



A Conceptual Framework of Demographic and Personality Variables in Principals' Performance in the Management of Secondary Schools

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Abstract

This paper examined the conceptual relationship of demographic and personality factors and principals' performance in the management of secondary schools. It is presumed that the effective performance of principals in the critical task areas like instructional management, communication, decision making, provision of incentives, financial management, human resources development, provision of incentives, public relations, adherence to legal status, conflict management, and school plant management is dependent on certain demographic and personality factors. The demographic factors are age, gender, working experience, professional qualification, and marital status, while the personality variables are motivation and leadership styles. The motivators are nature of work, recognition, responsibility, achievement and advancement. The leadership styles run in a continuum of open-close leadership style. The relationship between these demographic and personality factors and principals' performance are articulated in a schema to give a diagrammatic picture of their inter-relationship. Conclusions were drawn accordingly.

Keywords: Demographic, Personality, Principals, Performance, Management, Schools.

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INTRODUCTION

In the world ideas about certain situations are conceived through critical thinking. These ideas become concepts or principles about entities. Concepts according to Prinz (2002) are general ideas or notions that relate to entities. Concepts are used to explain abstract phenomena of actual or potential instances. In management, the concept of performance has evolved over time and used to describe how well a designated job is done. In school management, principals engage in various administrative duties daily. Principals' performance relates to how frequently they carry out their administrative duties in the critical task areas of management of schools. The effective performance of principals according to Peretomode (2001) and Oredein (2004) is predicted by some demographic and personality factors:

Demographic variables

Demographic variables are non-cognitive, non-personality factors such as age, gender, educational qualification, working experience and marital status that may impact on the performance of the principals in the management of secondary schools.

Age is the number of years a person has lived. Age may not be a determinant of a man's sense of good judgment. Feldman (1996) asserted that the general proposition is that younger principals in their fifties exhibit better management capabilities than the older principals since individuals tend to gradually disengage from active work with age. It may as well be that older principals will be more effective than younger ones, due to vitality and innovativeness associated with being young.

Gender is described as the behavioural characteristics distinguishing between males and females in any society. Gender according to Onyeonoru (2005), refers to the differentiation in roles between men and women construed by society through socialization. Sex is the biological differentiation between the roles of men and women. Thus, while sex is biological and fixed, gender is varied in space and time and is culturally determined. Scholars have given contrasting views about gender differences in performance effectiveness among school administrators. Daresh and Male (2000), reported that female principals are more effective and efficient in school administration because they extend their motherhood roles to the school environment. Uko (2002) noted male superiority over females as male principals usually apply their domineering capabilities to achieve the school goals. The assumption according to Ezeh (1997), is that males are superior to females in most things that count. Females are assumed to be dependent on males for taking initiatives and for leadership. Since principalship involves exercising the role of a leader or administrator in secondary schools, one is not sure whether the socio-cultural influences that expose males to different problems solving situations and place females in subordinate position would affect the performance of the different genders in school administration.

These suggest that there could be fundamental differences in the leadership, beliefs and practices of male and female leaders. Ezeh further stated that it has been frequently claimed that female leaders are more collaborative and relational. This means that female principals relate more friendly with teachers and students as well as the community where the school situates. There are indications that these assumptions may not be true always. Recent gender discourse, according to Fadekemi and Isaac (2011), reveals growing skepticism with the validity of gender typecast of men as instrumental, bureaucratic and competitive and women as nurturing, relational

and collaborative. To this extent, the performance of principals in the task areas of management of secondary schools could depend on gender.

Professional qualification is the requisite knowledge and skills a person has acquired from training to enable him work proficiently in his occupation. Akpan (2007) described professional qualification as the knowledge and skills acquired after a period of training and instruction by seasoned experts. Professional training could expose one to knowledge, skills, and values needed for effective job performance. However, there are contrasting views on the influence of principals' professional qualification on their performance in the management of secondary schools. Professional qualification could be an obstacle to innovation. It could also bring about ingenuity in the performance of duties. This means that the performance of principals in the task areas of management of secondary schools could depend on professional qualification.

