

An Evaluation of the Implementation of Educational Policies in Senior Secondary Schools in Osun State Nigeria

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Abstract

Effective implementation is very paramount for secondary education to achieve its objectives of providing opportunity for education of higher quality; catering for the differences in talents, equipping students to live effectively in our modern age of science and technology, inspire students with a desire for achievement and self-improvement at school and later in life; among others. It is observed that government's effort towards implementation of secondary school education yielded little or no dividend due to improper implementation of policies caused by lack of basic amenities for practical in sciences and vocational subjects as well as lack of instructional materials to facilitate effective learning in all subjects. The problem of poor planning as a result of political instability and in continuity of policy, insufficient fund, massive promotion of students, insufficient teachers, poor remuneration of teachers, among others are detrimental to effective policy implementation. This paper therefore takes a critical look at the areas of implementation and non-implementation of secondary schools policy and recommends that proper planning should be made to make provisions for basic amenities and instructional materials needed for effective learning and practice for proper implementation of secondary education policy and to achieve its laudable objectives in the State of Osun.

Keywords:- Evaluation, Implementation, Policy

1. Introduction

Education is defined in Edu.ng scholarship comment (2013) as the transmission of life experience from a generation to another, the knowledge of good manners and the behavior in society. Sherri Torjman (2005) defines policy development as a decision –making process that helps address identified goals, problems or concerns. Babalola (2003) defines Education policy as a general statement containing principles, regulations and rules, which govern many of the decisions on how to educate children where to get them educated, where to get them employed, who to teach them, how to finance their education, and so on. According to him, educational policies are vital to the achievement of the goals of the educational system.

Okoroma (2006) observes education to be the bedrock of any society. He opines that the issue of falling standard of education and the inability of Nigerian secondary education to meet its desired goals becomes a great concern to every reasonable citizen. Over the years, the gap between educational policies and goal attainment due to inadequate implementation of these policies has become of great concern to many observers.

Osokoya (1987) in Okoroma (2003) comments that education is a distinctive way in which the society inducts its young ones into full membership. Every society needs some educational policies to guide it in the process of such initiation. Nigerian's education has passed through different stages with various goals and objectives. The early missionaries and Portuguese traders introduced education in Nigeria with a view to get convert into their religions and making Nigerian understand their language to facilitate their trades respectively. The colonial government later developed interest in the education of the people out of the need to train interpreters, clerical officers, messengers, cooks, stewards, servants, typists, law enforcement agents and invariably refined slaves" (Oke and Odetokun, 2000).

The colonial government's involvement in the education development in Nigeria continues to improve her educational system through the enactments of educational codes till 1930s.

Then, it was discovered that the kind of education was incapable of meeting the needs of the society and various commission were setup to investigate the state of Nigeria education and bring forth recommendations. Among

them are the Phelps- stroke commission, Eliot commission, Ashby Commission, Harbison commission, etc. all of which contributed immensely to education development in Nigeria. After independence, the Nigeria Education Research Council sponsored a conference which holds from September 8-12, 1969. The conference formed a forum for the discussion of a wide range of an appropriate curriculum for the nation's schools. The conference give birth to the National Policy on Education (NPE) in which the objectives and philosophy of education were clearly stated, which is based on; "the development of the individual into an effective citizen; the full integration of the individual into the community; and the provision of equal access to educational opportunities for all citizens of the country at primary, secondary and tertiary levels both inside and outside the formal school system." The national educational goals which were derived from the nation's philosophy, according to section 1, paragraph 3 of the National Policy on Education (4th Edition, 2004).

- The inculcation of national consciousness and national unity;
- The inculcation of the type of values and attitude for the survival of the individuals and the Nigerian society;
- The training of the mind in the understanding of the world around;
- The acquisition of appropriate skills and the development of mental, physical and social abilities and competencies as equipment of individual to live in and contribute to the development of the society.

