

## COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF TIME SCHEDULING AND DELEGATING PRACTICES ADOPTED BY PRINCIPALS FOR IMPROVING STUDENTS' ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT IN PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN SOUTH-SOUTH, NIGERIA

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### Abstract

*The study comparatively analysed the time scheduling and delegating practices adopted by principals for improving students' academic achievement in public and private secondary schools in South-South, Nigeria. The study was guided by two research questions and two null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance. Descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. The population of the study comprised 48,794 teachers of which 38,977 were from public and 9,817 from private secondary schools in south-south, Nigeria. The sample for the study comprised 1,462 teachers of which 1,170 were from public and 292 from private secondary schools selected using multistage sampling procedure. A researcher-developed questionnaire titled 'Time Scheduling and Delegating practices for Improving Students' Academic Achievement Scale (TSDPISAAS)' was used for data collection. The instrument was validated by three experts of which two of them were from the Department of Educational Management and Policy, and one in Measurement and Evaluation in the Department of Educational Foundations, all in the Faculty of Education, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. Cronbach alpha was used for a test of internal consistency of the instrument and it yielded reliability coefficients of 0.80 and 0.76 for Cluster 1-2 respectively with overall coefficient of 0.78 for the entire instrument. The researcher and five research assistants collected data for the study using direct administration method and 98% return rate was recorded. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions, while t-test was used to test the null hypotheses. The findings of the study revealed among others that similar time scheduling and time delegating are adopted by principals for improving students' academic achievement in public and private secondary schools in South-South, Nigeria. It was also found out that there is no significant difference in the time scheduling and time delegating practices adopted by principals for improving students' academic achievement in public and private secondary schools in South-South, Nigeria. Based on the findings, it was recommended among others that principals should schedule time to every educational activity at the beginning of the session and ensure strict compliance for improving teaching and learning that can increase students' academic achievement*

**Keywords:** Principals, Time Scheduling, Time Delegating, Students, Academic Achievement, Public School, Private School

## **Introduction**

The development of any nation depends on the skills and knowledge acquired by her citizens through education. Education is an instrument for building one's character, inculcating the right value and moral empowerment to become responsible member of the society. Anachuna and Obi (2021) stressed that the skills and potentials of individuals for self-reliance and actualization could be developed through education. Education is delivered in various levels among them is the secondary education.

The secondary education is the intermediate level of education between primary and higher levels of education. Okeke and Nwogbo (2020) averred that the potential of secondary education for significant contribution to national development is unquestionable since it prepares one for a useful living. Similar to this, Okeke and Ikediugwu (2020) noted that secondary level of education not only prepares individuals for useful living but also refines their skills, behaviour and knowledge for useful living. Secondary level of education is offered in two categories of schools namely public and private secondary schools.

The public schools are established, funded and controlled by the government. Nwankwo and Godwin (2021) stressed that public secondary school is any post primary learning institution established, funded and overseen by the government, while the private secondary school is any post primary learning institution established, funded and overseen by the individuals, groups, missions and non-governmental organization. In the same vein, Anachuna and Obi (2021) stressed that public secondary schools are schools that are owned by the government and its agencies, and they are controlled and managed directly by education authority, while private secondary schools are schools owned, financed and managed by private individuals, missions, cooperate organization and non-governmental organization. The public secondary schools were financed by with taxpayer's money to provide equal education opportunities to the masses irrespective of their tribes, religion economic or political status. Private secondary school are owned and managed by individuals, private groups and organizations to educate students and make profit. The head and chief administrator of either public or private secondary school is the principal.

