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Stakeholders' Contribution in the Management of Secondary Education for Sustainable Development in Rivers State

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Abstract

The study investigated stakeholders' participation in the management of secondary education for sustainable development in Rivers State. The study which adopted descriptive survey research design was guided by two research questions and two hypotheses. The population of the study consisted of 552 principals and PTA chairmen in the 276 public secondary schools in Rivers State. A sample of 112 principals and PTA chairmen representing 20% of the population was drawn through proportionate stratified random sampling technique. A questionnaire entitled: "Stakeholders Participation in the Management of Secondary Education for Sustainable Development Questionnaire (SPMOSESDQ)" developed by the researcher was used for data collection. The instrument which contained 20 items was properly validated and the test of reliability yielded 0.88 through Cronbach Alpha method. Mean, mean set, rank order and standard deviation were used to analyse the research questions, while z-test was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The results of the study showed that stakeholders participate in the management of secondary education through: construction of required building facilities; provision of ICT facilities; perimeter fencing of school premises; donation of books; and award of scholarships among others. The study also revealed that the challenges of stakeholders' participation in the management of secondary education include among others: poor school-community relationship; ignorance, inadequate information and coordination of stakeholders. Based on the findings, conclusion was drawn and the following recommendations among others were made: secondary school administrators should maintain effective communication with secondary education stakeholders, and school administrators should be prudent, transparent and accountable in order to encourage stakeholders' participation in the management of secondary education in Rivers State.

Keywords: Stakeholders, Management, Participation, Secondary Education and Sustainable Development.

Introduction

Education is the most valuable tool for the pursuit of all kinds of development, be it economic, social, technological, infrastructural, leadership or human capital development. This is the major reason for the huge investments in education by individuals, nations and other major stakeholders. Nations with advanced educational systems all over the world are more developed than countries with unstable educational systems. The business of education

appears to be the most expensive business world over. It requires huge investments in terms of infrastructure, material resources and human capital. The quality of education delivery rests so much on the quality of investment inputs in the educational system. Moreover, the impact of quality education delivery is something that touches every arm or aspect of the society. The government of Nigeria is fully aware of this and their inability to fund and manage education alone, hence, they welcome and encourage the contribution of local communities, individuals, parent-teachers association, corporate organizations, and other organizations in the funding and management of education (Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN), 2014: 43).

Stakeholders in secondary education are individuals or organisations that have legitimate interest in this level of education. They are people who are interested in the success of secondary education by ensuring that secondary education system is effectively managed and meets the needs of the students. Their interest is hinged on assisting the government, to enhance the attainment of the broad goals of secondary education which include: to prepare individuals for useful living within the society; and for higher education pursuit (FRN, 2014: 11). Preparing individuals for useful living within the society implies that secondary education should be able to equip students with adequate skills and moral behaviours relevant to their development and the development of the society they belong to. Secondary education is the level of education after primary and before tertiary education. It is critical to the sustainable development of Rivers State and the nation at large because it prepares the middle level manpower required for economic growth and development. It also prepares individuals for higher education and useful living. Hence, this level of education should be adequately managed to enhance sustainable development. Sustainable development encompasses the various developmental strides and progress we record in the different sectors of the economy to enhance our standard of living, without hindering or compromising further development or improvement of the future generations.

Different stakeholders have their expectations from secondary education system depending on their perception and what they need from the programme. This sometimes shape or influence their contributions to the development and management of secondary education. According to Nakiyaga (2021), education stakeholders are those who have interest in the success and welfare of the education system. The stakeholders in education according to him include: parents, educators, policy-makers, school board members, school administrators, teachers, students, and the community. The community as a whole is a stakeholder in its education system because

local schools educate and prepare future employees, business owners and community leaders. A solid education programme builds a stronger community by ensuring better preparation of the students to become successful community members.

