

Principals' Administrative Preferences and Teachers' Job Performance in Secondary Schools in Nigeria

¹U. Aja-Okorie and ²Ogogor, Tochukwu N.

¹Educational Foundations Faculty of Education Ebonyi State University ,Abakaliki.

²Department of Educational Foundations Federal College of Education Asaba, Delta State.

Email: uzajaokorie@yahoo.com; tochukwuogogor@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Principals perform several administrative functions in schools in relation to teachers. Observations show administrative preference in discharge of these functions which is evidenced in partiality, favouritism and marginalization in the discharge of these functions by the principal. This paper critically examined the concept of administrative preference, highlighted the types of administrative preference and the various ways it manifests in principals' administration. The paper x-rayed the effect of administrative preference of the principal on teachers' performance and emphasized that negative administrative preference of the principal towards the teachers creates unhealthy relationship between the principal and the teacher which negatively affects secondary school teachers' job performance. By implication, where this exists, productivity may slow down and outcome is compromised. It was recommended among others that principals should submit to anonymous assessment by teachers which will help them to adjust their administrative dispositions where necessary and also, awareness on the destructive implications of administrative preference should be raised by educational and professional bodies in order to address the menace.

Keywords: Principals' administrative preference and teachers' job performance

INTRODUCTION

The principal is referred to as the administrator in the secondary school system. The secondary school in Nigeria occupies the central position as it bridges the educational gap between the primary and higher education [1,2,3,4]. It absorbs graduates primary education and prepares them for higher educational institutions [5,6]. Secondary schools are either publicly run by the government or privately run by individuals or cooperate bodies [7,8]. [9], viewed a principal as the administrative head of the secondary school who helps the teachers to improve on their instructional skills and professional growth. A principal could be male or female who works with various categories of teachers (males and females) within the school system providing them with all the necessary information required for the achievement of educational goals [10,11]. He encourages the new teachers to gain confidence in themselves and helps the old teachers to improve on their skills and competence. The principal performs statutory functions in the school. [12], viewed the principal as the school administrator,

instructional leader and personnel manager of teachers. Implicitly, the principal works very closely with the teacher. The principal organizes and utilizes the human and material resources in the school efficiently for the achievement of educational goal. In addition, as an administrator, the principal ensures that the working environment is conducive for teachers so as to actualize the achievement of the educational goals and objectives of the school. Hence, [13,14,15], noted that principals' positive relationship with teachers enhances teachers' confidence and feelings of competence. The working environment is determined by the principal's administrative behavior. The disposition of the principal in carrying out administrative duties such as in communication, motivation, delegation, conflict management, supervision and other administrative functions may influence teachers' attitude to work [16,17,18]. This invariably influences teachers' job performance. A teacher is charged with the responsibility of delivering lessons to students. He

manages the classroom and students' behavior towards their academic performance and overall achievement of educational goal. [19,20], asserted that teachers are indispensable for developing the prospect of the educational system. [21], also recognized that the quality of education is guaranteed by teachers' job performance. The activities and tasks carried out by the teacher in the school system help in the achievement of organizational goal [22,23]. The teachers' tasks and activities include; to teach, educate, provide educational guidance, promote the quest for scientific knowledge and conduct regular assessment of diverse nature [24,25]. The teacher teaches by planning, developing, organizing and delivering instruction and assessing the students' job performance [26,27]. The teacher educates by facilitating students' learning, helping them to acquire knowledge, skills, values, beliefs and habit through teaching, training, story-telling, discussion and other methods [28]. The teacher also performs guidance and counselling functions in providing educational guide to students. The teacher equips the students with adequate information that will help them to choose suitable courses for their future careers [29]. Teachers also expose students to practical work and experiments in classroom that arouse the interest of the students and create a quest for more knowledge. These enormous teachers' tasks require necessary resources and conducive working environment. The provision of this favourable physical environment (equipment, facilities, work processes and procedures) and psychological working environment (safety, supportiveness) help the teacher to obtain maximum job performance. [30], stated that the teacher is saddled with the responsibility of meeting the expectations of stakeholders of the school and have to be provided with a conducive environment to do this. Teachers are also under obligation to

