

Implementation of Fundamental Rights of Secondary School Students Towards Enhancing Academic Performance in Ebonyi State, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

This study assessed the extent of Implementation of Fundamental Rights of Secondary School Students towards Enhancing Academic Performance in Ebonyi State. Two research questions and hypotheses guided the study. Descriptive survey design was adopted for the study. The population of the study comprised 81,053 students in the 196 Co-educational public secondary schools in Ebonyi State. The sample of the study comprised 397 students which was arrived at using Taro Yamane formula to draw the sample. The instrument for data collection was a researcher developed questionnaire titled "Extent of Implementation of Fundamental Rights of Secondary School Students towards Enhancing Academic Performance Questionnaire (EIFRSSEAPQ)". The instrument was validated by three (3) experts: two in the Department of Educational Foundations (Educational Administration and Planning Unit) while one was Measurement and Evaluation Unit of Science Education, all from the Faculty of Education, Ebonyi State University, Abakaliki. The reliability of the instrument was determined using Cronbach Alpha technique which yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.80. Mean (\bar{x}) and standard deviation (SD) were used to answer the research questions while t-test statistics was used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The findings from the data analysis revealed among others that principal's implementation of student right to peaceful association is to a high extent and that Principals' implementation of students right to fair hearing in public secondary schools in Ebonyi State is to a high extent. Based on the findings the study recommended that: principals should not hinder students from associating or belonging to a peaceful association in the school and also educate the students on the needs of associating with others and that principal should ensure that students are not prevented or restricted from their mode of expression.

Keywords: Implementation, Fundamental Rights, Secondary School, Enhancements, Academic Performance.

INTRODUCTION

Education, be it formal, informal or non-formal has always served as an avenue through which values, skills, attitudes and belief system required for continued existence of the society as well as mankind are acquired, sustained, modified and eventually transferred from one generation to another [1,2,3,4]. [5, 6] defined education as an instrument for developing human intellect, technical skills, character and effective citizenship for self-reliance and

national development. [7, 8] added that education is a social process whereby the individual acquires skills and knowledge for successful living in a society. There is no doubt according to [9, 10] that, education is the key to the development of an individual for the acquisition of competencies necessary for personal and national development. [11,12] defined education as the transmission of what is desirable to individuals to make them knowledgeable and as well

contributing members of the society. Federal Republic of Nigeria [13] in her National Policy on Education remarks that "education in Nigeria is an instrument par excellence for effecting national development". The National Policy on Education also pointed out that the main objectives of education at all levels in Nigeria is to raise the quality of education in order to make the product of the system more useful to the needs of the society and to maintain education as one of the prime engines for development of individuals and nation in general [14, 15].

The National policy on education portrays the important role that education plays in national development [16, 17]. This indicates that education is the hub on which the development of a nation revolves. For a nation to rise to a standard worthy enough for a favourably competition in the League of Nations, such a nation must ensure that high quality is attained and sustained in her educational system. This is because education is an effective tool for human development and no meaningful development can take place without it [18, 19, 20]. Through education, an individual would develop the capacity to contribute positively to the development of the nation. This is dependent largely on the extent such individuals' rights are being protected. As a result, the extent to which the above expectation of the government is achieved depends largely on the role of principals as school administrators over the protection of fundamental rights of the students [21, 22]. This means that school administrators (principals) shall not only be aware about students' rights, but should also be proficient in the protection and promotion of these rights [23, 24].

Unfortunately, it is obvious that many challenges facing secondary schools today are traceable to principals, who as chief executives are expected to be in total control of all aspects of school

administration. These challenges include the ability of principals: - to keep students motivated and safe in an increasingly apathetic and violent school environment; to administer quality education to all students including those with special needs; to keep abreast of and implement modern reforms while introducing new technologies. [25] noted that many principals have abdicated their administrative roles in the areas of implementing students fundamental rights.

However, implementation in this context implies the process of carrying out objectives or a plan. It is the process of performing a task, an activity or programme. [26], described implementation as the stage where the preparations made earlier, the plans, designs and analysis proposed are tested to see what they really are. So, effective implementation of students fundamental right in the actualization of educational objectives account for effective administration in the school system for enhancing students' academic performance.

