

School-Based Decision-Making As A Predictor Of Effective School Administration In Enugu State, Nigeria: Implications For Psychology And Measurement Experts

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Abstract

The study investigated school-based decision-making as a predictor of effective school administration in Enugu State, Nigeria. The study was guided by four research questions and corresponding four hypotheses.

Methods: The study adopted a correlation survey design with a population of 7,790 teachers in 286 public senior secondary schools in Enugu State, Nigeria. Two instruments titled School-Based Decision-Making Questionnaire (SBDMQ) and Effective School Administration Questionnaire (ESAQ) were used for data collection. The validity of the instruments were determined through confirmatory factor analysis and the output showed that the items have values above 3.0 Eigen Value. The internal consistency reliability type through Cronbach Alpha gave reliability coefficients of .78, .81 and .83 for the clusters of strategic school-based decision making, tactical school-based decision making and operational school-based decision making. Moreso, the reliability coefficients of .88 and .91 were established for School-Based Decision-Making Questionnaire (SBDMQ) and Effective School Administration Questionnaire (ESAQ) respectively. Linear and multiple regression were used to answer the research questions while regression t-test and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) were used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 significant level.

Results: The study showed that strategic school-based decision making to a moderate extent predicted effective school administration in secondary schools in Enugu State, Nigeria. The study showed that tactical school-based decision making to a moderate extent predicted effective school administration in secondary schools in Enugu State, Nigeria. The study showed that operational school-based decision making to a moderate extent predicted effective school administration in secondary schools in Enugu State, Nigeria.

Conclusion: Based on the findings of this study, it was concluded that school-based decision-making are significant determinants of effective school administration in Enugu State, Nigeria. The study also concluded that strategic, tactical and operational school-based decision making are indispensable in the achievement of effective school administration in Enugu State.

Recommendations: School principals should promote inclusive decision-making by actively involving teachers, staff, and other stakeholders in school decisions. This will enhance commitment, accountability, and effectiveness in administration; Government and educational authorities should organize regular training, workshops, and seminars for principals and school leaders on strategic, tactical, and operational decision-making skills to improve administrative competence.

Keywords: School-Based Decision-Making, Strategic Decision-Making, Tactical Decision-Making, Operational Decision-Making, School Administration, Measurement and Evaluation, Secondary Schools.

Introduction

Effective school administration is supposed to be the hallmark of a functional school system. It is disheartening to not that most of the schools are bedeviled with administrative lapses especially in Enugu State. This ugly trend is buttressed by the finding of Ezeugbor and Victor (2018) discovered that secondary school administrators are missing some key managerial skills, leading to a range of issues. These include teachers struggling to keep up with the curriculum, students skipping school or arriving late, a lack of enthusiasm for teaching and learning, involvement in cult activities, and ongoing conflicts among students in Enugu State. In a related incident, in April 2018, the Enugu State Commissioner for Education revealed that 18 secondary school principals were dismissed from their positions for alleged exam misconduct (Adonu, 2018). These principals were found to have colluded with students to cheat during a public examination in the state (Adonu, 2018). The problems with these principals highlight significant administrative failures in upholding academic integrity (Tribune Online, 2018). The research also looked into how principals handle conflicts, particularly those linked to cult activities and frequent disputes among students. Egbo (2015) pointed out that secondary school counselors in Enugu State see negative public attitudes and a lack of funding as major obstacles to providing effective administrative and counseling services (Egbo, 2015). This shortfall in adequate counseling represents a serious administrative failure in addressing the welfare and behavioral needs of students.

The consequences of poor administration cannot be underestimated. Most secondary school graduates are unable to write a letter or tertiary institution graduates unable to write a job application (Adonu, 2018). Mba (2019) revealed that home conditions and parental support variables contribute significantly to students performing poorly academically, including low level of interaction with children's teachers, low involvement in parent-teacher associations, lack of adequate instructional materials, lack of good infrastructure for conducive learning, unqualified teachers, and student lifestyle factors including truancy.