Babalola (2014) perceived stakeholders as groups who count to a corporation in terms of interest, voice, influence and power, and recommend ways by which management can predict what counts to various interest groups and give due regard to the interest of those groups. The word or term stakeholder cuts across many school reform concepts and strategies such as leadership group, shared leadership, and voices. According to Uche and Omorojor (2020), it generally looks into expansion of the number of people involved in making important decisions relating to school administration and academics.

Stakeholders in education are divided into internal and external stakeholders. The internal stakeholders include the principal, teachers and the students. While, the external stakeholders include the Schools' Management Board, Ministry of Education, Parent- Teachers Association, Alumni Association, host communities, corporate organisations, religious bodies etc. Stakeholders play relevant roles in the management of secondary education programmes. According to Yamma and Izom (2018), if secondary education programmes must succeed, the various stakeholders must play their roles effectively.

Stakeholders' participation refers to the involvement of major contributors in delivering various functions such as policy formulation, setting school priorities, planning, resource allocation, monitoring and supervision of the implementation of the plans, and taking corrective measures to attain the vision, mission and set objectives of the school. Stakeholders participation according to Cabardo (2016) is associated with the principle of democracy which advocates for representation in any system of government and if quality education is to be enhanced, various school stakeholders need to be regularly communicated and brought on board to play significant roles in secondary education management. The participation of stakeholders in the management of secondary education could be through any of the following seven different ways:

1. Involvement through the contribution of money, materials and labour
2. Involvement through the mere use of a service such as enrolling children in school or using a primary health care facility:
3. Involvement through attendance;
4. Involvement through consultation on a particular issue;

5. Participation in the delivery of services often as a partner with other actors;
6. Participation as implementers of delegated power and;
7. Participation in real decision making at every stage, including identification of problems, the study of feasibility, planning, implementation, and evaluation.

The concept of stakeholder's participation in the management of secondary education connotes the means or ways of involving some hands in handling some aspects of the school projects such as provision of physical learning facilities, funds and ensuring quality educational development. Stakeholders participation according to Takyi, Emmanuel and Yusuf (2013) could range from low to high levels. They categorized stakeholder's participation into three. They are: consult, collaboration/partnership, and empower/control. Consultation is the least level of participation. In this case, individual's or group's opinion on pertinent issues are sought and the school authorities are not bound to accept such opinion. Collaboration/partnership is of a higher level of participation. Here, individuals or groups work together with school authorities to achieve stipulated goals. The various collaborators/participants take part in decision-making and have a say in the final outcome.

On the other hand, empowerment or control is the highest level of participation. In this case individuals or groups have complete control over the decision – making process. This level of participation according to Takyi et al (2013) is often seen in self-managed teams or organisations where employees have a say on how things are run. Stakeholders' participation in the management of education sector has helped in giving the sector a face lift, by providing the required infrastructure and environment adequate for teaching and learning since government is overwhelmed by the numerous problems facing the education sector. According to Nweke and Uche (2020), stakeholders participate in staff personnel management; students' personnel management; infrastructural development; and maintenance of school environment.

In the studies carried out by Wagbara and Agala (2023); and Okanezi (2023), it was observed that, to a moderate extent, stakeholders participate in the provision of physical facilities and in the funding of government owned secondary schools for effective management of secondary education and sustainable development of Rivers State.

In another related study by Analaba and Jack (2023) on stakeholder's participation in the funding of public secondary schools in Rivers State, it was revealed that old boys association, civil society organizations, government, parents' teachers' association (PTA), host communities, principals, teachers, students, non-governmental organisations, and religious

bodies are strong stakeholders in the funding of public secondary schools in Rivers State. They equally identified the following as factors that encourage stakeholders' participation in the funding of public secondary schools in Rivers State: adequate budgeting of school funds; regular auditing of school funds, proper utilization of school funds, maintenance culture of school facilities, reward/recognition of participating stakeholders, regular supervision and monitoring of school projects to ensure completion.

