

IMPEDIMENTS TO PRINCIPALS' EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT OF SECONDARY SCHOOLS FOR EMPOWERMENT AND JOB CREATION IN EKITI STATE

Ogunbiyi, Oluwadare Deji¹, & Dr. (Mrs.) Obano, J. Ezeimwenghian²

E-mail: dejiogunbiyi15@gmail.com, +2348034161962/
ezeimwenghian.obano@uniben.edu, Tel.: +2348027637225

Department of Educational Foundations and General
Studies, Joseph Sarwuan Tarka University, Makurdi, Nigeria

&

Department of Educational Management,
University of Benin, Edo State, Nigeria

Abstract

The study investigated the impediments to the school principals' effective management of Secondary schools for empowerment and job creation in Ekiti State, Nigeria. The study was guided by two research questions and two hypotheses. The study adopted the descriptive survey research design. The population of the study comprised all 189 secondary schools in Ekiti State as at (2022/2023 academic session). The study employed a proportionate stratified random sampling technique to select 128 school principals from a total population of 189 across the 16 Local Government Areas (LGAs) in Ekiti State. The instrument used for data collection for the study was a self-structured questionnaire titled "Principals' Impediments and Management of Secondary School Questionnaire, "(PIMSSQ)". The instrument was subjected to face validation by three experts. The data collected were analyzed using mean and standard deviation to answer the research questions, while the hypotheses were tested using the t-test statistics at 0.05 level of significance. The major findings of the study were that lack of skilled personnel and inadequate facilities were discovered as impediments to effective management of secondary schools for empowerment and job creation in Ekiti State. Based on the findings, it is recommended that both federal and state governments, along with non-governmental organizations, intensify efforts to address the issues of insufficient funding and inadequate facilities in schools. This is particularly important given that the program is capital-intensive and has the potential to significantly contribute to empowerment and job creation.

Keywords: Impediments, Principals, Management, Secondary schools, Empowerment, Job Creation

Introduction

The purpose of education in Nigeria has long been identified by the Federal Government of Nigeria (2013) in her National Policy on Education as the process that helps the whole man develop and change physically, mentally, morally and technologically. This is to enable him/her function effectively in any environment that he/she may find himself so as to become more productive, self-fulfilling and attain self-actualization. The Federal Republic of Nigeria also adopted education as an

instrument for National Development and change. According to Tyowuah & Chen (2019) it is believed that quality education is the key variable for the survival of Nigeria in the competitive economy. He further stated that parents, practitioners and policy makers agree that the key to transform the nation's economy is to improve quality of secondary education that would provide opportunity for a child to potentially acquire knowledge, skills and traits especially with more emphasis on secondary schools.

Despite all the glaring contributions of secondary education in Nigeria, Okoye & Arimonu (2016) regretted that Nigeria is yet to accord this type of education the attention it deserves. The authors note further that this is one of the key factors contributing to the increasing unemployment, poverty, and persistent crime rates in our society today. According to the Ilo (2004), the total number of young people (in the 15-29 age group) in developing country like Nigeria increased by 12.4% between 1993 and 2003, but youth employment rose by just 0.6%, it is obvious that young people are 3.5 times more likely to be unemployed than adult, this is because in years to come, the number of young people coming on to the job market in Nigeria will be steadily increasing. Sure! Here's a smoother and more polished version of that sentence: It is important to emphasize that by enhancing job seekers' access to both the formal and informal labor markets through quality training and effective labor market policies, the Nigerian government can make a significant impact in reducing unemployment and underemployment. As joblessness and underemployment among large sections of the population also have the potential to fuel conflict, vocational and entrepreneur training and labour market policy measures can contribute indirectly to conflict prevention and youth restiveness.

The role of job creation in enhancing youth empowerment cannot be underestimated. This informed why some countries of the world strive to create enabling business environments to support job creation, while another country like Nigeria has put up several social investment programmes that are believed to be geared towards job creation for youth empowerment. Job creation is a process by which the number of jobs in an economy increases. It is often referred to as a situation where government creates means and policies intended to reduce unemployment in a country or state. Ayeni (2021) defined job creation as the process of creating new jobs for the unemployed and the under-employed without necessarily displacing people who are already employed in other economic activities. Empowerment is the provision of increasing the capacity of individuals or groups of people to make choices desired actions and outcome in form of capacity building and training as well as provision of resource in form of material, financial support (Obano & Ogunbiyi, 2022). In essence, empowerment can be regarded as the act of providing opportunities for individual youths to develop their skills to become a problem solver and decision-makers without becoming a problem to the society.

