



## **PRINCIPALS MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES FOR ALLEVIATION OF TEACHERS BURNOUT SYNDROME IN ANAMBRA STATE SECONDARY SCHOOLS**

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### **Abstract**

*This study examined the principals management techniques for alleviating teacher burnout syndrome in Anambra state secondary schools.. To guide the study, two research questions and two hypotheses were formulated. Descriptive research design was used for the study. The population of the study consisted of 262 principals in Anambra state. All the principals were used because of their size. Self structured questionnaire containing 16 items and based on four point scale rating was used as instrument for data collection in the study. For reliability of the instrument, the questionnaire was collected, organized and analyzed using Cronbach alpha and was found to be 0.82. Four research assistants aided the researcher in administering and collecting the instruments. The study adopted mean and t-test as instruments for data analysis. Mean was used to answer the research questions while t-test was used to test the null hypotheses. Findings revealed among others that management techniques like encouraging team-work, attending seminars and workshops on burnout management, communicating appropriately with teachers and sharing school purposes, establishing mission and vision to teachers help in controlling and alleviating teacher burnout. Based on these findings, it was recommended that school principals should apply these management techniques for managing teacher burnout, in order to reduce the level of teacher burnout for improvement of their performance and effectiveness.*

***Keywords:*** *Burnout, Syndrome, Techniques, Management, Principal.*

### **Introduction**

Teaching profession is becoming more stressful recently, owing to external and internal work environment, highly intellectual activities that are involved in

teaching and work over load. This was in line with Manabete, John, Makinde and Duwa (2016) when they stated that teaching is one of the most stressful professions globally. This situation exposes teachers to burnout syndrome which is a state of chronic stress. Burnout makes it difficult for teachers to function effectively in the school. According to Ozdemir (2007), burnout is a syndrome of inappropriate attitudes towards clients and towards self, often associated with uncomfortable physical and emotional symptoms ranging from exhaustion and insomnia to migraine and war as well as with deterioration of performance. Burnout is also a multidimensional complication predominantly accompanied with cynicism and indifference towards one's job as well as fetching of interpersonal detachment during work, (Larrivee 2012). In the context of this study, burnout is a state of physical, emotional, mental, cognitive and physiological disruption or malfunction which can disorganize and adversely affect one's professional self efficacy. It might occur at home, in a work place, on the streets, at school or in the market place. In the school, most times teachers are usually affected because of their activities and work load.

Teacher burnout is a negative pattern of responding to stressful teaching events, to students and to teaching as a career, (Ozdemir 2007). Kampen (2020) sees teacher burnout as ongoing anxiety that can have serious negative effects on work and life. Teacher burnout in this context is expression of feelings of weakness in an attempt to teach students, lack of excitement to prepare lesson notes and lesson plan, poor classroom management, inability to motivate oneself to come to school or attend classes, loss of energy and memory and lose of interest in school affairs. Most teachers are bored and unmotivated when they find themselves in a poor working condition, too much work load, over population of students and economic problems.

Betz (2021) emphasized that other causes of teacher burnout are: role conflict among teachers, low salary, poor facilities, poor classroom climate, lack of instructional materials, little support from school managers, erosion of public respect or support for teachers, lack of teachers preparation, dealing with same issues year to year (teaching same thing) and students misbehavior. Teacher's roles cannot be over emphasized as they are the hub of the school wheels of activities. The ultimate objectives of teaching which is to stimulate the effort and interest of students for greater performance and success are difficult to achieve under burnout conditions. A good principal looks at ways to manage

work efficiently so that teachers who are the fundamental inculcators of knowledge will be well motivated and ameliorate burnout syndrome.

School management as the act of organizing, controlling, planning and coordinating the school human and material resources for the achievement of educational goals is important in controlling teacher burnout because poor school management contributes to teacher burnout. This was confirmed by Seidman and Zayer (1987) when they emphasized that teacher burnout is a negative pattern of responding to stressful teaching events, to students and to teaching as a career as well as a perception that there is lack of management support.

