
MECHANISMS FOR EFFECTIVE PLANNING AND ORGANIZATION OF RESOURCES IN SECONDARY SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION

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ABSTRACT: The paper identified two challenges to the management of secondary schools in the Northern Senatorial Zone of Adamawa State. It then examined the strategies for the effective management of the schools. Two purposes of the study were outlined. Two research questions were formulated to guide the study. The area of the study was the Northern Senatorial Zone of Adamawa. The Zone comprised 5 Local Government Areas, namely, Mubi North, Mubi South, Maiha, Michika and Madagali. A structured questionnaire, developed by the researcher and validated by 3 experts in educational management, was pilot tested on 22 respondents using the test re-test method of estimating reliability. The two tests were separated by a space of 2 weeks. The two results were correlated and the Pearson r was 0.87. The instrument was then administered on a sample of 474 respondents, made up of 302 teachers and 172 administrators. The data collected were analyzed using mean and standard deviation. Findings revealed that yearly plan of staff needs, term plan for students' feeding and term plan for materials were among the 13 strategies for effective planning of school activities. The findings showed that organizing materials into buildings, laboratories and workshops, organizing human beings into schools, committees and classes; and organizing ideas and principles into curricular activities, and time schedules are effective organizing strategies in secondary school management. The study however, did not consider that publicising the school was necessarily an effective strategy for secondary school management. To enhance school administrators' management skills, the study recommended among others, that school administrators need to undertake refresher courses so as to update their knowledge and skills; government needs to provide a conducive school environment so that administrators can functionally utilize their knowledge and skills, and teachers must give maximum support to administrators in their effort to provide effective leadership in the schools.

Introduction

The term "education" is viewed as a continuous process for helping a society to develop. According to Dauda (2007), education is the art of teaching and the training of the young, the aim of which is to develop them physically, intellectually, morally and spiritually. One type of education, secondary education, according to the National Policy on Education (FRN, 2004), is the education given to individuals after their graduation from the primary school. It has the broad goal of preparing individuals for useful living within the society and for higher education. According to Nzeako (2008), it is at the secondary level of education that a child is prepared to be a useful citizen, contributing

maximally and meaningfully to the development of society. Before the introduction of the Universal Basic Education Scheme, secondary education system consisted of three years of Junior Secondary Education and three years of Senior Secondary Education (Ladan, 2008). In order to archive the objectives of secondary education, the National Policy on Education (FRN, 2004) stipulated that government shall regulate the establishment of schools and as well supervise and inspect the schools regularly with a view to ensuring that the schools follow approved curriculum. To ensure the efficient instruction of students therefore, the secondary schools are managed by the States' Post Primary Schools Management Board (PPSMB) which appoint school administrators, generally referred to as principals.

In the management of schools, one fundamental problem is that which deals with planning and organizing. The term "management" has been defined by Adesina (1990) and Emmer (1992) as a technique that deals with the utilization of resources for the achievement of set objectives. According to Okeke (2001), management deals with both people and things. To Aliu (2001), management is the search for the best use of resources, i.e. men, money, materials, and methodologies. In other words, how do school administrators plan and organise men, materials and methodologies in order for schools to achieve set objectives? Therefore, secondary school management refers to the process of managing, controlling, supervising and organizing human and material resources towards the achievement of the goals of the school.

According to Castaldi (1994) material resources are any material things or services that facilitate teaching and learning. Resources in teaching and learning are human and material resources (Ayodele, 2001). Human resources, viewed as a nation's most precious resources, refer to a productive sector of a country population engaged in vital educational and economic activity (Ayodele, 2001, Jen, 2002; Kochhar, 2002). According to Jen (2002), material resources include classrooms, assembly halls, laboratories, workshops, libraries, teaching aids and devices such as modern educational hardware and their software, machinery and equipment, tools, instruments, materials and supplies. Jen added that the teaching staff who constitute a vital aspect of the teaching process organize and manage laboratories and workshops so as to bring about learning. Planning has been seen as an activity whereby a school administrator prepares in advance all the teaching and management duties necessary for the realization of the goals of the school (Edem, 1998). According to Kochhar (2002), a school plan must be flexible, giving room for any unforeseen situation. Such unforeseen circumstances include drop in grants, posting and transfer of staff and shortage in equipment and other facilities supply. Generally however, Adesina in Koko (2003) provided three elements of planning curricular offerings, namely, formulation of policy and determinate of objectives, use of resources which are scarce and taking decisions for complementation.