Carr-Hill, Rolleston, and Schendel (2016) describe school-based decision-making as a reform that empowers schools by shifting decision-making authority down to their level. This means that control over management, funding, curriculum, and teaching methods moves away from central education authorities and into the hands of individual schools. The World Bank (2009) highlights that SBDM represent a decentralization of authority from the central government to schools, positioning the school itself as the main decision-making unit. This unit comprises principals, teachers, parents, students, and community members. The definition stresses that for SBDM to truly work, local stakeholders must have genuine control over resources and processes. Mokoena and Machaisa (2018) explore SBDM through the lens of shared decision-making, pointing out the distinction between a balanced model where all members of school governing bodies (principals, educators, parents, and students) have an equal say, and models where certain groups (like principals or educators) hold most of the power. Their research reveals a disconnect between the policies that promote shared governance and the reality, where power often remains concentrated. Lieberman and Clayton (2018) examine SBDM as a process shaped by power dynamics and social capital, particularly focusing on operational decisions like teacher assignments. Since decision making involves action directions, it could take place through strategic school-based decision making, tactical school-based decision making and operational school-based decision making respectively.

The strategic school-based decision making involves the process of data management in the school system (Ozioko, 2020). This involves the collection of students' concrete information in order to improve students' the behaviour of students based on goal oriented activities (Agbo, 2019). It could also imply the gathering of necessary data by the students to solve relevant short term relevant goals (Udeh, 2019). In the study of Ozioko (2020), it was revealed that strategic school based decision making significantly predicted effective school administration. In the same vain, the finding of Agbo (2019) documented that strategic school decision making is a predictor of school productivity. Furthermore, the finding of Udeh (2019)

showed a positive relationship between strategic decision making and teachers' job engagement in the school. The next school based decision making strategy is the tactical.

Tactical decision-making is all about quickly and deliberately addressing immediate challenges, even when you don't have all the information at hand (Ukaebu, 2018). Tactical decision-making makes the most of the information that's available to drive real results within an organization (Udo, 2018). It allows for quicker responses, improved organization, and the effective transformation of information into valuable resources (Agwu, 2019). In essence, it sets up a framework for making fast decisions so you can grab opportunities without hesitation. Empirical evidence has shown that tactical decision-making has a high relationship with school control (Ukaebu, 2018). In the same vein, it was reported that tactical decision making style is a significant predictor of effective school management (Agwu, 2019). Tactical decision making may not be without operational decision making.

Operational decision-making in schools revolves around shifting responsibility from the central offices down to the various schools (Bala, 2018). The operational decision-making is one that allows the teachers, principals, host community and students to make relevant decisions about the schools' functioning (Yusuf, 2019). Yusuf further stressed that operational decision making permits the principals, teachers, students and community members to be actively involved in resource allocation, staffing, firing of staff, curriculum evaluation and teaching methodology in the schools' operation. The finding of Bala (2018) revealed that operational decision making process is instrumental in the day-to-day running of the schools. The finding of this study is suggesting that school-based decision making can account for effective school administration in other settings. It is not yet established whether school-based decision making can predict effective school administration in secondary schools in Enugu State. Therefore, the study investigated the predictive power of school-based decision making on effective school administration.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study is to investigate the predictive power of school-based decision making on effective school administration. Specifically, the study sought to determine the:

1. predictive power of strategic school-based decision making on effective school administration;
2. predictive power of tactical school-based decision making on effective school administration;
3. predictive power of operational school-based decision making on effective school administration;
4. joint predictive power of school-based decision making on effective school administration.

Research Questions

The following research questions were answered to guide the study

1. What is the predictive power of strategic school-based decision making on effective school administration?
2. What is the predictive power of tactical school-based decision making on effective school administration?
3. What is the predictive power of operational school-based decision making on effective school administration?
4. What is the joint predictive power of school-based decision making on effective school administration?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance.

