



Research Paper

The Role of Principal in Managing and Implementing Policy on Education in Public Secondary Schools in Anambra State.

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Abstract

This paper specifically examined the role of principals in managing and implementing policy on Education in Public secondary schools in Anambra State. The paper also looked into the possible challenges facing principals in public secondary school. However, this necessitates the introduction of some roles of principal which covers many different areas including leadership, teacher evaluation, furthermore, being an effective principal is hard work and is also time-consuming. A good principal is balanced within all her roles and works hard to ensure that he is doing what he feels is best for all constituents involved. It has also been discovered that restricting factors such as, Time is a major limiting factor for every principal. A principal must become efficient at practices such as prioritizing, scheduling, and evaluating the students Performance and so on. Mindful of other issues, the following recommendations were made; Ministry of Education should collaborate with relevant stakeholders to enhance principals' role in managing and implementing policy on Education through leadership strategies, intensive and annually seminars, workshops and conferences.

KEYWORD: Principals, managing, implementing, policy on Education, Secondary schools

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I. INTRODUCTION

A principal is regarded as the leader and head of secondary school. Principal plays a vital role in administering the school with teaching and non teaching staff, teaching equipment and other facilities that will improve teaching and learning. The principals as the chief accounting officers of the schools are saddled with the responsibility of ensuring judicious use of school funds through several financial management competency. Alia and Iwuoha (2014) opined that principals' financial management competency for effective administration of schools include prioritizing financial allocation according to needs, ensuring that budgets replicate agreed goals and objectives, delegating the mechanism of financial matters to capable staff, keeping close check on financial matters delegated to staff, working within the constraints of the school budget, planning and sourcing for funds for school development, keeping accurate financial information about the school and giving fair financial position of the school.

Ugwu, Chime and Agu (2020), noted that financial management competencies are required of principals to ensure that the desired goals or outcomes of education are achieved with the least possible resources. The principals demonstrate financial management competency through sourcing and ensuring prudence in the use of school funds. Managing can be defined as use of one's powers to lead, guide, or dominate. Also managing implies taking responsibility for the acts and achievements of a group. . The term implementation can be defined as getting a newly developed or significantly changed system to be used by those

for whom it was intended. Educational policy are the principles and government policy-making in educational sphere, as well as the collection of laws and rules that govern the operation of education systems and also it consists of the principles and policy decisions that influence the field of as well as the collection of laws and rules that govern the operation of systems. Managing and implementing educational policies by principals will ensure proper allocation of the limited funds for effective school management. Effective school management is the outcome of utilization of the available resources in the school. Secondary education is the phase in the education continuum responsible for the development of the young during their adolescence, the most rapid phase of their physical, mental and emotional growth. It is at this very education level, particularly in its first cycle, where values and attitudes formed at primary school are more firmly ingrained alongside the acquisition of knowledge and skills. In the conceptualization of Olorunsola and Belo (2018), effective school management is the ability of principal to optimally utilize both human and material resources available to school in order to achieve educational goals. According to Adeyemi (2011), effective school management is concerned with ensuring efficiency and effectiveness in the use of the available human, physical and financial resources together with the ability to combat any constraints that might hamper the achievement of the objectives. Effective management of human, material, time and financial resources is highly crucial for institutional sustainability and the development of school action plan (Umar, 2019).

ROLES OF PRINCIPALS IN MANAGING AND IMPLEMENTING POLICY ON EDUCATION

School leader

A school principal is a primary leader in a school building. A good leader always leads by example. A principal should be positive, enthusiastic, have his hand in the day-to-day activities of the school, and listen to what his constituents are saying. An effective leader is available to teachers, staff members, parents and community members. He stays calm in difficult situations, thinks before acting, and puts the needs of the school before himself. An effective principal steps up to fill in holes as needed, even if it isn't a part of his daily routine. According to Derrick Meador (2017), there are vital roles principals play in the managing and implementing of Educational Policies;

Chief Disciplinarian

A large part of any school principal's job is to handle student discipline. The first step of having is to ensure that teachers know the expectations. Once they understand how the principal wants them to handle disciplinary issues, then her job becomes easier. Disciplinary issues the principal deals with will mostly come from teachers, there are times that this can take a large part of the day. Her role in student discipline is much like that of a judge and a jury. A principal decides whether the student is guilty of a disciplinary infraction and what penalty he/ she should enforce. An effective principal always documents discipline issues, makes fair decisions, and informs parents when necessary.

