

## **Kakistocracy and Administrators' Professional Development in the 21st Century in Secondary Schools in North West Senatorial District, Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria.**

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### **Abstract**

This study set out to determine the relationship between kakistocracy and administrators' professional development in the 21st century in secondary schools in North West Senatorial District, Akwa Ibom State. Two objectives, two research questions and two null hypotheses were formulated to guide the study. The correlational design was adopted for the study. The population of the study consisted of all the 336 administrators in the 84 public secondary schools in the nine Local Education Committees (LEC) of the North West Senatorial District of Akwa Ibom State, 2024/2025 academic year. Multi-stage sampling procedure involving proportionate stratified and simple random sampling technique was used in selecting the 106 administrators for the study. The researchers' developed instrument: "Kakistocracy and Administrators' Professional Development Questionnaire (KAPDQ)" was used for data collection. The instrument was face validated by three experts. The reliability of the instrument was determined using Cronbach Alpha Statistics and the Reliability Coefficient of KAPDQ was .89. The research questions were answered using r-value of Pearson product moment correlation (PPMC) Statistics and the null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance using Significance value of PPMC Statistics. All the null hypotheses were rejected. The findings of the study revealed that there is a significant relationship between idiocracy, kleptocracy and administrators' professional development in the 21<sup>st</sup> century in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North West Senatorial District of Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. Recommendations had that Government should avoid the practice of idiocratic and kleptocratic system of governance in the school organization as these may hinder the administrators' professional development in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

**Keywords:** Kakistocracy, idiocracy, kleptocracy, administrators, professional development and 21<sup>st</sup> century

### **Introduction**

Administrator's professional development refers to the improvement of skills and knowledge for enhanced school community performance. In Nigeria, specifically in Akwa Ibom State, the management, administration and implementation of educational policies and programmes in secondary schools traditionally falls within the purviews of the school administrators. They are saddled with the administration of school personnel and facilities, conscious supervision of teaching and learning processes by supervising teachers lesson preparation, lesson delivery, evaluation of learning outcomes, mentoring both the teachers and the students, monitor, manage and discipline erring staff, maintain the school plant, plan for extra-curricular activities, provide effective management of school records as well as provide the school community with the necessary favorable and conducive physical and psychological working environment to facilitate the effective execution of the students' learning to bring about the much desired behavioral and attitudinal change in the learner for the realization of educational goals

Administrators to Thomas and Inyang (2022) refers to principals/ vice principals of secondary schools system responsible for developing the students to fit into their role expectation as leaders of tomorrow. They are responsible for ensuring every teacher has work tools for effective productivity like teaching, class administration, technology, expertise and personal wellbeing. To Thomas et al, teachers are professional educators employed in

a formal education setting to help students learn and grow by teaching them academic information and guiding their personal development under the auspices of the school Administrators. The school administrator supervises the teachers/ students' progress and provide guidance services, considering the fact that the broad goals of secondary school as contained in the National Policy on Education (2013) is to equip its beneficiaries with the necessary knowledge , skills, values, attitudes and belief system to be self-reliant and contribute to the development of the society.

Students to Thomas (2022) are the raw materials for the enhanced nation's economic development. As future educators, they need to be well processed and equipped not only with practicing tools and techniques to uphold the tenet of the society, but by well-equipped personnel with practicable experience in a very conducive learning environment. Education therefore is the veritable tool used for the change, hence the Federal Government of Nigeria adopting it as an instrument per excellence for national development. It's not only to foster tolerance, understanding and promotes harmony and stability among diverse communities but aims at meeting human and environmental needs as well as help in human interconnectivity. Its skills spur innovation, productivity and social advancement and these are mainly school -based.