In order to control teachers burnout some management techniques have been adopted by school principals for effective teaching and learning especially in this 21<sup>st</sup> century because teachers need to balance the activities from both ends and be optimal in one's performance at the job for effective delivery. Management techniques are recognized methods of analyzing or solving a recognized type of management problem in a detailed and systematic way (Argenti, 2021). Inuwa (2013) posited that management encompasses efforts geared towards saving and individual from mental, emotional or other forms of strain. Management techniques could be referred to as all mediations that control or alleviate tension and trauma exerted on a person. Many management techniques are available that may help teachers have positive feelings towards teaching and promote their general well being. This study focused on two management techniques which are: inter personal relationship management and collaborative management techniques.

Interpersonal relationship techniques result from effective and efficient personnel management practices, (Nyim 2012). This author noted that many school managers do not maintain good interpersonal relationships in their schools; hence, teachers tend to be burnt out. Nyim [2012] emphasized more that the enormous task of any school principal lies on effective personnel management through effective interpersonal relationships. This is because when the school personnel unit is well managed; all other aspects of management can be handled properly. Collaborative management techniques empower teachers to take ownership of outcomes, which can lead to increased engagement, innovation and creativity, (Knowledge Hub, 2021). This management technique helps teachers feel trusted, valued and they are inspired to put in their best, find

collaborative solutions to problems and engage completely with the process. With this collaborative management technique, teachers overcome pressures and tension that culminate to burnout.

When the application of these management techniques are not effective, teachers tend to loose interest in teaching and become less effective in teaching. This invariably, affects student's performance. Ozdemir (2007) stated that burnout influences the mental and physical health of teachers, the quality of education instruction and interpersonal relations between students and teachers. It also causes adverse affect on teachers effectiveness and students achievement, it affects teachers self efficacy, self confidence, motivation, self esteem, productivity, professional engagement and job satisfaction (Herman, Hickmon-Rosa, & Reinke 2018). This indicates that teachers who exhibit traces of being burnout are not effective in classroom and the school male and female principals should therefore utilize coherent management technique appropriate for alleviation of teacher's burnout for quality education in his school.

Male and female principals should always try to listen to teachers plight and respond to their concerns. This was emphasized by Kampen (2020) when he stated that teacher's burnout and its symptoms are better treated sooner than later as it affects not just the teacher but the students and entire education system. Teachers most of the time quit their job and look for another job because of burnout. Unfortunately, Ukonu (2019) emphasized that management challenge pose a serious burnout to teachers especially from the principals who are "Lord". Ukonu [2019] further alleged that school management that compels teachers to adopt a particular method of teaching students, setting targets for teachers (putting pressure on teachers to ensure that students perform well), and erratic and sporadic inspections from school principals put teachers undetr pressure and tension and evidently causes burnout. Also studies like Abenavoli, Jennings, Greenberg, Marvins and Katz (2013) and Jennings, Frank, Snowberg, Coccia and Greenberg (2013) stated that cases where teachers constantly report incidence where students or principal harass them, they suffer from high levels of burnout which can lead to depression. It is against this background that the study intends to investigate on the principals management techniques for alleviating teacher's burnout syndrome in Anambra state.

### **Statement of problem**

Education is an instrument for national development and its success or failure is dependent on the availability of competent, well trained, conscientious,

healthy, efficient and highly motivated classroom teachers. However, most teachers seem to be having burnout syndrome which affects their teaching effectiveness.

Observations show that there is declining standard and poor quality in education. Teachers are having too much work load, poor motivation by some school principals, role conflict, poor management technique by the principal, poor salary and school facilities are often times not maintained regularly. This ugly development tends to create anxiety, tension, and withdrawal, emotional and physical exhaustion among teachers.

Obviously, these may have affected teachers' performance in the line of their duties. The principals management techniques for controlling teacher's burnout seem not to be in practice. It is against this background that the researcher intends to investigate the management techniques for alleviation of teacher's burnout syndrome among secondary school teachers in Anambra state.

### **Purpose of the study**

The main purpose of the study is to investigate the principals management techniques for alleviating teachers' burnout syndrome in Anambra state secondary schools.

Specifically, the study sought to:

1. Determine the collaborative management techniques used by principals for alleviating teacher's burnout syndrome in Anambra state secondary schools.
2. Ascertain the interpersonal relationship management techniques used by principals for alleviating teacher's burnout syndromes in Anambra state secondary schools.