Teachers' evaluator

Most principals also are responsible for evaluating their teachers' performance following district and state guidelines. More so, it is in place to ensure that the teachers are effective. Evaluations should be fair and well documented, pointing out strengths and weaknesses.

Developer, implementer and Evaluator of school programs

A good principal should spend as much time in classrooms as possible. He should gather information every time he visits a classroom, even if it is just for a few minutes. Doing this allows the evaluator to have a larger collection of evidence of what actually goes on in a classroom than a principal who make few visits. A good evaluator always lets his teachers know what his expectations are and then offers suggestions for improvement if they are not being met. Developing, implementing, and evaluating the programs within the school is another large part of the role played by the principal. A principal should always be looking for ways to improve the student experience at school. Developing effective programs that cover a variety of areas is one way to ensure this. It is acceptable to look at other schools in the area and to implement those programs within the principal's school that have proved to be effective elsewhere. A principal should evaluate school programs every year and tweak them as necessary. If a reading program has become stale and students are not showing much growth, for example, a principal should review the program and make changes as needed to improve it.

Reviewer of Policies and Procedures

An individual school's governing document is its student handbook. A principal should have his stamp on the handbook. A principal should review, remove, rewrite, or write new policies and procedures every year as needed. Having a handle can improve the quality of education offered to students which can also make a principal's job a little easier. The principal's role is to ensure that students, teachers, and parents know what

these policies and procedures are and to hold each individual respectively accountable for their implementations.

Schedule Setter

Creating schedules every year can be a daunting task. It can take some time to get everything to fall into its proper place. There are many different schedules a principal may be required to create including a bell, teacher duty, computer lab, and library schedule. The principal should double check that every schedule is allotted its specified time. However, all the scheduling a principal has to do, it is almost impossible to please everyone. For example some teachers will like early classes while others prefer day time. It is probably best to create the schedule without trying to accommodate anyone pleasure. Also, a principal should be disposed to have the school schedules ready before each academic year. More so, in as much as the schedule is suppose to be ready before the academic year there is need for adjustment if the need arise.

Employing New Teachers

A vital part of principals' job is to hire teachers and staff who are going to do their job correctly while suitable candidate makes the principals job easier. The interview process is extremely important when there are many factors that play into a person being a good candidate, including teaching knowledge, personality, sincerity, and excitement toward the profession. Employment interview has its procedures, once a principal has interviewed a candidate she/he will call references to interviewer to get extended knowledge of the candidate and their professionalism. This time, he can ask another teacher, or the superintendent to join in the process to include another person's feedback in the hiring process. Once completing the process, she should rank candidates accordingly and offer to position to the person who is the best fit for the school, always letting the other candidates know that the position has been filled.

Public Relations Point Person

Having good relations with parents and community members can benefit a principal in a variety of areas. If a principal has built trusting relationships with a parent whose child has a discipline issue, it will be easier to deal with the situation. The same holds true for the community. Building relationships with individuals and businesses in the community can benefit the school greatly. Such benefits include but limited to donations, personal time, overall positive support for the school and contributing to the general security of the school.

Delegator

Many leaders by nature have a hard time putting things in others' hands without their direct stamp on it. However, it is vital that duties are delegated when necessary, having trustworthy people around will make this easier, an effective school principal does not have enough time to do everything that needs to be done. He must rely on other capable hands to assist him trusting that they are going to do the job to the optimum level.

CHALLENGES FACING PRINCIPALS IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS

Inadequate Funding

Inadequate funding has been a recurrent issues that the administrators of the schools have to battle with in the implementation of educational policies in Nigeria like insecurity, poor ICT infrastructure and hiring of professional teachers. More so, even the existing funds allocated for the implementation of educational policies and programme may be diverted by private pocket of some officials in the ministries of education. Ogbonnaya (2010) submitted that in spite of the inadequacy of allocations to the public school system, any fund made available often go down the drain through the corrupt practices of those entrusted with the implementation of public schools due to inadequate monitoring.

