

# IMPACT OF DIVISION OF LABOUR AND HIERARCHY OF AUTHORITY AS A BUREAUCRATIC PRINCIPLES ON PRINCIPALS' ROLE PERFORMANCE IN PUBLIC SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN RIVERS STATE

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## Abstract

The study examined the impact of division of labour and hierarchy of authority on principals' role performance in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. 2 research questions and hypotheses were formulated to guide the study. A descriptive design was adopted. Population of the study consisted of 275 principals of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. The sample size consisted of 153 principals in public secondary schools in Rivers State. A 13 self-constructed questionnaire instrument tagged Impact of division of Labour and Hierarchy of Authority on Principals Role Performance Questionnaire (IDLHAPRPQ) was used for data collection. The reliability coefficients of 0.71 and 0.79 were determined using Cronbach alpha. The Mean and standard deviation were used in answering the research questions while z- test statistics were used in testing the hypotheses. The findings revealed that there is no significant difference in the mean scores of male and female principals in the ways hierarchy of authority affect principals role performance and also, there is a significant difference in the mean scores of experienced and less experienced principals in the ways division of labour affects principals' role performance in secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria. The study concluded that when principals are given full liberty to manage the affairs of their schools, they will be able to initiate better ideas and innovations that will bring about effective administration. The researcher therefore recommended amongst others that organisational structure of schools in Rivers State should be restructured in a way that the principals will be given more opportunities to initiate their roles in secondary schools.

**Keyword:** Bureaucracy, Division of Labour, Hierarchy of Authority, Role Performance.

## Introduction

Every organisation which exists in a society whether legal, formal or informal is purposive and goal oriented. School as a legal and service industry exists to accomplish pre-determined goals. The society expects the school to produce individuals who will be self-reliant, respectful and able to contribute positively and constructively to the national project,

growth and development of the nation, hence in the world at large education plays a vital role in the development of human potentials needed for economic growth, development and technological advancement. In order to actualize these objectives in secondary school, the school principal who is seen as a manager, leader and the image maker of the school is required to possess certain basic

qualities, skills and abilities to enable him establish a culture of higher expectation and belongingness for all students, employees and parents for him to achieve success in performing his role. He is expected to be an innovative manager, a good coordinator and an environmental manager. This is because the world is now a global village and individual tastes and preferences have changed, the world expected new and quality products (student) which can give the society the best return.

These bureaucratic elements help the school principal in the effective coordination of school activities however it has its own challenges. The division of labour enables the principal to map out duties and functions according to workers areas of specialisations which help in achieving school targeted goals. Appropriate division of labour enhances co-operation and coordination, efficiency and effectiveness among workers, for instance in school system, teachers are employed to perform specific task because of their technical qualifications which help them to develop high proficiency.

Every organization has subordinate and super-ordinate relationship. The hierarchy shows the flow of authority from the top to the bottom and also how the feedback flows from the bottom to the top. In the school system, the principal is answerable to the schools board and give information to teachers. The hierarchy of authority helps the school system to ensure discipline and compliance of subordinate to the directives of super-ordinates. No organisation can achieve success without putting down some rules and regulations, because individuals who work in such organisation come from different backgrounds, have different values, aspirations and attitudes, which must have to be controlled by written laws and procedures to enable the employees work harmoniously. For instance state schools

boards normally provide handbook or manual that contain the rules and regulations and code of conduct which teachers and principals must abide with in decision making and it also guides teachers and students actions.

### **Statement of the Problem**

It is widely conceived that the realisation of organisational goals are heavily dependent on the organisational structure and the organisations leadership ability to coordinate the human and material resources and other environmental factors internal or external to the organisation. However school as a bureaucratic organisation is expected to achieve maximum efficiency, effectiveness and quality output in all ramifications. Contrary to this, observations and research findings have identified bureaucratic ineffectiveness in schools because of its complexity with rules and regulation, checks and balances. The researcher is bordered on the bureaucratisation of school, and wanted to find out the impact of bureaucratic principles of division of labour and hierarchy of authority on principals role performance in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

### **Aim and Objectives of the Study**

The study investigated impact of division of labour and hierarchy of authority on principals' role performance in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. Specifically, the study.

