

## Management of Resources for the Improvement of Secondary Schools Education in Rivers State

<sup>1</sup>Obi, Chidinma Evan (Ph.D), <sup>2</sup>Ogbuagu, Ifeoma Gracious

<sup>1</sup>CSS Aluu, Kelga, Rivers State, Nigeria.

<sup>2</sup>Department of Educational Management, Faculty of Education, University of Port Harcourt, Nigeria.

*\*Corresponding Author: Obi, Chidinma Evan (Ph.D), CSS Aluu, Kelga, Rivers State, Nigeria.*

### ABSTRACT

*The efficiency as well as the effectiveness of an institution lies heavily on the quality of the available resources. Resources are necessary inputs in the school system that enables the survival and improvement of educational programmes. Management of these resources is concerned with the planning, organizing, controlling and coordinating these educational resources such as the human, material, financial, time and information for the improvement and achievement of secondary school educational objectives. This paper reviewed management of school resources for the improvement of secondary schools education. It further examined the various concepts of resources, relevance of resources and management of these resources for secondary schools improvement. Issues associated with resource allocation and management were highlighted and solutions were proffered on how to overcome these issues so as to ensure improvement in the school system.*

**Keywords:** Resources, school manager, management, secondary schools, improvement.

### INTRODUCTION

Of all the onerous problems facing secondary school education, none is as persistent as the one relating to the management of resources. Resources are limited and need to be properly utilized to support educational improvement objectives to a great extent. They are inputs in school systems which should be distributed, utilized and managed by the school manager to encourage successful teaching and learning in order to optimize school output and continuous school improvement. A review of previous educational programmes in the country shows that resource inadequacy has been a significant element in chronic education failings (Fafunwa, 1974; Taiwo, 1985; Aiyepoku, 1989 in Agabi, 2010)

Resources are elementary implements required in the real performance of tasks and for the growth and development of human organization (Agabi, 2010). She went on to say that the composition of a resource is determined by its uses to which it can be fixed into. Resource can be seen as a stream apparatus from which benefit is produced. Advantages of resource deployment may include increased wealth or wants, proper functioning of an institution or a

system. Dearth of resources is not always the problem holding schools back; in countless situations, it is the nonexistence of management, proficiency and the resolve to use resources effectively. Nwankwo (2014) corroborated that the degree of productivity and attainment in an institution depends on the sufficiency of the planning and usage of resources.

Nwankwo further said that some institutions can achieve education objectives at the lowest possible cost (efficiency), while others cannot adequately accomplish stated education objectives even when they have enough resource. The disparity between both are in their method of allocation and use of available resources.

Secondary education occupies a strategic position in the education system. It serves as a 'producer' (input for tertiary level of education) and a 'consumer' (absorbs the output from primary level of education). According to the Federal Republic of Nigeria (2008:28), it was established to achieve various objectives, such as "inspire learners with a yearning for self-improvement and attainment of excellence, provide entrepreneurial, technical and vocational job-specific expertise for self-

reliance, commercial and economic development”.

Improvement as defined by Hornby (2010) is “the act of making something better; a change in something that makes it better, something that is better than it was before”. In the secondary schools, the principal is the administrator, the school head, the manager and the school business manager of the institution. He is supposed to possess the qualities and competencies required for coordinating the activities and resources in his institution. Bearing in mind that monies and amenities for school improvement are limited. Nwankwo (2014), averred that the school manager must create plans for ensuring incessant supply of these resources, which include arrangements for student’s admissions and placement, staff appointments development and deployment, and appropriate allocations, use and according of school funds.

