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Assessment of Principals' Assertiveness on the School Attendance of Nigerian Female Students Living and Working as Maids

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Abstract: This study was embarked upon as an assessment of school principals' assertiveness on the school attendance of Nigerian female students living and working as maids. Eight research questions and eight null hypotheses guided the study. The survey research design was utilized for the study. The target population was the 257 school principals in the six education zones in Anambra State, Nigeria. Simple random sampling was utilized in selecting four education zones for the study, out of which 96 principals were selected as the sample of the study. A questionnaire was used to elicit information from these school principals and 82 of them duly filled and returned theirs. The research questions were answered using the statistical mean, while the null hypotheses were tested using the t-test statistic at 0.05 level of significance. The findings revealed that that male principals did not have any knowledge of female students who work as housemaids or engage in commercial activities when they should be in school, and that both rural and urban school principals had limited knowledge of female students who work as maids in homes or in commercial ventures, among others. The hypotheses testing revealed that male and female school principals' knowledge of students who work housemaids or engage in commercial activities significantly differed, and also there was no significant difference in rural and urban location response ratings of school principals on their enforcement of school attendance for housemaids and female students used as labour in commercial activities. It was recommended that principals should show more interest in the personal lives of their students, as this could be contributory to their absenteeism from school, and that government should come out with a whitepaper on school attendance, the flouting of which would lead to sanctions against offending masters and mistresses of female students who work as maids in homes and in commercial ventures.

Keywords: Assessment: Assertiveness: Maids: Female Students.

1. Introduction

A child's progress in life is often measured in educational terms, which shows the importance attached to education. According to *Asiegbu et al. (2015)*, education is the sum total of all the processes by which a child or young adult develops his abilities, attitudes and other forms of behaviour, from which the society derives positive value. The educational enterprise is centred the world over on the child as its chief customer. In Nigeria, as in most developing countries, the emphasis of the day is on girl child education in order to liberate the girl child from social obscurity and objectification, which are inimical to her independence and self-actualization.

For instruction to be complete, the learner must have learnt something from exposure to various stimuli in the classroom and on the field. This is why there is a principal whose job entails the planning of instruction, the directing of learning activities (including assessment and evaluation), evaluation of teachers' performance, discipline of both students and teachers, monitoring of the progress of students, among others (*Temitayo et al., 2013*). The principal ensures that all school activities are carried out according to plans, that in executing the school programme, there is order, and that students do not stay away from school (based on exogenous and endogenous factors), thereby missing out on the lifetime opportunity of the learning experience. Whereby students skip school and the form teacher brings it to the notice of the school principal, it is expedient for him or her to ask after the absent student to ascertain such a student's wellbeing, as well as the reasons for not attending school.

Azi and Saluhu (2016) posited that in addition to whatever socialization that might have occurred at home, school interactions lead to the total socialization of the child. However, this socialization cannot take place without the presence of the learner. If students are not present in school, there will be nobody for the teacher to teach. Particularly, if such a student is one that has little or no say in his or her circumstance (for instance a house maid), it

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becomes worrisome as to how that student can acquire the skills necessary to thrive in modern life. Therefore, school attendance is a sine qua non for total student development.

1.1. The Concept of School Attendance

In normal parlance, school attendance entails a student being present in the school environment to partake of the learning experience. To understand school attendance, however, [The Moray Council \(2016\)](#) has it that several other terms related to school attendance have to be factored-in for one to fully grapple with the concept. These related terms include:

Attendance: This entails participation in a programme educational activities that are arranged and agreed upon by the school. What matters is the participation of the student who has to be bodily present. Aside from presence at school activities that take place within the school's walls, attendance encompasses other activities planned by the school but taking place outside its walls, such as excursions, field trips, sport activities and the like. It also covers tuition received on the hospital bed, in prison; there has to be a teacher and a learner present for attendance to be ascribed accordingly. Online learning is another realm of school attendance, since the stimulus (teaching) and response (learning) contiguously occurs, albeit without walls.

Authorized Absence: Such absence can be caused by illness, need to be at a sport event not organized by the school, weddings or funerals of close family members, religious observance, bereavement, and medical appointments. Against such, there are no sanctions since there is a mutual agreement between the student and the school in respect of presence at lessons.

Unauthorized Absence: This encompasses parent-approved absence from school, whereby the school does not approve of it. Truancy and school avoidance also fall under the same umbrella, as well as sundry unexplained reasons for not being present at school to partake in learning.