### **Research question**

The following research questions were formulated to guide the study:

1. What are the collaborative management techniques used by principals for alleviating teacher's burnout syndrome in Anambra state secondary schools?
2. What are the interpersonal relationship management techniques used by principals for alleviating teacher's burnout syndromes in Anambra state secondary schools?

## **Hypotheses**

The following null hypotheses were formulated and tested at .05 level of significance.

HO<sub>1</sub> There is no significant difference between the mean rating of male and female principals on the collaborative management techniques for alleviating teachers in Anambra state secondary schools.

HO<sub>2</sub> There is no significant difference between the mean rating of male and female principals on the interpersonal relationship techniques for alleviation teacher's burnout in Anambra state secondary schools.

## **Methodology**

This work adopted descriptive survey design which involved the use of questionnaire to obtain information from the respondents. The study was carried out in Anambra state. Anambra state has six education zones which are: Onitsha, Ogidi, Nnewi, Awka, Otuocha and Aguata education zones. 262 principals in all the zones in Anambra state were used because of their size. This means that census sampling was used for the study. The instrument used for data collection was a self structured questionnaire titled "Management Techniques for Alleviation of Teachers Burnout Questionnaire, (MTATBQ)." It was made up of two sections, A and B. Section A focused on personal data of the respondents while section B has 16 items on management techniques. It has two clusters with eight items in each cluster. The instrument was validated by three experts, one from education management, one from guidance and counseling and one from measurement and evaluation, all from faculty of education in Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University, Igbariam.

In order to ensure the internal consistency of the instrument a trial text exercise was carried out with 20 principals in Enugu state. The reliability of the instrument was determined using cronbach alpha which yielded 0.85 reliability coefficient. This was considered appropriate for the study. Cronbach alpha method was preferred because the instrument was not dichotomously scored. The questionnaire was administered to the respondents with the help of four research assistants who were briefed on method of data collection. Total of 260 instruments were correctly filled and used for the study. That is 99% return rate. The data collected were analyzed using mean and standard deviation for the research questions and t-test was used for testing null hypotheses formulated.

In taking decision 2.50 was used as cut-off point. Any mean rating 2.50 and above is agreed while below is disagreed.

## **Result**

Research Question 1: what are the collaborative management techniques used by principals for alleviation of teacher's burnout by principals in Anambra state secondary schools?

Table 1: mean and standard deviation of the respondents on the collaborative management techniques for alleviation of teacher's burnout by principals in Anambra state secondary schools.

<b>Group</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std.Dev</b>	<b>Decision</b>
<b>Maie principals</b>	48	3.52	.58	Agreed
<b>Female principals</b>	212	3.59	0.43	Agreed

From table 1, teachers had a mean of 3.52 with standard deviation of 0.58 indicating that male principals agree that the items are collaborative management techniques for alleviation of teacher burnout. Similarly female principals attained a mean of 3.59 with standard deviation of 0.43 showing they too agreed on the collaborative management technique for alleviation of teacher's burnout.

Research question 2: what are the interpersonal relationship management techniques used by principals for alleviating teacher's burnout by principals in Anambra state secondary schools?

Table 2: mean and standard deviation of the respondents on the interpersonal relationship management techniques for alleviating teacher's burnout by principals in Anambra state secondary schools.

<b>Group</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std.Dev</b>	<b>Decision</b>
<b>Male principals</b>	48	3.70	0.55	Agreed
<b>Female principals</b>	212	3.66	0.33	Agreed

From table 2, with a mean of 3.70 and standard deviation of 0.55, male principals indicated that interpersonal relationship management technique alleviate teachers burnout in Anambra state secondary schools. On the other hand, female principals also agreed that interpersonal relationship management techniques alleviate teacher’s burnout syndromet in Anambra state secondary school as shown by their mean (3.66) and standard deviation (0.33).

**Hypotheses**

HO<sub>1</sub>: There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of male principals and female principals on the collaborative management techniques for alleviating teacher burnout in Anambra state secondary school.

