

ASSESSMENT OF ALUMNI PARTICIPATION IN THE MANAGEMENT OF SECONDARY EDUCATION IN ANAMBRA STATE OF NIGERIA

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Abstract

The study focused on the assessment of Alumni participation in the management of secondary education in Anambra state of Nigeria. Descriptive survey design was adopted for the study. The population of the study comprised all the 261 principals and 6381 teachers in the public secondary schools in the state. A sample of 60 principals and 660 teachers was randomly selected and used for the study. A researcher developed 4-point structured questionnaire titled Alumni participation in secondary education management was validated by three experts and used for the study. Cronbach Alpha method was used to obtain reliability index of 0.83 and .78 respectively. Two research questions guided the study. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions and Z-test was employed to test the null hypotheses at .05 level of significance. The findings showed among other things that Alumni participate in the management of secondary education in; funding, decision making, building, provision of material resources and acquisition of lands for the schools. Based on the findings, it was recommended among other things that the government should increase budgetary allocation to education and Alumni groups should be engaged in the management of schools in key areas to promote quality education in the State.

Keywords: Assessment, Alumni participation, Management and Secondary education

Introduction

Education is very fundamental to development of an individual and the society. It is the key upon which all aspects of development rest and no nation can develop more than the quality of education it can provide (FGN, 2013). Education is the most powerful weapon one can use to change the world. Federal Republic of Nigeria (2013) defined secondary education as the education children received after primary education and before the tertiary stage. The broad goals of secondary education in Nigeria is to prepare individuals for useful living within the society and higher education. One major step in the achievement of these goals is provision of adequate human and material resources for effective teaching and learning processes in the schools.

Every public secondary school in Nigeria and Anambra State in particular depends heavily on the government for the provision of the required resources for school operations. However, the current economic crises being witnessed globally and Nigeria in particular, has laid a limiting factor to what the government can provide. Consequently the

government and stakeholders in education have come to realise the great support non-government and voluntary organisations can give to the educational sector. Hence National Policy on Education (2013) stated that the government welcomes the contributions and participation of voluntary agencies and communities in the management of schools and to establish their own schools as long as they meet the minimum standard laid down by the Federal Government". Upon this premises, many voluntary associations, agencies and companies have in the recent time mapped out programmes to support school activities at the national, state, community and school levels. Alumni associations seem to be one of the major forces involved in this struggle to enhance teaching and learning activities in schools through support for increased human and material resources.

Alumni are former students or pupils who graduated from a school. They are the branch ambassadors of the institutions they graduated from. A school Alumni association forms a reflection of it past and a link to its future. Valuable traditions of the school can be perpetuated through the activities of the ex-students. Sometimes the current students may not know the importance of certain school traditions or reasons behind them in the locality. Alumni can be powerful motivators for the traditions of the school. In addition, Alumni associations in the recent time have become a powerful asset for school development. Schools are changing the way they see and interact with their Alumni. Nwangwu (2012) identified that old student associations and other voluntary agencies should participate in the management and sustaining education in the states.

Management in education is the process which deals with utilizing both human and material resources to achieve predetermined goals (Onuselogu 2012). It is important therefor to assess the extent of participation of Alumni associations in managing secondary education in order to attain the overall goals of education in the state.

Alumni associations can participate in many ways in the management of secondary schools. Indeed many schools have started to harness the power of Alumni through various platforms. They can assist by raising funds towards developmental projects in the schools. The financial contributions can be employed in the provision of infrastructure such as classroom buildings, libraries and furniture for the school (Osuji, 2002). Financial support to schools can be used to build dormitories, staffrooms, and fencing the school compounds. Notably, assistance of Alumni groups to their alma mater can be in the form of mentorship, scholarship to students, career guidance, tutorials, coaching in sports, speakers or resource personals on career and award giving ceremonies. They can participate in the management of the schools through policy formulation and planning, conflict resolution, monitoring teaching and learning activities in the school to ensure that standard is maintained, (Okafor, 2010). Alumni associations' roles in the management of secondary schools can be through donations, awarding scholarship to students, employing temporary or part-time teachers, decision making, mentoring students, placement of new graduates from schools and having networking platforms. In view of the roles, the study assessed the forms assistance given and the extent to which alumni associations participate in the management of secondary schools in Anambra state.

