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ASSESSMENT OF IMPLEMENTATION OF STRATEGIC PLAN OF IMPROVING BUDGETARY ALLOCATION AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT FOR MANAGEMENT OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN ANAMBRA STATE

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ABSTRACT

The study examined the implementation of strategic plan of improving budgetary allocation and community involvement for management of public schools in Anambra State. Two research questions guided the study and two hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance. Descriptive survey research design was used for the study. The population of the study consisted 274 public secondary school principals and 119 State Ministry of Education officials. The sample size for the study consisted of 197 respondents (137 principals and 60 officials of State Ministry of Education) drawn through stratified random and purposive sampling techniques. Instrument for data collection was Implementation of Strategic Plan Questionnaire (ISPQ). Mean and standard deviation were utilized to answer the research questions, while t-test was used to test for the hypotheses. The findings of the study showed that Ministry of Education officials and principals disagreed that ministry of education implemented the strategic plan of improving community involvement for effective management of secondary schools. Based on findings, it was recommended among others, that The State Ministry of Education should pay regular visits to schools for continuous monitoring and guidance of implementation of strategic plan of improving community involvement for effective management of school.

Keywords: Budgetary Allocation, Community-Involvement, Implementation, Management, Public Schools and Public Schools

Introduction

Strategic education sector plan, with corresponding effective management, provides strategic direction for education systems, enabling better resource allocation and utilization to meet societal needs and state goals. It ensures efficiency and effectiveness by setting clear objectives, reducing waste, allowing objectives, and also allowing for timely responses to emerging challenges. Education development experts and strategists are unanimous in recommending the use of strategic education sector plans (SESP) for driving educational development for better

results and return on efforts and investments (Austin, 2020).

A well-implemented or effectively managed educational sector plan leads to higher quality education, improved access and the development of human capital, which are crucial for socio-economic growth and societal transformation especially as it pertains to the growing generation captured in the State secondary schools. The place of appropriate implementation of any strategic plan for achieving determined objectives cannot be undermined or left to chance. Any plan, however laudable, needs to be properly implemented before the objectives intended are achieved. Ogunode and Ahaotu (2020) noted that the implementation is a term used for the systematic ways of executing programme, policies and project. Implementation is the act of carrying out planned actions, policies and programmes.

The failure to implement education strategic plans effectively can negatively impact student outcomes, teacher morale, and the overall quality of education. With Anambra State's failure to regain the first position she attained in West African Secondary School Certificate Examination (WASSCE) in 2014, one wonders whether the dwindling students' outcomes in high stakes examinations like WASSCE can be attributed to lack of effective implementation of the strategic education sector plan of 2011-2020 in areas such as budgetary allocation and community involvement.

Community involvement in school management promotes collaborative efforts in running school affairs for effective delivery of instruction. Community participation cannot be effective and efficient without mass mobilization (Karen & Warren, 2022). Mass mobilization of community members to participate in school management could be facilitated through functional school-based management committees (SBMCs). Anambra State Government (2011) pointed out that non-functional SBMCs and inactive community participation in school management are the root causes of low level of community involvement in educational management. Thus, strategic intervention of Anambra State Government for improving community involvement in school management include; building capacity of SBMCs in schools, involving communities in all educational activities even in planning as well as advocacy, sensitization and mobilization of community members. The SBMCs could source funds for the development of secondary schools through community involvement. Although community involvement is needed for effective school system as highlighted above, however Government funding and budgetary allocation is a cardinal issue in education.

Funding and budgetary allocation are crucial aspects of education and school management. Funding refers to the provision of financial resources, typically from an external source, for a specific purpose or project in education or schools (Okonta & Osakwe, 2024). Budgetary allocation is the process of distributing those funds across different departments, projects, or expenses within the education sector or schools in order to meet strategic goals. Funding can

also be viewed as the act of providing money for a specific purpose, often by a government, organization, or private individuals (Nwamaradi, 2022; Ohaegbunam & Chijioke, 2023).

