

Management of Public Primary Schools in a Depressed Economy: The Roles of the Head Teachers.

¹Obi Zita Chika and ²Ezemba Constance Chinyere

¹Department of Educational Foundations Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University Anambra State.

²Department of Microbiology Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University Anambra State.

Email: obicy@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT

The paper explains the key concepts of the work; management and depressed economy. It highlighted the general objectives of primary education and clearly explained the current state of primary schools in Nigeria such as inadequate funding, low teacher morale, rural-urban migration, legislative problem and outmoded teachers among others. The paper vividly discussed the roles of the head teachers in managing public primary schools in a depressed economy. It admonished head teachers to adopt delegation of duties, partnership with Parent Teachers Association, improvisation of instructional materials as some of measures to meet the needs of his school in a depressed economy. Some relevant recommendations and conclusion were made.

Keywords: Management, School, Depress, Economy

INTRODUCTION

The saying that a good school equals to a good headmaster, shows the unique position which the headmaster occupies and the importance of his roles managing his schools in a depressed economy. Today, while most primary schools have adequate number of qualified staff, the materials for teaching and learning are lacking because of lack of funds to provide them [1]. A depressed economy is characterized by lack or insufficient teaching materials, infrastructures, inadequate remuneration, low morale of teachers among others. [2] posits that recession may or may not affect academic performance of children. The author further states that, it may affect academic performance but not from the parents' angle but rather, from the teachers teaching the children. The

teachers may want to look out for other means of livelihood to take care of their needs, which affect their outputs to the children in schools.

Every primary school headmaster has the sole responsibility of managing both human and material resources in a recessed economy to achieve the goals of primary education, in view of the inherent negative impacts of economic depression, there is need to take positive steps to reverse the challenges it posed the primary school children and their education. One sustainable way for mitigating the impacts of economic depression on the primary school children is through capacity building, resource improvisation, delegation of duties and partnership with Parents Teachers' Association (P.T.A) among others.

CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATION

Management

Management is the process of utilizing human and materials resources to achieve specified goals and objectives. Management is the utilization of physical and human resources to achieve organizational goals.

Depressed Economy

According to [3] a depressed economy is usually associated with high unemployment, slowing gross domestic product (GDP) and high inflationary rate. As economic depression affects governments' and parents incomes, it also affects children's welfare and education.

General Objectives of Primary Education

- a. The inculcation of permanent literacy and numeracy and ability to communicate effectively.
- b. The laying of a sound basis for scientific and reflective thinking.
- c. Citizenship education as basis for effective participation in and contribution to the life of the society.
- d. Character and moral training and the development of sound attitudes.
- e. Developing in the child, the ability to adapt to his changing environment.
- f. Giving the child opportunities for developing manipulative skills that will enable him to function effectively in the society within the limits of his capacity.
- g. Providing basic tools for further educational advancement including preparation for trades and crafts of the local community.

Current State of Primary schools in Nigeria that Calls for Adequate Management by the Head Teachers:

1. **Inadequate funding:** Some of the provisions in the National policy on Education at the primary school level could not be implemented because of

lack of funds. For example, junior libraries for primary school children have not, in the real sense of it, been provided by the government. No impact has been made in the area of provision of instructional materials.

2. **Low Teachers Morals:** The morale of our teachers at this level of our education system is low. Their image is anything but attractive. Their take home like most of the other civil servant and public servant is not enviable. This must have accounted for the mass exodus of their male counterparts from the profession. Those who remain have to make both ends meet. So they do not put in their best. Many of them get involved in private practices even during school hours. Because they are not motivated, they are not working towards serious implementation of the policy provisions.
3. **Rural-Urban Migration:** According to [4], while schools in the rural areas are under-populated with some classroom blocks lying empty, those in the urban areas are almost bursting with pupils population. Many of them are running morning and afternoon shifts to cope with the problem. The facilities are over utilized and over stretched. Teachers prefer school in the urban areas. Since most of the schools are being provided with the finance for their maintenance and repairs by the P.T.A., the more the number of pupils, the more financially buoyant is the school.
4. **Legislative Problem:** Education is in the concurrent list of legislature. Although we have same policy on education nation-wide, each state is left to implement these provisions. This has led to what [5] referred to as lopsided implementation. A typical example is that only ten states in the federation embarked on the 6-3-3-4 system of education in 1982/83 academic at its own time. Another example of this lopsided implementation is while some states

have phased out TCII teachers or about phasing it out, making NCE holders, the lowest teaching qualification, some states still retain the TC II teachers, an appear not to be in a hurry to phase them out.

