



ASSESSMENT OF EXTENT OF PRINCIPALS' COMPLIANCE WITH FEDERAL GOVERNMENT STUDENTS' SUPPORT SERVICES FOR EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT OF UNITY SCHOOLS IN SOUTH-EAST, NIGERIA

Chioma Mercyjenny Okeke

Nnamdi Azikwe University, Awka.

Department of Educational Management and Policy

Phone contact: 08160419223

Email: mj.okeke@unizik.edu.ng

&

Nnatu Echezona Zimuzo

Nnamdi Azikwe University, Awka.

Department of Educational Management and Policy

Phone contact: 08069267348

ez.nnatu@unizik.edu.ng

(Corresponding Author)

ABSTRACT

This study assessed the extent of principals' compliance with Federal Government students' support services for the effective management of unity schools in South-East, Nigeria. Two research questions guided the study, and two null hypotheses were tested at the 0.05 level of significance. A descriptive survey research design was adopted. The population comprised 1,877 respondents, including 12 principals and 1,865 teachers from the 12 Federal Unity Schools in South-East Nigeria. A sample of 758 respondents, comprising 12 principals and 746 teachers, was selected using a multistage sampling procedure. Data were collected using a researcher-developed instrument titled Principals' Compliance with Federal Ministry of Education Students' Support Services for Effective Management Questionnaire (PCFMESSEM). The instrument was validated by three experts from the Faculty of Education, . Cronbach Alpha was used to determine internal consistency, yielding reliability coefficients of 0.79 and 0.81 for Clusters I and II, respectively, with an overall coefficient of 0.80. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions, while t-test was used to test the hypotheses. The findings revealed that principals complied with Federal Government students' safety services to a high extent but complied with students' welfare services to a low extent. The study concluded that strengthening students' welfare services would improve the effective management of unity schools. It recommended that inspectors from the Federal Ministry of Education conduct regular monitoring visits to schools and that principals collaborate with teachers to periodically monitor school welfare committees to promote students' well-being.

Keywords: Assessment, Principals, Compliance Federal Government Students, Support Services, Effective Management, Unity Schools.

Introduction

Education is a formidable instrument for grooming the personality, molding the character, nurturing attitudes and inculcating values in individuals to make them productive members of the society. It also equips individuals with skills and knowledge



for self-reliance, socioeconomic empowerment and wealth creation, which contributes towards nation building and development. Similarly, Onuigwe and Egboka (2020) opined that education houses all the skills and knowledge that it takes to transform and develop both the individual and the nation in which the person belongs and lives. One of the educational institutions in which children receive formal education is the secondary school.

The secondary school occupies a strategic position in the education system as it serves as the intermediate between the basic and tertiary levels of education. Secondary level of education which equips children with knowledge and skills to make them useful members of the society and also prepare them for higher education provided in secondary schools which are owned either by private individuals, States or the Federal government. The public secondary schools established by Federal Government are known as unity schools. The unity schools are also known as Federal Government Colleges, Federal Government Girls' Colleges (FGGCs) and Federal Science and Technical Colleges. Umeghalu and Onyeike (2022) posited that unity schools are educational institutions established for national cohesion and integration by exploring the beauties that lie in the diversity of a multicultural and pluralistic society such as Nigeria. There are 104 unity schools in the country, out of which 12 are in the South East of Nigeria. Atanda and Olaifa (2022) asserted that unity schools came into existence in 1967 for promoting understanding, tolerance and respect for one another culture which was critical needed after the civil war. Operationally, unity schools are secondary schools established, financed and managed by the Federal Government to bring children from different parts of the country to study together and build the mindsets that foster national integration. A unity school is headed by a principal.

