

PRINCIPALS' PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES FOR IMPROVING FUNCTIONAL QUALITY SECONDARY EDUCATION SYSTEM

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Abstract

This study was to examine and identify strategies for improving the quality of secondary school education in Cross River State, the study adopted survey research design. The population of this study consisted of 2,400 principals and 100 teachers. The sample of 1,145 respondents was drawn randomly using stratified and simple random sampling techniques respectively. A questionnaire titled "Planning Strategies for Improving Quality Secondary School Education Questionnaire (PSIQSSEQ)" was used to gather data for the study. Two research questions and two null hypotheses were formulated to guide the study. 150 questionnaires administered by the researchers with the aid of three research assistants. The data gathered was analyzed using mean, standard deviation and independent t-test. The study findings revealed that poor quality of teaching personnel, poor teaching method, lack of teaching facilities, inadequate school plant, poor funding and a lot more were the factors hindering quality secondary school education in Cross River State. In the same vein, the study findings also indicated that regular organizing of seminars and workshops for teaching personnel, adequate funding, sufficient motivation, modern teaching methods are relevant for quality functional secondary system in Cross River State. Conclusion and recommendations were made based on the study.

Keywords: Principals, planning, strategies, improving, quality and secondary education

Introduction

Education is an instrument for national development. It is the backbone of any society and the quality of education determines the quality of human resources of a country (Offem and Edeh, 2019). Every school principal is faced with the challenge of planning and running a school efficiently for one reason of goal attainment which is achievable through optimum utilization of resources (human and material). In a bid to attaining the school goals, the principal plays a vital role of effective planning to ensure optimum performance.

The principal has the sole responsibility to perform planning role and is also the chief accounting officer of the school. According to Pearson (2003) principal is someone who is in charge of a school. Thus, principalship is a well-established position for the chief executives in secondary schools who carries out leadership responsibilities by coordinating curricular, co-curricular activities in the school and is in charge of the general administration.

Nigerian education system today centers around the quality of education imparted to the citizenry and the relevance of that education to the life of the individuals in particular and the nation in general. Quality implies to the standard of a phenomenon when it is compared to other things like it. Quality education is one assured by the extent to which the training received from an institution enables the recipient to think clearly, independently and analytically to solve relevant societal problems in any given environment. Eze (2012) quality means the totality of features and characteristics of a product or service that bother in its being able to satisfy stated needs.

Quality with respect to education this implies the ability or degree with which an educational system conforms to the established standard and appropriateness of the inputs available for the delivery of the system. Hence, quality in education means the relevance and appropriateness of the education programmed to the needs of the community for which it is provided. Quality may also be considered

on the basis of how good and efficient the teachers are; how adequate and accurate the teacher performs in their teaching and the challenges of life and solving the problems of society.

According to Akinpelu in Offem and Edeh (2019), the quality of education means that the products (graduates) of an education system must be the best example of those who can be regarded as educated in their cultures and who should be generally as the best humanity.

Secondary school education is that level of education which children receive after primary education and before the tertiary level. Secondary school level is therefore the bridge between the primary and tertiary levels. The development of education is a process of effecting a positive change through good planning, organizing, controlling and evaluating the education system. Education is one of the essentials in the determination of the destiny of a nation (Makibi, Ukeje in Ukwaiyi, 2012). The type of education one acquires affects his/her life positively or negatively.

Goals of Secondary Education

The broad goals of secondary education as stated by Federal Republic of Nigeria (2004) shall be to prepared the individual for

- a) Useful living within the society and
- b) Higher education

In specific term secondary education shall;

1. Provide all secondary school leavers with the opportunity for education for a higher level, irrespective of sex, social status, religious or ethnic background.
2. Offer diversified curriculum to cater for the differences in talents, opportunities and future roles.
3. Provide trained manpower in the applied sciences, technology and commerce at sub-professional grades.
4. Develop and promote Nigerian languages, Art and Culture in the context of World's Culture Heritage.
5. Inspire students with a desire for self-improvement and achievement of excellence.
6. Foster National Unity with an emphasis on the communities that unite us in our diversity.
7. Raise a generation of people who can think for themselves, respect the views and feelings of others, respect the dignity of labor, appreciate those values specified under our broad national goals and live as good citizens.
8. Provide technical knowledge and vocational skills necessary for agricultural, industrial, commercial and economic development.

