



(RESEARCH ARTICLE)



# PRINCIPALS' ANALYTICAL AND COGNITIVE DECISION-MAKING SKILLS AND TEACHERS' JOB PERFORMANCE IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS

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## ABSTRACT

This study examined principals' analytical and cognitive decision-making skills and teachers' job performance, in public secondary schools in Edo State, Nigeria. It was guided by three research questions and one hypothesis. This study used an ex post facto research design with correlational and descriptive statistical methods. The population for this study was 6,130, comprising 5,815 teachers and 315 principals from all 315 public secondary schools in Edo State. The sample for the study comprised 376 respondents, consisting of 47 principals and 329 teachers drawn from public secondary schools in Edo State. The sample size was determined using Yamane's (1967) formula at a 0.05 level of precision. A multi-stage sampling technique was used to select the sample for the study. Data for this study were collected using two questionnaires. The questionnaires were tagged Principals' Analytical and Cognitive Decision-Making Skills Questionnaire (PACDMSQ) and the Teachers' Job Performance Questionnaire (TJPQ), which were validated through face and content validity. Cronbach Alpha reliability method was used to determine the reliability and coefficient values of 0.803 and 0.824 were obtained for PACDMSQ and TJPQ respectively. Data obtained were analyzed using mean and standard deviation, simple correlation, coefficient of determination, and regression analysis. Findings show that principals in public secondary schools in Edo State demonstrate various cognitive and analytical decision-making skills which significantly enhanced teachers' job performance. The study recommends that government and school authorities in Edo State should institutionalize continuous professional development programmes that focus on enhancing principals' cognitive, and analytical, decision-making skills to help strengthen principal capacity in decision-making for improved school effectiveness.

**Keywords:** Analytical, Cognitive, Decision-making skills, Principals, Teachers.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

Secondary school is a link between primary and tertiary institutions where adequate knowledge for effective citizenship and collective benefits of society is achieved. The goals and the operation of secondary education in Nigeria are in line with the country's national education goals as highlighted in the National Policy on Education. Good and high-quality

secondary education can produce quality and reliable human resources. The importance of teachers in the teaching–learning process in any educational institution cannot be overemphasized. Teachers play a central role as implementers of the curriculum at the classroom level. For any curriculum to be effectively implemented, teachers must be actively involved. Hence, what teachers do or fail to do can directly or indirectly affect the attainment of instructional objectives in the classroom. Consequently, researchers have attributed students' learning outcomes to certain teacher attributes, including their job performance. Scholars have directly linked teachers' job performance to both the process and outcomes of education.

Teachers' job performance refers to the degree at which teachers discharge their primary duty of teaching and learning, as well as their general attitude towards the teaching profession and activities. Teacher job performance is duties performed by a teacher at a particular period in the school system in achieving organizational goals. Teachers' job performance could be measured through teacher's job satisfaction and job attitudes such as job commitment, feelings of job challenge, job meaningfulness and job responsibility. Job performance is important to ensure the quality of instruction taking place at school. It is said that the good performance of students depends upon Job performance of their teachers. Saidin and Jaafar (2025) reports that teacher's job performance is generally deteriorating around the world. This seems to be affecting the teaching and learning process as well as other instructional activities at school. Hence, it is crucial to determine the factors that influence teacher's job performance.

Another factor of interest in this study that may influence teachers' job performance is the principal's decision-making skills. Decision-making skills refer to the ability of school leaders to identify problems, analyze relevant information, evaluate possible alternatives, and choose the most appropriate course of action that aligns with organizational goals. These skills are shaped by a principal's experience, cognitive ability, interpersonal competence, emotional intelligence, and ethical judgment, all of which influence how decisions are formulated, implemented, and evaluated. School leaders must possess effective decision-making skills that are crucial for promoting organizational efficiency, fairness, and improve staff motivation (Asiyai,2020). In public secondary schools, principals' decision-making skills may significantly affect teachers' job performance by determining how instructional policies, staff welfare, and administrative matters are handled. The way a principal makes and communicates decisions can either promote trust, cooperation, and commitment or generate conflict, frustration, and resistance among teachers. Hence, this study examines how different decision-making skills such as cognitive, interpersonal, and executive decision-making impact teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Edo State, Nigeria.

