



## **Towards Effective Teaching and Learning in Nigeria Secondary Schools: Strategies, Challenges and Prospects**

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### **Abstract**

This paper examined the administrative strategies, challenges and prospects in teaching and learning in Nigeria Secondary Schools. The paper emphasized on the meaning of Administration, the concept of strategies, effective teaching and learning, strategies for improving teaching and learning and importance of administrative strategies in the school system. The topic under discussion actually suggests the needs for administrative strategies in the school system. This implies that the school system in realizing its aims and objectives, the administrative strategies must be put in place. Strategies on school advancement demand collective effort of all stakeholders in the educational system. In the same vein, the deployment of human and material resources and how these resources can be put into effective use in improving the school system should be an utmost priority to the stakeholders in the educational industries. The paper concludes that to enhance effectiveness and to realize the aims and objectives of educational system, those challenges of school administrative management must be adequately addressed.

**Keywords:** School, administration, strategies, teaching and learning, prospects, challenges, system.

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Administration is an integral part or an important aspect of human organization such as hospital organization, business enterprises, church, industrial firms and educational institution for the achievement of stated objectives. Educational institution (School) cannot realize its objective without adequate and effective administration of its human and material resources. In strategizing administratively, human and material resource must be utilized adequately. Although, human resource are the manipulators of materials resource, that is, they organize and put material resources that is, they organize materials, into proper use in order to bring about effectiveness in the system. Effective teaching and learning can only take place in a school where the teachers are equipped with necessary instructional materials, facilities and equipment. Administration is the process of controlling directing, budgeting, planning, coordinating the human and material resource of an organization so as to achieve desired organizational objective. It's crucially needed for maintaining and expanding the relevance,

effectiveness and productivity of complex institutions. The survival of any educational institution is dependent on the quality of administration service available and this administrative service is majorly with human and material resources.

Obviously, the goal of school administration are to be achieved through full deployment of the human and material resource, especially, the principal must be equipped with human resource management skills, financial/facilities management skill, school community relation and their responsibilities. Ogbannaya<sup>[1]</sup>, opined that administration as a component part of management concerned with facilitating the accomplishment of the objective of an organization through systematic management of constraint and careful utilization of the available limited resource. This implies that organizations especially educational organization that want to realize its objective should incorporate sound and effective administrative strategies for managing and utilizing scarce resources. Thorough understanding the scope of school administration, help to improve the school system, of course, school system basically

centered on teaching and learning and optimizing these variables and the major concern of any serious minded school administrator.

Administrative strategies can be seen as well as organized, planned series of actions or ways through which the available resources are managed and utilized for the achievement of specified objective. According to Inyang<sup>[2]</sup>, Administrative strategies can also be referred to as those procedures adopted by administrators or head of an institution for managing and reorganizing of human and material resource to attain the goals of the institution. Invariably, all these material resource that provide service which facilitate teaching and learning, this could refer to "school plant". School plant constitutes the school location/ school building, equipment in the school and other material resource provided in the school for the purpose of enhancing teaching and learning. Onwurah<sup>[3]</sup> sees school plant as the school building, the playground, equipment and other material resources provided in the school to facilitate effective teaching, learning operation. In other words, school plants comprise all the material resource in the school that enhances teaching and learning. As part of the administrative strategy Onyediji<sup>[4]</sup> maintains that the quality of education that children receive bears direct relevance to the space interpretation of the school curriculum. The programmes of the school are expressed through the school site/ the building, playgrounds/ the arrangement and design of the building. Therefore, school plant should be properly maintained for its continual existence and uninterrupted services. Strategically school heads or principals should imbibe those management skills in terms of school plant to ensure the realization of school objectives.

Strategies are ways and means of achieving goals and objective. Therefore to ensure improvement of school administration and service, the various stakeholders have their role to play namely: the government, the school managers/administrators, the teachers, the student, parents and the society at large, since the schools are required to meet the society needs<sup>[5]</sup>.

The strategy is to ensure that the administrative structure of the school and each individual member of administrative staff are well placed to make an ongoing and highly effective contribution to the business needs of the school and to provide a truly excellent service both internal and external. This boils down to effective teaching and learning in the school as the cardinal objective of the school system.

Anyanwu<sup>[5]</sup> opined that the strategy is written on the understanding that policies and guidance document that are available within school system will be incorporated into administrative planning for good practice.

