

## Assessing Principals' Coordinating and Controlling Strategies for Effective Teaching and Quality Learning Outcome in Secondary Schools in Ondo State, Nigeria

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**Abstract.** The study examined the efficacy of principals' coordinating and controlling strategies on teachers' instructional performance; determined students' learning outcome; and investigated the challenges in instructional management in secondary schools. Descriptive survey research design was adopted for data collection and analysis. A total of 480 participants comprised of 30 principals and 450 teachers completed the questionnaire titled "Coordination and Control Strategies Questionnaire (CCSQ)" in 30 public secondary schools using multi-stage sampling technique. Four research questions and four hypotheses were formulated. The simple percentage was used to answer the research questions while Pearson correlation statistics was employed to test the hypotheses at  $p < 0.05$  level of significance. The result showed that the relationship between principals' strategies and teachers' instructional performance was low in coordinating ( $r = 0.284$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), controlling ( $r = 0.149$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), and teachers' instructional performance and students' learning outcome ( $r = 0.076$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). The major constraints identified included inadequate number of qualified teachers (50%); excess workload for teachers (63.3%); inadequate learning resources (63.3%); lack of adequate and well equipped offices for teachers (80%); lack of conducive classrooms (36.7%); and fairly conducive classrooms (40%). The study concluded that the Government in collaboration with the school principals and other relevant stakeholders should provide adequate number of teachers, learning resources, classrooms and capacity development for teachers to address the gaps in curriculum instruction management in secondary schools.

**Keywords.** Principals' competences; coordinating strategies; controlling strategies; teachers' curriculum workload; students' learning outcome.

## 1. Introduction

The secondary school system is designed to prepare students for higher education and useful living in the society (Federal Republic of Nigeria: NPE, 2004). The attainment of this lofty goals hinges on the effective coordination and control of teaching and learning activities by the school principal. As an instructional leader, the principal occupies an important position and plays pivotal role in the management of both human and material resources that are used in the delivery of school curriculum to ensure high quality education for the learners. The ability of the school principal to effectively plan, implement, monitor, evaluate and review educational programmes and activities with the teachers will in no doubt ensure sustainable improvement in the teaching-learning process and lead to the school success in the pursuit of the set goals.

The need for effective coordination in secondary school is based on the assumption that human beings are naturally lazy, dislike work and enjoy pleasures more than work (Mc Gregor, 1960). This is counter-productive to the achievement of the set educational goals. Since the teachers are the hobs on which the education system rests upon, their roles cannot be under-estimated if quality education is to be achieved. It is therefore expedient for the school principal to set achievable standards and goals which all teachers must strive to attain in the delivery of the school curriculum. The teachers must be focused and well skilled in curriculum planning, utilization of instructional materials, content delivery, continuous assessment of learners, classroom management and record keeping to promote meaningful instruction and effective development of learners in the cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains of learning.

In the pursuit of quality instruction and student learning outcome, it is equally imperative to put in place effective control mechanisms so that the set goals can be achieved. The principal being an instructional leader is expected to be the driving force for effective curriculum delivery. The principal must device appropriate measures to ensure that all the teachers comply with the laid down rules and regulations in the performance of their instructional tasks. This is not to witch-hunt the teachers but to make them committed, self-regulated and goal-oriented, and have high expectations for the learners.

In spite of the awareness of the goals of secondary education by the principals and teachers, it is still highly surprising that students' learning outcome in terms of their performances in the Senior School Certificate Examinations conducted by the West African Examinations Council is relatively low (below 40%) in Nigeria and 30% in Ondo State. This is a matter of serious concern to the stakeholders in the education sector and something positive is needed to be done in order to reposition the secondary education system for better performance. This study therefore seeks to examine the coordinating and controlling strategies that are being used by the school principals in order to identify their strengths and challenges, and the attendant consequences on students' learning outcomes. This is with a view to making appropriate recommendations that will ensure sustainable improvement in instructional

management and the achievement of desirable learning outcome in secondary schools.

## **2.1 Coordination of Teachers' Instructional Tasks**

Coordination is the process of integrating the various units and sub-units in a unified operation towards achieving a common purpose in an organization. The process involves the linking of objectives, activities and strategies of different work units (departments or functional areas) in a systematic manner in order to allow a group of people whose capabilities complement one another to work together through collective efforts, actions and pooling of resources, which enable the organization to provide the proper quantity and quality of products within the stipulated time frame for the accomplishment of the set goals.

According to Crowston (1997), coordination is the process of linking the activities of the various departments of the organization. Ibukun (2008) perceived coordination as the need to synchronize individual efforts to achieve the objectives of the organization since individual differences may arise due to subjective interpretation of goals and roles. Enikanselu & Oyende (2009) viewed coordination as the orderly arrangement of group efforts to provide unity of action in pursuit of a common purpose. In the school system, the work people do must be well coordinated so that the teaching and learning processes can produce the desired outcomes.

