

EDUCATION DECENTRALIZATION POLICY AND EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT OF POST-BASIC SCHOOLS IN NORTH-EAST, NIGERIA.

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ABSTRACT

The study examined Education Decentralization Policy and Effective Management of Post-Basic Schools in North-East, Nigeria. Two (2) research purposes, research questions and hypotheses guided the study. The population of the study comprised twenty-one thousand seven hundred and seventy-three (21773) teachers in one thousand three hundred and four (1304) Post-basic Schools in the North East Geopolitical Zone. A sample of one thousand, three hundred and ninety-eight (1398) Post-basic School teachers drawn from the population was used for the study. The study adopted correlational research design and used two questionnaires designed by the researcher for data collection. The questionnaires were tagged Education Decentralization Policy Questionnaire (EDPQ) and Effective Management Questionnaire (EMQ). Both (EDPQ) and (EMQ) were validated by three experts in the Faculty of Education, Taraba State University, Jalingo. Reliability coefficients of .769 and .764 were obtained for EDPQ and EMQ respectively which shows that both instruments were reliable. Mean, standard deviation and Pearson product moment correlation coefficient were used to answer the research questions while regression analysis was used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. Findings revealed that education decentralization has a positive and significant correlation with Effective Management of post-

basic schools in North-East, Nigeria. Findings of the study also revealed the existence of a positive relationship between Community Participation; Funding and Effective Management of post-basic schools in North-East, Nigeria. However, the correlation between Funding and Effective Management of post-basic schools in North-East, Nigeria was found to be statistically insignificant. The study concluded that education decentralization has a positive and significant correlation with Effective Management of post-basic schools in North-East, Nigeria. It was recommended that Government at all levels should ensure the active participation of Local communities in policy formulation processes in order to achieve an education system that meets the specific needs of the local communities. It was also recommended among other recommendations that The Federal, State and Local Governments should increase education funding in line with the recommendation of United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) which is 26% of the total National budget, towards enhancing the effectiveness of the education system.

Keywords: Education Decentralization Policy, Effective Management, Post-basic Schools, North-east, Nigeria.

Introduction

Education Decentralization has been a significant policy initiative globally, aiming to transfer decision-making authority and responsibility from central authorities to local education agencies or schools. This paradigm shift in governance structures has been motivated by various factors, including the desire to improve educational outcomes, increase community participation, and enhance the responsiveness of educational systems to local needs. (World Bank 2021). Over the past few decades, decentralization has gained traction as a means to enhance local governance, improve service delivery, foster community participation, and promote democratic decision-making (Smoke, 2023). One of the primary implications of decentralization policy is the empowerment of local authorities and communities to make decisions that are better suited to their specific needs and contexts. By devolving authority from central government institutions, decentralization can promote local autonomy and flexibility in governance thereby enhancing the effectiveness of education management (Bardhan & Mookherjee, 2021).

Effective Management encompasses the strategic direction, coordination, and optimization of resources to achieve organizational goals and objectives. In the context of educational institutions such as post-basic schools, effective management is crucial for ensuring the delivery of quality education, fostering a conducive learning environment, and promoting the professional

development of staff and students. Effective management involves engaging with various stakeholders, including students, parents, community members, and policymakers. School leaders should foster open communication, collaboration, and partnerships to build trust and support for the school's mission and initiatives. Moreover, soliciting feedback and input from stakeholders can inform decision-making processes and promote shared ownership of educational goals and management (Daly et al, 2010).

Post-Basic Schools serve as a critical bridge between basic education and higher education or the workforce (Adeyemo, 2023). These schools offer three years of education beyond junior secondary level, typically covering grades 10 to 12. The curriculum includes core subjects such as Mathematics, English Language, Science, and Social Studies, as well as elective subjects based on students' interests and career aspirations. Senior Secondary Schools prepare students for National Examinations such as the West African Senior School Certificate Examination (WASSCE) or the National Examination Council (NECO) Examination, which are prerequisites for higher education or employment. (Adeyemo, 2023). Pedagogical approaches in Post-Basic Schools may vary, with an emphasis on active learning, practical skills development, and real-world applications. (Fagbemi 2021).