In the National Policy on Education (NERDC, 2004), it is stated that the secondary education is the form of education children receive after primary education and before the tertiary stage and its aims which are:

- I. Preparation for useful living within the society ; and
- II. Preparation for higher education.

Elaborating further on one of the aims of secondary education, Ukeje (1991) averred that preparation for useful living within the society implies a sound cultural, scientific and technological education, ability to think critically and creatively, acquisition of saleable skills, respect for dignity of labour, sense of responsibility and tolerance.

The National Policy on Education (2010) stated in its introduction that the Federal Government of Nigeria has adopted education as an instrument par-excellence for affecting national development. The five national goals which Nigeria's philosophy of education draws its strength are the building of:

1. A free and democratic society;
2. A just and egalitarian society;
3. A united, strong and self-reliant nation;
4. A great and dynamic economy; and
5. A land of bright and full opportunities for all citizens.

The federal ministry of education in her report on the state of secondary school in Nigeria (operation reach all secondary school Oct. 2006) declared: "unfortunately, it has been observed that the average Nigerian Secondary School leaver today cannot think critically and creatively, she/he has no saleable skills, no respect for dignity of labour and his sense of responsibility has been warped by extreme materialistic societal values. Even most of the secondary school graduates who gained admission into higher educational institutions demonstrate visible and payable unpreparedness for higher education".

Majority of our secondary school leavers have no direction for the future. Some have good results but no sponsors for higher education. The question is what is wrong? Is it our educational policy or its implementation? No matter how good an educational policy is, it is as good as nothing without proper implementation.

On this note, this study will give appraisal on the implementation of educational policy in Nigerian schools, finds out the level of policy implementation, finds out the areas of non-implementation or partial implementation and its effects on the society.

1.1.1 Statement of the Problem

The gaps that often exist between policy formulation and implementation provoke inquiry to identify factors that constrain the effective implementation of educational policies. The problem of policy implementation is traceable to the planning stage which comes immediately after policy formulation. Okeke (1985) stated clearly that good planning will ensure effective implementation. Good planning that can facilitate effective

implementation ought to consider factors such as the planning environment, social environment, political environment and financial and statistical problems.

The plan must take into consideration the needs of the society; the political, socio-cultural, economic, military, scientific, and technological realities of the environments are very important to its survival. The Federal Ministry of Education (Oct. 2006) also declared that in spite of the laudable objectives and structure of secondary education, all indications point to the fact that the rate of education failures in Nigerian secondary schools is on the increase.

Meanwhile, the level of implementation of educational policies goes a long way in determining the achievement of educational goals. Therefore, this study was carried out to find out how the educational policies are being implemented in selected Senior Secondary Schools in Osun State. The study also:

1. Identified areas of implementation and non- implementation of education policies;
2. Examined factors responsible for non-implementation of education policies;
3. Ascertained the effects of non-implementation or improper implementation of educational policies; and
4. Suggested possible solutions that can assist effective implementation of the educational policies.

1.1.2 Research Questions

The following questions were raised to guide the study;

1. Are there areas of implementation and non-implementation of the educational policies in Osun State Secondary Schools?
2. Are there factors responsible for the area not yet implemented in the educational policies in Osun State?
3. Are there any effects of the non-implementation or improper implementation of the policies on Osun State educational system?
4. What are the possible suggestions that can assist effective implementation of educational policies in Osun State?

1.1.3 Methodology

The study is a descriptive research of the survey type. The target population was all secondary schools in Osun State. Sixteen (16) secondary schools were used for the study. Eight (8) Junior Secondary Schools were randomly selected from Olurunda, Osogbo, Odo-Otin and Atakunmos-West Local Government Areas respectively. Twelve (12) teachers were randomly selected from each of the Junior Secondary Schools while 13 teachers were randomly selected from each of the senior secondary schools giving a total number of 200 respondents. A self-designed questionnaire was used to elicit responses. Interview was also used as part of instrument for data collection. The questionnaire was divided into 3 sections. Section A consisted of the personal data of the respondents. Section B consisted of the items on the implementation of subjects while section C consisted of questions on general policy. Some of the respondents were selected for the interview based on the results of the responses to the questionnaire administered in their schools to state the factors responsible for the implementation, partial implementation or non-implementation of educational policies in their schools. They were also asked some likely effects of partial or non-implementation of these policies and were asked to suggest possible solutions. The instrument was validated by two educational administrations. A test-re-test method was used to ensure the reliability of the instrument. This was done by using 5 school principals who were not part of the sample within 2 week interval. The result yielded 78.5% which was considered high enough for reliability. The instruments were personally administered by the researcher to the selected teachers of the selected schools. Data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics of frequency counts and percentages.