The need for effective coordination in the school is predicated on the fact that the school is a system with many sub-units interacting with one another to achieve a common goal. Griffiths (1963) defined a system as "a complex of elements in mutual interaction" and described the school as an open system which has an environment that inputs energy to the system, which undergoes transformation process to give desired outputs into the environment. Weick (1976) postulated that every system is 'loosely connected' with many other sub-systems or sub-units. For instance, the educational system is loosely coupled by the following elements: teacher-materials, school boards, administration-classrooms, process-outcome, teacher-teacher, parent-teacher and teacher-student, and so on (Chukwu, 1999).

The school as a system is established to train learners to achieve educational goals and values. In pursuit of this mission, it receives resource inputs in form of human, material and physical resources from the community to carry out its operations. For example, a school receives students as inputs and processed them over the period of their training through coordination of teaching and learning activities, utilization of available resources for human capital development, adequate supervision, monitoring and evaluation of instructional activities and materials on periodic basis, while in the long run, the students transformed into outputs (product value) in form of educated persons (intended outputs) to the environment in order to fulfill the expectations of the society. It is therefore imperative for the school principals to be effective in coordinating activities of the various departments and units in order to make sure that the

various components work in harmony and no part of the system strays from the common purpose.

Effective coordination promotes teachers' instructional performance. Ibukun (2008) opined that coordination enhances productivity when competent hands are appointed as unit heads; the goals and responsibilities are clearly defined and communicated to all members of the organization. This process reduces administrative bottlenecks, promotes inter-departmental cooperation and optimization of resources to produce the desired results in the organization. The principal being the driving force behind the school success is expected to adopt both vertical and horizontal coordination techniques in the management of the secondary school system. The vertical coordination ensures the linking together of the activities of the superiors and subordinates of the various departments, units, and sub-units at different levels while the horizontal coordination promotes the linking together of the top management members at the different departments, units and sub-units of the organization for the purpose of common actions. This process facilitates information processing, promotes innovation, increase teachers' instructional performance and produce quality learning outcome in the secondary school system.

Teachers' instructional performance is manifested in their knowledge of the subject-matter, skills and competences in the teaching-learning process. This means that the real teacher must possess the qualities for effective teaching and pleasant learning within the school setting. He/she must know what to teach, how to teach, and whom to teach. The purpose is to deliver the curriculum efficiently, so as to enable learners achieve the set educational goals and standards in schools (Makinde & Alao, 1992; Koleoso, 2002).

The teacher's role is crucial to effective and efficient learning, the teacher is expected to provide essential inputs like adequate planning of lesson notes, effective delivery of lessons, proper monitoring and evaluation of students' performance, providing regular feed-back on students' performance, improvisation of instructional materials, adequate keeping of records and appropriate discipline of students to produce and enhance expected learning achievement which require effective coordination by the principal in secondary school (Ayeni, 2010).

The teachers' instructional performance are germane to the achievement of quality learning outcome in secondary schools. Ameen (2007) highlighted the areas to be coordinated by school principals as follows: 1) Formulating aims and goals of programme in a thoughtful manner; 2) regular curriculum implementation and revisions; 3) teaching methodology and assessment methods; 4) staff development; 5) ICT education, modern teaching aids and physical environment; 6) internal quality assurance; and 7) cooperation at national and international level. This ultimately depends on the avowed commitment of principals, heads of departments, units and sub-units to

effectively coordinate teaching and learning activities to optimize instructional resources and achieve success for all students in secondary schools.

## **2.2 Controlling of Teachers' Instructional Tasks**

Control in the school system is a management process that guides both the principal and the teachers in the performance of their tasks, evaluating the process and making necessary adjustments towards ensuring effective teaching and learning activities for the purpose of achieving the predetermined educational objectives. Freeman (1992) defined control as the process of ensuring that actual activities conform to planned activities. Ibukun (2008) viewed control as the assessment and correcting of the activities of subordinates to ensure that they conform to plans. The control process involves four basic steps which Ibukun (2008) listed as : establishing standards and objectives, measuring performance against standards, correcting deviations from standards, and evaluating through analysis and comparison of performance with the original goals to determine whether control has yielded desired change. In the operation of the school system, this process strengthens the principal's capacity to make appropriate decisions on the provision, allocation and relocation of human and material resources to reduce deviations from plans, so that the set goals would be achieved.

Control is an internal assessment of school's curricula and co-curricular activities by the principal and other top management members for the purpose of helping teachers and learners to improve on their teaching and learning capacities in achieving educational objectives. It is the process by which school administrators and other top management members ensure proper application of monitoring and evaluation instruments to determine and enhance the effectiveness of teachers' instructional task performance towards advancement in students' intellectual and skills development for the achievement of quality learning outcome in secondary schools.