H₀₁: there is no significant predictive power of strategic school-based decision making on effective school administration.

H₀₂: there is no significant predictive power of tactical school-based decision making on effective school administration.

H₀₃: there is no significant predictive power of operational school-based decision making on effective school administration.

H₀₄: there is no significant joint predictive power of school-based decision making on effective school administration.

Methods

The population of this study comprised 7,790 teachers in 286 public senior secondary schools in Enugu State, Nigeria. The sample size for this study was 510 teachers from 34 schools. Multi-stage sampling procedure through cluster, stratified and simple random sampling techniques were used to draw the sample. First, the 286 schools were clustered into 17 Local Government Areas in Enugu State. Thereafter, simple random sampling technique was used to draw two (2) schools from each L.G.A making 34 secondary schools in all. Finally, 15 teachers were drawn from each school through simple random sampling by balloting with replacement. The minimum sample size of 400 was gotten through Taro Yamene minimum sample determination procedure.

Two instruments titled School-Based Decision-Making Questionnaire (SBDMQ) and Effective School Administration Questionnaire (ESAQ). The SBDMQ has two sections of A and B. Section A contained the demographic information of the respondents such as name of schools, designation and gender. Section B for SBDMQ has three clusters of strategic school-based decision making, tactical school-based decision making and operational school-based decision making. Each of these clusters has response options of Very High Extent (4), High Extent (3), Low Extent (2) and Very Low Extent (1) with ten items in each of the clusters. The maximum response score for each cluster is 40 points while the minimum response score is 10 points respectively.

The Effective School Administration Questionnaire (ESAQ) has 20 items with two sections that was divided into A and B. The section A is the same content in the instrument, SBDMQ. The section B has the response options of Very High Extent (4), High Extent (3), Low Extent (2) and Very Low Extent (1) respectively. The maximum and minimum scores are 80 and 20 for ESAQ. The validity of the instruments where determined through confirmatory factor analysis and the output showed that the items have values above 3.0 Eigen Value. The internal consistency reliability type through Cronbach Alpha gave reliability coefficients of .78, .81 and .83 for the clusters of strategic school-based decision making, tactical school-based decision making and operational school-based decision making. Moreso, the reliability coefficients of .88 and .91 were established for School-Based Decision-Making Questionnaire (SBDMQ) and Effective School Administration Questionnaire (ESAQ) respectively.

Linear and multiple regression were used to answer the research questions while regression t-test and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) were used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 significant level. The decision rule was based on Nworgu (2015) categorization as follows: 0.00 – 0.20 (Very Low), 0.20 – 0.40 (Low), 0.40 – 0.60 (Moderate), 0.60 – 0.80 (High) and 0.80 and above (Very High).

Results

Research Question 1: What is the predictive power of strategic school-based decision making on effective school administration?

Table 1: Linear regression of the predictive power of strategic school-based decision making on effective school administration

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.806 ^a	.650	.649	2.42371

Decision rule: 0.00 – 0.20 (Very Low), 0.20 – 0.40 (Low), 0.40 – 0.60 (Moderate), 0.60 – 0.80 (High) and 0.80 and above (Very High).

Result in Table 1 shows that the regression and regression square values are 0.806 and 0.650 respectively. The coefficient of determinism of 65% showed that strategic school-based decision making to moderate

extent can predict effective school administration in Enugu State. The 35% variance in effective school administration in Enugu State is not accounted for strategic school-based decision making.

H₀₁: there is no significant predictive power of strategic school-based decision making on effective school administration.

Table 2: t-test associated with linear regression of the predictive power of strategic school-based decision making on effective school administration

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Coefficients Beta		
1	(Constant)	7.936	.891		8.906	.000
	strategic	.767	.025	.806	30.684	.000

a. Dependent Variable: administration

Result in Table 2 showed that the t-test value associated with linear regression is 30.684. The hypothesis is rejected because the significant value of 0.00 is less than the alpha value of 0.05. Therefore, strategic school-based decision making significantly predicted effective school administration.