Stakeholders participation in the management of secondary education is faced with some challenges. According to Nwadike and Godwins (2020), the challenges facing the participation of education stakeholders in the management of secondary education include: lack of fund; lack of trained manpower; gender inequality; government policies; and family issues. Chacha and Tangi (2023) in their study on the challenges facing stakeholders' participation in improving teaching and learning process in public secondary schools in Rorya District, Mara, Tanzania found that political interference, lack of awareness, poverty, negligence of some parents, lack of transparency, and poor relationship with parents were some of the major challenges affecting stakeholder's participation in improving teaching and learning process.

Yaro, Salleh and Arshed (2018) observed that incorporating education stakeholders into different education issues by the govenrment is a challenge. It is a challenge for education stakeholders to participate effectively in education matters because of inadequate coordination and information to them on education issues. A lot of the stakeholders failed to be efficiently involved in education issues due to lack of information on what they could participate in and a lack of cooperation. Bekoe and Quarley (2013) observed that despite the need to involve the community in school issues, the community is still confronted with some challenges. The study revealed that farming activities, parents' low understanding of education, poor communication and unrecognized opinions of others were some of the challenges affecting effective community participation in the management of education issues. Education managers should recognize and work with some educational advice or views of community members on effective management of education, but neglecting their ideas or opinion could hinder their further participation in supporting their schools.

In a related study by Polycarp (2021), it was revealed that negative attitudes towards education, low level of parents' education, lack of accountability, parents' low socio-economic status and irregular parents meeting were some of the factors hindering stakeholders' participation on education issues. Lauwo and Mkulu (2021) found that, the major obstacles to

community involvement in education issues include ignorance, bad school administration, poverty, political interference, unfavourable attitude and behaviours, and lack of proper communication between the school and the community. From these reviews, poor communication between the school and the community affect community members' ability to provide their support in the provision of various facilities needed by the school.

Statement of the Problem

The issue of access to quality secondary education has suffered a serious setback in many states in Nigeria due to inadequate provision of educational resources. Government has made it clear that they cannot single-handedly fund and provide quality secondary education hence, they call for the participation of the private sector, local communities, individuals, and other stakeholders in the funding and management of secondary education for sustainable development. It is a challenge for education stakeholders to participate effectively in education matters because of inadequate coordination and information to them on education issues. A lot of the stakeholders failed to be efficiently involved in education issues due to lack of information on what they could participate in and a lack of cooperation. The researcher is not too sure of the various ways stakeholders participate in the provision of facilities, funding and management of secondary education for sustainable development in Rivers State. The problem of this study therefore, is to investigate the various ways stakeholders participate in the management of secondary education for sustainable development in Rivers State.

Aim and Objectives of the Study

This study aimed at investigating stakeholder's participation in the management of secondary education for sustainable development in Rivers State. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. Ascertain the various ways stakeholders participate in the management of public secondary education for sustainable development in Rivers State.

2. Determine the challenges of stakeholder's participation in the management of public secondary education for sustainable development in Rivers State.

Research Questions

The following research questions were answered in this study:

1. What are the various ways stakeholders participate in the management of public secondary education for sustainable development in Rivers State?

2. What are the challenges of stakeholder's participation in the management of secondary education for sustainable development in Rivers State?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance:

1. There is no significant difference between the mean scores of principals and Parents Teachers' Association (PTA) chairmen on the ways stakeholders participate in the management of public secondary education for sustainable development in Rivers State.

2. There is no significant difference between the mean scores of principals and PTA chairmen on the challenges of stakeholders' participation in the management of public secondary education for sustainable development in Rivers State.

Methodology

The study which adopted descriptive survey research design was guided by two research questions and two hypotheses. The population of the study consisted of 276 public secondary school principals and the 276 PTA chairmen in all the public secondary schools in Rivers State. A sample of 112 respondents (56 principals and 56 PTA chairmen), representing 20% of the population was drawn through the stratified random sampling technique.