School attendance is therefore paramount in ensuring that the beneficiaries of the curriculum truly benefit from its intellectual offerings. [The Moray Council \(2016\)](#) has it that where a student is continually absent from school, the Head Teacher (principal or headmaster) should arrange a meeting of concerned stakeholders to discuss the issue. For the girl child, the challenges of absenteeism from school need to be dealt with [Alabi et al. \(2014\)](#) in order for her to acquire the skills and abilities that will enable her exist in a modern world. Inasmuch as the form teacher should be the first to notice her absence from school, the principal must be made aware, since, according to [Nakpodia \(2009\)](#), principals perform some of their duties in loco parentis. Principals should act as parents and show care for every student, irrespective of class or creed.

1.2. Issues in the Education of the Girl Child and Maids

[Obinaju \(2014\)](#) asserted that education is the inalienable right of every citizen, irrespective of personal circumstances. Obianju appears to be in allusion to the view of [Oluyemi and Yinusa \(2016\)](#) who described education as the most important aspect of human development, a key to living, particularly girl child education. According to [Omede and Agahiu \(2016\)](#), Nigerians, especially the rural dwellers have the erroneous notion that girls are properties for the man and objects for his pleasure, which contributes to the restraining of some girls from attending school. For rural dwellers, it appears thus a waste of resources to educate the girl child since she is expected to one day be married off to a man for whom she will be nothing but a child bearer, cook and bedmate.

Girl child education, as defined by [Okenmor et al. \(2012\)](#), is a catchall term for a complexity of issues and debates surrounding (primary education, secondary, tertiary and health education in particular) girls and women. The discourse on girl child education also spans areas such as poverty alleviation, gender equality, violence against females and access to education. It is therefore disheartening to discover that there are deliberate attempts not to educate the girl child in Nigeria, as some parents and guardians consider it a waste of money; as if they expect child rearing to be a profit-oriented venture. According to [Alabi et al. \(2014\)](#), being born and growing up as a girl in developing countries such as Nigeria, is akin to being cursed, owing to the ignominious treatment female children receive from the family, the society and the school. The worst aspect of the disheartening scenario is that parents play a role in the exploitation of girl children by giving them up in early marriage and as maids to serve in homes and shops, often times hundreds of kilometers away.

[Alabi et al. \(2014\)](#) have it that child labour as evidenced in the use of girls for street hawking, as attendants in commercial ventures, and as housemaids, has deeply hampered the opportunities of the girl child for education. Citing the International Labour Organization (ILO), Alabi, Bahah and Alabi lamented that child labour (serving as maids) is greatly an unrewarded activity, as the girls affected have no solid background, little or no education and basically no parental care. Such girls as serving in homes are sometimes further subjected to greater abuse by being sent to hawk on the street to augment the income of their holding households. At home, some of these girls are made to work until as late as midnight, making them weak and hardly able to get up from bed in the mornings. It is also not unusual for them to be restrained from attending school in order for their mistresses to exploit them. For those who are in school, teachers often complain of the irregularity of their school attendance, more so when these girls can be seen in the daytime hawking wares or performing domestic tasks in the homes in which they serve as domestic servants.

1.3. Implications of Absenteeism on Academic Performance and Learning of Maids

Aside from truancy and other related factors, Musa (2014) identified absenteeism as one of the factors that can be held responsible for poor academic performance among students. Musa added that absenteeism hinders the smooth running of the school system, as well as students' academic and social progress. Oyebanji (cited in Musa (2014)) opined that staying away from school and lessons will make a child to fall behind others in the class. Oyebanji added that absenteeism can result in frustration for a girl child that is forced to repeat a class several times over due to the fact that she is cognitively behind and may never be able to cope with the general learning rate of the class.

2. Research Questions

1. What is the mean response rating of male and female school principals on their after school interactions with their students and/or their families?
2. What is the mean response rating of male and female school principals on their knowledge of students who work as housemaids or engage in commercial activities?
3. What is the mean response rating of male and female school principals on their awareness of absentees from schools?
4. What is the mean response rating of male and female school principals on their enforcement of school attendance for housemaids and female students used as labour in commercial activities?
5. What is the mean response rating of rural and urban school principals on their after school interaction with their students and/or families?
6. What is the mean response rating of rural and urban school principals on their knowledge of students who work housemaid or engage in commercial activities?
7. What is the mean response rating of rural and urban school principals on their awareness of absentees from school?
8. What is the mean response rating of Rural and Urban school principals on their enforcement of school attendance for housemaids and female students used as labour in commercial activities?