Many secondary school managers cannot make their school functional but depend on government to provide funds for the management and maintenance of resources in the school environment. Even when the school managers generate these funds internally cannot provide chairs and tables for staff, seats for students, effect some minor repairs in the school buildings, paint their school buildings, and fence the school compound, etc. Notwithstanding the fact that government has indicated interest to support in the management of schools in Nigeria, especially in the areas of funding and provision of facilities, supervision of instruction, enforcement of school regulations, discipline, innovations, provision of housing for staff, school plant management, promotion of the school health etc.; yet studies have revealed that some school managers do not want the community to contribute in the school, due to terror of clash or complexes; thereby guarding themselves from facing challenges and competition which today’s school administration requires (Akinsola in Ezeani, 2012)

A situation in which school managers neglect administration of school resources for the improvement of secondary school learning will create the challenge of producing students that will not be useful with skills and competencies required in their society as stated in the secondary school objectives. In terms of measuring globally with their counterparts, they will be left behind due to the fact that they were

not exposed during their teaching and learning process with the various resources that would have impacted wider knowledge and skills on them. This paper, therefore, reviews management of school resources for the improvement of secondary school education. This work is separated into four sections. Section one is the introduction. Section two examines the various concepts of resources, relevance of resources and management of these resources for secondary schools improvement with section three discussing the issues associated with resource allocation and management. Section four deals with the way forward and finally the conclusion.

### CONCEPTS OF RESOURCES AND RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Resources have different meanings depending on the context in which it is applied. In my own view, resource is something that enables an individual or organization to reach their goals. Resources are those necessary inputs which an institution depends on for their survival and improvement. Adetoro in Asodike and Adieme (2014:2) opined that “resources are all the things that are used unswervingly and ultimately for the purpose of assisting, inducing or boosting spread or achievement of knowledge, proficiency, and skills”. Onuka (2009:615) stated that “resource is any means by which production and services are provided for the benefit of an organizational clientele or the profitability of the organization itself depending on whether it is a profit- oriented or a social service provider”. Enaohwo in Asodike and Jaja (2014) classified resources as physical and immaterial resources. The physical resources are human, substantial and economic, while the immaterial ones are time and objectives. Resources can be seen as those capital, materials, human beings, information and time that can be rationally used in teaching and learning process in order to accomplish the desired organizational vision and objectives. The efficiency as well as the effectiveness of an institution lies heavily on the quality of the available resources.

Babalola and Ayeni (2009) in Nwafor (2011: 2) as cited in Asodike and Jaja(2014:355) stated that “resource management is the organization of the resources existing in the education sector with the aim of producing eminent graduates in the system”. It therefore implies that resource availability and management is crucial for maintaining quality and improved standard in

every educational sector so that the goals of education will be achieved.

### RELEVANCE OF RESOURCES IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS

Planning and allocation of resources cannot be over emphasized, when a school puts in more resources for their institution to function efficiently and effectively will boost the image of the school as the performance standard of the school will improve beyond measure. Few years ago, numerous research studies have reported some significant results regarding the relationships between resources, educational productivity and improvement (Anyago, 2015; Akinsolu, 2012; Kingi, 2015)

Comparing a private school like, Graceland International School and Rumuapara Community Secondary School which is a public school, both in Rivers State. Private institutions are adequately equipped with all the resources that are required to expand the quality of education more than the public schools. The private secondary schools are well fenced with security men at the gate and at strategic parts of the school. Most of the trade and entrepreneurial subjects that has been included in the curriculum and was made one of the five compulsory subjects including computer studies are being done in the private schools. The resources like the teachers to teach those subjects, materials and equipment to be used in learning those subjects and even the finance and time to teach has been provided by the private secondary schools owners/managers to ensure that their students (products/output) will come out with those skills and knowledge that will help them in the future. Their classrooms and offices are well furnished to boost the physical energy of both the students and teachers which is one of the energies needed to deliver educational objectives.

But in the public secondary schools, computer studies that is a compulsory subject is not taught due to lack of resources. Most public senior secondary schools resolve to teach only marketing as an entrepreneurial and trade subject which is one of the five compulsory subject which includes English language, Mathematics, Civic education, Computer studies and one entrepreneurial/trade subject, because teaching this subject does not require much resources to deliver it. Any teacher that studied Business management can teach the subject. Much material and financial resources are not required too.