Effective budget allocation helps maximize the return on investment in education. It aligns spending with strategic objectives or purposes and improves financial control. Zakayo (2018) observed that there was implementation of strategic plan of community involvement through parents funding of school strategic projects, maintaining of students' discipline and motivation of students and teachers. In the light of the above, and in harmony with the Anambra State education sector strategic plan 2011; budgetary allocation means the allocation of funds by the Government made through the State budget, wherein all the Government's expenditure for the education sector strategic plan is reflected (Eka-Ette & Owan, 2019). The intervention objectives of significantly increasing capital budgetary allocations to the education sector from 6.1% to 25% in Anambra State SESP, if properly implemented, will lead to effective management of Anambra State secondary schools. Thus, the focus of the present study is the assessment of implementation of strategic plan of improving budgetary allocation and community involvement for management of public schools in Anambra State.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to assess the implementation of strategic plan of improving budgetary allocation and community involvement for management of public schools in Anambra State. Specifically, the study sought to assess:

1. The implementation of Anambra State education sector strategic plan of improving community involvement for effective management of public secondary schools in Anambra State.
2. The implementation of Anambra State education sector strategic plan of improving budgetary allocation for effective management of public secondary schools in Anambra State.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. Was the strategic plan of improving community involvement for effective management of secondary schools in Anambra State from 2011 – 2020 implemented by the Ministry of Education?
2. Was the strategic plan of improving budgetary allocation for effective management of secondary schools in Anambra State from 2011 – 2020 implemented by the Ministry of Education?

Hypotheses

1. There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of principals and Ministry of Education officials on whether the Ministry of Education implemented the strategic plan of improving community involvement for effective management

of secondary schools in Anambra State from 2011 – 2020.

2. There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of principals and Ministry of Education officials on whether the Ministry of Education implemented the strategic plan of improving budgeting allocation for effective management of secondary schools in Anambra State from 2011 – 2020.

Method

The study utilized descriptive survey design. The population of the study was made up of 274 public secondary school principals and 119 State Ministry of Education Officials of not less than grade level seven. The participants for the study consisted of 197 respondents (137 principals and 60 officials of State Ministry of Education). The composition of the participants of the study was carried out using purposive and proportionate sampling techniques. Proportionate sampling technique was used to draw 50% of the total population of the study. The choice of 50% is in line with the recommendation of Bisht (2024) that 30% to 80% of a population above 100 is an adequate representation of the entire population. Data were collected with the use of Implementation of Strategic Plan Questionnaire (ISPQ)". It has two versions. One version of the ISPQ was responded to by the principals while the other was responded to by officials of State Ministry of Education. ISPQ was adapted from Anambra State Education Sector Strategic Plan, thorough review of related literature and information gathered from consultation of experts. ISPQ have two clusters namely; one and two which were based on the two areas of strategic plan assessed in this study: Cluster one focused on improving community involvement for effective management of secondary schools, Cluster two sought information on improving budgetary allocation for effective management of secondary schools. Clusters one and two have six items apiece. ISPQ was adapted in such a way that the participants for the study choose one of the four response categories of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD) with numerical indices of 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively. ISPQ was face-validated by three experts who were lecturers in Faculty of Education, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. The reliability of ISPQ was ascertained with the use of Cronbach alpha method. This was accomplished through the administration of copies of ISP to 30 Public Secondary School principals and 20 officials of the State Ministry of Education in Enugu State. The internal consistencies of the items in ISPQ gave reliability coefficient values of 0.75 apiece for clusters one and two. The adequacy of this value was confirmed by the recommendation of Shrestha (2021) that the adequate threshold value for Cronbach alpha should be >0.70. The researcher administered copies of the ISPQ to the participants alongside with five research assistants who are secondary school teachers in Anambra State. The administration and subsequent retrieval of the copies of the ISPQ spanned three weeks with 88% and 95% return rate of completed ISPQ for

principals and Ministry of Education officials respectively. Analysis of data from research questions was done using mean and standard deviation while hypotheses were tested at o.o5 level of significance using t-test. In answering the research questions in this study, mean ratings that fall below 2.50 were taken as low or very low extent and any mean rating of 2.50 or above were taken to indicate very high or low extent. Standard deviation was utilized to ascertain the homogeneity or otherwise of the respondents' mean ratings. In testing the null hypotheses, where t-calculated is equal to or greater than t-critical at 0.05 level of significance and the appropriate degree of freedom, the null hypothesis was accepted but if otherwise, it was not accepted.

Results

Research Question One: Was the strategic plan of improving community involvement for effective management of secondary schools in Anambra State from 2011 – 2020 implemented by the Ministry of Education?