Experience is viewed by Sturman (2000) as the culmination of context based events that a person perceives. It is the professional growth as a result of a period of continued work, training and retraining on the job and other related processes. Sturman further noted that experience has some level of influence on principals' job performance. It has been suggested by Nwangwu (2006) that experience assists in developing the required social and intellectual skills, in learning how to work closely with other people, and in finding out about individual interests and differences. However, Achunine (1998) opined that the length of time one stays on a job does not necessarily make one efficient; and argued that professional training is a more important factor than on-the-job experience in an administrator's job performance. These propositions indicate that experience may be related to performance. The performance of principals in the task areas of management of secondary schools could be influenced by their working experience.

Marital status is the state of being married or not married by a man or a woman (Anyanwu, 2009). It has been suggested by Erukoha (1999) that marital status influences teachers and administrators motivation, commitment to duty and task performance; and that married school administrators and teachers were more satisfied than the single ones. This implies a significant positive relationship between marital status and task performance. However, Okpalogu (2008) found an insignificant relationship between marital status and students' achievement in schools administered by married and single principals. It is therefore necessary to explore further how the performance of principals in the task areas of management of secondary schools could be influenced by marital status.

Personality factors

Personality factors refer to the attributes of a person which provide mental and emotional dimensions to the person's activities. Osuku (2003) described personality factors as those individual factors which can spur a leader towards achieving prescribed goals. Osuku noted that the effect of these factors in enhancing performance vary depending on individuals. The factors include self-concept, honesty, realism, drive, and tenacity or motivation, psychological openness, leadership styles, ambition, emotional stability and conscientiousness. Charan (2007) stated that leadership styles and motivation are personality factors that distinguish people who can perform from those who cannot.

Leadership styles are the behavioural approaches adopted by the principal to influence staff, students and other stakeholders towards the achievement of school goals. Several leadership styles have been advocated, such as democratic, autocratic, laissez-faire, eclectic,

transactional, and transformational. Most scholars in the areas of leadership studies, according to Pieters (2008), now agree that neither a set of personality trait approach nor the search for the 'best' leadership style or behaviour is adequate to deal with the complexities of the underlying process in the management of organizations.

Consequently, contingency leadership approach has been advocated. This approach suggests that leadership effectiveness depends upon the fit between personality, task, power, attitudes and perception. It is obvious that most effective school administrators are neither authoritative nor democratic but flexible to select a style that is not only comfortable to them but also appropriate for the situation they are handling. Within the contingency leadership approach, a principal may be more open or close in their leadership style. An open leadership style is one which has the tendencies of democratic and transformational principles, such as collaborative decision making, delegation of authority, concern for people, and creating communication networks. A close leadership style has the tendencies of autocratic and transactional principles such as imposition of task, denial of group members' respect and concern, and use of reward and punishment. A principal may be more open or close depending on the situation, and this reflects the personality of the principal. The open-close leadership style is a continuum, in which a principal may exhibit more frequently an open or close leadership style. The frequency with which principals exhibit open or close leadership styles may affect their performance.

Motivation is the process of stimulating and directing human behaviour towards achieving desirable goals. Motivation is a very important concept in school organisation and management. It is very essential in achieving effective teaching and learning. Chukwuemeka (2008) argued that while knowledge and skills possessed by the employee are important in determining his job performance, these factors alone are not sufficient. An understanding of what motivates the individual is needed to reveal how abilities and skills are activated and their personal potentials realized. The managerial function and responsibility for eliciting this desired organizational behaviour is referred to as 'Motivation' (Ekere, 2010). Motivation in this context is the process of stimulating principals to action in order to achieve desirable educational objectives. Motivation is what people need to perform better. However, the same things motivate individuals differently. Where one gets motivated, obtains satisfaction, and consequently performs better by getting additional responsibility assigned, another may feel much better valued and encouraged to higher productivity if he or she is merely being listened to, or given some flexibility in his or her work schedule. This implies that individual differences mediate motivation and performance effectiveness.