Statement of the problem

School is an agent of socialisation and citadel of learning towards human and national development. The national goals of secondary education can only be achieved when the environment for teaching and learning are made conducive through adequate provision of human and material resources. However, the huge financial and material resources required to fund secondary education in Nigeria and Anambra state inclusive seems to be above the government capability to provide. Consequently, community agents, Parent Teachers Association (P.T.A) and some other support groups including Alumni associations have contributed immensely towards the improvement and development of secondary education in Anambra State especially in areas such as land, building structures and financial support. Nevertheless, there seems to be lots of criticisms levied against by the public, which ranges from misappropriation of funds by the school authorities, politicising issues concerning the schools, manipulation of the support groups by the school heads and non-involvement of the parents and other stakeholders in decision making, planning and implementation. Specifically supportive and engaged Alumni associations have been identified as crucial to a school's success. It seems that many former students of schools in Anambra state are willing to give back to their alma-mater as sign of their gratitude and affinity. It therefore becomes imperative to carry out an empirical study to assess the areas and extent of participation of Alumni associations in the management of secondary education in Anambra state.

Purpose of the study

The main purpose of the study was to assess the extent to which Alumni associations have participated in the management of secondary education in Anambra state. Specifically the study;

1. Ascertained the areas in which alumni associations participate in the management of secondary education in Anambra state.
2. Examined the extent to which Alumni contribute in managing secondary education in Anambra state.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What are the areas in which Alumni Associations participate in the management of secondary education in Anambra State?
2. To what extent do Alumni associations contribute in managing secondary education in Anambra state?

Null Hypotheses

H_{01} There is no significant difference on the mean responses of principals and teachers on of contribution of Alumni in the management of Secondary Education in Anambra state.

H_{02} There is no significant difference on the mean responses of Principals and teachers on the extent the Alumni associations contribute in the management of secondary education in Anambra state.

Methodology

Descriptive survey design was adopted for the study. Nworgu (2015) defined survey as a method of obtaining data and describing in a systematic way the characteristics, features or facts about a given population, without interference on what was observed. By using the survey design, the researcher collected information from principals and teachers in Anambra state public secondary schools to determine the role and extent of contributions of Alumni associations in the management of schools.

The study population comprised 261 principals and 6382 teachers in all the 261 public secondary schools in the six education zones of Anambra state (Post Primary Schools Service Commission Awka Staff Analysis 2018). Anambra state is divided into six education zones namely; Aguta, Awka, Nnewi, Ogidi, Onitsha and Otuocha.

The sample of the study was made up of 660 teachers and 60 principals selected using multi-stage sampling procedure. At the first stage four education zones were randomly selected from the six education zones which included; Awka, Nnewi, Ogidi and Aguta zones. Then stratified random sampling technique was adopted to select 15 schools from each of the four zones giving a total of 60 schools. Stratification was based on location of the school, to reflect all the local government areas in each of the zones. In each of the selected schools, 11 teachers were randomly selected giving a total of 660 teachers. The principals of the selected schools were used giving a total 720 respondents.

