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School Improvement and Transformation System, in Lagos State Senior Secondary School Principals' Planning Approach

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Abstract

The study presents one of the ways by which school improvement plan which is a road map that sets out the changes a school needs to make to improve the level of student achievement and shows how and when these changes will be made. School improvement plans are selective; they help principals, teachers and school management board answer the questions "what will we focus on now" and "what will we leave until later. It was found out that curriculum delivery, school environment and parental involvement are significant relationship with school improvement and transformation system. Based on the findings and their implications, Recommendations were made as appropriate.

Introduction

School improvement is the process which schools use to ensure that all students achieve at high levels. An effective school improvement planning process guides schools to develop a strategic and ongoing plan that focuses on quality education. Quality is the degree to which the institution is successful in achieving its objectives to the satisfaction of itself, the students and society.

A school improvement plan according to Education Improvement Commission (2000) is a road map that sets out the changes a school needs to make to improve the level of student achievement, and shows how and when these changes will be made. School improvement plans are selective: they help principals, teachers, and school management answer the questions "What will we focus on now?" and "What will we leave until later?" They encourage staff and parents to monitor student achievement levels and other factors, such as the school environment, that are known to influence student success. With up-to-date and reliable information about how well students are performing, schools are better able to respond to the needs of students, teachers, and parents. A school improvement plan is also a mechanism through which the public can hold schools accountable for student success and through which it can measure improvement.

Education Improvement Commission (2000) notes that in developing their school's improvement plan, the principal, staff, school management, parents, and other community

members work through a variety of activities focused on three areas of priority: curriculum delivery, school environment, and parental involvement. For each of these areas, schools establish the following:

- a goal statement
- performance targets
- areas of focus
- implementation strategies
- indicators of success
- time lines
- responsibility for implementing strategies
- checkpoints for status updates
- opportunities for revisions.

School Climate

School climate refers to the quality and character of school life. National School Climate Council *(2012) states that s*chool climate is based on patterns of students', parents' and school personnel's experience of school life and reflects norms, goals, values, interpersonal relationships, teaching and learning practices, and organizational structures. A sustainable, positive school climate fosters youth development and learning necessary for a productive, contributing and satisfying life in a democratic society. This climate includes:

- Norms, values and expectations that support people feeling socially, emotionally and physically safe.
- People are engaged and respected.
- Students, families and educators work together to develop, live and contribute to a shared school vision.
- Educators model and nurture attitudes that emphasize the benefits and satisfaction gained from learning.
- Each person contributes to the operations of the school and the care of the physical environment.

There is no consensus about what school climate dimensions measures. National School Climate Council *(2012)* suggest that there are four major areas that school climate assessment needs to include: **safety, relationships, teaching and learning** and **the external environment.** Each of these areas includes a series of sub scales of indicators. School climate is larger than any one person's experience. When people work together, a group process emerges that is bigger than any one person's actions. A comprehensive assessment of school climate includes major spheres of school life such as safety, relationships, teaching and learning, and the environment as well as larger organizational patterns (e.g. from fragmented to shared; healthy or unhealthy). How we feel about being in school and these larger group trends shape learning and students' development.

Manpower Planning

- Manpower planning enables an organisation to get hold of the right number and class of people required for operations within a defined timeframe. According to Obasan and Yomi (2011) Manpower planning which is also called Human Resource Planning involves putting right number of people, right kind of people at the right place, at right time, doing the right things for which they are suited. Manpower planning implies an attempt to integrate economic development and educational planning. It is a

conscious attempt by the country to link the development of their educational systems to the demand for educated manpower by their economies. Obasan and Yomi (2011) quoting Fadipe (2011) states that manpower deals with human capital formation, allocation and utilization. Manpower, also known as human resources can be defined as the bulk of labour available for any particular kind of work. In more specific terms, it is the bulk of human being with the relevant skills, energies, talents, knowledge and attitude that can be committed towards the production of goods and services (Gbosi, 2003).