Fundamental rights are generally regarded as set of legal protections in the context of legal systems, wherein such system itself is said to be based upon this same set of basic, fundamental or inalienable "rights." Such rights thus belong without presumption or cost of privilege to all human beings under such jurisdiction [27]. The concept of human right has been promoted as a legal concept in large part owing to the idea that human beings have "fundamental" rights that transcend all jurisdictions, but are typically reinforced in different ways and with different emphasis within different legal systems. In addition, [28] observed that fundamental human rights are the basic natural rights which are essential for human existence and every citizen is entitled to them and is expected to enjoy them in full without hindrance or discrimination. The Federal Republic of Nigeria (1999) in her

constitution highlighted the following as the Fundamental Rights of human being (students): Right to life, Right to Dignity of human person, Right to Personal Liberty, Right to Fair Hearing, Right to private Life, Right to association and Right to peaceful assembly (p;18).

Right may also mean that to which a person has a just and valid claim, whether it is a property or privilege of doing or saying something. [29] asserts that secondary school principals in carrying out their administrative functions by enforcing students rights as they are aware of such rights. In contrary, [30] argued that secondary school principals violate students fundamental rights because some principals are not aware of these fundamental rights while some exhibit nonchalant attitudes toward the implementation of students' rights of fair hearing, right to life, personal liberty, freedom of expression, peaceful association, freedom of worship and others. The author further stated that for effective administration to occur in the running of secondary schools, there is need for principals awareness of students fundamental rights.

Similarly, he further observed that most of these administrators have never read the Nigerian constitution nor even the laws, rules and regulations governing the administration of their schools, in relation to their students. Therefore, these lapses create the critical need to investigate principals' level of implementation of legal provisions for students' rights, as a means of safe guarding these rights. It is obvious that many challenges facing secondary schools today are traceable to principals, who, as chief executives are expected to be in total control of all aspects of school administration. [31] noted that many principals have abdicated their administrative roles in the process of implementing students fundamental rights which ranges from personal liberty, right to fair hearing,

right to life, right to dignity of human person, freedom of expression and right to worship.

Right to fair hearing is another fundamental constitutional right as guaranteed by the constitution, the breach of it in any trial investigation or inquiry nullifies the trial and any action taken on time is nullity [32]. Fair hearing means the right to be notified of the charge being brought against an individual and the chance to defend that charge. In a nutshell, fair hearing is a judicial or administrative hearing conducted in line with the due process of giving the parties the opportunity to present their cases without any hindrance as reasonably guaranteed by law. This implies that the school principal in carrying out his administrative function in the school system is to give his students the privilege to explain their actions when accused of any violation. Furthermore, right to peaceful association is the individual right to come together and collectively express, promote, pursue, and defend their collective or shared ideas [33]. Peaceful association is sometimes used interchangeably with the freedom of assembly. The right to freedom of association is recognized as a human right, a political right and a civil liberty of a given individual be it school environment or other social system. As regards the implementation of students' rights in particular, many principals appear not to take enough care in exercising their role in the place of parents by safe guarding the interests of students within the school system [34]. The result is that many principals become bogged within numerous students' related problems. In the past, school-based problems were viewed as domestic and were therefore usually settled out of court. Nowadays the situation, according to [35] is changing due to the growing complexity of educational management, increasing politicization of education and the citizens' greater awareness of their constitutional, legal and fundamental

human rights. As a result, principals are now being caught up with the legal implications of their jobs. Even in the place of the parents' status, which gives the school administrator the statutory obligations to care for the students, this places a greater responsibility on them to be answerable to the students, parents, employers and the general public. The choice of principals as the focal point of investigation in the violation of students' rights in this study is therefore justified, given their central position in school administration. It will be interesting to find out their level of awareness of legal provisions for students' rights as well as the extent of implementation of these rights, as a means of suggesting remedial measures to enhance students' academic performance.