In specific terms, the goals of school based control among others include: 1) Identifying and focusing on areas where improvement in the provision of teaching and learning resources needs to be made; 2) Making principal and top management members become Quality Assurance (QA) evaluators in their own school; 3) Assessing teachers' pedagogical skills in curriculum delivery; helping teachers in identifying their strengths and weaknesses; and providing relevant remedial training for upgrading teachers' conceptual knowledge and teaching skills that will hopefully turn their weaknesses to strengths; 4) Identifying teachers who should be promoted, retrained, redeployed or disengaged; 5) Assessing the effectiveness and efficiency of educational programme and its efficacy in relationship to original expectations; 6) It enables school administration to collect information that are evidence-based for the purpose of periodic review of instructional practices and capacity development of teachers for further improvement in classroom management and curriculum delivery; 7) Generating innovative ideas, knowledge and relevant data that will be useful for

decision-making, policy formulation and review for improved performance. It is the management responsibilities of the principals to ensure effective control measure so that both the teachers and learners work towards achieving the set goals.

Teachers' instructional tasks are multi-dimensional, covering key areas such as curriculum planning, content delivery, classroom management, evaluation of learning outcomes and giving performance feedback to students, principals and parents. In order to ensure quality education delivery and achieve the set educational goals, the instructional activities of the teachers are controlled by the school principal. As an instructional leader and driving force behind the school success, the principal in most cases, carries out the controlling function through the heads of departments, units and sub-units heads who are appointed based on their qualifications, seniority and experience. The purpose of school based control is to enable the school management develop a virile and result-oriented supervisory system that is professionally operated by experienced, dedicated and efficient top management staff that will guarantee sustainable quality in curriculum organization and delivery, improved academic standards and outputs in secondary schools.

This controlling process enables the principal to continuously monitor, assess, regulate and get feedback on teachers' activities based on evidence collected through the process of observation, discussion and documentation (ODD). This perspective is predicated on the principle of Deming's cycle of continuous improvement, which is fundamentally based upon Plan, Do, Check and Act cycle (PDCA). The principle enables the school principal to be pro-active in instructional management by identifying the key issues that need to be reviewed and improved upon in the course of implementing educational programmes so as to ensure that significant agreement exist between the set goals and what is actually achieved in terms of standards and students' learning outcomes in secondary schools (Deming, 1986; Stahl, 1998; Temponi, 2005).

However, in a study conducted by Wildy & Dimmock (1993) in Western Australia found that principals submitted all the duties and responsibilities of instructional leadership to their senior assistant teacher and senior teacher at the department. They proved that principals do not play their role as instructional leaders. Their findings also share similar results with studies conducted by Taraseina & Hallinger (1994) in Thailand which indicated that principals in North Thailand do not perform the instructional leadership domain actively.

### **2.3 Teachers' Instructional Tasks and Students' Learning Outcomes**

The teachers' instructional tasks have strong influence on students' academic achievement. The purpose of any teacher in the classroom is to help learners learn, inquire, solve problems, and cope with their own emotional needs and tensions. The teacher promotes quality education from the domain of teaching and learning through creative idea, participation and cooperative learning,

research, analysis and critical thinking, problem solving, innovation and encouragement of creative and divergent thinking.

The quality of students' learning outcomes are the overall effects of the educational system, which are expressed in terms of desirable changes in knowledge, skills, attitudes and values of individuals as a result of their experiences in the cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains of learning over a period of study (Simkins, 1981; Tsang, 1988). In the context of this study, quality learning outcome is limited to the level of credit passes achieved by the students in the Senior School Certificate Examinations conducted by the West African Examinations Council (WASSCE) and National Examination Council (NECO SSCE) which make them eligible for admission into tertiary institutions for further study or fit into the world of work as employees or owners of small business enterprises.

The success or failure of students rests on the quality of instruction and not lack of students' abilities to learn (Levine, 1985; Mills, 1991). In order to ensure quality assurance-oriented teaching and learning processes, the teachers are expected to have in-depth knowledge of the pedagogy in their subject areas to be able to understand the effective ways of organising and presenting subject matter in terms of objective statements, providing the right methods, learning experiences and learning resources, and evaluating teaching and learning activities in consonance with the set objectives. The quality process requires that the classroom instruction meets the set standards. The teaching approach that a teacher adopts is an important factor that may affect students' achievement and facilitates high standards of learning outcomes.

The quality of students' learning outcomes is directly dependent on the quality of teachers' instructional performance and the assessment of students by teachers and other examination bodies such as the West African Examination Council, and National Examination Council (WAEC/NECO). It is therefore imperative of the principals to ensure effective teaching and thorough supervision of instructional activities so that students' learning outcomes can meet the set standards and satisfy the expectations of the society.

