

# **RELEVANCE AND BENEFITS OF MANAGEMENT BY OBJECTIVES TO SECONDARY SCHOOL MANAGEMENT IN ANAMBRA STATE: TEACHERS VIEWS**

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## **Abstract**

*The purpose of the of this study was to investigate the views of secondary school teachers on the relevance and expected benefits of management by Objectives (MBO) to secondary school management in Anambra State. Guided by two research questions and two null hypotheses, the descriptive survey design was adopted. A sample of 1159 teachers was selected through stratified random sampling technique from secondary schools in the six education zones in Anambra State. The study utilized a 37- item researcher developed questionnaire structured on a 4-point scale. Mean scores were used to answer research questions, while Analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to test the null hypotheses. The findings of the study indicated that the teachers irrespective of education zones were of the view that all the elements of MBO are relevant and could be beneficial to achieving continuous improvement in school management. Since the teachers considered MBO to be relevant and beneficial to school management, it was recommended among other things that principals across the six education zones in Anambra State should apply MBO for improved management of their schools.*

## **Introduction**

Management by Objectives (MBO) is a theory of management proposed by Drucker (1956). It relies on the defining of objectives for each employee and then comparing and directing employee performance against the objectives that have been set. Greenwood (2001) defined MBO as a broader term that encompasses managerial decisions and actions that help to ensure that an organization formulates and maintains a beneficial fit with its' environment consistent with its objectives and goals. Tahir, Shafkat and Mohammed (2008) described MBO as involving the establishment and communication of organizational goals, the setting of individual goals in line with the organizational goals, the periodic and final review of performance in relation to the organizational goals. Drucker (2006) highlighted the principles of MBO as consisting of cascading of organizational goals and objectives; specific objectives for each member, participative decision-making, explicit time period and performance evaluation and feedback. Nwosu (2008) described MBO as a technique of management that attempts to relate organizational goals to individual performances and development through the involvement of all levels of management. MBO is thus a management technique that involves the application of collective objectives, action, vision, insight, and inspiration in schools in such a way that

fundamental changes in direction, development, productivity, perceptions or beliefs occur in both followers and the organisation.

Studies have shown that the application of MBO to organizations leads to a transformation of the resources of the organisation in order to bring about realization of organizational objectives (Bottoms & O'Neil, 2001; Carr, 2005). Emetarom (1991) highlighted that the benefits of MBO include: focusing managers and employees' efforts on goal attainment; improved performance, motivation of employees, encouragement of innovation and enhancement of communication. In essence, MBO has several elements that promote change in the workplace. Cunningham, Woodward, Shannon, Macintosh, Lendrum, Rosenbloom, and Brown (2002), cited a range of studies that have identified workplace contributions to readiness for organisational change, including feeling empowered in one's job, believing one possesses the skills, attitudes and opportunities to manage change, which in turn affect work-related self-efficacy, and social support. Cheng and Townsend (2000) reported that in the efforts of various countries for change and effectiveness, the use of MBO by leaders is often crucial to their success. Dobby, Anscombe, Tuffin (2004) found that objective setting and employee empowerment as implied in the MBO are relevant to leadership.

Most studies on MBO concentrated on industries and on employee productivity. Only a few studies such as Rossi & Warglein (1999) investigated application of MBO in school management and reported that twenty-five (25) items of MBO have helped school leaders and staff to achieve set objectives more than they really believe they can do. Udeh (1997) found that principals in Enugu State do not apply MBO to solve school problems. There appears to be a lack of empirical studies on relevance and benefits of MBO to secondary school management in Anambra State in terms of these 25 items. If teachers consider MBO as relevant and beneficial to school management, principals could be trained and urged to apply the principles of MBO to improve school management. Hence, the present study investigates the views of secondary school teachers on the relevance and expected benefits of MBO to school management in Anambra State.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The broad goals of Nigerian secondary education system as specified in the National Policy on Education (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2004) are aimed at preparing students for useful living within the society and higher education. But as Egboka (2008) observed, achieving these aims has remained largely elusive because of problems in schools' finance, infrastructure, teachers and students' administration, curriculum, and supervision. Schools continue to be subjected to blames that the tasks they perform are not efficiently channeled towards providing the education necessary for the world of today and the future. Hence, they are being urged to apply result-oriented management techniques such as MBO to achieve educational objectives. Udeh (1997) found a low level of use of MBO by principals. Principals can only apply MBO if it is considered relevant and beneficial to their management tasks. Therefore, the problem of this study, put in question form is: do teachers

consider MBO relevant and beneficial to secondary school management in Anambra State?

