International Journal of Scientific Research in Education (IJSRE)

ISSN: 1117-3259

Principals' Curricular and School–Community Relations Instrumentalities for Sustaining Peaceful Learning Environments in Secondary Schools in Bayelsa State, Nigeria

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Abstract

The study examined principals' curricular and school-community relations instrumentalities for sustaining peaceful learning environments in secondary schools in Bayelsa State of Nigeria. Two (2) research questions and 2 hypotheses were answered and tested in the study, respectively. The design of the study was the analytic descriptive survey, with the population as all the 188 public secondary schools in Bayelsa State of Nigeria. These schools have a staff strength of 4579 (3872-teaching and 707-non teaching, from which 371 (321-teaching and 50-non teaching) were selected as sample, using the purposive and stratified random sampling technique. The instrument of the study was a researchers' constructed and validated 14-item scale titled Principals' Curricular and School Community Relations Instrumentalities for Sustaining Peaceful Learning Environments Scale (PCSCRISPLES), with a reliability index of 0.74, obtained using the Cronbach Alpha model. Mean and standard deviation were used in answering the research questions while t-test was used in testing the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The results of the study show that principals curricular and school-community relations instrumentalities sustain peaceful learning environments in secondary schools in Bayelsa State of Nigeria. Consequently, it was concluded that curricular and school-community relations instrumentalities of principals contribute immensely to sustaining peaceful learning environments in schools. Therefore, it was recommended that stakeholders in school governance should continue to utilize existing curricular and school-community relations instrumentalities in maintaining peace in school systems while also looking out for more proactive curricular and external relations laden approaches.

Keywords: Principals, Curricular, School, Community Relations, Instrumentalities, Sustaining, Peaceful Learning, Environment.

Reference to this paper should be made as follows:

Ben, A. O. M., & Afangideh, S. T. (2019). Principals' Curricular and School-Community Relations Instrumentalities for Sustaining Peaceful Learning Environments in Secondary Schools in Bayelsa State, Nigeria. *International Journal of Scientific Research in Education, 12*(1), 66-79. Retrieved [DATE] from http://www.ijsre.com.

INTRODUCTION

Traditionally, societies at the local, national, continental and inter-continental levels, have some basic seen and unseen heritages of value. These heritages include the knowledge of events and cultural behaviours of a people, the skills which the people of particular societies possess and the general attitudes or value of such societies. The knowledge components of societal heritages keeps alive all the past, present and future heritages of value to a society. Differently, the skills component handles the heritages that show-cases the special abilities of a people, as exemplified in their occupations and sports prowess while the attitudes and values are exemplified in the ways individuals in societies are expected to behave and which stands as marks of identity of such societies.

Following from the contributions of the heritages to societal growth and development, societies make deliberate and indeliberate efforts to keep these heritages alive from generation to generation. This dream is achieved through education. Education has to do with the transmission of the worthwhile knowledge, skills and values of a people from one generation to another (Schofield, 1990). Apparently, attaching contemporary implication, Afangideh and Aliexi (2016) consider education to be the introduction of the younger, needy and desiring members of the society into society's knowledge, skills and values from one generation to another. Educational institutions see to the actualization of these dreams.

Agreed that schools as educational institutions, take care of the transmission of the cultural knowledge, skills and values of the society, these cultural values must be transmitted to the learners in an environment that is devoid of rancor but laden with peace. This thinking is in agreement with Afangideh and Ipalibo-Wokoma (2016), who in their research note that, learning can only take place in peaceful environments. For these dream to be actualized, school leaders have a duty to ensure peace in their schools.

Scholars, among them Afangideh and Kpee (2018) are of the opinion that school leaders use both curricular and school community relations instrumentalities in furthering the course of peace in their schools. Following from these, the proceeding section of the review is based on the curricular and school-community relations instrumentalities as they may have implications for peaceful learning environments in schools. Thus:

Principals' Curricular Instrumentalities for Sustaining Peaceful Learning Environments in Schools

The content of educational curriculum should encourage the use of communicative and practical interactive teaching and learning strategies always and also indoctrinating people by inculcating in them the habit of working together as a group, which also shows that the principal could implement the school curricular programmes or activities which includes teaching subjects and other programmes that would promote mutual love and understanding, giving people the ability to imbibe a win-win attitude and as such discouraging violence and therefore creating and sustaining peaceful learning environment (Onyene, Adekunle, Umoren & Ekpe-Iko, 2014). The principal has to be careful in planning the use of curricular instrumentalities so as to promote a peaceful learning environment. These curricular instrumentalities are subject context, subject perspectives, teaching methods, co-curricular activities, staff development and classroom management.

