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Educational Policy Changes And Effective Administration: Implications For Secondary Schools In Rivers State

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ABSTRACT
The purpose of this study was to examine education policy changes and effective administration: implications for Senior Secondary Schools in Rivers State. Two research questions and two hypotheses guided the study. The study used descriptive survey. This design was adopted because the study would use questionnaire to generate its data from the respondents. The population of this study is 273 principals comprising all the senior secondary schools in Rivers State. The sample size for this research was 273 principals of senior secondary schools made up of male and female principals selected using proportionate simple random sampling technique. The instrument for the study is structured questionnaire developed by the researcher titled "Educational Policy Changes and Effective Administration: Implications for Senior Secondary Schools Questionnaire (EPCEAISSSQ), consisting of ten(10) items to elicit information on the various educational policies and its implications on effective administration of secondary schools. Mean and standard deviation was used to answer the research questions, while Z-test was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The findings of this study showed that educational policy changes had impacted positively on administration of-Senior Senior Secondary Schools in terms of curriculum and students' academic performance. Based on the findings of the study it was recommended that principals and school administrators should be incorporated in policy formation and implementation because effective school administration is the only viable approach to providing qualitative and functional education in the country.
Keywords: Educational Policy, School Administrators, Administration of Senior Secondary Schools

INTRODUCTION

Education is viewed as the process of acquiring knowledge, skills, attitudes, abilities, competence and the cultural norms of a society by people in order to transmit it to the younger generations that will enhance perpetual development of the society. In the view of Adepoju as cited in Etuk, Ering and Ajake (2012), stated that education is a tool for the acquisition of skills, relevant knowledge, and habits for surviving in the world, and as such in every society. The education sector stands as a medium through which positive transformation could be achieved. Thus, government at all levels place a high premium on education. They recognize it as a weapon against ignorance, diseases, squalor and poverty and as a means of raising enlightened, lively and industrious citizens and of producing prosperous nation. In all countries of the world education is overseen by an agency or ministry which drives the educational policy of that country. In Nigeria

and indeed Rivers State, education is overseen by the Ministry of Education which takes responsibility for implementing policy for state controlled public education.

Education is divided into sector such as pre-school, primary school, secondary school, colleges and university (FGN, 2004). Policy serves that purpose of ensuring that every action of an organization must have basis or backing. It also ensures consistency of action since every organization is governed by approved principles. Policies are initiatives mostly by governments which determine the direction of the system. Educational Policies are distinct from other policies by the fact that policies on education are part and parcel of educational institutions. So policies formulated in educational institutions can qualify as educational policies. It is vital that policies must be rational and purposeful to remain sustainable. Schools are set up to inculcate desirable values in the educand and facilitate learning. It then follows that for schools to function and operate efficiently they need policies to guide their operations. Policies are formulated and often with good intentions, but at the implementation stage the policies tend to be rendered less effective. These policies are enforced by school administrators or principals.

The term school administration, when used in secondary education discussion, draws attention to the direction of an organization, control and supervision of schools in Nigeria. The school administrator on appointment are clothed with authority and responsibility of developing and implementing the education programmes of the school, providing facilities and equipment, keeping school records as well as creating a conducive teaching and learning atmosphere in schools. The school principals are therefore held responsible for the effective organization and administration of the school in which they have been appointed. Principals are change agents and as such they must be current with the new trends in classroom management and supervision (Japhet-Nwapi, 2016). School administration is therefore the coordination of both human and material resources within the school for the optimal achievement of the predetermined objectives of education. The principal is the Chief Executive of the school and he directs the actions of his teachers, students, non-teaching staff and the entire community in which the school is built. As the highest official, his responsibilities include the following; assigning duties to his staff through the delegating of authority, but he is accountable to the Senior Secondary Schools Board (RSSSSB) for the implementation of educational programme in his schools, organizing and supervising instruction and evaluating the work of his teachers, making sure that the educational objectives are being achieved (Oluwuoye & Uche, 2004). Effective administration of schools can simply be explained in a straight forward statement as looking after the complete affairs related to school. In fact, it is the managerial skill for smooth functioning and execution. Also, school administration is the school main governing body which plays a major part in making and taking decisions related to students and the school's overall status (Japhet-Nwapi, 2016). In Nigeria, several policies have been formulated and adopted with the aim of bringing about quality improvement in secondary education. Ogbonna (2010), stated that the role of policy is that it specifies government program of action contained either in the nation's laws or in a public statement by a competent functionary of government. Among such educational policies introduced are the takeover of schools from the missionaries by the government resulting in unified educational system based on the 7-5-2-3 (7 years of primary education, 5 years of secondary school, 2 years of higher school certificate and three years of university). 8 - 5 - 2 - 3 (8years of primary school, 5 years of secondary school, 2 years of higher school certificate and 3 years of university education), 6-5-4 system involving (6 years of primary school, 5 years of secondary education and 4 years of university). The 6-3-3-4 system also involves (6 year of primary school, 3 years of junior secondary school, 3 years of senior secondary school and 4 years of university education, and 9-3-4 UBE system which involves (9 years of universal compulsory schooling to be given as six years of primary education, 3 years of junior secondary education). At the end of the compulsory nine years schooling, all the candidates are required to sit for an external examination and graduate with Junior Secondary School Certificate and later proceed to three years of senior secondary and 4 years of university. There are also policies on the

