

Research article

# COMPARATIVE STUDY OF MANAGEMENT PERFORMANCE OF PUBLIC AND PRIVATE PRIMARY SCHOOL HEADTEACHERS IN MAKURDI METROPOLIS OF BENUE STATE, NIGERIA.

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## Abstract

There has been dilemma among parents and the public over the type of primary school either public or private to send their children to. This is because, some of their children who attend public primary schools sometimes perform well or poor and on the other hand others who attend private primary schools also perform well or poor. This scenario has created so much worry among parents and members of the public. Many of the parents attribute the cause of excellence or poor performance of their children to head teachers' management performance. The thrust of this study is to compare the management performance of public and private primary school head teachers in Makurdi Metropolis of Benue State, Nigeria. Three research questions and three research hypotheses guided the study. The related literature review which was done under conceptual frameworks, empirical studies and summary comparatively analyzed the management performance of public and private primary school head teachers. The descriptive survey design was adopted for the study. The population of the study comprised 2,907 teachers from 363 public and private primary schools in Makurdi Metropolis of Benue State. A

sample of 491 teachers from 36 public and private selected primary schools constituted the sample of the study. A 15-item structured questionnaire developed by the researcher titled Comparative Analysis of Management Performance Questionnaire (CAMPQ) was used for data collection. The instrument was pilot tested for internal consistency and reliability. The pilot test data were collected from 30 teachers from public and private primary schools who were not part of the sampled population. The data collected was analyzed using Cronbach Alpha Correlation Co-efficient which yielded 0.83. The questionnaire was used for data collection for the study. Mean and standard deviations were used to answer research questions while t-test was used to test the research hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The findings revealed that, head teachers of public primary schools significantly maintain school facilities, manage their staff and maintain discipline better than those in private primary schools in Makurdi Metropolis of Benue State. It was recommended among others that School managers of all categories of primary schools should imbibe the culture of taking proper care of their school facilities for better teaching and learning and that appropriate school authorities of all categories of primary schools whether public or private should try to provide welfare packages for their teachers so as to encourage and motivate them to put in their best in the performance of their duties.

**Keywords:** Management Performance, Public and Private Primary Schools, Head Teachers, School Facilities, Staff Management, Discipline.

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## Introduction

Public primary schools are those either built and directly owned by government regulations or owned through grant-in-aid to such schools in which case government has share in the administration of such schools. Private schools on the other hand are those which government have no direct share and do not give grant to them. The owners of these schools have 99% control, with government's supervision having just 10% maintain standard (Adzema, 2009).

The increasing emphasis on the leadership at the school cannot be over-emphasized. A good leadership is always vital to the development of high performance learning. Leadership cannot be thought of as a manifest only in the acts of single person. "H-mastership" is defined as a series of necessary functions that need to be carried out rather than as the acts of a single person. However, it is a single person who arranges the organizational conditions within which these functions are carried out to productive ends and it is a single person who encourages and develops leadership among staff in the school. That person is referred to as the headteacher (Ubben and Hughes, 2002).

Ede (2000) stated that when a person with the requisite and management skills fills the roles in a school setting, great things happen. When the right person is not there, the best will not be gotten and the learners' need will go unattended to. In this wise, there are bad schools and good schools. There may also be some bad schools with good head teachers and good staff that are living lives of quiet desperation, but there are no good schools that have bad headteachers. This fact therefore stresses both the leadership and management aspect of the head teachers.

According to Ubben and Hughes (2002), good headteachers have always operated in the manner designed to encourage the followers. They maintain facilities in their schools very well and manage their staff to the best of their abilities so as to ensure better performance. In most educational institutions today, there are four categories of schools, namely public and government, private individual, mission and community schools. These schools have their heads also known as administrators that are saddled with the responsibility of planning, organizing, programming, staffing, budgeting, coordinating, reporting and evaluating of the school programme so as to ensure

that the set objectives are achieved. According to Asemah (2010), an educational administrator is a headmaster or principal who implements education plans, programmes or policies in an educational enterprise like the school.

Every school head or administrator in the aforementioned categories of schools tries in his or her own way to achieve set objectives. They coordinate both human and material resources of the school so as to function well. In spite of their efforts, some are effective in their performance while others are ineffective. This is because most of the school heads lack good managerial skills and knowledge to perform their functions and responsibilities creditably (Ekere, 2000). Ekere further observed that, government plays a supervisory role on all schools irrespective of their public or private status. The head teachers are expected to perform maximally well in the management of these schools irrespective of differences in ownership and control, which by implication requires adequate funding. Little differences also exist between public and private primary schools in terms of funding, admission policy and method of examination.