In our contemporary highly competitive global knowledge economy, a nation's position according to Agbo (2024) as published in the Nigerian Vanguard of 3 September (2024). 4 and 19 November, 2024 publication is directly dependent on the aggregate of its educated human capital; that is the knowledge and skills imparted to its citizens by its educational system. In Sept.3, 2024- Featured Report: Nigeria ranked 66 out of 67 countries in Economic Performance (EP). Going by the list of African countries by Gross Domestic Performance (GDP) (nominal), Nigeria ranked fourth with 877.073 per capita (US\$). Nigeria is therefore depleting as its economy is also tanking as a result of low growth and productivity. The Nigerian nominal GDP once biggest in Africa, has slipped to \$285 billion in 2024, making it fourth largest in Africa (4 Nov 2024), hence Thomas (2019) assertion that, "a true education is not just a legacy; it is the ultimate legacy. It is the gift of enlightenment, empowerment and endless possibilities. It can empower people to make positive impact on the world. It can also provide people with the tools to understand and solve problems and the mental agility to do well." Education also help people access better job opportunities, gain financial security, fulfill dreams and goals, achieve better society with a greater economic growth, gain personal development, secure peace and safety, freedom etc. hence the need for secondary school administrators to be professionally developed by the government to place Nigeria's economy alongside its counterparts the world over especially in this 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Much emphasis has been placed on secondary school administrators for the attainment of a stable, functional and qualitative standard of secondary education system in Nigeria to fulfil the national aim of preparing the students for useful living within the society and higher education, but the prospect of meeting this aim is still very bleak. Educationally, the world is evolving from the traditional to technological system of education and this is stirring dynamic changes in the society. Government should therefore provide administrators, teachers and students with the opportunities of adapting to new teaching, learning strategies and methods to meet up with these global standards. They should be greatly influenced by technology in terms of communication, networking, seeking and accessing information. To Itighise and Thomas (2022) the potentials of technology have not only increased assess and improved relevance and quality of education, but has facilitated the acquisition and absorption of knowledge as well as offer developing countries unprecedented opportunities to enhance the school personnel professional development.

Government presence in funding of the system, implementation of approved policies like training and retraining of personnel, making education not just free and compulsory but motivating the personnel, providing of infrastructures especially scientific and technological gadgets for Information and Communication activities, Artificial Intelligence (AI) compliance and other world best practices is of great essence. Several education stakeholders like the United Nations Education Science and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), Education for All (EFA) have worked assiduously to improve the required education goals in Nigeria, but the developmental pace is very slow.

Administration does not only involve planning activities which aim at the fulfillment of the goals of a particular organization, it also requires skills, new knowledge, understanding, behaviours, values, attitude, preferences and competence of the administrator to meet the demands and expectations of their role. This knowledge can be developed by the administrator embarking on educational processes like training, taking classes or workshop, attending conferences, earning certificates and expertise and adapting to new practices like Artificial Intelligence (AI). It is not usually realized that inadequate professional development of administrators constitute one of the major sources of frustration and dissolutionment. Effective administrators need to be well connected, cultured and competent with the ability to make right decisions.

Educationally, Nigeria is considered the least literate nation in the world with only 15% of its adults able to read and write. 5.2 percent only has secondary education and nearly 31percent drop out of primary school. To Agbo (2024) as published in the Nigerian Vanguard of 19, Nov. 2024, Nigeria is counted among the top ten countries with the worst education system. The United Nation Education Scientific Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Educational Development Index (EDI) present Nigeria as a country with a population of 21 million and the least educated nation in Africa with an EDI of 0.528. These and other factors may contribute to poor school administration resulting in social problems like early marriages, child labour, poverty etc. hence the research on kakistocracy: the role of government in shaping the educational outcomes has become very imperative. The well emphasized relevance of education to nations building and development has prompted this research work on kakistocracy and administrators' development in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The role of government in enhancing the administrator's professional development is *sin-qua- non* to the development and sustainability of the nation's growth.

Kakistocracy is a system of government where the least qualified, incompetent, or corrupt individuals hold positions of authority (Onebunne & Chukwujekwu, 2023). To Keane (2018), kakistocracy is "a form of rule where the least principled, most venal, and morally inept citizens or rulers occupy positions of authority." Runciman (2020) explains *kakistocracy* as "a situation where those in power lack competence, vision, or moral decency, leading to governance that actively undermines the interests of the governed." Runciman views it as a threat to democratic governance. In Signer (2017) opinion, kakistocracy is "the government by the worst, most incompetent, and morally bankrupt leaders, where power is seized and exercised for self-interest rather than public service." Signer connects this concept to corruption and inefficiency. These definitions highlight the moral and ethical degradation of those in power over the abandonment of education as the most dependable tool for national development. (Thomas 2019).

The influence of kakistocracy on administrators' professional development presents a complex challenge that merits closer examination especially in the 21st century. The concept of Idiocracy and kleptocracy are all forms of governance marked by dysfunction and mismanagement, yet they each have unique characteristics that

affect educational institutions differently. They hinder educational quality, resource availability, and alignment of education with current professional demands. Understanding their influence is important to assessing and addressing challenges in administrators' preparedness for modern professional environments.

