

**MANAGEMENT OF POLICY IMPLEMENTATION AND IMPLICATIONS
FOR EFFECTIVE PRACTICE IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN
ANAMBRA STATE, NIGERIA**

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Abstract

The paper investigated management of policy implementation and implications for effective practice in public secondary schools in Anambra State, Nigeria. Three research questions were answered and a null hypothesis tested at .05 level of significance. The population was 263 principals used for the study. The 16 item instrument validated by experts while the reliability was determined using Cronbach Alpha Method. This yielded an average reliability index of 0.80. Data generated were analyzed with mean and t-test at 0.05 alphas. The findings showed that some factors may cause impediment to management of policy implementation such as inadequate teaching personnel, lack of infrastructures, paucity of learning materials, high attrition rate among teachers and so on. It was also observed that effective management of policy implantation will go a long way to improving the fortunes of prospects of secondary education in terms of a functional and creative system capable of ensuring not only sustainable development but also national cohesion and global competitiveness at the end of the day. The conclusion of the study was that except policy implementation is effectively managed, the goals of secondary education will not be fully realized to the extent that Nigeria can favourably compete at the comity of Nations. Based on the findings of the study, the study recommended that the government should provide sufficient fund in order to recruit adequate teachers, provide enough infrastructures and learning materials. Further, teachers' welfare packages should be upgraded by the school and government for better productivity.

Key words: management, policy implementation and public secondary schools.

Introduction

The Importance of education to overall human development cannot be overemphasized and this vitality is on the ascendancy as the years roll by. Watson (2020), captured this reality in his remark that modern education has many positive dividends namely promotion of economic reforms, moral revival, cultural awareness, national integration, democratic government, rural regeneration and manpower development. Briggs (2021), supported the above observation by succinctly stating that education is a long term investment by the state to make itself a better place in which to live and a better place in which to make a living. However it should be noted that no education system can function well without effective management of policy implementation which facilitates functional and pragmatic practice in public secondary schools,

It is one thing to formulate educational policies and another thing to effectively implement them so that the lofty goals of education at all levels will be realized. Observers such as who? are of the opinion that standard of education has fallen drastically in recent times. Perhaps this prompted Animasun (2000), to assert in Kolawole (2020), that a state of emergency should be declared on Nigeria's educational system so that for a minimum of three years other sectors should be ignored while all efforts should be made to restructure the entire school system. In a similar vein, Osji (2004), in Onokposi (2021), contended that time was ripe for schools formerly under the various church missions should be handed back to them. This explains that such a move will not only ensure the emergence of a qualitative system of education but further take care of the incessant teachers' industrial actions and constant menace of cultism in schools. Furthermore, Obinna (2018), observed that certain negative features of our educational system include truancy, cultism, examination malpractice, indiscipline, robbery, alcoholism, incompetent teachers and questionable method of policy implementation in the school system. There is need to focus our attention on management, policy, public secondary schools and implementation.

Management is a social process designed to ensure the co-operation, intervention and involvement of others in the effective achievement of a given or pre-determined objectives (Ezeugbor & Emere, 2017). It is an integral part of any organization in which effective leadership is directed toward the achievement of pre-determined goals. Educational management involves the process of planning and forecasting, decision-making and formulating educational policies with the aim of attaining set educational goals as observed by Okorji and Unachukwu (2014). They explained that it involves the application of the process of planning, organizing, co-ordinating, controlling, supervising and evaluating human and material resources with the explicit purpose of achieving educational goals and objectives. The principal is the head of public secondary school and to perform well, he is expected to be involved in planning, organizing, directing, co-ordinating, communicating and motivating both staff and students toward the realization of both instructional and educational objectives. Mastron (2015), opined that attributes expected of principals are prevalence of inventiveness, dynamism, flexibility, imagination, achievements-prone, originality, adaptability, self-esteem and skills acquisition. There is need for effective management of educational policies in order to successfully strive toward full realization of the goals of secondary education namely preparation for higher or tertiary education and preparation for

useful living in the larger society.

