

INADEQUATE SCHOOL FINANCING, POLITICAL WILL AND PARENTAL ACTIVITIES AS
PERCEIVED FACTORS MILITATING AGAINST THE ADEQUATE ADMINISTRATIVE PERFORMANCE
OF SECONDARY SCHOOL MANAGERS IN RIVERS STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

The study was to examine the impact of school finance, political will and parental activities as perceived factors militating against adequate administrative performance of secondary school managers in Rivers State, Nigeria. The study used descriptive survey design. The population for the study was 2067 which includes (Principals 67 and the teachers 2000), making the total respondents. Ten (10%) percent of the principal 7 and that of the teachers 200 making a total of 207 comprised the sample. Self-structured four-Likert scale questionnaire of impact of school finance, political will and parental activities as perceived predictors militating against adequate administrative performance of secondary schools managers was used for data collection (ISFPPAPPMAAPSSM). The data collected was analysed using mean and standard deviation. The findings revealed among others that finances to schools are not adequate, political will is always overriding the administrative and school interest and that parental interest in schools has brought some tremendous improvement. The study concluded that political interest should resented, especially on finance and recruitment of teachers and school heads. Also, that parents put more effort in the management of their children education.

Key words: *School finance, political will, parental activities, perceived factors, militating.*

INTRODUCTION

The school as an organization is the citadel of knowledge, and so requires adequate administration and other viable factors to succeed in achieving its set goals and objectives. Such factors either present or absent can mal or enhance the administration and management of the school organization. In line with this, Akpakwu (2014) posits that the goals of organization is a process that involves planning, management, controlling, coordinating, leading and evaluating the human and material resources towards the achievement of set goals and objectives of the organization. Secondary education therefore prepares individual and the nation at large for development. The National Policy on Education FRN, (2014) states that the secondary school education prepares one either for self-employment, white collar job or entry into tertiary institutions. The realization of these educational goals in secondary education is dependent on government political will and intervention, financial allocation to school and parental activities. More so, Achieving educational objectives, overseeing the control mechanisms, managing the production processes, securing finances, and even accrediting the system must be interconnected with the management of the school, political will and considerations of the political class.

Administration can be described as a process by which organizational resources are integrated, coordinated or utilized to efficiently and effectively achieve the set objectives. This is very essential in the management of secondary education in Nigeria and globally if secondary education is to achieve the set goals. If secondary education is really taken as the seat of knowledge and a place where manpower is produced for creation of employment, it is a well constituted administration that will make it work. If secondary education is well planned, human

and material resources available and well managed, secondary education will then have every potential to provide an enabling environment where large number of young people can gain the skills and knowledge needed to better participate (economically, socially and politically) in a peaceful democratic society as well as develop the necessary knowledge to avoid engaging in such social vices (Amadioha, 2018).

In Nigeria today, there are so many non-state actors leading to the presence of banditry, kidnapping, Boko haram, human trafficking, and terrorism. Each of these non-state actors is mainly constituted of teenagers who should have been in school but outside causing mehelm on the society they are meant to develop. This has made the management and administration of secondary education nearly impossible. These activities also affected both internal and external examinations. This could also be one of the reasons why many Nigerian school age children either drop out of school or do not have access to education. Sanubi and Akpotu, (2015) on this note, reported that over 13 million children of secondary school going age in Nigeria are out of school.

Poor Funding of Education

Funding of any educational organization is very important and necessary. This is why Babalola (2011) posits that with procuring, expending, accounting and maintaining the financial resources of an educational institution efficiently and effectively could lead to the achievement of educational objectives. It is the Government that provides fund for the management of Public Secondary Schools in Nigeria. These funds are controlled by those in power or political leaders who in most cases influence the allocation and disbursement of such fund. From the budgetary allocation, a certain vote is for the principal for the administration of secondary school. According to Nwabueze, et al, (2016) it is state sadly that the politicians divert this funds meant for the schools. The money is not always used for what it was allocated for but channeled towards political interest. In Nigeria however, education has been the most neglected in terms of financial budgetary and support from the government. Due to receiving less financial support, the sector has remained the most under paid. This fact has rendered the education sector as the most unattractive profession. Poor funding of schools has also led to, low stakeholders participation, reduction in school income, lack of skilled and experience personnel, inadequate training, absence of budget allocation criteria, insufficient structured guidelines and procedures, budgetary constraints, weak control systems, and limited involvement of relevant agencies. These leading to low quality of education students receive in many schools and it is now becoming worrisome to stakeholders in education. Funds therefore are very crucial to the provision of facilities and quality education. This is because the secondary school managers seem to be helpless in managing the schools due to poor provision both human and material resources of secondary education in Nigeria.