This implies that adequate administration of school resources will boost teaching and learning which will also lead to improved performance of students both at national and international levels of educational competitions and examinations.

### MANAGEMENT OF RESOURCES FOR SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

Management during the industrial revolution was concerned with how best to scientifically organize men and materials to ensure maximum profit for the employer. Current studies have discovered that management practices affect organizational outcomes absolutely or adversely (Agomuo, 2002; Ezeani, 1999; Hanson & Anderson in Akpotowo & Amahi, 2006 as cited in Ezeani, 2012).

Nwankwo (1979) in Nwankwo (2014:4) attempted to define management (in education) in a resources/results context as “the organization of resources (human, material and information) available for education and, judiciously using them methodically to achieve educational objectives”.

Management in education can be seen as the utilization and systematic coordination of available resources (human, material, finances, time and information) towards the achievement of stated educational objectives.

Management exists in any institute to make resources fruitful in order that the organization may achieve its objectives (Ezeani, 2012). Management stimulates actions, arranges, coordinates people and material resources for the accomplishment of institutional visions. Onwuchekwa in Ezeani (2012) defined management as the organization and utilization of all human and material resources in a particular system for the attainment of acknowledged objectives in the system.

From the above views, management of resources can be explained as the process of planning and deciding on how resources could be provided, managed, used and as well maintained for the improvement and realization of predetermined objectives.

It can be deduced that the school manager has five basic types of resources to manage in order to improve his secondary school education objectives. They are as follows: school financial resources, school material resources, school personnel/human resources, school time and information resources.

### SCHOOL FINANCIAL RESOURCES

Financial resources are the economic inputs available for and consumed on the education system (Asodike & Adieme, 2014). The major concern of school financial management relates to the school budget.

Nwankwo (2014) stated that budgeting is the identification, determination, allocation of, and accountability for the funds available for running the school programmes and services in accordance with the school's objectives. Cost budgeting is one of the most popular ways of budgeting.

The document produced after cost budgeting is called budget. Budgets may be stated in terms of time, funds, material, labour or other tangible elements that can be monetized. School financial plan helps in the coordination of the various units and departments towards the objectives of the school. It encourages judiciousness and heightens economy in the use of materials and also inhibits waste in that it limits costs to specific purposes and limits (Nwankwo, 2014). It then implies that every school manager should have or prepare a budget for his school every academic session so as to know how to manage his resources prudently in order to achieve his vision for his school.

### SCHOOL MATERIAL RESOURCES

Material resources are tangible facilities such as school plant and facilities like furniture, buildings, play-ground, modern educational electronic gadgets, teaching aids, computers, projectors, sports and musical equipment and many more, which can be used to accomplish educational goals. The school plant and facilities (materials) management involves the proper arrangement, maintenance and utilization of these material resources for the services of the school and in accordance with the objectives of the school.

However, Asodike and Jaja (2014) stated that the effective realization of set goals of an educational institution depends wholly on how effective the physical facility resources are allocated, utilized and managed in its production of goods and services. Facility and materials management requires the school manager working with a professional and planning team that will develop sound safety emergency procedures and policies that states the procedures for usage of the school material resources. Also, effort should be made for

proper maintenance of the school facilities so as to enhance its longevity.

### SCHOOL PERSONNEL/HUMAN RESOURCES

Other resources are unproductive if not directed and coordinated by human resource. The human element at work in education are the human resources. They consist of the students, teachers, administrative staff, non-academic staff, etc. These categories of human resources in the school are gifted with a range of abilities, talents and attitudes to encourage efficiency and maximize profit (Bratton & Gold, 2012). Their needs and the organizational needs should be properly managed to create an equilibrium that will yield maximum output for the organization.