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions guided the study:

Which MBO items do secondary school teachers in Anambra State consider relevant to school management?

What benefits do secondary school teachers expect from MBO as relevant to school management?

### **Hypotheses**

The following null hypotheses were formulated and tested at the 0.05 significance level:

There is no significant difference between the mean responses of teachers on the relevance of MBO to secondary school management in Anambra State in relation to education zones.

There is no significant difference between the mean responses of teachers on the expected benefits of MBO to secondary school management in Anambra State in relation to education zones.

### **Research Design**

The study employed a survey research design. According to Akuezuilo, & Agu (2003), a survey research generally collects data from a defined population to describe the present opinion, status, beliefs, and views of the population using the variables under study. This design was used in the study to collect data from principals and teachers on the relevance of MBO to school management.

#### **Population of the Study**

The population comprised five thousand five hundred and eighty-seven teachers. These teachers were serving in the two hundred and sixty-eight government owned secondary schools in the State as at 2008/2009 academic session.

#### **Sample and Sampling Technique.**

The sample for this study comprised one thousand, one hundred and fifty-nine teachers selected through the proportionate stratified–random sampling technique was adopted. The schools were stratified on the basis of their education zones and twenty percent of the schools in each education zone were randomly selected. In each of the selected schools, the entire teachers (N=1159) were chosen to participate in the study. The teachers' sample represented 20.74 percent of the entire teachers in the population.

#### **Instrument for Data Collection**

The researcher used a questionnaire titled – Relevance and Benefits of MBO to School Management Questionnaire (RBMSMQ). The questionnaire was divided into three sections. Section A was the introductory section containing an item on teachers' education zones. Section B comprised 25 items on the relevance of MBO as depicted in Rossi and Wagner (1999) while section C had 12 items on the benefits of MBO to

school management. The items were based on a 4-point scale of strongly agree (4 points), agree (3 points), disagree (2 points) and strongly disagree (1 point).

**Validation of Instrument**

To ascertain the validity of the instrument used for the study, the drafted questionnaire was given to 2 (two) lecturers in educational management and an expert in measurement and evaluation in Nwafor Orizu College of Education, Nsugbe. These experts also went through the research purpose, questions and the questionnaire items and made useful suggestions that led to some corrections in the final questionnaire copies.

**Reliability of Instrument**

A test-re-test method was used to test for reliability of instrument. Copies of the questionnaire were administered on thirty teachers that were excluded from the final study. After two weeks, the questionnaire was administered again on the same teachers. Data collected from the first and second copies administered were analyzed using the Pearson’s Product Moment Correlation Coefficient. A reliability coefficient of 0.81 and was considered satisfactory for the study.

**Administration of Instrument**

The instrument was administered on the respondents by the researcher and six research assistants who also collected the completed questionnaires. Only one thousand, one hundred and fifty-two (99.39%) of the copies given to teachers were retrieved and used for statistical analysis.

**Method of Data Analysis**

Mean scores were used to answer the research questions. The responses were assigned the following points: Strongly agree (3.50-4.00); agree (2.50-3.49); disagree (2.00-2.49) and strongly disagree (1.99-2.00).

Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was used to test the null hypotheses. ANOVA was used to compare the responses of teachers across the five education zones at 0.05 significance level.

**Results**

Research Question One: Which MBO items do secondary school teachers in Anambra State consider relevant to school management?