Making Better Decisions

How well school performs depends significantly on the strategies and decisions that one makes. As the head of the school, being accountable about the students academic achievements in the domain of academics to guide possible lofty ambitions of the students. There is clear proof that when decisions are taken, after analyzing the insightful reports which may have been generated by the staff functions the principals ultimate decision would influence key areas of the school's functioning like:

- Admission Management
- Attendance Automation
- Discipline System
- Grades Management
- Fees Collection

Scheduling daily tasks

It is the work of a principal to schedule daily tasks, as a principal there would be complaints about class scheduling. These could eventually come from everyone associated with the school, such as teachers, students, and non-teaching staff. Sequel to these developments, scheduling can be reframed cognitively, this way the instructors would find it a lot easier to manage class schedules even if they have to do it for many courses, rooms, and faculty at a time. If the scheduling is innovative it can help to do away with various conflicts that normally happen when scheduling work in a manual way. In some cases, in the absence of regular teachers substitutes could be made available. It is the function of the principal or the administrator to oversee the allocation of duties to the teaching staff. This in turn, helps to maintain continuity in terms of instruction.

Employees Recruitment

One of the basic problems that a principal would face is recruiting teachers who would be competent enough to do the work assigned to them. Normally in schools, which seems to be successful, there are several top class features that make things move. Recruitment is recommended for proper management of schools. School management system has the following features such as :

- Online assessments
- Automated ranking system

Availability of the enclosed features could be of immense help in identifying quality teachers. There are ones who have shown the right competence, commitment, and willingness to serve the need of the students. All these are necessary to put into practice in certain educational programs that are of high quality and innovative, significantly which provides an unmatched level of excellence at all times for the students.

Evaluating Faculty Performance

The principals are the chief evaluation in administering schools. A principal have to understand the simple fact that the teachers are a times vulnerable in carrying out this responsibility and should be managed responsibly. Cognisance to the facts that it might be hard to create a bridge between learning contexts and assessments & instructions they need to be guided by the school management. This is especially true when the student population is a diverse one in terms of skill. A principal create the instructions in an innovative manner and make the curriculum a flexible one. This way, it is always easier for the students to gel with the teachers. However, it is recommended to use faculty evaluation system for evaluating teachers' performance.

Attendance and Discipline

One of the major problems facing principals are students related; lack of discipline, immoral behaviours, exam misconducts and absenteeism. In such cases, mobile devices can be used to capture untoward incidents and actions bothering on this disciplinary areas and attendance.

Designing the Curriculum

The principal is responsible to a certain extent, when it comes to designing a curriculum that is detailed and covers most bases, if not all. This is a critical task indeed, where technology such as curriculum mapping software can give the tools that may be needed to carry out changes to the way syllabus and curriculum are designed. Through such technology creating of sort of education that is customized and result oriented. Such a system of education is actually capable of mapping competencies and attributes of the students in such a way that learning outcomes can be improved. This way, students can also develop the skills and capabilities that are needed for them in order to produce the kind of results that are expected from them.

Evaluating Student's Outcomes

This is the One of the biggest areas of responsibility as well as a major challenges is definitely influencing the performance of the students. As a principal, obviously one may want to promote learning and make sure that the students are performing as well as they possibly can. Therefore, the need to use academic planning tools that are cutting edge, they would help creating learning plans that are personalized in nature. Which would help in creating a definite tasks and goals that are connected to the lessons offered by the students which ensures that the students would be successful as well.

II. Conclusions

Principal's role in managing and implementing policy on Education in public secondary school in Anambra State cannot be over emphasized, they are the key to all the activities in every secondary schools. The principal promotes a positive school learning climate, when the Principals play their role it promotes the quality of teaching which result to high academic achievement. Inadequate funding could probably be the reason for prudence in the use of Public secondary school funds in Anambra State. The principal as a leader in

managing and implementing educational policy in secondary schools are paramount if the objectives of secondary education are to be meaningfully translated into reality.

III. Recommendations

Based on the conclusion it was recommended that;

1. Ministry of Education should collaborate with relevant stakeholders to assist principals' in managing and implementing policy on Education through leadership strategies through intensive and annually seminars, workshops and conferences.
2. Officials of Post Primary School Service Commission should pay regular visits to public schools for monitoring, supervision and assisting principals to ensure continuous improvement and implementing policy on Education.

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