Politics and School Administration

This is the activities associated with the governance of a country or area, especially the debate for power between two or more political parties. It involves the activities aimed at improving someone's status or increasing power within an organization. Politics is a multifaceted and dynamic field encompassing the activities, processes, and structures through which societies make collective decisions, allocate resources, and exercise power. It involves the interactions among individuals, groups, and institutions within a given political system. Politics plays a significant role in the management of secondary education since different sectors participate in policy making and implementation. Politics interference in the policy making processes and its involvement in the administration of secondary schools is very disturbing and affects the effective and efficient management of these schools by the administrators of these institutions who have become mere administrative puppets or stooges in the hands of political powers. The main reason for so much political interference is that in many cases the appointment of secondary school teachers and their heads is made on political basis (Olujowon & Pemural, 2014). In this case, professionalism and merit are not considered. To this end, politically appointed managers cannot work on their own, but the dictates of their sponsors.

As posited by Baker and Green (2016) the politics of education encompasses the power dynamics and struggles that occur at various levels, from local school boards to national ministries, impacting issues such as curriculum development, resource allocation, and the overall structure of educational institutions. The politics of education is characterized by the negotiation of competing interests and values, as different actors seek to shape the educational agenda to align with their perspectives and goals. Francisca and Valentine (2019) emphasize that political ideologies play a significant role in framing educational debates and shaping policies. Whether influenced by conservative or liberal values, the politics of education reflects the broader societal values and political landscape, influencing decisions related to issues like school funding, standardized testing, and the role of private versus public education. Positive and negative political influences play a pivotal role in shaping the landscape of education. On the positive side, political commitment to education can lead to increased funding, policy support, and strategic initiatives that enhance the overall quality of education. For instance, research by Olayinka (2018) suggests that effective education policies, driven by positive political will, can contribute to improved student outcomes and economic growth. Positive political engagement can also result in the development of inclusive educational policies, addressing issues of access and equity, and promoting innovative teaching methods.

Parental Activities and School Management

The importance of the involvement of parents in the management of their children's education cannot be overemphasized. This is because the benefits of their involvement is quite high, outside the improvement in the educational attainment of their children. Avvisati et al. (2013) posited that there has been a "significant reduction of reported truancy and mis-behaviour, as well as improved motivation for schoolwork" as most parents are becoming involved in the education of their children. In line with this, McDowall & Schaughency (2017) stated that parental involvement in education has been found to lead to lower students' dropout rates and better emotional development. Okeke (2014) in his view stated that there are so many activities that show effective parental involvement in their children's schooling. He went further to state that parental involvement can be understood to describe "a situation in which parents are perceived as active partners in the process of educating their children. It is also stated that there is growing empirical evidence to show that supportive behaviour from parents or guardians correlates with student achievement (Scharton, 2019).

Besides the clarity provided in the paragraph above, there are other attempts at defining parental involvement in school. As indicated by Green et al. (2007), traditional definitions of parental involvement entail school-related activities such home-based activities (when parents help children at home) and school-based activities (when parents communicate with the school and help children with school-based activities). Parental involvement in education can also be conceptualized through Epstein's model of parental involvement. The model is comprised of six major levels. Each level includes activities which clarify how parents are involved in their children's education, and school life in general. In the paragraphs that follow, each of the levels is unpacked to illustrate parental involvement in the education of their children. • The first level focuses on parenting; parents try everything they can to satisfy their children's basic needs, supervise and discipline them when necessary, and establish home conditions that support children as learners, so that they can perform well at school. • The second level entails communicating; parents communicate with teachers and schools about school activities and children's progress. This level is crucial as it enables the early identification of learning barriers so that parents can be involved in addressing them. • Volunteering is the third level, and it refers to parents who assist teachers, learners, administrators, and other parents in classrooms or other areas of the school, while others may participate as supporters of school events. • The fourth level is about learning at home; parents work with guidance from schools to become involved in children's home learning, such as helping children with homework or curriculum-related activities. Frequent communication with the school is necessary, so that parents may be aware of how and in what areas of schoolwork to assist the child. • The fifth level deals with decision making and includes parental involvement in school decisions through participation in School Governing Bodies, SGB subcommittees, or school

-based parent groups. This role also affords parents the opportunity to participate in school governance and to promote the best interests of the school. • The sixth level encapsulates collaborating with the community and involves parents working with social structures with an interest in education and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) to support the school and collaborate with educators to achieve school goals.