Principal is the chief administrator who ensures that the available resources are judiciously used to achieve set goals of a secondary educational institution. Nyaegah (2022) defined principal as the chief administrator charged with the responsibility of running the overall activities, controlling members of staff and ensuring the general development of secondary school education. It is the duty of the principal to ensure that students are exposed to meaningful learning experiences through coordinating the efforts of the teachers and ensuring judicious use of the scarce resources in a secondary school. Contextually, the principal is a person who performs leadership roles of influencing and directing the activities of others and ensuring optimal use of the available resources in running the affairs of the school such that students are supported to excel in their studies and set educational objectives are attained. Principals strive to attain set educational objectives through effective school management.

Effective school management is the successful implementation of school programmes, enforcement of school policies and optimal utilization of the available resources to ensure that students receive quality instruction in secondary schools. According to Animba and Nneji (2020), effective school management involves arrangement of work schedules and coordination of the efforts of subordinates in efficient ways to ensure optimal performance of the school. Effective school management involves ensuring judicious utilization of available resources to achieve optimal improvement of the educational institutions. Similarly, Onuigwe and Egboka (2020) defined effective school management as efficiency in the utilization of the available resources to achieve



set educational objectives. Effective school management is concerned with the efficient execution of tasks to achieve the goals and objectives of educational institutions. In the context of this study, effective school management is the utilization of the available resources, overseeing the smooth operations of daily affairs of the schools and getting things well done through influencing the activities to ensure that educational objectives are achieved.

There are many indicators of effective school management. Syukri, Hidayat and Putri (2017) pointed out that the indicators of effective school management include: clear and consistent vision and mission, high parents and community involvement in education of students, good learning services for students, strong principal leadership, managing resources in a transparent and accountable manner within a school, high student involvement in extracurricular activities and a comfortable and orderly atmosphere for teaching and learning. Effective school management is evaluated through provision of maximal support services for the learners, timely dissemination of information, smooth operation of the school daily affairs, prudent use of school facilities, successful implementation of school programmes to meet the expectations of stakeholders, transparency and accountability in educational institutions. The principals work with teachers to ensure effective school management and attainment of set educational objectives. Teachers are professional trained persons who impart skills, knowledge and desirable attitude to learners through instructional activities in the classroom. According to Igbokwe, Akudo and Ugwu (2020), teachers are persons who have undergone an approved professional training in education at an appropriate level capable of imparting knowledge, attitude and skills to the learners. The teachers who interact with students on daily basis in the classroom could identify their learning needs and the various support services provided by principals to satisfy them. Thus, the principals could collaborate with teachers who interact with students on a daily basis to identify and satisfy the needs of learners through the provision of students' support services.

Students' support services are auxiliary supports instances provided for students to aid the successful operations of academic and non-academic programmes of educational institution. According to Sukhdeep (2016), students' support services are a cluster of facilities and activities that are provided to make the learning process easier and more interesting to the learner. The notion of students' support services is to create a conducive learning environment to make instructional experiences more meaningful to the learners. Shaheen, Mahmood and Shah (2020) defined students' support services as systematic and comprehensive assistance rendered to learners to meet their learning needs. Students' support services are preventive and remedial assistance rendered to learners to enable their active participation and excellence in school activities and their academic programmes. Operationally, Students' support services are programmes, facilities and assistance provided for learners to help them tackle their challenges in the course of learning in order to satisfy their academic needs, medical and safety needs and maximize learning experience in the school.

The implementation of the Federal Government Support Services of Quality Assurance Instrument Started in 2010; thirteen years after its introduction (2010-2023), an



assessment of the policy is deemed necessary. Assessment is the process of collecting data and information for appraising the outcome of a programme. In the view of Iwuagwu, Akuta and Iwuagwu (2022), assessment is the process of gathering evidence to make useful decisions of a programme. Contextually, assessment is a systematic process of gathering data to describe the level of implementation of students' support programmes. Assessment provides evidence of compliance to a programme.