Research Question 2: what is the predictive power of tactical school-based decision making on effective school administration?

Table 3: Linear regression of the predictive power of tactical school-based decision making on effective school administration

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.689 ^a	.475	.474	2.96672

Decision rule: 0.00 – 0.20 (Very Low), 0.20 – 0.40 (Low), 0.40 – 0.60 (Moderate), 0.60 – 0.80 (High) and 0.80 and above (Very High).

Result on Table 3 shows that the regression and regression square values are 0.689 and 0.475 respectively. The coefficient of determinism of 47.5% showed that tactical school-based decision making to moderate extent can predict effective school administration in Enugu State. The 52.5% variance in effective school administration in Enugu State is not accounted for tactical school-based decision making.

H₀₂: there is no significant predictive power of tactical school-based decision making on effective school administration.

Table 4: t-test associated with linear regression of the predictive power of tactical school-based decision making on effective school administration

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Coefficients Beta		
1	(Constant)	13.134	1.032		12.724	.000
	Tactical	.661	.031	.689	21.435	.000

Result in Table 4 showed that the t-test value associated with linear regression is 21.435. The hypothesis is rejected because the significant value of 0.00 is less than the alpha value of 0.05. Therefore, tactical school-based decision making significantly predicted effective school administration.

Research Question 3: what is the predictive power of operational school-based decision making on effective school administration?

Table 5: Linear regression of the predictive power of operational school-based decision making on effective school administration

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.762 ^a	.581	.580	2.65167

Decision rule: 0.00 – 0.20 (Very Low), 0.20 – 0.40 (Low), 0.40 – 0.60 (Moderate), 0.60 – 0.80 (High) and 0.80 and above (Very High).

Result on Table 5 shows that the regression and regression square values are 0.762 and 0.581 respectively. The coefficient of determinism of 47.5% showed that operational school-based decision making to moderate extent can predict effective school administration in Enugu State. The 41.9% variance in effective school administration in Enugu State is not accounted for operational school-based decision making.

H₀₃: there is no significant predictive power of operational school-based decision making on effective school administration.

Table 6: t-test associated with linear regression of the predictive power of operational school-based decision making on effective school administration

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error			
1	(Constant)	9.558	.970		9.857	.000
	Operational	.724	.027	.762	26.514	.000

Result in Table 6 showed that the t-test value associated with linear regression is 26.514. The hypothesis is rejected because the significant value of 0.00 is less than the alpha value of 0.05. Therefore, operational school-based decision making significantly predicted effective school administration.

Research Question 4: What is the joint predictive power of school-based decision making on effective school administration?

Table 7: Multiple regression of the predictive power of school-based decision making on effective school administration

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.813 ^a	.660	.658	2.39022

Decision rule: 0.00 – 0.20 (Very Low), 0.20 – 0.40 (Low), 0.40 – 0.60 (Moderate), 0.60 – 0.80 (High) and 0.80 and above (Very High).

Result in Table 7 shows that the regression and regression square values are 0.813 and 0.660 respectively. The coefficient of determinism of 66% showed that school-based decision making to moderate extent can predict effective school administration in Enugu State. The 34% variance in effective school administration in Enugu State is not accounted for school-based decision making.

H₀₄: there is no significant joint predictive power of school-based decision making on effective school administration.

Table 8: ANOVA associated with multiple regression of the predictive power of school-based decision making on effective school administration

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	5624.009	3	1874.670	328.132	.000 ^b

Residual	2890.853	506	5.713
Total	8514.863	509	

Result in Table 8 shows that the ANOVA value (F) is 328.132 ($F_{3,506}=328.132$, $p=0.00 < 0.05$). With a degree of freedom of 3 and 506, the hypothesis is rejected because the significant value of 0.00 is less than the alpha value of 0.05. Therefore school-based decision making significantly predicted effective school administration in Enugu State.