3. Method

The study was carried out in Anambra State, Nigeria, which has six education zones. The survey design was adopted for the study. In a survey, according to Oluyemi and Yinusa (2016), a fraction of a population can be studied, and then whatever findings are made will be used as generalizations regarding the target population. Eight research questions and eight null hypotheses guided the study. The target population comprised the 257 principals of the secondary schools in Anambra State, Nigeria. Ninety-six secondary school principals selected through simple random sampling from four education zones formed the sample of the study.

A researcher-developed questionnaire tagged "Principals' Assertiveness on Housemaids' School Attendance Questionnaire (PAHSAQ)" was utilized in the eliciting of data from respondents. It contained two sections A and B; section A elicited information on respondents' biodata, while section B elicited information through items developed through the literature with a thematic orientation tilted towards the research questions. It was rated on a four-point scale. Eighty-two of the PAHSAQ were returned duly filled by the respondents. The research questions were answered using the statistical mean, while the null hypotheses were answered using the t-test statistic. The decision rule was that when the calculated value of t was less than the table value, the null hypotheses will be rejected and vice-versa. All hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance.

4. Results

Research question 1: What is the mean response rating of male and female school principals on their after school interaction with their students and/or families?

Table-1. Mean response rating of male and female school principals on their after school interaction with their students and/or families.

S/N	Item	Male		Female	
		X	R	X	R
1	I know where most of my students live	2.32	D	2.43	D
2	I visit my students at home as often as i can to check on them	2.05	D	2.14	D
3	I call my students parents and guardians to monitor their activities	2.79	A	3.23	A
4	my students parents and guardians freely come to me with issues	3.61	A	3.73	A

Keys: X = Mean, R = Rank.

From the analysis presented in table 1, the result reveals that item 1 and 2 scored less than 2.50 for male school principals and other items score up to and above 2.50. For the female school principals items 1 and 2 scored less than 2.50 while items 3 and 4 scored up to 2.50 and above. The conclusion is that both male and female school principals have equal interaction with their students and/or their families after school.

Research Question 2: What is the mean response rating of male and female school principals on their knowledge of students who work housemaid or engage in commercial activities?

Table-2. Mean response rating of male and female school principals on their knowledge of students who work as housemaids or engage in commercial activities.

S/N	Item	Male		Female	
		X	R	X	R
5	I am aware of my female students after schools Activities	2.16	D	2.25	D
6	I know my female students who are housemaids	2.39	D	2.68	A
7	I know my female students who engage in commercial activities	2.08	D	2.50	A
8	I know the places here my female students work or live as maids	1.92	D	2.23	D

Keys: X = Mean, R = Rank.

The analysis presented in table two reveals that all the items in male school principals on their knowledge of students who work as housemaids or engage in commercial activities scored less than 2.50. For the female school principals, items 5 and 8 scored less than 2.50 while items 6 and 7 scored up to 2.50 and above. The conclusion is that the male school principals do not have any knowledge of female students who work housemaids or engage in commercial activities.

Research Question 3: What is the mean response rating of male and female school principals on their awareness of absentees from school?

Table-3. Mean response rating of male and female school principals on their awareness of absentees from school

S/N	Item	Male		Female	
		X	R	X	R
9	When a student is absent from school, I notice it	2.18	D	2.82	A
10	When a student is absent from school, the teacher tells me	2.71	A	3.07	A
11	When I notice a female student living and working as a maid is absent, I inquire form the teacher	2.37	D	2.66	A
12	If my female student living or working as a maid is sick, I should know	2.03	D	2.64	A

Keys: X = Mean, R = Rank.

The result of the analysis presented in table 1 reveals that items 9, 11 and 12 scored less than 2.50 for male school principals on their awareness of absentees from school and only one item above 2.50. For the female school principals all the items scored above 2.50. The conclusion is that the female school principals are more aware of absentees from school than their male counterparts.

Research Question 4: What is the mean response rating of male and female school principals on their enforcement of school attendance for housemaids and female students used as labour in commercial activities?

Table-4. Mean response rating of male and female school principals on their enforcement of school attendance for housemaids and female students used as labour in commercial activities.

