



POLITICS AND PRINCIPALS' ADMINISTRATION IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN NASARAWA STATE, NIGERIA FOR BETTER PRACTICES AND GOAL ACHIEVEMENT

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Abstract

The study examined Politics and Principals' Administration in Public Secondary Schools in Nasarawa State, Nigeria for better practices and goal achievement. Two (2) research questions with corresponding objectives and two (2) null hypotheses were generated to guide the study. The study was guided by descriptive survey research. The population comprised 6529 principals and teachers. The sample for the study was 653 principals and teachers using simple random sampling technique. Self designed structured questionnaire was used for data collection. Descriptive Statistics of Mean and Standard Deviation was used to answer the research questions. The null hypotheses were tested using chi-square at 0.05 level of significance. One of the findings among others revealed that politics has a significance influence on the provision of adequate funds in Public Secondary School in Nasarawa State, Nigeria and it was recommended among others that efforts should be made by school principals in conjunction with the Stakeholders such as traditional and community leaders to ensure that politicians within the localities where secondary schools are sited are lobbied and so that they can positively influence decisions of the state government with regards to school funding.

Keywords: *Politics, Principal, Administration, Fund and Infrastructural Facilities.*

Introduction

Education starts with politics which is the power play for the governance of human societies, hence educational systems tend to reflect the politics of nations they are designed to serve in the process of governance, political actors (governments) release policies, in a concrete guidelines which would best achieve their goals (Ezekiel-hart, 2011). Politics encompasses the activities involved in getting and using power in public life and being able to influence decisions that affect a country or a society. It includes matters concerned with getting or using the power within a particular group or organization (NOUN, 2015).

Changes in leadership have brought about instability in the education sector, which further aggravates the inconsistencies in policies on education. Perhaps, this is why (Olaniyonu, 2008) commented that “we are not looking forward in our planning” and therefore “we are unable to have a strong grip on the actual activities that will bring about a proper focus on educational development in Nigeria” Olusola(2011) cited in Oduwaiye (2012). A careful examination of this thrust of military and civilian government since independence reveals a lot as regards the development or otherwise of educational programmes in Nigeria. The various policies were marred with limited or lack of strong political will to develop the education sector which have manifested in poor funding, resulting in overt poverty of education infrastructure; uncoordinated educational policy implementation owing to political differences; political instability, which had resulted in abandonment of educational programmes and policies by successive governments; focus of political leaders on consolidating their dominance (and power elongation) by diverting resources to defence (during military rule) and electioneering campaign (during civilian regime) at the expense of education programmes and politicization of education data by political leaders at all levels of government (Olusola, 2011) cited in (Barnett, 2015).

From studies and survey of available literature, the politicization of education is a major problem of educational development in Nigeria today especially Nasarawa State. In an attempt to catch up with their counter-parts, many state in Nigeria, particularly the Nasarawa State indulge in the opening and running of many educational institutions, even when they least prepared to do so. This was particularly shown the activities of the various state governments during

and after the second republic clearly showed that education is still being politicized in Nigeria. (Oduwaiye, Sofololuwe, & Kayode 2012).

Politics may lead to lack of continuity in education policies and projects, including changes in education sector personnel, as each new regime chooses its own set of ministers, commissioners, advisers, technocrats and administrators, etc. Each new regime would want to make its own name by refusing to continue where its predecessor stopped. They always wanted to start afresh, believing in their bloated ego as “messiahs” to the “ailing” system. Long-term, set goals are hardly considered, rather they want to be seen now and be hailed here and there.

Politics is the practice and theory of influencing other people. Politics involves the making of a common decision for a group of people that is a uniform decision applying in the same way to all members of the group. It also involves the use of power by one person to affect the behavior of another person. More narrowly, it refers to achieving and exercising positions of governance organized control over a human community, particularly a state. Furthermore, politics is the study or practice of the distribution of power and resources within a given community (a usually hierarchically organized population) as well as the interrelationship(s) between communities (Wikipedia, 2015).