Discussion of Findings

Predictive power of strategic school-based decision making on effective school administration

The findings of the study revealed that strategic school-based decision making to a moderate extent predicted effective school administration in secondary schools in Enugu State, Nigeria. This indicates that while strategic decision-making at the school level contributes meaningfully to administrative effectiveness, it is not the sole determinant. In other words, effective school administration is influenced by strategic participation and planning, but also depends on other complementary factors such as leadership competence, availability of resources, policy environment, and organizational culture. The moderate predictive strength observed in this study may be attributed to several factors. First, while strategic school-based decision making promotes inclusiveness and shared responsibility, its effectiveness largely depends on the capacity of school leaders to coordinate and implement decisions effectively. Where principals lack adequate leadership or managerial skills, the benefits of participatory decision-making may not be fully realized.

Second, the level of stakeholder involvement in decision-making processes may vary across schools. In some cases, participation may be nominal rather than substantive, thereby limiting its impact on administrative effectiveness. This could explain why the predictive relationship was not strong but moderate. Third, structural and systemic constraints such as centralized educational policies, inadequate funding, and limited autonomy may reduce the effectiveness of school-based decision-making. Even when decisions are made at the school level, the extent to which they can be implemented may be restricted by external controls and resource limitations.

This finding is consistent with the position of Caldwell (2005), who argued that school-based decision making enhances administrative effectiveness by allowing schools to respond more directly to their unique needs, although its impact is often moderated by contextual factors such as leadership capacity and resource availability. Similarly, Leithwood and Menzies (1998) found that participatory and decentralized decision-making structures have a positive but moderate effect on school performance, suggesting that the benefits of such approaches depend on how well they are implemented within the school system. In the same vein, Somech (2010) reported that participative decision-making contributes to improved organizational outcomes, including administrative effectiveness, but its influence is often indirect and mediated by variables such as teacher commitment and organizational trust. This supports the present finding by indicating that while strategic school-based decision making is important, its effectiveness is strengthened when supported by other enabling conditions.

Furthermore, the finding aligns with the study by Ogundele and Adelabu (2012), who observed that school-based management practices in Nigerian secondary schools contributed moderately to administrative effectiveness due to challenges such as limited autonomy, inadequate training, and insufficient funding. Likewise, Eze (2018) found that although principals who engaged stakeholders in strategic decision-making recorded better administrative outcomes, the level of impact was constrained by systemic issues within the education sector. The finding of this study is also in agreement with that of Ozioko (2020) which revealed that strategic school based decision making significantly predicted effective school administration. In the same vein, the finding of this study buttressed that of Agbo (2019) which documented that strategic school decision making is a predictor of school productivity. The finding of this study is consistent with that of Udeh (2019) which showed a positive relationship between strategic decision making and teachers' job engagement in the school.

Predictive power of tactical school-based decision making on effective school administration

The findings of the study revealed that tactical school-based decision making to a moderate extent predicted effective school administration in secondary schools in Enugu State, Nigeria. This suggests that short to medium-term, operational-level decisions; such as resource allocation, staff coordination, and day-to-day problem-solving contribute meaningfully to administrative effectiveness, but are not sufficient on their own to fully determine it. In essence, while tactical decision-making enhances administrative functioning, its impact is moderated by other factors within the school system. The moderate predictive strength observed in this study may be attributed to several factors. First, tactical decision-making is often limited to immediate and routine issues, and may not address long-term institutional challenges. As a result, its influence on overall administrative effectiveness may be constrained. Second, the effectiveness of tactical decisions depends heavily on the skills and experience of school administrators, as well as the level of collaboration among staff. Where these are lacking, the impact of such decisions may be reduced.