Idiocracy is characterized by lack of competence among the governing bodies, these often leads to policies that are misaligned with the needs of the education system. In such governance, education may be underfunded, poorly structured, and detached from the practical skills required in contemporary professions. The World Bank emphasizes that an effective education system requires not just resources but a sound, strategic vision for curriculum development, teacher training, and resource allocation (World Bank, 2018). Educational systems that suffer from idiocratic governance often show poor professional preparation programs, as education becomes a secondary concern for policymakers lacking the insight or capability to implement effective changes (Anderson, 2020). For instance, countries with underdeveloped or unstable governments often experience high dropout rates of students, low teacher quality, and inadequate infrastructure, which impact negatively on administrators' readiness for professional environments (Olufemi, 2019).

Kleptocracy according to Acemoglu & Robinson (2019) is a government where leaders exploit national resources and wealth for personal gain. This poses significant challenges to the education sector. In kleptocratic regimes, educational funding may be diverted from schools and universities, leading to poor infrastructure, low teacher salaries, and scarcity of learning resources. This fosters a learning environment where students have limited access to the tools needed for professional success resulting in only a privileged few benefitting from robust educational resources, to the detriment of the majority left in under-resourced institutions. To Uche (2020), the professional development of administrators is severely impacted in such contexts as lack of exposure to advanced skills, internships, and training opportunities necessary for sound supervision of organization goals is seriously lacking.

The lack of adequate funding, poor policy implementation, and low academic standards associated with Kakistocracy, idiocracy and kleptocracy have far-reaching effects on administrators' professional development. In the 21st century, the demands and expectations of the labor market are really changing. Administrators are expected to acquire not only theoretical knowledge but also critical thinking, adaptability, and digital skills (World Economic Forum, 2020). In systems marred by incompetence or corruption, these skills are often undervalued or overlooked. Administrators in such environments may also experience lower self-efficacy and motivation, as the educational system does not provide a clear or attainable path to professional success, hence, administrators' aspirations and career ambitions are significantly influenced by the perceived quality of education and the resources available to them (Luthans et al., 2015).

In a world with increasingly values for innovation, critical thinking, and technological competence, the professional landscape especially in the 21st century demands skills and competencies that extend beyond traditional armed chair administration to pragmatic administration (Brown & Thornton, 2018). Administrators must be trained by government to navigate complex and evolving industries, not undermining the necessary support structures as opined by (Rubaii, 2016). Mismanagement, corruption, and lack of foresight by government hinders the implementation of educational reforms and professional development initiatives of administrators, thereby affecting students' ability to acquire the skills needed for professional success (Kassner & Heller, 2021).

Education and governance are inherently linked, with the former often reflecting the efficiency and priorities of the latter. Education is a huge government investment so government should provide a conducive

learning environment by allotting sufficient resources, formulating policies that prioritize education, as well as foster an ecosystem where teachers and students can flourish (Ihekoronye, 2020). Conversely, a kakistocratic system often breeds dysfunction, creating an environment where educational institutions are underfunded, policies are inconsistently implemented, and corruption is pervasive (Sawant, 2019). This can lead to stagnation in the professional development of administrators, as they are deprived of the quality educational know-how, resources and mentorship required to reach their clients full potential.

The global job market especially in this 21<sup>st</sup> century is increasingly competitive, nations that fail to prioritize education risk creating a workforce that is ill-equipped to compete on an international scale. According to Thomas and Thornas (2017) and Thomas and Thomas (2024) professional development simply hinges on research which is the bedrock of innovation, economic growth, and societal advancement hence the need for government intervention. But in kakistocratic governance, administrators are often left to navigate their professional journeys without the requisite skills or opportunities. This affects not only the administrators' career trajectories but also has broader implications for national economic development and global competitiveness (Brown & Thornton, 2018). Based on the above scenario, this study sought to investigate and determine the relationship between kakistocracy and administrators' professional development in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

### **Statement of the Problem**

In the contemporary Nigeria society, Secondary school Administrators are faced with lots of challenges culminating from lack of or inadequate government presence in their professional development. The society expects the educational system to be transformed from the traditional to the technological with administrator's acquisition of contemporary skills in instructional leadership, technological integration, strategic planning and stakeholder engagements etc. to meet up with global demands. However, several issues have impeded their professional development, creating gaps between expectations and the reality of leadership performance in many schools. One of the significant gap is the lack of structured and ongoing professional development programs for the 21<sup>st</sup>-century administrators. In many cases, professional development initiatives focus narrowly on compliance and procedural knowledge rather than fostering leadership skills, innovation, creativity and adaptability. Administrators often struggle to keep pace with technological advancements that have redefined teaching and learning. The integration of digital tools and data-driven decision-making processes require administrative skills that many administrators have not yet fully acquired, leaving them unprepared to address the challenges of modern education.