There is no doubt that the role of creating a job in economic development cannot be under-estimated, the reason being that job creation whether in the form of a paid job or starting up a small business or large scale business is a product of economic growth that must have necessitated job creation in the first place. On the contrary, any country that decided to embark on massive job creation to empower

her citizens without it being necessitated by economic growth will soon go into recession. Sustained economic growth seems to enhance job creation; that consequently brings about economic development. The difference between a developed country and developing or under-developed country seems to be the capacity of the former to enhance job creation for the greatest number of her citizens, while the latter cannot enhance job creation because of the absence of sustained economic growth. Job creation for some countries might be full employment owing to some conducive environment that enables businesses to thrive, while job creation for other countries lack conducive business environment hence the greatest numbers of citizens are unemployed owing to an un-conducive environment that does not support full employment.

Nuru (2007) indicates that changes in a country's economy is required to prepare young people for the jobs of the future and secondary education have important roles to play in this process. Youth unemployment appears to be shooting up the sky because many of them lack "employability" skills that are often acquired from technical schools. As Edukugho (2004) notes that, youth unemployment moved from 4.3% in 1985 to 5.3% in 1986, to 7.0% in 1987 and jumped to 60% in 1997. The report shows that in 2003 primary school accounted for 14.7% unemployment, secondary school 53.6%, and tertiary schools constituted 12.4%. The nation's poverty level was put at 70% and more than 91 million Nigerians are said to live on less than one dollar per day. Most analysts agree that today's employers demand more skills than they did in the past (Yang, 2008). Oranu (2010) reports that the several factors that have contributed to the rising demand for skills in the labor market to include: technological and organizational change, trade, deregulation of key industries, and the decline of unions.

It must be noted that developing country such as Nigeria, need balanced development through all of the educational sectors in order to make significant progress in terms of national development through effective management of resources in the school. Anashie, Eteng, Ikwen & Basake (2018) note that the management of secondary education in Nigeria is besieged by a myriad of problems that are hindering it from attaining the laudable goals and objectives. The authors further maintain that the serious shortfall and inadequacies in education funding manifest in overcrowded classroom, lack of facilities and equipment, ill-equipped workshops, libraries and laboratories where they exist at all, which all combine to frustrate teaching and learning. In another research, Kajo & Ogunbiyi (2017) elucidate that problem of secondary education in Nigeria involves inadequate and low quality of teachers, negative attitudes of teachers, lack of good communication, inadequate and decay infrastructural facilities, inadequate supervision, over enrolment, government factor, student factor and prevalence of examination malpractice.

In recent years, the management of secondary schools has become an increasingly complex task, with principals at the center of efforts to improve educational outcomes. Across many schools, principals are faced with challenges such as limited resources, high student enrollment, inadequate infrastructure, and rising expectations from stakeholders. Despite these hurdles, there is a growing recognition of the pivotal role that school leadership plays in shaping the effectiveness of teaching

and learning processes. Principals are expected not only to administer day-to-day activities but also to act as visionary leaders who can foster a positive school culture, manage staff efficiently, and ensure academic excellence. However, the prevailing situation reveals that many secondary schools struggle with issues related to discipline, teacher motivation, and resource allocation, factors that directly impact the quality of education offered. In response, many principals have made deliberate attempts to adopt more strategic and participatory approaches to school management, aiming to address these challenges and drive school improvement.

In Ekiti State, Nigeria, secondary school principals face numerous challenges including inadequate infrastructure, limited funding, and outdated administrative practices, all of which hinder effective school management. These issues have significant implications for students' preparedness for life beyond the classroom, particularly in terms of empowerment and job creation. Despite these constraints, principals remain key agents of change and have begun adopting innovative strategies such as promoting entrepreneurial education, integrating vocational training, and engaging community stakeholders. This paper explores how, by overcoming these management impediments, principals can reposition secondary schools in Ekiti State as vital platforms for youth empowerment and sustainable job creation.