Analytical decision-making skill involves the ability to systematically evaluate information, identify problems, and generate logical solutions based on data and evidence. It requires critical thinking, observation, and a rational assessment of possible alternatives before making a choice. According to Nwosu and Okorie (2021), analytical decision-making enables school principals to make objective and well-informed decisions that promote effective management and academic success. In public secondary schools in Delta and Edo States, principals who apply analytical decision-making skills can efficiently address issues such as teacher deployment, student discipline, and resource allocation. This approach minimizes errors, enhances organizational efficiency, and fosters a culture of accountability. Conversely, poor analytical skills may lead to hasty and uninformed decisions, resulting in inefficiency and reduced staff morale.

Cognitive decision-making skills involve the principal's mental ability to process information, analyze situations, and make rational, evidence-based decisions. These skills enable school leaders to think logically, evaluate data, and draw sound conclusions that guide effective school management (Hoy & Miskel, 2013). Cognitive decision-making skills is the determinant of effective management of school affairs since principals are usually called upon to make choices on various fronts involving distribution of resources, disciplinary action, instructional direction, and staff welfare. Principals with high-level cognitive capabilities can analyze issues from various standpoints, foresee the outcome, and make decisions that optimize school effectiveness (Nwogu & Ojukwu, 2019). Such evidence-informed and systematic approach to making choices minimizes error rates, ensures transparency, and gains the confidence of learners and other stakeholders (Omotayo & Abiodun, 2018). The effectiveness of teachers' job performance is often impacted by the quality of administrative decisions made by officials. Where school principals make decisions through the lens of cognitive decision-making competencies, they come to fair, consistent, and informed judgments that positively impact teachers' morale, effectiveness in the classroom, and overall job satisfaction (Chukwu & Nwosu, 2022). In the Edo State educational context, where schools often face challenges such as limited resources and varying teacher motivation, principals who demonstrate strong cognitive skills can better identify instructional gaps, interpret performance data, and implement strategies that directly enhance teacher effectiveness. For instance, through data analysis and evidence-based reasoning, principals can design professional development programmes tailored to teachers' specific needs. Therefore, by applying cognitive decision-making skills, principals in Edo State can foster a more data-driven culture that encourages continuous teacher improvement and accountability.

### 1.1 Statement of the Problem

In Edo State, the teaching and learning process in public secondary schools is supervised by the Ministry of Education with the aim of ensuring quality instruction and improved student learning outcomes. For this to be achieved, the quality of academic leadership provided by the principal is critical. The principal is expected to provide academic leadership by sound decision-making that would foster teachers' job performance. Two decision-making skills (analytical and cognitive) have been proven to promote effective administration of school discipline, truancy and other cases of teacher malfeasance and improve students' academic achievement. Teachers' job performance plays a vital role in determining the quality of education and the extent to which educational goals are realized. However, despite the efforts of teachers in ensuring effective teaching and learning in public secondary schools in Edo State, it appears that their level of job performance is not at the desired standard. There are instances where some teachers fail to adequately prepare lesson plans before classroom instruction. It appears that some principals are not effective in administration of the school leading to misunderstanding, lack of cooperation, and low morale. Similarly, when principals make unilateral or poorly informed decisions without involving teachers in the process, it may breed resentment and reduce teachers' commitment to their duties. Ineffective or poor decision-making on the part of school principals could therefore contribute to the declining level of teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Edo State. This study examined principals' analytical and cognitive decision-making skills and teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Edo State.