1. Examined ways division of labour affect principals role performance in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.
2. Find out ways hierarchy of authority affect principals role performance in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What are the ways division of labour affect principals' role performance in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State?
2. In what ways does hierarchy of authority affect principals' role performance in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State?

### **Hypotheses**

The following null hypotheses were tested

### **Review of Literature**

#### **Social System Theory**

The concept of social system theory according to Peretomode (2014) was derived by Tallott Persons in 1951, but its application to school administration was achieved by Von Bettalanfy, 1950, Getzel and Cuba in 1957 (Hoy & Miskel, 2008). They conceived social system as a system where the components are people and each individual or people is sharpened by psychosocial uniqueness and sociological attributes. Peretomode (2013) saw social system as an operational unit where by the various components harmoniously interplay to realize the organisational pre-determined goals. Lunenbury and Ornstern (2008) conceived social system as an activities and interactions of group members brought together for a common purpose. Ukeje, Okorie and Nwagbara in Igwe (2006:186) stated that "The focus of social systems theory is on the function of the individual in an organisation not only as an individual, but also as one who occupies duties or functions within the social system.

Silver, in Peretomode (2012) defined social system as a "set of components that interact for a purpose within a boundary that filters inputs and outputs". Hence a social system is a system where the components are individuals and these components are independent, yet interact with each other to

1. There is no significant difference in the mean scores of experienced and less experience principals on ways division of labour affect their role performance in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria.
2. There is no significant difference in the mean scores of male and female principals on ways hierarchy of authority affect their role performance in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria.

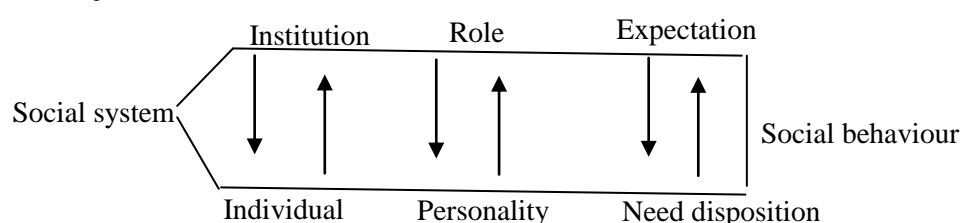
achieve organizational goals. School as a social system cannot work in isolation; all sub-systems must work harmoniously to achieve educational goals. Person in Okorie (2012) saw social system to consist of set of actors interacting with each other in a situation that has an environment aspect.

Peretomode (2014) identified the following characteristics of social system to consist of group of people, these people interact with a purpose, the interactions are inter-dependent, the pattern of interdependent interaction is into institution, and these institutions have definite geographical locations. Hoy and Forsyth in Igwe (2006) saw social system as "an aggregate of human relations such as neighbourhood, organizations or society itself". Thus Ukeje, Okorie and Nwagbara (2000) outlined a number of factors that make up the social system. Social system is made up of individuals who must work in harmony. For instance, individuals who act in the roles of principal, teachers, students and so on are people who make up the social systems; there are interactions among and between individuals; interactions are directed at the achievement of goals; social systems are open system because they continually transact with environment into different components that perform specific function; social systems are structured into different parts that perform specific functions; each individual in a social system is expected to

behave in a particular manner that is usually prescribed by formal rules and regulations and social systems are sanction bearing.

However, school as a social system consists of clearly defined population such as the principals, teachers, students and other school personnel, they work together and interact with one another for the achievement of organisational goals while individually working towards achieving their personal objectives. Getzel and Guba

in Igwe (2006) conceived school as a social system that involved two elements of a system which they called sub-systems, which are regarded as interdependent and interactive. They referred these element or phenomena as nomothetic and idiographic dimensions. Which the model shows below:



Every institution has goals to be actualized, they have roles and each role is associated with a particular set of expectations. However, the nomothetic dimension explains the individual behaviour in terms of dominant roles and expectations aimed at achieving the goals. The regular and routine patterns of behaviour represent the bureaucratic roles defined in terms of expectation. Silver in Peretomode (2014:242) refers to nomothetic dimension to “making and transmission of law”. Thus ensuring that people behaviour or conduct conforms to the norm of the society.

