 0.77 | Agree  | 3.46  | 0.65 | Agree  |
| 9  | A clear policy is put in place to guide disciplinary process of teachers   | 3.32   | 0.74 | Agree  | 3.34  | 0.75 | Agree  |
| 10 | Disciplinary actions are applied fairly and consistently to all teachers to avoid conflict and improve job performance.          | 3.35   | 0.70 | Agree  | 3.50  | 0.56 | Agree  |
| 11 | Teachers that misbehave are disciplined according to set standard and regulations  | 3.37   | 0.72 | Agree  | 3.52  | 0.56 | Agree  |
|    | Cluster Mean and Standard Deviation  | 3.16   | 0.72 | Agree  | 3.46  | 0.33 | Agree  |

### Hypothesis

**H<sub>01</sub>:** There will be no significant difference in the mean ratings of public and private secondary school teachers on staff disciplinary practices of principals for improving their job performance.

**Table 2:** The summary of t-test analysis on the staff disciplinary practices adopted by principals for improving their job performance.

| Group   | N          | Mean         | SD         | P-value | Df   | Alpha | Remark      |
|---|------------|--------------|------------|---------|------|-------|-------------|
| Public secondary schools' Private secondary schools | 825<br>526 | 3.16<br>3.46 | .72<br>.33 | 0.000   | 1349 | 0.05  | Significant |

Data presented in the table revealed that the p-value of 0.00 is less than 0.05 level of significance. Thus, null hypothesis is not accepted. Therefore, there is significant difference in the mean ratings of public and private secondary school teachers on the staff disciplinary practices adopted by principals for improving their job performance.

### Discussion

The result of the finding showed that there are similarities in the staff disciplinary practices adopted by principals for improving teachers' job performance in public and private secondary schools in Anambra state. It is clear that school is a formal organization where clear policies and disciplinary actions are applied for fairness, upholding standard and regulations in the school. Which when teachers see to be consistent, serves as disciplinary practice that improves their commitment and performance. This finding agrees with the findings of Sebayang and Iryanti (2024) <sup>[6]</sup> which revealed that employee discipline and perceived organizational support (POS) positively and significantly impact organizational commitment. These results emphasize the vital roles of organizational support and workplace discipline in nurturing employee loyalty and responsibility. This was also in agreement with the finding of Agbo (2020) <sup>[1]</sup> which inferred that code of discipline influenced the employee performance in an organization. This agreement could be because most in-disciplinary act attract sanctions in most organizations, secondary schools inclusive, thus no staff would want such sanctions which most often may be

tantamount to delays in promotions. Among the disciplinary practices adopted by principals of public and private secondary schools for improving job performance in Anambra State include; setting a laid down regulation and standards for misbehaviours and having a clear policy guiding disciplinary process of teachers. These was the same with the findings of Agbor (2023) <sup>[2]</sup> that oral/written reprimand, suspension, demotion and termination as disciplinary practice for positive employee performance. It was also found that there is a significant difference in the mean ratings of public and private secondary school teachers on the principals' disciplinary practices for improving teachers' job performance in Anambra State. This supports the finding of Anekwe, Nwatu and Nwanah (2023) which showed that workplace discipline affects employee performance in different dimension depending on the disciplinary tool adopted by management. This is to say that administration differences of public and private secondary may affect staff management.

### Conclusion

In conclusion, the study found that there are similar disciplinary practices adopted by principals for improving teachers' job performance in public and private secondary schools in Anambra state. The study also found out that, there is a significant difference in the mean rating of public and private secondary school teachers on staff disciplinary practices adopted by principals for improving their job performance.

## **Recommendation**

Based on the findings, it was recommended that principals should establish a clear policy to guide teachers' behaviour as a standard and regulation for disciplinary practice in the school

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