Academic performance is a construct which refers to the level of measurable and observable behaviour in learners. According to [36] students' academic performance especially at the secondary school level is not only a pointer to the effectiveness of the schools but a major determinant of the future of the students in particular and the nation at large. Virtually, all stakeholders in education place premium on academic performance,

Statement of the Problem

In secondary schools, students may face some problems ranging from abuse of dignity, right to fair hearing or association. The school has the social and constitutional responsibilities of educating citizenry and protecting its learners from abuse of their rights. This is intricately interwoven in the responsibility due to inadequate knowledge and unawareness of fundamental human rights. This appears to undermine administrator's ability to protect and promote such rights thereby causing a lot of set-back in the actualization of educational goals. In many secondary schools particularly in Ebonyi State, students are maltreated by some school principals and their teachers in

hence [12] posited that excellent academic performance of students is often the expectation of parents. In the same vein, the major goal of the school is to work towards attainment of academic excellence of students. The principals need to be aware and effectively implement students' right for enhancing academic performance, irrespective of their gender and other classifying variables.

In the context of this study, rights are conceived as privileges which are legally allowed or owed to school children, and are delimited to rights to fair hearing, right to personal liberty, right to life and right to dignity of human persons. This become necessary as many parents often complain of meting corporal punishment on their children without justification. Despite the various provisions for the protection of human rights generally, the question is, do secondary school principals actually make efforts towards implementing these rights? If the answer is presumably in the affirmative, the researcher is interested in investigating the extent of implementation of these fundamental rights in relation to academic performance of students in secondary schools in Ebonyi State.

the process of carrying out administrative activities in the school. These often lead to brutalization of students in the school environment therefore making students to feel less important in the schools. This abnormal attitude of brutalization by some principals do affect students academically due to emotional torture and also retards administrative effectiveness of the school. Specifically, right to life and dignity of human person, appear mostly violated in the school system of today in Ebonyi State. The rising issues of sexual abuse has also generated lot of concern to stakeholders, especially parents who watch helplessly the moral decay in educational system. This often give

rise to crisis between students' parents and school community due to the violation of personal liberty, fair hearing and dignity of human person which no parents can tolerate. This in turn distract and cause setback in the administrative functions of any school. The rising cases of violation of students fundamental right is a source of worry to parents and the general

public, especially when the major focus of the attention seem to be on the principals' poor implementation of the rights of the students under their control. Therefore, the problem of this study summarized in question form is: to what extent are students' rights to fair hearing and peaceful association implemented by principals in public secondary schools in Ebonyi State?

Purpose of Study

The main purpose of this study was to investigate the extent of implementation of Fundamental Rights of Secondary School Students towards Enhancing Academic Performance in Ebonyi State. Specifically, this study sought to:

1. find out the extent principals' implement students' right to peaceful association in Public Secondary Schools in Ebonyi State.
2. determine the extent principals implement students' right to fair hearing in public secondary schools in Ebonyi State.

Research Questions

The following research questions, guided this study.

1. To what extent do principals' implement students' right to peaceful association in Public Secondary Schools in Ebonyi State?

2. To what extent do principals implement students' rights to fair hearings in public secondary schools in Ebonyi State?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated to guide the study and were tested at 0.05 level of significance.

Ho₁: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female students on the extent to which principals' implement students' right to peaceful

association in Public Secondary Schools in Ebonyi State.

Ho₂: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female students on the extent principals implement students' rights to fair hearings in Public Secondary Schools in Ebonyi State.

Implementation of Students Rights

Implementation is the carrying out, execution, or practice of a plan, a method, or any design, idea, model, specification, standard or policy for doing something [7]. As such, implementation is the action that must follow any preliminary thinking in order for something to actually happen. Implementation simply means the process of carrying out objectives or a plan. It is the process of performing a task, an activity or programme. [8] describes implementation as the stage where the preparations made earlier, the plans, designs and analysis proposed are

tested to see what they really are. One important point to note is that policy is being made as it is being administered or implemented. The various peoples and institutions responsible for implementing public policies include: administrative agencies, legislative houses, the courts and community organizations. Principals implementation of students right is the realization of an application, or execution of a plan, idea, model, design, specification, standard, algorithm, or policy toward the favorable study of the students.