Subject context as an instrumentality, ensures that the subjects that are taught in the school, are subjects that will promote peace. This involves subjects that will teach morals to the children. Subjects like local language, social studies, religion, physical education, arts and science are the core curricular subjects, which can be used to infuse peace (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation, 2001). Edenkwo and Edenkwo (20017)

opine that if the goals and aims of education are to produce good and sound citizens, then integrity and ethical behaviours must be made a part of the school curricular, which will go a long way in sharpening students' focus. This means that with the foregoing, embedded into the curriculum, students will be dissuaded from dishonest acts and in the same vein, teachers will execute tasks in tandem with the curricular, to ensure efficiency, and a conducive and peaceful environment to enhance effective teaching and learning activities.

Subject perspective helps teachers to make subjects meaningful to the students, by encouraging them to undergo training and staff development programmes, so as to develop themselves and improve on their teaching skills. With this, the subjects will not just be learned merely for the subject's sake because it has to be interpreted in such a manner that it will contribute to the learners' social, emotional, intellectual and moral self-development. Hence, the principal will achieve his intentions of creating a peaceful learning environment. (Maduabuchi, 2002). Teaching methods in the school setting entails how subjects are taught.

Aja (2014) opines that, the principal should ensure that, teachers use different teaching methods in teaching, to make learning interesting and to arouse students' interests in the objectives of the lesson and school, as this will help promote a healthy learning environment. This indicates that a good teacher is not only concerned with imparting knowledge but also concerned with developing skills, morals, attitudes and learning skills of children to ensure that the principal achieves a peaceful learning environment.

Co-curricular activities are activities that take place outside the classroom, for the purpose of helping students understand better the subjects they are taught in the classroom. (Merriam Webster, 2011). Extra-curricular activities are also included so as to harmonize the teachers and the students and also the school and the community. These activities for Olawolu (2017) include inter-house sports competition, debates, quiz and Parent Teachers' Association (PTA) meetings, among others. These are indications that when these activities are properly organized, the principal will be able to achieve a peaceful environment and the goals of education for the ultimate growth and development of staff and student personnel.

Edenkwo and Edenkwo (2017) maintain that, nations who wish to, endeavour to continuously equip its citizens with qualitative and quantitative education, through nonstop teachings and research activities. The researchers further that these can only be actualized when teachers are constantly and continuously managed and equipped with various staff development programmes, since they are the key or change agents in education. For Ejiogu (1990), Osagie (2011) and Ejionueme (2012) staff education programmes include conferences, seminars, and workshops. These staff development programmes ensure that teachers are involved in various programmes to raise awareness and be conscious of their environments, in order to handle students and relate with people in the school environment. (Madumere-Obike, 2005).

This is suggestive of the fact that these staff development programmes furnish teachers with requisite skills and competencies to improve teaching and enhance peaceful environment within the school. In the same vein, another instrument used by principals is effective classroom management. In the view of Aja (2014), classroom management involves maintaining discipline in the school, organizing learning, character building, conflict resolution, counseling, among others. These promote a peaceful learning environment. Classroom management refers to all the activities the teacher engages in, which leads to the achievement and the success of teaching and learning (Agabi, 2002). This shows that, when teachers adequately manage their classes, it ensures that students understand the objectives of the lesson and spur teachers to deliver the lesson plan, efficiently. Hence, effective classroom management equates to a peaceful learning atmosphere.

Principals' School-Community Relations Instrumentalities for Sustaining Peaceful Learning Environments in Schools

The school exists in the community which makes it inseparable from the community. Abraham (2003) notes that, no school is situated in an island since every school is found in a community. The community is a social system with unrestricted geographical area, that forms the catchment area of the school. Every school depends solemnly on the entity of its community for almost everything it requires such as teaching and non-teaching personnel, students, equipment, facilities, funds and other resources. In other words, the school is not isolated from the community and that is why the principal has to work closely or be in synergy and collaborations with the community leaders, so as to achieve a peaceful learning environment.