Principal is the chief manager, executive, administrator and leader of secondary school. Ikediugwu and Obiora (2021) defined principal as the chief executive officer of a secondary school. Furthermore, Ikediugwu and Obiora noted that the principal as the leader in secondary school is saddled with the responsibility of managing the available human and material resources of a secondary school. The principal instructs, persuades and oversees the activities of teachers to ensure that the staff follow set procedures to attain set objectives. The principal as the instructional leader is responsible for organizing and overseeing matters concerning teaching and learning in the classroom. The principal is responsible for planning, delegating, motivating, communicating and controlling the available resources so as to attain set goals. The principal as the instructional leader is responsible for organizing and overseeing matters concerning teaching

and learning in the classroom. Every principal strives to coordinate and utilize the limited time to attain predetermined goals by time scheduling.

Time scheduling entails setting up period to start and finish a task. Scheduling contacts involve scheduling events, concentrating on a single task at a time, finishing one task before going to another, regularly monitoring time usage, planning schedules to save time and spending most time on profitable activities (Omenu, 2015). Akinyemi and Ajayi (2020) maintained that a good time management technique is to always schedule events and try to stick to them according to the diary, planner chart or calendar in accomplishing educational aims and objectives. Delegation relieves the principals of specific tasks which give them more time to focus on more essential obligations. According to Adeolu (2020), delegation of responsibility reduces workload and job stress while the administrator can concentrate on other activities. The principals meet deadlines of scheduled tasks by delegating minor ones to members of staff.

Delegation is the assignment of specific task or activity to another person. Delegation of some tasks to teachers stem from the fact that it consume a lot of time for principals to perform all the administrative duties alone. Anju (2019) asserted that delegation of tasks of handling many classroom activities to students and teachers can save enormous amounts of time. Continuing, Anju stressed that the student can be assigned to monitor work in small groups, make instructional resources ready, keep bulletin boards current, monitor learning activities and assist in conducting test. Time delegating practice involves assigning responsibility and providing necessary authority, resources and support to staff, placing a limit for task completion when delegated and following up on the work delegated to teachers. Akinyemi and Ajayi (2020) stressed that delegation is a significant aspect of time management in the school system. Continuing, Akinyemi and Ajayi pointed that delegation is the act of sharing obtainable functions in the school to teachers and students according to their skills and capabilities towards achieving the aims and objectives of the school. Mbulawa (2012) noted that the ability of secondary school principals to delegate tasks and ensure the execution of the tasks without procrastination strongly affects the students' academic achievement.

Academic achievement is the final grade which students get after assessment through tests or examinations. According to Ikwuka and Adigwe (2021), students' academic achievement is a product of education or learning which is commonly measured by examination or continuous assessment. Academic achievement is a measure of the degree of success in performing specific tasks in a subject or area of study by students after a learning experience. According to Oladele, Abubakar, Ali and Adawa (2021), academic achievement is the measure of knowledge students acquire in a learning institution. It is the scores that measure of the knowledge and skills of students. The academic achievement is measured by their timely completion of assignments, test scores and their level of understanding of concept. To buttress this, Akanni (2021) noted that academic achievement is measured in the level of students' timely completion of assignment, attainment in examination in terms high scores and their understanding of concept taught in the classroom. The students who consistently learn and understand new concepts are prone to attain high academic achievement. Academic achievement is the final scores that depict students' intellectual abilities and skills in learning environment.

The scores and grades of students in external examinations are yet to meet the expectations of the educational stakeholders. The West Africa Examination Council (WAEC) results summary obtained from National Bureau of Statistics indicated that the numbers of candidates that sat for the council examinations in private secondary schools in south-south zone, Nigeria for the year 2016, 2017 and 2018 were 18,417, 14,146 and 11,675 respectively and the number of candidates that obtained five credits and above including Mathematics and English Language were 5,774, 2078 and 2,463 which represented 31.35%, 14.69% and 21.10% respectively of the population that sat for the examination. On the other hand, the numbers of candidates that sat for the council examinations in public secondary schools in south-south zone, Nigeria for the year 2016, 2017 and 2018 were 48,101, 61,656 and 48,351 and the number of candidates that obtained five credits and above including Mathematics and English Language were 32,404, 50,741 and 29,454 respectively which represented 67.37%, 82.30% and 60.92% of the population that sat for the examination. The students in public secondary schools performed better in WAEC than their counterpart in private secondary schools for the year 2016, 2017 and 2018.

