

IMPACT OF EDUCATIONAL POLICY IMPLEMENTATION ON QUALITY EDUCATION IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN ENUGU STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

This study examined the impact of educational policy implementation on the quality of education in secondary schools in Enugu State, Nigeria. With specific focus, the relationship between adequate resources and quality of secondary school graduates were examined. The study further took account of the relationship between the political system and the quality of education at the secondary education level, it also analyzed the relationship between proper planning and management and the quality in secondary school education in Enugu State, and examined the relationship between leadership and quality of education offered at the secondary schools in the state. The study adopted the descriptive survey research design. Four local governments (Enugu North, Enugu South, Aninri and Awgu) were randomly selected for the study. Simple random sampling was used to select four secondary schools, one from each local government. 55 students from each school and 45 teachers each from urban and rural areas, were randomly selected giving a total of 420 respondents. Data collected for the study were analyzed through the use of Pearson Product Moment Correlation to determine the relationship between the independent and the dependent variables. The findings revealed that the availability of resources, be it human, financial or material in perfect proportion, affects the quality of secondary school students. The study therefore, offered practical recommendations for policymakers, education managers, and stakeholders to bridge the gap between policy and practice, thereby enhancing the overall quality of secondary education in Enugu State.

Keywords: Secondary education, educational policy implementation, quality education, educational planning.

Introduction

The development of a nation is dependent on the quality of its educational system. The role of education in the development of a society is not negligible because the socio-political and economic development of the nation is, in many ways determined by the quality and the level of educational attainment of the population. Quality means degree of excellence, and of a high standard. It is the combination of all the attributes and peculiar features that makes one or an object fit for a purpose. In the simplest definition, quality is "fitness for purpose". Education is a public service where thinking about quality cannot reject consideration of the customer-driven quality concept and where complaints should be accepted as legitimate (Abdullahi, Abdulkareem, Okafor, Alabi & Zubair, 2023). Secondary education plays a crucial role in shaping well-rounded individuals, preparing them for higher education or the workforce, and fostering their intellectual, social, and emotional development. It equips students with the skills and knowledge necessary for personal growth, successful careers, and active participation in society. Concern for quality in Nigerian secondary education is most desirable for obvious reasons. Secondary education provides a foundation for further academic pursuits, such as university or vocational training. It equips students with essential skills and knowledge relevant to various professions and industries. In some countries, secondary education is seen as a prerequisite for entering specific higher education institutions or certain career paths. Unfortunately, secondary education in Nigeria which hitherto enjoyed tremendous global respectability and acceptability is fast losing its high esteem in the face of labour market and

members of community because the current certified Nigerian graduates lack acceptable level of competence in their areas of specialization (John & Aliyu, 2024). As noted earlier, how much a nation progresses has a lot to do with the quality of education and educational attainment of the citizens. Supporting the ongoing discussion, the quality of education, as defined by Sangoleye, Adedapo, and Olajo (2022), pertains to the relevance, validity, functionalism, and efficacy of the education system in the pursuit of national objectives and goals. The quality of secondary education according to Uvah (2005) is measured through various indicators, including student academic performance, teacher quality, school resources, and the overall learning environment. These indicators can be assessed through standardized tests, student grades, teacher qualifications, classroom observations, and feedback from students and parents. Quality in Nigerian secondary education is a multidimensional concept which should embrace various functions and activities; teaching and academic programmes, staffing, students, buildings, facilities, equipment, services to the community and the academic environment. (UNESCO.2018).

The quality paradigm includes the input (teachers, students, curriculum, school facilities, and funds), process (teaching and learning process, internal efficiency, quality assurance, management) and output (graduates, quantity and quality). Over enrolment without expansion in facilities, would lead to crowdedness in classrooms, gross inadequacies of laboratories and other learning materials, instability in the system characterized by the truncation of academic sessions and the epileptic closure and reopening of schools are all causes of anxiety in the education system in the country, repetition and drop-out rates are indicators of inefficiency in an education system, Other indicators that show it is not well with the process of Nigerian secondary education are issues of examination malpractice and sexual harassment. Outputs of educational research are nothing to boast about in today's Nigerian universities as lecturers bemoan dearth of research grants and if in any case research grants are given, it will be siphoned (Onoyima & Aka, 2023). To a very large extent, expansion in enrolments in secondary schools marked the beginning of 'the decline in quality of education in the society. In Nigeria, secondary school enrollment has seen significant growth in the last two decades, though it's still lower than the ideal. Specifically, the gross enrollment ratio in upper secondary school was 36.7% in 2018, up from 38.6% in 2016 (UNESCO.2018). Thus, while there has been progress, challenges remain in ensuring all eligible children have access to and complete secondary education (Dike 2020).