Several in-house training programmes on personnel management, school supervision, financial management, professional development packages like sponsored participation in conferences etc has been advocated by the School Management Board and Parent –Teachers Association ( P.T.As) for improved administrative purposes but the gaps still remain unabridged as some of the mounted programmes often lack depth and consistency to address the modern challenges, hence the researcher's interest to investigate the relationship between kakistocracy, that is government presence and administrators' professional development in the 21<sup>st</sup> century in secondary schools in North West Senatorial District of Akwa Ibom State.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between kakistocracy and administrators' professional development in the 21<sup>st</sup> century in secondary schools in North West Senatorial District of Akwa Ibom State. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. Determine the relationship between idiocracy and administrators' professional development in 21st century.
2. Determine the relationship between kleptocracy and administrators' professional development in 21st century.

### **Research Questions**

What is the relationship between idiocracy and administrators' professional development in the 21st century?

What is the relationship between kleptocracy and administrators' professional development in the 21st century?

### **Hypotheses**

1. There is no significant relationship between idiocracy and administrators' professional development in the 21st century.
2. There is no significant relationship between kleptocracy and administrators' professional development in the 21st century.

### **Methods**

This study employed a Correlational research design. Correlational research design is used to identify and analyze the relationships between two or more variables without manipulating them. This type of design is commonly used in situations where experimental manipulation is either impractical or unethical, and it helps the researchers to understand whether, and to what extent, a relationship should exist between variables. The study was conducted in the North West Senatorial District of Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria.

The population of the study consisted of 336 administrators (84 principals and 252 vice principals) in the 84 public secondary schools in nine Local Education Committees (LEC) in the North West Senatorial District of Akwa Ibom State during the 2024/2025 academic year (Akwa Ibom State Secondary Education Board, Uyo, 2024). Multistage sampling procedure involving stratified proportionate sampling and simple random sampling technique was used in selecting 106 administrators from 30 randomly selected secondary schools. The instrument for data collection was titled "Kakistocracy and Administrators' Professional Development Questionnaire (KAPDQ). The instrument was developed by the researcher and consisted of 20 items. 10 items on Kakistocracy and 10 items on Administrators' Professional Development. These items were developed using a four point Likert scale of strongly agree (SA) - 4points, agree (A) - 3points, disagree (D) - 2points and strongly disagree (SD) - 1point.

To ensure the face validity of the instrument, draft copies were given to two lecturers in the area of Science Education and one lecturer in Educational Management, all in Department of Science Education in Akwa Ibom State University. The reliability of the instrument was determined by trial testing the instrument using a sample of 25 administrators who was not part of the sample for the study. The instrument was administered by the researcher. The reliability coefficient was determined using Cronbach Alpha. The reliability indices obtained was 0.89 which affirmed the reliability of the instrument.

In the course of the study, the researcher obtained a letter of introduction from the Head of Department of Science Education, Akwa Ibom State University to proceed with instrument administration. The researcher administered the instrument through the help of research assistants to the administrators selected for the study. The instrument was immediately retrieved after completion. The data collected was analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) statistics. The r-value of PPMC was used to answer the research questions

while the significance value of PPMC was used to test the formulated null hypotheses at 0.05 alpha level of significance.

## Results

### Research Question One

What is the relationship between idiocracy and administrators' professional development in the 21<sup>st</sup> century?

**Table 1: Pearson Product Moment Correlation between idiocracy and administrators' professional development in 21<sup>st</sup> century**

Variables	N	R	Remark
Idiocracy	106	-.812	Very Strong Negative Relationship
Administrators' professional development	106		

**Source:** Computed by the Researcher using data from the respondents.

From the result in Table 1, it is revealed that r-value is -.812. This implied that there is a very strong negative relationship between idiocracy and administrators' professional development in 21<sup>st</sup> century. This means that as idiocracy increases, the administrators' professional development in the 21<sup>st</sup> century also decreases very strongly. Therefore, idiocracy could affect administrators' professional development in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

### Research Question Two

What is the relationship between kleptocracy and administrators' professional development in the 21<sup>st</sup> century?