Compliance is the act of yielding to particular rules and work standards. Compliance is the conformity of actions to procedural manual of operating a programme. Efrem, Sharla and Okan (2022), compliance is the obedience and conformity to the standard of operations in an organization. The compliance to standard of operation ensures smooth running of a programme. According to Harvey (2022), compliance is undertaking activities or establishing practices or policies in accordance with the requirements or expectations of relevant authority. Operationally, compliance is the act of adhering to procedures, regulations and requirements for implementation of a programme. Compliance is assessed to gather evidence to judge against a standard and the standard for this assessment is the Government's Support Service quality assurance instrument.

The areas of assessment of students' support services highlighted by Federal Ministry of Education (2010) through quality assurance instrument are how well the school:

1. Ensures learners' care, welfare, health and safety
2. Ensures that learners work in a healthy and safe environment
3. Provides support, advise and guidance for learners, based on the monitoring of their achievements and personal development
4. Seeks to involve learners in its work and development

The aspects of these students' support services in which the study is interested in are safety and welfare services. The justification for these components of support services are due to the fact that they are core facilities needed by students to maximize from the school learning programmes.

Safety is a state of being free from fear of danger and risks in an environment. Nweke and Nwikina (2022) defined safety as a state in which hazards and conditions that could lead to physical, physiological or material harm are controlled in order to maintain well-being of individuals and property. A safe school has a sense of calmness and excitement for learners and members of staff. Alunga (2020) noted that principals are charged with overseeing the implementation of safety procedures and thus are responsible for the outcomes of any of the threats that attack the schools. The principals protect students and also react to anything that poses a threat to their lives and school properties through the provision of safety service. Alagboso (2022) indicated that safety service includes issuance of identity cards to staff and students to distinguish them from intruders; formulation of strict school safety rules and regulations; orientating staff and students on security guard at school gate. The provision of safety services by the principals ensures safety in the school and also reduces fear and anxiety among learners and thereby contribute to the improvement of their welfare.

Welfare services consists of actions, amenities and procedures that promote the basic well-being of learners in educational institutions. The students' welfare service



includes catering to satisfy their basic needs of food and water, sports activities to maintain physical fitness, transportation service for easy movement, accommodation for shelter and provision of recreational facilities among others. According to Nuwayo (2021), students' welfare service is anything the school management does to meet students' needs, create a conducive environment for learners to enjoy and get maximum benefits from school programmes. The students seem not to be receiving adequate support from principals in unity schools in South-East, Nigeria. Umeghalu and Onyeike (2022) noted that principals of unity schools in South-East, Nigeria are performing below capacity in providing support in order to students to bring out the best in them. The poor nature of school buildings in most unity schools put the safety of students at risk. This tallies with the observation of Nnebedum and Ofojebe (2019) which reported the cases of dilapidated school facilities that pose risk to learners in unity schools in South East, Nigeria. Umeghalu and onyeike (2022) indicate that unity schools in south-east, Nigeria are vulnerable and open to safety threats probably due to physical and psychological environment and poor emergency respond preparedness. Ugbor, Nweke, Uwakwe, Isiaku, Opara, Isilebo and Madu (2020) observed that principals seem to have failed in their primary duty to safeguard the students and staff in their care as evidenced by cases of which has happened such as incessant fighting, defacement of school plants, horrific attacks, rape and kidnapping in unity schools in Nigeria the principals seem to rarely demonstrate the capacity to promote students' welfare through provision of adequate school programmes, provision of requisite recreational and sporting facilities in unity schools in South- East, Nigeria. It is based on this background that the study assessed the extent of principals' compliance with federal Government students' support services for effective management of unity schools in South-East, Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

The principals of unity schools in South-East, Nigeria appear to be performing below capacity in providing substantial supports services required by students to derive maximum benefits from the school curricular and extra-curricular activities. The existence of dilapidated structures and bushy environment in the schools tend to pose a threat to safety of students. The incessant bullying, destruction of school properties, fighting and broken facilities in the students' playground may indicate danger if there are no security measures put in place to guarantee the safety of students .one hostel accommodation for students which appeared not to be spacious and equipped with necessary attention by the principals of unity schools in south-east, Nigeria.