Table 1: Mean Ratings and Standard Deviation Scores of Principals and Ministry of Education Officials on the Implementation of Strategic Plan of Improving Community Involvement for Effective School Management

S/N	ITEMS	Principals (N=121)			Ministry of Education (N=57)		
		Mean	SD	Remark	Mean	SD	Remark
1.	Constituting of school-based management committee in schools	2.63	1.08	Agree	3.16	0.94	Agree
2.	Organizing sensitization programme to stimulate school community partnership	2.31	1.11	Disagree	2.28	1.10	Disagree
3.	Involving community in planning the school budget	2.07	0.97	Disagree	2.21	1.06	Disagree
4.	Mobilization of community members in formulating school programmes	2.01	1.02	Disagree	2.02	0.92	Disagree
5.	Advocacy of community members participation in building projects	2.01	1.02	Disagree	2.02	0.92	Disagree
6.	School community partnership in providing facilities	2.25	1.03	disagree	2.39	1.15	Disagree
	Cluster Mean	**2.25**	**1.05**	**disagree**	**2.44**	**1.03**	**Disagree**

Results in Table 1 reveal that all the items with the exception of items 1 and 4 have mean ratings below the cut off mean of 2.50 in respect of both the principals and Ministry of Education officials. This shows that the respondents disagreed that how Ministry of Education implemented the strategic plan of improving community involvement for effective management of secondary schools in Anambra State include; organizing sensitization programme to stimulate school-community partnership, involving community in planning the school budget, Advocacy of community members participation in building projects and School-community partnership in providing

facilities. The principals and Ministry of Education officials recorded mean scores above the cut-off mean of 2.50 for item 1 indicating agreement that constituting school- based management committee in schools is how Ministry of Education implemented the strategic plan of improving community involvement for effective management of secondary schools in Anambra State.

The standard deviation scores for principals and Ministry of Education officials range from 0.92-1.15 indicating that the respondents are homogeneous in their responses. The cluster mean of 2.25 and 2.44 for principals and Ministry of Education officials respectively which are below 2.50 indicated that Ministry of Education do not implement the strategic plan of provision of library facilities for effective management of secondary schools in Anambra State.

Research Question Two: Was the strategic plan of improving budgetary allocation for effective management of secondary schools in Anambra State from 2011 – 2020 implemented by the Ministry of Education?

Table 2: Mean Ratings and Standard Deviation of Principals and Ministry of Education Officials on the Implementation of Strategic Plan of Improving Budgetary Allocation for Effective School Management

S/N	ITEMS	Principals (N=121)			Ministry of Education (N=57)		
		Mean	SD	Remark	Mean	SD	Remark
7.	Enhancing the constituting of school-based management committee for schools	2.63	1.08	Agree	3.16	0.94	Agree
8.	Boosting the Planning of school budget proposal	2.31	1.11	Disagree	2.28	1.10	Disagree
9.	Releasing appropriations for capital and operating expenditures in schools	2.07	0.97	Disagree	2.21	1.06	Disagree
10.	Investing in school infrastructure	2.01	1.02	Disagree	2.02	0.92	Disagree
11.	Allocating funds for technology integration in teaching /learning	2.01	1.02	Disagree	2.02	0.92	Disagree
12.	Provision of competitive remuneration for teachers.	2.25	1.03	disagree	2.39	1.15	Disagree
	Cluster Mean	**2.25**	**1.05**	**disagree**	**2.44**	**1.03**	**Disagree**

Results in Table 2 reveal that all the items with the exception of items 7 and 8 have mean ratings below the cut off mean of 2.50 in respect of both the principals and ministry of education officials. This shows that the respondents disagreed on how ministry of education implemented the strategic plan of improving budgetary allocation for effective management of secondary schools in Anambra State include; funding infrastructure and resources (such as building new school blocks, classrooms, hostels, renovating existing ones, and equipping them with necessary facilities and technology integration, salaries, entitlements and welfare, programmes and initiatives (such as special education for students with disabilities,

gender-responsive education initiatives, etc) administrative operations (such as managing the education system in Secondary Schools in Anambra State) accountability and transparency (school-based management, planning, monitoring and evaluation systems), and funding for indigent students in rural areas.

The principals and ministry of Education officials recorded mean scores above the cut-off mean of 2.50 for item 11 indicating agreement that accountability and transparency is crucial on how Ministry of Education implement the strategic plan of improving budgetary allocation (funding for effective management of secondary schools in Anambra State. The standard deviation scores for principals and ministry of education officials rage from 0.92-1.15 indicating that the respondents are homogeneous in their responses. The cluster mean of 2.25 and 2.44 for principals and ministry of Education officials respectively which are below 2.50 indicated that ministry of education does not implement the strategic plan of improving budgetary allocation for effective management of secondary schools in Anambra State.

Hypothesis One: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of principals and Ministry of Education officials on whether the Ministry of Education implemented the strategic plan of improving community involvement for effective management of secondary schools in Anambra State from 2011 – 2020.