The principal as an administrative head, manager, public relations officer, a supervisor, an instructional leader, a curriculum innovator and a catalyst towards the achievement of educational goals in secondary schools (Adenuga, 2008), is expected to be motivated to demonstrate effectiveness in the performance of the duties. Leithwood and Jantzi cited in Udachukwu (2003) noted that school principals who have succeeded in their role performance are properly motivated by way of a range of mechanisms like promotion, recognition, and advancement. The performance of a principal could be effective when the job description of the principal is challenging, and interesting which requires their initiatives and contributions to decision making concerning their schools. Besides, being commended for doing well, with freedom of exercising job roles without restrictions are motivating. In an environment where cordial relationship exists with opportunity for promotion and professional growth and self-actualization could lead to strong motivation, satisfaction, and subsequently performance effectiveness. Motivation is also important in the performance of duties. Since motivation is

measured through perception, the extent a principal is motivated is dependent on how he sees the incentives. Therefore Principals at the same level of motivation may not perform equally well.

Demographic and personality factors become important for consideration in the selection of principals with the belief that some individual would become more effective than others in the management of schools. For instance experience of the principals could enable them monitor and supervise the various aspects of school activities like teaching and learning. Experience could also be a burden to the principals. It might be an obstacle to innovation.

Similarly, marital status could enable a principal adjust properly to handle complex issues since marriage comes with emotional stability, love and tolerance. These attributes of marriage could be extended to the relationships with teachers and students to promote cooperation in the general administration of schools. Being married could also be a hindrance to the effectiveness of the principal as marriage subjects couples to more responsibilities which gives them little time to attend to official matters regularly and punctually.

Nwankwo, Loyce and Obiorah (2011) noted that principals' leadership has an objective dimension in their performance. It enhances the accomplishment of school goals by applying democratic principles. These principles include overcoming resource constraint, building teams, providing feedback, coordination, conflict management, creating communication networks, practicing collaborative politics, and modeling the school's vision. The school administrator who adopts such principles tries to be very objective in his praise and criticism and at the same time becomes a regular group member without doing much of the work. Each group in the school system ensures that their contributions are earnestly made for the success of the task since each member has been involved in the task right from the planning stage hence none of them could allow it to fail. Any form of leadership which is not people-oriented could impact negatively on supervision of instruction, communication, decision making, public relations and other task areas of management of schools. The negative impact may possibly result to poor performance of students, indiscipline among teachers and students, and mismanagement of school resources.

Principals' Performance

Performance is the frequency or how well a job task is carried out by a person. Principals' performance is the measure of how well or the frequency at which principals carry out their duties in the management of secondary schools. Rosenthal and Pittsky (2002) stated that task performance is an individual level variable which indicate whether a person did well or not in his expected roles. It is therefore the measure of how well a job task is performed by the principal in their roles towards ensuring that effective teaching and learning take place for the achievement of secondary school goals.

Principals' effective performance on these critical aspects of administration determines the achievement of educational objectives. Ibukun (2011) viewed principals' performance as the rate or frequency at which they carry out their daily functions towards the attainment of educational goals. Principals' performance in this study refers to how well or the frequency with which the principals execute tasks in the critical areas of school administration for the achievement of goals. The more frequently principals carry out their functions in the critical task areas, the higher their performance and the better for the achievement of school goals.

With schools facing increased pressure to improve teaching and learning, Stoner (2002) posited that the duties and responsibilities of principals expanded further to include task areas where their performance is measured like instructional supervision, communication, decision-

making, provision of incentives for teachers and students, professional development, financial management, public relation, adherence to statutory regulations in school administration, conflict management/resolution, and plant management. Thus, success in school reforms to increase student achievement is often hinged upon a principal's ability to effectively perform his duties within the context of these task areas in the management of schools. These task areas are discussed one after the other.