**Table 1**

**Mean scores of teachers’ responses on the relevance of MBO to school management (N1152)**

Item	Items	Mean	Decision
1	Developing the objectives of the school in line with new technologies	4.00	Strongly agree
2	Creating objectives for achieving a life-long learning organization	3.97	Strongly agree
3	Sustaining and motivating staff for continuous	3.91	

Relevance and benefits of management by objectives to secondary school...

4	improvement in achieving school objectives	3.57	agree
5	Providing supportive instructional supervision	3.45	Strongly agree
6	Defining the core values and beliefs of education for sustainable development	3.55	Strongly agree
7		3.10	
	Using research and "best practice" in resource management	3.73	Strongly agree
8			Agree
9	Facilitating school innovations in line with secondary education reform goals	3.65	
			Strongly agree
10	Building shared decision making, collegiality and peer support among staff	3.70	agree
		3.98	Strongly agree
11	Unleashing the potential capacities that already exist in staff and students	3.64	agree
12			Strongly agree
13	Building team commitment for improvisation of teaching aids	3.16	agree
		3.66	Strongly agree
14	Understanding student development and learning	3.63	agree
15			Strongly agree
16	Facilitating professional development of others	3.54	
			Agree
17	Solving complex problems and making decisions	3.87	Strongly agree
			agree
18	Assessing school effectiveness in meeting its learning objectives	3.96	Strongly agree
		3.71	
19	Building consensus and negotiating conflicts		Strongly agree
		3.86	agree
20	Resolving complex management problems		
		3.85	Strongly agree
21	Understanding measurements, evaluation and assessment strategies	3.53	agree
22			
	Setting community involvement objectives and determining outcomes	3.70	Strongly agree
23			agree

24	Developing the vision and the mission of the school	3.23	Strongly agree
25	Ensuring that action is taken on decisions made at the school	2.83	Strongly agree
	Developing information and data collection strategies for school records		Strongly agree
	Developing annual sports objectives and plan how to achieve objectives set		Strongly agree
	Designing, implementing, and evaluating attainment of curriculum objectives		Strongly agree
	Managing the organization and operational procedures involved in teacher appraisals		Agree
	Raising supplementary funds for school in line with school priority needs		Agree

In Table I, the entire items score above 2.50. This indicates that the teachers consider the entire MBO items relevant to school management.

**Research Question 2:** What benefits do secondary school teachers expect from MBO in school management?

**Table 2:**

**Mean scores of teachers' responses on expected benefits of MBO in school management. (N1152)**

Item	Items	Mean	Decision
N			
	A workforce that is respected, energized and enabled to achieve objectives	3.41	Agree
	Leadership that has a vision	3.38	<b>Agree</b>
	Active engagement in school management by staff, parents and community	3.27	Agree
	Staff willingness to seek feedback of their own job effectiveness	3.79	Strongly agree
	Staff courage to admit where they are not behaving in the most effective way,	3.25	Agree

Taking active steps by staff in supporting their own development,	3.96	Strongly agree
Staff and student adherence to school principles, which are manifest in all day-to-day activities.	3.50	Strongly agree
On organization that has the potential of dealing excitingly with change,	3.56	Strongly agree
A greater chance of continuing success in students' achievement.	3.89	Strongly agree
Genuine empowerment of staff to take decisions	3.74	Disagree
Translation of school motto into practice	3.72	Disagree
Leader comes to recognize and value the contributions and support that staff offer	3.48	Dsagree

In Table 2, the entire items score above 2.50. This also indicates that the teachers expect school management to benefit from MBO as listed in the entire items.

**Hypothesis One:** There is no significant difference between the mean responses of teachers on the relevance of MBO to secondary school management in Anambra State in relation to education zones.

**Table 3**

**ANOVA on the teachers' responses on the relevance of MBO to school management. (P 0.05)**

Source of Variation	Sum of squares	of Df	M.S.	Cal. F	Critical F	Decision
Between group	736.39	5	147.28			Not
Within group	99986.40	1146	87.27	1.68	2.21	Significant
Total	100722.79	1151				

Table 3 shows that at 0.05 significant levels, 5df numerator and 1147 df denominator, the calculated F of 1.68 is less than the critical F of 2.21. Therefore, the first null hypothesis is accepted. The researcher concludes that the teachers' responses on the relevance of MBO to school management do not differ significantly due to their Education Zones.