Table 3: t-Test Analysis of the Mean Ratings of Principals and Ministry of Education Officials on whether the Ministry of Education Implemented the Strategic Plan of Improving Community Involvement for Effective Management

Variables	N	$\bar{x}$	SD	t-call	t-crit	df	∞	Remark
Principals	121	2.25	1.05	-1.20	1.96	176	0.05	Not Significant
Ministry of Edu.	57	2.44	1.03					

Results of data analysis presented on Table 3 reveal that the t-calculated value of -1.20 is less than t-critical value of 1.96 at 0.05 level of significance and 176 degree of freedom. Thus, the null hypothesis is not rejected. Therefore, the difference in the mean ratings of principals and Ministry of Education officials on how the Ministry of Education implemented the strategic plan of improving community involvement for effective management of secondary schools in Anambra State was not significant.

Hypothesis Two: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of principals and Ministry of Education officials on whether the Ministry of Education implemented the strategic plan of improving budgeting allocation for effective management of secondary schools in Anambra State from 2011 – 2020.

Table 4: t–Test Analysis of the Mean Ratings of Principals and Ministry of Education officials on whether the Ministry of Education Implemented the Strategic Plan of Improving Budgetary Allocation for Effective Management

Variables	N	x̄	SD	t-call	t-crit	df	∞	Remark
Principals	121	2.25	1.05	-1.20	1.96	176	0.05	Not Significant
Ministry of Edu.	57	2.44	1.03					

Result of data analysis presented on Table 4 reveal that the t – calculated value of – 1.20 is less than t- critical value of 1.96 at 0.05 level of significance and 176 degree of freedom. Thus, the null hypothesis is not rejected. Therefore, the difference on the mean ratings of principals on how the ministry of education implemented the strategic plan of improving budgetary allocation for effective management of secondary schools in Anambra state was not significant.

Discussion

Findings on the community involvement for effective school management revealed that Ministry of Education officials and principals disagreed that ministry of education implemented the strategic plan of improving community involvement for effective management of secondary schools in Anambra State. It was reported that constituting of school-based management committee in schools is the only way Ministry of Education has implemented the strategic plan of improving community involvement for effective management of secondary schools in Anambra State. This contradicted the finding of Zakayo (2018) which found out there was implementation of strategic plan of community involvement through parents funding of school strategic projects, maintaining of students' discipline and motivation of students and teachers. The difference in geographical location could account for this contradiction.

It was further found out that the difference in the mean ratings of principals and Ministry of Education officials on how the Ministry of Education implemented the strategic plan of improving community involvement for effective management of secondary schools in Anambra State was not significant. The similarity in principals and Ministry of Education officials mean scores could indicate the true state of affairs in connection to the Ministry of Education implementation of the strategic plan objective of improving community involvement for effective management of secondary schools.

The findings on the budgetary allocation/funding for effective school management revealed that Ministry of Education officials and principals disagreed that ministry of education implemented the strategic plan of improving budgetary/funding for effective management of secondary schools in Anambra State. It was also reported that constituting of school-based management committee in schools is one of the ways Ministry of Education appeared to have implemented the strategic plan of improving budgetary allocation/ funding for effective management of

Secondary Schools in Anambra State. This contradicted the finding of Zakayo (2018) which found out there was implementation of strategic plan of budgetary allocation through government and parents funding of school strategic projects, maintaining of infrastructure and motivation of teachers. The difference in geographical location could account for this contradiction.

It was further found out that the difference in the mean ratings of principals and Ministry of Education officials on how the Ministry of Education implemented the strategic plan of improving budgetary allocation for effective management of Secondary Schools in Anambra State was not significant. The similarity in principals and Ministry of Education officials mean scores could indicate the true state of affairs in connection to the Ministry of Education implementation of the strategic plan objective of improving budgetary allocation for effective management of secondary schools.

Conclusion

Regular evaluation enhances accountability, improves resource allocation, and supports continuous improvement, ultimately leading to better outcomes, increased efficiency and more effective risk management. Based on the findings of this study, it was concluded that strategic plan of improving budgetary allocation and improving community involvement for effective management of secondary schools in Anambra state has not been adequately implemented.

Recommendations

In line with the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. The State Ministry of Education should pay regular visits to schools for continuous monitoring and guidance of implementation of strategic plan of improving community involvement for effective management of school.
2. Efforts should be made by the ministry of education to ensure that education stakeholders participate alongside the government in making funds available for education and educational development.

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