

Dichotomy in the Implementation and Formulation of Educational Policies in Public Primary Schools in Delta South Senatorial District of Delta State, Nigeria.

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Abstract.

This article examines the Nigerian National Education Policy in the Delta Senatorial south District of Delta State- Distortions in Formulation and Implementation. The population of this study comprised of all the Head teachers in the public primary schools in Delta South Senatorial District of Delta State. A sample of 160 Head teachers was drawn using a stratified random sampling technique. Data were collected and analyzed using the chi-square contingency table with a significance level of 0.05. Results showed that male and female Head teachers do not differ in their perception of dichotomy in educational policy formulation and implementation. Also, experienced and less- experienced Head teachers do not differ on factors that influence the implementation of education policies and programmes. Among other things, the document recommends that policy makers should stop playing politics through education policy and ensure that education policy is implemented effectively and efficiently.

Keywords: education policy, dichotomy, program implementation, Head teachers, primary school.

Introduction.

Global Policy on Education as a Human Right of the United Nations declared access and participation in education a fundamental human right of all citizens of the world (Odukoya, 2009). To this end, the greatest investment a country can make in the development of its economic, social and human resources is education (Aminu, 2006). Further, Odukoya noted that "the relationship between education and development is well established". Education is now internationally accepted as a key indicator of development, and in recognition of this importance, governments around the world have made commitments in their respective countries to Education Policies and Citizens' access to Educational Opportunities. Education in Nigeria is of vital importance to the development of the country. It is one of the social policies used by the government to enhance and improve the well-being of the citizens (FRN 2014). Over the years, Nigeria has been committed to education in the belief that reducing

illiteracy and ignorance will provide the basis for accelerated national development. In this context, education policies have been reviewed and maintained by the Government of Nigeria about three times, under the supervision of the education sector at three levels of government- federal government, state government and state governments local education authorities (Imam 2012). The Federal government primarily formulates policy, manages the education sector, and directs state and local governments to act in accordance with regulations set by the federal government. The primary objective of education policy is to ensure the continued growth and development of education desired by society. According to Edem(2006), these educational policies are implemented to meet the wishes, needs and aspirations of a group of people, a community and a nation as a whole . In fact, the development of an education policy lays the foundation for its implementation, which, according to

Olagbaju(2014), is probably the most important aspect of planning .

Planning is usually the action that follows policy formulation but precedes implementation. Unfortunately, education policy and achievement of goals are incompatible due to implementation constraints. As a result, many development plans were implemented haphazardly or abandoned halfway. In this context, dichotomy simply means that there is a difference between what a person says and what they do. However perfect a policy may be, its implementation may reveal certain imperfections. Okoroma (2006) asserts that educational policy and goal achievement are incompatible due to the constraints of timing . In fact, looking at our schools, we have the impression that what is put in place is very different from what we have on paper. Recognizing the important role of education in national development, the Nigerian government has embarked on the formulation of various educational policies and programmes. For example, Universal Primary Education (UPE) of 1976 and the current Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme are aimed at making education accessible to all school-aged children. During this time, the 6-5-4 program came into effect and after some time it was abandoned and the 6-3-3-4 education system was introduced. However, the 6-3-3-4 plan was introduced in September 1999, ushering in the 9-3-4 system. According to Ifeluni (2015), our education system is constantly subject to experimentation and policy disruption, resulting in policy inconsistency.

Similarly, the implementation of educational policies and the achievement of quality education are hampered by various factors. Some of the problems associated with this dilemma include lack of sufficient data to implement plans, lack of coordination among stakeholders, insufficient funding, corruption and lack of continuity in political commitments (Aleyideino 2000). Ojuma and Egwuyenga (2015) also point to poor infrastructure, lack of qualified teachers, embezzlement of funds and facilities by school administrators, lack of interest in education and other forms of corruption in the sector of education as the scourges of the poor implementation of education policies. In fact, there are endless contradictions between Nigerian education policy and its implementation.

Statement of the problem.