Adesina in Asodike and Jaja (2014) averred that human resource management involves the recruitment of adequate and qualified staff, development and maintenance of the staff who would be able to willingly render effective and efficient educational services to the institution and society as a whole.

In the school environment, the duties and functions of the school personnel should be clearly arranged. These duties and functions should be matched with the staff personnel experience and training. These duties and functions depend on the nature and types of the school activities and programmes in the school (e.g. approved subjects, sports, music, drama, debates, dance, etc.). It can be in the form of duty roster (Nwankwo, 2014).

Training and retraining exercises should be organized for them with the use of latest technological equipment's (computers and projectors) and relevant teaching tools. A major issue is for the school managers to explore all the factors of job satisfaction and dissatisfaction in their effort to motivate the school staff.

To ensure adequate staff motivation schools manager will ensure that the task of classroom teaching or coaching in extra-curricular activities are made satisfying (Nwankwo, 2014: 236). Welfare packages of teachers should not be treated with laxity.

Money and worthy working condition/environment are two foremost motivating elements for workers. There should be a system in place to reward hardworking teachers and also encourage them to improve themselves by affording them the opportunities for further education with the result that the more ambitious teachers will not see the job and/or

the management as enemies in residence that are against their progress.

The school head should be seen by his teachers as a leader, teammate and associate. He should also, promote those features that produce decent human relations and group success.

### SCHOOL TIME AND INFORMATION RESOURCE

Time as a resource in educational institutions includes; time for delegation of duties and responsibilities, time for meetings, time for academic learning, time for extra-curricular activities, time for making phone calls and so on (Nwankwo (2011) in Asodike & Jaja ,2014).

There is also time for extra-curricular activities. That is the reason why most schools have a school calendar, school time table for teaching and learning. All these enable the school operation to be done effectively. Information is also fundamental to management.

People need information to do their jobs or to take action. Each person or group in an enterprise needs information in order to coordinate activities with others (Nwankwo, 2014).

It is held that most educational management glitches in Nigeria are traceable to insufficient information and a general deficiency of appropriate information management techniques (Okorosaye - Orubite, 2008; Akinwumiju & Agabi, 2008 in Agabi, 2010).

Nwankwo (1985) in Nwankwo (2014) stated it bluntly that in the management of schools today, when

*“in an era of information explosion, in an age when time has become a valuable and even a rare commodity and, in the modern technological society in which accuracy with speed and precision are assets, the uninformed, time-unconscious and imprecise manager/executive is as good as dead” (p.208).*

An adage stated that “time is money”, but one can say that time is more than money, because once it is lost it cannot be recovered. People especially in the organization that cannot manage their time resource properly will always complain that there is no time, while others can get a lot done all the time.

An efficient, executive manager has nothing like lack of time. No individual has an extra time in the whole day than the other. It all depends on how well the available time is planned. Just as

other resources are prudently managed, the same should be applied to time resource management.

Effective use of time, like any other skill can be learned. A school manager plans for virtually all the resources that are used in the institution, because failing to plan is planning to fail.

There are guides that can enhance a manager's effort to acquire the habit of proper time management. Setting up priorities especially for the achievement of the school goals.

The second step in the prioritization is to give detailed steps that may be necessary to effect those priorities. (Here he involves his staff, students, parent and even service providers to the school). The third major step is to allocate time (months, weeks, days, hours) for each of the steps (Nwankwo, 2014:242).

The school manager must also have a personnel time chart showing, in brief, what he intends to achieve on a weekly and daily basis, because an adage states also that “it takes time to save time”.

This can be done with our modern technologies such as the laptops, mobile phones that we use which have pre-programmed scales to slot in your activities and plans, if possible with alerts or we can use our diaries.

### CHALLENGES OF RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

To a large extent, resourcing in our educational institution has its pros and cons. A school as a social system made up of various inputs as resources (human, material, finance, time and information) which undergoes a process to arrive at finished products have their challenges and issues that surround its improvement and productivity.

