

Factors Militating against Effective Administration of Secondary Schools in Anambra State

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Abstract

The study was embarked upon with a view to finding out some of the hitches influencing effective administration of secondary schools in some selected zones of Anambra state namely: Aguata, Onitsha and Otuocha. The population which is also the same size consists of 110 secondary school principals. A self-administered questionnaire which has eight research questions and twenty-four questionnaire items guided the study. The data was analysed through the use of frequency counts and simple percentages. The study revealed among others that many schools are understaffed and are still facing inadequate subject teachers, in other words, most principals are forced to teach some classes in addition to their official work of administration. On the strength of the findings, some recommendations were made among which are the provision of adequate and qualified teachers for effective teaching and learning; the principals should be released from classes so that they can fully concentrate on administration of their schools.

Keywords

Administration of Secondary Schools, education, effective teaching and learning

1. Introduction

Education has remained a systematic process through which a child or an adult acquires knowledge, experience, skill and sound attitude. It makes an individual civilized, refined, cultured and educated (Ikegbusi, 2012). According to her, for a civilized and socialized society, education is the only means; its goal is to make an individual perfect. According to Adesina (2011), education is a major force in the economic, intellectual, social and cultural empowerment. He further stresses that education has the capacity to bring about character and attitudinal change, as well as restructure capabilities for desired development. The achievement of the right to education requires that young people be given the opportunity necessary for the acquisition of the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values which will enable them lead happy and productive lives as individuals and discharge their social duties for the betterment of life in the society (Fafunwa, 2002). Nigeria, having realized the effectiveness of education as a powerful instrument for national progress and development, adjusted her educational

philosophy and methodology to match the ideals and challenges of changing economic and social structure of modern society (National Policy on Education, 2004). Consequently, it is not a gainsaying that secondary education is very important and unique in the Nigerian education system. Secondary education is the second in the tripod of education starting from the primary, secondary and tertiary stages in ascending order of magnitude (Amaghionyeodiwe & Osinubi, 2006). The importance of secondary education in educational system cannot be overemphasized. A major factor that necessitates the acquisition of secondary education in Nigeria is that the education being provided at the primary level is proving to be insufficient for a child to acquire permanent literacy, communicative and numeracy skills expected from him/her at the end of the training (Chinelo, 2011).

The broad aims and objectives of secondary education in Nigerian educational system are:

- 1) Preparation for useful living within the society (self-employment), and
- 2) Preparation for higher education.

Specifically, it aims at:

- 1) Providing all primary school leavers with the opportunity for education of higher level irrespective of sex, social status, religious or ethnic background;
- 2) Offering diversified curriculum to cater for differences in talents, opportunities, and future roles;
- 3) Providing trained manpower in applied science, technology and commerce at sub-professional grades;
- 4) Developing and promoting Nigerian languages, arts and culture in the context of the world's cultural heritage;
- 5) Inspiring students with a desire for self-improvement and achievement of excellence;
- 6) Fostering national unity with an emphasis on the common ties that unite us in our diversity;
- 7) Raising a generation of people who can think for themselves, respect the views and feelings of others, respect the dignity of labour, appreciate those values specified under our broad national goals, and live as good citizens; and
- 8) Providing technical knowledge and vocational skills, necessary for agricultural, industrial, commercial, and economic development (National Policy on Education, 2004).

Heads of secondary schools are tasked with the implications of these objectives. The success of secondary school education rests on a good administration involving the local communities, adequate and well qualified teachers, adequate funds for infrastructural facilities, together with interested parents supplying children's material needs and bringing home training to supplement the efforts of the teachers at school. For heads of secondary schools to succeed in the administration of secondary schools, they need the collaboration and sustenance of the parents, teachers, the Post Primary Schools Service Commission and the Ministry of Education.

In spite of the roles of secondary education, Ajayi (2014) reported of public crises of various dimensions such as poor funding, poor educational infrastructure—which include inadequate classrooms, inadequate and low quality teachers, and polluted learning environment. In a school, where

these infrastructures and amenities are not well provided, heads of secondary schools efforts to administer schools diligently will be disenchanted. Probable outcomes of this kind of situation comprise unruly and disorderly students, non-literate population and an unresponsive teaching workforce (Ikegbusi, 2014). These hinder the fulfillment of educational objectives. Many secondary schools in Anambra state are not excused from this bitter state of matters. Many are confronted by a constant outburst of rowdy behavior on the part of students, a constant lack of educational amenities as well as an overpopulation of students.

