



Association of Public Policy on the Management of Secondary Schools in Kwara State,
Nigeria

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Abstract

This study examined the association between public policy and the management of secondary schools in Kwara State. The research design adopted for this study was the descriptive research design of survey type. The population for the study was 523 principals in Kwara State secondary schools, and a purposive sampling technique was used to select 333 principals. The instrument used for this study was a researcher-designed questionnaire. The reliability of the instrument was tested using the test-retest method within an interval of four weeks. The data collected was analyzed using Cronbach's alpha. The analysis of the collected data was done, and a reliability coefficient of 0.84 was obtained. Pearson product moment correlation was used to analyze the hypotheses raised for this study at the 0.05 level of significance. The findings of this study revealed that there was a positive significant relationship between public policy and academic planning (R-value 0.140, p-value = 0.017); between public policy and financial management (R-value 0.140, p-value = 0.023); between public policy and record keeping (R-value 0.140, p-value = 0.021); and between public policy and discipline (R-value 0.140, p-value = 0.015). This study recommended, among others, that school administrators and managers should always be guided by the policy and laid-down rules in decision-making and ensuring effective implementation of policies guiding school management.

Keywords: Academic Planning, Financial Management, Record Keeping, Discipline, Education, Public Policy.

Introduction

As part of its efforts to reform the education sector, Nigeria has enacted a number of education policies. Hundreds of millions of Naira have been spent to overhaul the education sector, with numerous initiatives yielding significant results. Instead, stagnation and depredation reign supreme, with a contempt for illiteracy and ignorance. Policies are the opinions of eminent scholars who see the future and believe in what they write. When theory is applied to practice, difficulties arise. The Nigerian government's decision to sign the 1990 Jomtiem Declaration, which calls for universal education by the year 2000, as well as become a member of the Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA), demonstrates its commitment to eradicating absolute illiteracy. This means that the continued low level of education after so much investment in external assistance and various education policies

cannot promote long-term development in the education sector. Policy is the most meticulous indicator of how the nation plans to improve or bring about those necessary developmental changes in society through formal and non-formal manpower training and development in order to elevate Nigerians' social, spiritual, and economic well-being.

As the researcher of this study observed, it is extremely concerning that public policies are perfectly formulated but their implementation is inadequate, resulting in such policies failing to meet their intended goals and objectives. In Nigeria, insufficient policy implementation has resulted in a significant gap between articulated and achieved public policy goals. In Nigeria, there are generally large gaps between articulated policy goals and their achievement as a result of insufficient execution in almost every aspect of government. As a result, the following five



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national objectives included in the Second National Development Plan were accepted in developing a public policy on education: (a) a powerful, united, and self-sufficient nation; (b) a large and dynamic economy; (c) a just and equal society; (d) a land of boundless possibilities; and (e) a free and democratic society (Federal Government of Nigeria, 2014). Policies are developed to attain these goals; one example is the 1969 curriculum conference, where people from all areas of life participated in the development of educational policies for the growth of society. Educational policies are established to direct and guide the educational system. Policy cannot exist without educational teaching (Anyanwu, 2021). Public policy is a mode-setting action that showcases the direction and guides the way to the realization of certain goals and objectives desired by the government. Some of these public policies in Nigeria in different sectors include the National Policy on Education, the National Population Policy, the National Housing Policy, and the Poverty Alleviation Policy, among others. Ayeni and Dada in Anyanwu (2021) said that the changes in policy are due to the undertone or performance of the policy. For example, the 6-5-4 system of education was changed to the 6-5-3-4 system.

Policy, according to Duke and Canady (2017), is neither static nor exists in a vacuum. Policies must be compatible, well-coordinated, regularly followed, and changed in response to numerous factors rather than being a one-time activity. To address specific financial procedures conducted by schools, policy must explicitly outline the structure, strategy, and philosophy. In general, policy is a set of rules and principles adopted for the ease of governance within an organization. It is critical for organizations to have policies that can be implemented because they serve as a link between the school administration, teachers, students, parents, and the rule of law (Sami, 2018).

However, public policy has an impact on every part of school administration, including discipline, financial management, and record keeping. School discipline, according to Lukman and Hamadi (2014), is

a vital component of school administration since discipline is a way of life governed by society's laws, the transgressions of which are dubious and penalized. Additionally, policies are crucial because they aid schools in developing best practices for operations, standards of excellence for learning, and security, as well as expectations and accountability.