The support services received by students which seem to be below expectations might have created an uncomfortable learning condition and contribute to misconduct of learners such as lateness, absenteeism and truancy which constitute a challenge to effective school management. Effective school management of principals tend to be adversely affected in terms of assisting students to learn and acquire requisite skills and knowledge to achieve secondary school objectives of making students to be useful members of the society and also proceed to higher institutions of learning. If the unacceptable situations of students not receiving sufficient supports remain unchecked, it could lead to state of emergency in criminal activities; youth restiveness, cultism and drug abuse which endangers the economic, social, moral and political development of South-East, Nigeria. The tackling of these problems is bound to increase the rate of



skilled manpower to meaningfully contribute to the development of the society. It is as a result of this problem that the researcher assessed extent of the principals' compliance with Federal Government students' support services for effective management of unity schools in South-east, Nigeria.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to assess the extent of principals' compliance with Federal Government students' support services for effective management of unity schools in South East, Nigeria. Specially, the study sought to assess the extent of:

1. Principals' compliance with Federal Government students' safety service for effective management of unity schools in South-East, Nigeria.
2. Principals' compliance with Federal Government students' welfare services for effective management of unity schools in South-East, Nigeria

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. To what extent do principals comply with Federal Government students' safety services for effective management of unity schools in South-east, Nigeria?
2. To what extent do principals comply with Federal Government students' welfare services for effective management of unity schools in South-east, Nigeria?

Hypotheses

The following research hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance:

1. There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of principals and teachers on the extent to which principals comply with Federal Government students' safety service for effective management of unity schools in South-east, Nigeria.
2. There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of principals and teachers on the extent to which principals comply with Federal Government students' welfare services for effective management of unity schools in South-east, Nigeria.

Methods

The descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. This design is deemed appropriate, since the researcher collected data from a given population of the study to assess the extent of principals' compliance with Federal Government students' support services for effective management of unity schools, South East Nigeria. The study was conducted in South-East Nigeria which is one of the six zones in Nigeria. South-East Nigeria has five states namely; Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu and Imo States. The choice of South-East for the study is that there is existence of challenges among students' which necessitated an assessment of the extent of compliance to students' support services by principals. The population of the study comprised 1,877 respondents of which 12 are principals and 1,865 are teachers in the twelve Federal unity schools in South-East, Nigeria. The sample for the study is 758 respondents of which 12 are principals and 746 are teachers drawn using multistage sampling procedure.

A researcher-developed instrument titled "Principals' Compliance with Federal Ministry of Education Students' Support Services for Effective Management



Questionnaire (PCFMESSEM)'' was used for data collection. The instrument was developed by the researcher from literature review and consultation with experts in the field. It has two versions. One version of the instrument was responded to by the principals while the other was responded to by teachers. This is done to enable teachers mitigate the responses of their principals. Each of the two versions of the instruments had four clusters namely: I and II with 12 and 10 items on safety service and welfare service. The instrument contains 22 items structured on a four-point rating scale of Very High Extent (VHE), High Extent (HE), Low Extent (LE) and Very Low Extent (VLE) weighted 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively.

The instrument subjected to face validation by three experts, two in the Department of Educational Management and Policy, and one in Measurement and Evaluation in the Department of Educational Foundations, all in the Faculty of Education, Nnamdi Azikiwe University. The suggestions of the experts were applied in producing the final instrument. The reliability of the instrument involved single administration of 30 copies of the instrument which 6 copies were distributed to principals and 24 copies to teachers respectively in unity schools in south-south, Nigeria. The data obtained were subjected to test of internal consistency using Cronbach Alpha. It was considered appropriate in order to determine the level of homogeneity of the items in the clusters. The co-efficient obtained for clusters I and II of the instruments were 0.79 and 0.81 respectively with an overall coefficient of 0.79.