Statement of the Problem

The management of children education is so important that it cannot be left in the hands of the school management and teachers alone. The parents must be involved. This is because the first teacher the child encountered with were his or her parents. The purpose of these combined management effort is to turn out children who would be useful to themselves and the society at large. But this effort is always meeting stumbling blocks due to the involvement of the parents themselves who may not agree in some cases about their children's behaviour, the political elites and their wills, inadequate budgetary plans, inadequate financing and in most cases inadequate human and material resources. That was why the researcher decided to examine the impact of School Finance, Political Will and Parental Activities as Perceived factors militating against adequate Administrative Performance of Secondary School Managers in in Rivers State, Nigeria.

Objectives of the Study

The main objectives of the this study was to examine the impact of school finance, political will and parental activities as perceived factors militating against adequate administrative performance of secondary school managers in in Rivers State, Nigeria. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. Examine the impact school finance as a perceived factor militating against adequate administrative performance of secondary school managers in Rivers State, Nigeria;
2. Examine the impact of political will as a perceived factor militating against adequate administrative performance of secondary school managers in Rivers State, Nigeria; and
3. Examine the impact of parental activities as a perceived factor militating against adequate administrative performance of secondary school managers in Rivers State, Nigeria.

Research Questions

Based on the objectives of this study, the following research questions were formulated to elicit information from the respondents:

1. What impact has the school finance created on adequate administrative performance of secondary school managers in Rivers State, Nigeria?
2. What are the perceived impact of political will on adequate administrative performance of secondary school managers in Rivers State, Nigeria?
3. What are the perceived impact of parental activities on adequate administrative performance of secondary school managers in Rivers State, Nigeria?

METHODOLOGY

The study was a descriptive research survey. All the principals of the sixty seven senior secondary schools and teachers made up the population (Principals=67 and the teachers=2000), making a total of 2067 respondents. According to Nworgu, 2013, 10% each of the population of the principals and teachers were selected as the sample. The principal was 7 and the teachers was 200, totaling 207 respondents as the sample for the study. Four Likert-scale self-structured questionnaire was used to collect the data. The questionnaire was validated by some experts in the Department of Educational Administration and Planning and a reliability index of 0.76 was realized. Mean and Standard deviation were used to analyze the data. The criterion mean was 2.50 on a four-point response scale. Findings were made. The study was concluded and recommendations were also made.

Data Analysis

Research Question 1: What impact has the school finance created on adequate administrative performance of secondary school managers in Rivers State, Nigeria?

Table 1: Responses of the respondents on whether school finance created adequate administrative performance of secondary school managers in Rivers State, Nigeria.

N= 207

S/N	Statement	SA	A	D	SD	X	STD	Decision
1.	Finances are always provided in the school for management to use	20	23	48	105	4.80	0.96	Disagreed
2.	Finances provided are commensurate to the school budgets	15	21	45	112	4.66	0.93	Disagreed
3.	The money provided are always enough to pay the teachers' salaries	35	33	45	81	4.69	0.94	Disagreed
4.	Teachers are well remunerated with the finances of the school	28	22	42	102	4.69	0.94	Disagreed
5.	The school manager uses the money provided to the school judiciously	42	33	47	71	4.52	0.90	Disagreed
Cumulative Mean						4.70		

Criterion Mean = 2.50

Mean and standard deviation responses of the respondents on whether school finances create adequate impact on administrative performance of secondary school managers in Rivers State, Nigeria. From the table it was discovered that schools are provided with finances but not adequate enough to cater for the administrative needs. This is seen in all the items in the table. It was also observed that even the much that is been provided are not judiciously used by the managers themselves. In line with this, Nwabueze, et al, (2016) posits that it is sad to not that the politicians divert this funds meant for the schools. The money is not always used for what it was allocated for but channeled towards political interest.

Research Question 2: What are the perceived impact of political will on adequate administrative performance of secondary school managers in Rivers State, Nigeria?

Table 2: Shows the mean and standard deviation of responses of the respondents on the impact of political will on adequate administrative performance of secondary school managers in Rivers State, Nigeria.

N = 207

S/N	Statement	SA	A	D	SD	X	STD	Decision
1.	Politics play a significant role in secondary school management	85	55	38	21	4.81	0.96	Agreed
2.	Appointment of principals and teachers are mostly based on political interest	101	64	25	10	4.83	0.97	Agreed
3.	There are much political interference on decision and its making process by the politicians	85	55	45	15	4.83	0.97	Agreed
4.	Politics create so much conflicting interest in secondary school management and Administrations	112	61	21	10	4.93	0.99	Agreed
5.	Political interest brings increased funding, policy support and strategic initiative.	115	45	24	15	4.81	0.96	Agreed
Cumulative Mean						4.84		

Criterion Mean = 2.50

Table 2 shows the mean and standard deviation of responses of the respondent on the impact of Political Will on adequate administrative performance of secondary school managers in Rivers

State, Nigeria. Based on the responses, it was observed that politics play both positive and negative role on administrative performance of school managers. These includes political importance to school, appointment of school principal and teachers, leading to square pegs on a round hole, political interference on school decision making process, conflict interest in school matters and increased funding of schools which are used to settle political boys and girls. These has left most of the school in shackle and dilapidated shape, especially in the rural areas of the state. In line with this, Olujowon & Pemural (2014) stated that the main reason for so much political interference is that in many cases the appointment of secondary school teachers and their heads is made on political basis. In this case, professionalism and merit are not considered. To this end, politically appointed managers cannot work on their own, but at the dictates of their sponsors.