Instructional Supervision

Instructional supervision has to do with what the principal does to promote or direct teaching and learning in the school. This according to Mgbodile (2004) involves the task of ensuring that organized teaching and learning is effective in the school system. This is done by the principal to see that meaningful learning takes place in all classes and that teachers are teaching what they are supposed to teach; and are undertaking the teaching in a manner that the students understand and enjoy their lessons. The essence of instructional supervision is to assist teachers with ideas and suggestions that will improve their instructional delivery, as well as identify their needs and problems and proffer solutions to them. It is the duty of the Principal to see that teachers are assigned to classes according to their qualifications, notes of lesson are inspected to see if they are properly written in a manner that the students understand and enjoy their lessons, conduct unscheduled informal visits to classrooms, examine students' note books during visits, and point out specific strengths and weaknesses in teacher's instructional practice. Haruna (2008) noted that instructional supervision is the first and the most important responsibility of a school principal. No wonder Carter (2008) explained that the cardinal index of the performance evaluation of the school administrator rests on the leadership ability in instructional supervision. Similarly, Chika and Ebeke (2007) observed that among many factors that influence learning and achievement in secondary schools, principals' instructional management seem to be the most critical intervening factor. Therefore it is important to identify the demographic and personality variables of Principals that predispose them to high performance in instructional supervision.

Communication

Communication is a basic administrative responsibility of the principal in ensuring that educational goals are achieved. Communication, according to Craig (2009), is the process of sharing information and exchange of significant messages, ideas, attitudes, and feelings in ways that produce a degree of understanding between two or more people. Communication is the ability to convey in the simplest form information or ideas which the recipient can easily understand; and the ability of the recipient to reciprocate in such a way that he can easily be understood (Otamiri, Isaiah & Wori, 2002). If the principal's communication style is unfavorable to teachers working with him, there is the tendency that the teachers would not co-operate with the principal and performance would be affected. It is the duty of school principals to ensure that they discuss the schools' goals and mission with teachers at meetings, inform staff and students about School rules and guidelines, and other school programmes to enable them adjust properly, encourage teachers to discuss their problems with them, mention the schools' goals or mission in fora with students (e.g., in assemblies), and send out information about students to parents and guardians. Communication is the life-wire of any organisation. How the demographic and personality variables relate to it is important.

Decision Making

Decision making is also a critical aspect of an administrator's responsibility in the management of secondary schools. This is the process of choosing from among alternatives ways of providing a solution to a problem towards achieving objectives (Mgbodile, 2004). Decision making involves making choices. In the school system, the principal makes informed decisions that guide whatever the school does. Oboegbulem and Onwurah (2011) noted that decision making is vital in such managerial functions as planning, organizing, influencing and controlling. Participatory decision making in a collaborative form with stakeholders usually improves the quality of decisions. This is so because diverse organizational experience is drawn and this increases the understanding of the group as well as their commitment to the decisions. This ownership perception when decisions are taken collectively by stakeholders motivates them to successfully implement the decisions. In the management of secondary schools, it is the responsibility of principals to involve teachers and students in decision making, ensure that PTA meetings are held to discuss salient issues of school improvement, take decision based on available resources, and consider school programmes in taking decisions. Performance in Decision-Making may be related to some demographic and personality characteristics of the principals.

Provision of Incentives

Provision of teaching and learning incentives to teachers and students is another task area of principals' responsibility in school administration. These incentives are those things that encourage teachers and students action or efforts in the teaching and learning process which fall within the purview of the principal (Amirize, 2009). Understanding that teachers and students are the most important assets in the school is very necessary for school management. Due to the importance of teachers and students in the school system, Mgbodile (2004) reiterated that they must be handled very adroitly. The principal must understand how to deal with them to get the best out of them by rewarding those who perform well, show love and care to staff and students, recognize teachers' personal value, and ensure that the learning environment is safe from hazards. Principals' ability to provide these incentives may be dependent on their demographic and personality characteristics.