Principals implementation of a school programme is an act or instance of implementing a given process of making something active or effective in the school system [12]. This is the process of moving an idea from concept to reality as related to enforcing and ensuring the effectiveness recognition of students

fundamental rights in the school system. In educational sector and other fields, implementation can be regarded as the acts of enhancing or building process rather than the design process. The school principals take rigid action in initiating values for the actualization of given objectives in the school system.

Right to Peaceful Association

Freedom of peaceful association, sometimes used interchangeably with the freedom of assembly, is the individual right or ability of people to come together and collectively to express, promote, pursue, and defend their collective or shared ideas [12]. The right to freedom of association is recognized as a human right, a political right and a civil liberty. The terms freedom of assembly and freedom of association may be used to distinguish between the freedom to assemble in public places and the freedom to join an association. Freedom of assembly is often used in the context of the right to protest, while freedom of association is used in the context of labor rights and in the Constitution of the State is interpreted to mean both the freedom to assemble and the freedom to join an association. The right to peaceful assembly protects the right of individuals and groups to meet and to engage in peaceful protest [15]. The right to freedom of association protects the right to form and join associations to pursue common goals. The right to peaceful assembly protects the right of individuals and groups to meet for a common purpose or in order to exchange ideas and information, to express their views publicly and to hold a peaceful protest. The right

extends to all gatherings for peaceful purposes, regardless of the degree of public support for the purpose of the gathering. However, the right applies only to peaceful assemblies, not to those involving violence. The right to peaceful assembly is the right of individuals to gather for a common purpose or to pursue common goals. Meetings and protests are examples of assemblies. Only peaceful assemblies are protected, not those which involve violence. This right covers preparing for and conducting of the assembly and protects the organizer's and the participants. This right extends to all forms of association with others, including but not only for political purposes. Right to peaceful association in the school include the free involvement of students in the social clubs or social gathering with ambition of social thought. Organizational climate patterns have created wrong assumption, as most principals hinder students from association in the school system, as students are punished over peaceful association. Disengagement of students from peaceful demonstration and making decision always the best when handling students' matters over students association remained bad administrative process.

Fair Hearing

It is a fact that what law seeks to achieve is justice. Justice must be pursued in the light of the laid down rules and procedure or the attainment of the desired justice, which is the quest of every man [7]. The principle of fair hearing cannot be divorced from the broad heading of human

rights which is today a universal concept. The right of fair hearing is one of the fundamental constitutional rights guaranteed by the constitution, the breach of it in any trial investigation or inquiry nullifies the trial and any action taken on them is a nullity. The meaning of fair hearing is

not a one way traffic as well, different meaning and different descriptions/explanations have been offered towards a clear grasp of what the true purport of fair hearing connotes. A cursory look at the provisions of the constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (1999) given a clear view of the concept section 36(1) of the constitution provides: "In the determination of his civil rights and obligations, including any question or determination by or against any government or authority, a person shall be entitled to a fair hearing within a reasonable time by a court or other tribunal established by law and independence and impartiality."

It is clear from the foregoing provisions and the whole of schools generally that party to a suit either in civil or criminal matters must be given fair hearing within a reasonable time and in public except where and when it will be contrary to public safety and public morality [20]. The provision extends further to state that parties to a suit be afforded opportunity to make representation to the authority before any decision is made and be entitled to defend himself in person or by legal practitioners of his own choice. Fair hearing means a judicial proceeding that is conducted in such a manner as to conform to fundamental concepts of justice and equality. During fair hearing, authority is exercised according to the principle of Due Process of law. Fair hearing therefore means that an individual will have an opportunity to present evidence to support his or her case and to discover what evidence exists against him or her. In criminal law when an individual is arrested, he is given the chance to defend himself/herself which is made known to him/her in advance [22]. Fair hearing means the right to be notified of the charge being brought against an individual and the chance to defend that charge. In a nutshell, fair hearing is a judicial or administrative hearing conducted in line with the due process

of giving the parties the opportunity to present their cases without any let or hindrance as reasonably guaranteed by law [20]. Logically it can be said that when the attribute of a "fair trial" is present in any given circumstance then one could conclude that there is fair hearing. Fair hearing does not exist in isolation but can only be enhanced by way of a judge acting as an impartial arbiter so as not to descend into the arena of a court of law [11].