Administrative strategies are the ways or modalities school principal or school heads put in place to ensure excellent service in the school system. The overriding aim of the administrative strategy is that the administrative support staffs provide excellent service

to the school. This will entail reacting to the strategic planning of the school in a positive and proactive way, and devising method and working practice which will support the school in its management and administrative process. The school should develop a number of strategies to plan and support its business and day to day activities.

School administrative strategy will need to provide the capacity to deliver an excellent service, through appropriate management and staff development, adequate resources and frameworks within the school that facilitate and encourage effective working at all levels and for all types of staff.

Administration according to Ogbonnaya<sup>[1]</sup> sees administration as a process which entails the utilization of human, financial and material resource in maximizing the organizational goals. In other words, the main purpose of educational administration is the coordination of both human and material resources toward the realization of some predetermined objectives.

Okai<sup>[6]</sup> buttressed that school as a formal organization arises out of a deliberate effort of the association of persons who desired to accomplish a common goal. He further states that the attainment of the overall goals of the school organization require the mobilization of both human and material resource. Peretomde in Ibara<sup>[7]</sup> opined that educational administration as a process concerned with implementation of educational plans, programme or policies in the educational enterprise. Okeke in Okoroma<sup>[8]</sup> refers educational administration as the process concerned with using methods, principles and practice to establish, develop and execute the goals, policies, plans and procedures necessary to achieve the objectives of education. Administration implies directing and controlling of human and material resources in order to achieve organizational goals.

Administration occurs in every organization be it social, economic and political organization. Educational administrator or school administrator is that person who is concerned with implementing educational plan, programme or policies in the educational enterprise such as the principal in the case of secondary schools.

In every administration or management involves strategies. Strategies are ways and means of achieving goals and objectives. In this case, it is behold on the school administrator/managers, teacher etc. to adopt appropriate modalities to ensure improvement in the system. According to Inyang<sup>[2]</sup> strategies are referred to as a general programme of action implying commitment of emphasis and resources to attain broad objective of the organization. Strategy as a long term master plan of how a company or organization will pursue its mission, it establishes the general direction in which a company or organization will move. This means that administrative strategies are well organized, planned series of action, ways or procedures through which the

available resource are managed and utilized for the achievement of organizational predetermined objectives. Administrative strategies could be seen as those actions, behavior or attitudes which administrators adopt in order to carry out their administrative roles.

Administrative strategies entails reacting to the strategic planning of the school in a positive and proactive way and devising methods or ways and working practice which will support the school in its management and administrative process. The institution ought to develop a number of strategies to plan and support its business and day to day activities. The administrative strategy of the school need to provide the capacity to deliver an excellent service, through appropriate management and staff development, adequate resources and frame work within the school that facilitate and encourage effective working at all levels and for all types of staff.

In educational administration, according to Enyi<sup>[9]</sup>, there are numbers of procedures or processes that assist the administrator in carrying out their day to day activities and any administrator who ignores these processes is likely to encounter problems in the task of school administration. He further explains that the focus is on such processes as planning, organizing, coordinating, stimulating and evaluating.

Obi<sup>[10]</sup> buttressed that one of the core process of administration is decision making and that effective administration requires rational decision making which will lead to the selection of the best way to reach an expected goal. He further suggested that the school administrators should be able to use administrative decision making theory the same way a practicing doctor is able to use the theory developed by researcher in biological laboratories.

### Conceptual Clarification

In this section, the following concepts will be discussed for clarity:

- Effective teaching and learning in secondary school
- Administrative strategies for improving teaching and learning
- Importance of administrative strategies in schools system
- Challenges of effective teaching and learning in Nigeria secondary schools.
- Prospects of effective teaching and learning.

### Effective Teaching and Learning in Secondary Schools

Effective Teaching and Learning have been a central focus of any educational institution of learning. In fact, it is the primary duty of any educational administrator or school head, to ensure that there is effective teaching and learning and to achieve this/ he or she must marshal out or work out modalities to achieve that.

These modalities are known as strategies. It is common understanding that the essence of administrative strategies in a school system is to bring about effective teaching and learning. It is an effective teachers, school administrators that carry out effective teaching which result to an effective learning, the school system is an environment established for the purpose of giving education to individuals who are referred to as learners. Therefore, one key factor in this process is the teacher. His primarily assigned role in the education process is teaching whereas the individuals under him are supposed to learn. Therefore, Teaching is often meant to as the activity of the teacher by which knowledge in a particular subject is passed to the learner in the institution of learning.