The researcher and eleven research assistants who are teachers in unity schools in South-East, Nigeria collected data for the study. The research assistants are representatives in 11 schools, while the researcher administered copies of the instrument to the respondents in the remaining school. A total of 758 copies of the questionnaire were administered to 12 principals and 746 teachers, while 733 copies (12 from principals and 721 from teachers) were properly completed and successfully retrieved, indicating 97% percent return. The data collected were analyzed using mean and standard deviation for answering the research questions and t-test for testing the hypotheses. In answering the research questions in this study, mean scores that fall between: 4.00-3.50, 3.49-2.50, 2.49-1.50, and 1.49-below were taken to indicate VHE, HE, LE and VLE respectively. In taking decisions on the null hypotheses, if p-value is equal or greater than the level of significance 0.05, the null hypothesis was not rejected. On the other hand, if the p-value is less than 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis was rejected.

Results

Research Question 1: To what extent do principals comply with Federal Government students' safety service for effective management of unity schools in South-East, Nigeria?

Table 1: Ratings and Standard Deviation Scores on Principals' Compliance with Federal Students' Safety Service for Effective Management of Unity Schools.

S/N	ITEMS	Principals (N=12)		Teachers (N=721)		
		Mean	Sd	Decision	Mean	Sd



1) Inspects regularly the cleaning of school environment	2.86	0.97	High extent	2.74	1.04	High Extent
2) Provides visitor's book to monitor movement in or out of the school.	2.92	0.99	High Extent	2.91	1.08	High Extent
3) Issues identity card to students for easy identification in the school premises	3.17	1.10	High Extent	3.29	1.05	High Extent
4) Stations security guard at school gate	2.74	1.03	High Extent	2.68	1.17	High Extent
5) Has no emergency contact numbers that will help in case of any threats	2.45	1.08	Low Extent	2.42	1.08	Low Extent
6) Provides fire extinguishers for emergency fire out-break	2.58	1.00	High Extent	2.81	1.15	High Extent
7) Ensures that school sanitary Facilities are kept clean to reduce Students' exposure to infection	2.59	1.14	High Extent	2.64	1.04	High Extent
8) Windows of the buildings has no burglary proofs to safe guard the learners	2.43	1.06	Low Extent	2.40	0.94	Low Extent
9) Installed emergency alarm system in the school premises	2.38	0.94	Low Extent	2.41	1.06	Low Extent
10) Organises orientation For students on security tips.	2.66	1.17	High Extent	2.70	1.10	High Extent
11) Renovates school buildings to prevent them from collapse	2.48	0.96	Low Extent	2.46	1.11	Low Extent
12) Installed Closed Circuit Televisions(CCTV) cameras to monitor movement Within the school	2.37	1.14	Low Extent	2.33	1.13	Low Extent
Cluster Mean	2.63	1.05	High Extent	2.67	1.07	High Extent

Table 1 shows that the mean ratings of principals and teachers for items 1,2,3,4,6,7 and 10 which were 2.55 and 2.56 showed high extent to which principals comply with Federal Government students' safety service for effective school management for the items. The mean ratings of principals and teachers for items 5,8,9, 11 and 12 were between 1.50 and 2.49 indicating that there was low extent of principals comply with Federal Government students' safety service for effective management for the items.



The pooled standard deviation scores for principals and teachers which stood at 1.05 and 1.07 respectively indicated convergence of their responses and thus their responses were homogeneous. The cluster mean of 2.63 and 2.67 for principals and teachers respectively fall within the decision rule of 2.50 -3.49 and this shows that principals comply with Federal Government students' safety service for effective management of unity schools in South-East, Nigeria to a high extent.

Ho1: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of principals and teachers on the extent to which principals comply with Federal Government students' safety service for effective management of unity schools in South-East, Nigeria.

Table 2: The Summary of t-test Analysis of no Significant Difference in the Mean Ratings of Principals and Teachers on the Extent to which Principals Comply with Federal Government Students' Safety Service for Effective Management of Unity Schools.