Types of preference

There are various forms of preference observable in human endeavour. [15], identified several types of preference which include: Socio-cultural preference: which is preferring others belonging to

discharge these duties effectively and efficiently to improve job performance. Teachers need physical characteristics such as voice quality and non-verbal communication skills and such affective qualities as fairness, patience, humour and concern to carry out these duties effectively [31,32]. The teacher also needs an enabling environment devoid of any negative administrative effect that will affect the teacher's emotion which may likely de-stabilize and affect job performance of the teacher. [33,34,35,36], pointed out that high level of teacher job performance is attributed to certain factors like; commitment, motivation, proper leadership, effective communication, teacher effectiveness, cooperative behavior of top management and release of privileges and rights. A critical evaluation of these factors will reveal that the actualization of all the factors depends on the principals' ability to carry out the administrative duties without preference or prejudice. [37,38,39,40], defined preference as a tendency to lean in a certain direction, either in favour of or against a particular thing, person or group. Paulina is of the view that one can prefer one thing or person against another [41]. If one prefers someone or something against another, then one tends to think positively of the preferred and negatively of the one not preferred. Everyone has preferences. Preference disposes individuals to have negative feelings about people of different ethnicities, religion, character, and other dispositions that are contrary to their view or unacceptable to them. One may probably not be aware of exhibiting preference but it is the victim of preference that bears the brunt [42]. Sometimes, preference occurs intentionally, but often, people exhibit preference without being aware of doing so. This is very dangerous in administration and may cause harm without realizing it.

one's culture, religion, social background, etc., resulting in stratification. Spillover preference: which is preferring someone based on past job performance, failing to take into account recent improvements.

Affinity preference: which is the unconscious tendency to get along with only those who have something in common with us, like relatives, friends, people from the same ethnic group. Stereotype preference: which is preferring someone because of a positive character trait in the person ignoring every other vice. Attribution preference: making an assumption on why people behave in certain ways which may not be true. Horns preference: judging someone based on a natural handicap. Halo preference: having only positive impression of a person and allowing it to affect your opinion about the person even when the person is wrong. Conformity preference: this is preferring someone based on majority opinion of the person which may be wrong. Implicit preference: which is unconscious attribution of particular qualities to people which may or may not be true and which affect one's attitude, actions and decisions. Perception preference: this is interpreting peoples' behaviour in your own way without paying attention to the reason behind the behaviour and preferring them accordingly. Positivity preference: this is the tendency to only dwell on positive event surrounding someone and allowing it to affect our actions. Pecuniary preference: this is conscious or unconscious preference in relation to monetary gain, or anything of value. institutional preference: which are practices built into institutions or organizations that results in certain groups being advantaged or favoured and others being disadvantaged or devalued. Gender preference: which is discrimination against a person's sex or gender and manifests in marginalization, stereotyping discrimination. Policy preference: this is altering of information to make a political position seem more attractive [21]. The list is quite inexhaustible and Colin was of the opinion that preference actually flourishes at all points along the spectrum and every field of endeavour. Therefore, the list of preference is unending. Preferences are evidenced in administration of any organization. [32], viewed gender preference, implicit preference, affinity preference, Socio-

cultural preference and Institutional preference as administrative preferences that are most likely to affect decision making and behavioural attitude of administrators towards their subordinates. [6], pointed out that school administrators can unknowingly exhibit preference in their perception and attitude by paying attention to only a portion of information available to them, focusing attention on some workers and ignoring some, having negative opinion of some individuals, paying more attention to negative behaviors or actions of some individuals and ignoring the positive actions that would contradict the opinion. Principals' administrative preference can therefore be seen as the principals' tendency to treat some groups or persons fairly or unfairly based on assumption and perception, without any observable cause, in carrying out the administrative function. Administrative functions consist of four functions; acquisition, development, motivation and maintenance of human resources [33], noted that principals behaviour should transcend partnership, ethnicity, or any form of personal prejudice or preference that will affect the teacher morally, psychologically or emotionally leading to negative personality traits which will in turn affect job performance. The principals' administration is meant to offer all teachers fair and equal opportunity to improve their job performance. This is important because the job performance of the teacher is important in educational goals achievement. [27], opined that job performance is doing meaningful work in efficient and effective ways and meeting the requirement of diverse stakeholder of the organization. In line with this, [29] identified the following variables as yardstick to measuring teachers' job performance: punctuality, submission of examination grades on time, extra lesson for students, efficient classroom management, lesson organization, recording and reporting students work, quality and competency in teaching skills, teachers' behavior and attitude towards task responsibilities, material resource management and students' management. It therefore follows that there is need for

