

**CHALLENGES AND PROSPECTS OF
MANAGING PRIVATE SECONDARY
SCHOOLS IN KANO STATE**

BY

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Abstract

Education is the process of bringing desirable change in the behaviour of human beings. To achieve this, the educational system needs to pass through a sector either public educational sector or private educational sector. Public educational sector is an educational system which is controlled by the government and private schools are owned by an individual, cooperating individuals, voluntary agencies or faith based organizations. The Private school system has contributed immensely to the development of education and by extension, manpower base of the country. It continues to do so even now. However, as private enterprises, most owners of Private schools have run their schools clearly as private property often paying little attention to laws governing the operations of education industry. This has presented challenges to the state in a bid to run and

deliver education needed for sustainable development of the state. This paper looks at the possible challenges and prospects for managing private secondary schools educational system in Kano State and recommends among other things that Private schools in the state should be subjected to direct control, regulation and supervision of the Commissioner for Education. The implication is that education venture in Kano State must conform to state policy on Education in terms of structure, learning programmes, activities, administration, provision, access and delivery. And also In Licencing Private ownership and operators in the education sector, government should ensure evidence of current practices for staff recruitment process, staff development, staff conditions of service, mid and long term development plan covering facilities, plant, staff and students personnel policy are put in order, also Proposal of merger plans/growth pole direction in the next 20 years.

Introduction

Education can be variedly defined depending on the purpose it is meant to serve and the discipline in perspective. Education is the process of creating the changes in the behaviour of people. It can also be defined as a process of delivering or acquiring knowledge or habits through instructions. In certain terms, education is a means by which people understand their society and structure. This helps people to find the creation of meaning in the

environment, discover their relationships with others in the field of language, and categorize the meaning of things, ideas and events (Saidu and Ahmodu, 2016).

Education for any nation, whether developed or developing, is to help in solving the problems that affect that nation. Therefore, according to the National Education Policy (FRN, 2004), the government said that for the benefit of all citizens, the country's educational goals shall be clearly set out in terms of their relevance to the needs of the individual and those of the society, in consonance with the realities of our environment and the modern world".

Education is a tool for people's social changes. It is the vehicle for transferring values, knowledge and experience that make for proper moulding and adjustment of an individual to his dynamic environment. To achieve these, the educational system needs to pass through a sector either public educational sector or private educational sector. Public educational sector is educational system which is controlled by the government and Private schools owned by an individual, cooperating individuals, voluntary agencies or religious organizations.

Private schools

The history of education and private participation in Nigeria cannot begin or end without brilliant

mentions in the contributions of missionaries who came to Nigeria in the mid -18th century. In 1843, the Methodist Missionary Association established the first school, and in 1847 the Anglican Communion also established chains of schools. Before the coming of the missionaries, Islamic education has covered most part of the North. The education that time was purely private participation where students gather under tree or in front of Imam's house for lessons. For more than four decades now, Private schools have been run as profit oriented enterprises, often owned by an individual, cooperating individuals, voluntary agencies or faith based organizations. Private ownership of schools as earlier noted, dominated the education landscape of the country during the mid- Nineteenth Century leading up to the later part of that Century. The missionaries were predominantly responsible for those schools. Private schools have persisted since then.

Private schools can be classified according to donations because they are low fees (LFP) and high fees (HFP). The mode of the board of directors is determined directly by the owner, certain standards and characteristics and is not subject to state regulation. Fees payed determine the quality of the programs available in each school. Private schools are mainly controlled based on cash (AGI, 2013)

AGI, (2013) Report reveals some or part of the following data for private schools. Private funding,

managing and hiring employees are more than public school standards, and are strictly limited in number of employees, service conditions, strict restrictions, monitoring and evaluating conditions. Unknown government recognition is not well known in many private schools throughout the year's admissions, and the certificate candidate registration, a platform prepared around a miracle, a restriction of relief or accessible, a laboratory, a library, a demonstration, a playground, etc. Irregular school attendance by pupils

It is pertinent to note that while some private schools in Kano State are highly appreciated in terms of academic achievements, good means, training and good school climate, but others are generally grateful and barely looking for them because they do not contribute to the excellence of education and do not contribute to educational training. There is also a problem in Kano's education management as well as private schools.