School Transformation and Capacity Building

Capacity building also referred to as capacity development. It is a conceptual approach to development that focuses on understanding the obstacles that inhibit people, governments, international organizations and non-governmental organizations from realizing their developmental goals while enhancing the abilities that will allow them to achieve measurable and sustainable results. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) (2011) defines capacity building as a long-term continual process of development that involves all stakeholders; including ministries, local authorities, non-governmental organizations, professionals, community members, academics and even more. Capacity building uses a country's human, scientific, technological, organizational, and institutional and resource capabilities. The goal of capacity building is to tackle problems related to policy and methods of development, while considering the potential, limits and needs of the people of the country concerned. The United Nations (2006) outlines that capacity building as taking place in individual, institutional, and the societal levels.

- **Individual level-** Capacity-building on an individual level requires the development of conditions that allow individual participants to build and enhance existing knowledge and skills. It also calls for the establishment of conditions that will allow individuals to engage in the "process of learning and adapting to change.
- **Institutional level-** Capacity building on an institutional level involves aiding pre-existing institutions in developing countries. It should not involve creating new institutions, rather modernizing existing institutions and supporting them in forming sound policies, oganizational structures, and effective methods of management and revenue control.
- **Societal level-** Capacity building at the societal level supports the establishment of a more "interactive public administration that learns equally from its actions and from feedback it receives from the population at large." Capacity building must be used to develop public administrators that are responsive and accountable

Deborah (2005) believes that capacity building is an approach to development based on the fundamental concept that people all have an equal share of the world's resources and they have the right to be "authors of their own development and denial of such right is at the heart of poverty and suffering.

Organizational capacity building: This is another form of capacity building that focused on developing capacity within organizations like schools and NGOs. It refers to the process of enhancing an organization's abilities to perform specific activities. An Organizational capacity building approach which is used by schools and NGOs to develop internally, so they can better fulfil their defined mission (Allan, 2000).

Problems of effective manpower planning and good quality education in nigerian educational system.

As far as manpower planning and quality education in Nigeria is concerned, the nation seem to be in quagmire, Okebukola (2008); Olaniyonu et al (2011) agree on the following as obstacles to Nigerian educational system.

1. Policy incoherence and mplementation inconsistency.
2. Teacher inadequacies, both in quality and quantity. The shortfall in teacher number translate to high pupil/teacher ratio and severe stress on teachers.
3. Funding inadequacies.
4. Dearth of infrastructural facilities. Many learning environment in Nigerian schools are far from being conducive, thereby leading to poor quality education.
5. Curriculum inadequacies. The curriculum at all levels has been found to be deficient in relation to relevance and adequacy of content to meet contemporary needs of a knowledge society, and world of work.
6. Poor curriculum delivery.
7. Social vices such as examination malpractice, cultism and sexual harassment have crept from the larger society into the educational system.

Principal as The Main Actor

Everyone involved in or interested in the operation of schools has a role to play in the improvement planning process. District school boards and the Local Authorities on education play important roles in setting directions and in supporting and monitoring school improvement plans. The most important work, however, takes place within the school community itself. Education Improvement Commission (2000) notes that Principals are the key players in the school improvement process. They play a wide variety of roles to ensure that the improvement plan and its implementation are successful. One of their most important responsibilities is to ensure that improvement plans reflect the characteristics of their own school and its community. In general, principals' roles in school improvement planning fall into three main categories; communication, professional development, and leadership. The Principal should be clearly involved to:

• explain the school improvement planning process to staff, school councils, parents, and other community members
• help staff, school councils, parents, and other community members understand their role in the process and invite them to participate
• provide the community with a school "profile" detailing the nature and characteristics of the school encourage staff to lead the development and implementation of the plan
• provide leadership and professional development/training opportunities to staff, school council members, parents, and other community members involved in the process, and support them in developing and implementing the plan. Provide support and ongoing professional development for staff members as they pursue the strategies set out in the plan
• ensure that the school budget reflects and supports the plan's goals and implementation strategies
• continually gather information on student achievement and communicate it to the school's community as part of the plan's monitoring and evaluation process.