use of information and communication technology (ICT) in secondary schools, policy on professionalization of teaching profession and the school based management policy. In addition to the aforementioned policy changes in the education sector, the government of Nigeria has also introduced a policy to reflect the state of professional practice in education which is the Teachers Registration Council of Nigeria (TRNC) for teachers who teach in secondary schools and are required to have a minimum qualification of Bachelor's Degree, plus a Post-graduate Diploma in Education.

Research Questions

The study sought to provide answers to the following research questions:

i) What are the various educational policy changes that occurred in secondary schools in Rivers State?

ii) How does educational policy changes affect administration of secondary schools in Rivers State?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses guided the study:

i) There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of male and female principals on the various educational policy changes that occurred in secondary schools in Rivers State.

ii) There is no significant difference between the mean rating of male and female principals on how educational policy changes affect the administration of secondary schools in Rivers State

Theoretical Framework

This study was anchored on Kurt Lewin's Theory of Organizational Change of (1947). This theory is defined as the movement of an organization away from its present state in order to increase its efficiency and effectiveness. And during organizational or policy change, managers/' administrators must balance the need to response to new and unpredictable events. According to this theory, a wide variety of forces arises from the way an organization operates from its structure, culture and control system that makes it resistant to change or do both at the same time. Managing policy changes in an organization also involve evaluating the agents at the end by comparing the situation before and after the change or using bench marking. The use of this theory is justifiable to this study and also relevant because when there is a change in policy the reason may be due to a change in economic climate, or a new curriculum, teaching method, teaching methods, staff recruitment infrastructural development for effective administration of the school towards the goal attainment. Indeed, as a long or short term educational policy it involves evaluating the change at the end.

Conceptual Framework

The place of education in national development cannot be overstressed. Its importance is stressed in the opening statement of the federal republic of Nigeria (FRN) (2004) where it is stated that "education in Nigeria is an instrument par excellence for effecting national development". In other words, education is not just a medium of knowledge and skill acquisition, it is also a total formation building as cited in (Etuk, Ering and Ajake, 2012). Similarly, Amaghionyediwe and Osinube (2006) are of the opinion that education in Nigeria is more of a public enterprises' that has witnessed government active participation. In the view of the initiative of the national policy on education, education is seen as a vehicle of change in achieving national development. In the very words of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (2004).The National Policy on education is Nigeria's national guideline on the effective management and implementation of education at all tiers of the system. The National Policy on Education therefore as a standard and requirements for quality education in Nigeria (Federal Republic of Nigeria, p.9) Miebodie (2004) as cited in Japhet-Nwapi(2016) asserts that educational policies are set up to guide and give directions to the system of education. No educational institution cans survival without a policy. This is because