Merriam-Webster dictionary (2014), defined policy as definite course or method of action selected from among alternatives and in light of given conditions to guide and determine present and future decisions. In almost the same vein, policies can mean the same thing as rules, standing orders, procedures and goodies for carrying out action or channeling thinking in support of strategies and tactics particularly in strategic planning. Educational policies embodies the principles and government procedures based primarily on material interest and prudence concerning education of a country (Stevenson, 2016). Further, Babalola (2013), described educational policies as the principle and government policy in educational sphere, as well as the collection of laws and rules that govern the operation of the education system. From these definitions, policies of education determine the course in Nigeria. To this effect, Okoroma in Nzeako (2016), postulated that educational policies are general statements containing principles, regulations and rules which govern, influence and determine the decisions on how to educate the children, where to get them educated, when to get them employed, who to teach them and how to finance their education. To all intents and purposes, educational policies are comprehensive in nature.

Awokoya, in Nzeako (2016), stated that educational policy is directed toward increasing the quality of life of a people and believes that the objectives of any policy is to satisfy individual needs, community pressures and the degree of complexity and sophistication to which socialized personnel must be educated and trained to meet these demands. They contended that these principles should guide the formulation of any educational policy.

- i. It should be formulated and adopted through a political process which acknowledges the reality and legitimacy of conflicting interests and desires among its participants.
- ii. It should contain information on the board objectives that should be reached,
- iii. It should be a binding guide on the actions of those implementing it; and
- iv. It should be enforceable and enforced by the society which formulates it the next consideration after policy formulation is its implementation.

Implementation is the process of putting a particular programme, plan or project into action so as to strive towards getting the expected results (Ikeli, 2020). This implies that it is the pragmatic or practical aspect of any educational programme. In recent times, policies to do with Nigeria's education system from 1977 to 2013 were articulated in a comprehensive document known as National Policy on Education of Federal Republic of Nigeria. This particular document covered all levels of education like pre-primary, primary, secondary and tertiary and all types of education namely arts, science, technical, vocational among others. There are many factors affecting the implementation of education policies as pointed out by Adesina in Okoroma (2006). These include:

- i. Over-estimation of available resources whereby estimated resources are greater than actual available resources to implement a programme.
- ii. Under-estimation of the cost of implementing a plan whereby cost estimates do not make adequate provisions for inflation and actual implementation cost become unmanageable,
- iii. Over-reliance upon external assistance whereby plans that substantially rely upon

- assistance from foreign sources for their implementation run into hitches when such aid fails to come through, and
- iv. Inaccurate statistical data whereby planning becomes impossible under such circumstance.

In addition, Van Horn and Van Meter in Okoroma (2006), indentified three general factors for the unsuccessful implementation of programmes as followed:-

- i. The communication process-for implementation to be effective the implementers must know what they are expected to do. This is for the fact that as messages pass through any communication network distortions are likely to occur which can produce contrary directives, ambiguities. inconsistencies and incompatible requirements.
- ii. The capacity problem whereby ability to implement policies may be kindred by such factors as incompetent staff insufficient information, political support, inadequate financial resources and impossible time constraints, and
- iii. Dispositional conflicts whereby the implementation of a policy may fail because those charged with the responsibility of implementation refuse to carry out their own assignments. The implementation of educational polices need to happen at the secondary school level due to its over-ridding importance to education in general.

Secondary education bridges the gap between the primary and tertiary institutions as it is vital to fashion out a functional system that will not only make the Nigerian child self-sufficient but help him face challenges of life on a daily basis (Ada, Ushies, Andeshi & Ikwun, 2019). There is further an urgent need to ensure that public secondary schools provide students with the knowledge and skills they need to establish careers and participate in community life and in local, state and National politics.

Secondary education provides an optimal platform where young people especially teenagers can be developed and trained to live healthy and productive adult lives while participating in the socio-economic spheres of life. They maintain that secondary education is also fast becoming a prerequisite through which countries which aspire to compete globally equip their citizens to gain specific skills and aptitudes required for increasing technology and advanced global market status. To achieve these a country must ensure that their secondary education accommodates enough students to meet these requirements, provide a curriculum of sufficient quality and length, train her administrators and teachers as well as monitor and evaluate them to ensure they deliver according to pre-set standards (VNESCO, 2010). The Federal Republic of Nigeria, F.R.N. In the NPE (2013), stated that secondary education shall:

- i. Provide all primary school leavers with the opportunity for education of a higher level irrespective of sex, social status, religious or ethnic background,
- ii. Offer diversified curriculum to cater for the differences in talents opportunities and future roles,
- iii. Provide trained manpower in the applied science, technology and commerce at sub-professional grades.
- iv. Develop and promote Nigerian languages, art and culture in the context of world's cultural heritage,
- v. Inspire students with desire for self-improvement and achievement of excellence.