The dimensions for quality in the output are measures of achievement, attainment and standards. Achievement refers to what students really learnt in terms of the knowledge, skills and attitudes acquired. Attainment refers to the number of students who complete the prescribed academic programmes and obtain the qualifications. Standards are the official learning objectives, that is what society expects of products of a given school system (Onoyima & Aka, 2023). In order to establish and maintain quality education, educational policies are made. Policies are vital to the achievement of goals in the system; they embrace all aspects of the educational system helping to keep it running smoothly and thereby saving a great deal of time and effort. One of the major observations was that the production of graduates with critical skills had not met with the required needs for students' transition to higher education. Educational policies are meant to tackle issues relating to the structure, equity, access, finance, management and the efficiency of the education system, it is actually an agreed way of operating the system and it is necessary in order to ensure that direction is given to any action taken on education. This policy is embedded in the National policy on education published in 1977, revised in 1981, 1998, 2004 and 2013, it was revised to ensure that the policies address the perceived needs of the government in power and to ensure that the education sector is supportive of government developmental goals. Other issues approved from time to time by the National council on education (NCE) which is the highest policy making body on education

related matter and other policies legislated and passed into law in respect of secondary education operations and management of the country. Some of these policies are documented somewhere for reference purposes while some are unwritten when they are made in form of pronouncements by people in position of authority. The Federal Ministry of Education has the responsibility for the coherence of national policy and procedures and for ensuring that the states policies operate within the parameters of national policy as adapted for local needs. Co-ordination of policy at the political level takes place through the National Council of Education. However, some of these policies took its root from government's acceptance of some recommendations made by different commissions, such as education tax fund. The national goal of secondary education as provided by the National Policy on Education (NPE, 2013) particularly in the Nigerian context is aimed at preparing individuals for useful living within the society and for higher education. According to the NPE (as revised), the specific goals of secondary education include: providing all primary school leavers with the opportunity for education of a higher level, irrespective of sex, social status, religious or ethnic background; offering diversified curriculum to cater for the differences in talents, opportunities and future roles; providing trained manpower in the applied sciences, technology, and commerce at sub-professional grades; developing and promoting Nigerian languages, art, and culture in the context of world's cultural heritage; inspiring students with a desire for self-improvement and achievement of excellence; fostering national unity with an emphasis on the common ties that unite us in our diversity; raising a generation of people who can think for themselves, respect the views and feelings of others, respect the dignity of labour, and live as good citizens; and providing technical knowledge and vocational skills necessary for agricultural, industrial, commercial, and economic development.

These goals are structured to ensure that secondary education builds a foundation for productive citizenship and equips students either for entry into the workforce or for further education. To enhance effectiveness and efficiency in the system, policies are made in different major areas such as funding, quality assurance, and access to secondary education, relevance to national and global needs, and governance and management (Sangoleye, Adedapo & Olajojo, 2022). In Nigeria, the Post Primary Education Board (PPEB) also known in some states as the State Secondary Education Board (SSEB) according to John & Aliyu, (2024) is responsible for overseeing the management and administration of secondary (post-primary) schools at the state level. The responsibilities of the board are to; Recruitment and Deployment of Staff: employ, post, and transfer teaching and non-teaching staff in public secondary schools, maintain an up-to-date database of staff records; supervision and Monitoring: supervise the activities of schools to ensure compliance with educational policies and standards, monitor teaching and learning processes, including curriculum implementation; staff Development and Training: organize in-service training, workshops, and seminars to enhance the professional skills of teachers and other staff, encourage career development and promotions based on merit and performance; school Management and Administration: oversee the day-to-day running of public secondary schools, ensure that schools maintain discipline, proper record-keeping, and good governance; budgeting and Funding: prepare and manage the board's budget for effective school administration, disburse funds to schools and ensure proper financial accountability; infrastructure and Facilities: oversee the maintenance and development of school buildings and facilities, ensure schools have adequate learning materials, equipment, and furniture; student Welfare: monitor student enrolment, attendance, discipline, and general welfare, address issues such as truancy, dropout, and examination malpractice; curriculum Support: ensure effective implementation of the national secondary school curriculum as set by the Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC), support schools in the organization of internal and external examinations (e.g., WAEC, NECO); liaison with Other Educational Agencies: collaborate with the State Ministry of Education, Teaching Service Commission, and other

relevant bodies, and implement policies and directives from federal and state governments. These responsibilities ensure that the PPEB plays a critical role in the effective delivery of quality secondary education across Nigerian states.