Human Resources Development

Human resources development is another crucial area of principals' responsibility in the management of secondary schools. Human resources development is the training and retraining given to workers in an organisation to increase their knowledge and skill for better job performance. This could also be known as professional development (Gareth & Jennifer, 2006). According to Lawson (2007), human resource development refers to the series of articulated training programmes designed for enhancing values re-orientation and attitudinal change of the human resources in an organization. These specialized training when given to the teachers will make them more professionally effective than those who are not exposed to such training. This is so because these training programmes empower and motivate teachers for better performance. Okendu (2009) asserted that human resources development in the educational system are planned activities concerned with increasing and enlarging the capabilities of teachers to successfully

improve instruction. It is geared towards improving on workers' performance with the ultimate aim of achieving set organizational goals. Human resources are the most important factor of production.

The human resources in any organization according to Hunter (2006), is the fulcrum upon which all other resources revolve. Igwe (1990) pointed out that in the educational system, the teachers are the most important elements. This according to him is because with the best of all facilities, books, infrastructure and other materials and equipment, the aims and objectives of education may still not be achieved if the teachers as the organizers of all these are incompetent. Corroborating this fact, Nnaike and Obi (2015) noted that teacher quality is a major contributor to improving the quality of education in the nation. Therefore, professional development of teachers is important to realize the ever cherished dream of a greater tomorrow. This implies that no organization can succeed without the availability of human resources in the right quantity and quality. Lawson (2007) reiterated that the human resources even when available in the right mix could not attain organizational goals because they are either not properly utilized for effective performance or may not have been properly harnessed for result-oriented purposes.

In the opinion of Achunine (1998), the length of time one stays on the job does not necessarily make one perform efficiently, rather professional training is a more important factor than on-the job experience in job performance. The principals are to ensure that they show interest in teachers' in-service training and encourage them to participate in seminars or workshops to enhance their performance. The principals should also set aside time at staff meetings for teachers to share ideas or information from in-service training. The variables that would predispose Principals to perform this task effectively need to be identified.

Public Relations

Public relations function is another area of responsibility of the school administrator. It is the practice of managing the spread of information between an individual or an organization and the public to ensure mutual co-existence. Public relations, according to Sherlekar (2005), underscore the need to establish good rapport and cordial relations between the school and the various stakeholders especially parents, government and philanthropists. This demands that the administrator seeks appropriate ways of relating with the public on issues of mutual interest. The school as an institution is a social organization which is designed to serve the needs of various stake holders of whom the students are the main clients, while parents, government and the society at large are the secondary clients (Peretomode, 1996). The school system cannot ignore the existence of these groups hence school administrators are concerned with techniques of relating with each of them effectively. No school can ever operate in a social vacuum outside the society it serves. This is so because it derives its existence and life blood from the various individuals and groups which it is established to serve and from which it is supplied with human and material resources. This means that the school interacts with the elements within and outside the system with a mutual relationship existing between the school system and other systems in the school environment. Idemili (1990) observed that the survival of the school is a function of the strength of its social, economic, legal and political environment. Based on these realities, it is assumed that each school should establish public relations that are good enough and favourable to the school.

According to Walson (2015), the performance of public relations functions depends on the principal operating an open door policy where they can easily be accessed; regularly send

out newsletters that address school and student progress over the course of the time, indicating dates of special events and volunteer opportunities; help to establish PTA and working cooperatively with them by holding regular meetings where parents, teachers and community discuss salient issues as well as correct the views people hold against the school; making appeals to philanthropists in the locality to track down needed supplies in the school; and inviting the community to important school functions such as price giving day, annual sports competition and end-of-year events. By this, the school will endear itself to the public and attract support and assistance in various ways (Bander, 2008).