Idiographic dimension consists of the individual personality and need disposition, and any performance or act of any individual in this system may be as a result of individuals trying to cope with his environment which is composed with pattern of expectation or roles and his behaviour in a manner consistent with his patterns of need disposition. (Igwe 2006).

### **Concept of Bureaucracy**

Bureaucracy is an organisational and administrative arrangement whereby all the employees have specialized job they

perform in accordance with specific producers, standard rules and regulations in schools. It is a formal organisation structure characterised by clearly defined laws, policies and procedure that define the pattern of activities and hierarchy: Weber in Ibara (2010: 36), defined bureaucracy as formal system of organisation and administration designed to ensure efficiency and effectiveness. Bureaucracy is also looked at as a tool for proper and effective control and direction of human effort and behavior (Muringan, 2011). Abraham (2013), pointed out that bureaucracy is an important principle of administration because its influence is felt in every formal organisation. He also explained that “bureaucracy is the super-impositions of men, materials, competence and authority upon one another in the process of attaining the goals of an organisation” (pg.51).

However bureaucracy ensures the depersonalization of work tasks at every level of the organisation, the concept of bureaucracy attempts to minimize the frustration of large organisation in which the relationship between the management and employees were based on tradition and

privilege and on the other hand maximizing efficiency and output. Farrant in Afrangideh (2004) saw bureaucracy as a “system of administration, established to complement the policy of the governing body”. Ukeje, Okorie and Nwagbara (2000:58) postulated that bureaucracy refers to a specific form of social organisation for administration purpose which possesses a formal pattern of activities in which every series of action is functionally related.

### **Division of Labor on Principals Role Performance**

In a formal and social organization like the school an individual cannot assume all the roles necessary for the accomplishment of educational goals. Task and responsibilities must be allocated based on areas of specialization. For instance the English teacher specialises in English language while mathematic, chemistry, physics teacher are specialist in their own areas. Ukeje in Ajuzieogu (2008) stated that one of the problems with division of labour and specialization is that it brings boredom. The employee keeps doing one thing on a daily bases, creativity and innovation are not encouraged. The reutilization of jobs makes employees feel trapped, and bored because they are not exposed to learning new things, neither to put in their creative ideas. Division of labour and specialisation impede productivity because it narrows employees mind set, he only focused on the assign duties.

Okorie (2012:74) supported the above analysis, that division of labour and specialisation leads to boredom impedes productivity and innovation. He was of the view that it encourages teachers to use the same scheme of work, textbooks and notes in a particular subject years, and after year and that makes employers to have limited principal who is seen as the leader and manager at more level, receive

instruction from the school board and the ministry, has his own assigned duties to perform, he has his own duties assigned to him or hers by the central authority he cannot act out of the instruction given to him, too many directives and dictations from the ministry, which most time lead principal to confusion and frustration. As it stands important because a follower of rules and regulation, he always follow the way it has been done in the organization without thinking of innovative way of doing that job. Hence division of labour impede principals’ role because they are accustomed to a particular way of doing things and feel threatened whenever the idea of introduction of new things come in and the employees also resist to the change that principal intended to introduce due to the conversant of task they perform on a daily basis.

### **Hierarchy of Authority on Principals Role Performance**

School as a bureaucratic organization, communication follow from the top to the bottom, while feedback follow from down to the top the principals of hierarchy delay an administrative decision making process in a large organization like school, files and documents have to pass through all the necessary stages and processed and endorsed by the appropriate authorities and officers before the final decision is taking irrespective of the urgent nature of such document Afangideh (2004) “The pyramidal hierarchy of authority in organizations distorts and block communication, fosters bureaucratic red-tapism, stifles creativity and innovation, encourages flattery and systematic distortion of the real situation” the above analysis was supported by Okorie (2012). Adesina and Ogunsaju in Ajuzieogu (2008) pointed out that principals and head of school do no longer exercise independence and freedom which head of secondary school enjoyed in the past over

such matters as staffing, finance, control of teachers and even the use of school building. However the school system has organizational structure, or framework which a guide and direct the principals, they receive laws and implement those laws, he communicate to the ministry and disseminate the information to his subordinates the principal, must follow a due process in handling any matter, nor matter how urgent the case might be, he cannot act on its own power, and any action taken by him constitute a deviation and which leads to sanction which hinders principals performance.