With regards to the provisions of the policy, Nigerians know that none of those lofty objectives have been fully realized. Just as many "effective citizens" have been produced by the educational system, there are also many citizens who cannot perform their responsibilities as citizens. There are thousands of secondary education graduates who cannot transit to higher education. These people cannot be described in the words of educational policy as effective citizens. There are also few educated elites who have looted the treasury so massively that they cannot be described as effective citizens. Stakeholders would wonder what type of education was given to people of such character in government (Dike 2008). Proper implementation of National Policy on Education should instill patriotism in the minds of the citizens, integrate individuals into the community, receive education that will get them job or create job for themselves. In terms of provision of equal access to educational opportunities for all citizens at all levels, observers will readily assert that this has become a mirage (Abdullahi, Abdulkareem, Okafor, Alabi & Zubair, 2023). Until the education stakeholders at all levels carry out massive enlightenment campaign and the government significantly improve funding for education the state cannot talk of equal access to education at all levels for all our citizens.

Quality is an issue which relates to, and sometimes reinterprets, the traditional basic questions of education management, organization development, culture, school improvement, leadership, effectiveness and so on. Quality education is a fundamental aspect of gaining and maintaining credibility for programmes, institutions and national system of higher education, it should reflect the quality of an institution's method and educational product and outcomes. Zelvy (2004) perceived that the concept of quality has been one of the most important concepts in contemporary educational terminology and attempts have been made by many educationists to define it. Quality as defined by the International Organization of Standardization (1994) as the totality of features and characteristics of a product or service that bear on its ability to satisfy stated needs. Alele - Williams (2004) defines quality of education as that which indicates the pre-eminence and special features that makes the institution distinct from other forms of institution. Tovey (1994) described the quality of education as dealing with issues of relevance, validity, functionalism and efficiency of education system in the achievement of national goals and objectives. Okafor (1990) explains that quality refers to the degree of goodness and excellence in the education sector. Kemmerer (1993) examined the nature of quality in education and stated that quality is perceived as the level of achievement or performance and this is linked with the ability to function well in the school environment and to meet the need of the entrepreneur. Oderinde (2004) enumerated two aspects of quality in education, which are both internal and external. The internal aspect is the implementation of the school's objectives while the external aspect deals with the implementation of national objectives, which are pre-requisites to the achievement of quality in any educational institution. A consistent quality of education establishes an institution's good reputation and image. It also includes defined standard of achievement, documented procedures for all identified process, established ways of responding to issues and clear accountability for outcomes. Quality education results in greater public confidence, more satisfied students, efficient processes and staff who are confident in their jobs and students are more likely to experience better quality instructions learning materials and interactions with the institution and its staff leading to enhanced learning outcomes.

Babalola (2003) defined educational policy as a general statement containing principles, regulations and rules, which govern many of the decisions on how to educate children, where to get them educated, where to get them employed, who to teach them, how to finance their education, and so on. It is a projected statement of actions which specifies the goals, values and

practices of the educational system. It is a guiding principle or a course of action which is concerned to be expedient, prudent and advantageous in the process of realizing educational objectives. It is a statement which guides and directs all actions directed towards achieving the national development through the educational development. Educational policies are the agreed ways of operating the educational system, and any official statements made by the government which guides the practices of education is referred to as educational policy. Every modern society needs an educational policy. This is because the instruction of its new members has become a matter of deliberate and critical choice. (Babalola 2003). Moreover, the society has become so complex that the content of instruction for every student must be selected from a diversified culture that no single individual can master all of it. However, educational policy is needed to specify and set a limit to a course of action related to the educational system in a country.

Effective educational policy implementation is essential for achieving quality education. Success depends on adequate planning, leadership, and resource allocation. In Nigeria, despite well-formulated policies, challenges such as poor funding, weak leadership, and political interference hinder effective implementation. Ineffective management reduces educational quality at the secondary level. However, few studies have examined how policy implementation directly affects education quality, especially in Enugu State. This study fills that gap by analyzing the impact of leadership, planning, and resource adequacy on the quality of secondary education, offering insights for improving policy execution and educational outcomes.