On the other hand, Akera (2006) in his research found that, in most public or private primary schools today, school heads perform far below expectation as a result of lack of good strategies used in the management of their schools. They also lack the basic skills to manage their staff well enough to get better performance from them. The raising of revenue for the school is a serious problem for them as well as the maintenance of school facilities. Ogbu (2006) noted that there have been recent frequent discussions by parents, other educational stakeholders and members of the public focused, on educational standards between public primary schools and private individual schools in terms of pupils' performance in common entrance and students' general academic achievement which has to do with the management ability of the school heads.

Most head teachers of primary schools either public or private in urban or rural areas are said to lack the basic keen understanding of the principles of management. However, efficient and effective head teachers seem to use the established guidelines and procedures to help solve the day to day problems of the school. This makes most of the head teachers perform well while others who are inefficient and ineffective perform below expectation in school management. According to Idoko (2001), most primary school head teachers allow their school facilities to wear and tear very fast because of lack of proper maintenance. He stated further that, in terms of staff management, head teachers of private schools tend to have low motivation for their staff in terms of provision of welfare packages such as accommodation, transport means, canteen for them and medical facilities to boost their moral towards putting in their best in the performance of their duties.

Management is the process of planning, organizing, leading and controlling the efforts of organizational members and using all other organizational resources to achieve set goals (Yalokwu, 2002). Whereas management performance entails how well or bad managers or administrators of school perform. It is the measurement of success or failure of school managers who are bestowed with certain responsibilities which has an intended accomplishment (Ubben and Hughes, 1997).

Ede (2000) maintained that, primary education is supposed to give a qualitative teaching to pupils so as to prepare them for future academic challenges. This can only be made possible by the quality of the performances of the headteachers and teachers in primary schools. However, there is need to know the level of performances of head

teachers in both public and private primary schools as regards the need for a quality education of our children. It is against this background that the researcher deemed it necessary to compare the management performance of public and private primary school head teachers in Makurdi Metropolis of Benue State with particular focus to maintenance of school facilities, staff management and maintenance of discipline.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN, 2004) states that public schools are schools established and managed by the government while private schools are those established and managed by voluntary agencies, communities and private individuals. There are peculiar differences and similarities between private and public primary schools but they are expected to use the same curriculum, the same calendar and the teaching and learning carried out under the same acceptable standards of facilities and quality of head teachers and teachers.

There are speculations in the study area that some head teachers of either public or private primary schools seems not to have been performing as expected of them in the management of schools. They are sometimes accused of breaking school rules and regulations rather than being the architect of instilling discipline in their schools. On the other hand, the researcher observed that most parents and the entire public in the study area have also been complaining and are worried about the low performance of their children and wards in primary schools. They seem to wonder if the cause of low performance of their children and low education standard are attributed to the head teachers low management performance in either public or private schools today. This is in terms of maintenance of school facilities, poor staff management, low revenue generation for the school, inadequate maintenance of discipline, poor planning and implementation of budget and poor allocation of funds to priority areas of the school.

It is in the light of the scenario that the researcher deemed it necessary to embark on this research. The problem of this study is therefore; a comparative analysis of management performance of public and private primary school head teachers in Makurdi Metropolis of Benue State.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The main purpose of this study was to compare the management performance of public and private primary school head teachers in Makurdi Metropolis of Benue State. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. Find out if head teachers of public primary schools maintain school facilities better than those in private primary schools.
2. Examine if head teachers of public primary schools manage their staff better than those in private primary schools.
3. Ascertain if head teachers of public primary schools maintain discipline better than those in private primary schools.

### **Research Questions.**

The following research questions guided the study.

1. To what extent do head teachers of public primary schools maintain school facilities better than those in private primary schools in Gboko Education Zone of Benue State?

2. In what ways do head teacher of public primary schools manage their staff better than those in private primary schools?
3. To what extent do public primary school head teachers maintain discipline better than those in private primary school?

### **Research Hypotheses**

The following research hypotheses were tested at 0.05 alpha level of significance.

- H<sub>01</sub>** Head teachers of public primary schools do not significantly maintain school facilities better than those in private primary schools in Gboko Education Zone of Benue State.
- H<sub>01</sub>** Head teachers of public primary schools do not significantly manage their staff better than those in private primary schools.
- H<sub>01</sub>** Head teachers of public primary schools do not significantly maintain discipline in school better than those in private schools.