enabling environment and collaborative effort in realizing job performance. This enabling environment largely lies on

administrative fairness, justice and equity devoid of any preference.

Preference in Administration

A sad fact of life is that sometimes, not all people are treated the same. This happens everywhere even in educational setting. This is what preference is all about, hence [20], opined that preference is an operative prejudice which may be conscious or unconscious in relation to a party or an issue, usually in a way that is closed minded, prejudiced or unfair. Concurring, [30], viewed preference as partiality and bias which prevents unprejudiced consideration. [28], therefore analyzed preference as a disproportionate weight in favour of or against a person or idea. He went on to say that preference can be innate or learned. People may develop preferences for or against an individual, a group or a belief. From the above definitions, it is deduced that preference is the tendency to like or dislike, or in the case of social interaction, to act favourably or unfavourably towards someone or something. It is when a person or group of individuals are treated unfairly, intentionally or unintentionally. It is therefore rooted in inequality and breeds other social injustices like: marginalization, prejudice, discrimination, favoritism, unfairness, hostility, mistreatment, nepotism, and the likes. Preference in secondary school administration therefore is the tendency of the principal to treat a person or group of persons unfairly, with prejudice while giving undue favour and preferential treatment to another group or persons. Educational settings have several factors that naturally lend themselves to opportunities for preference. [30], identified some of these factors to include: mixed gender, culture, economics, ethnicity, background of teachers and students and lack of educator's awareness or consciousness of existence of preference in their administration. [37], concurred to this maintaining that despite our objections, each one of us have some sort of preference based on race, gender, economic class, or sexual orientation and we allow it to have impact on our actions.

Principals are no exception to this. However, Newberry was quick to add that only with training and mindfulness of its presence can school administrators begin to reduce preference deleterious effects on teaching and learning. Principals exhibit many preference behaviours towards some of their teachers who are victims of their preference. [23], grouped these preference behaviours into: verbal, non-verbal and physical preference behaviours (excluding physical violence) towards teachers that are victims of their preference.

- i. Verbal behavior: threats, false accusation, scapegoating, swearing, name calling, gossiping, deceit, unfounded criticism, dishonesty, favouritism, unfair evaluations, taking credit for another's accomplishment, unwarranted reprimands, unfair reassignments of duty or termination, racial or ethnic harassment.
- ii. Nonverbal behaviours: ignoring, snubbing, aggressive eye contact, staring, physical gestures, finger pointing and foot stomping.
- iii. Physical behavior: withholding essential resources, destruction of the teachers' work hiding essential information from the teachers (pg 97)

Blasé further obtained a more extensive pattern of principals' preference behaviours towards teachers by carrying out an interview with teachers and obtaining the following more detailed information about principals who practice preference. That they discount teachers' thoughts, needs and feelings; ignored and snub teachers, exhibit insensitivity to personal matters (e.g., death in teachers' family), engage in stonewalling (e.g., failed to respond to written request). Furthermore, that they showed nonsupport of teachers: they failed to support some teachers in conflict with students or parents and are shamelessly unfair, failed to investigate problems,

blamed the affected teacher for problems and reprimand the teacher before students. He went on to say that preferential principals withheld resources and denied their victims opportunities for professional development (e.g., to attend conference, workshops, etc) and took credit for the teacher's accomplishment or give the credit to another teacher. Favouritism is also seen as part of disposition of preferential principals. [40], pointed out that some principals constantly rewarded selected teachers and neglect others with no particular criteria for the decision. They allowed some teachers to pursue personal interest during the school hours while others are made to do their work. Some spied on their victims by situating themselves near classroom doorways, listening in classes maliciously, and even soliciting the services of favoured teachers or parents as informants. Ferudun and Emre added that these principals overloaded their victims with extra work/responsibilities without giving them credit for it, criticized their victims publicly; in front of office areas, hallways, classrooms, and