[12], in a cumulative summary maintain that when a person is arrested and accused of a crime, he must be promptly charged and brought before account. He stated further with reference to the Nigeria 1999 constitution which guarantees an accused person a free and fair trial as provided for in section 36 of the 1999 constitution of Federal Republic of Nigeria. To him fairness of trial is fundamental to the administration of practice, it does not only give integrity to the legal system but also ensures the confidence of the society in the justice system. [13] also indicated the constitutional safe guards for fair trial which includes: Every person is guaranteed fair hearing. Stating further two major principles of fair hearing as "Audit Alteram Partem" meaning "hear the other party" and Nemo Judex in Causa Sua meaning no one shall be a judge in his own case.

In order for a hearing to be fair and comply with due process requirement, it must be held before an impartial tribunal; however, a hearing can be unfair without any intention that it be that way. A fair hearing may provide a reasonable opportunity for an individual to be present at the designated time and place, during which time he or she may offer evidence, cross examine opposition witness, and offer a defense. Formalities of a court action need not be strictly complied with in order for a proceeding to be considered for a fair hearing. [14] in line with this stated that the pupils should be given fair hearing prior to suspension or

expulsion. He further observed that it is recommended that parents are invited to the disciplinary committee hearing if sanction or expulsion is contemplated.

Fair hearing is regarded as a hearing that is granted in extra ordinary situations where the normal judicial process would be inadequate to secure due process because the person would be harmed or denied their rights before a judicial remedy became available i.e deportation or loss of welfare benefit. The right to fair hearing requires that individual students should not be penalized by decision affecting their rights or legitimate expectations unless they have been given prior notice of the case, a fair opportunity to present their own case [15]. The mere fact that

a decision affects rights or interest is sufficient to subject the decision to the procedures required by natural justice. In Europe, as found in the right to fair hearing is guaranteed by Article 6(1) of the European convention on Human Rights, which is said to complement the common law rather than replace it. This also is not different from the view of [17] in English Natural Justice and American Due Process. In this regard a person therefore is barred from deciding any case in which he or she may be, or may fairly be suspected to be biased, and this embodies the basic concept of impartiality. School principals therefore are expected not to be partial in their dealing with school rules and regulations as they are binding on students.

Theoretical Framework

This work precisely focused its theoretical framework on System Theory.

Systems Theory

This theory was propounded by Ludwig Von Bertalanffy in 1940 and was furthered by Ross Ashby in 1956. Systems theory in an organization is viewed by administrative theorists as a social system with interrelated parts/sub-parts on system. The only way to study an organization as articulated in education is to study it as a system. The term system has been used to describe the working of almost everything which makes the system theory universal. There is an obvious fact that cars, human body, electricity, economy, education and many others are made up of a system and the rationale behind these various systems is that all the parts are extricable related, dependent and that failure of any of the parts, affect the whole system. A system is a unit with series of inter-related and inter dependent parts, such that the interplay of any part affects the whole. They further articulated that within every system are other smaller systems called sub-systems as primary, secondary and tertiary sub systems in educational

system. The systems theory is important to educational administrators because the entire educational set up is a system, and the concept of interaction and interdependency of parts with one another is applicable. Problems facing the Nigerian educational system today can be resolved through system analysis. This is possible because there are a number of systems-oriented management techniques which have been developed for the physical, biological and social sciences, which can be adopted and applied in educational administration. These techniques can be used by educational administrators to analyze all educational programmes in a systematic way. In every educational institution, varieties of influences are exhibited by different individuals. The findings of this study may reveal the influence of system theory on the assessment of principals' violations of students' rights in secondary schools. This study is anchored on system theory since success in any

organization requires proper awareness of sub-systems within it and the climate. Adequate awareness of the sub-systems and climate will help the principal in the realization of the administrative goals. The knowledge of the theory will as well help the principal to realize the need

Ogbu *et al* for establishing positive report and school climate as this may have the potentials of influencing students' performance. Essentially, principal's awareness of his own rights and that of students may play a significant role on students' achievement.