Also, academic planning is a critical tool in the teaching and learning processes. Academic planning is a set of ideas and activities that allow teachers to develop an educational process with meaning and continuity (Imrie, 2016). As a result, creating a work plan includes components that affect how students are taught and how they learn. The curriculum design in this process results in the realization of cognitive structures, skill acquisition, altered behaviors, and student attitudes. Thus, academic planning is considered a model or pattern that allows teachers to face their practice in an orderly and consistent format (Imrie, 2016). The importance of academic planning is due to the influence and impact it has on students' learning results, besides being the basis and central axis of the educational teaching process (Prieto et al., 2020).

Financial management is a vital key in achieving educational goals and objectives. Sources, allocation, and management of financial resources determine the success of an educational system. Therefore, financial management is an important phase of educational and school management. In an effort to achieve the school's objectives, principals are responsible for the effective management of financial resources that accrue to them from time to time. The availability of funds determines, to a large extent, the level to which budgeting activities and practices can go. The progressive increase in school population and rising costs are expected to be followed by an increase in the provision and availability of funds to meet school objectives. Yogendrarajah *et al.* (2017) described financial management practice as a process of designing, organizing, monitoring, and controlling money to attain organizational goals efficiently and



Oluwalola, K. Felicia & Bello, K. Yunus effectively. Therefore, the aim of financial management is to ensure that the resources available for education are procured, properly disbursed, accounted for, and regularly monitored to ensure their effective use.

Meanwhile, the extent to which a school administrator succeeds in carrying out this responsibility depends on a number of factors, and one of them has to do with the records that he is expected to keep. These records give a lot of information about the school that will enable him to take decisions and also assess the progress of the school. National policy on education requires that some of the records be kept appropriately (Omoha, 2013). This implies that effective record management enables the institution to achieve its stated goals. The success of any organization depends solely on adequate record-keeping. The creation of policies, future planning, and decision-making are all based on record management in order to improve secondary school administration (Ukaogba & Nwankwo).

Statement of the Problem

One of the most visible issues in the Nigerian educational system is that policies are not properly implemented when compared to where they are borrowed. Nigeria's education system, for instance, is based on the (1)-6-3-3-4 formula: one year of pre-primary, six years of primary, three years of junior secondary, three years of senior secondary, and at least four years of tertiary education. Before Nigeria adopted it in 1989, this system had been successfully implemented and achieved in China, Germany, and Ghana. This story is different in Nigeria, which has had an impact on our educational output in comparison to expectations. The researcher observed that this has been one of the major problems hindering the effective administration of secondary education in Nigeria. Scholars are divided on the impact of public policy on the Nigerian education sector. While some argue that there can be no meaningful development and social progress in Nigeria without public policy on education, others argue that poor planning strategies, insufficient funding, and an uneven distribution of school facility

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needs have resulted in the failure of public policy on education in Nigeria (Nwachukwu, 2014, Ololube, 2016). While Okon et al. (2011) stated that a lack of proper financial control measures allowed for consistent fund misappropriation within secondary schools. A national education policy and several coordination mechanisms have been put in place to ensure that the highest standards are maintained in curriculum, infrastructure, and human resource development. Therefore, this study focused on examining the association of public policy on secondary schools' management in Kwara State.

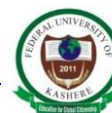
Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study was to investigate the association of public policy on management of secondary schools in Kwara State, Nigeria. Specifically, the paper sought to:

1. Find out the relationship that exists between public policy and academic planning secondary schools in Kwara State, Nigeria
2. Examine the relationship that exist between public policy and financial management of secondary schools in Kwara State, Nigeria
3. Examine the relationship that exist between public policy and record management of secondary schools in Kwara State, Nigeria
4. Identify the relationship between public policy and record keeping of secondary schools in Kwara State, Nigeria

Research Hypotheses

- Ho₁: There is no significant relationship between public policy and academic planning of secondary schools in Kwara State, Nigeria
- Ho₂: There is no significant relationship between public policy and financial management of secondary schools in Kwara State, Nigeria
- Ho₃: There is no significant relationship between public policy and record keeping of secondary schools in Kwara State, Nigeria
- Ho₄: There is no significant relationship between public policy and record



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Department of Measurement and Evaluation of the University of Ilorin, Department of Educational Management, and one lecturer from the Department of Educational Management, Alhikmah University, Kwara State. The reliability of the instrument was tested using the test-retest method within an interval of four weeks. The instrument was administered to 113 vice principals in Ilorin South Local Government Area, Kwara State. The collected data was analyzed using Cronbach's alpha, and a reliability coefficient of 0.84 was obtained. This signifies that the instrument was reliable. Pearson product-moment correlation was used to analyze the hypotheses raised for this study at the 0.05 level of significance.