A variety of methods are employed in politics, which include promoting or forcing one's own political views among people, negotiation with other political subjects, making laws, and exercising force, including warfare against adversaries. Politics is exercised on a wide range of social levels, from clans and tribes of traditional societies, through modern local governments, companies and institutions up to sovereign states, to the international level. (David, 2011).

Lasswell (2014) cited in Langona & Rochs (2015) suggests that politics is essentially the struggle for positions of power and influence by which those who succeed in monopolizing such positions in society are able to make decisions that affect the lives of every citizen within the country. Political leadership operates within the political system. It should equally be noted that educational programmes are babies of educational policies. Thus, it is imperative to examine the interface between the political system and education policy formulation. Politics and Education: an interface, a bi-directional relationship exists between education and politics (Fabunmi, 2005). Education is provided through a

political system. Indeed, “no educational system can survive without the financial support and protection of the government” (Nwankwo, 2002). Because of the huge government financial involvement in education and other unavoidable responsibilities it owes both the immediate societies and the nation at large, it determines direction of the education system by formulating and interpreting educational law and policies and also establishing standards for measurement of educational quality. In Nigeria, for example, educational development has been guided by politics in the areas of social demand for education, schools take-over, the boarding or day schools, the establishment of special (unity) schools, and the location of new schools. Indeed, what education transmits as well as the process and manner of transmission is politically determined. There is always political or social purposes behind any educational policy which is contingent upon the ideology of the government or part in power Olusola (2011) cited in (Barnett, 2015).

School Administration is a social process, concerned with identifying, maintaining, stimulating, controlling and unifying, formally and informally organized human and material energies within an interpreted system. A school administrator fulfils such demands by developing specific plans and executing policies within a unified system related to the administrative task. It is through administration that the energies of people are brought together (NOUN, 2014). School administration involves managing, administering the curriculum and teaching, pastoral care, discipline, assessment evaluation and examinations, resource allocation, costing and forward planning, staff appraisal relationship with the community, use of the practical skills necessary for surviving the policies of organization such as decision-making, negotiation, bargaining, communication, conflict handling, running meetings and so on (Ojo, 2000). All these tasks can be reduced to the following: planning, organizing, directing, supervising, and evaluating the school system. These activities are those of the school principal who must ensure they are all directed towards efficient and effective teaching and learning in the school so as to be able to produce quality output. School administration is specifically concerned with students, teachers, and rules, regulations and policies that govern the school system (Timilehin, 2010) cited in (Ade, 2016).

By implication, the principal of a school is a planner, director, controller, coordinator, organizer, adviser and a problem-solver (Leithwood, 2016). The

principal is the person on whose shoulders rest the entire administration, success or failure of the school. The principal identifies and set goals and objectives of the school, which of course, must be in line with the national objectives, analyses tasks and share responsibility of the staff according to specialization. Funding is one of the pillar to effective management of secondary education in the country. According to Aghenta (2004), the success of any secondary school depends upon the resources available to it. Money is very important in this respect because by it, all other vital elements in the school can be obtained, such as school building, purchase of equipment, payment of teachers' salaries and allowances and running expenses.

Meanwhile, Jaiyeoba and Atanda (2003) explained that the rapid expansion of students' enrolment in Nigeria since the attainment of independence followed by the enrolment explosion in recent years have made education a thorny responsibility for government to shoulder. Hence inadequate funding has resulted in poor teaching and dilapidated buildings (Lee, 2000) cited in (Leithwood, 2016). There is no doubt whatsoever, that the inadequate funding of the secondary school system in the country will hinder the accomplishment of some of the aims and objectives of this level of education as contained in the National Policy on Education for better practices and goal achievement.

Infrastructural facilities are the material resources that facilitate effective teaching and learning in schools. Jaiyeoba and Atanda (2005) posited that educational facilities are those things which enable a skilful teacher to achieve a level of instructional effectiveness that far exceeds what is possible when they are not provided these infrastructural facilities are technical workshop, laboratories library etc.