Moreso, learning on the other way round is the process by which a person (learner) behavior is relatively permanently changed as a result of what he has been taught that is, experience<sup>[11]</sup>. Obviously, when teaching is not well done, learning will not take place effectively. Therefore, effectiveness as it implies refers to how well the objective or aim of an exercise have been achieved at the end of a giving period of activity. Teaching and learning too many people or individuals have different divergent views. To some individuals, teaching is the putting together all the teachers' activities around the learners which cause him to change his behavioral pattern relatively permanently and in a desire direction. If the teacher does him or her work well, then the learner will learn. If on the other hand, the child fails to learn, it implies that the teacher has not taught well. This theory explains that a teacher cannot say that he has taught if the learner has not learnt, this, school of thought believe that effective teaching can be conceptualized as a form of teaching that foster a relatively permanent change in the behavior of learners in specific ways owing, entirely to the effort of the teacher.

### Administrative Strategies for Improving Teaching and Learning

Administrative strategies are the recognized pattern or modalities in which school administrator put in place to bring about improvement in the school system. It is widely known that the cardinal objective of an institution of learning is to ensure effective teaching and learning. Therefore, there are a lot of strategies to be put in place to ensure a successful output, these include:

#### Educational Policy

Okoroma<sup>[12]</sup>, opined that a policy reveals an administrator's intentions for a period in the future and are decided in advance of time.

According to Okoroma<sup>[8]</sup> that educational policies are initiative mostly by government that determine the direction of the educational system of a local government area/ state or a nation, and that in Nigeria many educational policies in 1960, and some of them have contributed immensely toward the educational advancement of the country.

Obviously the school administrators (principal/ head teacher, provost, rector, vice chancellor) are expected to have adequate understanding of the new national educational policy. The goals and objective must be well understood for accomplishment. Since the primary objective of school is to achieve teaching and learning/ strong emphasis should be placed on the application of good policies that will gear toward realizing the pre-determine objective of the school. The new vision of education in the new national education policy should be seriously pursued by all schools with emphasis on innovation, effectiveness and efficiency must be given the priority they deserved.

### Curriculum Development and Implementation

According to Ogunsaju<sup>[13]</sup>, explains that a curriculum contains many intentions, such as what aspects of learning student should develop, the means of education to be used to assess learning, the criteria according to which student will be admitted to the programme, the material and equipment to be used, and the qualities required of teachers. It involves intentions to promote learning.

The curriculum used in the school is very important to school effectiveness. Proper implementation of curriculum in the school enhances and promotes quality teaching and learning. This can be adequately be done when the school administration have adequate knowledge of the curriculum specially its mode of application and implementation. Having known, Anyanwu<sup>[14]</sup> posed the following questions:

- Are schools using the current national policy on education?
- Are copies of national curriculum available in schools?
- Are schools implementing the curriculum fully or partially to enable the students understand and appreciate our values, beliefs, new innovations and development needs?
- Is the curriculum used in conformity with WAEC/ NECO/ NERDC curriculum guidelines?

In other hands, it is believes that if the guidelines stated above are properly answered and followed strictly, it mean that there will be quality teaching and learning in the school environment. Anyanwu<sup>[14]</sup> also suggested that every member of the school system needs to ensure that school curriculum is strictly followed and therefore the role of the school administrator or manager and teachers becomes imperative in this regards, that teachers should be trained on the use of the new curriculum.

### Facilities Management

Facilities in the school can also be referred as school plant. It referred to as educational facilities. These include school building/ classroom, laboratories, workshops, libraries etc., teaching aids and their

software in the form of magnetic tapes, films. Onwurah<sup>[3]</sup>, describes school plant as the school buildings, the play grounds and the equipment and other material resources provided in the school to facilitate effective teaching and learning operation. Castaldi in Ogunu<sup>[13]</sup>, refers school plant as those things of education which enable a skillful teacher to achieve a level of instructional effectiveness that far exceeds what is possible when they are not provided. Onyedeki<sup>[4]</sup>, explains that the quality of education that children receive bears direct relevance to the availability of physical facilities and overall atmosphere in which learning takes places.

Therefore, the school plant should suit the scope of the curriculum and methods of instruction. Onwurah<sup>[3]</sup>, asserts that school plant play an important role in the development of the three domains of Blooms Taxonomy of educational objectives namely; cognitive, affective and psychomotor. School facilities and equipment are very important for the achievement of educational objective. In other hands, proper maintenance of these school plants is necessary for their productivity.