1.1.4 Results

The table below represents the responses of the respondents on the area of implementation and non-implementation of education policies in subject areas.

Table 1:

S/N	ITEMS (science class)	YES(%)	NO(%)	NEUTRAL
1	Does your school offer science subjects?	190(95%)	10(5%)	-
2.	Do you have enough teachers for all the subjects being offered?	118(59%)	82(41%)	-
3	Are all teachers available qualified to handle the subjects?	149(74%)	51(25.5%)	-
4	Do you have laboratory for each of the subjects?	59(29.5%)	141(70.5%)	-
5	Are there enough equipment in the laboratories?	25(12.5%)	175(87.5%)	-
6	Do you engage in practical lessons for the subject offered?	58(29%)	142(71%)	-
7	Are you having regular practical lessons?	28(14%)	172(86%)	-

The table above revealed that 95% of the respondents agreed that science subjects are being offered in their schools while 59% agreed they have enough teachers for the science subjects. Likewise 74% agreed that the teachers are qualified to handle the subjects. 29.5% of the respondents agreed that they have laboratories for each of the science subjects and 70.5% disagreed with this. 12.5% only agreed that there is enough equipment in the laboratories while a larger percentage of 87.5% disagreed with the claim. 29% of the respondents believe they do not engage in practical lessons for the subjects offered, while 71% disagreed to engaging in practical lessons. Also, 14% accept that they have regular practical lessons, while 86% rejected this claim. These results revealed that science subjects are not adequately implemented as stipulated in the government policy on education.

Table 2: Response on policy implementation and non-implementation on Arts Classes.

S/N	ITEMS	YES	NO	NEUTRAL
1	Does your school offer Arts subjects?	179(89.5%)	21(10.5%)	-
2	Are there enough teachers for Arts subjects offered?	108(54%)	92(45%)	-
3	Are all the teachers available qualified for teaching the subjects?	160(80%)	40(20%)	-

The above table revealed that the area of the Arts Subjects is partially implemented as only 54% of the respondents agreed to having enough teachers. Adequate provision of teaching staff can only facilitate effective implementation of the educational policies.

Table 3 Responses of Respondents on policy Implementation (commercial class)

SN	ITEMS	YES	NO	NEUTRAL
1.	Does your school offer commercial subjects?	182(91%)	18(9%)	—
2.	Are there enough teachers for these subjects?	144(72%)	52(27%)	2(1%)
3.	Are there enough instructional materials for practical of commercial subjects?	66(33%)	134(67%)	—
4.	Do you engage in practical lessons?	75(37.5%)	125(62.5%)	—
5.	Do you have regular practical lessons	46(23%)	152(76%)	2(1%)

Very high percent of (91%) agreed they offer commercial subjects in their schools and 72% agreed they have enough teachers for the subjects. But low percentage of (33%) agreed to have enough instructional materials while 67% disagreed. Likewise in the area of practical lessons there is low percentage of 37.5% and 23%

respectively. This implies that the policy is not adequately implemented in the area of commercial subjects since there is need for adequate instructional materials which will facilitate frequent practical aspect of the subject area.