School-community relations refer to a non-parasitic relationship between the school and host community in the achievement of educational goals (Abraham, 2006). Quite differently, Nwafor (as cited in Abraham, 2006) asserts that school community relationship depicts a situation where the school needs the community/society to survive. This suggests that the principal must have a synergistic relationship with the community for its existence, growth and survival. Thus, there must exists a regular harmonious relationship between the school (the principal as the school head) and the community to ensure a peaceful learning environment.

Olawolu and Madumere-Obike (2011) posit that the principal as the head of the school is in the position to regularly interact with the community. While stressing on this account, the scholars declares that the interactive section will determine the sort of impression and relationship the community would have with the school. The practice of inter-personal relationship will bring about an atmosphere that is accommodating for building confidence and there will be agreement between the education stakeholders that will eventually help to minimize violence (Madumere-Obike, 2005). In other words, the principal who deals directly with the surrounding communities should bear in mind the needs of the society and also be ready to appreciate the efforts and contributions of every other education stakeholder such as parents, corporate organizations and other community entities surrounding the school environment and channeling the human efforts to achieve success in education. Little wonder, Olawolu and Madumere-Obike (2011) suggest that there is need for both the public and the school to work co-operatively for the good of education, thereby giving room for both parties to trade their knowledge and skills.

It will be counter-productive to regard school community relationship as a situation whereby one will be dictating to the other. The relationship is reciprocal, and such that stresses the influence of one on the other in equitable terms. The ways in which principals' relationship with communities assist in sustaining a peaceful environment are through leadership style, the parley, school community flexibility, development of certain attitude and mental attributes, transmission of values, assistance from both the school and the community and community development (Peterson, 2015).

Leadership style involves the role of the principal which includes using his initiatives to plan various processes and procedures for keeping the board, staff and public well informed. However, the community cannot be exempted from this because it is only when there is a cordial relationship between the school and the community that the principal can perform and sustain a peaceful environment (Peterson, 2015). In order words, the relationship between the school and the community affects the leadership style of the principal and this can also affect the school environment because where the principal is autocratic and feels he can do without the community, there will be conflict between the school and the community. According to Ojedele (2000), it is through the relationships that exist between the schools and

the community that the principal can learn about the progress, development and problems of the community and vice versa through appropriate leadership methods.

The parley provides an avenue for individuals both from the school and the community to come together to discuss, brainstorm, ask questions, seek information, make suggestions, raise issues, examine some issues and map out lines for action for solving identified problems (Okafor, 2014). This suggests that problems are inevitable in organisations and it is through adequate relationships with stakeholders that solutions are proffered to ameliorate these challenges in order to ensure a peaceful learning environment. Bello (20110 opines that open relationship between the school and the community will assist in making community resources fully utilized for school improvement. This will help all personnel connected with the school system, to become sensitive to the meaning and importance of their contacts in the community. These coming together could be in form of PTA meetings, where the principal will have the opportunity to explain to the parents and guardians of students about the recent happenings in the school. This helps in promoting a peaceful learning environment because it assists in making the students, parents, teachers and other stakeholders to be abreast with the dealing of the school with the principal being flexible in achieving the goals of the school.

School community flexibility becomes the watch word in school community relationship because without the principal being flexible, he cannot achieve a peaceful environment. Hence, the principal needs to be flexible in order to achieve the goals of the school. Therefore, there is no permanent beneficiary because either party stands to gain from the other in turns. Either party should be ready to part with ideas viewed as profitable for the benefit of the other party, likewise, both party should be prepared to accept whatever useful ideas that are introduced by either parties once it becomes clear that an old idea is crude or less useful than the newly acquired one. It is in this line of thought that Ojedele (2002) posits that all parties involved in school relations have valid ideas and contributions, and as such should be willing to share and collaborate their knowledge for the advancement of mutual growth and educational goals. This implies that healthy collaborations will yield or promote growth and easy attainment of both individual and group goals.

The relationship between the school and the communities could be by making some school facilities and resources available to the community for educational and social purposes. For examples, the Parents' Teachers Association could hold their meetings in the schools; the local education officer might use the assembly hall for conducting common entrance examination or evening classes. During vacations the halls in the school could be used as venues for in-service courses, just as students' association might wish to hold dances or meetings. At times, some items of furniture could be borrowed for important official occasion. Instead of refusing them, the school should instead commit the people in writing in case of loss or damage to property. With this, the principal will be able to sustain a peaceful learning environment.