Teachers, according to Nwuzor (1982) are involved in planning curricula activities. These activities include planning yearly work, term schedules and weekly lesson notes and plans. In practical terms, principals as administrators, plan on school and staff development. Finch and Mc Gough (1982) stated that in carrying out their planning functions, administrators must make important decisions regarding student enrolment, instructional materials and facilities requirements. These decisions, according to Okoro (2006), will generate questions relating to the courses of study, number of classrooms and workshops and number and sizes of offices, storage rooms, wash rooms and toilets. The decisions are necessary so as to make for the smooth operation of the school system. The school cannot function if there are no adequate classrooms, storage areas and rooms, and as well offices, washrooms and toilets. The school administrator is always involved in decision making. Teachers perform the school administrative planning functions along with the principal. According to Edem (2006), principals normally prepare in advance a plan that contains teaching and administrative duties and assign these duties to teachers based on their qualifications and experience. This administrative planning function of assigning staff duties based on the requirement and demand of the job is referred to as job analysis, job specification or job description.

In secondary school management, human and material resources must be organized for teaching and learning to effectively take place. The term "organizing" is defined by Okeke (1986) to mean arranging work according to activities involved and then assigning duties and responsibilities in the commensurate authority. Consequently, in a school system, Kochhar (2002:5) held that the following are organized:

1. Materials into buildings, furniture and equipment, libraries, laboratories, workshops, museums and art gallery.
2. Human beings into schools, classes, committees, groups, school staff, the inspecting staff.
3. Ideas and principles into curricular activities, time schedules and norms of achievement.

According to Nwuzor (1982), by dividing the school work into departments and units, administrators employ division of labour by assigning responsibilities to members of staff. Nwuzor added that this stand has created a line structure where every member of staff knows his position in the organizational chart and the duties assigned to each position. In the words of Nkwuhe (1995), organizing material and human resources in their various classifications does not only make management easier but promote an illusion of reality and as well provide a common framework of experience. Organizing in school management is so crucial that Nwagwu (1978:35) listed important things that are involved in the activity. These things are, organizing the school terms into weeks and days, organizing the school time table and organizing the way in which teaching and learning activities are classified or divided into subjects. Others are placement of students in classes, grades and streams and organizing the way in which the teaching and auxiliary

staff are deployed in response to the requirements of the duties in the school. These steps, according to Enemali (2000), eliminate most of the problems that are encountered in school management. It can be added that organizing as an activity enhances school management. Staff and students are able to perform their duties in an orderly manner. The procedure makes for easy identification of students by teachers and teachers by students. Disciplinary problems are easily traced and are promptly corrected.

In order that organizing might be effectively carried out, Nwuzor (1982:288) outlined the following things which the school administrator needs to do:

1. He examines and makes sure he is very clear about the objectives and the total task of the institution
2. He breaks the services (work) which the institution has to render in order to achieve the goals into units, such as
 - a) administrative work
 - b) academic work
 - c) maintenance work
 - d) library services work
 - e) expert or advisory services
3. He further breaks the units into definable jobs and tasks, e.g., administrative work may be defined into personnel matters, catering services, accounting responsibilities; academic work broken into different departments of teaching units
4. He thinks about the personnel that will fit into the various jobs and to whom he will assign positions or posts to play their role or render services expected of them.

It is expected that administrators will take the work of organizing seriously. If effectively carried out, the process eliminates most of the flaws that are normally encountered in school management. Members of staff have defined roles assigned to them. As they carry out those roles, the goals of the school become easy to achieve.

Purpose of the Study

The study had the following objectives:

1. To determine the strategies for effective planning of curricular activities.
2. To ascertain the ways for organizing educational resources for effective teaching and learning.

Research Questions

The following research questions were stated to which answers were sought:

1. What are the strategies for effective planning of curricular activities?
2. What are the ways for organizing educational resources for effective teaching and learning?