Table 4 Responses of the Respondents on policy Implementation (Vocational Class)

SN	ITEMS	YES	NO	UNDECIDED
1.	Does your school offer vocational subjects?	128(64%)	70(35%)	2(1%)
2.	Do you have teachers for all vocational subjects being offered?	95(47.5)	105(52.5%)	—
3.	Are there sufficient instructional materials for the vocational subjects?	44(22%)	156(78%)	—
4.	Do you engage in practical lessons?	66(33%)	134(67%)	—
5.	Do you have regular practical lessons	23(11.5%)	177(88.5%)	—

From the table, 64% of the respondents agreed that they offer vocational subjects and 35% disagreed to this claim. 47.5% agreed that they have teachers for vocational subjects while 52.5% claimed they have no adequate number of teachers. Only 22% agreed to the claim that they have sufficient instructional materials for vocational subjects while 78% claimed they have no sufficient instructional materials. 33% and 23% of the respondents agreed to being engaged in practical lessons and regular practical lessons respectively, while 67% and 88% disagreed to these claims respectively.

Table 5 Response to policy Implementation on ICT facilities

SN	ITEMS	YES	NO	UNDECIDED
1.	Is there integration of ICT in your school system?	74(37%)	126(63%)	—
2.	Are there computers in your school for ICT training	36(18%)	164(82%)	—
3.	Are there ICT facilities enough?	22(11%)	178(89%)	—
4.	Are the ICT facilities in good conditions?	29(14.5%)	169(84.5%)	—
5.	Do you have ICT facilitators?	48(24%)	152(76%)	—
6.	Is there power supply in your school?	164(82%)	36(18%)	—
7.	Is the power supply regular?	145(72.5%)	55(27.5%)	—

The table above revealed 37% of the respondents agreed to have ICT integrated to their school system while 63% disagreed to the claim. 18% only claimed to have ICT facilities available in their school while 82% claimed not to have only 11% of the school have enough of these ICT facilities while 89% have not enough. Most of these facilities are not in good condition as 14.5% agree and 84.5% disagreed. The number of facilitators available is low as only 24% agreed to this and 76% disagreed. Most of the respondents agreed to have power supply and have it regularly as the percentages are 82% and 72.5% agreed to these claims.

Table 6: Responses to Policy Implementation to Extra Curricular Facilities

S/N	ITEMS	YES	NO	UNDECIDED
1	Do you have library in your school?	67(33.5%)	131(65.5)	2(1%)
2	Is it well equipped?	30(15%)	168(84%)	2(1%)
3	Do you have time for quiz and debate?	141(70.5%)	56(28%)	3(1.5%)
4	Is it regular?	134(67%)	63(31.5%)	3(1.5%)
5	Does your school encourage youth clubs and other school societies?	96(48%)	98(49%)	6(3%)
6	Does your engage in sporting activities?	147(73.5%)	53(26.5%)	-
7	Is it regular?	82(41%)	118(59%)	-

The above table revealed that 33.5% of the schools have library in school while a larger proportion did not have. 15% confirm that the library is well equipped, while 84% disagreed to these and 1% undecided. 70.5% of the respondents affirm that they have time for quiz and debate, 28% disagreed to this. 68% subscribe to having regular time for quiz and debate and 31% say no to this. 48% agreed that their schools encourage youth clubs and school societies and 49% disagreed to this. A large proportion of 73.5% of the respondents agreed that their school engage in sporting activities while 26.5% disagreed to this. A lower proportion of 41% of the respondents claimed that the sporting activities are regular, while 59% do not have regular sporting activities.

Table 7: Responses to policy implementation on supervision

S/N	ITEMS	YES	NO	UNDECIDED
1	Are there regular supervisions from the Ministry of Education?	154(77%)	46(23%)	-
2	Are there feedback reports after each supervision/visit?	49(24.5%)	159(75.5%)	-
3	Are there internal supervision by the principal/vice Principal?	175(87.5%)	25(12.5%)	-

From the table above, 77% of the respondents agreed that there are regular supervision from the Ministry of Education, while 23% disagreed. 24% only claimed to receive feed-back reports from each supervision/visit from the Ministry of Education while 75.5% claimed not. 87.5% subscribed to regular internal supervision from principals and 12.5% disagreed to this claim.