### 1.2 Research Questions

The following research questions were answered in this study:

- What are the various analytical and cognitive decision-making skills exhibited by principals in public secondary schools?
- What is the relationship between principals' analytical decision-making skills and teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Edo State, Nigeria?
- What is the relationship between principals' cognitive decision-making skills and teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Edo State, Nigeria?

### 1.3 Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were tested in this study:

- Principals' analytical decision-making skills will not significantly predict teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Edo State, Nigeria.
- Principals' cognitive decision-making skills will not significantly predict teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Edo State, Nigeria.

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## 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

Decision-making skills encompass a range of cognitive, analytical, and interpersonal competencies that enable school leaders to process information, assess options, predict possible outcomes, and choose the most effective strategy (Adebayo, 2020). These skills are essential for planning, staffing, budgeting, supervision, and resolving conflicts within the school system. Effective decision-making in public secondary schools ensures the optimal use of human and material resources, enhances teacher motivation, and promotes student academic achievement (Omorie, 2018). According to Robbins and Coulter (2017), decision-making involves a systematic process that includes problem identification, development of alternatives, evaluation of alternatives, selection of the best alternative, implementation of the decision, and evaluation of results. In educational administration, principals who possess strong decision-making skills are better equipped to balance competing interests, maintain discipline, manage resources efficiently, and achieve institutional goals (Nwachukwu, 2021).

Teachers' job performance encompasses their effectiveness in lesson planning, classroom management, assessment, extracurricular involvement, and contribution to students' overall academic achievement (Onwuka & Iwu, 2022). Principals must demonstrate competence in all three areas to ensure the smooth functioning of their schools. Poor decision-making often leads to conflict, inefficiency, and low staff morale, whereas sound decision-making fosters harmony, effectiveness, and productivity.

Azubike (2019) noted that decision-making in public secondary schools requires transparency, fairness, and inclusiveness. A principal who exercises good judgment and consults relevant stakeholders before making critical decisions is more likely to earn the trust and cooperation of teachers. This approach also promotes accountability and shared responsibility in achieving school goals. In the same vein, Nwogbaga and Oboegbulem (2019) asserted that

participatory decision-making enhances school effectiveness because it allows teachers to contribute their expertise, creativity, and professional insight to problem-solving.

According to Akpan (2016), decision-making skills are indispensable in addressing administrative challenges such as teacher deployment, student discipline, financial management, and staff development. A principal with strong decision-making skills can balance competing demands and allocate resources efficiently. In contrast, indecisiveness or unilateral decisions often result in poor outcomes and dissatisfaction among staff. Effective school leaders therefore rely on relevant data, experience, and consultation to ensure that decisions are not only rational but also beneficial to the school system. Ugwu and Nwafor (2021) emphasized, these skills are essential for effective leadership and successful school administration. Principals who possess sound decision-making skills are better equipped to guide teachers, manage school resources, and enhance students' academic performance. Thus, decision-making skills remain a critical component of administrative competence and a determinant of educational effectiveness in public secondary schools.

Cognitive decision-making skills is the determinant of effective management of school affairs since principals are usually called upon to make choices on various fronts involving distribution of resources, disciplinary action, instructional direction, and staff welfare. Principals with high-level cognitive capabilities can analyze issues from various standpoints, foresee the outcome, and make decisions that optimize school effectiveness (Nwogu & Ojukwu, 2019). Such evidence-informed and systematic approach to making choices minimizes error rates, ensures transparency, and gains the confidence of learners and other stakeholders (Omotayo & Abiodun, 2018). The effectiveness of teachers' job performance is often impacted by the quality of administrative decisions made by officials. Where school principals make decisions through the lens of cognitive decision-making competencies, they come to fair, consistent, and informed judgments that positively impact teachers' morale, effectiveness in the classroom, and overall job satisfaction (Chukwu & Nwosu, 2022). Where decisions regarding workload management, professional growth avenues, and teaching resources are made discerningly, they boost teacher motivation and performance (Okon, 2021). Additionally, cognitive decision-making competencies facilitate strategic planning and problem-solving in schools. Principals with critical thinking and data-driven judgment can create effective instructional programs, manage conflicts effectively, and establish obtainable objectives that inform teachers' efforts to improved academic performance (Eze & Igbokwe, 2020). On the other hand, weak cognitive decision-making through the lens of prejudice, judgment without evidence, or hasty judgment usually results in administrative inefficiency, lack of morale among the teaching staff, and suboptimal performance (Ugwuegbulam, 2021).