The quality of students' learning outcomes could be made better through effective use of instructional materials by the teachers in curriculum delivery. This will facilitate students' in-depth understanding of the course contents. This is important because a well planned and imaginative use of instructional materials as educational inputs promotes the quality of teaching-learning process and contributes significantly to learning outcome in schools. Instructional resources provide good supplement for students who are faced with the challenge of inadequate of textbooks and enable the teachers to capture students' attention, motivate and sustain their interest to learn. This underscores the need for teachers to have adequate knowledge of instructional resource management in order to ensure effective teaching and practical learning of curriculum content in secondary schools.

Banjo (1987), posited that, adequate training of teachers in the latest methodology, to a large extent, determines how the learner learns during instructional activities. This viewpoint was further stressed by Maduekwe (2007) in a study on the strategies for teaching English lessons in Lagos, that in spite of the fact that most of the teachers have teaching qualifications, many of them do not have adequate knowledge of some grammatical concepts and they ended up imparting the wrong knowledge to their students. This situation is also a serious gap in the teaching-learning process in Ondo state as reflected in poor academic performance of students in the Senior School Certificate Examinations conducted by the West African Examination Council (WASSCE) in which the percentage of students that obtained five credit level passes and above in subjects including English Language and Mathematics were 38.73% in 2012; 29.92% in 2013 and 32.40% in 2014 ( Ondo State Ministry of Education, 2014; Eguridu, 2014).

The trend in Nigerian students' academic performance has shown continuous low academic achievement in secondary schools. For instance, Bello-Osagie & Olugbamila (2009) reported that in the 2009 November/December Senior Secondary School Certificate Examination conducted by the National Examination Council (NECO-SSCE) out of the total number of 234,682 Nigerian candidates who sat for the examination, only 4,223 obtained credit passes and above in five subjects including English and Mathematics, which is a 98.2% failure rate. Owadiae (2010) reported that in 2009 May/June Senior Secondary Certificate Examination conducted by the West African Examinations Council, only 25.99 percent of the candidates obtained credit passes and above in five subjects including English Language and Mathematics, while in the 2010 May/June WASSCE, out of the 1,135,557 candidates that sat for the examination, only 337,071 (24.94%) candidates obtained five credit level passes and above in subjects including English Language and Mathematics (Federal Ministry of Education, 2011b).

Furthermore, in Nigeria, the 2011 May/June Senior Secondary Certificate Examination conducted by West African Examinations Council shows that only 30.99% of the 1,540,250 candidates obtained credit level passes and above in five subjects including English Language and Mathematics, while in 2012 May/June WASSCE, 649,156 (38.81%) of the 1,672,224 candidates that sat for the examination obtained five credit level passes and above in subjects including English Language and Mathematics; also 36.57% was recorded in 2013 and 31.28% in the 2014 WASSCE. A comparative study of the results between 2012 and 2014 show a sharp decline in the performances of candidates in WASSCE in the 36 States of the Federation and the Federal Capital Territory (Owadiae, 2011; Owadiae, 2012; Eguridu, 2014).

### **3. 1. Statement of Problem**

The most prominent task of the school principal is to improve teaching-learning process through effective coordinating and controlling strategies that are connected to teachers' instructional performance and more generally determine



students' learning outcomes in secondary schools. It is the primary responsibility of the school principal to coordinate and control teachers' activities for the purpose of achieving the best in the management of instructional resource inputs, process and outputs which determine students' academic success in secondary schools. However, there is a growing public concern about the realization of the objectives of secondary education due to dwindling students' academic performance. This has been partly attributed to teachers' inadequacies in curriculum delivery and that many principals give little attention to coordination and control of teachers' instructional performance, which has its negative implications on students' learning outcomes.

It becomes imperative to think of the challenges of realising secondary school objectives in a situation where the principal looks away and allow the teachers to do whatever they like. Scholars such as Lunenburg & Ornstein (1991), McEwen (1998), Blasé (2001), and Adeniji (2002) have thought of dwindling academic performance of secondary school students partly due to non-challant attitude of school teachers and principals. The quality of lesson delivery seems to be nose diving in the school system nowadays as a result of lack of effective coordination and control by the school principals.

The worse of it all is that some principals have compromised the educational goals in secondary schools due to their failure to continuously monitor and supervise the teachers effectively. Others appear to have totally delegated their instructional leadership roles to their subordinates (vice-principals and heads of departments), while the principal becomes nobody in the school. All of these thoughts provoking statements have given credence to the study. Thus the purpose of this study was to examine principals' coordinating and controlling strategies for effective teaching and quality learning outcome in secondary schools in Ondo State which is the only state that operate autonomous Quality Education Assurance Agency in South-west, Nigeria.

### **3.2 Research Questions**

The following research questions were formulated for the study

- i. How do principals perceive teachers' instructional performance in secondary schools?
- ii. How do teachers perceive principals' coordinating strategies in secondary schools?
- iii. How do teachers perceive principals' controlling strategies in secondary schools?
- iv. What are the constraints faced by principals in coordinating and controlling of teachers instructional tasks in secondary schools?