Challenges of managing private schools

The essence of ownership of private schools and the goal of private schools is a Hercules task in which private schools surrender to external agencies' requests and administrative cooperation. For this reason, the main problem of private school management is:

Funding: The availability of funds for private school owners is very important. Most private schools are small in size, no educational equipment

and facilities, and are trapped in shifts or rental housing. Small cartridge and astronomical accommodation costs are needed to accompany the ability to acquire specific environments of education, equipments, and high -quality teachers, all necessary to meet set standards for the operation of schools in the state or even elsewhere (Odeley, Oyelamin & Abike, 2012). Educational materials and users need finance to actually use educational materials for education.

Environment: The school environment is an important factor in school operation and success. More than 80% of the private schools in Kano state are located in a private house or a building that can be replaced and cannot be expanded in the near future. Sports facilities, libraries, convenience, dispensary, etc. are functions of space. In some private secondary schools, housing in the classroom is very inappropriate. As a result of large registration in this school, the classroom is generally crowded with up to sixty or more students receiving instructions in a classroom designed for only thirty or forty students. In most cases, chairs and tables are not enough. See how they share their chairs, sit or sit on a window or broken table. When students are in such congestion, there are many learning processes and violations of children's mental activities, and generally contradicts the effective education and intellectual development of children.

Unstable Staff: In the case of private elementary schools and high school staff today, the problem is no longer that of unavailability, but that of instability. This does not help development of the educational system. Because of the comparatively poorer conditions of service of teachers in the Nigeria society, the tendency for many teaching in the nation's school today, as was the case with their predecessors in later colonial and independent Nigeria, is to use the teaching profession as a stepping stone to other highly esteemed and more attractive jobs.

As a result, teaching gradually becomes a job for new graduates of universities and colleges of education who are ready to call it quit, without provocation, as soon as they find greener pasture elsewhere. Sometimes staffs of private education institutions are generally unstable. Consequently, the teaching, learning process installed everywhere. Unless the conditions of service of teachers, at all levels, are improved and their status raised higher in the Nigerian society, the teaching staff of our educational institution, including universities, shall continue to be unstable and educational progress shall continue to be retarded; But this should not be so for a country that is almost ready to jump into the world of science and technology.

Poor Preparation and Malpractices: Experts in the education sector were able to identify examination malpractices with poor preparation of

students for an examination, and lack of self-confidence. In view of the rising costs of education (school fees, enrolment fees, cost of books and other material), students and even their parents will not ordinarily want to be held back by any form of deficit or failure in any of the required subjects and so, they go extra miles to ensure success. In some cases, some teachers at the secondary school level are involved by way of encouraging student to contribute money (cooperation fees) in order to secure the needed assistance during such examinations because they, the teachers are left with no other alternative considering the fact that they are aware of the inadequate preparation of their students as well as the lack of facilities to get them properly prepared before examination in private schools as some want to make names therefore, involving their schools in examination malpractices.

Condition of service/motivation

The Private School System should evolve a platform for harmonized conditions of service that mirrors what is obtainable in the Public Secondary Schools. This will enable teachers in Private Schools who see their job as adhoc arrangement settle down to develop careers in such school and contribute meaningfully well to education delivery. It should also be a precondition for licencing a school.

Creating board of governors

Private school owners should be compelled to create Board of Governors, when requesting for Licence to operate. The functions of the Board, number of meeting for a year and reporting process clearly identified and specified before Licencing is done.

Exploitation and Educational Standard

A close assessment of activities in schools have revealed that, students are made to suffer undue amount of exploitation by school heads at both private and public schools in the name of enrolment fees and assurances of success in their examination and this they do in collaboration with the ministry officials who are supposed to inspect and monitor activities in schools to ensure standards compliance. Despite the fact that most of the schools lack basic learning facilities and a complete set of teachers, in some cases, a school with the services of an English Language teacher will lack that of a Mathematics teacher. This is the more reason why one may not have the gut to quarry the mass promotion syndrome being practice in schools because the system itself is not balanced. (Saidu and Sandra 2015).