S/N	Item	Male		Female	
		X	R	X	R
13	I make sure to call the guardians of my female students living and working as maid to encourage them to attend school	2.32	D	2.95	A
14	I sanction guardians ho do not allow their live-in or commercial maids attend school	1.89	D	2.20	D
15	I engage welfare services of the government when female students are forced to skip school by their guardians	1.71	D	2.00	D
16	I mandate teachers to ensure the school attendance of girls living or working as maids	2.66	A	2.91	A

Keys: X = Mean, R = Rank.

From the analysis presented in table 4, result reveals that items 13, 14 and 15 scored less than 2.50 for male school principals and only one item scored above 2.50 among the four items. For the female school principals items 14 and 15 scored less than 2.50 while items 13 and 16 scored up to 2.50 and above. The conclusion is that the female school principals enforcement of school attendance for housemaids and female students used as labour in commercial activities are more than their male counterparts.

Research question 5: What is the mean response rating of Rural and Urban school principals on their after school interaction with their students and/or families?

Table-5. Mean response rating of Rural and Urban school principals on their after school interaction with their students and/or families.

S/N	Item	Rural		Urban	
		X	R	X	R
1	I know where most of my students live	2.36	D	2.39	D
2	I visit my students at home as often as i can to check on them	2.23	D	1.95	D
3	I call my students parents and guardians to monitor their activities	2.89	A	3.18	A
4	my students parents and guardians freely come to me with issues	3.57	A	3.79	A

Keys: X = Mean, R = Remark, D = Disagree and A = Agree.

The analysis in table 5 above reveals that items 1 and 2 scored less than 2.50 in rural school principals on their after school interaction with their students and/or families and others scored up to 2.50 and above. while in urban school principals, items 1 and 2 scored less than 2.50 while items 3 and 4 scored up to 2.50 and above. in conclusion, both rural and urban school principals has equal interaction with their students and/or families.

Research Question 6: What is the mean response rating of Rural and Urban school principals on their knowledge of students who work housemaid or engage in commercial activities?

Table-6. Mean response rating of Rural and Urban school principals on their knowledge of students who work housemaid or engage in commercial activities

S/N	Item	Rural		Urban	
		X	R	X	R
5	I am aware of my female students after schools activities	2.25	D	2.16	D
6	I know my female students who are housemaids	2.57	A	2.53	A
7	I know my female students who engage in commercial activities	2.37	D	2.24	D
8	I know the places here my female students work or live as maids	2.14	D	2.03	D

Keys: X = Mean, R = Remark, D = Disagree and A = Agree.

The analysis in table 6 above reveals that items 5, 7, and 8 scored less than 2.50 in rural school principals on their knowledge of students who work housemaid or engage in commercial activities and only 1 item score above 2.50. While in urban school principals, items 5, 7 and 8 scored less than 2.50 and only one item (item 6) scored above

2.50. In conclusion, both rural and urban school principals has equal knowledge of students who work housemaid or engage in commercial activities

Research Question 7: What is the mean response rating of Rural and Urban school principals on their awareness of absentees from school?

Table-7. Mean response rating of Rural and Urban school principals on their awareness of absentees from school

S/N	Item	Rural		Urban	
		X	R	X	R
9	When a student is absent from school, I notice it	2.48	A	2.58	A
10	When a student is absent from school, teacher tells me	2.86	A	2.95	A
11	When I notice a female student living and working as a maid is absent, I inquire form the teacher	2.48	A	2.58	A
12	If my female student living or working as a maid is sick, I should know	2.25	D	2.47	A

Keys: X = Mean, R = Remark, D = Disagree and A = Agree.

The analysis in table 7 above reveals only item 12 scored less than 2.50 in rural school principals on awareness of absentees from school and items 9,10 and 11 scored up to 2.50 and above. While in urban school principals, all the items scored up to 2.50 and above. In conclusion, both rural and urban school principals held it high on their awareness of absentees from school.

Research Question 8: What is the mean response rating of Rural and Urban school principals on their enforcement of school attendance for housemaids and female students used as labour in commercial activities.

Table-8. Mean response rating of Rural and Urban school principals on their enforcement of school attendance for housemaids and female students used as labour in commercial activities

S/N	Item	Rural		Urban	
		X	R	X	R
13	I make sure to call the guardians of my female students living and working as maid to encourage them to attend school	2.43	D	2.92	A
14	I sanction guardians ho do not allow their live-in or commercial maids attend school	2.00	D	2.13	D
15	I engage welfare services of the government when female students are forced to skip school by their guardians	1.86	D	1.87	D
16	I mandate teachers to ensure the school attendance of girls living or working as maids	2.77	A	2.82	A

Keys: X = Mean, R = Remark, D = Disagree and A = Agree.