Peretomode (2014) opined that positions of offices in school set-up are organized and arranged in form of pyramid. The principal who is at thus pyramid must recognize the line of authority accordingly in other to achieve great success in performing his assigned duties. Ukeje in Afangidah (2013) was of the view that hierarchy of authority allows for a graduation of authority starting with the administrative post and ending with cooperative workers. This principle of hierarchy serves as an instrument through which every part of the organization functions effectively because of well channel of communication and clarification of position are well defined.

### **Methodology**

The researcher adopted descriptive design. The population of this study consisted of

275 principals in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. The sample of the study consisted of 153 principals from the 275 principals in public secondary schools in Rivers State. The multistage sampling procedure used disproportionate and purposive sampling technique to arrive at the sample. The instrument used for data collection is a self- designed 13 item-questionnaire titled, "Impact of division of labour and hierarchy of authority on Principals role performance in public secondary schools questionnaire [IBPRPSSQ].

The Cronbach alpha method was used to establish the reliability index of the instruments. Copies of the instruments were administered to thirty (30) principals outside the sampled area. The reliability coefficients for the subscale of division of labour is 0.71, Hierarchy of Authority is 0.79. The researcher administered 163 copies of the questionnaire personally to the respondents, so that she can explain any issues or challenges across. 153 copies of the questionnaire were retrieved, which represent 93.87% rate of return. The data obtained in the course of this study were coded based on items responses and scales. Mean statistics and standard deviation were used to answer the research question. The z-test statistics was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 alpha level. The criterion mean used is 2.50.

### **Results**

**Research Question 1:** What are the ways divisions of labour affect principals' role performance in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State?

**Table 1: Mean ( $\bar{X}$ ) and Standard Deviation (SD) on the responses of experienced and less experienced Principals on ways division of labour affect principals' role performance in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State**

S/N	ITEMS	Experienced Teachers		Less experienced Teachers		$\bar{x}$	Remark
		$\bar{x}$	SD	$\bar{x}$	SD		
1	Division of labour does not lead to effectiveness	2.34	1.08	2.23	1.11	2.29	Disagree
2	Division of labour does not enhances productivity	2.43	1.05	2.43	1.08	2.43	Disagree
3	Division of labour improves principals efforts to initiate change and innovation	3.05	0.79	2.68	0.97	2.87	Agree
4	High proficiency is guaranteed if school activities are well divided among employees in school.	3.25	0.65	2.75	0.88	3.00	Agree
5	When employees are accustomed to a particular way of doing things, they find it difficult to change their old pattern	3.16	0.69	2.64	0.98	2.90	Agree
7	Division of labour gives attention to creativity.	3.32	0.55	2.66	0.92	2.99	Agree
.	Emphasis on area of specialisation tends to enhance broad mindedness of employees	3.32	0.58	2.62	0.91	2.97	Agree
<b>Average</b>		<b>2.98</b>	<b>0.77</b>	<b>2.57</b>	<b>0.98</b>	<b>2.78</b>	

Data on Table shows that most of the items had weighted mean scores above the criterion mean of 2.50 and were seen as ways divisions of labour affect principals' role performance in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. In summary, with an aggregate weighted mean of 2.78 which is above the criterion mean of 2.50, the respondents agreed that division of labour improves principals efforts to initiate change and innovation, high proficiency is guaranteed if school activities are well divided among employees in school, when employees are accustomed to a particular way of doing things, they find it difficult to change their

old pattern, division of labour gives attention to creativity and emphasis on area of specialization tends to enhance broad mindedness of employees.