Administration according to Peretomode (2003) is the component part of the management concerned with facilitating accomplishment of the objectives of an organization like school through the systematic management of constraints and careful utilization of the available limited resources like human, material, finance and so on. Okeke (2014) sees secondary school administration as involving the provision and maintenance of the necessary manpower to those who teach children with a view to bring about the desired change in the children's behaviour. The school principals face numerous administrative problems which militate against operative running of their schools. These include inadequate and low quality teachers, inadequate funding to maintain schools and paying teachers' salaries, intrusion by parents. Others are lack of accommodation for students, indiscipline behaviours on the part of teachers and students and uncooperative assertiveness of other school staff. Where the heads fail to arrest these situations and problems, the smooth running of secondary school is conceded. Etuk (2007) outlined the following under listed functions of school administration as staff personnel administration, student personnel administration, finance and physical resources, and school community relationship management. The above fit well with the objectives of this study. Therefore, the study will be reviewed under the following: inadequate infrastructural facilities, staffing, finance, supervision and students' population.

2. Inadequate Infrastructural Facilities

Facilities include all the buildings and equipment in schools that aid teaching and learning. Administration of secondary school is becoming difficult due to inadequate infrastructural facilities (Alagbu, 2003). According to him, large number of secondary schools suffer an immense deprivation of facilities that aid teaching and learning. It has been observed that teachers' ineffectiveness in delivering their duties is attributed to inadequate provision of infrastructural facilities for effective teaching and learning. This kind of situation has consistently presented enormous challenges to school heads. Anderson (2015) observed that teaching and learning without materials is like chewing nuts without teeth. If the nuts are chewed at all, they will never be chewed well.

3. Inadequate Staffing

Staffing is another part of administration. According to Obi (2003), staffing is the process of ensuring that competent employees are selected, developed and rewarded for accomplishing the organization objective. He went further to say that human resources are the lifeblood of an institution. Odi and Omofonmwan (2007) argue intensely that acute shortage of teachers can result in poor outcome in teaching and learning. They also called for a revitalisation of the education programmes in Nigeria through research, manpower training and development. Staffing is seen by many researchers as a vital part of the functioning of any organization, including a school. Nel (2012) posits that staffing is a technique used by an organisation to place the right person in the right position. According Ikegbusi (2014) the success of secondary school administration depends on the availability of teachers. This implies that for proper running of a secondary school, quality and efficiency of staff determine to a great extent the successful achievement of its educational objectives.

4. Finance

According to Ogba and Igu (2014), one of the biggest challenges of secondary school management and administration is poor funding. They stress further that the extent to which adequate educational programmes are achieved depends largely on the economic provisions supporting the programme. Insufficient funds often leads to large classes for teachers, skimpy libraries, very limited instructional materials, low-priced building construction and poorly trained teachers. Keller (2012) posits that insufficient funds to maintain schools and pays teachers' salaries are among other factors that militate against the smooth administration of secondary schools. The lack adequate puts enormous degree pressure on school administrators, because as Anderson and Lamby (2005) point out that there is a high degree of pressure on school heads to raise funds so that their schools are fully efficient. Keller (2012) writes that for a country with a large population [such as Nigeria], and a failing economy, the challenge of financing public education is huge.

5. Supervision

Supervision according to Ofojebe (2007) is a process of assisting, directing, stimulating, and motivating teachers to enhance teaching and learning in educational institutions. Lack of supervision and monitoring of schools are regarded as the major drawbacks in the education sector (Muodebelu, 2008). She goes further to say that effective supervision is an important virtue that teachers should uphold effectively in the school system. A failure to appropriately supervise instruction on the part of teachers might result in the failure of supervisory programme, which is a critical factor for school administration. The person who is task with the responsibility of supervision is the school head (Adeyemi, 2010). Despite the fact that supervision is very important in evaluating the effectiveness of schools, it is disturbing to note that it is irregularly conducted (Ezekwesili, 2007). He, however blames this poor response to supervision on insufficient vehicle for monitoring, poor funding for supervision

and scarce number of qualified school supervisors.