Yusuf and Salami (2022) investigated teachers' cognitive and analytical decision-making skills as predictors of job performance in public senior secondary schools in Kwara State. Results indicated that both cognitive and analytical decision-making skills significantly predicted teachers' effectiveness in instructional planning, assessment, and discipline management. Uche and Okafor (2024) carried out a study titled principals' strategic decision-making skills and teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State. Findings revealed that principals with high strategic decision-making competence were more effective in resource management, communication flow, and teacher motivation. Bello and Danjuma (2025) investigated decision-making competence, problem-solving ability, and teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Kaduna State, Nigeria. Findings indicated a significant positive relationship between decision-making competence and teachers' instructional performance, lesson preparation, and evaluation practices. Ojo and Mohammed (2023) investigated principals' rational decision-making process and its influence on teachers' effectiveness in secondary schools in Oyo State. The findings indicated that principals who applied rational and data-driven decision-making approaches significantly enhanced teachers' productivity and instructional quality. The study's limitation was its narrow focus on rational decision-making, excluding interpersonal and collaborative decision-making dimensions.

Majorinty of the reviewed literature were studies carried out in other States of Nigeria. This study filled this gap by investing the predictive strength of analytical and cognitive decision-making skills on teachers' job performance in Edo State, Nigeria.

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### 3 METHODOLOGY

This correlational research employed *ex-post facto* design. The population for this study was 6,130, comprising 5,815 teachers and 315 principals from all the 315 public secondary schools in Edo State. The sample for the study comprised 376 respondents, consisting of 47 principals and 329 teachers drawn from the public secondary schools. The sample size was determined using Yamane's (1967) formula at a 0.05 level of precision. Multi-stage sampling technique was used to select the sample for the study.

Data for this study were collected with two sets of questionnaires. The questionnaires are Principals' Analytical and Cognitive Decision-Making Skills Questionnaire (PACDMSQ) and Teachers' Job Performance Questionnaire (TJPQ). Section A was designed to collect respondents' personal data, such as sex (male and female) and location (urban and

rural). The PACDMSQ contained 18 items while the TJPQ contained 20 items. Respondents were requested to indicate their opinion on a four-point scale of strongly agree (4), agree (3), disagree (2), and strongly disagree (1) point. The instruments were validated by two professors in the Faculty of Education, Delta State University, Abraka. Based on their feedback, the instrument was revised and refined accordingly. The reliability of the instrument was performed using Cronbach Alpha method, which is a measure of the internal consistency. Reliability coefficients of 0.88 and 0.82 was computed for PACDMSQ and TJPQ respectively.

The researchers visited the selected schools and administered the questionnaire to teachers, principals and vice principals with the assistance of three research assistants to ensure a smooth and efficient process. Prior to the distribution of the questionnaire, an orientation session was conducted for the research assistants to familiarize them with the procedures. The orientation covered key aspects such as distribution methods, proper approaches to respondents, and adherence to research ethics. Data collected were analyzed using mean, standard deviation, correlation and coefficient of determination to answer the research questions and establish the relationship between the independent and dependent variable. Hypotheses testing was performed using Pearson's correlation coefficient at a significance level of  $p \leq 0.05$ .

#### 4 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of data analysis are thus presented

**Research Question 1:** What are the various analytical and cognitive decision-making skills exhibited by principals in public secondary schools in Edo State, Nigeria?