Little wonder, Yusuf (2000) agrees that school community relations are strong instrumentalities for effective administration of the school as it will help in policy formulation and aids the existence of a good relationship between the school and the host communities for the development of the right attitude and attributes. With the cordial relationship existing between the school and the community, both the students, staff and members of the community develop the right attitudes and attributes as they ensures that the school environment is peaceful for quality teaching and learning. It is on this note that Ojibara (2002) states that, the larger society expects students to develop certain attitude and mental attributes necessary for improvement of the quality of their lives and that of the society. This implies that for a peaceful learning environment, students need to develop good attitudes, values and abilities to enable peace flourish and for a peaceful learning environment

in the school which helps in the attainment of educational goals. The school should be able to transmit the right values to the students.

The school transmits values to its students which help them in their day-to-day activities and the community also transmits its own values to both the school and its occupants and the community in general. The principal can sustain a peaceful environment if he plays his role in making sure that the values of the community are adhered to because this will help prevent crisis between the school and the community. Since the school is to transmit the values of the society to the new generation, the community should also respect the values of the school so as to sustain a peaceful environment (Peterson, 2015). This shows that the school and the community are inseparable and should not do without the other.

Assistance from both the school and community: some communities are buoyant enough financially to build classrooms for their schools. Sometimes, the community has direct contact with local school board to influence their activities in promoting teaching and learning process. In some cases, when the schools have shortage of teachers, the community in which the school is situated employs teachers to support the government staff and the payment will be from the community's purse which means that the community also gives financial and moral assistance. The community can also support by managing the finances of the school and applying the appropriate checks and balances in financial deals on behalf of the school. It is on this note that Opadokun (2002) and Eshiet (2014) posit that school personnel services are being sponsored by both the communities where the schools are situated as they assist in providing classroom buildings to compliment government efforts and also the provision of personnel services in the school. The implication of this is that, these partnerships will yield quality outcomes, since no single individual or organisation can solely provide all that educational institutions need to maintain and retain a positive and peaceful learning and congenial atmosphere.

The school should also be involved in developing the community as this could be through community service, engaging in cultural activities to promote the culture of the community, among others. Communities should be prepared to accept the good ideas which the school introduces in order to maintain good school community relationships and also participate in projects development. The school should also take into consideration individuals' psychological needs so as to achieve organizational goals through motivation. The school provides co-curricular activities to develop skills in games and physical development, demonstrate active interest in community life though promoting the involvement and participation of the school in suitable social activities and extramural programmes. For instance, the school can organize cultural activities, club meetings, social welfare programmes, adult education schemes, sporting activities and community project. Some members of staff can serve as members of local committees. The school can initiate supports or help in social programmes such as clean-up campaign, relationship club, the organization to help the destitute, further education programmes and nursery education.

Statement of the Problem

The use of curricular and school-community relations instrumentalities have gained wide appeal as measures for sustaining peaceful learning environment in schools. As a result, school leaders are expected to use these instrumentalities in the course of school administration. Quite surprisingly, it is difficult to explain the incidents of rancor and insecurity which tend to and appears to be enveloping our schools in recent times. These call to question, whether curricular and school-community relations instrumentalities do no longer work in the creation of a peaceful environment for learning in educational institutions. These bothered the researchers, who considered it expedient to go into the study to unravel

the place of curricular and school-community relations as instrumentalities for enhancing peaceful learning environments at the secondary level of education.

Aim and Objectives of the Study

The study examined the curricular and school- community relation instrumentalities for sustaining peaceful learning environments in secondary schools in Bayelsa State of Nigeria. Specifically, the study sought to:

- Ascertain the principals' curricular instrumentalities for sustaining peaceful learning environments in secondary schools in Bayelsa State of Nigeria.
- Examine the ways principals' school-community relations instrumentalities sustains peaceful learning environments in secondary schools in Bayelsa State of Nigeria.

Research Questions

- What are the principals' curricular instrumentalities for sustaining peaceful learning environments in secondary schools in Bayelsa State of Nigeria?
- In what ways do principals' school-community relations instrumentalities sustain peaceful learning environments in secondary schools in Bayelsa State of Nigeria?

Hypotheses

- There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of teaching and non-teaching staff on the principals' curricular instrumentalities for sustaining peaceful learning environments in secondary schools in Bayelsa State of Nigeria.
- There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of teaching and non-teaching staff on the ways principals' school-community relations instrumentalities sustain peaceful learning environments in secondary schools in Bayelsa State of Nigeria.