Gender Preference and Principals' Administration

The word 'gender' is a generic term normally used to indicate the distinction between humans on the basis of masculinity/femininity dycotomy. [30], opined that gender is the distinction of male and female and it is a socio-cultural construct that assigns roles, attitudes and values considered appropriate for each sex. There are patterns of behaviours, attitudes and expectations associated with being either male or female. This is because males and females differ in physical behaviors, choice of social interaction, motivations and choices. According to [34], the difference in male and female behaviour begin in early childhood where the child learns gender differences from adults who consciously or unconsciously impart to the boys and girls gender consciousness and behaviors. It is a universally acknowledged truth that societies have always been inclined to distinguish between male and female seeing them as having certain stereotyped pattern of life. For instance, in growing up, boys are encouraged to be more physically active while girls are

other open places disgracing the teacher. According to them, many preferential principals engaged in loud verbal abuse of their victims, with pounding of fists on their table during face-to-face interaction. [12], enumerated more of the preferential behaviours of the principals to include threats saying that preferential principals threaten teachers when they express contrary opinions different from the principals own and give unwarranted written reprimands to their victims in form of query for minor offences. As one might expect, the above manifestations in a preferential secondary school administrator or principal is likely to result in far reaching effect on the teachers' psychological, emotional, physical and physiological relationship with colleagues. [20], pointed out that preference can actually cause unjust treatment resulting in conflict in personal and family-life of individuals which also determines the teachers 'job performance. There are various types of preference that are observable in secondary school administration.

encouraged to be affectionate and tender. Parents would quickly come to the aid of their daughters but insist that their sons handle problems themselves. So, independence and initiative seem to be encouraged more in boys than in girls. Nakpodia and Urien buttressed this by adding that even when women are portrayed in books, they are shown in the home behaving passively and expressing fear or incompetence while the males are portrayed to be more dominant and adventurous and often rescuing the women. One of the most prominent areas of life where preference can play out is the workplace and the strongest preference, we have in the workplace is the gender preference [33]. Lumby viewed gender preference as sex discrimination and receiving unequal treatment based on gender. In other words, gender preference is when one gender is treated differently than another gender. Lots of evidences abound showing that men and women are not given the same opportunities in education, job assignments and positions. In the secular world, it is rare to see a

woman “up” in the political ladder. This is because men are assumed to be stronger and more courageous than women. In school administration, principals reserve certain posts, assignments, delegation or duty for a particular gender, with the assumption that the other gender cannot cope. [23], pointed out that although women numerically dominate the workplace, senior managers are predominantly men. This is also true in the secondary school. [11], observed that though women dominate the education department and teaching profession in particular, when it comes to certain prestigious posts and delegations in the school like; vice principals, heads of departments, examination liaison officers, male teachers are considered first. Hence, one can say that ranking of officers are gender based. [12], lamented that women’s experiences in the school are often hindered and compromised by the traditional cultural value system earlier mentioned which affect the structural arrangement within the school and the structural arrangement are less favourable to women. So, women continue to fight against the sexist cultural attitudes from their communities and school environment. This affects their