**Hypothesis Two:** There is no significant difference between the mean responses of teachers on the expected benefits of MBO to secondary school management in Anambra State in relation to education zones.

**Table 4**

**ANOVA on the teachers' responses on the expected benefits of MBO to school management. (P 0.05)**

Source of Variation	Sum of squares	of Df	M.S.	Cal. F	Critical F	Decision
Between group	932.71	5	186.54			Not

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Within group	140693.41	1146	122.7	1.52	2.21	Significant
			7			
Total	141626.12	1151				

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Table 4 shows that at 0.05 significant levels, 5df numerator and 1147 df denominator, the calculated F of 1.52 is less than the critical F of 2.21. Therefore, the second null hypothesis is accepted. The researcher concludes that the teachers' responses on the expected benefits of MBO to school management do not differ significantly due to their Education Zones.

### **Discussion of Findings**

The findings of this study indicate that the teachers consider MBO elements as relevant and beneficial to school management. The finding suggests that teachers recognized that application of MBO in these domains would help the school management to achieve continuous school improvement. This finding is consistent with the elements of MBO importance for successful school leadership identified by Carr (2005) and Tahir et al (2008). Alimo-Metcalfe and Alban-Metcalfe (2005) also identified managing the organization and operational procedures and organizing resources as relevant issues in school management.

Findings also indicate that teachers expected some benefits from the use of MBO in school management. These benefits are consistent with those identified by Emetarom (1991), Rossi & Warglein (1999), and Cunningham et al, (2002). These expected benefits suggests that if MBO is to be implemented in school management, it could result in active involvement in organisational change, reducing barriers to participatory management, building problem-solving strategies, and enhancing staff perceptions of their ability to cope with change.

It was also found that the teachers' responses on the relevance of MBO to school management did not differ significantly due to education zones. In essence, secondary school teachers across the six education zones in Anambra State consider MBO relevant and of expected benefits to school management. This implies that MBO is relevant and have some expected benefits to secondary school management irrespective of education zone.

The challenge then is for the principals to devise practical result-oriented MBO approaches to revitalize their schools, set school performance goals in collaboration with their staff, monitor the achievement of the objectives and realign school objectives in line with broad national educational goals. If principals are to apply MBO to school management, they require training on its principles. This is because Nwosu (2008) found that some principals did not specialize in educational management and those that are educational management specialists are not likely to have reviewed in-depth training on modern Management theories and techniques such as MBO. Without sound training in specialized management and leadership knowledge in areas such as MBO, several principals would lack the MBO competencies to build the collaborative learning organization that is so critical to successful improvement school management.

### **Recommendations**

Consequent upon the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made:

Since the teachers considered MBO to be highly relevant to school management, principals across the six education zones in Anambra State should apply MBO for improved performance of their schools.

The State Ministry of Education should sponsor principals to conferences in the area of Educational Management and Planning within and outside the state where they will acquire more knowledge on the application of MBO to their managerial tasks. Also continuous training opportunities should be given to all principals by the Ministry of Education and State Education Commission, through seminars and workshops to expose them to modern trends and skills in MBO application to schools' management.

Government should empower and authorize school principals to use MBO to strategize towards sourcing internal and external donors.

Principals should make efforts to upgrade their MBO competencies. Reading professional journals, peer mentoring, and participating in professional conferences and seminars will help them achieve this.

Government should increase educational funding to provide an enabling environment for principals to apply MBO in their tasks.

### **Conclusion**

This study has shown that secondary school teachers in different education zones in Anambra State recognize that MBO elements are relevant and could be beneficial to school management. The elements of MBO are in line with contemporary school management needs. For instance, schools need to use emerging technologies to revolutionize schools and define the core values and beliefs of education for sustainable development. Principals should therefore need to apply MBO as a means of enhancing the collaborative nature of school leadership and developing a collaborative learning community.

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