Some of the issues in our secondary education programmes are inadequate planning for the allocation of resources, supply of educational resources, inadequate management of the staff personnel, and political constraints.

#### Inadequate Planning for the Allocation of Resources

Government budgetary allocation to education still falls below 26% recommendation by UNICEF for developing countries like Nigeria. This can be caused by so many reasons such as the economic situation of the nation and state, the relative importance attached to secondary education, the number of institutions being managed by the government and the various population of learners in public secondary

schools across the nation (Maduagwu & Nwogu, 2006).

### **Supply of Educational Resources**

In most cases in our various secondary schools, the supply of educational resources are either over supplied leading to wastage of resources or they are under supplied leading to shortage of resources. Nwagwu in Maduagwu and Nwogu (2006) confirmed that the resources in our schools in Nigeria are grossly insufficient.

This insufficiency of resources according to Kosemani in Maduagwu & Nwogu (2006), can make the most brilliant education plan useless and of no effect. Shortages in the supply of school resources could be as a result of school managers in their inability to make appropriate demand for resources needed in their schools.

Some of the school managers/ Principals intentionally reduce the population of the school as a means of reducing the money to be remitted into the coffers of the government.

On the issue of over-supply of resources (which results to wastages and underutilization), for instance, in the recent mass employment of 13,000 teachers in Rivers State, many people analyzed it as a waste, while some analyzed it as politics on the side of the Government.

That massive employment of teachers reduced most of the issues concerning the shortage of the teachers especially in the rural areas because most of the teachers were posted to the schools in their communities. On the other hand most of the schools in the urban areas have more than enough teachers.

### **Inadequate Management of the Staff Personnel**

School managers do not take cognizance of the importance of assembling, guiding, regular supervision and motivating qualified staff in their schools. In most cases, the staff are posted to the schools based on vacancies proposed by the school head or according to the staff positions provided for in the school budget (Nwankwo, 2014).

Getting qualified staff and as well determine what motivates them is essential because what satisfies a particular teacher can dissatisfy another teacher. The school managers should uphold and inspire those factors that create good human relations and group success for effective task performance.

### **The Politicization of Educational Leadership Positions**

This is a situation in which school managers are selected not by excellence and professional qualification, but by political kinship. If the school head is not proficient enough to manage his school resources under his care will mar or make his administration very successful.

### **SUGGESTIONS FOR PROPER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT IN SCHOOLS**

Based on the above discussions, the following suggestions are deemed necessary for the improvement of secondary school education through adequate resources.

#### **Availability of Finance**

School managers should enhance avenues for their schools to generate funds internally which can be through P.T.A. levies, uniforms, examination fees, local craft, environmental levy, etc. Moreover, all these funds should be judiciously put into use and not being diverted into their private pockets.

#### **Adequacy of School Resources**

School managers should ensure that resources are adequately provided by making their demands known to the appropriate office – Post primary Schools Board.

#### **Improving Supervision and Accountability Mechanisms**

There should be a thorough supervision of instruction and assessment of school facilities, which should be carried out on a regular basis in the secondary schools. There should be accountability mechanisms in the schools that will make the school managers not to misappropriate funds budgeted for the school.

School managers with the Schools Board Monitoring team should also set up correct teachers' incentives by linking pay or tenure directly to performance. It will also allow the school administrator to identify areas of resource requirement and upkeep.

#### **Professional Training**

School administrators should be professionally trained as to enable them to acquire adequate knowledge about educational resources and how to manage such relevant resources for any particular programme.

## CONCLUSION

It is obvious that effective management of school resources is highly indispensable and crucial to the attainment of secondary school education set goals. The relevance of school resources in our secondary schools cannot be over-emphasized. It should be planned and managed properly based on needs of the society and the goals of secondary school education so that the educational objectives for the improvement of secondary school will be accomplished.

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