Implicit Preference and Principals’ Administration

The term implicit preference was first coined by social psychologists MahzarinBanji and Tony Greenwald in 1995. In an influential paper introducing their theory of implicit social cognition, they proposed that social behavior was largely affected by unconscious associations and judgements [43]. Delvin in view of this defined implicit preference as an unconscious association, belief or attitude towards any social group. It involves attitudes, or stereotypes that affect our understanding, actions and decisions in an unconscious manner. A stereotype is a mental association between a group, category or persons or a trait that may not be based on reality, when these attitudes and stereotypes elicit affective responses, they are described as prejudices, while negative behavioural responses caused by prejudices are known as discrimination, in which people are treated differentially due to their identity [28]. This implies

performance because [25], opined that gender is a moderator to commitment and participation. In other words, contribution to work is determined by gender. There is also this interplay between the social norms and beliefs which informs what happens in the school context, perpetuating the reproduction of a continued male domination in the field of profession occupied mostly by women. Gender preference affect workers’ behaviours, attitudes and job performance like any other preference. [33], confirmed this by pointing out that gender consciousness by principals affect cognitive trust in principals and have negative interactive effect on teachers’ continued commitment to school. [38], added that gender preference affects employees and overall economic job performance of the organization beside being illegal and discriminating. In secondary school, for instance, there are more female teachers than male teachers, yet male teachers dominate the activities in the school because principals give them more opportunities than the female teachers. This study will examine the effect this has on the secondary school teachers’ job performance in Delta State, Nigeria.

that people can act on the basis of prejudice and stereotypes without intending to do so. Stereotyping means that administrators or someone may attribute certain qualities or characteristics to someone or members of a particular group that may not be based on reality or fact. For instance, concluding that science teachers are poor in grammatical expression. Implicit preference operates almost entirely on an unconscious level. While people might like to believe that they are not susceptible to these preferences and stereotypes, the reality is that one engages them unconsciously. [37], explained that it does not mean that one is necessarily prejudiced or inclined to discriminate against other people, however, it simply means that one’s brain is working the way it should, taking in information to form associations and make generalization. Hence, it can imply that implicit preference happens

automatically and is triggered by our brain, making quick judgement and assessments of people and situations influenced by our background, cultural environment and our personal experiences. Beachum&Gullo (2017) noted that implicit preference can occur in school administration, leading to 'stereotype threat' in which the school principal may internalize negative stereotypes about a teacher or group of teachers. For example; The believe that short teachers should not teach in senior classes or science teachers should not be given any assignment involving grammatical expression like staff secretary because they are not good in grammar. The stronger these preference beliefs are, the less likely the teachers who are victims are to pursue impressive job performance because they will be inhibited by lack of encouragement [28]. This will have a negative impact on the educational accessibility and academic achievement of students. Implicit preference can take various forms in an organization. [18], identified these types of implicit preference in administration of workplace or school; First impression preference: this is when the administrator give too much prominence to the first impression made by an employee. The administrator allows the initial judgement made about the employee to shape and control how he views or interprets future evidences about the employee. Even when the future information would seem to contradict the initial picture, the administrator might be unwilling to change his perspective. Secondly, is the recency preference: the administrators' focus is unduly balanced in favour of an employee's most recent activities. Most of the school administrators are guilty of this preference especially in annual assessment of teachers. If recent activities are negative, they can easily overshadow many months' worth of strong previous job performance. Likewise, poor past job performance might be mostly forgotten if the employee has recently excelled. Another one is spillover preference: Moris asserted that this is when the administrator pays too much attention to past information. This preference usually relates to a prominent

episode in the employees past activities that came to dominate the administrators' thought about the employee. Perhaps the teacher plays a starring role in a project or activity and the principal always thinks of the teacher in terms of the success even if the teacher consistently underperforms after that. Inversely, if the teacher is unfortunate enough to be guilty of a major failure or blunder, it might be difficult for him or her to change the principals' opinion in the future, even if the teacher consistently provides excellent work thereafter. Lastly, is the negativity preference which according to Moris is an unfortunately common characteristics of human nature, when we are presented with information, some of which are positive and some negative, we are prone to give more attention to the negative information. Though this is not fair but the negative information predominates our thoughts and moves us to form imbalanced conclusions on the negative side. School administrators are also guilty of this. In the secondary school system, implicit preference is manifest when principals' thought, feelings and attitudes towards other staff is based on characteristics such as race, ethnicity, age, appearance and the likes and not on job performance, fact or realities. [29], asserted that the exhibition of these behaviours by the principal contribute to teachers burn-out and psychological imbalance which sometimes lead to health-related problems. Ferudun and Emre (2016) added that the behavioural disposition of the principal towards the teacher will affect the principal in administrative duties like allocation of subjects to teachers, delegation of duties, assessment or evaluation of teachers, employment of teachers, resolution of conflict and even principal's interaction and communication with teachers. The end result will affect teachers' job performance. While implicit preference can have an impact on the administrative behavior as seen above, [19] suggested the following as steps to be taken by the administrator in reducing the impact:

- i. Adjust your perspective; try seeing things from another person's point of view. Ask yourself how you would

- respond if you were in the same position.
- ii. Work on consciously changing your stereotypes. If you recognize that your response to a person might be rooted in preference or stereotypes, make an effort to consciously adjust your response.
 - iii. Focus on seeing people as individuals rather than focusing on stereotypes to define people. Spend time considering them on a more personal, individual level.

The above steps will be a good guide to principals and all school administrators to overcoming not just implicit preference but all forms of preference. Since implicit preference is mostly unconsciously exhibited, school principals should be on guard so as not to fall victim to it, because [24], concluded that principals' stereotyped opinion gives rise to so many problems that give rise to overall effectiveness of the teacher.

Affinity Preference and Principals' Administration

Affinity preference is what it sounds like: we gravitate toward people like ourselves in appearance, beliefs, and background and we may avoid or even dislike people who are different from us. [27], viewed Affinity preference as the unconscious tendency to get along with others who are like us because it is easy to socialize and spend time with others who are not different while it requires more effort to bridge differences when diversity is present. This preference can be based on race, age, religion, schools attended, or any other distinguishing demographic feature. So, it is unconsciously preferring people who share qualities with you or someone you like. It happens because your brain sees them as familiar and relatable, and we all want to be around people we can relate. However, affinity preference can cloud our judgement as administrators because it can lead to less creative views and approaches to work because while an employer may not be like you, he could be just as or even more talented and friendly as those you have affinity with. Moreover, in administration a diverse and inclusive workforce is needed to be able to tap talent, innovation, creativity and diverse strategies to work with. Affinity preference can affect the administrator's disposal to work. [26], explained how affinity preference can affect administration by giving an example that if an administrator has affinity with an employer, he welcomes every idea of the employer with smiles, word of encouragement and speak in much higher terms of the person than the person he shared no affinity with. Therefore, the

administrator shows favouritism so that those who are fortunate enough to be accepted in administrator's "circle" receive special positive treatment while those that are not in the circle do not. [29], concurred that affinity preference is on the top list of unconscious preference because administrators unconsciously show preference to "people who are like them" and "people who make them feel comfortable". She was of the opinion that though this is not right, working with closely related employees will ensure information flow elicit obedience. Turnbull therefore suggested that since affinity preference is not completely bad, there are ways to avoid its negative impact in administration wherever and whenever possible if only one would take time to get to know people better. The more we know about each other, the more likely we are to find that common ground that enables us to get along. This is because, one can have affinity for people that look not just like oneself but someone one knows and likes. The more people we know that are different from ourselves, the broader the group of people we have affinity with. So, as an administrator, reach out to the stranger in the crowd and find common ground. [29], also suggested that to curb affinity preference, managers should carefully, take note of the similarities they share with particular workers, and try to differentiate between attributes that may cloud their judgement and the concrete skills, experiences and unique qualities that would contribute to the organization. In other words, administrators should not trade excellent skills, experience and

quality for affinity. In addition, [13], observed that affinity preference can lead to "Group think" whereby workers try too hard to fit into a particular group either by mimicking others or holding back thoughts and opinions. In the school system, many teachers lose part of their identities by trying hard to be like others just to attract the principals' attention thereby denying the school of creativity