6. Over Population

Etuk (2007) observed that there has been expansion in the school system and students' population now in Nigeria without corresponding growth in the number of essential facilities to match the change. Oni (2009) recounts the appalling state of over-population through the experience of a one-time federal minister of education in Nigeria thus: *In one state capital, I witnessed an appalling situation, where three classes made up of a total of 200 children were sitting in the sun facing one blackboard.* This perchance meant that as a result of over-population, school children could not be accommodated in the classroom, but study outside classroom location. In Nigeria, free primary education is indicated in the universal primary education review of 1985 (Amaghionyeodiwe & Osinubi, 2006). The sad development experienced from the free primary education is that both federal and local government have constantly failed to reflect the effect of an increase in enrolment in the school's physical facilities. The above assertion according to Ogba and Igu (2014) suggested when facilities are in short supply in schools, increase in students' enrolment will be futile and disadvantageous.

7. School Head-Teacher-Community Relationship

A healthy relationship between school heads and their teachers can result in an increase in teacher job performance, reduced incidence of students' indiscipline and an improvement in school-community relationship (Ogba & Igu, 2004). School teachers should be made to understand that they can reach out to the school head with their grievances and obtain backing. In fact, Adeyemi (2010) opines that the way a school head relates with his or her staff has a positive or negative impact on the productivity level of the staff. In the same vein, the school head is in a solely in-charge as the administrator, who control school's resources for the purpose of attaining the aims and objectives of his school (Ikegbusi, 2014). Ayeni (2010) seriously asserted that in pursuit of quality teaching and learning, schools must see themselves as open systems deriving their energies from a network of relationships including those of host communities. He goes further to emphasize that good community relation enables the school to receive learning means, enabling environments and possibly, attracts capable and professional educationists from the community to the school. After all, on graduation, learners are released as outputs to their immediate communities. Anderson (2015) advocates that if a healthy relationship exists between the school and its host community, it becomes almost possible for the community to absorb the graduate, knowing fully well that they have followed the student's learning programme from day one.

8. Indiscipline

School discipline is an essential element in school administration. The indiscipline problems in schools are ranked as a major problem among students of secondary schools in Nigeria (Olaitan, 2013). In fact, one of the reasons for the introduction of the universal basic education in Nigeria was the sharp decline in the morality of primary school children (Edho, 2009). The enforcement of discipline through corporal means is now criticized around the world. When teachers are not able to impose discipline as a result of conflicting values, they feel unconfident (Nakpodia, 2010). However, Ayeni (2010) found two major causes of students' indiscipline. First was the constant negative labelling of students followed by teachers' lateness, absenteeism, poor school environment and poor teaching. No doubt that discipline and students control is never easy to maintain, it demands co-operation, wisdom, diplomacies, courage, fairness and firmness (Ogba & Igu, 2014). According to them, much of these seem to pose serious challenges to the school heads, hence, decline in academic standards and a lack of authority to provide discipline.

The above mentioned factors create problems for secondary school heads in their administration of schools. This study shows how the factors enumerated above constitute problems in the administration of secondary schools in Aguata, Onitsha and Otuocha education zones of Anambra state. More so, how far the above problems exist and their effect on the administration of secondary schools in the above three education zones is the focus of this study.

9. Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study.

- 1) To what extent would terrorizations to school heads administrators constitute administrative problems in Anambra state?
- 2) In what ways does staffing become administrative problem for the school heads in Anambra state?
- 3) To what extent does lack of facilities affect the administration of secondary schools in Anambra state?
- 4) To what extent does over-population become an administrative problem for the school heads in Anambra state?
- 5) To what extent does finance constitute administrative problems for the schools in Anambra state?
- 6) To what extent does supervision help to facilitate the administration of schools in Anambra state?
- 7) To what extent does lack of co-operation affect the school heads' relation with teachers and community in Anambra state?
- 8) To what extent are the effects of indiscipline on the administration of secondary schools in Anambra state?

10. Methodology

The study employed descriptive survey design. Three out of six education zones of Anambra state (Aguata, Onitsha, & Otuocha, n.d.). The population of the study comprised 110 principals from public secondary schools in the selected zones. Purposive sampling technique was adopted because the researchers used the entire population.