Statement of the Problem

Basically, policy formulated is meant to guide present and future decisions, initiatives and actions of decision makers and managers, but it goes beyond the formulation to the implementation of this policy so as to achieve the objectives of the policies formulated. It has been observed that there is virtually no difference between the state of things in the system before policies were articulated and formulated and also after those policies were executed, therefore producing the same result and resulting to no development in the system. Moreover, findings have proved that the educational system is not actually suffering from poor policy formulation but the major problem is improper policy implementation which may be due to different factors such as inadequate facilities and resources, lack of support and acceptance and so on. This study addressed the discrepancy between policy articulation and policy execution, taking into account the appropriateness of strategies, factors and mechanisms for effective Implementation.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of the study was to examine the impact of educational policy implementation on quality education in public secondary schools in Enugu State. Specifically, the study investigated the relationship between adequate resources and quality of secondary school graduates. The study took account of the relationship between the political system and the quality of education at the secondary education level. It also analyzed the relationship between proper planning and management and the quality in secondary school education in Enugu State.

Research Questions

1. To what extent does adequate resources impact quality secondary school education in Enugu State?
2. How does the political system affect the quality of secondary schools' education in Enugu State?
3. I what ways does lack of proper planning and management affect the quality of education at the secondary school level in Enugu State?

Hypotheses

- H₀₁** There is no significant relationship between adequate resources and quality secondary school education in Enugu State.
- H₀₂** There is no significant relationship between the political system and the quality of secondary school education in Enugu State.
- H₀₃** There is no significant relationship between proper planning and management and the quality of secondary schools' education in Enugu State.

Methods

The research work was descriptive research of a survey method; surveying method was considered appropriate for this study because the method involves direct contact with the samples that are relevant to the study and it involves a critical examination of events and ideas with the intent of providing exact information about the condition of the phenomenon. This method tends to describe a given state of affairs that exist at a given time and gathers information from a given population. The study population consisted students and teachers in urban and rural area; Secondary schools in Enugu State. The study was carried out in four local governments (Enugu North, Enugu South, Aninri and Awgu) in Enugu State. Simple random sampling method was used to select four secondary schools, one from each local government. 55 students from each school and 45 teachers each from urban and rural areas were randomly selected giving a total of 420 respondents. Enugu North and Enugu South were identified as the urban study location, while Aninri and Awgu were selected as the rural LGAs for the study. A research instrument was adopted for the effectiveness of the study. A well-designated questionnaire was adopted to collect valid information for the research and was designated for both teachers and students. There were two sets of questionnaires, one was designated solely for the teachers and the other was designated for the students in the schools selected for the study. Each questionnaire contained two sections, section A and B, section A sought information on the respondent's demographic data, and section B contained items to measure the effect of educational policy implementation on quality education in secondary schools in Enugu state, this section was in parts. All the 420 copies of the questionnaires were administered and were fully used to analyze the data. The student's questionnaires were based on 330copies and were administered to sample of students in each of the two schools selected from the study locations. The teachers' questionnaires were based on 90 copies and were administered to the teachers in the four schools. For the purpose of this study, both face and content validity of the instrument were used to ensure the instrument designed actually measured what it intends to measure. Furthermore, experts in the area of institutional administration and educational management at the Godfrey Okoye University and Enugu State University of Science and Technology Enugu, were asked to validate the questionnaire. Based on the suggestions and comments of the experts, some items within the instruments were restructured, some were included while the inappropriate ones were removed. The reliability of the instrument was done by administering the questionnaires to the students and teachers not within the sampled secondary schools in the state. The instruments were collected and analyzed, the correlation co-efficient of 0.77 obtained was used to determine the reliability of the instrument which was considered high. The data collected for the study were analyzed through the use of Pearson Product Moment Correlation co-efficient (PPMC) to determine the relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable in answering hypothesis one, two and three.

Result and Discussion

In this section, data collected was analyzed and the hypotheses formulated were tested using Pearson product moment correlation.

Table 1: Demographic statistics of respondents

Location	Respondents	Number
Urban	Enugu South Teachers	45
	Students	110
Rural	Awgu Teachers	45
	Students	110

Table 1 shows that 330 students responded to the questionnaire and 90 teachers responded to the study.

Table 2: Correlation between Adequate Resources and Quality of Secondary school students based on students and teachers' response.