- vi. Foster national unity with an emphasis on the common ties that unite us in our diversity,
- vii. Raise 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.
- viii. Provide technical knowledge and vocational skills necessary for agricultural, industrial and economic development (N.P.E 2013:21).

The focus of this investigation is to determine management of policy implementation and implications for effective practice in public secondary schools in Anambra State, Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

The performance of secondary school students in external examinations like West African Senior Secondary Certificate Examinations (WASSCE) and National Examinations Council (KECO) in the past ten years had been woeful. According to West African Examination Council (WAEC) report in 2021, less than 40% of the overall candidates obtained the requisite admission requirements for university admissions of five credits with English Language and Mathematics inclusive at one sitting within the same period. Many factors like teachers incompetence, students' laxity, lack of teaching materials, inadequate infrastructure among others. May be responsible for the ugly development.

Perhaps it is time to look beyond these factors highlighted above and consider other pertinent factors which had been ignored. There is the issue of policies implementation as far as secondary education is concerned. The problem of this study, therefore, is to examine the management of policy implementation and implications for effective practice in public secondary schools in Anambra State, Nigeria.

Purpose of the Study

Generally, the purpose of this study is to examine the management of policy implementation and implications for effective practice in public secondary schools. Specifically, the objectives of this study are to:

- ✓ Determine the cause of poor implementation of educational policies in public secondary schools in Anambra State, Nigeria.
- ✓ Find out the effects of poor implementation of educational policies in public secondary schools in Anambra State, Nigeria.
- ✓ Highlight the strategies to achieve effective implementation of educational policies in public secondary schools, in Anambra State, Nigeria.

NB: Impact and effect in research mean the same. I suggest you examine the factor, effects and strategies not impact consider this.

Significance of the Study

The outcomes of this investigation are expected to be of significant benefits to teachers, principals and government. Data generated from factors that are responsible for poor implementation of educational policies and their effects in public secondary schools will help

teachers to re-strategize and work according to innovative ways that will help to improve the situation. The same goes to principals who are administrative heads of public secondary schools. The government will equally benefit from the outcomes here.

Government will further gain from data generated from anticipated impact of effective implementation of educational policies by keying into the process and putting their material and human resources to good effect. This restructuring will go a long way promoting full realization of the goals of secondary education in Anambra State, Nigeria. Much of the millions being wasted previously will be channeled to better use as far as implementation of educational policies are concerned.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study.

- ✓ What are the causes of poor implementation of educational policies in public secondary schools in Anambra State, Nigeria?
- ✓ What are the effects of poor implementation of educational policies in public secondary schools in Anambra State, Nigeria?
- ✓ What are the anticipated strategies to achieve effective implementation of educational policies in public secondary schools in Anambra State, Nigeria?

Scope of the Study

The study was de-limited to the management of policy implementation and its implications for effective practice in public secondary schools in Anambra State, Nigeria. It covered factors responsible for poor implementation of education policies, effects of poor implementation of educational policies and anticipated impact of effective implementation of educational policies in public secondary schools in Anambra State, Nigeria. Anambra State being the geographical coverage.

Method

Descriptive survey design was used for the research. Azubike (2019), contended that this type of design examines people's opinions, motivations, interests and perceptions on a subject through the use of questionnaires or interview. As such, survey design was considered most suitable for the research.

The population for the study consisted of 263 principals of public secondary schools in Anambra State spread over six education zones namely Awka, Aguata, Ogidi, Nnewi, Otuocha and Onitsha. The composition of the population is 73 males and 190 female principals.