The cases of multitasking by principals which involves doing more than one task at a time seem to be more common in private secondary schools than their public counterpart could be due to variation time scheduling and delegating practices of their respective principals. Notwithstanding, frequent missing of deadlines and procrastination by waiting until the last hour to complete scheme of work seem to be practiced in public secondary schools than their private counterpart probably strict measure of managing the time by the principals. Thus, could the cases of difference in incompleteness of scheme of work, struggling to meet deadline, unclear daily goals and academic achievement level of students in public and private schools be attributed to the varying time scheduling and delegating practices adopted by their respective principals in South-South, Nigeria.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of the study was to comparatively analyze the time scheduling and delegating practices adopted by principals for improving students' academic achievement in public and private secondary schools in South-South, Nigeria. Specifically, the study sought to compare:

1. Time scheduling practices adopted by principals for improving students' academic achievement in public and private secondary schools in South-South, Nigeria.
2. Time delegating practices adopted by principals for improving students' academic achievement in public and private secondary schools in South-South, Nigeria.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What are the time scheduling practices adopted by principals for improving students' academic achievement in public and private secondary schools in South-South, Nigeria?
2. What are the time delegating practices adopted by principals for improving students' academic achievement in public and private secondary schools in South-South, Nigeria?

### **Research Hypotheses**

The following hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance.

1. There is no significant difference in the mean scores of teachers on the time scheduling practices adopted by principals for improving students' academic achievement in public and private secondary schools in South-South, Nigeria.
2. There is no significant difference in the mean scores of teachers on the time delegating practices adopted by principals for improving students' academic achievement in public and private secondary schools in South-South, Nigeria.

### **Method**

Descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. The study was conducted in south-south Nigeria which is one of the six geographical zones in Nigeria. The population of the study comprised 48,794 teachers of which 38,977 were from public and 9,817 from private secondary schools in south-south, Nigeria. The sample for the study comprised 1,462 teachers of which 1,170 were from public and 292 from private secondary schools in south-south, Nigeria using multistage sampling procedure.

A researcher-developed questionnaire titled "Time Scheduling and Delegating practices for Improving Students' Academic Achievement Scale (TSDPISAAS)" was used for data collection. The instrument was developed by the researcher based on review of related literature and consultation of experts in educational management. The TSDPISAAS has two sections; A and B. Section A has two items on the demographic data of the school. Section B of TSDPISAAS has two clusters namely: 1-2. Cluster 1 has 6 items on time scheduling practices for improving students' academic achievement and cluster 2 has eight items on time delegating practices for improving students' academic achievement. The instrument therefore contains a total of 14 items all of which are structured on a four point rating scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D); Strongly Disagree (SD) weighted 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively. A copy of TSDPISAAS is attached as Appendix D on page 131.

The instrument was subjected to face validation by three experts, two in the Department of Educational Management and Policy, and one in Measurement and Evaluation in the Department of Educational Foundations, all in the Faculty of Education, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. The experts suggested among others that editorial issues in the instrument should be corrected and some items restructured. Based on the suggestions, editorials issues in items were corrected and all items that are completion of stem were started with small letter. Thus, their suggestions were used to produce the final version of the instrument. Cronbach alpha method was used to establish the reliability of the instrument which yielded co-efficient of 0.80 and 0.76 for Clusters 1 and 2 of section B respectively and overall coefficient was 0.78. Thus, the researcher considered the instrument to be reliable for the study.

Data were collected by the researcher with the help of five research assistants. The research assistants were briefed by the researcher on the mode of distributing and retrieving the instrument. total of 1,462 copies of the questionnaire were distributed, and 1,431 copies of questionnaire were successfully retrieved, indicating 98% percent return. The data collected were analyzed using mean

and standard deviation to answer the research questions and t-test to test the hypotheses. In taking decisions on the research questions, mean item rating of 2.50 and above was taken as agreement and any mean rating that falls below 2.50 was taken to indicate disagreement. In taking decisions on the null hypotheses, if the exact p-value is equal to or greater than significant value of 0.05, the null hypothesis was rejected but if exact p-value is less than significant value of 0.05, the null hypotheses was accepted.