Statement of the Problem

Principals in Ekiti State face several impediments that hinder the effective management of secondary schools for empowerment and job creation. These include inadequate funding, lack of vocational and entrepreneurial training facilities, overcrowded classrooms, insufficient teacher motivation, and limited autonomy in decision-making. Additionally, outdated curricula that focus primarily on theoretical knowledge rather than practical skills further limit students' readiness for self-employment or entry into the labor market. These challenges not only affect the quality of education but also restrict principals' ability to implement innovative programs aimed at equipping students with the skills necessary for empowerment and job creation. This situation coupled with the pervasive phenomenon of government intervention in secondary school management related matter in Ekiti state tends to generate problems as to whether the principals of secondary schools are effectively executing their duties. In Nigeria today, it can be seen that many secondary school leavers are found roaming the streets of the Society without any means of livelihood. The increasing rates of poverty, unemployment and underemployment amongst secondary school leavers in Nigeria has made government and all stakeholders in the education to adopt and place emphasis on business and entrepreneurship training and development. Despite the recognized importance of effective school leadership in promoting student empowerment and job readiness, many secondary schools in Ekiti State continue to struggle with systemic challenges that limit principals' capacity to implement transformative initiatives. Issues such as inadequate funding, poor infrastructure, lack of vocational programs, and limited administrative autonomy persist, undermining efforts to align education with the demands of the labor market. This is why the researchers sought to investigate the impediments to principals' effective management of secondary schools for empowerment and job creation in Ekiti State, Nigeria.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to investigate the impediments to principals' effective management of secondary schools for empowerment and job creation in Ekiti state. Specifically, it sought to:

1. Determine if manpower factor impedes principals' effective management of secondary schools for empowerment and job creation in Ekiti state.
2. Establish whether lack of facilities impedes principals' effective management of secondary schools for empowerment and job creation in Ekiti state.

Research Questions

1. Does the manpower factor impede principals' effective management of secondary schools for empowerment and job creation in Ekiti state?
2. Does lack of facilities impede principals' effective management of secondary schools for empowerment and job creation in Ekiti state?

Research Hypotheses

- Ho₁: There is no significant difference between the mean scores of male and female principals as regards whether manpower factor impedes principals' effective management of secondary schools for empowerment and job creation in Ekiti state.
- Ho₂: There is no significant difference between the mean scores of male and female principals with regard to whether facilities impede principals' effective management of secondary schools for empowerment and job creation in Ekiti state.

Methodology

The study adopted the descriptive survey research design. The population of the study includes all the 189 public secondary schools principals in Ekiti State as at 2022/2023 academic session, (Directorate of Planning, Research, Statistics and Computer (DPRSC) unit, Ekiti State Teaching Service Board (TSB). The study employed a proportionate stratified random sampling technique to select 128 school principals from a total population of 189 across the 16 Local Government Areas (LGAs) in Ekiti State. Each LGA represented a stratum, and the number of principals selected from each was proportionate to the size of its population relative to the total. Within each LGA, simple random sampling was used to select individual participants, ensuring fairness and equal chance of selection. This method guaranteed comprehensive representation of all strata and enhanced the reliability and generalizability of the study's findings. The instrument used for data collection for the study was a self structured questionnaire titled "Principals' impediments and Management of Secondary School Questionnaire, (PIMSSQ)". The instrument was subjected to face validation by three experts, two from educational administration and planning, and one from test, measurement and evaluation. The experts were requested to assess the relevance of the items in addressing the research questions bearing in mind the purpose of the study. These experts, after scrutinizing the instrument, made very important observations and corrections. The data collected were analyzed using mean and standard deviation to answer the research questions, the decision level was determined by the use of criterion mean of 2.50 for items. Mean of 2.50 and above were considered

as agreed while mean that fell below 2.50 were categorized as disagreed, while the hypotheses were tested using the t-test statistics at 0.05 level of significance.

Results

Research Question 1: Does manpower factor impedes principals' effective management of secondary schools for empowerment and job creation in Ekiti state?

Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation of Responses of Male and Female Principals on how Manpower Factor Impedes Principals' Effective Management of Secondary Schools for Empowerment and Job Creation in Ekiti State

S/N	Item Description	Male Principals (81)			Female Principals (47)		
		X	SD.	Dec.	X	SD.	Dec.
1.	Poor in-service training for staff	2.22	0.67	Disagree	2.17	0.87	Disagree
2.	Arbitrary transfer of teachers	2.82	0.17	Agree	3.10	0.90	Agree
3.	Poor conditions of service for teachers	3.01	0.94	Agree	2.73	0.38	Agree
4.	Shortage of qualified personnel	2.79	0.85	Agree	2.08	0.61	Disagree
5.	No criteria for posting newly recruited teachers	2.11	0.40	Disagree	2.50	0.14	Agree
	Cluster Mean	2.59	0.60	Agree	2.51	0.58	Agree

Key: N = Number of Respondents, X = mean, SD = Standard Deviation, Dec. = Decision

Table 1 revealed showed responses of male and female principals on whether manpower factor impedes principals' effective management of secondary schools for empowerment and job creation in Ekiti state, with male principals disagreed with items 1 and 5 with mean scores of 2.22 and 2.11, but agree with item 2, 3 and 4 with mean scores of 2.82, 3.01 and 2.79 respectively. On the other hand, the female principals disagree with item 1 and 4 with mean scores of 2.17 and 2.08. However, with cluster mean scores of 2.59 for male principals and 2.51 for female principals respectively, its means that manpower factor was an impediment to the principals' effective management of secondary schools for empowerment and job creation in Ekiti state.

Research Question 2: Does lack of facilities impedes principals' effective management of secondary schools for empowerment and job creation in Ekiti state?

Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation of Responses of Male and Female Principals on how Lack of good Facilities Impedes Principals' Effective Management of Secondary Schools for Empowerment and Job Creation in Ekiti State

S/ N	Item Description	Male Principals (81)			Female Principals (47)		
		X	SD	Dec.	X	SD	Dec.
			.			.	
1.	Inadequate instructional materials	2.72	0.51	Agree	2.67	0.87	Agree
2.	Inadequate stationeries to disseminate information to staff and students	2.62	0.43	Agree	2.52	0.60	Agree
3.	General poor infrastructure	2.50	0.63	Agree	2.67	0.18	Agree
4.	Lack of transport facilities for staff and students	2.59	0.71	Agree	2.15	0.41	Disagree
5.	Inadequate practical and library facilities for staff and students	2.71	0.16	Agree	2.51	0.54	Agree
	Cluster Mean	2.62	0.48	Agree	2.50	0.52	Agree

Key: N = Number of Respondents, X = mean, SD = Standard Deviation, Dec. = Decision

Table 2 revealed the mean responses of male and female principals on how lack of good facilities impedes principals' effective management of secondary schools for empowerment and job creation in post covid-19 era in Ekiti state. The male principals agreed with all items to 5 with mean scores of 2.72, 2.62, 2.50, 2.59 and 2.71 respectively; while the female principals agreed with items 1, 2, 3 and 5 with mean scores of 2.67, 2.52, 2.67 and 2.51, but disagreed with item 4. However, with cluster mean scores of 2.62 for male principals and 2.50 for female principals respectively, this shows that lack of facilities impedes the principals' effective management of secondary schools for empowerment and job creation in Ekiti state

Test of Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant difference between the mean scores of male and female principals as regards whether manpower factor impedes principals' effective management of secondary schools for empowerment and job creation in Ekiti state.

Table 3: T-test Results of the Responses of the Male and Female Principals on how Manpower Factor Principals' Effective Management of Secondary Schools for Empowerment and Job creation in Ekiti State

Status	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	df	t-cal	t-crit	Sig.	Remarks
Male Principals	81	3.49	1.15	126	0.63	1.91	0.05	Accepted
Female Principals	47	2.89	1.64					

Table 3 shown the results of the t-test analysis of the mean difference between the mean scores of male and female principals with regard to how manpower factor impedes principals' effective management of secondary schools for empowerment and job creation in Ekiti state. The t-cal value was 0.63, while the critical value was 1.91 at 0.05 level of significance and the degree of freedom of 126. The hypothesis was accepted. This therefore implies that there is no significant difference between the mean scores of male and female principals with regard to whether manpower factor impedes principals' effective management of secondary schools for empowerment and job creation in Ekiti state.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant difference between the mean scores of male and female principals with regard to lack of good facilities impedes principals' effective management of secondary schools for empowerment and job creation in Ekiti state.