**Table 1: Mean scores on various analytical and cognitive decision-making skills exhibited by principals (N=368)**

| <b>Principals' Decision-Making Skills</b>                      |           |          |          |
|----------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|----------|----------|
| Analytical Decision-Making Skill: My school principal,         | $\bar{x}$ | Std. Dev | Decision |
| Analyses problems carefully before acting.                     | 3.07      | 0.55     | Agree    |
| Breaks down complicated school problems for easy understanding | 2.58      | 1.02     | Agree    |
| Identifies the main cause of an issue before deciding.         | 3.12      | 0.53     | Agree    |
| Compares different solutions to select the most effective one. | 3.11      | 0.67     | Agree    |
| Interprets data on students' performance                       | 2.64      | 1.00     | Agree    |
| Identify the causes for students' poor performance.            | 2.66      | 0.88     | Agree    |
| Allocate resources for teaching judiciously                    | 2.46      | 0.32     | Disagree |
| Relies on factual evidence when making decisions.              | 3.11      | 0.45     | Agree    |
| Draws conclusions from data rather than assumptions.           | 3.07      | 0.85     | Agree    |
| Cognitive Decision-Making Skill: My school principal,          |           |          |          |
| Gathers relevant information before making decisions.          | 3.00      | 0.49     | Agree    |
| Considers the possible outcomes of each decision.              | 3.12      | 0.54     | Agree    |
| Applies logical reasoning when solving school problems.        | 3.09      | 0.54     | Agree    |
| Reviews previous experiences to guide current decisions.       | 3.07      | 0.52     | Agree    |
| Evaluates available alternatives before choosing one.          | 3.07      | 0.55     | Agree    |
| Make plan on school improvement regularly                      | 2.88      | 0.73     | Agree    |
| Is able to make decision timely.                               | 2.62      | 0.90     | Agree    |
| Is able to deploy staff when needed                            | 2.28      | 1.12     | Disagree |
| Average $\bar{x}$ score                                        | 2.72      | 0.65     | Agree    |

KEY: 2.50 is the benchmark for accepting an item as agree. Items having  $\bar{x}$  score from 2.50 and above represent Agree. Items with  $\bar{x}$  score from 2.49 and below represent Disagree.

Data in Table 1 showed mean scores on various principals' analytical and cognitive decision-making skills. The results revealed that principals demonstrate various analytical and cognitive decision-making skills. The average mean score of ( $\bar{x} = 2.72$ , Std. Dev = 0.65), implied that principals greatly employed analytical and cognitive decision-making skills to influence teachers' job performance.

**Research Question 2:** What is the relationship between principals' analytical decision-making skills and teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Edo State, Nigeria?

**Table 2: Relationship between principals' analytical decision-making skills and teachers' job performance**

| Variables                                     | $\bar{x}$ | Std. Dev | R     | $r^2$ | $r^2\%$ | Decision              |
|-----------------------------------------------|-----------|----------|-------|-------|---------|-----------------------|
| Principals' analytical decision-making skills | 2.87      | 0.69     | 0.508 | 0.258 | 25.8    | Positive relationship |
| Teachers' job performance                     | 3.02      | 0.51     |       |       |         |                       |

Data in Table 2 revealed relationship between principals' analytical decision-making skills and teachers' job performance. The results indicate that principals' analytical decision-making skills ( $\bar{x} = 2.87$ , Std. Dev = .69) have a positive relationship ( $r = .508$ ) with teachers' job performance ( $\bar{x} = 3.02$ , Std. Dev = 0.51). The coefficient of determination ( $r^2 = .258$ ) indicates that 25.8% of the variance in teachers' job performance is accounted for by principals' analytical decision-making skills.

**Research Question 3:** What is the relationship between principals' cognitive decision-making skills and teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Edo State, Nigeria?