## Results

**Research Question 1:** What are the time scheduling practices adopted by principals for improving students' academic achievement in public and private secondary schools in South-South, Nigeria

Table 1: Mean Ratings and Standard Deviation Scores on Time Scheduling Practices adopted by Principals for improving Students' Academic Achievement

S/ N	ITEMS	Public Sch. Teachers (n =1,150)			Private sch. Teachers (n =280)		
		Mean	SD	Decision	Mean	SD	Decision
1	set aside period to receive visitors to attain uninterrupted lesson delivery	2.56	1.13	Agree	2.62	0.91	Agree
2	use daily diary to record school programmes	2.81	1.08	Agree	2.78	0.92	Agree
3	set aside period for interacting with colleague	2.76	1.02	Agree	2.40	1.07	Agree
4	allocate the period for continuous monitoring of teachers	2.56	1.08	Agree	2.56	1.13	Agree
5	arrange for extra period for the teachers to teach students to ensure coverage of lesson scheme	2.73	1.11	Agree	2.70	1.06	Agree
6	review daily scheduled tasks to find what has been accomplished	2.76	0.91	Agree	2.64	1.14	Agree
<b>Cluster Mean</b>		<b>2.70</b>	<b>1.06</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>2.62</b>	<b>1.04</b>	<b>Agree</b>

Result presented on Table 1 shows that the mean scores of teachers of public and private secondary schools for all items are above the mean score of 2.50 indicating agreement with the

items as the time scheduling practices adopted by their principals for improving students' academic achievement.

The standard deviation scores of 1.06 and 1.04 for public and private secondary teachers respectively indicate convergence of their responses implying that their responses are homogenous. The time scheduling practices adopted by principals for improving students' academic achievement in public and private secondary schools in South-South, Nigeria were: setting aside period to receive visitors to attain uninterrupted lesson delivery, use daily diary to record school programmes, setting aside period for interacting with colleague, allocating the period for continuous monitoring of teachers, arranging for extra period for the teachers to teach students to ensure coverage of lesson scheme and reviewing daily scheduled tasks to find what has been accomplished.

The pooled standard deviation scores for teachers of public and private secondary schools which stood at 1.06 and 1.04 respectively indicated convergence of their responses and thus their responses were homogenous. The cluster mean of 2.70 for public school teachers and 2.62 for private school teachers are above 2.50 indicating that there agreement in the responses of time prioritizing practices adopted by principals for improving students' academic achievement in public and private secondary schools in South-South, Nigeria.

**Research Question 2:** What are the time delegating practices adopted by principals for improving students' academic achievement in public and private secondary schools in South-South, Nigeria.

S/ N	ITEMS My Principal:	Public Sch. Teachers (n =1,151)			Private sch. Teachers (n =280)		
		Mean	SD	Decision	Mean	SD	Decision
7	assign responsibility with commiserate period to teachers	2.71	1.05	Agree	2.65	1.07	Agree
8	adhere to the list of tasks mapped out to be assigned to teachers each day	2.43	1.03	Disagree	2.54	0.99	Agree
9	time-up the classroom activities assigned to teachers	2.68	1.11	Agree	2.66	1.08	Agree
10	follow-up the time spent on classroom activities assigned to staff	2.61	1.09	Agree	2.67	1.02	Agree
11	place a limit for completion of tasks assigned to staff	2.65	1.14	Agree	2.61	1.01	Agree
12	instruct the teachers on time to assess the students	2.70	1.12	Agree	2.64	1.16	Agree
13	analyse how time is spent by teachers in executing assigned classroom tasks	2.53	1.09	Agree	2.47	1.12	Disagree