The study was guided by eight research questions and twenty-four questionnaire items. The instrument was validated by three experts from Measurement and evaluation, Educational Management, and Guidance and counselling. Corrections made by these experts were effected in the final copies. “Yes” or “No” was required from the respondents in each questionnaire item. A “Yes” answer indicated a positive response, whereas a “No” answer signified a negative response.

The instrument was administered by to the 110 principals by the researchers with the help of six research assistants. In each zone and schools visited, copies of the questionnaire were administered on the respondents; they were allowed to respond to the items before retrieving the filled questionnaire. These strategies were meant to minimize chances of loss of copies of the instrument. Data was analysed through the use of frequency counts and simple percentages. According to Nwankwo (2010), it is a form of descriptive research which has the capability of putting into perspectives, the content in which a problem exists. Illustration of the findings was done using Microsoft Excel application software.

11. Presentation and Analysis of Data

Table 1. Terrorizations to School Principal’s Authority

S/N Items	YES	%	%	No	Total
1. Principals are often terrorized by parents when their children are punished	53	53	47	47	100
2. Reports of erring teachers are not taken seriously by school authorities	80	80	20	20	100
3. Commission scowls at school heads for collecting levies from students	65	65	35	35	100

In Table 1, it was observed that 53% of the principals are terrorized by students’ parents, 80% by the commission, and 65% by Post Primary Schools Service Commission (PPSSC) and supervisors who do not take principals reports seriously. But 47%, 20% and 35% respectively have no such problem.

Table 2. Staffing Problem

S/N Items	YES	%	%	No	Total
4. Do you have insufficient staff members	50	50	50	50	100
5. Do you have adequate number of subject teachers	61	61	39	39	100
6. Are some of your teachers on in-service training or PTA paid teachers	60	60	40	40	100
7. Do you teach a class with administrative work	75	75	25	25	100

Table 2 shows that 50% of the principals of schools have problems of insufficient staff, 61% have adequate number of subject teachers, 60% have some teachers on in-service training, while 75% of them combine teaching with administrative work.

Table 3. Infrastructural Facilities

S/N Items	YES	%	%	No	Total
8. There are enough efficient classrooms, laboratories and offices	23	23	77	77	100
9. Provision of learning materials	44	44	56	56	100
10. Furniture are provided and in good condition	40	40	60	60	100
11. School property is effectively protected	55	55	45	45	100

Results in Table 3 indicates that 77% of the principals lack functional school classrooms, laboratories and offices of which some of the buildings have dilapidated, 56% have no sufficient provision of learning materials including textbooks, 60% lack good furniture, while 65% have no security for school property such as land and economic trees.

Table 4. Over Population of Students

S/N Items	YES	%	%	No	Total
12. No students per class	54	54	46	46	100
13. Problem of students control in school and in class	63	63	37	37	100

In Table 4, the results shows that each class should ideally have 30 students at maximum. However, this is not the case as most classes had above 40 students per class.

Table 5. Finance

S/N Items	YES	%	%	No	Total
14. Do you often receive financial aid from government and NGOs?	43	43	57	57	100
15. Do parents unduly interfere in matters concerning school funds	65	65	35	35	100
16. Does sale of crafts serve as additional source of fund for the school?	40	40	60	60	100

Table 5 indicates that 57% of the principals do not normally receive financial assistance from either the government or Non-Governmental Organizations, 65% are disturbed by parents on issue of fund, while 40% raise funds through hand crafts and arts.

Table 6. Effective and Efficient Supervision

S/N Items	YES	%	%	No	Total
17. Are there regular supervision and monitoring of schools from PPSSC?	60	60	40	40	100
18. Do you supervise your staff regularly?	50	50	50	50	100

Results in Table 6 shows that 60% of the principals agree that there are effective and efficient regular

supervision and monitoring of schools from PPSSC headquarters which makes teachers to be always at alert, while 50% agree that they also supervise the activities of their staff in schools, this as well makes teachers to be up and doing.

Table 7. School Principals/Teachers/Community Relations

S/N Items	YES	%	%	No	Total
19. School principals are in good relations with the member of staff	20	20	80	80	100
20. School principals and the community members relate very well	38	38	62	62	100

Table 7 shows that only 20% of the principals relate positively with their members of staff, while 80% do not; consequently, 38% enjoy the co-operation of the community members.