### **Significance of the Study**

The finding of this study would create in minds of school managers of all categories of primary schools on the need to adopt a good maintenance culture to their school facilities. The findings of this study will also facilitate the re-modification of staff management strategies and improve administrative process and procedures for effective school management. The study would also help to provide the basis for school administrators in strengthening and enforcing adequate discipline among staff and students. Lastly, the study would also be relevant to students, teachers, school authorities and educational planners as well as those who may wish to carry out a study on a related topic and make recommendations for policy makers.

### **Methodology**

Survey research design was adopted for the study. The population of this study comprised 4907 teachers from 492 public and private primary schools in Makurdi Metropolis of Benue State. There are 269 public primary schools, 2963 teachers and 233 private primary schools, 1944 teachers in Makurdi Metropolis of Benue State. A sample of 296 or 10% teachers from 27 or 10% public primary schools were selected and 195 or 10% teachers from 23 or 10% private primary schools were selected for the study. Thus, making a total of 491 or 10% teachers selected from 50 public and private primary schools for the study. Simple random sampling technique was used to select the sample size for the study. A 15-item structured questionnaire developed by the researchers titled “Comparative Analysis of Management Performance Questionnaire (CAMPQ)” was used for data collection. The questionnaire was validated by experts in Educational Management, Tests and Measurement from the Faculty of Education, Benue State University, Makurdi. The questionnaire was trial tested using 30 teachers who were not part of the sampled population. The data collected was analyzed using Cronbach Alpha correlation co-efficient which yielded 0.83. The coefficient indicated high internal consistency which proved that the instrument was reliable to be used for field work. The data collected was analyzed using simple descriptive statistics of mean and standard deviation to answer research questions. A mean cut-off point of 2.50 was used for decision making. Any mean score of 2.50 and above was accepted as been significant while any mean score below 2.50 was rejected as not been significant. The research

hypotheses were tested using t-test at 0.05 level of significance.

## Results and Findings

### Research Question One:

#### To what extent do head teachers of public primary schools maintain school facilities better than those in private primary schools in Makurdi Metropolis of Benue State?

The data that provide answer to the research question one presented on table 1.

**Table 1: Perceived Opinions of Head Teachers of Public and Private Primary Schools on Maintenance of School Facilities.**

Item No	Item Description	SA	A	D	SD	$\bar{X}$	STD	Decision
1	Public primary school classrooms facilities are always looking dirty and bad than those in private primary schools.	323	182	51	26	3.26	0.85	Accepted
2	Public primary schools' library facilities are always obsolete and in a state of disrepair than private primary schools.	227	174	72	18	3.24	0.84	Accepted
3	Laboratory facilities/equipments of most private primary schools are always looking better for use than those of public primary schools.	210	192	58	31	3.28	0.88	Accepted
4	Private primary schools have better usable playground facilities than those of public primary schools.	256	158	33	4	3.30	0.89	Accepted
5	Private primary schools transport facilities are always looking better and ready to use at all times than public primary schools.	177	170	93	51	2.96	.098	Accepted
<b>Cluster Mean/Standard Deviation</b>						<b>3.19</b>	<b>0.89</b>	<b>Accepted</b>

Data on Table 1 showed that the means rating for items 1-5 were 3.26, 3.24, 3.18, 3.30 and 3.96 respectively with their corresponding standard deviations of 0.85, 0.84, 0.88, 0.89 and 0.98. All the mean ratings are above the cut-off point of 2.50. This means that the respondents had accepted that public primary school classrooms facilities are always looking dirty and bad than those in Private primary schools. That public primary school library facilities are always obsolete and in a state of disrepair than those in private primary schools. They also accepted that laboratory are always looking better for use than those of public primary schools. More so, private primary schools have better usable playground facilities than those of public primary schools and that private primary schools transport facilities are always looking better and ready to use at all times than public primary schools. The cluster mean of 3.19 with the standard deviation of 0.89 was also found to be above the cut-off point of 2.50. This implies that head teachers of public primary schools do not maintain schools facilities better than those in private primary schools in Makurdi Metropolis of Benue State.

### Research Question Two:

#### In what ways do head teachers of public primary schools manage their staff better than those in private primary schools?

The data that provide answer to the research question are presented on table 2.