14	set aside a period for follow-up actions to be taken after the execution of assigned tasks	2.56	1.10	Agree	2.69	0.93	Agree
<b>Cluster Mean</b>		<b>2.61</b>	<b>1.09</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>2.62</b>	<b>1.05</b>	<b>Agree</b>

Table 2: Mean Ratings and Standard Deviation Scores on Time Delegating Practices adopted by Principals for improving Students’ Academic Achievement

Results from Table 4 indicated items 7, 9-12 and 14 had mean scores above 2.50 as rated by both teachers of public and private secondary schools and this shows agreement with the items as time delegating practices adopted by their principals for improving students’ academic achievement in public and private secondary schools in South-South, Nigeria. The time delegating practices adopted by their principals for improving students’ academic achievement in public and private secondary schools in South-South, Nigeria were: assigning responsibility with commiserate period to teachers, time-up the classroom activities assigned to teachers, follow-up the time spent on classroom activities assigned to staff, place a limit for completion of tasks assigned to staff, instruct the teachers on time to assess the students and set aside a period for follow-up actions to be taken after the execution of assigned tasks. On the other hand, mean scores of teachers of public and private secondary schools for items 8 and 13 shows variation in the time delegating practices adopted by their principals for improving students’ academic achievement.

The overall standard deviation scores for teachers of public and private secondary schools which stand at 1.09 and 1.05 respectively indicate homogeneity in their mean scores. The cluster mean of 2.61 for public school teachers and 2.62 for private school teachers are above 2.50 indicating that similar time delegating practices adopted by principals for improving students’ academic achievement in public and private secondary schools in South-South, Nigeria.

$H_{01}$ : There is no significant difference in the time scheduling practices adopted by principals for improving students’ academic achievement in public and private secondary schools in South-South, Nigeria.

Table 3: The t-test Summary of Significant Difference between the Mean Ratings of Public and Private School Teachers on The Time Scheduling Practices adopted by their Principals for improving Students’ Academic Achievement

Respondents	N	$\bar{X}$	SD	p-value	Df	∞	Remark
Public Sch. Teachers	1,151	2.70	1.06	0.06	1429	0.05	Not Significant
Private Sch. Teachers	280	2.62	1.04				

Data presented on Table 3 revealed that the p-value of 0.06 is greater than t 0.05 level of significance and 1429 degree of freedom. Thus, the null hypothesis is accepted. Therefore, the difference in the time scheduling practices adopted by principals for improving students’

academic achievement in public and private secondary schools in South-South, Nigeria was not significant.

Ho<sub>2</sub>: There is no significant difference in the time delegating practices adopted by principals for improving students' academic achievement in public and private secondary schools in South-South, Nigeria.

Table 4: The t-test Summary of Significant Difference between the Mean Ratings of Public and Private School Teachers on The Time Delegating Practices adopted by their Principals for improving Students' Academic Achievement

Respondents	N	$\bar{X}$	SD	p-value	Df	$\infty$	Remark
Public Sch. Teachers	1,151	2.61	1.09	0.12	1429	0.05	Not Significant
Private Sch. Teachers	280	2.62	1.05				

Result of Data Analysis presented on Table 4 revealed that the p-value of 0.12 is greater than t 0.05 level of significance and 1429 degree of freedom. Thus, the null hypothesis is accepted. Therefore, there is no significant difference in the time delegating practices adopted by their principals for improving students' academic achievement in public and private secondary schools in South-South, Nigeria.