The state of infrastructural decay in many secondary schools in Nigeria particular Nasarawa State is a manifestation of political interest and priority fund of the system. Ade (2016) revealed that in most of the nation's secondary schools; teaching and learning takes place under a most uncondusive environment, lacking the basic materials and thus hindered the fulfillment of educational objectives for best practices and good achievement.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study;

1. What is the influence of politics on provision of adequate funds in Public Secondary Schools in Nasarawa State, Nigeria for better practices and goal achievement?
2. What is the influence of politics on provision of infrastructural facilities in Public Secondary Schools in Nasarawa State, Nigeria for better practices and goal achievement?

Objectives of the study

The main objective of the study was to examine politics and principals' administration of Public Secondary Schools in Nasarawa State, Nigeria for better practices and goal achievement. Specifically, the study seeks to examine:

- i. The influence of politics on provision of adequate funds for Public Secondary Schools in Nasarawa State, Nigeria for better practices and goal achievement.
- ii. The influence of politics on provision of infrastructural facilities in Public Secondary Schools in Nasarawa State, Nigeria for better practices and goal achievement.

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance

HO₁: There is no significant influence of politics on provision of adequate fund in Public Secondary Schools in Nasarawa State, Nigeria for better practices and goal achievement.

HO₂: There is no significant influence of politics on provision of infrastructural facilities in Public Secondary Schools in Nasarawa State, Nigeria for better practices and goal achievement.

Methodology

The study adopted descriptive survey design. The population of the study comprises 6529 principals and teachers in Public Secondary Schools in Nasarawa State, Nigeria. The sample for the study was made up of 653 (that is, 10%) principals and teachers that was sampled from the population mentioned above using simple random technique.

The instrument used for data collection was a self-designed structured questionnaire titled: “Questionnaire on Politics, and Principals’ Administration” (QOPAPA). The Questionnaire was two (2) clusters with ten (10) items that expresses statement on some of the issues on the influence of politics on principals’ administration aimed at finding out how politics influences principals’ administration in Public Secondary Schools Nasarawa State, Nigeria for best practices and goal achievement. The Questionnaire has only one section. Modified liker rating scale with response mode of Strongly Agree (SA) =4 Agree (A)=3, Disagree (D) =2 and Strongly Disagree (SD)=1. An expert from Department of Educational Management in Faculty of Education, Nasarawa State University, Keffi validated the instrument by reviewing, scrutiny, and checking the level of comprehensiveness, appropriateness and relevance of each of the items to the objectives in order to determine the logical validity index of the instrument. The instrument yielded logical validity index of 0.80 using cronbach alpha formular which shows that the items are reliable. His observations and recommendation were taken into consideration in the modification and development of final valid instrument. The data collected for the study was collated and descriptive statistics (Mean and Standard Deviation) was used to answer the research questions. A mean cut-off point of 2.5 was regarded as the acceptance mean while any response with a mean score of over 2.5 was considered as being above and the mean less 2.5 was considered as being below. The null hypotheses 1 and 2 were tested using chi-square at 0.05 level of significance. This statistics tool was considered suitable because the instrument elicited non-parametric data with the help of the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS), chi-square was justifiably used in describing the degree of association between the variables.

Results

Research Questions

The data collected was analyzed and presented on tables. Mean and standard was used in answering research questions while chi-square was used for testing the hypotheses at 0.05level of significance level. For hypotheses whose r-calculated values are higher than the r-tables wasrejected while those less than r-tables wasaccepted.

Research Question 1: What is the influence of politics on provision of adequate funds in Public Secondary Schools in Nasarawa State, Nigeria for better practices and goal achievement?

Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation Scores Showing Respondents views on the influence of Politics on Provision of Adequate Funds in Public Secondary Schools in Nasarawa State, Nigeria for better practices and goal achievement.