Table 3: t-test of significant difference between the mean rating of male principals and female principals on the collaborative management techniques for alleviating teacher burnout in Anambra state secondary schools.

Group	N	X	Sd	Df	Sig	t- Crit	t-cal	Remark
<b>Male principals</b>	48	3.52	0.58					
				46	.05	1.96	0.85	Not significant
<b>Female principals</b>	212	3.59	0.43					

From table 3, the t-calculated (0.85) is less than the t-critical (1.96). Thus hypothesis 1 is not rejected because there is no significant difference between the mean rating of male principals and female principals on the collaborative management techniques alleviating teacher burnout syndrome in Anambra state secondary schools.

HO<sub>2</sub> There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of male principals and female principals on the interpersonal relationship techniques for alleviating teacher burnout syndrome in Anambra state secondary schools.

Table 4: t-test of significant difference between the mean rating of principals and teachers on the interpersonal relationship techniques for alleviating teacher burnout in Anambra state secondary schools.



<b>Group</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>Sd</b>	<b>Df</b>	<b>Sig</b>	<b>t-crit</b>	<b>t-cal</b>	<b>Remark</b>
<b>Male principals</b>	48	3.70	0.46					
				460	.05	1.96	0.60	Not significant
<b>Female principals</b>	212	3.66	0.33					

The result from table 4 shows that the calculated t-value (0.60) was less than the critical value (1.96). The null hypothesis was not rejected. Therefore, there is no significant difference between the mean ratings of male principals and female principals on the interpersonal relationship techniques for alleviating teacher burnout syndrome in Anambra state secondary schools.

### **Discussion of findings**

The findings of this study showed that male principals and female principals agreed that collaborative management techniques like encouraging team work, encouraging innovation in schools fostering cohesion and organizing seminars and workshops for teachers alleviate teacher's burnout in secondary schools in Anambra state. This finding agrees with Knowledge Hub (2021) when it stated that collaborative management techniques empower teachers to take ownership of outcomes and can lead to increased engagement, motivation and creativity. The study is equally in line with Almeida (2020) who opined that support services like stress management workshops and training are great for educating teachers on new coping mechanisms and ways to better handle over whelming feeling and burnout. Collaborative management technique is a very important technique in controlling teacher's burnout as it encourages cooperation of teachers and teamwork. It was found out that there is no significant difference between mean ratings of male and female principals on the collaborative management techniques for alleviating teachers burnout in schools. This shows that their opinions are similar.

The finding in table 2 shows that interpersonal relationship management technique like -s principals making himself accessible to teachers, being a good listener, communicate to teachers effectively by calling on regular meetings, using messages, e-mails and face-to-face conversation most of the time, sharing

the school purposes, establishing visions and missions to teachers so that they will be strengthened to teach well and solving problem between teachers quickly and efficiently alleviates teachers burnout. The findings corroborate the submission of Rodriquez-Mantilla and Fernandez-Diaz (2017) who stated that the more positive the relationships between teachers and principals, level of emotional exhaustion decrease significantly and efficacy increases. This also agrees with the work of Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2011) that the support and positive relationship teachers receive from their supervisors are negatively related with emotional exhaustion and cynical depersonalization and are positively related with personal accomplishment. This is an indication that interpersonal relationship in school contributes a lot in reducing teacher burnout as it builds supportive work environments that boost morale and helps teachers alleviate burnout. It was also found that there is no significant difference between mean ratings of male and female principals on the interpersonal relationship management techniques for alleviating teacher burnout in schools. This implies that the opinions of principals and teachers on this did not differ.

### **Conclusion**

The study examined the management techniques by school principals in alleviating burnout syndrome among teachers in secondary schools in Anambra state. It focused on the two management techniques of collaborative and interpersonal relationship techniques that could be used to alleviate teacher burnout. It is obviously from the findings that these management techniques will help to a long extent in alleviating teacher's burnout. Hence the principals are expected to administer these management techniques on their teachers in order to improve teacher's productivity and effectiveness in Anambra state secondary schools.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are made -

1. Principals should use pro-active measures like collaborative management techniques to reduce teachers burnout.
2. Principals should adopt interpersonal relationship techniques for managing teacher burnout for teacher's effective performance in schools.

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