METHODOLOGY

The design for the study was the analytic descriptive survey, with the population as all the 188 public secondary schools in Bayelsa State. These schools have a staff strength of 4579 (3872-teaching and 707-non-teaching, from which 371 (321-teaching and 50-non-teaching) were selected as sample, using the purposive and stratified random sampling techniques. The respondents of the study responded to a validated researchers' constructed 14-item instrument titled Principals Curricular and School-Community Relations Instrumentalities for Sustaining Peaceful Learning Environment Scale (PCSCRISPLES), with a reliability index of 0.74, obtained using the Cronbach Alpha model. Mean and standard deviation were used in answering the research questions while z-test was used in testing the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

RESULTS

The results of the study came from the answers to the research questions and the test of hypotheses.

Research Question 1: What are the principals' curricular instrumentalities for sustaining peaceful learning environments in secondary schools Bayelsa State of Nigeria?

Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation on the Mean Ratings of Teaching and Non-Teaching Staff on the Principals' Curricular Instrumentalities for Sustaining Peaceful Learning Environments in Secondary Schools in Bayelsa State of Nigeria.

S/N	ITEMS	MEAN RESPONSES					
		$\overline{x}_1$	SD_1	$\overline{x}_2$	SD_2	$\overline{xx}$	Remarks
1	Effective principals ensure that only subjects with morals are taught in schools.	2.91	0.98	2.48	1.13	2.69	Agreed
2	Effective principal curricular instrumentalities ensure the teachings of relevant subjects by encouraging teacher development programmes.	3.05	0.94	2.59	1.15	2.82	Agreed
3	Effective curricular instrumentalities spur teachers to adopt different teaching strategies to make learning interesting to students.	2.86	1.05	2.91	1.15	2.89	Agreed
4	Principals' effective instrumentalities spur personnel to emphasize on extra-curricular activities in the curricular to harmonize stakeholders.	2.95	1.02	2.93	1.12	2.94	Agreed
5	Principals' curricular instrumentalities ensure teacher growth through adequate staff development programmes.	2.80	1.00	2.83	1.08	2.82	Agreed
6	Efficient classroom management assists teachers to promote a peaceful learning environment.	2.83	1.06	2.78	1.05	2.81	Agreed
7	Principals' effective curricular instrumentalities assist in policy making to maintain discipline in the school environment.	2.84	1.01	2.78	1.17	2.81	Agreed
Criterion $\overline{x}$ = 2.50		**2.89**	**1.01**	**2.56**	**1.12**	**2.83**	**Agreed**

Legend

$\overline{x}_1$ = mean: Group 1

SD_1 = standard deviation: Group 1

$\overline{x}_2$ = mean: Group 2

SD_2 = standard deviation: Group 2

$\overline{xx}$ = Weighted mean

Scale

1.00 – 2.49 - Disagreed

2.50 – 4.00 – Agreed

Data on Table 1 show that all items 1-7 had mean ratings above the criterion mean of 2.50 and were adjudged as principals' curricular instrumentalities for sustaining peaceful learning environments in secondary schools in Bayelsa State of Nigeria. In summary, with an aggregate mean of 2.83 above the criterion mean of 2.50, teaching and non-teaching staff agreed that principals' curricular instrumentalities for sustaining peaceful learning environments in schools is through teaching of subjects with morals, teaching of relevant subjects, adopting different teaching strategies, emphasizing on extra-curricular activities, adequate staff development programmes, efficient classroom management and policy making to maintain discipline.

Research Question 2: In what ways do principals' school-community relations instrumentalities sustains peaceful learning environments in secondary schools in Bayelsa State of Nigeria?

Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation on the Mean Ratings of Teaching and Non-Teaching Staff on the Ways Principals' School-Community Relations Instrumentalities Sustains Peaceful Learning Environments in Secondary Schools Bayelsa State of Nigeria.