A self-structured questionnaire titled "Management of Implementation of Educational Policies and its Implications for Effective Practice in Public Secondary Schools Questionnaire (MIEPIEPPSSQ) was used for data collection. It contained 21 items with three clusters. The instrument was validated by three experts, two in educational management and one in measurement and evaluation, all in the Department of Educational Foundations, Faculty of Education, Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University, Igbariam Campus,

whose opinions were elicited. Cronbach alpha coefficient method was used to analyze the data collected for a reliability of the study. Ninety-five percent of the 263 copies of questionnaire administered through on-the-spot method were properly completed and retrieved.

On techniques for data analysis, the research questions were answered using the standard deviation.

Results Response key

Very Effective	(VE)	-	4 points
Effective	(E)	-	3 points
Fairly Effective	(FE)	-	2 points
Not Effective	(NF)	-	1 point

Research Question 1: What are the causes of poor implementation of educational policies in public secondary schools in Anambra State, Nigeria?

Table 1: Mean ratings of respondents on factors responsible for poor implementation of educational policies in public secondary schools in Anambra State, Nigeria.

S/N	Item Description	Male Principal		Female Principal		Remarks
		X	SD	X	SD	
1.	Poor funding	3.95	0.43	3.5	0.46	VE
2.	Lack of accurate data	3.12	0.49	3.08	0.49	E
3.	Inadequate infrastructure	3.81	0.44	3.5	0.46	VE
4.	Lack of learning facilities	3.14	0.49	3.17	0.48	E
5.	Poor teachers welfare	3.81	0.44	3.75	0.44	E
6.	Prevalent corruption among administrators	3.42	0.47	2.80	0.51	E
7.	High leadership turn-over	3.25	0.73	3.33	0.77	E
	Grand Mean	3.5	0.46	3.30	0.47	E

From the tabulated result above, it was clearly revealed that there is respondent's consensus that these are factors responsible for poor implementation of educational policies in public secondary schools in Anambra State, Nigeria. This was as a result of high agreement among respondents on the seven (7) items presented to them.

Research Question 2: What are the effects of poor implementation of educational policies in public secondary schools in Anambra State, Nigeria?

Table 2: Mean ratings of respondents on the effects of poor implementation of educational policies in public secondary schools in Anambra State, Nigeria.

S/N	Item Description	X	SD	Remarks
1.	High rate of truancy	2.69	0.94	Effective
2.	Prevalence of cultism	3.25	0.22	Effective
3.	High wastage rate	3.59	0.95	Effective
4.	Increased teachers' attrition	3.01	0.12	Effective
5.	Dependence on examination malpractice	2.78	0.50	Effective
6.	Dwindling students' population	2.98	0.55	Effective
7.	Students' woeful academic performance	3.5	0.65	Effective
	Grand Mean	3.1	0.49	Effective

To a high extent, information documented on **Table 2**, depicted homogeneity in responses among respondents as regards the effects of poor implementation of educational policies in public secondary schools in Anambra State, Nigeria. This was as a result of high agreement rate among the respondents on the seven (7) items presented to them.

Research Question 3: What are the anticipated impacts of effective implementation of educational policies in public secondary schools in Anambra State, Nigeria?

Table 3: Mean ratings of respondents on the strategies to achieve effective implementation of educational policies in public secondary schools in Anambra State, Nigeria.

S/N	Item Description	X	SD	Remarks
1.	Improved students' academic performance	3.83	0.37	VE
2.	Increased teachers' productivity	3.33	0.77	VE
3.	Shunning examination malpractice	3.5	0.77	E
4.	Availability of infrastructures	3.25	0.73	E
5.	Increased students' population	3.08	0.73	E
6.	Improvement of School tone	3.12	0.49	E
7.	Reduced teachers' attrition	2.80	05.1	E
	Grand Mean	3.27	0.48	E

To a significant extent, information documented on **Table 3** showed uniformity in responses among respondents as regards the anticipated impact of effective implementation of educational policies in public secondary schools in Anambra State, Nigeria. This was due to high agreement rate among the respondents on the seven (7) items presented to them.

Findings

The following findings were made:- .