Nwankwo, Adaobi and Chinedu (1999) opined that qualitative primary education system ensures qualitative secondary education which in turn facilitates qualitative tertiary education. Lee and Verspoor (1990) further stressed that, one may be forced to ask, with these numerous problems that face education in Nigeria such as frequent industrial strike within the education sectors, irrelevant curriculum provision, poor teachers and equipment, teachers' poor attitude to work as a result of poor salary scale, lack of prompt promotion etc. to mention but a few may be efficacious to the development of secondary school education.

Research Questions

The following research formulated to guide the study

1. What are the factors that militate against quality secondary school education in Cross River State?

2. What criteria can be used to planning and improve the quality of secondary school education in Cross River State?

Research Hypotheses

The two research questions directed the study and tested at 0.05 level of significant.

1. There is no significant difference between the mean rating of principal and teachers on the factors that militate against quality secondary school education in Cross River State.
2. There is no significant difference between the rating means of principal and teachers on the criteria to be adopted to improve the quality secondary education in Cross River State.

Method

The study adopted survey research design. The population for the study consisted of 2,400 principals and administrative staff working in the secondary school management board. Stratified and simple random sampling techniques were used to draw the sample. The stratification was based on the three educational zones and secondary school management board (SSMB) staff. The sample for the study comprises 1140 both principals and administrative from the board. The sample was drawn randomly from the population of the study. The researchers structured questionnaire titled “Principal Planning Strategies for Improving Quality Secondary School Education Questionnaire (PPSIQSSEQ)” was used for data collection. The questionnaire was of two parts. Part ‘A’ was developed to elicit information on the respondents’ demographical data. While part ‘B’ consist five clusters was used to elicit information on the measured variables and the questionnaire was structured on four-point rating scale of Strongly Agree (SA) = 4 points, Agree (A) = 3 points, Disagree (D) = 2 points and Strongly Disagree (SD) = 1 point. The instrument was validated by two experts, one in Educational management and one in Educational measurement and Evaluation of University of Calabar. The reliability of the instrument was subjected to pill of test. The instrument was distributed to 73 principals who are not part of the study sample or population which the reliability test yielded the value of 0.89 by using statistical analysis of split half reliability hence the instrument was considered highly reliable for the study. The instrument for the principals were administered to them during conference of the principals Cross River State Chapter in Calabar, with the help of three research assistants and the instrument was filled and returned at a spot. The data gathered for the study were analyzed using mean, standard deviation and independent t-test respectively.

Presentation/Results

Research Question 1 – What are the factors that militate against quality secondary school education in Cross River State?

Table 1: Mean response of principals and SSCMB administrative staff on the factors that militated against quality secondary school education in Cross River State.

S/N	Variables	Principals		Decision	Admin. staff		Decision
		$\bar{X}$	SD		$\bar{X}$	SD	
1.	Inadequate/poor teachers	3.61	0.61	SA	3.40	0.51	SA
2.	Lack of modern teaching technique	3.60	0.8	SA	3.70	51	SA
3.	Lack of teaching facilities/equipment	3.81	1.01	SA	3.70	0.51	SA
4.	Inadequate school plants	3.61	0.62	SA	3.64	0.55	SA
5.	Poor funding	3.70	0.63	SA	3.80	0.52	SA
6.	Lack of motivation indices	3.58	0.78	SA	3.69	0.66	SA
7.	Poor attention to secondary school education	3.90	0.23	SA	3.90	0.50	SA
8.	Irrelevant curriculum/scheme of work	3.90	0.20	SA	3.56	0.31	SA

Grand $\bar{x}$ 3.71 0.68 SA 3.69 0.51 SA

From table 1, the analysis shows the grand mean scores of 3.71 and 3.69 with standard deviation of 0.68 and 0.51 for principals and SSCMB administrative staff respectively. This implies that the respondents strongly agree that the factors stated above militated against quality secondary school education functionality in Cross River State.

Table 2: T-test of mean difference of principals and SSMB administrative staff on factors militating against quantity secondary school education in Cross River State.

Variables	N	$\bar{X}$	SD	DF	Sign	t-cal	t-tab.	Dec.
Principals	10000	3.71	0.62	1137	0.05	0.27	1.96	P<0.5 accepted
SSMB Admin Staff	150	3.69	0.51					

The result in table 2 shows that the calculated t-value at 1137 degree of freedom and 0.05 level of significance is 0.27. Since the calculated value is less than the critical table value of 1.96, the null hypothesis of no significant difference is hence upheld.