**Table 3: Relationship between principals' cognitive decision-making skills and teachers' job performance**

| Variables                                    | Mean | Std. Dev | R    | $r^2$ | $r^2\%$ | Decision              |
|----------------------------------------------|------|----------|------|-------|---------|-----------------------|
| Principals' cognitive decision-making skills | 2.57 | .60      | .331 | .128  | 18.8    | Positive relationship |
| Teachers' job performance                    | 3.02 | .51      |      |       |         |                       |

Data in Table 3 revealed relationship between principals' cognitive decision-making skills and teachers' job performance. The results indicate that principals' cognitive l decision-making skills ( $\bar{x} = 2.57$ , Std. Dev = .60) have a positive relationship ( $r = .331$ ) with teachers' job performance ( $\bar{x} = 3.02$ , Std. Dev = 0.51). The coefficient of determination ( $r^2 = .128$ ) indicates that 12.8% of the variance in teachers' job performance is accounted for by principals' cognitive decision-making skills.

#### 4.1 Hypotheses Testing

**Hypothesis 1:** Principals' analytical decision-making skills will not significantly predict teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Edo State, Nigeria.

**Table 4: Pearson r between analytical principals' decision-making skills and teachers' job performance**

|                                               |                     | Principals' Analytical Decision-Making Skills | Teacher Job Performance |
|-----------------------------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Principals' Analytical Decision-Making Skills | Pearson Correlation | 1                                             | 0.508                   |
|                                               | Sig. (2-tailed)     |                                               | 0.000                   |
|                                               | N                   | 415                                           | 415                     |
| Teacher Job Performance                       | Pearson Correlation | 0.508                                         | 1                       |
|                                               | Sig. (2-tailed)     | 0.000                                         |                         |
|                                               | N                   | 415                                           | 415                     |

The results in Table 4 revealed a Pearson correlation coefficient of  $r = .508$  between principals' analytical decision-making skills and teachers' job performance, with a p-value of .000, which is statistically significant at the 0.05 level. This indicates a moderate positive relationship between the variables. Consequently, the null hypothesis was rejected, suggesting that there is a significant relationship between principals' analytical decision-making skills and teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Edo State.

**Table 5: Pearson r between principals' cognitive decision-making skills and teachers' job performance**

|                                              |                     | Principals' Analytical Decision-Making Skills | Teacher Job Performance |
|----------------------------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Principals' Cognitive Decision-Making Skills | Pearson Correlation | 1                                             | 0.402                   |
|                                              | Sig. (2-tailed)     |                                               | 0.000                   |
|                                              | N                   | 415                                           | 415                     |
| Teacher Job Performance                      | Pearson Correlation | 0.402                                         | 1                       |
|                                              | Sig. (2-tailed)     | 0.000                                         |                         |
|                                              | N                   | 415                                           | 415                     |

The results in Table 5 revealed a Pearson correlation coefficient of  $r = .402$  between principals' cognitive decision-making skills and teachers' job performance, with a p-value of .000, which is statistically significant at the 0.05 level. This indicates a moderate positive relationship between the variables. Consequently, the null hypothesis was rejected, suggesting that there is a significant relationship between principals' cognitive decision-making skills and teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Edo State.

#### **4.2 Principal's Analytical and Cognitive Decision-Making Skills**

The findings showed that principals in public secondary schools in Edo State demonstrate various analytical decision-making skills, including identifying the main course of an issue before deciding, making a compares of different alternatives before choosing the most effective option, relying on factual evidence, careful analysis of problems carefully before making decision, making data based decision, identifying the causes of student poor performance and interpretation of data on students' performance. For cognitive decision-making skills, the finding revealed that principals exhibited consideration of possible outcomes of each decision to be made, application of logical analysis in problem solving, review of previous experience as a guide to taking decision on current problem, regularly planning school improvement, and timeliness in decision-making.

The display of analytical and cognitive decision-making skills among principals can be linked to the multifaceted nature of school leadership. Principals are required to solve diverse problems ranging from instructional issues to personnel management, which necessitates the integration of logical reasoning (cognitive), and evidence-based analysis (analytical) in school operations, while creative skills enable principals to adapt to emerging challenges such as policy changes and resource constraints. This combination of skills may also be influenced by professional training, experience, and policy expectations from educational authorities, which emphasized competence and accountability in leadership roles.