1. Factors that contribute to poor implementation of educational policies in public secondary schools in Anambra State Nigeria, are poor funding, lack of accurate data, inadequate infrastructures, lack of learning facilities, poor teachers' welfare packages, prevalent corruption among administrators and high leadership turnover.
2. Effects of poor implementation of educational policies in public secondary schools in Anambra State Nigeria, include high rate of truancy, prevalence of cultism, high

wastage rate, increased teachers' attrition, dependence on examination malpractice, dwindling students' population and woeful academic performance of students.

3. The strategies to achieve effective implementation of educational policies in public secondary schools in Anambra State in Nigeria are improved students' academic performance, increased teachers' productivity, shunning examination malpractice, availability of infrastructures, increased students' population, improvement of school tone and reduced teachers' attrition.

Discussion

The study revealed certain factors that contributed to poor implementation of educational policies in public secondary schools in Anambra State, Nigeria. These are poor funding, lack of accurate data, inadequate infrastructures, lack of learning facilities, poor teachers' welfare, prevalent corruption among administrators and high leadership turn-over. Singly and collectively these factors contribute to poor implementation of educational policies. These tallies with the viewpoint of Oharis, (2017), who, stated that lack of funds limits the amount of technical and industrial exposure that students acquire in the course of learning so much so that under-funding raises a lot of other implications on the part of educational policy. In addition, Aiyamekhue (2019), asserted that Nigeria's education system is bedeviled with the challenges of under-funding thus poor infrastructure, inadequate classrooms and teaching aids (projectors, computers, libraries, laboratories etc.), paucity of quality teachers/poor or polluted learning environment to the extent that educational policies cannot be implemented. According to him, the school system is further plagued with numerous social vices like examination malpractices, cultism, students' unrest, strike actions to mention but a few.

Also revealed, were the effects of poor implementation of educational policies, in public secondary schools in Anambra State, Nigeria. These effect manifested in the shape of high rate of truancy, prevalence of cultism, high wastage rate, increased teacher attrition, dependence on examination malpractice, dwindling students' population and students' woeful academic performance. These factors reflect the negative effects of poor implementation of educational policies in public secondary schools in Nigeria. This agreed with the assertion of Abdullahi (2012:91) that: One of the impediments to educational policy implementation is lack of quality learning resource to support classroom instruction and lack of time to study Guides therefore; effective implementation of educational policy is dependent on the presence of adequate resources and support. In Nigeria, teaching-learning resources. Textbooks, students guides, libraries, equipment and other facilities are either lacking in our schools or are in very short supply or inadequate :he astronomical rise in school enrolment compounds the problem as many school children struggle for the scarce resources.

Finally, the study revealed the strategies that will ensure effective implementation of educational policies in public secondary schools in the shape of improved students' academic performance, increased teachers' productivity, shunning examination malpractice, availability of infrastructures, increased students' population, improved school tone and reduced teachers' attrition. Singly and collectively these variables represent the strategies of effective implementation of educational policies in public secondary schools in Anambra State, Nigeria. This rhythms with the contention of Adewale (2014), that functional education is a

wholistic educational experience that is focused on the identification of situational problems, gathering of information to make decisions in a world of challenges and realities of life, enhancing users and end-user to acquire knowledge, skills and attitudes to showcase new concepts as a vehicle of globalizing such countries for meaningful co-existence, sustainability and developments. In essence, effective implementation of educational policies will be capable of producing Nigerians who can utilize raw materials., operate machines and tools needed for local and international market, invent new designs, discover drugs capable of curing diseases hitherto incurable and transform Nigeria from consumption, to manufacturing status.

Conclusion

Based on the results of the findings, it was concluded that the goals of secondary education cannot be fully realized in the absence of effective implementation of educational policies at public secondary schools in Anambra State, Nigeria.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusion, the following recommendations are made:

1. Better funding of schools by the government to ensure adequate provision of infrastructures, learning facilities and recruitment of competent teachers.
2. Establishment of a special department for procurement of accurate data for educational planning by the ministry of Education.
3. The government should provide teachers welfare scheme so as to motivate them to achieve a greater productivity.
4. Compulsory dormitory system to check and manage students' truancy by the school authority.
5. Increased emphasis on moral and religious education to help combat social ills like cultism, examination malpractices, sexual promiscuity and stealing by school principals and teachers.

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