S/N	ITEMS	MEAN RESPONSES					
		$\bar{x}_1$	SD_1	$\bar{x}_2$	SD_2	$\overline{xx}$	Remarks
8	Effective principal relationship with communities assist principals with initiatives to constantly keep stakeholders informed.	2.84	1.03	2.48	1.07	2.66	Agreed
9	Continuous principal relationship with members of the community spurs collaborations among stakeholders to solve eminent school problems.	2.951	1.00	2.85	1.05	2.90	Agreed
10	Principal-community relationships transcend to profitable relationships amongst stakeholders.	2.54	1.05	3.00	0.99	2.77	Agreed
11	Principal-community relationships equip stakeholders with attributes relevant to societal improvements.	2.59	1.13	2.72	1.15	2.66	Agreed
12	Principal-community relationships ensure that the values of the community are maintained to prevent crisis.	2.71	1.09	2.67	1.14	2.69	Agreed
13	School-community collaborations translate to effective management of school projects.	2.71	1.09	2.67	1.14	2.69	Agreed
14	School-community relationships breeds partnership for the execution of school projects.	2.97	0.99	2.85	1.11	2.91	Agreed
Criterion $\bar{x}$ = 2.50		**2.79**	**1.04**	**2.76**	**1.08**	**2.77**	**Agreed**

* Legend and scale of table one apply.

Data on Table 2 show that items 8-14 had mean ratings above the criterion mean of 2.50 and were adjudged as the ways principals' school-community relations instrumentalities sustain peaceful learning environments in secondary schools in Bayelsa State of Nigeria. In summary, with an aggregate mean of 2.77 above the criterion mean of 2.50, teaching and non-teaching staff agreed that principals' school-community relations instrumentalities sustain peaceful learning environments in secondary schools in Bayelsa State of Nigeria by assisting principals with initiatives to continually keep stakeholders informed, spurring collaborations between principals and stakeholders to solve eminent school problems, enhancing profitable relationships amongst stakeholders, equipping stakeholders with attributes relevant for societal improvement, ensuring that the values of the community are maintained to prevent crisis, encouraging collaborations in the management of school projects and breeding partnerships for the execution of school projects.

H$_{01}$: There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of teaching and non-teaching staff on the principals' curricular instrumentalities for sustaining peaceful learning environments in secondary schools in Bayelsa State of Nigeria.

Table 3: Summary of z-test Analysis on the Mean Ratings of Teaching and Non-Teaching Staff on the Principals' Curricular Instrumentalities for Sustaining Peaceful Learning Environments in Secondary Schools in Bayelsa State of Nigeria

Subjects	N	$\bar{x}$	SD	z-cal	z-crit	df	Results
Teaching Staff	311	2.83	1.05	0.80	1.960	355	Not Significant (Failed to reject)
Non-Teaching Staff	46	2.69	1.11				

Legend

N = Number of Participants $\bar{x}$ = Mean Responses   SD = standard deviation

Cal z = Calculated z-value   z-Crit = z Critical Value   df = Degree of Freedom

Data on Table 3 show summaries of mean ratings, standard deviation and z-test of different between the mean ratings of teaching and non-teaching staff on the principals' curricular instrumentalities for sustaining peaceful learning environments in secondary schools in Bayelsa State of Nigeria. The z-test value calculated and used in testing the hypothesis stood at 0.80 while the z-critical value stood at 1.960 using 355 degrees of freedom at 0.05 level of significance.

At 0.05 level of significance and 355 degrees of freedom, the calculated z-value of 0.80 is less than the critical z-value of 1.960. Hence, the difference between the respondents is not significant. Consequently, the researchers failed to reject the null hypothesis that there is no significant difference between the mean ratings of teaching and non-teaching staff on the principals' curricular instrumentalities for sustaining principal learning environments in secondary schools in Bayelsa State of Nigeria.

H_{02}: There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of teaching and non-teaching staff on the ways principals' school-community relations instrumentalities sustain peaceful learning environments in secondary schools in Bayelsa State of Nigeria.

Table 4: Summary of z-test Analysis on the Mean Ratings of Teaching and Non-Teaching Staff on the Ways Principals' School-Community Relations Instrumentalities Sustain Peaceful Learning Environments in Secondary Schools in Bayelsa State of Nigeria

Subjects	N	$\bar{x}$	SD	z-cal	z-crit	df	Results
Teaching Staff	311	2.78	1.04	0.12	1.960	355	Not Significant (Failed to reject)
Non-Teaching Staff	46	2.76	1.08				

* The legend for Table 3 applies

Data on Table 4 show summaries of mean ratings, standard deviation and z-test of different between the mean ratings of teaching and non-teaching staff on the ways principals' school-community relations instrumentalities sustain peaceful learning environments in secondary schools in Bayelsa State of Nigeria. The z-test value calculated and used in testing the hypothesis stood at 0.12 while the z-critical value stood at 1.960, using 355 degrees of freedom at 0.05 level of significance.