5. **Outmoded Teachers:** Most of the teachers at this level were processed through outmoded method of teacher preparation. Expecting them to apply new methods of teaching to which they were not exposed to will be asking for something very difficult. Asking them to act as change agents while they are just the laggards, cannot make implementation of the policy provision easy.
6. **Data Problem:** It is difficult to plan without accurate data. The success of primary education depends on the planning that is based on accurate statistical data.
7. **Inadequate of Physical Resources:** Physical resources are very essential aids to effective instruction. The rapid increase in school enrolment without a corresponding increase in the provision of educational facilities contribute to poor teaching which became noticeable in poor students performance.

The Role of the Head Teacher in managing Public Primary schools in A Depressed Economy:

Delegation of Duties

One of the decisions which every head teacher has to take is the various duties he will delegate to the members of his staff. It is very crucial decision because it will affect the successful implementation of the curriculum and no headmaster can do without delegation unless he wants to cause strain in his span of control. For the headmaster to delegate duties properly, he should know the talents of his staff because if he delegates an important duty to a staff that is inexperienced and incompetent, he will compound his problems. If for good reasons he has no confidence in the capability of his staff he can resort to half delegation and give

terms of reference by which the staff to whom the duty is delegated will be compelled by instruction to refer back to him for final decision. According to [6], [7], [8] delegation of duties by the head teacher whether it is complete delegation or half delegation is unavoidable because no headmaster can be in direct operational with all the teachers and pupils in the school. Delegation of duties will enable the head teacher to save time, manage scarce resources and train prospective head teachers.

Partnership with Parents Teachers Association in School Administration

The headmaster should be in partnership with the Parents Teacher Association (PTA) in running his school. [5] maintains that, Parents Teachers Association (PTA) plays some significant roles in primary schools which include:

- i. Assisting in the provision and maintenance of school infrastructures.
- ii. Provision of books and non-books materials for effective teaching and learning.
- iii. Paying regular visits to the schools to monitor students and teachers performance.
- iv. Co-operating with other stakeholders in education to provide quality education to pupils.
- v. Employment of part-time teachers in subject areas lacking teachers and paying those teachers from the PTA account.
- vi. Making donations to support school projects.

The above roles of PTA will make head teachers management of public primary schools in depressed economy smooth and effective; it will enhance the quality of education.

Improvisation of Instructional Materials:

The head teacher should encourage his teachers to produce their instructional materials instead of buying ready-made materials which has serious financial implication to the school. Improvisation

of materials will not only improve the skill of the teacher and make him master of his subject, it will also increase the revenue base of the school since some of

the materials improvised for teaching could be sold to the public and the money accruing to the school could be diverted to other areas of need.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings, the paper hereby recommend the following:

1. Adequate motivation of teachers through delegation of duties and allowing them to improve themselves through in service training.
2. Providing support such as expertise, time and learning resources to the teachers.
3. Head teachers should encourage the teachers to improvise their teaching materials. They could involve the pupils in the provision of their teaching materials.

4. Improved and adequate budgetary allocation to education and disbursement of such at all levels.
5. Better condition of service for teachers.
6. Improved educational materials, equipment, facilities and infrastructure.
7. Recruitment and employment of qualified and competent teachers, educational administrators as well as other educational personnel.
8. Training and retraining of serving teachers and other educational personnel.

CONCLUSION

The dominating influence in every school is the head teacher. It is the headmaster who decides how the school is to be run, the method of discipline, the time-table and at times, the book to be purchased for teachers use. It has never been possible for the government to make adequate financial provision for running of school. Teaching materials, equipment and qualified teachers are inadequately provided in our primary

schools. This is as a result of down turn of Nigerian economy. The head teacher has great roles to play in managing his/her school in a depressed economy. He/she must be innovative and resourceful in spotting talented teachers and delegating duties to them, he must partner with the Parent Teachers Association (PTA) for administrative support to the school.

REFERENCES

1. Akubue, A (2003). The key to effective management. A look at the over looked, lead paper at the Journal of WCCI Nigeria chapter 4 (1) p.24
2. Allen, N. (2004). Principles and practice of teaching. London: Allen and Unwin.
3. Azubuikwe, N.O. (2017). Curriculum design for the pre-school child in a depressed economy. Journal of Educational Studies and Research 9 (1) p. 204
4. Gandonu, B. (2017). Celebrating Nigerian children in a recessed economy. Guardian Newspaper, 27th May, 2017 p.5
5. Mbakwem, J.N. (2005). Curriculum plan. Owerri: Upthrust Press.
6. Okafor, V.E. (2009). Challenges of implementing social studies

curriculum in Anambra State primary schools. *International Journal of Higher Education Research* 1(1) p. 108.

7. Okoli, S.I (1992). Curriculum provisions in National Policy on Education. Awka: Meks publishers.
8. Taiwo, T. (1980). Primary education in South Western Nigeria. A report. Ibadan: Government Printers.