Furthermore, contextual challenges such as inadequate funding, bureaucratic constraints, and limited autonomy may hinder the effective implementation of tactical decisions in secondary schools. Even when sound decisions are made, their outcomes may be compromised by external limitations beyond the control of school administrators. This aligns with the observation by Ogundele and Adelabu (2012) that school-based decision-making in Nigeria often faces implementation challenges due to systemic constraints. Another possible explanation is that effective school administration is inherently multidimensional, involving not only operational efficiency but also leadership, vision, communication, and stakeholder engagement. Tactical decision-making, while important, represents only one aspect of this broader framework, thereby explaining its moderate predictive influence.

This finding is in line with the work of Mintzberg (1994), who emphasized that tactical decisions are essential for translating broader strategies into actionable steps, thereby supporting organizational effectiveness. However, he also noted that the success of such decisions depends on alignment with strategic goals and the capacity of leadership to implement them effectively. Similarly, Leithwood and Riehl (2003) argued that effective school administration is influenced by multiple layers of decision-making, including both strategic and tactical processes, with each contributing differently to overall outcomes. In the same vein, Somech (2010) found that participative decision-making at the operational level improves coordination and staff engagement, which in turn enhances administrative effectiveness, although the impact is often moderate due to intervening variables such as organizational climate and leadership style. Likewise, Hallinger (2011) observed that instructional leadership practices, which often involve tactical decisions, play a significant role in school administration but must be complemented by broader strategic direction to achieve optimal effectiveness. The finding of this study also aligns with that of Ukaebu (2018) which showed that tactical decision-making has a high relationship with school control. In the same vein, its finding of this study concurred with that of Agwu (2019) which showed that tactical decision making style is a significant predictor of effective school management.

Predictive power of operational school-based decision making on effective school administration

The finding of the study revealed that operational school-based decision making to a moderate extent predicted effective school administration in secondary schools in Enugu State, Nigeria. The finding indicates that routine, day-to-day decisions; such as staff supervision, student management, scheduling, and implementation of school policies play a meaningful role in enhancing administrative effectiveness, but are not sufficient on their own to guarantee optimal school performance. Thus, while operational decisions are essential for the smooth functioning of schools, their influence is complemented by other administrative and organizational factors. The moderate predictive strength observed in this study may be attributed to several factors. First, operational decision-making is often limited to immediate and routine issues and may not address long-term challenges facing the school. As a result, its impact on overall administrative effectiveness is somewhat restricted. Second, the effectiveness of operational decisions depends largely on the competence and experience of school administrators, as well as the level of cooperation among staff members. Another possible explanation is that effective school administration is a multidimensional construct that involves strategic planning, tactical coordination, and operational execution. While

operational decision-making ensures the smooth running of daily school activities, it must be integrated with higher-level decision-making processes to achieve maximum effectiveness. This explains why its predictive influence is moderate rather than high.

This finding is consistent with the work of Hallinger (2011), who emphasized that day-to-day administrative practices, particularly those related to instructional leadership and school management, contribute to improved school functioning. However, the study also noted that such operational practices have a moderate effect unless they are supported by strong leadership vision and strategic direction. Similarly, Bush (2011) argued that effective school administration requires a balance between routine management functions and broader leadership processes, suggesting that operational decisions alone may not fully determine administrative success. In the same vein, Somech (2010) found that participative decision-making at the operational level enhances collaboration, staff morale, and organizational efficiency, which in turn improve administrative outcomes. However, the impact was found to be moderate due to the influence of mediating factors such as organizational culture, leadership style, and resource availability. Likewise, Spillane (2006) highlighted that leadership practice in schools is distributed across various activities, including operational decision-making, but its effectiveness depends on how these activities are coordinated within the larger organizational system.

Joint predictive power of school-based decision making on effective school administration

The finding of the study revealed that jointly, school-based decision making accounted or predicted 66% on effective school administration in Enugu State. This indicates a strong predictive relationship, suggesting that school-based decision-making practices; encompassing strategic, tactical, and operational dimensions are major determinants of administrative effectiveness. In practical terms, this implies that a substantial proportion of what makes school administration effective can be explained by how decisions are made, shared, and implemented within the school system.