A questionnaire titled: "Stakeholders' Participation in the Management of Secondary Education for Sustainable Development Questionnaire (SPMOSESDQ)" was used for data collection. The instrument which had 20 items structured on a four (4) point likert rating scale of Strongly Agree (4 points), Agree (3 points), Disagree (2 points), and Strongly Disagree (1 point). The instrument was properly validated by three (3) research experts, two (2) from Department of Educational Management and one (1) from Measurement and Evaluation, Rivers State University. The reliability test carried out using Cronbach alpha method yielded a reliability index of 0.88. mean, mean set, rank order and standard deviation were used to analyse the research questions while the hypotheses were tested with z-test at 0.05 level of significance.

Results

Research Question One: What are the various ways stakeholders participate in the management of secondary education for sustainable development in Rivers State?

Table 1: Mean, mean set, rank order and standard deviation of the responses of principals and PTA chairmen on the various ways stakeholders participate in the management of secondary education for sustainable development in Rivers State.

S/N	Items	Principals N = 56		PTA Chairmen N= 56		Mean Set	Rank Order	Decision
		$\bar{x}_1$	SD_1	$\bar{x}_2$	SD_2			
1.	Construction of classroom blocks, offices, school halls, hostels for effective management of schools.	3.54	0.59	3.62	0.57	3.58	1st	Agree
2.	Provision of ICT facilities.	3.28	0.69	3.34	0.67	3.31	5th	Agree
3.	Perimeter fencing of school premises	3.20	0.71	3.24	0.70	3.22	6th	Agree
4.	Donation of textbooks for school libraries	3.42	0.63	3.36	0.66	3.39	3rd	Agree
5.	Construction of internal roads in the school premises	3.16	0.75	3.18	0.73	3.17	8th	Agree
6.	Drilling of boreholes/provision of portable water.	3.12	0.77	3.08	0.79	3.10	9th	Agree
7.	Provision of scholarship for indigent and brilliant students.	3.38	0.65	3.40	0.64	3.39	3rd	Agree
8.	Provision of furniture, office, workshops and laboratory equipment	3.50	0.61	3.52	0.60	3.51	2nd	Agree
9.	Monthly payment of teachers' salaries/allowances	2.33	0.81	2.27	0.83	2.30	10th	Disagree
10.	Donation of cups/awards/prices to encourage sports and academic development.	3.18	0.73	3.20	0.71	3.19	7th	Agree
	Aggregate mean and standard deviation	3.21	0.69	3.22	0.69			

Results in table 1 show that items 1 to 8 and item 10 had weighted mean scores that are greater than the criterion mean of 2.50. They were accepted as the ways stakeholders participate in the management of secondary education for sustainable development in Rivers State. In terms of ranking, item 1 ranked 1st followed by item 8. While, item 9 which had the least mean score of 2.30, which is far less than the criterion mean, ranked 10th in the rank order. The aggregate mean scores of 3.21 for principals and 3.22 for PTA chairmen which did not differ so much from each other is an indication that both respondents shared a common opinion on the ways stakeholders participate in the management of secondary schools for sustainable development in Rivers State.

Therefore, the various ways stakeholders participate in the management of secondary education for sustainable development in Rivers state include: Construction of required building facilities for effective management of schools; provision of ICT facilities; perimeter fencing of school premises; donation of textbooks; construction of internal roads in the school; provision of furniture and other equipment; and donation of cups/awards/ prizes to encourage sports and academic development.

Research Question Two: What are the challenges of stakeholder's participation in the management of secondary education for sustainable development in Rivers State?

Table 2: Mean, mean set, rank order, and standard deviation of the responses of principals and PTA chairmen on the challenges of stakeholder's participation in the management of secondary education for sustainable development in Rivers State?