The public image of the school depends largely on the opinions which the public either wrongly or rightly hold about the school. The concept of public relations could be seen from the leadership point of view where the administrator has concern for the organizational goals and working in accord with the various interest groups (Odigbo, 1999). Therefore, the effective school administrator tries to balance his concern for organizational goals with those of the stakeholders in the school system through good public relations practices. In essence, public relations as an administrative tool is people-oriented, work-oriented, effectiveness-oriented and very useful at all levels of the hierarchy in the organizational set up. A study carried in South-South Nigeria on the relationship between demographic and personality factors and principals performance in the management of secondary schools revealed that leadership styles and experience as vice principal had relationship with principals' performance in public relations. Demographic and personality factors may jointly predict and account for reasonable variance in the principals' performance in public relations.

Fund Management

Managing school funds is one of the major tasks of the principals. Financial management entails sourcing and effective use of funds. According to Ogbonnaya (2009), the central purpose of financial management is the raising of funds and ensuring that the funds are utilized in the most effective and efficient manner. Mogbodile (2004) noted that the principal is expected to keep accurate records of all incoming monies to the school as well as a proper account of the disbursement and expenditure of such monies. This is prudent financial management that ensures that funds are judiciously spent for the purpose they are meant. The success or failure of any school programme depends very much on the way the financial resources are managed. Ogbonnaya (2010) pointed out that although public schools derive most of their financial resources from the government, the principals of such schools should be aware of other avenues for the school to generate fund for its use. However, the crux of the matter is not just the inflow of funds but also on how best the funds are utilized. It is therefore important that all school heads have sufficient knowledge of financial management as chief accountants of their schools. Mogbodile (2004) noted that the failure of many schools is due partly poor financial management. Without good fund management measures, the programmes of educational institutions will not be properly implemented. The school administrator, in addition to other duties, is expected to ensure that they prepare realistic budgets, explore sources of revenue generation to provide some essential needs of the school, keep proper accounts of disbursement of school funds, prioritize financial allocation according to needs, and work within the confines of school budget. Certain demographic and personality variables may account for principals' performance in financial management.

Adherence to legal status

Adherence to legal status is also an important area of responsibility for the school administrators. It is the observance of the laws guiding school administration. In contemporary times people are becoming more aware of their rights within the school system. The school administrators in the discharge of their duties are expected to work within confines of the laws regulating administration of secondary schools (Obi, 2010). Otherwise there will be issues which could lead to series of litigations in the school system. These rights ought to be respected. According to Ellah (2004), knowledge of the legal provisions of principals rights and privileges, roles and codes of conduct as they relate especially to the rights and obligations of teachers and students should be of great concern not only to the school administrator but to all members of the society who are directly or indirectly involved in the educational system. This is important in order to define the limits of individual behaviours, inject respectability and mutuality of interest and induce co-operation for the smooth running of the school. Any mistake made to the limits of their respective rights are very costly and may lead to series of litigations in the school system which may not augur well to the effective administration of schools (Kalagbor, 2004). This position has also been buttressed by Ozurmba (2007).

Therefore knowledge of the rights and responsibilities of others and the legal implications of actions and inactions through rules and regulations governing the administration of schools will probably enhance principals' effectiveness in their respective roles in the school system. As stipulated in the Nigerian Teachers' Service Manual cited in Igwe (2003), it is expected that principals shall continually seek to uphold the constitutional provisions and the various state education laws in order to protect their own rights and the rights of students.

The principals are to make school rules and regulations available to teachers and students to regulate their conduct, and ensure strict control over teachers and prefects whose powers and limitations are clearly defined. The relationship between demographic and personality factors and principals' performance in adherence to legal status ought to be established.