Materials and Methods

The study adopted the descriptive survey design. The area of the study was the Northern Senatorial Zone of Adamawa State. The zone had 5 Local Governments, namely; Mubi North, Mubi South, Maiha, Michika and Madagali Local Governments. Adamawa State is located between altitude 8°N and 11°N. The population of the study was 1434 respondents, made up of 935 teachers and 497 (468 principals and vice principals, vice principals, 11 Ministry of Education officials, 7 Post Primary Schools Management Board officials and 11 Local Government inspectors). Stratified random sampling was adopted for the study. Again, using a sample of 40% (Akuezilo & Agu, 2003) 62 schools out of 156 secondary schools in the Northern Senatorial Zone were sampled. This gave the sample to be 572 respondents, made up of 374 teachers and 198 administrators. A structured questionnaire designed by the researcher collected data from respondents. Earlier, it was validated by 3 experts and then pilot-tested on 22 respondents using the test-retest method of estimating reliability. A 2-Week interval separated the first test and the second test. The two results were correlated using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient. The Pearson r was found to be 0.87. This shows that the reliability was strong positive (Olaitan & Ndomi, 2000).

Results and Discussion

A total of 474 valid copies of the structured questionnaire were retrieved from respondents. This number was made up of 302 copies for teachers and 172 copies for administrators. The valid copies constituted 82.9% of the number of questionnaire administered. Analyses of the results were done on the valid copies of the questionnaire. The data collected were analyzed using mean and standard deviation for answering the research questions. As suggested by Spiegel in Omozokpia (2001), any means of respondents of 3.50 and above was considered agree, and any means of less than 3.50 was considered disagree. The results are presented in tables based on the research questions.

Research Question 1

What are the strategies for effective planning of curricular activities?

Table 1: Strategies for Effective Planning of Curricular Activities

S/N	TEST ITEMS	ADMIN (172)		TEACHERS (302)			REMARKS
		\bar{x}_A	σ_A	\bar{x}_T	σ_T	\bar{x}_G	
1.	Yearly plan of staff needs	3.71	2.01	3.63	1.73	3.37	Disagree
2.	Yearly plan of facilities needs	3.67	2.14	3.27	1.98	3.47	Disagree
3.	Planning of term schedules	3.52	1.89	3.81	2.07	3.67	Agree
4.	Yearly plan of enrolment needs	3.61	1.93	3.55	2.13	3.58	Agree
5.	Term budget for students feeding	3.73	1.64	3.68	2.09	3.71	Agree
6.	Weekly lesson plans	3.87	1.51	4.04	1.72	3.96	Agree
7.	Weekly lesson notes	5.92	1.18	4.12	1.91	4.02	Agree
8.	Term plan for extra-curricular act	3.50	2.15	3.38	2.13	3.56	Agree
9.	Term schedule for meetings	3.69	1.73	3.43	2.11	3.56	Agree
10.	Inspection schedules	3.56	2.11	3.61	2.09	3.59	Agree
11.	Workshop safety plans	3.41	2.06	3.72	1.98	3.57	Agree
12.	Yearly plan for books	3.37	2.15	3.22	2.93	3.30	Disagree
13.	Term plan for materials	3.91	1.71	3.75	2.10	3.83	Agree
14.	Develop curriculum guides	4.48	2.01	3.54	2.15	3.51	Agree
15.	Develop lab manuals	3.51	2.07	3.63	1.91	3.57	Agree
16.	Plan projections for furniture needs	3.54	1.90	3.47	2.99	3.51	Agree

Table 1 presents the means and standard deviations of respondents on the strategies for effective planning of curricular activities. It answered research question 1. Based on the decision rule, out of the 16 items presented in the table, the respondents agreed on 13 items are strategies for effective planning of curricular activities. The 13 items include, yearly plan of staff needs which has a grand mean (\bar{x}_G) of 3.67, term plan for students feeding (with a \bar{x}_G of 3.71) and term plan for materials, having a \bar{x}_G of 3.83). The 3 items respondents disagreed with as strategies for effective planning of curricular activities are term plan for extra-curricular materials, yearly plan for books and yearly plan of facilities needs, which have grand means of 3.44, 3.30 and 3.47 respectively.

Research Question 2

What are the ways of organizing educational resources for effective teaching and learning?