S/N	Items	Principals N = 56		PTA Chairmen N= 56		Mean Set	Rank Order	Decision
		$\bar{x}_1$	SD_1	$\bar{x}_2$	SD_2			
1.	Inadequate school- community relations.	3.06	0.75	3.10	0.73	3.08	3rd	Agree
2.	Ignorance/low level of education of some parents	3.02	0.76	3.12	0.72	3.07	4th	Agree
3.	Poverty/low socio-economic status of some stakeholders	3.00	0.77	2.94	0.79	2.97	6th	Agree
4.	Inadequate information and coordination of stakeholders	3.12	0.72	3.06	0.75	3.09	2nd	Agree
5.	Bad school administration	2.96	0.78	3.02	0.76	2.99	5th	Agree
6.	Corruption/ lack of accountability	3.14	0.71	3.08	0.74	3.11	1st	Agree
7.	Political interference	2.84	0.83	2.86	0.82	2.85	8th	Agree
8.	Frequent transfer of principals from one school to another	2.42	0.86	2.35	0.88	2.39	10th	Disagree
9.	Insecurity	2.38	0.87	2.44	0.85	2.41	9th	Disagree
10.	Inflation/high cost of materials	2.90	0.81	2.92	0.80	2.91	7th	Agree
	Aggregate mean and standard deviation	2.88	0.79	2.89	0.78			

Results in table 2 indicate that items 1 to 7 and item 10 had weighted mean scores that are greater than criterion mean of 2.50. They were agreed on as the challenges of stakeholder's participation in the management of secondary education for sustainable development in Rivers State. in terms of rank order item 6 ranked 1st, followed by item 4. While items 8 and 9 which had the lowest mean scores of 2.39 and 2.41 respectively ranked 10th and 9th. Items 8 and 9 were not accepted as the challenges of stakeholder's participation in the management of secondary education for sustainable development in Rivers State.

The aggregate mean of 2.88 and 2.89 for principals and PTA chairmen which are very close reflect that the respondents had the same opinion about the challenges of stakeholder's participation in the management of secondary education for sustainable development. Therefore, the challenges as revealed by the study are as follows: inadequate school/community relations, ignorance/poor level of education of some parents; poverty; inadequate information/coordination of stakeholders; bad school administration; corruption/lack of accountability; political interference; and inflation/high cost of materials.

Test of Hypotheses

Ho₁: There is no significant difference between the mean scores of principals and PTA chairmen on the various ways stakeholders participate in the management of secondary education for sustainable development in Rivers State.

Table 3: **z-test of difference between the mean scores of principals and PTA chairmen on the way stakeholders participate in the management of secondary education for sustainable development in Rivers State.**

Status	N	$\bar{x}$	SD	Df	z-cal.	z-crit.	Level of sign.	Decision
Principals	56	3.21	0.69					Ho1
PTA Chairmen	56	3.22	0.69	110	0.077	±1.960	0.05	Retained

Table 3 shows a summary of mean, standard deviation and z-test of difference between the principals and PTA chairmen on the ways stakeholders participate in the management of secondary education for sustainable development in Rivers State. The z-test calculated which was used in testing the hypothesis stood at 0.077, while the z-critical value was ±1.960 at 110 degree of freedom using 0.05 level of significance. The z-calculated value was by far less than the z-critical value. Therefore, the null hypothesis of no significant difference between the mean scores of principals and PTA chairmen on the ways stakeholders participate in the management of secondary education for sustainable development in Rivers State was retained.

Ho₂: There is no significant difference between the mean scores of principals and PTA chairmen on the challenges of stakeholder's participation in the management of secondary education for sustainable development in Rivers State.

Table 4: **z- test of difference between the mean scores of principals and PTA chairmen on the challenges of stakeholder's participation in the management of secondary education for sustainable development in Rivers State.**

Status	N	$\bar{x}$	SD	Df	z-cal.	z-crit.	Level of sign.	Decision
Principals	56	2.88	0.79					Ho2
PTA Chairmen	56	2.89	0.78	110	0.067	±1.960	0.05	Retained

Table 4 shows a summary of mean, standard deviation and z-test of difference between the principals and PTA chairmen on the challenges of stakeholder's participation in the management of secondary education for sustainable development in Rivers State.