Methodology

The research design adopted for this study was the descriptive research design of survey type. The population for this study comprises all principals in 523 secondary schools in Kwara State. Therefore, the sample for this study was composed of 333 principals in secondary schools in Kwara State. The principals were selected for this study using the purposive sampling technique because they are responsible for policy implementation in the day-to-day running of schools. The instrument used for this study was a researcher-designed questionnaire titled "Influence of Public Policy on Management of Secondary Schools in Kwara State Questionnaire." The questionnaire was used to test the hypotheses raised for the study. The face and content validity of the instrument was done by three lecturers; two lecturers from the

Results

Ho₁: There is no significant relationship between public policy and academic planning of secondary schools in Kwara State, Nigeria

Table 1: Significant Relationship between public policy and academic planning of secondary schools in Kwara State, Nigeria

Variables	N	\bar{x}	σ	Df	r-value	p-value	Remarks
Public Policy	333	2.28	1.19	331	.140	.017	Ho rejected
Academic Planning	333	1.59	1.20				

From Table 1, the mean (\bar{x}) for public policy was 2.28 and standard deviation (σ) was 1.19. Also, the mean (\bar{x}) for academic planning was 1.59 and the standard deviation (σ) was 1.20. The R-value was 0.140 while the p-value was 0.017. As shown in the Table, the p-value was less than the level of significance 0.05. Therefore, the null hypothesis which stated that there was no significant relationship between public policy and academic planning in Kwara State, Nigeria was rejected. This implied that there was a weak relationship between public policy and academic planning in Kwara State, Nigeria.

Also, there was a positive but weak relationship between public policy and academic planning in Kwara State, Nigeria. Furthermore, the result from table 1 showed that public policy ($\bar{x} = 2.28, \sigma = 1.19$), Academic planning ($\bar{x} = 1.59, \sigma = 1.20$). In each case the standard deviation is smaller. This means that the values or the data are not widely spread or dispersed. The values are closer to the mean.

Ho₂: There is no significant relationship between public policy and financial management of secondary schools in Kwara State, Nigeria



Table 2: Significant Relationship between public policy and financial management of secondary schools in Kwara State, Nigeria

Variables	N	\bar{x}	σ	Df	r-value	p-value	Remarks
Public Policy	333	2.28	1.19	331	.163	.023	Ho rejected
Financial Management	333	1.59	1.20				

Table 2, the mean (\bar{x}) for public policy was 2.28 and standard deviation (σ) was 1.19. Also, the mean (\bar{x}) for financial management was 1.59 and the standard deviation (σ) was 1.20. The r-value was 0.163 while the p-value was 0.023. As shown in the Table, the p-value was less than the level of significance 0.05. Therefore, the null hypothesis which stated that there was no significant relationship between public policy and financial management of secondary schools in Kwara State, Nigeria was rejected. This implied that there was a weak relationship between public policy and financial management of secondary schools

in Kwara State, Nigeria. Also, there was a positive but weak relationship between public policy and financial management of secondary schools in Kwara State, Nigeria. More so, the result from table 2 showed that public policy ($\bar{x} = 2.28, \sigma = 1.19$), Financial Management ($\bar{x} = 1.59, \sigma = 1.20$). In each case the standard deviation is smaller. This means that the values or the data are not widely spread or dispersed. The values are closer to the mean.

Ho3: There is no significant relationship between public policy and record keeping of secondary schools in Kwara State, Nigeria

Table 3: Significant Relationship between Public policy and record keeping of secondary schools in Kwara State, Nigeria

Variables	N	\bar{x}	Σ	Df	r-value	p-value	Remarks
Public Policy	333	2.28	1.19	331	.144	.021	Ho rejected
Record Keeping	333	1.59	1.20				

From Table 3, the mean (\bar{x}) for public policy was 2.28 and standard deviation (σ) was 1.19. Also, the mean (\bar{x}) for record keeping was 1.59 and the standard deviation (σ) was 1.20. The r-value was 0.144 while the p-value was 0.021. As shown in the Table, the p-value was less than the level of significance 0.05. Therefore, the null hypothesis which stated that there was no significant relationship between public policy and record keeping of secondary schools in Kwara State, Nigeria was rejected. This means that there was a weak relationship between public policy and record keeping of secondary schools in

Kwara State, Nigeria. Also, there was a positive but weak relationship between public policy and school records of secondary schools in Kwara State, Nigeria. The results also revealed from table 3 showed that public policy ($\bar{x} = 2.28, \sigma = 1.19$), Record Keeping ($\bar{x} = 1.59, \sigma = 1.20$). In each case the standard deviation is smaller. This means that the values or the data are not widely spread or dispersed. The values are closer to the mean.