Before 1977, Nigeria had an education policy inherited from the United Kingdom. This policy is unpopular because it does not satisfy the country's national aspirations. Continuous efforts are being made to improve the quality of the national education system through the formulation of various education policies. Policy documents have been revised to ensure that policies respond to the challenges faced by the government in power and ensure that the education sector supports the government's development goals. In other words, the individual becomes a healthy and efficient citizen. Individuals are fully integrated into the community and equal opportunities for access to primary, secondary and higher educations are offered to all citizens of the country, both inside and outside regular schools (Federal Government of Nigeria 2006). Unfortunately, there are growing complaints about the poor state of education in Nigeria. Imam noted that "despite changes that have resulted in three revisions to the national education policy, the education gap between northern and southern Nigeria continues to widen in the west, with the Muslim-majority north at the train". While education in the south has made great progress, the development of education in the north has been slow and backward due to religious and cultural issues. There also appear to be gaps in policy formulation and implementation. Odukoya (2009) opines that, "for three decades, the state has failed to implement the national education policy. Therefore, this study will examine the gap between education policy and programme implementation in Delta South Senatorial District of Delta State, Nigeria.

Significance of the Study.

The importance of this research will improve the quality of the national education system through the development of various educational policies. Policy documents have been revised to ensure that policies respond to the challenges faced by the government in power and ensure that the education sector supports the government's development objectives. This study identifies gaps in Nigerian education policy, challenges associated with policy implementation and how these challenges can be overcome. As a result, policy makers will be able to design and articulate comprehensive education policies and find ways to implement them effectively. The study will have important implications for governments,

education policy makers, school administrators, teachers and students. The findings of this study will also serve as excellent resource materials for researchers and policy makers who can delve into issues affecting education policy in Nigeria.

Purpose of Research.

The purpose of this research is;

1. Investigate Dichotomy in Educational Policies and Programmes Implementation in primary schools in Delta South Senatorial District.
2. Identify the factors determining the implementation of educational policies in Delta South Senatorial District of Delta State.

Research Question.

The following research questions guided the research:

1. What is the relationship between the dichotomy of educational policies and the implementation of programmes in primary schools in Delta South Senatorial Districts of Delta State?
2. What is the relationship between factors influencing the implementation of educational policies and programmes in primary schools in Delta South Senatorial District of Delta State?

Hypotheses.

The following hypotheses were tested in this study:

1. There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of male and female Head teachers on dichotomization of educational policies and programmes implementation in

primary schools in Delta South Senatorial Districts of Delta State.

2. There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of Experienced and Less-Experienced Head teachers on factors that influence the implementation of educational policies and programmes in primary schools in Delta South Senatorial Districts of Delta State.

Methodology.

The study used a correlative design. The population consists of all the Head teachers in public elementary schools in the Delta South Senatorial District. The researcher used a stratified random sampling technique and the sample consisted of 160 Head teachers. The researcher used a self-designed questionnaire called the two-part Dichotomy of Education Policy and Programme Implementation (DEPPI). Section "A" contains information about the personal data of respondents, and section "B" contains information about bias in the implementation of policies and programmes in the field of education. The scale was verified by experts from the Ministry of Education and reliability was determined by the test-retest method, with a reliability coefficient index of 0.76. The researcher(s) operated the device with the help of three trained research assistants who are also elementary school teachers. A total of 160 questionnaires were distributed and collected. During the analysis of the data collected, tables were constructed to summarize the information received from the participants through the questionnaire items. The chi-square contingency table was used to analyze the data on the probability value of 0.05 Significance level.

Results Presentation.

Research question 1: What is the relationship between the dichotomy of education policies and programmes implementation in primary schools in Delta South Senatorial Districts of Delta State.

Hypothesis 1. There is no significant difference between male and female Head teachers on dichotomization of educational policies and programmes implementation in primary schools in Delta South Senatorial District of Delta State.

Table 1: Test of significant difference between male and female Head teachers on dichotomization of educational policies and programmes implementation.

	Level of Relationship				Row Total	X2 Value
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree		
Male Head teachers	34 (33)	53 (55)	10 (10)	06 (06)	103	0.29
Female Head teachers	17 (18)	32 (30)	05 (05)	03 (03)	57	
Colum Total	51	85	15	09	160	

Significant at 0.05. $df=3=7.82$

The result of the data analysis presented in the contingency table above reveals that there is no significant difference between male and female Head teachers on dichotomization of policies and programme implementation. The calculated chi-square value of 0.29 which is lower than the critical value of 7.82 at $df=3$ at 0.05 level of significance, validates the above assertion. Therefore, we accept the null hypothesis that states that, there is no significant difference between male and female Head teachers on dichotomization of educational policies and programmes implementation in primary schools.