Education Improvement Commission (2000) further notes that the principals play a crucial role in facilitating the formation of school improvement and transformation planning team, which will be responsible for establishing priorities. The principals should make every effort to inform teachers, school council members, parents and other community members about the improvement process in a way that welcomes their participation.

Research Questions

The study is concerned with answering the following questions

1. Is there any significant relationship between school environment and school improvement and transformation system.
2. Is there any significant relationship between curriculum delivery and school improvement and transformation system.
3. Is there any significant relationship between parental involvement and school improvement and transformation system.

Hypotheses

For the purpose of the study, the following hypotheses were generated and tested.

1. There is no significant relationship between school environment and school improvement and transformation system.
2. There is no significant relationship between curriculum delivery and school improvement and transformation system.
3. There is no significant relationship between parental involvement and school improvement and transformation system.

Methodology

Descriptive research design was used with survey methods. The population of this study comprised of all the teachers and students in all 65 public senior secondary schools of Education District v in Lagos State. Using stratified sampling technique, 20 public senior secondary schools were selected as the sample. Education District v consists of four zones namely Amuwo Odofin, Badagry, Ajeromi Ifelodun and Ojo. 5 public senior secondary schools were selected randomly from each zone. In each school, ten students and ten teachers was selected for the study. A total of 200 students and 200 teachers were used as respondents.

Instrument

The main instrument used for data collection was two self-structured questionnaire designed in line with 4-Likert Scale format. The questionnaires have two sections. Section A sought for respondents bio-data, while section B contained twelve (12) items relevant to the study. The researcher personally administered the questionnaires to the respondents in their various schools. Respondents were made to respond to the questionnaire independently. Completed questionnaire were retrieved immediately.

Data Analysis

Data collected were subjected to descriptive statistics of frequency counts, simple percentage and the Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Co-efficient inferential statistics.

Results and Discussion

Table 1

Product Moment Correlation analysis of data on school improvement and transformation system

Variables	R-cal	r-Tab	Alpha Level	Df	Decision
School environment and school improvement.	0.546.`	.4438	0.05	18	Hi
Curriculum delivery and school improvement.	1.049	.4438	0.05	18	Hi
Parental involvement and school improvement.	.605	.4438	0.05	18	Hi

Discussion

Hypothesis I was tested and rejected based on the result in table 1. This implies that there is a significant relationship between school environment and school improvement and transformation system. School climate is larger than any one person's experience. When people work together, a group process emerges that is bigger that any one person's actions. A comprehensive assessment of school climate includes major spheres of school life such as safety, relationships, teaching and learning, and the environment as well as larger organizational patterns (e.g. from fragmented to shared; healthy or unhealthy). How we feel about being in school and these larger group that shape learning and students' development. Peer-reviewed educational research has consistently demonstrated that a positive school climate is associated with academic achievement, effective risk prevention efforts and positive youth development *(*National School Climate Council, 2012)

Hypothesis II was tested and rejected based on the result in table 1. This implies there is a significant relationship between curriculum delivery and school improvement and transformation system.

Hypothesis III was tested and rejected based on the result in table 1. This implies that there is a significant relationship between parental involvement and school improvement and transformation system. Education Improvement Commission (2000) noted that school councils, majority of whose members are parents must be involved in the school improvement planning process to ensure that the priorities of the whole school community are reflected in the school's plan. Parents and community members who are not members of school councils may also wish to contribute to the school plan, and should be encouraged to do so. Parents care deeply about their children's education. They want to know what their children are being taught and how successful their children are. Parents also want to become partners in their children's education.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, it could be concluded that School environment, Curriculum delivery and parental involvement all have a significant relationship with school improvement and transformation system. It was therefore recommended that

1. Parental involvement need not be restricted to participation in a formal organization like attendance at parent-teacher meetings, volunteering in a classroom, and helping out in the school library. schools must look beyond these traditional practices and seek innovative ways to involve parents in their children's learning both inside and outside

the home. The principals should establish home-to-school and school-to-home communication about school programs and students' progress.

2. Principals should ensure an orderly, purposeful atmosphere, free from the threat of physical harm. Policies must be in place to address issues such as conflict, mediation, bullying, and building healthy and lasting relationships.

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