Respondents	N	X	SD	p-value	∞	Df	Remark
Principals	12	2.63	1.05	0.24	0.05	731	Not Significant
Teachers	721	2.67	1.07				

Table 2 revealed that the p-value of 0.24 is greater than 0.05 level of significance at 731 degree of freedom. Thus, the null hypothesis is accepted. Therefore, there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of principals and teachers on the extent to which principals comply with federal Government students' safety service for effective management of unity schools in South-East, Nigeria.

Research Question 2: To what extent do principals comply with Federal Government students' welfare service for effective management of unity schools in South-East, Nigeria?

Table 3: Mean Ratings and Standard Deviation Scores on Principals' Compliance with Federal Government Students' welfare Service for Effective Management of Unity Schools.

S/N	ITEMS	Principals (N=12)			Teachers (N=721)		
		Mean	Sd	Decision	Mean	Sd	Decision



13	Provides recreational facilities for students for ease of stress	2.46	1.05 Low Extent	Low Extent	2.43	1.11	
14	Rewards students for outstanding performance based on agreed criteria	2.58	1.17	High Extent	2.60	1.16	High Extent
15	Ensures proper lighting of classrooms to create meaningful learning environment for students	2.40	1.13	Low Extent	2.35	1.04	Low Extent
16	Has well-furnished hostel accommodation for students	2.55	1.18	High Extent	2.51	1.14	High Extent
17	Organises sporting activities for students to keep them healthy for academic activities	2.54	1.04	High Extent	2.52	0.95	High Extent
18	Organises interactive sessions with students that are centered on promoting their well-being	2.41	1.10	Low Extent	2.42	1.10	Low Extent
19	Attends to the daily issues that affect students' welfare	2.34	1.16	Low Extent	2.31	1.09	Low Extent
20	Formulated policies that promote students' welfare	2.51	1.09	High Extent	2.46	1.14	Low Extent
21	Conducts periodic meetings with parents to talk about students' welfare	2.40	1.13	Low Extent	2.42	1.07	Low Extent
22	Constituted a committee that works for the overall welfare of students	2.38	0.97	Low Extent	2.41	1.10	Low Extent
	Cluster Mean	2.46	1.10	Low Extent	2.44	1.09	Low Extent

Result of data analysis presented on Table 4 shows that the mean scores of principals and teachers for all items 13,15,18,19,20, 21 and 22 were between 1.50 and 2.49 indicating that principals complied with federal Government Students' welfare service to a low extent for effective school management. On the other hand, the mean ratings of both principals and teachers for items 14, 16 and 17 were between 2.50 and 3.49 indicating that there was high extent of principals' compliance with federal Government students' welfare service for effective management of unity schools in connection to the items. The mean score of 2.51 recorded by principals for item 20 indicated that they complied to a high extent with aspect to students' welfare service, while the teachers who recorded mean score of 2.46 indicated that the principals complied to the item to low extent to which principals comply with the item.

The pooled standard deviation scores which stood at 1.10 and 1.09 for teachers and students respectively indicate that their mean ratings were just little variation in their responses. The cluster mean of 2.46 and 2.44 for principals and teachers respectively fell within the decision rule of 2.50 - 3.49 indicating that there was low extent to



which principals compiled to a low extent with federal government students' welfare service for effective management of unity schools in South-East, Nigeria.

Ho2: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of principals and teachers on the extent to which principals comply with Federal Government students' welfare service for effective management of unity schools in South -East, Nigeria.

Table 4: The Summary of t-test Analysis of no Significant Difference in the Mean Ratings of Principals and Teachers on the Extent to which Principals Comply with Federal Government Students' welfare Service for Effective Management of Unity Schools.