Parameter	Values (students)	Values (Teachers)
Pearson product Moment correlation Coefficient (r)	-.124	-.140
N	330	90
P value	.025	.032

Table 2 shows that the Pearson correlation coefficient (r) indicating the relationship between Adequate resources and Quality of secondary school students based on student's responses is -.124; $p < 0.05$. since the P value is less than 0.05, then the null hypothesis one is therefore rejected, meaning that there is a significant relationship between adequate resource and quality of secondary school students. Based on the teachers' responses, the Pearson correlation coefficient (r) of the same hypothesis is -.140; $p < 0.05$, therefore the null hypothesis is rejected, meaning that there is a significant relationship between adequate resources and quality of secondary school students. Adequate resources cannot be underestimated in acquiring quality students. Okecha (2018) listed myriads of problems bedeviling the implementation of educational policies, causing poor quality of students. It was included that dearth of resources, dearth of resources has played a major role in the policy failure; Shortage of human resources, inadequate laboratories for teaching, shortage of books among others.

Table 3: Correlation between the Political system and the Quality of Education in Secondary schools based on students' responses and teachers' responses

Parameter	Values(students)	Values(teachers)
Pearson product Moment correlation Coefficient (r)	-.152	-.139
N	330	90
P value	.037	.028

Table 3 shows that the Pearson correlation coefficient (r) indicating the relationship between the political system and the quality of education in secondary schools in Enugu based on students' responses and teachers' responses. Politicians are the political influence to what happens in the education system probably through their police and attitude towards the system. The political system allocates a certain percentage of the budget of the education system. Dike (2019) stated that the government's habit of allocating low percentage of the education sector

especially when compared with other less influence society in Africa is having negative effect of the system. Serious attention is demanded by the education sector from the political system so as to increase the productivity of the system and to treat as a public- health of the state is determined by the quality of education attainment of the people. Ijeoma and Osagie (2015) identified political interferences and unexpected consequences of government that Leads to unstable environment and frequent strike as factor that had devastating effect of the quality of education. The relationship between political system and the education system is intertwine, the quality of the political system demand on the competency and proficiency of the leader and is determined by the quality of the education leaders has acquired. A leader with quality education and correct moral principle will make a difference and it can only be given by the education system. The success of any system depends on the success of the education system.

Table 4: correlating between proper planning and management and the quality of secondary schools in Enugu based on students' response and teachers' responses

Parameter	Values (students)	Value (teachers)
Pearson product	-.071	-.148
Moment correlation		
Coefficient (r)		
N	330	90
P value	.195	.037

Table 4 show that the Pearson correlation coefficient (r) indicating the relationship between proper planning and management and the quality of secondary schools' base on student response and teachers' responses are -.071; $p > 0.05$ and -.148 ; $p < 0.05$ respectively. As observed, the p value for the student' response is greater than 0.05, than the null hypothesis, hence the hypothesis is therefore rejected, meaning that there is no significant relationship between proper planning and management and the quality of secondary schools' education in the state. Based on the teachers' response, since the p value is less than 0.05, than the the null hypothesis, it is rejected meaning that there is a significant relationship between proper planning and management and the quality of secondary education. Planning involves developing strategies to solve problem that can hinder the achievement of the educational objectives, for quality education to be attained in secondary schools' system proper planning cannot be ignored. Planning is primary among the managerial task and it cut across all aspects. With proper planning, over-enrolment which has been highlighted by Okoh (2000) as a cause of inadequate facilities can be prevented since it is a catalyst to; judicious allocation and utilization of resources.

Summary of the findings

The findings revealed that the availability of resources, be it human, financial or material in perfect proportion, affects the quality of secondary school students. Human resources in terms of adequate and appropriate teachers in each subject area as well as administrative staff. It also revealed that the political system to an extent determines the quality of secondary school education in the state through their attitudes toward education, policy formulation, and appointment of top officials. From the findings, the teachers established that proper planning and management contributes to the enhancement of quality secondary school education delivery , through adequate quality control, proper co-ordination of implementation strategies, correct supervision and proper monitoring, accurate allocation of funds and resources and well-programmed internal co-ordination which will boost active pedagogies, produce good learning outcomes such as in values and behaviors, and appropriate teacher and student ratio.

Conclusion

The findings of the study gave a vivid insight on the impact policy implementation could have on the quality of secondary education in the state, regarding the adequacy of resources, political system who introduces policies, planning and management of schools. Suffice it to say that, these are the cogent factors responsible to policy implementation and that without proper and correct placement of these factors, policies would not be properly executed.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made'

1. Policy formulators who are educational technocrats should ensure that policies formulated are feasible and attainable, and that all resources needed for the execution are made available.
2. The state government through the ministry of education should develop a correct academic culture and correct value system towards the education system so as to achieve the education goals.
3. Educational planners and managers should carry out a transition audit to help in adequate resource allocation and proper planning to ensure quality education.

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