The analysis in table 8 above reveals only item 13, 14 and 15 scored less than 2.50 in the mean response ratings of rural school principals on enforcement of school attendance for housemaids and female students used as labour in commercial activities while only item 16 scored above. While in urban school principals, items 14 and 15 scored less than 2.50 and items 13 and 16 scored above 2.50. In conclusion, enforcement of school attendance for housemaids and female students used as labour in commercial activities are both not put into proper consideration.

5. Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant difference between male and female response ratings school principals on their after school interaction with their students and/or families α - level = 0.05

$$\text{Test statistic} = \frac{X_1 - X_2}{\sqrt{\frac{S_1^2}{N_1} + \frac{S_2^2}{N_2}}}$$

Decision Rule: Reject null hypothesis if the absolute calculated value of the test statistic is greater than the tabulated value or t critical.

Table-9. t-test for the significant difference between male and female response ratings of school principals on their after school interaction with their students and/or families.

Gender	N	X	SD	DF	t-cal	t-crit	Decision
Male	38	2.69	.428				
				80	-1.93	2.00	not significant
Female	44	2.89	.456				

Keys: N= number of principals, X= Mean, DF= Degree of freedom, t-cal= t calculated, t-crit= t critical

The result in table 9 showed that the t-test shows no statistically significant difference. Based on the decision rule, $t = -1.93$ is less than $t_{80}(0.05) = 2.00$, the researcher therefore did not reject the null hypothesis in this regard.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant difference between male and female response ratings of school principals on the knowledge of students who work housemaids or engage in commercial activities.

Table-10. t-test for the significant difference between male and female response ratings of school principals on the knowledge of students who work housemaids or engage in commercial activities.

Gender	N	X	SD	DF	t-cal	t-crit	Decision
Male	38	2.14	.495				
				80	-2.37	2.00	significant
Female	44	2.42	.542				

Keys: N= number of principals, X= Mean, DF= Degree of freedom, t-cal= t calculated, t-crit= t critical

The result of the t-test in Table 10 shows that the test is statistically significant. Based on the decision rule, $t = -2.37$ is greater than $t_{80}(0.05)=2.00$ the researcher rejected the null hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance.

Hypothesis 3: There is no significant difference between male and female response ratings of school principals on their awareness of absentees from school

Table-11. t-test for the significant difference between male and female response ratings of school principals on their awareness of absentees from school

Gender	N	X	SD	DF	t-cal	t-crit	Decision
Male	38	2.32	.548				
				80	-3.85	2.00	significant
Female	44	2.79	.561				

Keys: N= number of principals, X= Mean, DF= Degree of freedom, t-cal= t calculated, t-crit= t critical

The result of the t-test in Table 11 showed that the test is statistically significant. Based on the decision rule, $t = -3.85$ is greater than $t_{80}(0.05)=2.00$ the researcher rejected the null hypothesis.

Hypothesis 4: there is no significant difference between male and female response ratings of school principals on their enforcement of school attendance for housemaids and female students used as labour in commercial activities.

Table-12. t-test for the significant difference between male and female response ratings of school principals on their enforcement of school attendance for housemaids and female students used as labour in commercial activities.

Gender	N	X	SD	DF	t-cal	t-crit	Decision
Male	38	2.14	.608				
				80	-2.85	2.00	significant
Female	44	2.52	.572				

Keys: N= number of principals, X= Mean, DF= Degree of freedom, t-cal= t calculated, t-crit= t critical

The presentation in the table 13 showed that the test is statistically significant, since $t = -2.85$ is greater than $t_{80}(0.05)=2.00$. Based on the decision rule, the researcher rejected the null hypothesis.

Hypothesis 5: There is no significant difference between rural and urban response ratings of school principals on their after school interactions with their students and/or their families

Table-13. t-test for the significant difference between male and female response ratings of school principals on their after school interactions with their students and/or their families

Location	N	X	SD	DF	t-cal	t-crit	Decision
Rural	44	2.76	.467				
				80	-.676	2.00	Not significant
Urban	38	2.83	.435				

Keys: N= number of principals, X= Mean, DF= Degree of freedom, t-cal= t calculated, t-crit= t critical

In table 13, the result showed that there is statistical significance in the test since $t = -.676$ is greater than $t_{80} (0.05) = 2.00$. Based on the decision rule the researcher rejected the hypothesis.