Furthermore, it guaranteed high proficiency if school activities are well divided among employees in school is the highest way divisions of labour affect principals role performance in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

**Research Question 2:** In what ways does hierarchy of authority affect principals' role performance in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State?

**Table 2: Mean ( $\bar{X}$ ) and Standard Deviation (SD) on the responses of male and female Principals on ways hierarchy of authority, affect principals role performance in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State**

S/N	ITEMS	Male Principals		Female Principals		$\bar{x}$	$\bar{x}$	Remark
		$\bar{x}$	SD	$\bar{x}$	SD			
8	Principle of hierarchy of authority is practiced in secondary schools.	2.67	0.89	2.67	1.02	2.67		Agree
9	Principals receive and implement policies from the Ministry of Education and state schools board.	2.62	0.81	2.65	0.98	2.64		Agree
10	The school activities are controlled by the central authority.	2.67	0.92	2.60	0.95	2.64		Agree
11	The hierarchy of authority block free communication in schools	2.65	0.96	2.70	0.79	2.68		Agree
12	Hierarchy of authority hinders employees' innovativeness, because they only implement	2.42	1.09	2.33	1.10	2.38		Disagree
13	decision made by the ministry of education. The principals have no right to act on their own even when there is emergency, they have to go through the due processes, to get what they want.	2.63	0.88	2.65	0.93	2.64		Agree
	<b>Average</b>	<b>2.61</b>	<b>0.93</b>	<b>2.60</b>	<b>0.96</b>	<b>2.61</b>		

Data on Table shows that most of the items had weighted mean scores above the criterion mean of 2.50 and were seen as ways hierarchy of authority affect principals' role performance in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. In summary, with an aggregate weighted mean of 2.61 which is above the criterion mean of 2.50, the respondents agreed that principle of hierarchy of authority is practiced in secondary schools, principals receive and implement policies from the Ministry of Education and state schools

board, the school activities are controlled by the central authority, the hierarchy of authority blocks free communication in schools and principals have no right to act on their own even when there is emergency, they have to go through the due processes, to get what they want. Furthermore, the hierarchy of authority blocks free communication in schools is the highest way hierarchy of authority affect principals' role performance in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

**HO<sub>1</sub>:** There is no significant difference in the mean scores of experienced and less experience principals on ways division of labour affect their role performance in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria.



**Table 1: Summary of z-test Analysis on the difference in the mean score of experienced and less experienced Principals on ways division of labour affect role performance in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria**

Principals	N	$\bar{X}$	SD	Level of sig	Df	z-cal	z-critical	Decision
Experienced	100	2.98	0.77	0.05	151	2.93	1.96	Significant
Less experienced	53	2.57	0.98					Not Rejected

Data on the Table revealed the summaries of Subject, mean, standard deviation and z-test of difference between the mean scores of experienced and less experienced principals on ways division of labour affect their role performance in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria. The calculated z-test value used in testing hypothesis stood at 2.93, while z-critical value stood at 1.96 using 151 degree of freedom at 0.05 level of significance.

At 0.05 level of significance and 151 degrees of freedom, the calculated z-value of 2.93 is greater than the z-critical value of 1.96. Hence there is a significant difference between the responses of the respondents. Consequently, the researcher rejected the null hypothesis, and concluded that there is a significant difference in the mean scores of experienced and less experienced principals on ways division of labour affect their role performance in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria.

**HO<sub>2</sub>:** There is no significant difference in the mean scores of male and female principals on ways hierarchy of authority affect their role performance in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria.

**Table 2: Summary of z-test analysis on the difference in the mean score of male and female Principals on ways hierarchy of authority affect role performance in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria**

Principals	N	$\bar{X}$	SD	Level of sig	Df	z-cal	z-critical	Decision
Male	110	2.61	0.93	0.05	151	0.07	1.96	Not Significant
Female	43	2.60	0.96					Rejected

Data on the Table revealed the summaries of Subject, mean, standard deviation and z-test of difference between the mean scores of male and female principals on ways hierarchy of authority affect their role performance in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria. The calculated z-test value used in testing hypothesis stood at 0.07, while z-critical value stood at 1.96 using 151 degree of freedom at 0.05 level of significance. At

0.05 level of significance and 151 degrees of freedom, the calculated z-value of 0.07 is less than the z-critical value of 1.96. Hence there is no significant difference between the responses of the respondents. Consequently, the researcher accepted the null hypothesis, and concluded that there is no significant difference in the mean scores of male and female principals on ways hierarchy of authority affect their role performance in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria.