Community Participation in education is essential for effective management of post-basic schools in the North-East, Nigeria. Community Participation plays a crucial role in enhancing school management by fostering a sense of ownership, collaboration, and accountability within the local community. When parents, guardians, local leaders, and other stakeholders actively engage in the management of schools, it creates a supportive environment that contributes to the overall success of the educational institution. Community Participation fosters democratic decision-making processes and promotes transparency and accountability in school management (Ajayi, 2023). Engaging the community enables schools to leverage local resources, including financial support, volunteerism, and infrastructure development (UNESCO, 2022). Community involvement provides vital support for educational programs, such as literacy campaigns, parent-teacher associations, and school feeding programs (Olarinde, 2024). Schools with active community participation tend to demonstrate better academic performance and higher student retention rates (Adebayo, 2020). Community engagement contributes to a positive school climate characterized by trust, collaboration, and a sense of belonging among stakeholders (Oyewole, 2022). Involving the community in decision-making processes ensures the efficient allocation and utilization of resources to meet the needs of students and staff (UNICEF, 2023).

Involving the community in school management ensures that the responsibility for the success of the school is shared among various stakeholders. Community members have a deep understanding of the unique needs, challenges, and opportunities within their locality. By actively participating in school management, they can provide valuable insights and perspectives that help tailor

educational programs and initiatives to meet these specific needs (Oyewole, 2022). Engaging the community in school management can lead to increased support and resources for the school. This may include volunteer assistance, donations, or partnerships with local businesses and organizations, all of which can enrich the educational experience for students. Effective communication between the school and the community is essential for building trust and fostering positive relationships (Oyewole, 2022). When community members are involved in school management, it promotes transparency and open dialogue, leading to stronger connections between the school and the broader community.

Understanding how Funding affects the overall quality of education delivery in Post basic schools is also very crucial for Effective Management of Education in the North-East Region and Nigeria at large. Despite the importance, Post-Basic Schools in Nigeria faces several challenges, prominent among the which is Funding. Effective resource allocation enables the development and maintenance of essential infrastructure in post-basic schools, such as classrooms, laboratories, libraries, and sanitation facilities. Adequate infrastructure is essential for creating a conducive learning environment and facilitating effective teaching and learning processes (Adebayo, 2024).

Funding provides for the recruitment, training, and retention of qualified teachers in post-basic schools. Investing in teacher capacity building programs, professional development initiatives, and competitive salaries helps attract and retain competent educators, which is vital for ensuring quality education delivery (UNICEF Nigeria, 2023). Funding plays a crucial role in providing educational materials, textbooks, teaching aids, and technology equipment to post-basic schools. Access to up-to-date learning materials and resources enhances the quality of instruction, supports curriculum delivery, and promotes student engagement and achievement (National Bureau of Statistics Nigeria, 2021). Adequate funding allows for the maintenance of an optimal teacher-student ratio in post-basic schools. Research indicates that smaller class sizes and lower teacher-student ratios are associated with improved student outcomes, including academic achievement, engagement, and behaviour (UNESCO, 2023). Adequate funding supports efficient school management and administration by providing funds for administrative personnel, management systems, and operational expenses. Well-managed schools can allocate resources judiciously, implement effective policies and procedures, foster a learning environment conducive for academic success (Omotunde, 2020). Funding facilitates the implementation of Monitoring and Evaluation systems to assess the effectiveness of education programs and interventions. Investing in data collection, assessment tools, and evaluation frameworks enables education authorities to identify areas for improvement, track progress, and make evidence-based decisions to enhance management practices (World Bank, 2020)

Despite the importance, post-basic schools in Nigeria faces several challenges such as inadequate Funding and insufficient Community Participation. Post-Basic Schools often struggle with limited

financial resources, which affect various aspects of operations, including infrastructure development, teacher salaries, instructional materials, and extracurricular activities. Insufficient funding leads to infrastructural deficits, such as dilapidated school buildings, overcrowded classrooms, and inadequate facilities for practical learning. These conditions not only compromise the safety and well-being of students but also hinder the delivery of quality education. Additionally, limited financial resources constrain schools' ability to hire qualified teachers and provide them with continuous professional development opportunities. As a result, the quality of teaching and learning suffers, impacting students' academic performance and future prospects. Furthermore, the uneven distribution of resources among States and Local Governments may also exacerbates the problem of decentralization. Some regions, particularly the North-East part of Nigeria, face greater challenges in accessing educational resources due to historical and socio-economic disparities. This inequity can affect the quality of education and the ability of schools in disadvantaged regions such as the North-East to effectively implement decentralization policies. Decentralization could inadvertently deepen the inequalities in education due to the failure to address these disparities adequately. In North-East, Nigeria, where challenges such as insurgency and displacement may disrupt schooling, community engagement as an important strategy that can help ensure stakeholder accountability, continuity and resilience in education provision is apparently inadequate.