**Table 2: Pearson Product Moment Correlation between kleptocracy and administrators' professional development in the 21<sup>st</sup> century**

Variables	N	R	Remark
Kleptocracy	106	-.755	Strong Negative Relationship
Administrators' professional development	106		

**Source:** Computed by the Researcher using data from the respondents.

From the result in Table 2, it is revealed that r-value is -.755. This implied that there is a strong negative relationship between kleptocracy and administrators' professional development in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. This means that as kleptocracy increases, the administrators' professional development in the 21<sup>st</sup> century decreases strongly. Therefore, kleptocracy could affect administrators' professional development in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

### Hypothesis One

There is no significant relationship between idiocracy and administrators' professional development in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

**Table 3: Summary of Pearson Product Moment Correlation between idiocracy and administrators' professional development in the 21<sup>st</sup> century**

Variables	N	p-cal.	p-crit.	Decision at .05 alpha level
Idiocracy	106	.000	.05	(S) H <sub>0</sub> 1 Rejected

Administrators' professional development	<b>106</b>
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df= 104, S= Significant at .05 alpha level.

**Source:** Computed by the Researcher using data from the respondents.

The result in Table 3 revealed that the p-cal of .000 is less than the .05 alpha level of significance at the 104 degrees of freedom. This showed that in the formulated null hypothesis one, that there is no significant relationship between idiocracy and administrators' professional development in the 21<sup>st</sup> century was rejected. Therefore, there is a significant relationship between idiocracy and administrators' professional development in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

### **Hypothesis Two**

There is no significant relationship between kleptocracy and administrators' professional development in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

**Table 4: Summary of Pearson Product Moment Correlation between kleptocracy and administrators' professional development in 21<sup>st</sup> century**

Variables	N	p-cal.	p-crit.	Decision at .05 alpha level
Kleptocracy	<b>106</b>			
Administrators' professional development	<b>106</b>	<b>.000</b>	<b>.05</b>	<b>(S) H<sub>0</sub>2 Rejected</b>

df= 104, S= Significant at .05 alpha level.

**Source:** Computed by the Researcher using data from the respondents.

The result in Table 4 revealed that the p-cal of .000 is less than the .05 alpha level of significance at the 104 degrees of freedom. This showed that in the formulated null hypothesis two, that "there is no significant relationship between kleptocracy and administrators' professional development in the 21<sup>st</sup> century" was rejected. Therefore, there is a significant relationship between kleptocracy and administrators' professional development in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

## **Discussion of the Findings**

### **Idiocracy and Administrators' professional development in the 21<sup>st</sup> century**

The findings revealed that there is a very strong negative relationship between idiocracy and administrators' professional development in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The result also shows that there is a significant relationship between idiocracy and administrators' professional development in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. This result could be attributed to the fact that "Idiocracy," highlights the consequences of absence of critical thinking and decision-making, which can influence administrators' professional development by emphasizing the need for creativity, adaptability, innovation, and the fostering of intellectual growth. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, administrators must navigate a rapidly changing world, requiring constant learning and up -skilling to lead effectively. This also highlights the importance of promoting thoughtful leadership and fostering environments that can challenge traditional mindsets and embrace progressive strategies for enhanced development. The finding of this study is synonymous to the findings of Olufemi(2019) who reported that idiocracy significantly impacts Administrators' professional development in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

### **Kleptocracy and Administrators' Professional Development in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century**

The findings revealed that there is a strong negative relationship between idiocracy and administrators' professional development in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The result also shows that there is a significant relationship between



kleptocracy and administrators' professional development in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. This result could be attributed to the fact that in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, administrators must focus on transparency, accountability, and ethical leadership to counter the negative effects of corruption. This environment demands the development of strong governance skills and integrity to promote sustainable organizational progress. The finding of this study is in support of Uche (2020) who reported that kleptocracy significantly impacts Administrators' professional development in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

## Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, it is hereby concluded that there is a significant relationship between idiocracy, kleptocracy and administrators' professional development in the 21<sup>st</sup> century in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North west senatorial district. Thus, administrators' professional development in the 21<sup>st</sup> century depend on kakistocracy.

## Recommendations

Based on the findings and the conclusions reached, the following recommendations are made:

1. Government should not practice idiocratic system of governance in the school organisation as this may hinder the administrators' professional development in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.
2. Government should not practice kleptocratic system of governance in the school as this may hinder the administrators' professional development in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

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