Poor Parenting/Guidance

Parenting entails caring, protection, guidance, provision of basic needs for a child's upkeep in order for him or her to be properly equipped to meet with the challenges of life, in accordance

with the laws of the land. In desperation, many parents have decided to bring in additional innovation by way of not only involving in encouraging, but also financing activities in and around examination venues to effect malpractices in order to brighten the chances of their children or wards in qualifying examinations to higher institutions and some even, progress on this act through the tertiary level of education. (Sule, 2012)

Facilities / equipment

In accomplishing teaching and learning, facilities/equipment is central to any learner centred education. Most Private schools especially Low Fee Payment (LFP) may not be able to afford facilities/equipments necessary for offering certain subjects in the curriculum especially in the sciences, technical and vocational areas. This also causes most of these schools to focus more on social sciences and art subjects to the detriment of a balanced curriculum as required by the educational system. The state education policy weighs in on sciences, technical and vocational education and has encouraged this over the years. Therefore, Private schools needing to operate, should have equipments and facilities likely to promote emphasis areas in Kano State Education policy (Agi, 2013).

Poorly Equipped Libraries, Laboratories and Subject Rooms:

For effective teaching and learning, well equipped laboratories and subject rooms are needed; but the truth is that private schools today lack these essential facilities. Many private schools have buildings that they call libraries, but most of these are not equipped with essential books and current journals and magazines. Also, many private schools do not have science laboratories while a good number of those that have, do not possess the basic tools or equipments as microscopes, dissecting instruments and specimens.

Also, many schools do have special rooms for teaching such basic subjects as history, geography and French. In such a situation as this, the teachers cannot put in their best; and the students too, cannot enjoy teaching-learning process that is for overall development of the children, (Ahmodu, Saidu and Yahaya 2015).

Prospects for private schools in Kano State

Private school system in Kano State really can be improved to succeed and contribute more to realizing the goal of Education for all. Despite the avalanche of challenges facing the system, collaborative efforts between operators of Private School System and Government can open new vistas. This is even so as Private education providers are accepted as partners in national development. Opportunities for improvement of

Private education providers abound in Kano State. They come in the following ways:

- Government and the private sector should pull in more effort and resources towards the development of education.
- More financial institutions are available to assist with facilities and instrument.
- An independent inspectorate committee should be put in place to regularly monitor activities in schools as the existing inspectorate unit has cease to function effectively.
- Private education providers can capitalize on available National and State policies on education as well as the Nigeria Roadmap for education sector to strengthen their programme base.
- Private sectors stand to benefit from state regulation of education that will in turn enhance their performance necessary for attracting large clients.
- More modern learning aids such as computers, internet Web sites facilities, overhead projectors, firms etc should be provided in schools.
- Online registration being introduced now for school examination enrolment, by the Nation Examination Body should be encouraged; this will reduce the exploitative tendency by school.
- Schools should be properly staffed and equipped by the private owners

- Educating and re-orientation of teachers, parents and students on the need to discourage examination malpractice in schools.
- Establishment of local libraries by teachers at the classroom level should be encouraged

Conclusion

The Private school system has contributed immensely to the development of education and by extension manpower base of the country. It continues to do so even now. However, as private enterprises, most owners of Private schools have run their schools clearly as private property often paying little attention to laws governing the operations of education industry. This has presented challenges to the state in its bid to run and deliver education needed for sustainable development of the state. Clearly the state must exercise its authority over the education sector as important as it is by ensuring that the other operators in the education system share the state's vision, values, principles which inform the objectives of state education.

In order to remove some of the major problems of educational development in Nigeria, the issue of responsibility and control must be resolved and a uniform system of education introduced and operated nation-wide. This would mean the abolition of the present school system whereby, children of the privileged class and attend special schools.

Recommendations

Based on the discussion of issues involved in this paper, the following recommendations are made:

- Private schools in the state should be subjected to direct control, regulation and supervision of the Commissioner for Education. The implication is that education venture in Kano State must conform to state policy on Education in terms of structure, learning programmes, activities, administration, provision, access and delivery.
- Frequent changes of subject syllabuses should be discouraged while teachers of all categories should be encouraged to remain in the same school for many years so that a tradition of teaching and learning could be established in each school.
- In Licencing Private ownership and operators in the education sector government ensure evidence of Journal for staff recruitment process, staff development, staff conditions of service, mid and long term development plan covering facilities, plant, staff and students personnel policy are put in order, also Proposal of merger plans/growth pole direction in the next 20 years.
- All private schools should be provided with adequate equipment and facilities for teaching and learning.

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