Table 2: Ways for Organizing Resources for Teaching and Learning

S/N	TEST ITEMS	ADMIN (172) TEACHERS (302)					REMARKS
		\bar{X}_A	σ_A	\bar{X}_T	σ_T	\bar{X}_G	
17.	Selection of classrooms	4.01	1.07	3.92	1.73	3.97	Agree
18.	Separation of workshop and lab.	3.95	1.09	3.72	2.20	3.84	Agree
19.	Organizing classrooms	3.75	1.38	4.24	1.13	3.99	Agree
20.	Appointment of subject masters	3.98	1.09	4.12	1.07	4.05	Agree
21.	Organizing offices for staff	4.13	1.01	3.63	2.12	3.88	Agree
22.	Organizing work into depts.	3.83	1.61	4.11	1.20	3.97	Agree
23.	Appointment of heads of dept	3.90	1.83	4.03	1.19	3.97	Agree
24.	Organization of committees	3.92	1.51	3.51	2.21	3.72	Agree
25.	Organization of laboratory	3.57	2.10	3.72	1.96	3.65	Agree
26.	Organization of term into weeks	4.12	1.03	3.87	1.21	3.99	Agree
27.	Org. schedules for non-teaching staff	3.86	1.19	3.91	1.06	3.89	Agree
28.	Organization extra-curricular activities	3.61	2.01	3.23	2.93	3.42	Disagree
29.	Publicizing the school	3.71	2.13	3.12	2.72	3.42	Disagree

Table 2 present data that answered research question 2. The result shows that all the items except 28 and 29 are ways of organizing resources for effective teaching and learning. The mean ratings of items 17- 27 range from 3.65 to 4.05. It therefore, means that all items are ways of acquiring resources for effective teaching except organization of extracurricular activities and publicizing the school. The standard deviations vary from 1.01 to 2.93 among the administrators and teachers.

The finding in Table 1 agrees with what Nwuzor (1982) said where the author pointed out that teachers are also involved in planning curricular activities. The finding also agrees with Finch and Mc Gough (1982) who stressed that in making plans, teachers and administrators must make important decisions regarding students' enrolment, instructional materials and facilities requirements. In decision making plans regarding the curricular activities, Okoro (2006) says teachers and administrators are involved in planning the curriculum and the courses. The finding in Table 2 agrees with Nwagwu (1978) who has viewed organizing as an administrative function that involves organizing the school term into weeks and days, organizing the learning activities are divided into subjects. The finding of this study also agrees with the view of Okeke (1986) who sees organizing essentially as an activity that involves assigning duties and responsibilities. Furthermore, the finding of the study agrees with Kochhar (2002) who views organizing as dealing with organizing materials into buildings laboratories and workshops, organizing human beings into schools, committees and classes; and organizing ideas and principles into curricular activities, time schedules and norms of achievement.

The implication of the findings is that public school administrators and teachers need to employ the strategies of yearly planning of staff and students' needs, budgets and planning of inspection schedules to improve the management of the public schools. Effort must be made to undertake yearly plan of staff needs, planning of inspection schedules and term budget of students' feeding which are found to be vital strategies for effective planning of curricular activities. Administrators of public secondary schools in the Northern Senatorial Zone of Adamawa State need to separate workshops and laboratories and organize work into departments as part of the strategies for organizing resources for effective teaching and learning.

Conclusion

Secondary school management encompasses planning, organizing, coordinating, stimulating and supervision. One basic problem faced by administrators of schools deals with their ability to identify planning areas and then organize work into teachable units. More often than not, a lot of skill is needed to effectively carry out these administrative functions. In Northern Senatorial Zone of Adamawa State, the strategies for the effective management of secondary schools were determined. Planning work into units, planning the school year, planning lesson and class schedules have been found to be very effective strategies for enhanced secondary school management. Similarly, organizing work into depts., organization of laboratory and organization extracurricular activities are all important strategies for effectively managing secondary schools. To enhance school administrators' management skills therefore, the study suggests as follows:

1. School administrators need to undertake refresher courses so as to update their knowledge and skills.
2. Government needs to provide a conducive school environment so that administrators can functionally utilize their knowledge and skills.
3. Administrators need the support of parents and all stakeholders in the education enterprise in order that they may succeed in their tasks of managing the schools.

Finally, teachers must give maximum support to administrators in their effort to provide effective leadership in the schools. Students on their part must not engage in any social vices. They and the prefects among them must learn to produce a peaceful school atmosphere so that learning can take place. It is only when these steps are taken that the strategies for managing the schools can be effective when put to use.

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