Conflict Management and Resolution

Conflict management and resolution is an important task area of principals. Conflict ordinarily is an inescapable reality for workers in any organization. It may be a disagreement about how to complete a task, allocate resources, personality clash between associates, misunderstanding among students, or differences in individual value system (Oboegbulem & Onwurah, 2011). Leah (2008) posited that at every level conflict manifests in the school system, be it intra-personal, inter- personal, inter- organization and community related, if not properly diagnosed or left unchecked can be a highly destructive force. Effective conflict resolution and management strategies in the school system bring about an enviable and productive environment for the achievement of school goals. Conflict management involves the reduction, elimination or termination of all forms and types of conflicts. This could take the form of mediation and arbitration. Mediation refers to a broad variety of practices that includes techniques designed to promote relaxation, build internal energy or life force and develop compassion, love, patience, generosity and forgiveness among people. Conflict resolution involves implementing strategies to control the negative aspects of conflict and to increase the positive aspects. These strategies include compromise, collaboration, competition, accommodating, and avoiding (Smulyan, 2000).

Hence school administrators should apply conflict management and resolution strategies to control and prevent conflict from becoming destructive (Oboegbulam & Onwurah, 2011). The principals should ensure that they do not take sides with any party in a dispute in the school, create cordial relationship with and among teachers, ensure proper school organization to define staff roles to avoid a clash, treat everybody equally, and foster strict disciplinary measures to defaulting staff and students to serve as a deterrent to others. Some demographic and personality factors may determine how principals handle conflicts in their schools.

PLANT MANAGEMENT

Plant management is another crucial area of principals' responsibility. School plant refers to the school site, buildings, playground, compound, the equipment and other materials provided for effective teaching and learning (Onwurah, 2004). Continuing Onwurah described school plant as the space interpretation of the curriculum, noting that the programmes of the school are expressed through the site, the building, play grounds, the arrangement and design of the school buildings. The school plant is an integral part of the learning environment. The importance attached to school plant as a vehicle for effective teaching and learning cannot be over emphasized. School plant management is the process that ensures that school facilities and other technical systems support the operations of an educational institution. Therefore, school plant management is the planning, organizing, decision-making, co-ordination and controlling of the physical school environment and facilities for the actualization of educational goals and objectives.

The school plant if not properly managed, maintained, and utilized could dilapidate and wear out to the extent that the school would not derive optimum benefits from it (Adedokun, 2011). Consequently the educational goals for which such educational facilities are acquired would not be achieved. Lack of school plant maintenance makes the environment untidy and unsafe for staff and students. It is also important to note that maintenance of buildings and equipment, provide safety, and reduce accidents, stress and time for the individuals in the school community. Principals who lead schools that have dilapidated structures stand the risk of answering question of poor performance in examination and regular accidents as well as damages within the schools (Amadike, 2002). Similarly, most causes of anti-social behaviour by students could be traced to the state of the school environment. This is so because a cozy environment can kindle pleasant behaviours in students as well as staff. Bryce (2006) noted that school compound where property are defaced, esthetics destroyed, classrooms not swept and machines rendered unproductive, leaves students unsecured, frustrated, discomforted and may encourage indiscipline and wanton destruction of property and total disorder in the school. This same can be said of laboratories and libraries that are ill-maintained and which may affect the students' academic performance through poor teaching and learning.

The school administrator, in addition to other duties, is expected to utilize, safeguard and maintain school plant through regular replacing of roofs, doors, windows, repairs of broken chairs and tables as well painting of offices and classrooms. Others include ensuring that gardeners and labourers keep tidy the plants and flowers through regular pruning for esthetics. Fire Prevention and Safety to put off fire outbreaks, with the use of fire-fighting materials which are kept in strategic corners of buildings are also necessary. Buckets can also be filled with sand which could be used to put off any minor fire outbreak. These provisions are necessary because students who attend well organized and equipped schools are most likely to prove some level of superiority over those that attend classes under dilapidated buildings and untidy environments.

Some demographic and personality variables may predispose principals to manage more effectively school plant.

The relationship between these variables (demographic, personality and performance) is articulated in a schematic diagram in figure 1.