### **3.3 Hypotheses**

- i. HO<sub>1</sub>: There is no significant relationship between principals' coordinating strategies and teachers' instructional performance in secondary schools.

- ii. HO<sub>2</sub>: There is no significant relationship between principals' controlling strategies and teachers' instructional performance in secondary schools.
- iii. HO<sub>4</sub>: There is no significant relationship between teachers' instructional performance and students' learning outcomes in secondary schools.
- iv. HO<sub>3</sub>: Principals' coordinating and controlling strategies will not jointly have significant effect on students' learning outcomes in secondary schools.

### 3.4 Methodology

The study employed the descriptive survey design. With this design, both quantitative and qualitative methods which involve systematic and objective collection and analysis of data were adopted to elicit responses from the participants in order to find solution to the problems identified. The target population comprised principals and teachers in secondary schools in Ondo state. The sample consisted of 30 principals and 480 teachers, the respondents were randomly selected from 30 public secondary schools, representing ten percents (10%) of the total existing 304 public secondary schools in Ondo state. The secondary schools were selected using multi-stage sampling method from 5 Local Government Areas (LGAs) out of the existing five educational zones (Akure, Ikare, Okitipupa, Ondo, and Owo) in Ondo State, South-west, Nigeria.

Two research instruments were used for data collection; they are "Coordinating and Controlling Strategies Questionnaire (CCSQ)"; and Interview Guide for Principals (IGP). The questionnaire (CCSQ) was a 43--structured questionnaire developed by the researchers and comprised of two sections. The first, section A, had 23 items which sought information from the school principals on teachers' instructional performance and students' learning outcomes, while the second, section B, had 20 items; that sought relevant research information from the teachers on the level of principals' coordinating and controlling strategies in secondary schools. The instrument utilized a 4- point rating scale indicating strongly agree, agree, fairly agree, disagree, and strongly disagree with 5, 4, 3, 2, and 1 rating points used to assess the level of principals' coordinating and controlling strategies for effective teaching and quality learning outcome in secondary schools.

The instrument was validated by two experts in the Department of Educational Management; Adekunle Ajasin University, Akungba-Akoko and the items were further subjected to meticulous vetting and review by Test and Measurement experts in the Department of Guidance and Counseling in the Faculty of Education at Adekunle Ajasin University, Akungba-Akoko which ascertained the suitability of the items on the instrument. The reliability coefficient of 0.76 was obtained, using Cronbach alpha, which ascertain the inter-item consistency. Finally, the instrument was administered through the help of two trained research assistants, while the researchers coordinated the administration and collation of completed questionnaires. Four research questions and four hypotheses were formulated. The simple per-cent and mean scores were used to answer the research questions, while Pearson correlation statistics was

employed to test the hypotheses at  $p < 0.05$  level of significance; using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 16.0.

#### **4. Results**

The results of data analysis were presented in order of research questions and hypothesis while discussions of findings were carried out to examine principals' coordinating and controlling strategies in determining the quality of teaching and learning outcome in secondary schools.

##### *4.1 How do principals perceive teachers' instructional performance in secondary schools?*

The evidence from the data analysis presented in table 1 showed that the level of teachers' instructional performance was good as rated by the school principals and reflected in the following percentage points: strongly agreed (6.7%-60%); agreed (26.7%-53.3%); fairly agreed (3.3%-50%); disagreed (3.3%-30%); and strongly disagreed (0%). The tasks that were well performed included: preparation of lesson notes, checking of lesson notes, teaching of lessons, continuous assessment of learners, classroom management, checking of students' notes, filling of diaries, capacity development and collegiality. However, the following tasks were fairly performed by teachers: usage of instructional materials, marking of students' class attendance, while 10% of teachers did not attend to their lessons punctually and regularly.

**Table 1: Principals' Ratings on Teachers' Instructional Performance (N = 30)**

S/N	ITEMS	SA (%)	A (%)	FA (%)	D (%)	SD (%)
1.	My teachers prepare their lesson notes promptly according to the syllabus	43.3	53.3	3.3	0	0
2.	All lesson notes are checked and marked promptly and regularly by the vice-principals/heads of departments on weekly basis	40.0	46.7	13.3	0	0
3.	The teachers make good use of instructional materials while teaching	0	43.3	50.0	6.7	0
4.	All the teachers attend to their lessons punctually and regularly	13.3	53.3	23.3	10.0	0
5.	The teachers mark students' attendance during lessons	0	26.7	43.3	30.0	0
6.	The teacher have effective classroom management	16.7	66.7	16.7	0	0
7.	All the teachers give notes and written work to students regularly	20.0	43.3	33.3	3.3	0
8.	The teachers conduct continuous assessments on regularly basis	60.0	36.7	3.3	0	0
9.	The teachers mark students exercises/written work regularly	10.0	50.0	36.7	3.3	0
10.	All the teachers fill their dairies of work up to date	46.7	40.0	13.3	0	0
11.	The teachers show interest in capacity development training	33.3	50.0	13.3	3.3	0
12.	The teachers maintain good working relationship with colleagues	50.0	43.3	6.7	0	0
13.	Students' achievement in 2013 WASSCE, it is Excellent (5) if 75% or more obtained 5 credits and above including English Language and Mathematics; Very Good-4 (60%-74%); Good-3 (50%-59%); Fair-2 (40%-49%); Poor-1 (below 40%).	6.7	40.0	20.0	13.3	20.0