Ho4: There is no significant relationship between public policy and record keeping of secondary schools in Kwara State, Nigeria

Table 4: Significant Relationship between Public policy and of secondary and discipline in secondary schools in Kwara State, Nigeria

Variables	N	\bar{x}	Σ	Df	r-value	p-value	Remarks
Public Policy	333	2.28	1.19	331	.150	.021	Ho rejected
Discipline	333	1.59	1.20				



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Table 4, the mean (\bar{x}) for public policy was 2.28 and standard deviation (σ) was 1.19. Also, the mean (\bar{x}) for discipline was 1.59 and the standard deviation (σ) was 1.20. The r-value was 0.150 while the p-value was 0.021. As shown in the Table, the p-value was less than the level of significance 0.05. Therefore, the null hypothesis which stated that there was no significant relationship between public policy and of secondary and discipline in secondary schools in Kwara State, Nigeria was rejected. This implied that there was a weak relationship between public policy and of secondary and discipline in secondary schools in Kwara State, Nigeria. Also, there was a positive but weak relationship between public policy and discipline in secondary schools in Kwara State, Nigeria. Table 4 showed that public policy ($\bar{x} = 2.28$, $\sigma = 1.19$), Discipline ($\bar{x} = 1.59$, $\sigma = 1.20$). In each case the standard deviation is smaller. This means that the values or the data are not widely spread or dispersed. The values are closer to the mean.

Discussion of Findings

The findings from hypothesis one revealed that there was a positive but weak relationship between public policy and academic planning in secondary schools in Kwara State, Nigeria. This implied that school administrators are guided by the policy and rules in taking decisions as laid down by the public. The finding is in line with the submission of Imrie (2016) that academic planning is a set of ideas and activities that allow teachers to develop an educational process with meaningful continuity.

The findings from hypothesis two revealed that there was a positive but weak relationship between public policy and financial management in secondary schools in Kwara State, Nigeria. This showed that finance had less impact on public policy in secondary schools in Kwara State, Nigeria. This finding is supported by Duke and Canady (2017), who state that financial policy is an important management tool and is intended as a mechanism for setting goals and objectives, measuring progress towards objectives, identifying weaknesses or inadequacies, and controlling and integrating

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diverse financial activities carried out in schools. They further asserted that a good financial policy significantly contributes to the achievement of the schools' goals without adversely affecting the education of learners. They further stated that policies may not always please or benefit everyone, but at least they should not harm learners and teachers served by the school. However, Nwachukwu (2014) and Aigboje and Ehiaguina (2016) explained that education has continued to be the headache of all stakeholders in Nigeria, and the financial issues have been attributed to inadequate and unsustainable funding.

Hypothesis three revealed that there was a positive and significant relationship between public policy and record keeping in secondary schools in Kwara State, Nigeria. This implied that record keeping in secondary schools in Kwara State does not have much influence on public policy. This could be a result of the school not keeping the record as it should. This finding is in line with Nwaeke's (2020) assertion that every stakeholder in the educational system is duty-bound to keep records of his or her professional activities. This cuts across academic and non-academic staff, including teachers, examination officers, admission officers, disciplinary masters, form masters, food masters, games masters, health masters, heads of school and their assistants, secretaries, purchasing officers, broad officials, ministry of education officials, federal ministry of education officials, and other supportive agencies and parastatals, and so on.

The fourth hypothesis revealed that there was a weak relationship between public policy and discipline in secondary schools in Kwara State, Nigeria. This showed that there is not enough discipline in secondary schools in Kwara State. The findings for this purpose revealed that there was a positive and significant relationship between public policy and discipline in secondary schools in Kwara State, Nigeria. This finding supported Temitayo *et al.*'s (2013) assertion that education is a service-oriented organization and that the school serves as a preparatory ground for the grooming and development of the minds that would in the future fathom a



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country's socio-economic puzzles and ensure societal longevity, which it does through empowerment and certification. This implied that school administrators are guided by the laid-down rules and regulations in the area of students' discipline.

Conclusion

Education is a public good whose relationship with society (the public) is symbiotic in nature. Also, education is a global service that every country strives to provide for its citizens since it serves as a tool for socio-economic development. According to the findings of this study, secondary school managers are to be more conversant and help in maintaining balance in the application and implementation of public policy for the betterment of society.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following are recommended made

1. School administrators and managers should always be guided by the policy and laid-down rules in their decision-making and ensure effective implementation of the policies guiding school management.
2. School managers should ensure strict compliance with financial policy and statutory provisions regarding the allocation and management of school funds.
3. Teachers and school heads should ensure that all the statutory records are kept and other records are kept to achieve educational and school goals effectively.
4. Teachers should be guided periodically on policy relating to discipline to avoid unnecessary public criticism.

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