The instrument used for data collection was a researcher developed questionnaire titled Alumni Participation in School Management (APSM). The instrument had three sections, A, B, and C. Section "A" contained information on personal data of the respondents. Sections B contained 11 items on the areas of Alumni participation in the management of schools. While Section 'C' had 11 items on the extent of participation. Sections B was scored on 4-point scale of strongly Agree (SA = 4 point), Agree (A= 3 points), Disagree (D = 2 points) and Strongly Disagree (SD = 1 point). While section C was scored on 4 – point scale of Very High Extent (VHE = 4 points), High Extent (HE = 3 point), Low Extent (LE= 2) and very low extent (VLE = 1). The instrument was face validated by three experts, two senior lecturers in educational management and one in measurement and evaluation from Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University Anambra State, Nigeria. The reliability of the instrument was established using Cronbach Alpha statistic. Reliability coefficient of 0.83, and 0.78 were obtained respectively for sections B and C, which were considered high enough for the study. Four research assistants were used in the administration and collection of the instrument. Out of the 660 questionnaire administered to teachers, 640 copies were collected and used for data analysis. 20 copies could not be retrieved. 60 copies of the instrument administered to the principals were retrieved and used for the study. Data collected were analysed using mean and standard deviation to answer the research questions. The mean score of 2.50 and above were accepted as respondents' agreement with the research items in section B while any score below 2.50 indicated that the respondents disagree with the research items. In cluster C mean score of 2.50 and above were considered to be high and scores of 2.49 and below indicate low extent. Z-test statistic was used to test the null hypotheses at 05 level of significance.

Results

Research Question 1: What are the areas in which Alumni Associations Participate in the management of secondary education in Anambra state, Nigeria?

Table 1: Mean Ratings Of Alumni Associations’ Areas of Participation In Secondary Education Management.

S/N	Item description	Principals			Teachers		
		\bar{X}	60 SD	Decision	\bar{X}	60 SD	Decision
1	Involvement in decision making	2.70	1.08	Accepted	2.89	1.07	Accepted
2	Fund raising for development projects	3.06	0.98	Accepted	3.45	0.84	Accepted
3	Supervision of instructional activities	2.02	1.09	Rejected	2.00	1.14	Rejected
4	Acquisition of land for the school expansion	2.95	1.10	Accepted	2.80	0.89	Accepted
5	Promote students’ and staff welfare services	2.58	1.04	Rejected	2.65	1.00	Accepted
6	Erecting buildings in the school	3.34	0.80	Accepted	3.65	0.87	Accepted
7	Provision of sports materials	2.82	1.06	Accepted	2.52	1.01	Accepted
8	Fencing school compound	3.20	0.87	Accepted	3.50	0.78	Accepted
9	Settling disputes between teachers and principals	2.82	1.02	Accepted	2.60	1.02	Accepted
10	Provision of material resources	3.10	0.94	Accepted	2.72	1.04	Accepted
11	Organizing social activities	2.45	1.02	Rejected	2.02	1.12	Rejected
	Grand mean score	2.96	1.00		2.81	0.98	

The data on table 1 shows that items 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7,8, 9 and10, with mean values ranging from 2.52 to 3.34 for principals and 2.52 to 3.45 for teachers, scored mean responses above the acceptable score of 2.50 and were judged as areas Alumni Association participate in the management of secondary schools in Anambra State of Nigeria. Such areas of participation include; decision making, fund raising, acquisition of lands for expansion, staff and student welfare services, erection of buildings, provision of sports and other material resources, fencing of school compound, settling disputes between teachers and principals. While items 3 and 11 did not measure up to midpoint of 2.50 and as such were rejected.

Research Question 2

To what extent do Alumni Associations participate in Secondary School Management in Anambra State?

Table 2: mean responses of Principals and teachers on the extent to which Alumni Associations Participate in Secondary School management.

S/ N	Item description	Principals			Teachers		
		\bar{X}	SD	Decisi on	\bar{X}	SD	Decisi on
1	Involvement in decision making	2.75	1.08	HE	2.5 5	1.12	HE
2	Fund raising	3.02	0.12	VHE	3.3 2	0.88	VHE
3	Supervision of instructional activities	2.26	1.09	LE	2.0 2	1.02	LE
4	Acquisition of Land for the school	2.87	1.12	HE	3.0 6	1.00	VHE
5	Promote students and staff welfare	2.61	1.10	HE	2.7 5	1.08	HE
6	Erecting buildings in the school	3.06	1.10	VHE	3.0 1	0.99	VHE
7	Provision of sports materials	2.71	1.10	HE	2.6 2	1.01	HE
8	Fencing school compound	2.94	1.11	HE	2.7 1	1.10	HE
9	Settling disputes between teachers and principals	2.52	1.14	LE	2.0 7	1.14	VLE
10	Provision of material resources	2.75	1.08	HE	2.5 4	1.16	HE
11	Organising social activities	2.02	1.15	VLE	1.9 5	1.12	VLE
	Grand Mean Score	2.68	1.01	HE	2.6 0	1.06	HE