The z-test calculated which stood at 0.067 is by far less than the z-critical value of $\pm$ 1.960 at 110 degree of freedom using 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis of no significant difference between the mean scores of principals and PTA chairmen on the challenges of stakeholder's participation in the management of secondary education for sustainable development in Rivers State was retained.

Discussion of Findings

The results of the study revealed that stakeholders participate in the management of secondary education in Rivers State through the construction and donation of required building facilities; fencing of school premises and construction of internal roads in the school premises. In many secondary schools in Rivers State, there are building facilities built and donated by the schools' PTA, the host communities, corporate organisations such as NDDC, oil companies and some well-meaning philanthropists. They do this to solve the facilities need of the schools and the enhance quality education in the schools. Corporate organisations equally provide or donate some facilities to schools as part of the fulfilment of their social responsibilities.

These findings agree with Wagbara and Agala (2023) as well as Analaba and Jack (2023) who observed in their respective studies that, stakeholders participate in the funding and provision of physical facilities in public secondary schools in Rivers State. stakeholders also provide ICT facilities, textbooks, portable water, scholarships to brilliant indigent students, furniture, office, workshop, laboratory equipment and, they equally encourage sports and academic activities in public secondary schools through the donation of cups and prizes/awards for best students in certain areas, these efforts by stakeholders immensely contribute to the management of secondary education in the state.

The study observed that the challenges of stakeholders' participation in the management of secondary education include: inadequate school- community relations, ignorance and poverty. Secondary school administrators need to maintain good relationship with their host communities. This will enable them to gain their corporation and support in a lot of things. Ignorance and low level of education as well as poverty of some parents serve as major hinderance to their participation to the provision of school facilities. Some of them feel that it is the obligation of government to provide everything for the school, hence nobody should

worry them. They forget that the future of their children is what is at stake here. The quality of secondary education received by their children will help to shape their future either for good or bad.

Other challenges observed by this study include inadequate information/coordination of stakeholder's bad school administration, corruption, political interference, and high cost of materials. These findings agree with Yaro, Salleh and Arshed (2018), Chacha and Tangi (2023), and Bekoe and Quartey (2023). It appears that some school administrators do not adequately reach out to some stakeholders in secondary education. there is lack of well-coordinated communication or information flow between them and the school. This makes it difficult for such people organisation to participate in managing or providing services and facilities for the school. Bad school administration is another issue that hinders people from participating in the in the management of secondary schools. Some school administrators are "Mr. Know it all". They do not like seeking for advice or help. Some are difficult to work with because of their bad character. They are very secretive and lack transparency in managing school funds. Such attitude could scare stakeholders away from participating in anything concerning the school.

Politics is a major issue affecting educational management in Nigeria. It determines people's actions and inactions. Political interest could motivate some stakeholders to provide some facilities or fund some projects in a school. It could also result to delay or withdrawal in the execution of some projects. High cost of materials in the market is affecting the cost of living in Nigeria and the funding of school projects. Many parents and stakeholders currently, are struggling for survival and may not have the financial capacity to participate in the funding and management of secondary education the way they have been doing, due to inflation and high cost of living currently experienced in Nigeria.

Conclusion

Stakeholders' participation in the management of secondary education in Rivers State has promoted the provision of school facilities and the funding of secondary education. Their participation which has enhanced the development of secondary education is challenged by some factors such as inadequate school-community relations, bad school administration, poor communication and coordination of stakeholders by some school administrators.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations were made:

1. Secondary school administrators should ensure that, they maintain effective communication with secondary education stakeholders.

2. There should be effective school-community relationship between secondary school administrators and their host communities.

3. In this time of economic recession, school administrators should not depend on government alone for funding and provision of school facilities, but through the Ministry of Education and Secondary Education Management Board reach out to potential stakeholders locally and internationally to contribute and participate in the management of their schools.

4. Secondary school administrators should ensure that, they maintain proper accountability, prudency, transparency and adequate management of school resources as a way of encouraging stakeholders to participate in the management of secondary education in Rivers State.

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