#### 4.2 How do teachers perceive principals' coordinating strategies in secondary schools?

The data presented in table 2 revealed that principals' coordinating strategies was good as indicated by the teachers' ratings and reflected in the following percentage points: strongly agreed (24%-70.7%); agreed (22.7%-48.7%); fairly agreed (4.7%-28.7%); disagreed (0.9%-11.8%); and strongly disagreed (0.4%-11.3%). The tasks that were well coordinated by the school principals included: appointment of heads of departments based on qualifications, seniority and teaching experience; grouping of teachers into departments; management of

teachers by the heads of departments; effective communication with teachers; distribution of authorities and responsibilities to teachers; consideration of subject teachers' requests; team work among teachers; brainstorming among teachers; and inter-departmental cooperation. However, 59% of teachers have subject overload.

**Table 2:** Teachers' Rating on Principal's Coordinating Strategies (N = 450)

S/N	ITEMS	SA (%)	A (%)	FA (%)	D (%)	SD (%)
1	All the teachers are well grouped into departments in my school	67.1	25.1	4.9	2.4	0.4
2	The appointment of HODs is strictly based on competence (qualifications, seniority and teaching experience )	70.7	22.7	4.7	0.9	1.1
3	Allocation of subjects to teachers is strictly based on areas of specialization	49.3	30.7	13.3	5.1	1.6
4	My subject workload is within my capacity/not too many for me	24.0	34.4	18.4	11.8	11.3
5	The principal responds promptly to the needs of my subject (s)	24.0	38.2	28.7	7.8	1.3
6	The principal clearly defines responsibilities to avoid conflict among teachers	36.2	48.7	11.1	2.7	1.3
7	Teachers in my department always brainstorm together to solve difficult concepts in their subject	35.1	40.2	14.7	7.3	2.7
8	The principal encourages cooperation among teachers within and across departments on the teaching of inter-disciplinary subjects such as Social Studies, Basic Science, Basic Technology and others	36.0	42.4	12.9	7.6	1.1
9	The principal maintains effective communication with teachers in my department	40.7	43.1	10.9	3.8	1.6
10	Teachers in my department are well managed by the head of department	48.4	40.4	9.6	0.9	0.7

#### 4.3. How do teachers perceive principals' controlling strategies in secondary schools?

The data presented in table 3 showed that majority of the teachers strongly agreed (17.8%-61.3%) and agreed (27.6%-47.8%) that the principals made good use of controlling strategies to enhance teachers' instructional performance in secondary schools. The controlling strategies that were effectively used by principals included: intimating teachers with school goals and supervision schedule; regulating teachers' activities in line with the school's

rules and regulations; involvement of vice-principals and heads of departments in classroom supervision; checking of teachers' lesson notes and records of work by the vice-principals and heads of departments; unscheduled visits to teachers in the classrooms; discussing performance feedback with teachers; and follow up activities. However, the provision of learning resources and reward of teachers for extra work done are still at the average level of controlling strategies.

**Table 3:** Teachers' Rating on Principal's Controlling Strategies (N = 450)

S/N	ITEMS	SA (%)	A (%)	FA (%)	D (%)	SD (%)
11	The principal set goals to be achieved, designs supervision schedule and intimate teachers with the plan	38.4	43.3	13.6	3.3	1.3
12	Teachers' activities are regulated by laid down rules and regulations in the school	43.1	47.8	6.9	1.8	0.4
13	The principal involves the vice-principals and heads of departments in classroom supervision	54.0	35.8	6.0	2.9	1.3
14	The principal/vice -principal/HOD always check my lesson notes and record of work towards students' academic works	61.3	32.4	4.2	1.6	0.4
15	The principal provides adequate resources (textbooks and instructional materials) to support curriculum delivery	21.6	35.3	22.9	15.1	5.1
16	The principal always carry out unscheduled visits to teachers in the classrooms	28.0	46.0	16.0	7.8	2.2
17	The principal discusses performance feedback with teachers after classroom supervision	28.9	40.0	19.3	8.7	3.1
18	The principal always follow up teachers' work after the performance review meeting	24.0	42.2	22.7	8.0	3.1
19	The principal always issue query to those teachers who have been very irregular in their lessons	23.6	41.3	20.7	10.7	3.8
20	The principal reward teachers for extra work done	17.8	27.6	23.8	18.0	12.9

#### 4.4 What are the constraints faced by principals in coordinating and controlling of teachers instructional tasks in secondary schools?