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a descriptive survey design. Descriptive survey research design according to [21] is a design approach which aims at collecting and describing data in a systematic manner, the characteristics feature or facts about a given population. The area of the study was Ebonyi State. The State has 13 Local Government Areas (LGA). The people of Ebonyi State are mainly farmers with a good number of traders and civil servants. The people of the state are mainly Igbos by their cultural background and other Nigerians. There are many public secondary schools in the State. The population of the study comprised 81,053 students in the 196 co-education public senior secondary schools in Ebonyi State. There are 40,986 male students and 40,067 female students in the co-educational schools as at the time of this study in Ebonyi State. The sample for the study is 397 respondents which comprised of 201 male and 196 female students. This sample size was arrived at Taro Yamane formula for finite population. The instrument for data collection was a researcher structured questionnaire titled extent of Implementation of Fundamental Rights of Secondary School Students towards Enhancing Academic Performance in Ebonyi State Questionnaire (EIFRSSSEAPQ).

The instrument was face validated by three (3) experts: two from the Department of Educational Foundations (Educational Administration and Planning) and one from the Department of Science Education (Measurement and Evaluation); all from the Faculty of Education, Ebonyi State University, Abakaliki. The validated instrument was trial tested with thirty eight (38) students in Cross River State which is not part of the study area to ensure its reliability. These gave an overall reliability score of 0.80. The result indicated that the instrument was reliable and therefore considered appropriate for use. This decision is in line with [4] who stated that when a reliability index of a test is above 0.50, the instrument is reliable. In answering the research questions, data collected from respondents were analyzed using SPSS software (Statistical Package for Social Sciences). In taking decision for mean, range values were adopted. That is 1.00-1.49 for Very Low Extent (VLE), 1.50 - 2.49 for Low Extent (LE), 2.50 - 3.49 for High Extent (HE) and 3.50 -4.00 for Very High Extent (VHE). In testing the hypotheses, t-test was used to test the entire null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

Research Question One

To what extent do principals implement students' right to peaceful association in Public Secondary Schools in Ebonyi State? The data

providing answers to the above research question are presented in table 1 below.

Table 1: Mean Ratings and Standard Deviation of Responses on the extent to which principals' implement students' right to peaceful association in Public Secondary Schools in Ebonyi State

S/N	Item Statement	N	\bar{X}	SD	DEC.
1	Principals encourage students to belong to social clubs in school	397	3.00	0.55	HE
2	Principals allow students' peaceful demonstration within the school	397	2.75	0.59	HE
3	Some school policies which influence the students association are hardly made open to students	397	2.66	0.49	HE
4	School administrator consider their decisions as always the best when handling students' Association matters	397	2.71	0.67	HE
5	Lay down procedures are not usually followed in some corporal punishments involving suspension in relation to students association.	397	2.54	0.77	HE
6	School principals mostly encourages students peer relationship	397	2.62	0.70	HE
7	Most principals facilitates students association in the school system	397	3.01	0.56	HE
8	Students are punished for peaceful demonstration	397	2.79	0.70	HE
	Grand Mean		2.76	0.62	HE

The result presented in Table 1 showed the mean ratings of respondents on the extent to which principals' implement students' right to peaceful association in Public Secondary Schools. Items 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7 and 8 with mean scores of 3.00, 2.75, 2.66, 2.71, 2.54, 2.62, 3.01 and 2.79 showed that principals implement students' right to peaceful association in Public Secondary Schools to a high extent. This implies that principals to a high extent: encourage students to belonging to social clubs in school, allowing students' peaceful demonstration within the school, some

school policies which influence the students association are hardly made open to students, School administrator consider their decisions as always the best when handling students' Association matters, lay down procedures are not usually followed in some corporal punishments involving suspension in relation to students association, School principals encourages students peer relationship, most principals facilitates students association in the school system and Students are punished for peaceful demonstration.