**Table 2: Perceived Opinions of Head Teachers of Public and Private Primary Schools on Staff Management.**

Item No	Item Description	SA	A	D	SD	$\bar{X}$	STD	Decision
6	Public primary schools are better staffed (in quality and quantity) than private primary schools	249	132	66	44	3.19	0.98	Accepted
7	Staff welfare issues are adequately addressed in public primary schools than in private primary schools.	222	201	47	21	3.27	0.80	Accepted
8	Staff of public primary schools are better motivated than staff of private primary schools.	265	101	83	42	3.20	1.00	Accepted
9	Public primary schools recruit more qualified and experienced teachers than those in private primary schools.	213	220	39	19	3.28	0.77	Accepted
10	Public primary school head teachers treat their staff fairly and justly than private primary school head teachers.	248	175	45	23	3.32	0.83	Accepted
<b>Cluster Mean/Standard Deviation</b>						<b>3.25</b>	<b>0.88</b>	<b>Accepted</b>

From the analysis of data as shown on Table 2, the mean ratings for items 6-10 were 3.19, 3.27, 3.20, 3.28 and 3.32 respectively with their corresponding standard deviation of 0.98, 0.80, 1.00, 0.77 and 0.83. All the mean ratings are above the cut-off point of 2.50. This means that the respondents had accepted that private primary schools are better staffed (in quality and quantity) than public schools. The staff welfare issues are adequately addressed in public primary schools than in private primary schools. Also that staff public primary schools are better motivated than staff of private primary schools. More so, public primary schools recruit more qualified and experienced teachers than those in private primary schools and that public primary school head teachers treat their staff fairly and justly than private primary school head teachers. The cluster mean of 3.25 with the standard deviations of 0.88 was also found to be above the cut-off point of 2.50. This implies that head teachers of public primary schools manage their staff better than those in private primary schools.

### Research Question Three:

#### To what extent do public primary school head teachers maintain discipline better than those in private primary school?

The data that provide answer to the research question four are presented on table 3.

**Table 3: Perceived Opinions of Head Teachers of Public and Private Primary Schools on Maintenance of School Discipline**

Item No	Item Description	SA	A	D	SD	$\bar{X}$	STD	Decision
11	Private primary school pupil can insult a teacher and go free than in public primary school.	226	155	76	34	3.17	0.93	Accepted
12	A private primary school teacher can easily be sacked on account of punishing a pupil but not rare in the case of public primary schools.	167	214	83	27	3.06	0.85	Accepted
13	Private primary school pupils play more truancy than the public primary school pupils.	155	233	64	39	3.03	0.87	Accepted
14	The issue of indecent dressing and promiscuity is more pronounced in public primary schools than in private schools.	136	211	98	46	2.89	0.92	Accepted
15	Private primary school pupils and teachers are more seen coming late to school than those of public primary schools.	239	161	69	22	3.26	0.86	Accepted
<b>Cluster Mean/Standard Deviation</b>						<b>3.09</b>	<b>0.89</b>	<b>Accepted</b>

From the analysis of data shown on Table 3, the mean ratings for item 16-20 were 3.17, 3.06, 3.03, 2.89, and 3.26 respectively with corresponding standard deviations of 0.93, 0.85, 0.87, 0.92 and 0.86. All the mean ratings are above the cut-off point of 2.50. This means that the respondents agreed that private primary school pupils insult a teacher and goes free than in public primary school. That a private primary school teacher can easily be sacked on account of punishing a pupil but not rare in the case of public primary schools. Also that private primary school pupils play more truancy than the public primary school pupils. More so, the issue of indecent dressing and promiscuity is more pronounced in private primary schools than in public schools and that private primary school pupils and teachers as more seen coming late to school than those of public primary schools. The cluster mean of 3.09 with the standard deviations of 0.89 was also found to be above the cut-off point of 2.50. This implies that public primary school head teachers maintain discipline better than those in private primary school.

### Testing Research Hypotheses

In testing the four hypotheses of this study, the t-test statistical tool was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 probability level of significance and the results are presented on table 4 to 6.

#### Hypotheses one:

Head teachers of public primary schools do not significantly maintain school facilities better than those in private primary schools in Makurdi Metropolis of Benue State.



**Table 4: T-test Analysis of the Head teachers of Public and Private Primary Schools on Maintenance of School Facilities.**

Head Teachers' Performance	N	St. error	Df (n-2)	Level of sig	t-cal	t-crit	Decision
Maintenance of school facilities public schools.	307						
		0.0012	489	0.05	40.32	1.96	Ho
Maintenance of school facilities- private schools	184						Rejected
P < 0.05							

The result on the Table 4 shows that t-cal is 40.32 while the t-table is 1.96 at 0.05 level of significance as analyzed using SPSS. The result implies that head teachers of public primary schools significantly maintain school facilities better than those in private primary schools in Makurdi Metropolis of Benue State. The null hypothesis Ho is therefore rejected.