Table 8. Indiscipline Problems

S/N Items	YES	%	%	No	Total
21. Teachers are effective and dedicated to their works	32	32	68	68	100
22. Students play truancy and use dangerous weapons	60	60	40	40	100
23. Teachers relate positively with students	70	70	30	30	100
24. Use of corporal punishment to check indiscipline	46	46	54	54	100

Results in Table 8 shows that 68% of the principals do not have dedicated and effective teachers, 60% suffer students' truancy and bully by their fellow students to other students, and 70% have positive teacher- student relationship, while 46% do not use corporal punishment as a remedy to check indiscipline among students.

12. Discussion of Results

It has been discovered that parents terrorize school principals especial when it comes to utilization of school money and in area of discipline. The Post Primary Schools Service Commission (PPSSC) also shuns on any school principal who collects illegal money from any student. According to Peretomode (2003), school is a planned social organisation that act as instruments of society for teaching young ones and should therefore depend on co-operative interrelationships within and outside their relevant publics. As the commission has banned all forms of levies, without any substitute, the school principals most often find it difficult to purchase school materials like chalk and writing materials. Their administrative work is made more difficult and unpleasant, in other words has negative effect.

The study also discovered that shortage and inadequate staff affects the subjects taught in secondary schools. This was supported by Ige (2012) who posited that preponderance of unqualified teachers in secondary schools in Nigeria will have serious implication on the quality of education which students will acquire at the end if other factors that may influence the training are constant. The student-teacher ratio of over (40) per class shows that teachers are over tasked, while students do not get sufficient attention from teachers. Edho (2009) approved this problem and advocated the construction of more schools to take care of increased enrolment rate and recruitment of qualified teachers. This will also go a long way to lessen the task on the principals who combine teaching with administrative work, which according to Ikegbusi (2014) will be too tasking on them.

In the same vein, results in Table 3 show that 77% of secondary school principals lack functional classrooms, laboratories and offices, the available ones are dilapidating with leaky roofs, 50% have insufficient learning materials including textbooks which is very crucial in students' learning, 60% lack good furniture, while 65% have their land and economic trees tampered by the community. This has a serious negative effect on school administration. In some schools that hold classes outside of the school classroom or premises, truancy on the part of the students was found to be a problem. Most of the students bring seats from their homes, while others use windows and floors as their seats. In line with this, Ige (2011) suggested that a school with inadequate classrooms, textbooks, laboratories, workshops, will be uncomfortable for students to learn. He further advised that school facilities should be provided by the government because they facilitate effective teaching and learning in schools.

Again, it was found out that many principals do relate very well with their teachers and the community, this according to Ayeni (2012) has great negative effect on the administration of the principals, it also hinders learning. Moreover, there is need for more effective supervision of schools to ease problems of school administration because according to Modebelu (2008), effective supervision makes teachers to be at alert and up and doing. Teachers' dedication to work, physical facilities and use of appropriate medium of instruction were appraised by Ajayi (2014) as part of the reasons for secondary school administrators' ineffectiveness. He suggests that the Post Primary Schools Service Commission (PSSC) and Ministry of Education should be more effective in the supervision as it will help to curb indiscipline acts among students and teachers.

13. Conclusion

From the findings, it was concluded that insufficient funding hinders the smooth administration of schools because it impedes so many things like purchase of learning materials and recruitment of qualified staff. Again, it was concluded that parents' continuous hostility with the principals do have a negative impact their relationship with one another, which also affect the schools negatively.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are made.

- 1) The government should sponsor teachers on a regular basis for in-service training, seminars, workshops and conferences to update their knowledge as this will help them in their teaching and learning process and improve the level of academic performance of students.
- 2) Post Primary Schools Service Commission should allow principals to administer schools without on daily basis impose and change policies.
- 3) Provision of adequate and qualified teachers must a conscious and regular programme of both the government and ministry of education.
- 4) The government should take sole responsibility of financing secondary education by providing funds to make facilities available in schools.
- 5) There should be regular and effective supervision of secondary schools by PPSSC and Ministry of Education because it plays great roles in achieving quality education in schools.
- 6) Schools and their host communities should join hands to purge the schools of some the hindrances encountered by schools. Communities should help to project the good image of the schools in their communities, as this could attract reputable teachers and increased support from the government and NGOs.

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