Respondents	N	X	SD	p-value	∞	Df	Remark
Principals	12	2.46	1.10	0.14	0.05	731	Not Significant
Teachers	721	2.44	1.09				

Data presented on Table 4 revealed that p-value of 0.14 is greater than 0.05 level of significance at 731 degrees of freedom. Thus, the null hypothesis is accepted. Therefore, there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of principals and teachers on the extent to which principals comply with the federal government students' welfare for effective management of unity schools in South-East, Nigeria

Discussion of Findings

The result of data analysis indicated that principals comply with Federal Government Students' safety service for effective management of unity schools in South-East, Nigeria to a high extent. This is in line with the findings of Anyaogu and Jerry-Alagbaoso (2022) which indicated that safety and security measures were adopted by the principals to high extent for management of staff and student in public secondary schools. The time span of the studies which are recent and might bring about significant changes in safety services could account for agreement in the findings. This disagreed with the finding of Aideyan and Akingbade (2019) which revealed that majority of primary schools rendered safety services to a low extent. The difference in participants and the levels of education in which studies conducted might account for the disagreement in findings. The findings revealed that principals to a high extent inspect regularly the cleaning of school environment, provide visitors' book to monitor movement in and out of the school, issue identity card to students for easy identification in the school premises, station security guard at the school gate, provides fire extinguishers for emergency fire outbreak, ensure that school sanitary facilities are kept clean to reduce students' exposure to infection and organise orientation for students on security tips. Principals comply with Federal Government students' safety service for effective management of unity schools to high extent is possibly a means of responding to security challenges.

It was indicated that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of principals and teachers on the extent to which principals comply with Federal Government



Students' safety service for effective management of unity schools in South-East, Nigeria. This agreed with the findings of Ogbo, Nwanga and Nnebedum (2021) which revealed that there is no significant difference in the mean rating of principals and teachers on the safety measures adopted by principals in management of public secondary schools. The possible reason for the agreement in findings could be similarities in geographical location. Students learn without fear and distraction owing to the safety services provided by the principals of unity schools.

The findings revealed that Federal Government students' welfare services was to a low extent for effective management of unity schools in South-East, Nigeria. This finding is in line with that of Yusuf and Afolabi (2017) which showed that students' welfare services were being provided and administered within the limits of the state education laws to a low extent. The findings refuted that of sadera, Tanui and Kara (2022) which indicated the perceptions about the provision of students' welfare services were rated high. This disagreed with the finding of Amit (2019) which showed that the level of implementation of the students' welfare programmes and services in different state universities was moderately rated. The difference in the time span and educational level might explain the agreement in findings. The findings revealed that principals to low extent provide recreational facilities for students for ease of stress, ensures proper lightening of classroom to create meaningful learning environment for students, organizes interactive sessions with students that centered on promoting their well-being, attend to the daily issues that affect students' welfare of students. The low extent to which principals comply with federal government students' welfare service for effective management of unity schools undermine the satisfaction of physical, mental, moral and emotional needs of students.

The result of this study also showed that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of principals and teachers on the extent to which principals comply with Federal Government Students' welfare service for effective management of unity schools in South- East, Nigeria. Ikegwuonu (2017) which showed that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of principals and teachers on the extent of principals' application of welfare practices in the administration of public secondary schools. The agreement in the findings could be connected to the similarity in the geographical locations of the study. The students might not be comfortable to learn in an environment where their welfare has not been received adequate attention

Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, it was concluded that principals partially comply with Federal Government students' support services for effective management of unity schools in South-East, Nigeria. The principals' compliance with components of safety services of Federal Government students' support services was to a high extent, while their compliance to welfare services was to a low extent. The principals' compliance to students' safety services help to address the security challenges students encounter during the teaching-learning process. Through safety services secondary school students are protected from harm in the school environment. However, the students' physical, mental and social well-being requires adequate attention in secondary schools



Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations were made:

1. Inspectors from the Federal Ministry of Education should enhance visit to schools on regular basis to monitor safety services provided by principals and make recommendations for improvement of the services in unity schools.
2. Federal Government through the relevant education agencies should subsidize the financial cost of attending conferences, seminars or workshops in order to encourage principals to attend and keep abreast of means of improving students' welfare services in unity schools.

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