**Hypotheses Two:**

Head teachers of public primary schools do significantly manage their staff better than those in private primary schools.

**Table 5: T-test Analysis of the Head teachers of Public Primary and Private Primary Schools on Staff Management**

Head Teachers' Performance	N	St. error	Df (n-2)	Level of sig	t-cal	t-crit	Decision
Staff management-public schools.	298						
		0.008	489	0.05	67.13	1.96	Ho
Staff management-Private schools	193						Rejected
P < 0.05							

The result of Table 5 shows that the t-cal is 67.13 while the t-critical or table value is 1.96. Since the calculated t-value exceeds the critical table value, we reject the null hypotheses. Based on the decision rule, this implies that head teachers of public primary schools significantly manage their staff better than those in private primary schools.

**Hypothesis Three:**

Head teachers of public primary schools do not significantly maintain discipline in schools better than those in

private primary schools.

**Table 6: T-test Analysis of Head teachers of Public and Private Primary Schools on Maintenance of Discipline**

Head Teachers' Performance	N	St. error	Df (n-2)	Level of sig	t-cal	t-crit	Decision
Maintenance of discipline- Public schools	315	0.14	489	0.05	89.21	1.96	Ho
Maintenance of discipline- Private schools	176						Rejected

$P < 0.05$

From the result analysis of data as presented on table 6, the t-cal is 89.21 while the t-critical table value is 1.96. Since the t-cal exceeds the t-critical table value, we therefore reject the null hypothesis. Based on the decision rule, it implies that head teachers of public primary schools significantly maintain discipline in schools better than those in primary schools.

### Decision of Findings

The first finding of this study revealed that head teachers of public primary schools significantly maintain school facilities better than those in private primary schools in Makurdi Metropolis of Benue State. This finding agrees with the views of Morphet (2004) who maintained that, most private primary schools in Nigeria have almost all the needed school learning facilities but the maintenance culture of these facilities by the school head teachers seems to be very poor as compared to public primary schools. Morphet further noted that, school facilities constitute a substantial cost of the school establishment as such, if not properly managed and maintained, they go waster and tear out faster than their normal life span and if not properly utilized, the school and the particular school unit will not derive the optimum benefits from their establishment.

The second finding of this study revealed head teachers of public primary schools significantly manage their staff better than those in private primary school. This finding is in agreement with the opinion of Ododo (2003) who stated that, the manner at which most private school heads at the primary school level fail in their management performance is attributed to their recruitment exercise. By this he meant that, private school head teachers, like recruiting less experienced and qualified personnel that can be cheaply paid than those in public primary schools. This does not balance well structured management team that will work together to achieve the school objectives. Similarly, Owoicho (2005) asserted that some private primary school head teachers perform very poor because they fail to carry their staff along mostly when it comes to decision making in the school. They feel they are superior; as such no subordinate staff has any input in what he decides to do.

The third finding of this study revealed that head teachers of public primary schools significantly maintain discipline in school better than those in private primary schools. This finding is in consonance with the opinion of

Eze (2000) who stated that public primary school pupils respect rules and regulations of the school better than those in private primary schools because, fighting a teacher by a pupil or his parent is more risky in government schools because, the teachers enjoy a strong security coverage of the government such that a teacher cannot be arrested or molested without the consent of the school authority. Similarly in line with the finding, the researcher observed from field work that public primary school head teachers exhibit more disciplinary measures to stop indiscipline in their schools than in private primary schools where teachers can easily be sacked or transferred because of one student who misbehaved and was punished by the teacher.

## Conclusion

Based on the results of this study, it was concluded that head teachers of public primary schools significantly maintain school facilities, manage their staff and maintain discipline better than those in private primary schools in Makurdi Metropolis of Benue State.

## Recommendations

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

1. School managers of all categories of primary schools should imbibe the culture of taking proper care of their school facilities for better teaching and learning.
2. Appropriate school authorities of all categories of primary schools whether public or private should enable to provide welfare packages for their teachers so as to encourage and motivate them to put in their best in the performance of their duties.
3. Maintenance of discipline should be made an all-round affairs by all categories of schools and assisted by parents, government, community and the general public.

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