At 0.05 level of significance and 355 degrees of freedom, the calculated z-value of 0.12 is less than the critical z-value of 1.960. Hence, the difference between the respondents is not significant. Consequently, the researchers failed to reject the null hypothesis that there is no significant difference between the mean ratings of teaching and non-teaching staff on

the ways principals' school-community relations instrumentalities sustain peaceful learning environments in secondary schools in Bayelsa State of Nigeria.

DISCUSSION

The Principals' Curricular Instrumentalities for Sustaining Peaceful Learning Environments in Secondary Schools in Bayelsa State of Nigeria

The first finding of the study establishes that peaceful learning environment in schools is sustained through teaching of subjects with morals, teaching of relevant subjects, adopting different teaching strategies, emphasizing on extra-curricular activities, adequate staff development programmes, efficient classroom management and policy making to maintain discipline.

This finding agree with United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation (2001), Edenkwo and Edenkwo (2017), Maduabuchi (2002), Aja (2014), and Madumere-Obike (2005) who in their scholarly and empirical academic contributions show that principals' curricular instrumentalities are highly expedient for the sustenance of peaceful learning environments. This trend could be tied to the fact that when subjects that teach morals, integrity, values and ethical behaviours are embedded into the curriculum, they breed a peaceful learning environment that facilitates effective teaching and learning in schools. This implies that effective teaching and learning cannot take place when the environment lacks congeniality.

However, a corresponding finding from hypothesis testing found no significant difference between the mean ratings of teaching and non-teaching staff on the principals' curricular instrumentalities for sustaining peaceful learning environments in secondary schools in Bayelsa State of Nigeria. This finding however disagrees with the positions taken by the scholars and researchers cited earlier. Despite this disagreement, the finding does not invalidate the fact that principals' curricular instrumentalities sustain peaceful learning environments in secondary schools in Bayelsa State of Nigeria. A possible explanation for this fact may be from the disposition of the respondents, the bias of the respondents and the rigorous statistical tools used in data analysis.

The Ways Principals' School-Community Relations Instrumentalities Sustain Peaceful Learning Environments

The second finding of the study establishes that the ways principals' school-community relations instrumentalities sustain peaceful learning environments are by giving initiatives to keep stakeholders informed, encouraging collaborations between principals and stakeholders to solve problems in the school, boosting profitable relationships amongst stakeholders to improve the society, sustaining community values to prevent crisis, encouraging collaborations in the management of school projects and spurring partnerships to effectively execute school projects.

This finding agrees with Peterson (2015), Ojedele (2000), Okafor (2014), Bello (2011), Yusuf (2000), Ojibara (2002), Opadokun (2002) and Eshiet (2014) who in their scholarly positions provided and ascribed empirical explanations and interpretations that in sustaining peaceful learning environments in schools, principals must have continuous collaborative bonds, synergistic relationships with communities and its stakeholders for its existence, growth and development. This implies that the school does not exist in isolation as

it needs its environment and also welcomes the assistance and contributions from communities and stakeholders to ensure growth and the attainment of goals.

Surprisingly, a corresponding finding from hypothesis testing found no significant difference between the mean ratings of teaching and non-teaching staff on the ways principals' school-community relations instrumentalities sustain peaceful learning environments in secondary schools in Bayelsa State of Nigeria. This finding disagrees with the authors, scholars and researchers referred to in the preceding paragraph and does not negate the fact that schools do not need support from communities, governmental organisations, non-governmental organisation and faith based or religious organisations for their existence, survival and continuous growth. The finding may have resulted from the disposition of the respondents and the rigorous statistical tools used in the test of hypothesis.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of the study, the discussions on them and their educational implications, it is concluded that principals' curricular and school-community relations instrumentalities sustain peaceful learning environments in secondary schools.

Recommendations

Based on the conclusion of the study, it is recommended as follows:

- Principals and other stakeholders in school governance should continue to use existing curricular instrumentalities in maintaining peace in schools while also looking out for more proactive curricular approaches to complement existing ones.
- School principals and significant other stakeholders involved in school administration should continue to use school-community relations instrumentalities in sustaining peace in schools while also looking out for other ways to complement the existing ones.

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