The evidence from the data analysis in table 4 showed that 5 out of the 10 items are factor constraints militating against effective coordination and control of instructional activities in secondary schools. The major constraints identified by

the principals are reflected in the following percentage points: inadequate number of qualified teachers (50%); excess workload for teachers (63.3%); inadequate learning resources (63.3%); lack of adequate and well equipped offices for teachers (80%); lack of conducive classrooms (36.7%); and fairly conducive classrooms (40%).

**Table 4:** Challenges facing Principal's Coordinating and Controlling Strategies in Secondary Schools (N = 30)

S/N	ITEMS	SA (%)	A (%)	FA (%)	D (%)	SD (%)
16.	The school has adequate number of qualified teachers in all subjects on the curriculum	0	20.0	30.0	43.3	6.7
17.	The teachers usually complain of excess workload	33.3	30.0	16.7	20.0	0
18.	The HODs practice inter-departmental team teaching among teachers	10.0	30.0	30.0	26.7	3.3
19.	The HODs are very effective in the management, monitoring and supervision of teachers in their various departments	20.0	40.0	26.7	13.3	0
20.	The HODs give prompt and regular performance feedback to teachers in their respective departments	16.7	46.7	26.7	10.0	0
21.	The school has adequate learning resources (library materials, laboratory equipment and other instructional materials) for effective teaching and learning activities	6.7	30.0	33.3	23.3	6.7
22.	The school has adequate and well equipped offices for teachers	0	20.0	40.0	33.3	6.7
23.	The school has conducive learning environment (classrooms) for the entire student population	6.7	16.7	40.0	20.0	16.7
24.	The school receives adequate learning resources from the government	0	23.3	40.0	26.7	10.0
25.	The school enjoys adequate support from the PTA on the provision and maintenance of learning facilities	20.0	43.3	20.0	13.3	3.3

#### 4.5 Relationship between Principals' Coordinating Strategies and Teachers' Instructional Performance.

The result presented in table 5 revealed that the calculated r-value (0.284) was less than the critical-value (0.64) at  $p < 0.05$  is not significant. Hence, the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) is accepted while the alternative hypothesis ( $H_a$ ) is rejected.

**Table 5:** Relationship between Principals' Coordinating Strategies and Teachers' Instructional Performance

Items	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	r	Sig
Coordinating Strategies	450	4.5867	0.55664	0.284	0.64
Teachers' Instructional Performance	30	3.7000	1.05536		

#### 4.6 Relationship between Principals' Controlling Strategies and Teachers' Instructional Performance

The result presented in table 6 revealed that the calculated r-value (0.149) was less than the critical-value (0.216) at  $p < 0.05$  is not significant. Hence, the null hypothesis (Ho) is accepted while the alternative hypothesis (Ha) is rejected.

**Table 6:** Relationship between Principals' Controlling Strategies and Teachers' Instructional Performance

Items	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	r	Sig
Controlling Strategies	450	4.3689	0.64148	0.149	0.216
Teachers' Instructional Performance	30	3.7000	1.05536		

#### 4.7 Relationship between Teachers' Instructional Performance and Students' learning outcomes

The result presented in table 7 revealed that the calculated r-value (0.076) was less than the critical-value (0.345) at  $p < 0.05$  is not significant. The null hypothesis (Ho) of no significant relationship is accepted while the alternative hypothesis (Ha) is rejected.

**Table 7:** Relationship between Teachers' Instructional Performance and students' Learning Outcomes

Items	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	r	Sig
Teachers' Instructional Performance	30	3.7000	1.05536	0.076	0.345
Students' Learning Outcomes	30	3.0000	1.28654		



#### 4.8 Principals' coordinating and controlling strategies will not jointly have significant effect on students' learning outcomes in secondary schools

The result presented in table 8 showed that the calculated r-value (0.094) was less than the critical-value (0.311) at  $p < 0.05$  is not significant. The null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) is of no significant relationship is accepted while the alternative hypothesis ( $H_a$ ) is rejected.

**Table 8:** Relative effect of Principals' Coordinating and Controlling Strategies on Students' Learning Outcomes

Items	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	r	Sig
Coordinating and Controlling Strategies	450	4.5089	.57114	0.094	0.311
Students' Learning Outcomes	30	3.0000	3.0000		

#### 4.9 Discussions

The findings of the study in table 5, revealed a low significant relationship between principals' coordinating strategies and teachers' instructional performance. Despite the fact that the school principals grouped teachers into departments that are managed by the heads of departments while many teachers prepared lesson notes and conducted continuous assessment for learners; this has not yielded the desired results in table 7 which shows that there is no significant relationship between teachers' instructional performance and students' learning outcome. This is evident in 38.8% of the students that obtained credit level passes in five subjects and above, including English Language and Mathematics in 2012 and 28.8% recorded in 2013 in Ondo State. The low academic performance could be partly attributed to 63% of teachers that have excess workload, inadequate learning resources in the library and science laboratory (43%), and low usage of instructional materials by 56% of the teachers during teaching-learning process as evident in the analysis of data in tables 1 and 4 respectively.