This finding supports the findings of Adebayo (2020), who found that decision-making skills encompass a range of cognitive, analytical, and interpersonal competencies that enabled school leaders to process information, assess options, predict possible outcomes, and choose the most effective strategy. This finding also aligns with the findings of Olatunji and Ibrahim (2023), who found that principals who involved teachers in participatory decision-making processes recorded higher levels of teacher motivation, punctuality, and classroom effectiveness in public secondary schools in Lagos State. This finding is consistent with the findings of Olawale and Adebisi (2020), who found that cognitive decision-making skills include the intellectual assets and mental processes by which school leaders can examine complex situations, read data, judge alternatives, and make informed decisions that improve organizational effectiveness. This finding also aligns with the findings of Azubike (2019), who found that decision-making in public secondary schools requires transparency, fairness, and inclusiveness, and that a principal who exercises good judgment and consults relevant stakeholders before making critical decisions is more likely to earn the trust and cooperation of teachers.

#### 4.3 Relationship between Principal's Analytical and Cognitive Decision-Making Skills and Teachers Job Performance.

There is a significant relationship between principals' analytical and cognitive decision-making skills and teachers' job performance in public secondary schools. The observed relationship may stem from the impact of leadership decisions on the school environment. Sound decisions regarding resource allocation, staff management, and instructional policies create conditions that enabled teachers to perform effectively. For instance, when principals make informed and fair decisions timely, it promotes trust and reduces workplace conflict, thereby enhancing teachers' morale. Involving teachers in decision-making processes also increases their sense of ownership and commitment to school goals. Consequently, effective analytical and cognitive decision-making serves as a catalyst for improved teacher productivity and overall school performance.

This finding supports the findings of Eze (2021), who found a significant positive relationship between principals' decision-making skills and teachers' job performance, especially in instructional delivery and classroom management, in public secondary schools in Enugu State. This finding also supports the findings of Yusuf and Salami (2022), who found that both cognitive and analytical decision-making skills significantly predicted teachers' effectiveness in instructional planning, assessment, and discipline management in public senior secondary schools in Kwara State. This finding is consistent with the findings of Adebisi and Okon (2022), who found a strong positive correlation between principals' participatory decision-making and teachers' job performance, especially in instructional delivery and professional discipline, in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom State. This finding further supports the findings of Bello and Danjuma (2025), who found a significant positive relationship between decision-making competence and teachers' instructional performance, lesson preparation, and evaluation practices in public secondary schools in Kaduna State.

This finding supports the findings of Adebayo (2020), who found that decision-making skills encompass a range of cognitive, analytical, and interpersonal competencies that enable school leaders to process information, assess options, predict possible outcomes, and choose the most effective strategy. This finding further supports the findings of Robbins and Coulter (2017), who found that decision-making involves a systematic process that includes problem identification, development of alternatives, evaluation of alternatives, selection of the best alternative, implementation of the decision, and evaluation of results.

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## 5 CONCLUSION

The study concludes that principals in public secondary schools in Edo State demonstrate effective leadership through diverse well-developed decision-making skills, which collectively contributed to a high level of teachers' job performance. The significant relationships observed between analytical and cognitive decision-making skills, and teachers' performance indicate that leadership effectiveness in schools is strongly dependent on how well principals make informed, fair, and inclusive decisions.

### *Recommendation*

The following recommendations were proposed:

- Government and school administrators should institutionalize continuous professional development programmes that focus on enhancing principals' cognitive, and analytical, decision-making skills to help strengthen principal capacity in decision-making for improved school effectiveness.

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## STATEMENTS ON COMPLIANCE WITH ETHICAL STANDARDS

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The authors wish to declare that there is no conflict of interest to be disclosed.

*Statement of informed consent*

Formal informed consent was not applied in this study.

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