Hence, the problem of this study is to determine the correlation between education decentralization policy and effective management of Post-Basic Schools in North East, Nigeria.

The main purpose of the study was to determine the correlation between Education Decentralization Policy and Effective Management of Post-Basic Schools in North- East, Nigeria. Specifically, the study sought to:

17. Determine the extent of correlation between Community Participation and Effective Management of Post-Basic Schools in North-East, Nigeria.
18. Determine the extent of correlation between Funding and Effective Management of Post-Basic Schools in North-East, Nigeria.

The following null hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 for level of significance:

H₀₁: There is no significant correlation between Community Participation and Effective Management of Post-Basic Schools in North-East, Nigeria.

H₀₂: There is no significant relationship between Funding and Effective Management of Post-Basic Schools in North-East, Nigeria.

Correlational research design was adopted for the study. Correlation research design is used to examine relationship between two or more variables (Kazdin, 2020). Correlational research involves collection of data to determine the extent to which relationship exist between two or more variables. The degree of relationship is expressed in terms of coefficient of correlation. The design was found suitable for the present study because it seeks to establish the existence of relationship and the extent of such relationship that may exist between the independent variable (Education Decentralization) and the dependent variable (Effective Management) being the major variables of the study. The study was carried out in the North-East Geopolitical Zone of Nigeria. The population of the study comprise all Post-basic School teachers in the North East Geopolitical Zone which is twenty-one thousand seven hundred and seventy-three (21,773) teachers in one thousand three hundred and four (1,304) post-basic schools in the study area. A sample of one thousand, three hundred and ninety-eight (1398) Post-basic School teachers drawn using multi stage sampling procedure was used for the study. The researcher-developed two Questionnaires tagged Education Decentralization Policy Questionnaire (EDPQ) and Effective Management Questionnaire (EMQ). Both (EDPQ) and (EMQ) were used for data collection. EDPQ and EMQ were subjected to face and content validation by three experts, two from Educational Administration and planning and one from Measurement and Evaluation, all in the Faculty of Education, Taraba State University, Jalingo. To determine the reliability of the instruments, a pilot test was carried out in Benue State, Nigeria. EDPQ and EMQ were administered to a sample of sixty (60) respondents randomly drawn from four schools. The scores obtained from the pilot testing were subjected to Cronbach Alpha method to determine the internal consistency of EDP and EMQ. Reliability coefficients of .769 and .764 were obtained for EDP and EMQ respectively which indicates that both EDP and EMQ are reliable for data collection. Data collected were analysed using mean, standard deviation, Pearson's r (Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient) to answer the research questions while linear regression was used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

Hypothesis One

Table 1a: Model Summary^b

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted Square	RStd. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.128 ^a	.016	.016	.38726	1.156

a. Predictors: (Constant), Community_Participation

b. Dependent Variable: EMQ

Table 1b: ANOVAa

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	3.465	1	3.465	23.106	.000 ^b
	Residual	208.155	1388	.150		
	Total	211.620	1389			

a. Dependent Variable: EMQ

b. Predictors: (Constant), Community_Participation

Table 1c: Coefficients^a

Model	Standardized			Collinearity		
	Unstandardized Coefficients	Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.	Partial Correlation	Tolerance
1 (Constant)	2.813	.040	70.847	.000		
Community_Participation	.071	.015	4.807	.000	.128	1.000

a. Dependent Variable: EMQ

The regression analysis explores the relationship between Community Participation and Effective Management of Post Basic Schools in North-East, Nigeria, the results presented in Tables 10abc. The dependent variable in this analysis is effective management, and the independent variable is community participation. The overall model, as shown in Table 10a, has a moderate positive correlation with an R-value of 0.128, meaning that Community Participation has a very low and positive relationship with Effective Management of Post Basic Schools. The R Square value of 0.016 from Table 10a suggests that approximately 1.6% of the variation in Effective Management of Post Basic Schools is explained by Community Participation. The model is statistically

significant, with an F-statistic of 23.106 and a p-value of 0.000, meaning that the relationship between Community Participation and Effective Management of Post Basic Schools is meaningful and the model is fit for estimation.