From the interview conducted, all the respondents declared that the policy is being implemented but not properly implemented especially in sciences and vocational subjects. This is because they lack proper implementation in the practical aspects due to non-availability of basic amenities and laboratory equipment in the school.

Consequent upon the interview, the following were suggested to assist full and proper implementation of educational policy:-

- I. Good planning
- II. Provision of teachers
- III. Provision of instructional materials and laboratory equipment
- IV. Involvement of the society in the provision of educational materials
- V. Regular and proper examination and screening of students for admission into senior secondary schools as spelt out in the policy.
- VI. Good remuneration to teachers
- VII. Creation of awareness of the nature of policy in the society.

1.1.5 Discussion of the Findings

Question 1 sought to know the areas of implementation and non-implementation of the educational policy. Findings revealed that secondary education policy is being implemented theoretically.

Extracurricular activities are allowed and there are regular supervision in schools. But the practical aspect especially in science and vocational subjects suffer non-implementation and partial implementation. The finding is in agreement with the statement of Babafemi (2007) in Soneya (2013) that the 6-3-3-4 system of education is a setup in the right direction towards the technological development of the nation describing it as a laudable programme capable of ushering in educational revolution in Nigeria. He however remarked that the current situation on ground is far from this ideal as the system seems to be suffering from poor and shoddy implementation.

The findings to research question 2 revealed the factors hindering effective implementation of secondary education policy include; lack of basic amenities from practical work which forms the core aspect of the policy and what actually differentiates it from the old policy. This is in agreement with Oke and Adetokun (2000) who identified problems militating against the implementation of the National policy on Education to be inability of

the implementation committee to obtain detailed and up-to-date data needed for effective planning, finance, supply of teachers and administrative capacity.

The findings to research question 3 revealed that the effects of improper implementation involves the inability to realize the objectives for which the policy is drawn which resulted in low level of understanding of secondary school leavers, poor performance of students, lack of skills acquisition and incompetence among youths, unemployment, high rate of poverty etc. the effect of partial implementation of the policy also include mass failure of students, increase in examination malpractices, high rate of stranded secondary school leavers in the society, poverty increase, lack of technical development in the nation, over-dependent on white collar job, etc.

In specific terms, the secondary education has its goals to prepare the individual for useful living and higher education but it was emphasized in the federal Ministry of Education's report (2006) on operation Reach All Secondary school that "Nigeria has in reality only used new labels on old wines in bottles with new designs. The new curriculum is implemented as the old one, which was rejected as students were promoted from the first year to the end in conventional schools of the old. The best that can be said of the current curriculum at the secondary school level is that it has failed to achieve its laudable objectives.

The result of the findings also revealed following suggestions to assist effective implementation of educational policies.

- Provision of necessary equipment and amenities
- Good planning
- Involvement of the stakeholders in funding education;
- Creation of awareness of the policy in the society;
- Establishment of standard examinations for students;
- Inculcating discipline among students; and
- Involvement of artisan in the vocational training in schools like mechanical work, wood work, electricity and
- If possible, separate education from political interference etc.

1.1.6 Conclusion

From the findings of this study, it can be confirmed that secondary school education policy is not yet fully implemented due to improper planning, insufficient fund, political interference and poor attitude of stakeholders in the secondary education.

Meanwhile, improper implementation of education policy has led to the failure of the education policy to meet its desirable objectives in the society and unless necessary steps are taken to proper implementation of the policy, the effect spelt great disaster on the society and the nation at large.

1.1.7 Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following are recommended:

Government should:

- I. Make provision for basic education amenities and laboratory equipment for vocational and science subjects;
- II. Improve on the provision of instructional materials for all subjects;
- III. Make proper planning towards effective implementation;
- IV. Encourage teachers by paying their salaries and allowances properly and as at when due;
- V. Create awareness of the policy in the society and allow the society to participate in funding education; and

Establish standard examination, discipline and rewards among students

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