Hypothesis 6: There is no significant difference between rural and urban location response ratings of school principals on their knowledge of students who work housemaids or engage in commercial activities.

Table-14. t-test for the significant difference between rural and urban location response ratings of school principals on their knowledge of students who work housemaids or engage in commercial activities.

Location	N	X	SD	DF	t-cal	t-crit	Decision
Rural	44	2.33	.537				
				80	-.814	2.00	significant
Urban	38	2.24	.545				

Keys: N= number of principals, X= Mean, DF= Degree of freedom, t-cal= t calculated, t-crit= t critical

In table 14, the result showed that there is statistical significant in the test since $t = .814$ is greater than $t_{80} (0.05) = 2.00$. Based on the decision rule the researcher therefore rejected the null hypothesis.

Hypothesis 7: There will be no significant difference between rural and urban location response ratings of school principals on their awareness of absentees from school

Table-15. t-test for the significant difference between rural and urban location response ratings of school principals on their awareness of absentees from school

Location	N	X	SD	DF	t-cal	t-crit	Decision
Rural	44	2.52	.572				
				80	-.960	2.00	significant
Urban	38	2.65	.633				

Keys: N= number of principals, X= Mean, DF= Degree of freedom, t-cal= t calculated, t-crit= t critical

In table15, the result showed that there is statistical significance in the test since $t = -.960$ is greater than $t_{80} (0.05) = 2.00$. Based on the decision rule the researcher therefore rejected the null hypothesis.

Hypothesis 8: There is no significant difference between rural and urban location response ratings school principals on their enforcement of school attendance for housemaids and female students used as labour in commercial activities.

Table-16. t-test for the significant difference between rural and urban location response ratings of school principals on their enforcement of school attendance for housemaids and female students used as labour in commercial activities.

Location	N	X	SD	DF	t-cal	t-crit	Decision
Rural	44	2.27	.572				
				80	-1.23	2.00	significant
Urban	38	2.43	.657				

Keys: N= number of principals, X= Mean, DF= Degree of freedom, t-cal= t calculated, t-crit= t critical

In table 16, a statistical significant does not exist in the test since $t = -1.23$ is less than the $t_{80} (0.05) = 2.00$. Based on the decision rule, the researcher did not reject the null hypothesis.

6. Discussion

It is indicative from the results that both male and female principals have equal interaction with their students and/or their families after school, but male principals have knowledge of female students who work housemaids or engage in commercial activities. Female school principals are more aware of absentees from school than their male counterparts, and enforce school attendance for housemaids and female students used as labour in commercial activities more than their male counterparts. Both rural and urban school principals have equal interaction with their students and/or families, and both groups have equal knowledge of students who work housemaids or engage in commercial activities. In addition, rural and urban school principals held it high on their awareness of absentees from school, and enforcement of school attendance for housemaids and female students used as labour in commercial activities are both not put into proper consideration, although urban school principals fared better in this regard.

Significant differences exist in male and female principals' response ratings of school principals on their after school interaction with their students and/or families, and in their enforcement of school attendance for housemaids and female students used as labour in commercial activities. Significant differences were found for the rest of the null hypotheses as shown in the tables; hence, the null hypothesis testing for their significant differences were rejected.

7. Conclusion

If principals were to pay more visits spontaneously to the homes of their female students, they would be able to decipher for themselves firsthand the situation-at-home of these students, rather than be fed second-hand information regarding them. Male principals' lack of knowledge of female students living and working as maids depicts the erroneous impression that such a duty lies within the purview of the form teacher. After all, the same set of principals often know the home settings of students from affluent backgrounds and take progress reports home to the parents of such students; hence, it is expected that the same clinical supervision be applied in the case of students whose home settings are not socio-economically viable.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were made, following the findings of this study:

1. School principals need (where they are able to identify female students living and working as maids) to educate the masters of mistresses of these students on the need for them to attend school, as the world has evolved to the point where it cannot ill-afford to accommodate semi or stark illiterates.
2. Principals should show more interest in the personal lives of their female students, as home and background factors could be contributory to their absenteeism from school.
3. Government should emerge with a whitepaper on school attendance, the flouting of which would lead to sanctions against offending parents, masters and mistresses of female students who work as maids in homes and in commercial ventures.
4. Child rights advocacy groups should visit homes and shops where female students serve in contribution to whatever sensitization efforts principals might make in this regard.

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