The finding may be attributed to the fact that effective decision-making enhances coordination, improves communication, fosters accountability, and encourages stakeholder participation. When teachers, administrators, and other stakeholders are involved in decision-making, they are more likely to be committed to the implementation of such decisions, thereby improving administrative outcomes. Another possible explanation for the strong joint prediction is the complementary nature of strategic, tactical, and operational decision-making. While strategic decisions provide long-term direction, tactical decisions translate these into actionable plans, and operational decisions ensure day-to-day implementation. The integration of these levels of decision-making likely creates a synergistic effect that enhances overall administrative effectiveness. Furthermore, the finding may reflect increasing awareness and adoption of participatory governance practices in secondary schools in Enugu State. As schools become more inclusive in their decision-making processes, the quality of decisions and their implementation improves, leading to better administrative outcomes.

This finding is consistent with existing literature which emphasizes the central role of decentralized and participatory decision-making in improving school effectiveness. For instance, Caldwell (2005) posited that school-based management significantly enhances administrative performance by granting schools autonomy to make context-specific decisions. Similarly, Leithwood and Menzies (1998) found that school-based decision-making structures contribute meaningfully to school effectiveness by promoting shared responsibility and improved organizational functioning. In the same vein, Somech (2010) reported that participative decision-making has a strong influence on organizational outcomes, including administrative effectiveness, particularly when stakeholders are actively involved in the decision-making process. Likewise, Spillane (2006) highlighted that leadership and decision-making practices distributed across different actors within the school significantly shape administrative outcomes. These studies support the present finding by demonstrating that decision-making processes are critical drivers of school effectiveness.

Conclusion

This study examined school-based decision-making as a predictor of effective school administration in secondary schools in Enugu State, Nigeria. The findings have demonstrated that school-based decision-

making; across strategic, tactical, and operational levels plays a significant role in enhancing administrative effectiveness. The study established that strategic, tactical, and operational decision-making each contributed to effective school administration to a moderate extent. This indicates that while each dimension of decision-making is important, none operates in isolation to fully determine administrative success. Rather, effective school administration is achieved through the integration of these decision-making levels, supported by other organizational and contextual factors. In conclusion, therefore, the study affirms that school-based decision-making is a critical determinant of effective school administration in secondary schools in Enugu State. Strengthening decision-making processes at all levels, while simultaneously addressing contextual and institutional challenges, is essential for improving the overall performance and management of schools.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study on school-based decision-making as a predictor of effective school administration in secondary schools in Enugu State, Nigeria, the following recommendations are made:

1. School principals should promote inclusive decision-making by actively involving teachers, staff, and other stakeholders in school decisions. This will enhance commitment, accountability, and effectiveness in administration.
2. Government and educational authorities should organize regular training, workshops, and seminars for principals and school leaders on strategic, tactical, and operational decision-making skills to improve administrative competence.
3. The Ministry of Education should formulate and implement policies that encourage school-based management, granting schools more autonomy to make context-specific decisions that enhance administrative effectiveness.
4. Adequate financial, material, and human resources should be provided to schools to support the implementation of decisions and ensure that administrative plans are effectively executed.
5. School administrators should adopt leadership styles that encourage collaboration, transparency, and accountability in decision-making processes, thereby improving overall school administration.
6. Educational authorities should establish effective monitoring and evaluation systems to assess how school-based decisions are made and implemented, ensuring alignment with educational goals and standards.
7. Teachers and administrative staff should be given opportunities for continuous professional development to enhance their participation and effectiveness in decision-making processes.
8. School leaders should create a supportive and open organizational climate that encourages free expression of ideas and constructive contributions to decision-making.