Research Question 2: What criteria can be used to improve quality of secondary school education in Cross River State?

Table 3: Mean response of principals and SSMB administrative staff in the strategies for improving quality secondary school education in Cross River State.

S/N	Variables	Principals		Decision	Admin. staff		Decision
		$\bar{X}$	SD		$\bar{X}$	SD	
1.	Adopting innovative in teaching methodology	3.81	0.99	SA	3.78	0.48	SA
2.	Regular organizing of seminars and workshops for teachers	3.04	0.84	SA	3.68	0.84	SA
3.	Adoption of motivational indices for teachers	3.36	0.58	SA	3.67	0.78	SA
4.	Adoption of relevant curriculum	3.56	0.64	SA	3.84	1.02	SA
5.	Exposing students to modern technical skills	3.78	0.48	SA	3.67	0.99	SA
6.	Budgeting/provision of school finance	3.06	0.74	SA	3.8	0.99	SA
7.	Priority attention to secondary school education	3.58	0.68	SA	3.33	0.98	SA
8	Provision of adequate modern infrastructural facilities	3.48	0.48	SA	3.31	0.66	SA
9	Application team teaching	3.87	0.92	SA	2.93	0.95	SA
10.	Mobilization of participation in school administration	3.87	0.89	SA	3.33	0.86	SA
	Grand X	3.40	0.75	SA	3.33	0.86	SA

Table 3 revealed that the grand mean of 3.40 with 0.75 standard deviation for principals and 3.33 with 0.86 standard deviation for administrative staff of SSCMB respectively. The rating shows that the respondents strongly agree on the identified strategies for improving the quality of secondary school education in Cross River State.

Table 4: T-test of mean difference of principals and SSMB administrative staff on strategies for improving quality secondary school education in Cross River State.

Variables	N	$\bar{X}$	SD	DF	Sign. Level	t-cal	t-tab.	Remark
Principals	10000	3.40	0.75	1137	0.05	0.27	1.96	P<0.5 accepted
SSMB Admin Staff	150	3.33	0.86					

Table 4 above shows that the calculated t-value of 0.27 and t-table value of 1.96. Since the calculated t-value is less than the critical table value, the null hypothesis is accepted at 1137 degree of freedom and 0.05 level of significance.

Discussion of findings

From the table analysis, it revealed that the quality of secondary school education in Cross River State has been seriously hindered by several factors which include poor teacher's quality, teaching method, inadequate/poor learning facilities and equipment, poor funding, poor motivational indices and irrelevant curriculum/scheme of work. Unfortunately, adequate and quality resources (human and material) that enhance high level of good education are limited or lacking. This finding is in line with the study of Uzoka, abolo and Lasisi (2015) who's opined that the quality education. It appears that there is need to pay attention to the teachers in terms of quality and number. This is because good teachers are needed to achieve quality education which is indispensable for social change and national development. Offem and Edeh (2019) added that quality with respect to education, this implies the ability or degree with which an educational system conforms to the established standard and appropriateness, of the inputs available for the delivery of the system. Hence, quality in education mean the relevance and appropriateness of the education programme to the needs of the community for which it is provided.

Table 2 analysis indicate the strategies for improving the quality of secondary school education which agree with the study of Lunenburg (2010) that training for educators is needed in three areas. First, there must be training in the new teaching and learning processes that are developed. Second, training must be provided in the use of new assessment strategies (Pophan, 2010). Third, there must be training in the principles of the new management system. In supporting Ezeuchu (2006) noted that efforts are not made in area of adequate provision of training facilities to develop teachers for professional growth in order to increase productivity, supply of qualified manpower/learning facilities and completed with the suspicion of external evaluators' non-check of supervision carried out by principals seem to make their practices appear to be largely procedural, diagnostic rather than remedial.

Conclusion

From the above findings, the study concluded that principal effective planning strategies should address those factors that militated against quality secondary school education functionally and also the identified strategies should be adopted for the improvement of quality school education.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made;

1. Seminars and workshops should be organized on regular basis for the principals to uphold update their skill in planning school-based activities in order to expose them to proper and sustained school system.
2. Government should always employ professionally and academically qualified educational managers.
3. Educational managers should always build confidence of their staff through their effective planning and management strategies.

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