The implication is that teaching would not be thorough as many teachers in an attempt to cover the syllabus would be giving scanty notes to students who will have limited knowledge. The principals are not likely to have effective control since majority of the teachers have excess workload that often hindered them from being thorough in curriculum delivery. The resultant effect is poor academic performance and non realization of the desired learning outcomes in secondary schools. The relatively low effect of principals' coordinating and controlling strategies on students' learning outcome indicated in table 8 also confirms the earlier findings by researchers such as Lunenburg & Ornstein (1991), McEwen (1998), Blasé (2001), and Adeniji (2002) who reported on dwindling academic performance of secondary school students partly due to non-challant attitude of school teachers in curriculum delivery and lack of

effective coordination and control by the school principals. This situation hampered the quality of curriculum delivery and learning outcome in secondary schools.

The school principals interviewed said that teachers are inadequate in many subjects namely English Language, Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, Animal Husbandry, Civic Education and Trade Subjects. The principals have been mobilizing the Parents Teachers Association (PTA) to engage the services of part-time teachers to complement teachers' efforts in some subjects in the certificate classes where there is acute shortage of teachers. However, the PTA still have the strong believe that it is the government responsibility to ensure adequate number of teachers in secondary schools.

There is a relatively low significant relationship between principals' controlling strategies and teachers' instructional performance. The teachers' ratings on principals' controlling strategies revealed that many principals intimidated teachers with school goals and supervision schedule, involved vice-principals and heads of departments in classroom supervision, checking of teachers' lesson notes and records of work, and follow up activities. However, the provision of learning resources and reward of teachers for extra work done are still very low in secondary schools. The teachers interviewed complained of inadequate motivation to stimulate their interest for efficient service delivery since many of the classrooms are in poor condition with class sizes ranging from 60-75 students in urban schools. This impaired effective teaching and learning processes and caused poor classroom management in secondary schools.

The outcome of the study also revealed no significant relationship between teachers' instructional performance and students' learning outcomes in secondary schools. By implication, teachers occupy centre stage in the teaching and learning processes; while students' academic performance is dependent greatly on teachers' content knowledge, pedagogical skills and competence. There is a high mean score of 3.70 recorded on teachers' instructional performance in table 7, which implied that majority of the teachers accorded the desired attention to teaching and learning processes. However, the mean score of 3.00 recorded on students' learning outcome was very low because many of them are not equipped with the necessary learning materials. The teachers interviewed revealed that less than 30% of the students have textbooks in subjects such as English Language and Mathematics, while most have no textbooks in others subjects. This made it difficult for most learners to extend learning beyond the classrooms while the principals' coordinating and controlling strategies to make teachers work very hard to improve students' learning outcomes have not yielded the desired results. The implication is poor academic performance. It could be deduced that students are faced with a lot of challenges which require stakeholders' intervention.

### 5.1 Conclusion

The study concluded that effective coordination and control of teachers' instructional performance by principals are no doubt the hob of students' learning outcome and leads to quality education in secondary schools. The noticeable gaps in teachers' instructional performance and students' learning outcome could be partly attributed to shortage of qualified teachers and inadequate learning resources that will eventually result into good output (product value). In Nigeria, the level of learning achievement of students in secondary schools is relatively low partly due to the inability of the government to provide adequate learning facilities and teachers for effective curriculum delivery in secondary schools. As a result, students are faced with a lot of challenges which require stakeholders' intervention to improve the standard of secondary education. The continuous teachers' capacity development, motivation and effective coordination and control by the principals are potent factors for teachers' morale and commitment to instructional tasks performance, which are great determinants of the quality of students' learning outcome.

### 5.2 Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made in order to improve instructional management for the achievement of better learning outcomes in secondary schools.

- The Government should provide adequate number of qualified teachers to ensure thorough teaching and full coverage of the syllabi in all subjects; this will also make coordinating and controlling functions of principals to be effective and achieve the desired learning outcome in secondary schools.
- Government should provide adequate classrooms to decongest large class size and improve working environment of teachers by providing good offices to motivate them for greater productivity in secondary schools
- The school principals should provide adequate instructional materials and facilities through Parents-Teachers Associations, (PTA), Old Students' Associations, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), Communities, Philanthropists and other Development Partners, to enhance effective teaching and learning processes in secondary schools.
- The school authority should give periodic feedback on students' academic performance and sensitize parents to equip their children/wards with the prescribed textbooks and other learning materials to improve the quality of learning outcome in secondary schools.
- School principals should collaborate with relevant stakeholders to organize capacity development workshop for teachers on production and effective utilization of instructional materials to enhance teaching-learning process in secondary schools.

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