Implications for Psychology Experts

The findings of this study have several important implications for psychology experts, particularly those working in educational, organizational, and leadership psychology. First, the finding that school-based decision-making significantly predicts effective school administration implies that psychological processes such as cognition, perception, motivation, and interpersonal influence play a central role in administrative effectiveness. This suggests that school administration is not only an organizational function but also a psychologically driven process shaped by how individuals think, interact, and make collective decisions. Second, the moderate contributions of strategic, tactical, and operational decision-making imply that different levels of cognitive processing are involved in school administration. Psychology experts can interpret this as evidence that higher-order thinking (strategic decisions), problem-solving skills (tactical decisions), and routine cognitive processing (operational decisions) all interact to influence organizational outcomes. This highlights the importance of cognitive complexity in educational leadership. Third, the strong joint predictive power of school-based decision-making (66%) implies that group psychological dynamics such as collaboration, shared cognition, social influence, and group decision-making processes

significantly shape administrative effectiveness. This aligns with theories of group psychology which emphasize that collective intelligence often produces better outcomes than individual decision-making. Fourth, the findings suggest that emotional and motivational factors may influence the effectiveness of school-based decision-making. For psychology experts, this implies that constructs such as job satisfaction, organizational commitment, trust, and leadership motivation are likely to affect how decisions are made and implemented in schools. Fifth, the absence of strong individual-level differences in some cases implies that psychological influences on decision-making and administration may be more organizational than demographic. This suggests that environmental and situational factors may have stronger psychological effects than age or experience in shaping decision outcomes. Sixth, the study implies that resistance to change, collaboration patterns, and communication processes within schools are important psychological variables that can influence the success of decision-making systems. Psychology experts can therefore explore these variables to better understand how to improve school effectiveness. Finally, the findings imply that interventions aimed at improving school administration should incorporate psychological principles such as motivation enhancement, leadership development, group cohesion, and cognitive skill training. This highlights the need for psychology experts to play a key role in designing training programmes and interventions for school leaders and teachers.

Implications for Measurement and Evaluation Experts

The findings of this study on school-based decision-making as a predictor of effective school administration in Enugu State have several important implications for measurement and evaluation experts. First, the finding that school-based decision-making jointly accounts for a substantial proportion (66%) of the variance in effective school administration implies that decision-making constructs possess strong explanatory power and should be treated as core variables in educational measurement models. This elevates school-based decision-making from a peripheral concept to a central construct in the assessment of school effectiveness. Second, the moderate individual contributions of strategic, tactical, and operational decision-making imply that these dimensions are distinct but interrelated constructs. For measurement experts, this suggests the need to conceptualize and operationalize school-based decision-making as a multidimensional variable, with clearly defined subscales that capture different levels of decision processes within schools.

Third, the predictive nature of the findings implies that measurement and evaluation in education should increasingly adopt inferential and predictive approaches rather than relying solely on descriptive assessments. Constructs such as school-based decision-making can be modeled as independent variables in regression and other statistical frameworks to explain variations in administrative effectiveness. Fourth, the results imply that effective school administration is a latent construct influenced by observable indicators such as decision-making practices. This underscores the importance of developing valid and reliable instruments capable of capturing both observable behaviors and underlying organizational processes.

Fifth, the findings suggest that a significant proportion of administrative effectiveness is influenced by factors outside the model (34%), implying that measurement frameworks must be comprehensive and flexible enough to incorporate additional variables such as leadership style, school climate, and resource availability. This highlights the complexity of educational evaluation and the need for robust models. Sixth, the absence of overly strong individual predictive effects but a strong joint effect implies the presence of interaction or combined effects among decision-making dimensions. This has implications for advanced measurement techniques, suggesting the need for multivariate analyses that can capture relationships among variables rather than treating them in isolation. Finally, the findings imply that evaluation in educational settings should integrate both process-based and outcome-based indicators. School-based decision-making represents a process variable that significantly influences outcomes, thereby reinforcing the need for balanced evaluation models that consider how results are achieved, not just the results themselves.

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