Research Question 3: What are the perceived impact of parental activities on adequate administrative performance of secondary school managers in Rivers State, Nigeria?

Table 3: Mean and Standard of Responses of the respondents on impact of parental activities on adequate administrative performance of secondary school managers in Rivers State, Nigeria.

N=207

S/N	Statement	SA	A	D	SD	X	STD	Decision
1.	Parental involvement in the school management has reduced the rate of truancy, mis-behaviour in school	131	45	21	5	4.88	0.98	Agreed
2.	Parental involvement has led to the reduction in the rate of school dropout	138	45	15	5	4.90	0.98	Agreed
3.	Parental involvement has increased the level of passes in both internal and external examinations	137	49	10	9	4.95	0.99	Agreed
4.	Parental involvement in school management has brought some level of sanity on the part of the students' and teachers' discipline	128	48	15	10	4.86	0.97	Agreed
5.	Parental involvement in school management has brought collaboration between the school and the community	121	51	13	12	4.76	0.95	Agreed
Cumulative Mean						4.87		

Criterion Mean = 2.50

Table 3 discusses the mean and standard deviation of the responses of the respondents on impact of parental activities on adequate administrative performance of secondary school managers in Rivers State, Nigeria. From the table, all the items were positively responded to, affirming that parents' involvement in secondary school administration has brought some level of the school improvement in different forms and ways. In line with the affirmation, Avvisati et al. (2013) posited that there has been a "significant reduction of reported truancy and mis-behaviour, as well as improved motivation for schoolwork" as most parents are becoming involved in the education of their children. Also, McDowall & Schaughency (2017) stated that parental involvement in education has been found to lead to lower students' dropout rates and better emotional development.

Discussion of Findings

The objective of this study was to examine the impact of school finance, political will and parental activities as perceived factors militating against adequate administrative performance of secondary school managers in Rivers State, Nigeria. From the table 1 above, it was discovered that schools are provided with finances but not sufficient and adequate enough to carter for the schools' administrative needs. This is seen on the responses of the respondents in all the items in the table. It was also observed that even the much that is been provided are not judiciously used by the managers themselves. In line with this, Nwabueze, et al, (2016) posited that it is sad to note

that the politicians divert this funds meant for the schools. The money is not always used for what it was allocated for but channeled towards political interest.

The mean and standard deviation analysis of table two shows the responses of the respondent on the impact of political will on adequate administrative performance of secondary school managers in Rivers State, Nigeria. Based on the responses, it was observed that politics play both positive and negative role on administrative performance of school managers. These includes appointment of school principals and teachers, leading to square pegs on a round hole, political interference on school decision making process, conflict interest in school matters and increased funding of schools which are used to settle political boys and girls. These has left most of the school in shackle and dilapidated shape, especially in the rural areas of the state. In line with this, Olujowon & Pemural (2014) stated that the main reason for so much political interference is that in many cases the appointment of secondary school teachers and their heads is made on political basis. In this case, professionalism and merit are not considered. To this end, politically appointed managers cannot work on their own, but at the dictates of their sponsors.

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CONCLUSION

The study established that schools are provided with finances but not as sufficient and adequate enough to carter for the schools' administrative needs. It was also established that even the much finance that is been provided are not judiciously used by the managers themselves. The study also established that politics play both positive and negative role on administrative performance of school managers. These includes appointment of school principals and teachers, leading to square pegs on a round hole, political interference on school decision making process, conflict interest in school matters and increased funding of schools which are used to settle political boys and girls. The study went further to establish that the participation of parents in the school administration has brought some level of the school improvement in different forms and ways, which include lowering the rate students dropout, reduction on students truancy and increase in passes on both internal and external examinations.

RECOMMENDATIONS

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

1. More funds should be released to secondary schools by the government of the day to enable adequate administrative processes of the school managers;
2. The fund released should be used adequately and judiciously for the purpose for which it was released;
3. The politicians should reduce the level of interest in the school administration;
4. The school managers should be involved in the recruitment of teachers and heads of schools, to avoid recruiting those teachers that are not relevant to the system eventually, putting a square peg in a round hole
5. There should be more active participation and involvement of the parents in school administration, either through PTA, SBMC and other relevant stakeholders in education.

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