Result also provides the coefficients and statistical significance of the independent variable. The analysis reveals that Community Participation has a significant positive relationship with Effective Management of Post Basic Schools, with a Beta coefficient of 0.128 and an unstandardized coefficient (B) of 0.071. This means that for every unit increase in Community Participation, Effective Management of Post Basic Schools increases by 0.038 units. This effect is statistically significant ($p < .000$), suggesting that as Community Participation increases Effective Management increases. Thus, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant correlation between Community Participation and Effective Management of Post-Basic Schools in North-East, Nigeria.

is rejected.

Hypothesis Two:

Table 2a: Model Summary^b

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted Square	RStd. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.030 ^a	.001	.000	.39029	1.123

a. Predictors: (Constant), Funding

b. Dependent Variable: EMQ

Table 11b: ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	.190	1	.190	1.244	.002 ^b
	Residual	211.430	1388	.152		
	Total	211.620	1389			

a. Dependent Variable: EMQ,

b. Predictors: (Constant), Funding

Table 2c: Coefficients^a

Model	Standardized			Collinearity		
	Unstandardized Coefficients	Standardized Coefficients	T	Partial Correlation	Tolerance	VIF
1 (Constant)	2.904	.084	34.494	.000		
Funding	.030	.027	1.116	.265	.030	1.000

a. Dependent Variable: EMQ

The regression analysis explores the relationship between Funding and Effective Management of Post Basic Schools in North-East, Nigeria, the results presented in Tables 11abc. The dependent variable in this analysis is Effective Management, and the independent variable is Funding. The overall model, as shown in Table 11a, has a moderate positive correlation with an R-value of 0.030, meaning that Funding has a very low and positive relationship with Effective Management of Post Basic Schools. The R Square value of 0.001 from Table 11a suggests that approximately 0.1% of the variation in Effective Management of Post Basic Schools is explained by Funding. The model is statistically significant, with an F-statistic of 1.244 and a p-value of 0.002, meaning that the relationship between Funding and Effective Management of Post Basic Schools is meaningful and the model is fit for estimation. Result also provides the coefficients and statistical significance of the independent variable. The analysis reveals that Funding has a significant positive relationship with Effective Management of Post Basic Schools, with a Beta coefficient of 0.030 and an unstandardized coefficient (B) of 0.030. This means that for every unit increase in Funding, Effective Management of Post Basic Schools increases by 0.030 units. This effect is statistically insignificant ($p = .265$), suggesting that as funding increases effective management increases.

Thus, the null hypothesis which states that There is no significant relationship between Funding and effective management of post-basic schools in North-East, Nigeria.is retained.

Discussion of Findings

The correlation between Community Participation and Effective Management of Post-Basic Schools is weak but positive. The p-value obtained through regression analysis is 0.000, which is well below the conventional significance threshold of 0.05. Given that the p-value is smaller than the significance level, the null hypothesis is rejected. This weak positive correlation indicates that, to a minor extent, higher levels of Community Participation are associated with improvements in the Effective Management of Post Basic Schools. The finding of this study agrees with Mukhtar and Danjuma (2024) who found that strategies adopted by the community structures were determined by the respondents as effective particularly in managing the schools and helping the students to pass examination. Findings also revealed that the relationship between Funding and Effective Management of Post Basic Schools in North-East, Nigeria is statistically insignificant. P-value obtained using regression analysis is .265. Since the p-value is higher than the commonly accepted significance level of 0.05, the null hypothesis is retained. Although a positive correlation exists between Funding and the Effectiveness of Management in Post-Basic Schools, the strength of this relationship is weak, suggesting that other factors may contribute more significantly to the effectiveness of school management in North-East Nigeria. This weak positive correlation indicates that, to a slight extent, increase in Funding are associated with slight improvements in the Effective Management of Schools.

Conclusion

The study concluded that Education Decentralization has a positive and significant correlation with Effective Management of Post-Basic Schools in North-East, Nigeria. Increased Community Participation and Funding engender Effective Management of schools.

Recommendations

The following were recommended in line with the findings of the study:

1. Government at all levels should ensure the active participation of Local communities in policy formulation processes in order to achieve an education system that meets the specific needs of the local communities.
2. The Federal, State and Local Governments should increase education funding in line with the recommendation of United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) which is 26% of the total National budget, towards enhancing the effectiveness of the education system.

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