### **Summary of Findings**

1. Division of labour improves principals efforts to initiate change and innovation, high proficiency is guaranteed if school activities are well divided among employees in school, when employees are accustomed to a

particular way of doing things, they find it difficult to change their old pattern, division of labour gives attention to creativity and emphasis on area of specialization tends to enhance broad mindedness of employees. Furthermore, it guaranteed high proficiency if school activities are well divided among employees in school is the highest way divisions of labour affect principals role performance in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

2. Principle of hierarchy of authority is practiced in secondary schools, principals receive and implement policies from the Ministry of Education and state schools board, the school activities are controlled by the central authority, the hierarchy of authority blocks free communication in schools and principals have no right to act on their own even when there is emergency, they have to go through the due processes, to get what they want. Furthermore, the hierarchy of authority blocks free communication in schools is the highest way hierarchy of authority affect principals role performance in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.
3. There is a significant difference in the mean scores of experienced and less experienced principals on ways division of labour affect their role performance in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria

4. There is no significant difference in the mean scores of male and female principals on ways hierarchy of authority affect their role performance in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria.

### **Discussion of Findings and Implications** **Ways divisions of labour affect principals' role performance in secondary schools**

From the study, the respondents agreed that Division of labour improves principals efforts to initiate change and innovation, high proficiency is guaranteed if school activities are well divided among employees in school, when employees are accustomed to a particular way of doing things, they find it difficult to change their old pattern, division of labour gives attention to creativity and emphasis on area of specialization tends to enhance broad mindedness of employees. Furthermore, it guaranteed high proficiency if school activities are well divided among employees in school is the highest way divisions of labour affect principals role performance in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

Ajuzieogu, (2008) worked on bureaucratic impediments to principals role performance in secondary schools in Abia State. The finding indicated that division of labour frustrates efforts to initiate change. In a similar study, Afangideh (2004), worked on bureaucracy and primary school effectiveness in Akwa Ibom State. His findings revealed that there was a very high and positive response on division of labour. The above studies validate the present findings. The implication of the present study is that, the effectiveness of a school principal relies on his/her ability to make changes, as well as take decisions where necessary. In other words, he/she should be able to know who,

when and how to assign function to any teacher/staff at every given time.

### **Ways hierarchy of authority affect principals' role performance in secondary schools**

From the study, the respondents agreed that principle of hierarchy of authority is practiced in secondary schools, principals receive and implement policies from the Ministry of Education and state schools board, the school activities are controlled by the central authority, the hierarchy of authority blocks free communication in schools and principals have no right to act on their own even when there is emergency, they have to go through the due processes, to get what they want. Furthermore, the hierarchy of authority blocks free communication in schools is the highest way hierarchy of authority affect principals role performance in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

Afangideh (2004) examined bureaucracy and primary school effectiveness in Akwa Ibom State. The study employed descriptive and inferential research designs. His findings revealed a high and positive response on school hierarchical authority structure. This means that hierarchy of authority is prevalent in secondary schools, as principals mostly take instructions from the ministry of education. They usually have no input, when it has to do with major decisions to take. This implies that hierarchy of authority stifles creativity and

innovations in subordinates. It does not give much room for positive and productive moves by school principals that can enhance their performance and effectiveness.

### **Conclusion**

Based on the findings of the study it is concluded that when principals are given full liberty to manage the affairs of their schools, they will be able to initiate better ideas and innovations that will bring about effective administration, as well as improved performance.

### **Recommendations**

1. Organizational structure of schools in Rivers State should be restructured in a way that the principals will be given more opportunities to initiate their roles in secondary schools.
2. Principals should avail themselves of the functional aspects of bureaucracy and apply them in a manner, that counteract their dysfunctional influences

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