Research Question Two

To what extent do principals implement students' rights to fair hearings in Public Secondary Schools in Ebonyi State? The data providing answers to the above research question are presented in table 2 below.

Table 2: Mean Ratings and Standard Deviation of Responses on the extent to which principals implement students' rights to fair hearings in Public Secondary Schools in Ebonyi State

S/N	Principals Implementation of Students Rights to Fair Hearing:	N	\bar{X}	SD	DEC.
9	School principal review policies which affect students through writing to students	397	2.83	0.62	HE
10	Principals involve students in decision making.	397	2.71	0.45	HE
11	Opportunities are given to students by the principal to give their opinion over school matter.	397	2.84	0.85	HE
12	School principal is not rigid in handling students cases.	397	2.83	0.37	HE
13	Principals correct students for expressing opinion that is against the school policy.	397	2.33	0.54	LE
14	Principals give students the opportunities to defend themselves over alleged offences.	397	2.88	0.60	HE
Grand Mean			2.73	0.56	HE

Table 2 revealed that the respondents in items 9-12, recoded that principal reviewed policies which affect students through writing to students to a high extent that principals involved students in decision making, gives opportunities to students to present their opinion over school matter to high extent. The table shows also school principal is not rigid in handling students cases and principals give students the opportunities to defend themselves over alleged offences to a high extent while item 13 recorded that Principals correct students for expressing opinion that is

against the school policy to low extent. The grand means for the cluster is 2.73; this is between 2.50 and 3.49 and corresponds to High Extent (HE).

1: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female students on the extent to which principals' implement students' right to peaceful association in Public Secondary Schools in Ebonyi State. The respondents were categorized based on the gender of the school principals. A t-test analysis of the difference between these two groups of respondents were computed and the result is show on table 3.

Table 3: t-test of difference in the mean responses of male and female students on the extent to which principals' implement students' right to peaceful association in Public Secondary Schools in Ebonyi State

Ite ms	Category Respondents	of N	Mean	SD	Df	t-cal	t-crit.	Decision
1.	Male	201	2.97	0.55	395	1.00	1.96	Not Significant
	Female	196	3.03	0.55				
2.	Male	201	2.78	0.60	395	0.94	1.96	Not Significant
	Female	196	2.72	0.58				
3.	Male	201	2.66	0.47	395	0.14	1.96	Not Significant
	Female	196	2.66	0.47				
4.	Male	201	2.77	0.67	395	1.81	1.96	Not Significant
	Female	196	2.65	0.68				
5.	Male	201	2.55	0.78	395	0.08	1.96	Not Significant
	Female	196	2.54	0.76				
6.	Male	201	2.60	0.72	395	0.66	1.96	Not Significant
	Female	196	2.65	0.67				
7.	Male	201	2.99	0.57	395	0.71	1.96	Not Significant
	Female	196	3.03	0.55				
8	Male	201	2.82	0.73	395	0.79	1.96	Not Significant
	Female	196	2.76	0.67				
	Average					0.76	1.96	Not Significant

The result of the t-test analysis presented in Table 3 indicated that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female students on the extent to which principals' implement students' right to peaceful association in Public Secondary Schools in Ebonyi State. This is because from the table, most of the items like 1,2,3,4,5,6,7 and 8 obtained a t-calculated value that was less than the t-critical value. The average t-calculated value of 0.76 was also less than the average t-critical of 1.96. Based on this, the researcher hereby accept the null hypothesis of there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female students on the extent to which principals' implement students' right to peaceful association in Public Secondary Schools in Ebonyi State.

2: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female students on the extent principals implement students' rights to fair hearings in Public Secondary Schools in Ebonyi State. The items of students rights to fair hearings were separated across gender of school principals and subjected them to test of difference using t-test statistical tool. Summary of results were shown on Table 4.

Table 4: t-test of difference in the mean responses of male and female students on the extent principals implement students' rights to fair hearings in Public Secondary Schools in Ebonyi State.