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	StdDev	Remarks
1	Playing of politics in the provision of adequate funds lead to inequitable distribution in schools.	200	202	150	101	2.77	0.69	Agree
2	Linking politics in the provision of adequate funds by the government will improve productivity in some schools while some will not	205	222	170	56	2.88	0.73	Agree
3	Administrators and other staff will become ineffective in the discharge of their duties when politics is used in the provision of funds	202	155	160	136	2.65	0.63	Agree
4	Some schools my have sufficient teaching and learning facilities while some will	200	202	150	101	2.77	0.69	Agree

	not have if politics is involved in the provision of funds by the government							
5	When politics is involved in the provision of funds in the school, it will make both teaching and non-teaching staff incompetent	202	155	160	136	2.65	0.63	Agree
	Average Mean					2.74	0.67	Agree

Table 1 shows the views of respondents on influence of politics on provision of adequate funds in Public Secondary Schools in Nasarawa State, Nigeria for better practices and goal achievement. Responses from the questionnaire which were scored using mean and standard deviation showed that items 1 to 5 yielded mean values of 2.77, 2.88, 2.65, 2.77, and 2.65 while standard deviation values of 0.69, 0.73, 0.63, 0.69 and 0.0.63 were obtained respectively. The average mean obtained was 2.74. This value is far above the scale mean value of 2.50 which is the acceptable value for a 4-point likert scaled instrument. Hence, politics has high influence on the provision of adequate funds in Public Secondary Schools in Nasarawa State, Nigeria for better practices and goal achievement.

Research Question 2: What is the influence of politics on provision of infrastructural facilities in Public Secondary Schools in Nasarawa State, Nigeria for better practices and goal achievement?

Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation Scores Showing Respondents views on the influence of Politics on Provision of Infrastructural Facilities in Public Secondary Schools in Nasarawa State, Nigeria for Better Practices and Goal Achievement

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	StdDev	Remarks
6	Some schools will definitely have sufficient teaching and learning facilities like chairs, desk and chalkboard while some will not when politics is involved in the provision of such materials	244	203	160	226	3.26	1.01	Agree
7	Use of politics in the provision of infrastructural facilities to schools causes disagreement and clash among the hosting school communities	204	220	180	226	3.16	0.94	Agree
8	When politics is played in the provision of infrastructural facilities lead to inequitable distribution of classroom to schools	202	155	160	136	2.65	0.63	Agree
9	Where politics becomes the other of the day and	244	203	160	226	3.26	1.01	Agree

	used in the provision of infrastructural facilities to schools leads to inconclusiveness and decay of some school projects							
10	Relating politics to the provision of infrastructural by the government will improve teaching and learning outcomes in the side of the students in some schools while some will be deprived of.	215	165	200	73	2.80	0.61	Agree
	Average Mean					2.99	0.84	Agree

Table 2 shows the views of respondents on influence of politics on provision of infrastructural facilities in Public Secondary Schools in Nasarawa State, Nigeria for better practices and goal achievement. Responses from the questionnaire which were scored using mean and standard deviation showed that Items 6 to 10 yielded mean values of 3.26, 2.16, 2.65, 3.26, and 2.80 while standard deviation values of 1.01, 0.94, 0.63, 0.61, 0.63, 1.01 and 0.61 were obtained respectively. The average mean obtained was 2.99. This value is far above the scale mean value of 2.50 which is the acceptable value for a 4-point likert scaled instrument. Hence, politics has high influence on provision of infrastructural facilities in Public Secondary Schools in Nasarawa State, Nigeria for better practices and goal achievement.

Test of Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant influence of politics on provision of adequate funds in Public Secondary Schools in Nasarawa State, Nigeria for better practices and goal achievement.

Hypothesis 1 was analyzed using Pearson’s product moment statistics at 0.05 level of significance. Results are shown in table 4 below:

Table 3: Chi-square Statistics Showing Significant Influence of Politics on Provision of Adequate Funds in Public Secondary Schools in Nasarawa State, Nigeria for Better Practices and Goal Achievement.

S/N	Variables	N	\bar{x}	Df	r-cal	r-tab	Level of significance	of Decision
1	Politics	653	2.74	12	0.74	0.56	0.05	Significant
2	Provision of Adequate Funds	653	2.72					

**Significant at $\alpha = 0.05$

Table 3 indicates the Pearson’s product moment Statistics for ascertaining the influence of politics on provision of adequate funds in Public Secondary Schools in Nasarawa State, Nigeria for better practices and goal achievement. The results show that at the calculated value r for Chi-square, which was given as 0.74 the table value of r was given as 0.56. It is observed that the r-calculated value is higher than the r-table value at 0.05 level of significance. Since the r-calculated is higher than the r-table value at 0.05, hypothesis 1 is therefore rejected implying politics has a significant influence on provision of adequate funds in Public Secondary Schools in Nasarawa State, Nigeria for better practices and goal achievement.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant influence of politics on provision of infrastructural facilities in Public Secondary Schools in Nasarawa State, Nigeria for better practices and goal achievement.