## Discussion

The study reported that there is no difference in the time scheduling practices adopted by principals for improving students' academic achievement in public and private secondary schools in South-South, Nigeria. This affirmed the finding of Zafarullah, Mumtaz, Uzma, Abida and Humera (2016) who reported that majority of public and private school staff adopt time scheduling practices. The possible explanation for the agreement stem from the fact that principals cannot perform all school tasks alone and thus delegate some to the subordinates. The school activities are scheduled by principals according to specific time allocated like periods for morning assembly, break, labour and sports among others. The time scheduling practices adopted by principals for improving students' academic achievement in public and private secondary schools in South-South, Nigeria were: setting aside period to receive visitors to attain uninterrupted lesson delivery, use daily diary to record school programmes, setting aside period for interacting with colleague, allocating the period for continuous monitoring of teachers, arranging for extra period for the teachers to teach students to ensure coverage of lesson scheme and reviewing daily scheduled tasks to find what has been accomplished. It is the time scheduling practices of principals that lead to the distribution of subjects and total number of periods taken by teachers in public and private secondary schools in south-south, Nigeria.

It was showed that there is no significant difference in the time scheduling practices adopted by their principals for improving students' academic achievement in public and private secondary schools in South-South, Nigeria. Zafarullah, Mumtaz, Uzma, Abida and Humera (2016) found out that the difference in staff time scheduling practices in the public and private school was not significant. The scheduling activities make job of administration or supervising

teachers to be easier and smooth for effective realization of targets of improving students' academic achievement,

It was reported that there is similar time delegating practices adopted by principals for improving students' academic achievement in public and private secondary schools in South-South, Nigeria. This disagreed with the finding of Agogbua and Agu (2021) who reported that school administrators in Anambra State do engage in time delegating practices. This also contradicted the finding of Akinfolarin (2017) that reported that principals do not adopt delegating strategies in managing time in secondary schools. The principals in various locations of the students might have been exposed to varying kind of time management training and experience which may account for the contradicting findings. The time delegating practices adopted by principals for improving students' academic achievement in public and private secondary schools in South-South, Nigeria were: assigning responsibility with commiserate period to teachers, time-up the classroom activities assigned to teachers, follow-up the time spent on classroom activities assigned to staff, place a limit for completion of tasks assigned to staff, instruct the teachers on time to assess the students and set aside a period for follow-up actions to be taken after the execution of assigned tasks. The delegation practices is probably adopted by principals of public and private secondary schools in south-south speed up the execution of numerous administrative tasks at the available limited time. Some secondary school principals in South-south, Nigeria relieve themselves from attending to the routine administrative activities by delegating common ones to teachers in order to get more time to plan, coordinates and supervise instructional tasks that have directly impact on students' academic achievement. The principals probably adopt time schedule to avoid conflict among teachers in carrying out instructional activities and ensure each task is fully accomplished as planned.

It was also indicated that there is no significant difference in the time delegating practices adopted by principals for improving students' academic achievement in public and private secondary schools in South-South, Nigeria. This is in line with the finding of Zafarullah, Mumtaz, Uzma, Abida and Humera (2016) who found out that the difference staff time delegating practices in the public and private school was not significant. The tasks delegated to teachers give them complete responsibility and increases the use of their initiative to delivery lessons, while providing opportunity to the principals to control their activities to attain desirable results of improving students' academic achievement.

## **Conclusion**

It is inferred from the findings of the study that similar time scheduling and delegating practices are adopted by principals for improving students' academic achievement in public and private secondary schools in south-south, Nigeria. The principals adopt time saving approach through delegation for most activities and proper schedule of time for each activity in the school. In meeting the demand of limited time for numerous tasks, the principals delegate tasks such as labour, sports, social and disciplinary to members of staff for their assistance in executing them. The time scheduling and delegating practices adopted by principals shows that they assign and set time for teachers to prepare lesson notes, engage in learning activities, evaluation of learning outcome, marking of students' scripts, specifying time to record and publish students' results to

attain the set educational goals. It results in timely coverage of subjects' syllabus which gives students enough time to prepare and excel in examinations.

### Recommendations

The following recommendations are made from the findings of this study:

1. Principals should schedule time to every educational activity at the beginning of the session and ensure strict compliance for improving teaching and learning that can increase students' academic achievement.
2. State Ministries of Education and school directors of private secondary schools should often embark on regular unannounced intensive inspection exercise to oversee the time delegation practices of public and private school principals and make possible recommendations for improvement.

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