Items	Category of resp.	N	Mean	SD	Df	t-cal	t-crit.	Decision
9	Male	201	2.82	0.63	395	0.33	1.96	Not Significant
	Female	196	2.84	0.61				
10	Male	201	2.72	0.44	395	0.71	1.96	Not Significant
	Female	196	2.69	0.46				
11	Male	201	2.85	0.84	395	0.10	1.96	Not Significant
	Female	196	2.84	0.85				
12	Male	201	2.86	0.34	395	1.46	1.96	Not Significant
	Female	196	2.80	0.39				
13	Male	201	2.29	0.55	395	1.53	1.96	Not Significant
	Female	196	2.37	0.53				
14	Male	201	2.83	0.62	395	1.80	1.96	Not Significant
	Female	196	2.93	0.56				
Average						0.98	1.96	Not Significant

The result of t-test analysis presented in Table 4 indicated that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female students on the extent to which principals implement students' rights to fair hearings in Public Secondary Schools in Ebonyi State. This is because from the table above, all the items obtained a t-calculated value that were less than

the t-critical. The average t-calculated value of 0.98 was less than the t-critical. Based on this, the researcher hereby accepted the null hypothesis that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female students on the extent principals implement students' rights to fair hearings in Public Secondary Schools in Ebonyi State.

DISCUSSION

The study revealed the extent to which principals' implement students' right to peaceful association in Public Secondary Schools. The responses of the respondents imply that principals to a high extent: encourage students to belong to social clubs in school, allowing students' peaceful demonstration within the school, some school policies which influence the students association are hardly made open to students, School administrators consider their decisions as always the best when handling students' Association matters, laid down procedures are not usually followed in some corporal punishments involving suspension in relation to students association, school principals encourage students peer relationship, most principals facilitate students association in the school system and Students are punished for peaceful demonstration.

The indication based on the grand mean asserted to a high extent do principals' implement students' right to peaceful association in Public Secondary Schools.

In support of [23] who asserted that right to peaceful assembly protects the right of individuals and groups to meet and to engage in peaceful protest. The right to freedom of association protects the right to form and join associations to pursue common goals. The right to peaceful assembly protects the right of individuals and groups to meet for a common purpose or in order to exchange ideas and information, to express their views publicly and to hold a peaceful protest which is constantly breached by some authorities. In a related view [15] disclosed that students right to peaceful association is being violated in one form or the other, some lead to students;secreterelationship/associati

on which most often have adverse effect on their academic performance. Therefore, there is need to assess the extent principals implement students right to peaceful association in secondary schools. The study basically revealed the extent to which principals' implement students' right to fair hearing in Public Secondary Schools. The indication in the responses of the respondents shows that to a high extent do school principal review policies which affect students through writing to students, involved students in decision making, based of opportunities given to students by the principal to give their opinion over school matter, not rigid in handling students cases and give students the opportunities to express their opinion on alleged offences This

study is in accord with the opinion of [16] in his study on analysis of cases of implementation of students' rights in public secondary schools, observed that students are not rusticated i.e. are not suspended without fair hearing. He also observed that school authorities consider their decision and students' opinion as always best when handling student matters. [11], stressed there is need for the school executive to continually have a listing so that students will not be punished unduly. In his support Yu opined that under law to give fair hearing to individuals especially in matters concerning them. Thus lay credence to the need for an investigation onto the extent principals implement students right to fair hearing in secondary schools.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion the issue of implementation of students fundamental rights in public secondary schools in Ebonyi State are to high extent, the aspect of fundamental rights recognized by secondary school principals are right

to peaceful association and right to fair hearing in secondary schools which all correspond to high extent, which is an indication that the effective implementation of these rights vehemently improved students' academic performance.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the discussion of the results, the following recommendations were made:

1. In the area of implementation of students' right to peaceful association in public secondary schools, principals should not hinder students from associating or belonging to a peaceful association in the school, also they

should educate the students on the needs for associating with others.

2. In the case of implementation of students' rights to fair hearings in public secondary schools, principals should ensure that students are not prevented or restricted from their mode of expression.

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