Hypothesis 1 was analyzed using Chi-square statistics at 0.05 level of significance. Results are shown in table 4 below:

Table 4: Chi-square statistics showing significant influence of Politics on provision of Infrastructural Facilities in Public Secondary Schools in Nasarawa State, Nigeria for Better Practices and Goal Achievement.

S/N	Variables	N	\bar{x}	Df	r-cal r-tab	Level of significance	of Decision
1	Politics	653	2.99	12 0.42	0.65	0.05	Significant
2	Provision of Infrastructural Facilities	653	2.97				

**Significant at $\alpha = 0.05$

Table 4 indicates the Chi-square Statistics for ascertaining the influence of politics on provision of infrastructural facilities in Public Secondary Schools in Nasarawa State, Nigeria for better practices and goal achievement. The results show that at the calculated value r for Chi-square, which was given as 0.65 the table value of r was given as 0.42. It is observed that the r-calculated value is higher than the r-table value at 0.05 level of significance. Since the r-calculated was higher than the r-table value at 0.05, hypothesis 2 was therefore rejected implying politics has a significant influence on the provision of infrastructural facilities in Public Secondary Schools in Nasarawa State, Nigeria for better practices and goal achievement.

Summary of findings

This study focused on the politics and principals' administration in public of senior secondary school students in Nasarawa State, Nigeria. Findings on hypothesis 1 indicated that politics has a significant influence on the provision of adequate funds in Public Secondary Schools in Nasarawa State, Nigeria for

better practices and goal achievement. Findings on hypothesis 2 showed that politics has a significant influence on the provision of infrastructural facilities in Public Secondary Schools in Nasarawa State, Nigeria for better practices and goal achievement.

Discussion

Findings on hypothesis 1 indicated that politics has a significant influence the on provision of adequate funds in Public Secondary Schools in Nasarawa State, Nigeria for better practices and goal achievement. In other words, the provision of adequate funds in Public Secondary Schools in Nasarawa State, Nigeria for better practices and goal achievement is influenced by political activities. This findings is in agreement with those of Oduwaiye, Sofoluwe and Kayode (2012) which showed that politics influenced the release and disbursement of funds for development and attainment of educational objectives in Nigerian schools. Nwankwo (2002) further noted that the survival of the educational system depended the financial support and protection of the government.

Findings on hypothesis 2 showed that politics has a significant influence on the provision of infrastructural facilities in Public Secondary Schools in Nasarawa State, Nigeria for better practices and goal achievement. In other words, the provision of infrastructural facilities in Public Secondary Schools in Nasarawa State, Nigeria for better practices and goal achievement is influenced by political activities. This findings is in agreement with those of Lee (2000), which noted that the state of school infrastructural facilities such buildings is significantly influenced by the efforts of the political class in government. This explains why Jaiyeoba and Atnda (2005) posited that infrastructural facilities are the materials that facilitate effective teaching and learning in schools.

Conclusions

Based on the findings of this study, the following conclusions were made:

1. There is no significant influence of politics on provision of adequate funds in Public Secondary Schools in Nasarawa State, Nigeria for better practices and goal achievement.
2. There is no significant influence of politics on provision of infrastructural facilities in Public Secondary Schools in Nasarawa State, Nigeria for better practices and goal achievement.

Recommendations

Based on the above findings, the following recommendations were made:

1. Efforts should be made by school principals in conjunction with the Stakeholders such as traditional and community leaders to ensure that politicians within the localities where secondary schools are sited are lobbied and so that they can positively influence decisions of the state government with regards to school funding.
2. School administrators should work in conjunction with influential indigenes in localities where schools are cited by ensuring they mount pressure on the local and state governments to so that development of school facilities will be enhanced in secondary schools within Nasarawa State.

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