Effects of principals' administrative preference on teachers' performance

Principals' administrative preference has great effect on teachers' performance because the teachers' performance depends highly on the principals' administrative behaviour. [24], observed that principals' behavioural disposition is a moderator to commitment and participation of the teacher, stressing that the principals' disposition in delegation of duties, motivation of teachers and evaluation of teachers determines how particular teachers are committed to particular duties. [27], was also of the opinion that preference affects structural arrangement within the school which according to him are less favourable to victims of preference. This is evidenced when the principal appoints teachers to positions of authorities on the basis of their relationship with the principal instead of their performance. This attitude dampens teachers' confidence and feelings of competence which in turn has a negative effect on their classroom performance. Furthermore, on the damaging effect of preference, [22], added that administrative preference of the principal hinders communication with the students, fellow teachers and the principal leading to psychological depression of the teachers which in turn affects their performance. It further indicated that teachers become poorly dedicated to their duties and are reluctant to accomplish any task knowing that their effort will not change the principals' opinion about them. Moreover, the teacher develops low morale; unfavourable climate is created and teachers cannot get professional direction for effective classroom delivery from the

and innovation that will boost job performance. Most principals are so affected by this preference that if you are not in his or her "group", nothing good will come out of you or come to you. [15], noted that the welfare of teachers is manipulated by principals to favour his "inner caucus" and this may lead to deviant behaviours in teachers who may want to protest against such act.

principal when the atmosphere between them is tense. To this result by noting that one of the hindrances between principals and teachers is the behavioural disposition of the principal towards the teacher, stressing that this also leads to tense atmosphere that can affect output. Preference is manifest in behavioural disposition; therefore, the preferential principal generates tension in the school climate which will negatively affect the performance of the teacher. [24], indicated that principals' unmindful preference behavior contributes to teachers' burnout and psychological imbalance noting that this sometimes led to health-related problems. When a teacher is not psychologically fit, effective communication becomes difficult thereby leading to poor performance both inside and outside the classroom. In addition, [26] further noted that the welfare of teachers is manipulated by the administratively preferred principal to favour those affiliated to him. They pointed out that welfare is the availability of resources and presence of conditions required for reasonable, comfortable, healthy and secure living for teachers. It includes good working conditions, secured environment, regular promotion, in-service training among others. It therefore implied that the teacher runs the risk of losing these incentives in the face of preference of the principal. This will result in poor performance of the teacher as the welfare of teachers boosted by incentives motivates teachers to effectiveness and high productivity.

CONCLUSION

Preference is an inherent and inevitable vice in humanity and it exists in any human organization including the

educational system. Its effects are toxic and destructive; hence it needs to be identified and curbed. In educational

administration, a principal could be administratively preferential influencing the job performance of the teacher. This is because principals' administration and administrative behaviour is viewed as one of the most important determinant of teachers' job performance. There are various types of administrative preference evidenced in principals' administration in secondary schools in Nigeria and these preferences affect the job performance of teachers. Principals' administrative preference manifests in principals' gender preferences in

allocation of duties, wrong opinion or judgement of teacher, show of favouritism to close associates and the like. These have negative effects on teachers' job performance in terms of teachers' competence, commitment, participation and students' management. Therefore, the issue of preference in principals' administration needs to be addressed by putting mechanism in place that will curb the behavioural manifestation of preference in principals' administration.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the study, the following recommendations were drawn:

1. Education policy makers should develop, adopt and implement a well-designed education administrative policy that prohibits preference, mistreatment and abuse of teachers and provide viable avenues for redress of such problems.
2. Education bodies like Nigerian Union of Teachers (NUT) and the like should organize seminars, conferences and staff development programs that will enlighten teachers on issues associated with preference and help them develop skills and techniques that will ameliorate

the adverse psychological, emotional and behavioural effects of such challenges.

3. Principals and school administrators should adopt reflective practices such as provision of opinion boxes for teachers' comments and contributions, drafting of personal appraisal form and giving teachers to fill anonymously to evaluate principals' social, religious, cultural and general disposition towards teachers. This will help them to assess their unconscious behaviours and attitudes and where possible, seek teachers' suggestions for improvement.

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