The data on table 2 show that out of 11 items, both principals and teachers agreed in most of the items except on item 9 which is settling of disputes between the principals and teachers. The mean rating of items 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10 ranged between 2.52 to 3.06 for principals and between 2.52 to 3.32 for teachers. This indicates that the Alumni Associations participate to a high extent in the management of secondary schools in areas which include, fund raising, decision making, acquisition of land for the schools promotion of students and staff welfare, erecting buildings, provision of sports and other material resources and fencing of the school compound. While areas where they participated to very low extent were in supervision of instructions and organising social activities. The standard deviations of principals and teachers were 1.10 and 1.18 respectively.

Table 3: Z-test difference in the mean responses of principals and teachers on the contributions of Alumni in the management of secondary education in Anambra State, Nigeria.

Group	N	X	SD	Z-crit	Z-cal	Decision
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Principals	60	2.96	1.00	1.96	0.74	NS
Teachers	640	2.81	0.98			

The result on table 3 shows that Z-crit. value of 1.96 is greater than Z-cal. value of 0.14 at 0.5 level of significance. Therefore the null hypothesis is accepted that there is no significant difference between the mean responses of principals and teachers on the areas of contributions of Alumni to the management of secondary schools in Anambra State, Nigeria.

Table 4: Z-test difference in the mean responses of Principals and teachers on the extent of participation of Alumni in the management of secondary schools in Anambra State.

Group	N	X	SD	Z-crit	Z-cal	Decision
Principals	60	2.68	1.01	1.96	0.14	NS
Teachers	640	2.60	1.06			

The result on table 4 shows that Z-crit. Value of 1.96 is greater than Z-cal. Value of 0.14 at .05 level of significance. Therefore the null hypothesis is accepted that there is no significant difference between the mean responses of Principals and teachers on the extent of Alumni participation in the management of secondary schools in Anambra State, Nigeria.

Discussion of the Findings

The results of the study revealed that both the principals of schools and teachers agreed that areas of Alumni participation in secondary education management in Anambra state of Nigeria include, decision making, fund raising, Acquisition of lands, Staff and Students welfare, Erecting buildings, Provision of material resources and Fencing of school compound. The findings of the study support the views of Okorji (2011) and Nwangwu (2012), who reiterated that old students associations and other voluntary agencies should participate in the management and sustaining education in the states. Intervention by Alumni groups therefore is a welcome idea that will help to enhance quality education in Nigeria. Table 1 also revealed that both the principals and teachers agreed that Alumni groups do not participate in the supervision of instructions and organising social activities in the schools.

The findings also revealed that both principals and teachers agreed that Alumni participate to high extent in the management of secondary schools in decision making, fund raising, acquisition of lands for schools, promotion of staff and teachers' welfare, erecting buildings in the school and provision of material resources. These are very important areas that can boost the funding and management of education in the state.

The two null hypotheses were accepted which revealed that there was no significant difference on the mean responses of Principal and teachers on the areas and extent of participation of Alumni in the management of secondary education in the state.

Conclusion

The current economic depression being witnessed in Nigeria has greatly affected budgetary allocations for education. Consequently both the Federal and State governments cannot adequately fund all the levels of education, therefore assistance from Alumni and other voluntary agencies in the management of secondary education in Anambra State through; fund raising, erecting buildings, acquisition of lands and material resources, should be encouraged.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made.

1. There is a great need for school authorities to involve Alumni and other community agents in the management of education.
2. The government should increase budgetary allocations to education sector to further enhance quality education in Nigeria.
3. The activities of the Alumni and other voluntary agencies should be recognised by the school authorities and the government to encourage them to give more assistance to the schools.

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