School administrator / Managers represent the key institutional authority with direct responsibility to ensure that learning environment enhances student's effective learning.

School plant management is one of the administrative strategies or roles of school administrator. Importantly, the actual role of school managers in the area of facility management is maintenances. School administrator should determine the maintenance strategies considering the fact that the available resources must be preserve in order to prolong the useful life of the school plant and in enhancing teaching and learning.

### Decision Making in the School

One of the major roles of school administrator is that of decision-making. Decision making is the core process of administration. Okoroma<sup>[8]</sup> explain that in education, quality or standard cannot be higher than the ultimate decision made on educational resources including implementation of decisions.

Decisions are made and implemented every day in schools. However, to ensure that rational decision are made and double standard are not applied in decision making, all the school stakeholders should be allowed to make decisions as at when due. It is the key to any organization whether formal or informal. For any educational institution to ensure effective teaching and learning, vital strategy like making appropriate decision must be adhere to, especially in line with teaching and learning which is the major cardinal objective of any institution of learning. Ololube<sup>[15]</sup> explained that decision is an intellectual processes resulting in the selection of a course of action from among several alternative scenarios, that every decision making



process produces a final choice (whether an action or opinion/position) as its output. Decision making could be referring to choosing from the several available alternatives. School administrator cannot do without decision making as long as he or she remains the school administrator (principal, head teacher).

### **In-service training for school administrators/teachers and staff motivation**

In-service training for school administrators and teachers is an organization (institution of learning) planned efforts to help employees to acquire job related knowledge, more skills, and abilities with the behavior with the aim of applying these on the job. It is a common believe that "no education system can be stronger and better than the quality of its teachers". The importance of the human factor in the school system can never be overemphasized. Recruitment is the art of getting the right people to the right positions at the right time. But this does not end at the recruitment. It involves staff appraisal, promotion and career development among others. Therefore, for effective teaching and learning, in-service training becomes a strategy and critical for all school managers (principals/ teachers, inspectors/supervisor etc.).

In other hands, this will enable them to have mastery of the subjects they teach, acquire relevant teaching skills and keep abreast of the developments in educational sector. Teachers' professionals' development should be institutionalized as it is the case with other professionals.

According to Ogunsaju<sup>[13]</sup>, that different educators needs different trainings and that there are various types of in-service training available to educators, which includes;

- Induction needs: this means that as soon as teachers are posted to school, the principal or whoever is in charge is expected to carry out orientation for such teachers. It is not enough for any school system to recruit and select teachers; they must be harmonized to the assigned work, the environment and with other members of the school units.
- Extension needs: these needs are based on people needs or teacher's needs to enable them increase their potentials in the work.
- Refreshment needs: this has to do with a course of study and supervised practicum focused on what teacher need to know and be able to do to teach successfully. For example teacher education refresh (T E R) programme.
- Conversion needs: this is in form of promotion from lower level to higher level.
- Professional needs: staff motivation in a school is a major force for staff satisfaction, job performance and productivity. Motivation is a driving force.

Armstrong (2001) maintained that motivation as all the factors that influence people to behave in certain ways'. In other hands, motivation is a vital factor which leads to effectiveness and efficiency among teachers. Attractive salaries, regular promotion/ study leave and in-service training are motivators for teachers.

### **Importance of Administrative Strategies in a School System**

Most importantly the viability of any institution of learning is anchored on the quality of administrative services available. Administrative services have to do with strategies applied in ensuring that the cardinal objective of a school is achieved and that is, teaching and learning. Strategies can be seen as modalities put in place by the school administrator to achieve the pre-determined objectives. Therefore some importance of administrative strategies or good administration is as follows:

Okai<sup>[6]</sup> stated thus;

- Discerning and influencing the development of educational goals and policies
- It stimulates and direct the development of educational programmes designed to achieve pre-determined educational goals and policies.
- Help in mobilizing human and material resources toward the attainment of educational goals.
- Help in establishing, organizing and coordinating the activities aimed at planning and implementing the educational programmes.
- Helps in monitoring and evaluating the educational programme with a view to ensuring that the programme is in line with set standard.
- Help in providing an environment for the realization of educational goals.
- Help in ensuring maximum utilization of human and other resources for the attainment of school goals.