Table 4: T-test Results of the Responses of the Male and Female Principals on how Lack of Good Facilities Principals' Effective Management of Secondary Schools for Empowerment and Job creation in Ekiti State

Status	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	df	t-cal	t-crit	Sig.	Remarks
Male Principals	81	2.57	0.67	126	1.83	1.96	0.05	Accepted
Female Principals	47	2.48	0.71					

Table 4 above presented the results of the t-test analysis of the mean difference between the mean scores of male and female principals with regard to how lack of good facilities impedes principals' effective management of secondary schools for empowerment and job creation in Ekiti state. The t-cal revealed a value of 1.83, while the critical value is 1.96 at 0.05 level of significance and with a degree of freedom of 126. The hypothesis was accepted. This therefore implies that there is no significant difference between the mean scores of male and female principals with regard to how lack

of good facilities impedes principals' effective management of secondary schools for empowerment and job creation in Ekiti state.

Discussion of Findings

The finding from the study shows that manpower factor militates against the principals' effective management of secondary schools for empowerment and job creation in Ekiti State. This finding corroborated the finding of Ode (2006), who found that manpower-related factors such as poor in-service training for staff, low job morale among the teachers, poorly qualified teaching staff, scarcity of manpower in schools, and regular attraction of staff out of the teaching profession militate against effective secondary school management in Ekiti State. Similarly, Akinyemi (2010) emphasized that inadequate manpower development and poor professional support systems significantly hinder school administrators' ability to implement sustainable empowerment and job creation strategies in the education sector. The author further notes that without a deliberate policy focus on staff motivation, continuous training, and recruitment of qualified personnel, secondary schools will continue to struggle with achieving their educational and socioeconomic objectives. This underscores the urgent need for government and educational stakeholders to invest more in manpower development as a strategic tool for enhancing school leadership effectiveness.

Findings from Table Two established that lack of good facilities militates against the principals' effective management of secondary schools for empowerment and job creation in Ekiti State. This finding is in agreement with the submission of Nwagwu (2004), who asserted that one of the most critical factors in balancing qualitative and quantitative educational growth is the availability and adequacy of infrastructure, such as buildings, learning facilities, machinery, and equipment. Without proper infrastructure, it becomes increasingly difficult for school principals to create an enabling environment that promotes effective teaching, learning, and skills acquisition necessary for empowering students and fostering job creation. Furthermore, the hypotheses tested in the study revealed no significant difference between the mean scores of male and female principals regarding how inadequate funding, manpower factors, and lack of good facilities impede their capacity to manage secondary schools effectively. In line with these findings, Oyesola (2000) also emphasized that the condition of physical facilities in schools directly affects administrative efficiency and student outcomes. When schools are poorly equipped, principals face challenges in executing educational policies and programs that are crucial for student empowerment. These findings underscore the urgent need for government and stakeholders in the education sector to prioritize infrastructural development and maintenance as a foundational strategy for enhancing school management and achieving the goals of empowerment and employment generation.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, it was concluded that the primary challenges hindering principals' effective management of secondary schools for the purposes of empowerment and job creation in Ekiti State include shortage of qualified manpower, lack of funds, and insufficient infrastructural facilities. These impediments significantly limit the capacity of school principals to implement programs and policies that could enhance skill acquisition, entrepreneurship education, and overall

student empowerment. Addressing these issues is therefore critical to improving school management outcomes and fostering an environment that supports sustainable job creation among secondary school graduates in Ekiti state.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. **Provision of Adequate Infrastructure and Resources:** The Secondary School Management Boards should prioritize the provision of essential infrastructural facilities, modern equipment, and relevant teaching and learning materials to secondary schools. This will enhance the ability of principals to effectively manage their schools and implement programs geared towards student empowerment and job creation.
2. **Capacity Building and Recruitment of Qualified Personnel:** To address manpower challenges, the Management Boards should organize regular training and professional development programs for school principals and staff, while also ensuring the recruitment of qualified personnel. Strengthening human capacity will improve school management efficiency and foster the development of skills necessary for entrepreneurial education.

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