Research Question2: What is the relationship between the factors that influences the implementation of educational policies and programmes in primary schools in Delta South Senatorial Districts of Delta State.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant difference between Experienced and Less- Experienced Head teachers on factors that influence the implementation of educational policies and programmes in primary schools in Delta South Senatorial Districts of Delta State.

Table 2: Test of significance difference between Experienced and Less- Experienced Head teachers on factors influencing the implementation of educational policies and programmes.

	Level of Differences				Row Total	X2 Value
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree		
Experienced Head teachers	26 (26)	42 (44)	10 (08)	04 (05)	82	1.7
Less- Experienced Headteachers	25 (25)	43 (41)	05 (07)	05 (04)	78	
Colum Total	51	85	15	09	160	

Significant at 0.05. $df=3=7.82$

In grouping Head teachers into experienced and less experienced categories, the mode, median and mean were calculated for their reported years of headship experience. The mode was 10 years, the median 10 years and the mean was 11 years. Consequently, 10 years was chosen as the dividing line. Those heading school for more than 10 years were classified as experienced while those heading school for 10 or less years were regarded as less experienced. The data in table 2 is relevant to the second hypothesis. The analysis of the data shows that the computed value of 1.7 is lower than the critical value of 7.82 at 0.05 level of significance. This implies that both experienced and less experienced Head teachers do not differ on their perceptions of factors that influence educational policies and programmes implementations. Therefore, the null hypothesis is hereby accepted.

Discussion of Findings.

The results of this study in research question one and hypothesis one denote that both male and female Head teachers agreed that there is dichotomy in the formulation of education policy and curriculum implementation. This means that education policy is formulated with little or no implementation. This finding is consistent with Okoroma (2006) who argues that many shortcomings in the implementation of national education policy depend on the failure of the federal government to implement most of the measures it takes to ensure that the policies are achieved. To him, educational policies are very perfect on paper but implementation is the major bottleneck. Thus, this study reveals that there are many inconsistencies between educational policy and curriculum implementation in the Nigerian primary education system.

The results of research question two and hypothesis two denote no significant difference between experienced and less experienced Head teachers on factors that influence the implementation of educational policies and programmes in primary schools. They agreed that certain variables inhibit the government from implementing educational policies. This conclusion is consistent with Aleyideino (2000) who stated that, the often existing gap between policy development and implementation needs to be studied to identify the factors that limit the effective implementation of education policy. Ifeloni (2015) again added that the problem with our education system is not a lack of policies, but a lack of political

will to implement such policies. As a result, many development plans were implemented haphazardly or abandoned halfway. Therefore, the implementation of education policy is hampered by many factors.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made:

1. Adequate planning should be done to determine the availability of educational resources before any education policy is developed.
2. Political leaders should stop politicizing education and allow the education program to operate for a reasonable length of time before introducing another education program into the country.
3. The government should incorporate awareness campaigns aimed at sensitizing members of the public on Nigerian education policies. The government should initiate a public outreach, which will use key education policy information.
4. Establish for researchers and key government officials the importance of the policy development and implementation process - Annual professional seminar/training course.

Conclusion

Education is an integral part of every individual and society as a whole. It is a weapon capable of fighting against social inequalities and poverty. Education contributes to the stability and sustainable development of a country. Primary education is the only way to change the country, so the Nigerian government should ensure that education policies are effectively implemented. However, the findings of the study suggest that while Nigerian leaders continue to hide under the umbrella of a clearly articulated national education policy, there are many inconsistencies between education policy and the implementation of the program, giving the impression that all is well in the education system.

Limitations of the study.

Some of the limitations encountered in this study include:

1. The sample size seems too small to make assumptions about all primary schools in Nigeria. Therefore, it is difficult to generalize the results of this study.

2. Use of questionnaires for information gathering- Problems with misrepresentation of facts, falsification and interpretation of questionnaires, and for research purposes are common.
3. Research is restricted due to financial constraints preventing researchers from accessing all schools in the Senate area.

Contribution to knowledge

The findings of this study highlight that education can ensure the sustainable development of a country through the effective implementation of national education policies. Thus, governments can provide the necessary resources to ensure the implementation of education policies formulated on the basis of these observations.

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