### **Challenges of Effective Teaching and Learning in Nigeria Secondary Schools**

In this context, challenges here refer to problems confronting effective teaching and learning and these challenges include:

**Unqualified teachers:** It is obvious that teacher who is academically incompetent and unsound cannot produce competent and sound students. He cannot give what he does not have. This situation is a problem to the growth of school system as well as attainment of educational goals and objectives. For teaching and learning to be effective, the quality of teachers teaching in Nigeria secondary schools must be given priority attention.

In support of this view, Ishumi, Nyirenda, Heymen, Ikejiani in John (2013) suggests that for teaching and learning to thrive, dynamic processes of interaction between a teacher, a learner and the subject matter is crucial.

A teacher is required to make frantic effort toward the expansion of his knowledge of his own subject matter in order to improve his teaching technique as well as communicating appropriate knowledge, skills, manners and moral to the learners.

**Teachers' Truancy:** The word truancy means to be unsteady. Teachers' truancy is a negative attitude which negates productivity of performance (effectiveness). It means unsteadiness of a teacher. Nyabuto (2007) established that teachers' truancy contributes greatly to the ineffective (poor) performance of the learners, a condition that will make teachers not to be able to cover the syllabus appropriately. To a large extent, possess serious challenges to teaching and learning. It slows down achievement of educational goals and objectives.

**Inadequate Motivation among Teaching Staff:** One of the commonest challenges of teaching and learning is the issue of teachers' inadequate motivation. That is, when the teachers teaching in the schools are not given incentives that will propel them to do more work to enhance better productivity? It is believe that poor salary and allowances, poor job attitude, inadequate teaching and learning facilities affect quality delivery. This is to a large extent the reason why much is not achieve in the education industry because of less regard to implementation of education policies. Mobeji (2003) established that teacher motivation has been truncated by some numerous education changes, greed on the part of school. Consequently, if motivation and morals are low, teaching and learning bears the brunt.

**Inadequate Teaching Staff:** This has to do with the inability to provide adequate number and better teachers to carry out the responsibilities for which he is paid for. Mobeji (2007) explains that inadequate teachers are one of the challenges of effective teaching and learning in Nigeria Secondary Schools. Mayeku (2009) maintained that inadequate teaching staff leads to heavy burden on the quality services rendered.

**Prospect of Effective Teaching and Learning:** The primary aims and objectives of institution of learning is to achieve effective teaching and learning. These acts of teaching and learning are carried out by the teachers' not just teachers but trained and qualified teachers with great passion for the job. Effective teachers have high expectation for students and place strong emphasis on the attainment of academic goals. Effective teaching and learning has to do with plan purposefully selection of appropriate contents for students. Effective teaching and learning is about or aim at engaging hearts and minds in the process of learning. Effective teaching and learning inspire students to compete amongst themselves to take on tasks that seem to exceed their grasp, discover and develop their real mental as thinkers; effective teaching and learning create a positive change of the student behavior and also create meaningful constructive relationship.

Also, effective teaching and learning provide academic tasks that are mastered easily by most students. Present

content in a small steps and move students at a reasonable pace, effective teaching and learning is concerned with the contents of the learning task to be achieved, the social and physiological processes enabling the content to be imparted successfully. Effective teaching and learning brings about students' high academic performance, maintenance of minimum academic standard.

## CONCLUSION

The study so far explained that an administrative strategy for teaching and learning is very crucial in any school system. If the suggested Administrative strategies are implemented in full with renewed enthusiasm, there is likely hope for improvement in the school system. Strategies for school improvement demand collective efforts of all the stake holders in the education sector. Administrative strategies as an instrument for effective teaching and learning in the school system is a task often carried out by the school administrator. Obviously, effective teaching and learning can also take place in a school where the teachers and students are equipped with necessary instructional materials, facilities and equipment, better policies, curriculum development and implementation, in-service training/ personal development, proper decision making, school communication, quality control for school improvement, staff motivation, adequate funding etc. These strategies enhance teaching and learning in the school system.

## Suggestions

**The following suggestions are made:**

- In improving teaching and learning in the school, all hands should be on deck (Stakeholders) to ensure that the system moves on.
- School heads/Teachers should be properly trained in the area of school management.
- School heads/ teachers should from time to time at a regular basis update their knowledge on the current trends in education.
- School should establish a standing committee on endowment to facilitate and encourage funding in our schools.
- Resourcefulness and prudent management.
- Decisions should be in line with the prevailing circumstances in order to improve the school system.

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