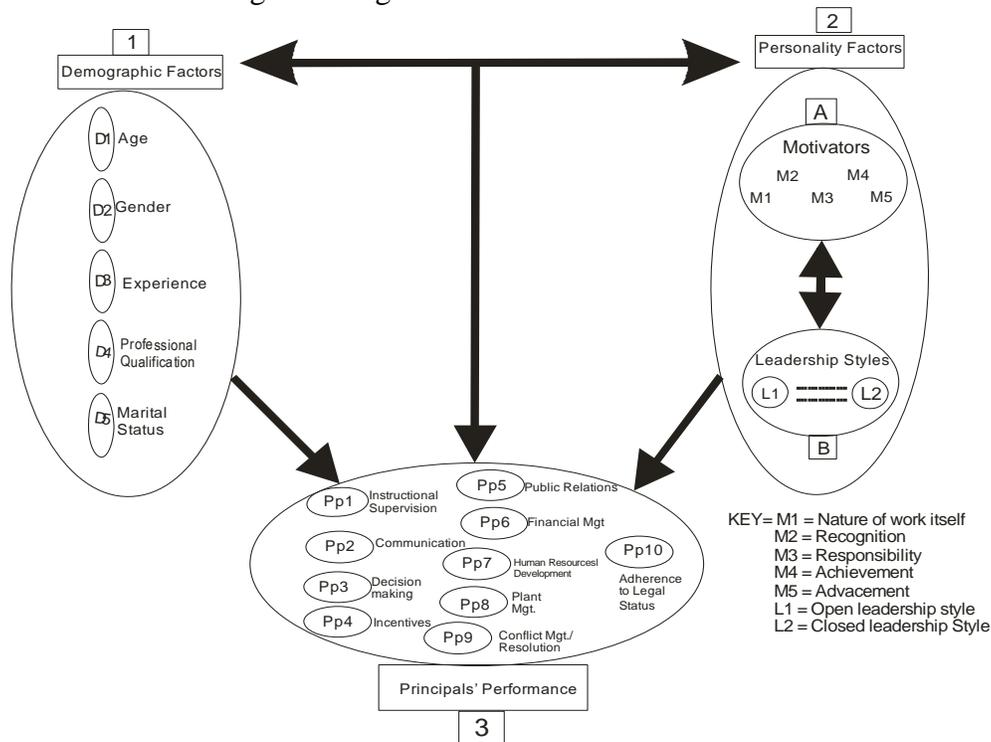


Figure 1: Schematic representation of Conceptual framework

Fig 1 shows the relationship between demographic and personality factors and principals performance in the task areas of management of secondary schools. The principal as the executive officer of secondary school carries out several functions in the management of secondary schools. These functional tasks areas are represented in the oval marked 3 and range from pp1...pp10 which are instructional supervision, decision making, communication, provision of incentives to teachers and learners, human resource development, public relations, financial management, plant management, conflict management and resolution, and adherence to legal status. The effective performance of these tasks in the management of secondary schools may depend on certain factors. These factors include demographic and personality factors represented in the oval marked 1 and 2 respectively. The demographic factors in oval 1 labeled D1...D5 are Age, gender, Experience, professional qualification and marital status respectively. The personality factors in the oval marked 2 consist of motivators and leadership styles. The motivators in the oval marked A are the nature of the work or work itself (M₁), recognition (M₂), responsibility (M₃), achievement (M₄) and advancement (M₅). The leadership styles in the eccentric oval marked B exist in a continuum L₁ to L₂ representing open-close leadership styles continuum. The demographic and personality factors may be independently or jointly related to principals' performance in the task areas of management of secondary schools. Oredien (2004) submitted that personality factors such as style of principal's leadership and level of motivation do influence staff and students achievement. Similarly, Peretomode (2001) noted that

demographic variables could be advantageous or disadvantageous in the principals' performance of duties. The schema in fig. 1 therefore illustrates the conceptual framework for the relationship between demographic and personality factors and principals performance in the task areas of management of secondary schools.

CONCLUSION

The conceptual framework of demographic and personality factors and principals performance in the management of secondary schools is a vital means of proposing the relationship between them. Such understanding could guide relevant agencies and researchers on how these factors may predispose principals to manage their schools effectively and efficiently.

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