policy provides a sense of direction in dealing and solving educational problems. However, for any system of education to survive and thrive in a competitive economy, it must be reviewed from time to time. Ekundayo as cited in Miebode, (2014) opined that education policy represents definite course of action proposed by the government and adopted as expedient to the issues and problems of the education sector. Educational policy means the collection of laws and rules that governs the operation of education system. In line with the above, Ogbonna (2010) opines that education policies are approved documents that guide all areas of educational i.e. recruitment, admission and registration of students etc. Imam(2012) listed some of the policies an education from 1944 till date to include; policy of decentralization, universal primary education, Quranic education, 6-3-3-4 system and 9-3-4 (UBE) System, Universal Basic Education (UBE) according to Ayeni and dada(2011) stated that the changes in policy are due to the undertone or performance of the policies. For instance, 6-5-4 system was changed to 6-S-3-4 system because the programme was conceived as an instrument of national unity, and also to inject functionality into the system. Ayeni and Dada, (2011) posted that the 6-3-3-4 system was fashioned to produces graduates who would be able to make use of their hands, heads and heart i.e. (the 3Hs of education). The 6-3-3-4 System was changed to Universal Basic Education (UBE) in 1999, and the UBE Act signed in April 2004. The programme was concrete demonstration of Federal Government Resolution to have the gradual, but shocking drift of the country's education into an inglorious past of dangerous illiteracy. The UBE Scheme would develop in the citizenry a "strong consciousness" for education and commitment to its promotion and provide free Universal Basic Education for every Nigeria child of school age, and to streamline the overcrowded nature of subjects offered at the basic education level and it is expected to meet the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) (Anamachi &Romaine, 2000).

Also Gideon as cited in Anaduaka and Okafor (2013), however noted that most of these educational policies in Nigeria were always implemented without a reliable assessment of the nation's needs, without proper funding, monitoring and evaluation. There is no gain saying that these policies in education have an impact on effective school administration. In fact, the changes from 6-3-3-4 system to 9-3-4 system necessitated the division of UBE and Senior Secondary Schools, this gave rise to the appointment of two principals ie (Junior and senior school's principal) and the need for upgrading of teaching and learning facilities. The National Policy on Education was published in 1977 but revised in 1981. 1990, 2004 and 2014. The policy document was revised to ensure that it address the perceived needs of the nation. The major purpose of education policy as stated by Matthew (2008) is to analyze educational policies and its system periodically with a view to detecting defects and making provisions for remedying them so that the system can optimally achieve its goals. The various educational policy prior to independence in 1960, showed that was administered at regional levels. The western region blazed the trail with the introduction of free primary education in 1955, and followed by the eastern region and the Lagos colony in 1957. However, the early policies failed to provide the nation with adequate national philosophy and integration (Osokoya, 2003). In support of the above, Japhet-Nwapi (2006) stated that the early policies on education failed to make provisions for a national policy that would have unified the fragmentation occasioned by the efforts of the regional government at the time. The UPE Programme has been a stated priority of successive governments since inception in the 1970's although the actual commitment of the different governments has varied substantially. For instance, Abdulsalam Abubakar regime in recognition of the need for greater participation of the stakeholders toward it implementation, passed a legislation that spelt out the responsibilities of different levels of government and that of various stakeholders. Other initiatives included the reinstatement of the National Primary Education Commission and other management structures. National Primary Education Commission was established in 1988 abolished in 1991, and re-established by decree No. 98's of 1993 (Ayeni and Dada, 2011). Elechi and Yerogha (2013) defined Quranic education as a system of Quranic Literacy which aimed at training future scholars for the propagation of Islam or usually refers to a person who migrates

from the luxury of his home to other places or to a popular teacher in search of Islam knowledge. Also, Ayeni and Dada (2011), opined that the federal government of Nigeria after independence and in an attempt to find the type of education best suited to the country educational development identified the 6-3-3-4 system of education dated back to the 8th of September 1969. The Federal movement stated that the programme was conceived as an instrument of National Unity and also able to inject functionally into the system. The 6-3-3-4 system, is in itself an attempts to align with global and pan-African trend that aims at compulsory education up to the end of junior secondary school (PTTE, 2011). Nwagu (2007) also stated that the new system was modeled after the America system of education which laid emphasis on science, technology and vocational training. The Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC) have digitized the Nigerian secondary school curriculum in order to meet up with global best practices and improve the education sector (Kuni, 2004). The National Education Research Development Council (NERDC) vision is building and sustaining a culture of strategic education research and development that will inform the formation and effective implementation of policies in education as well as other related sectors of the economy, educational policy changes and school administration. Educational change is associated with education reforms. According to Medinat, Florence and Lasiele, as cited in Nwangwa and Omotere (2013) stated that change, implies that existing status quo in education is unsatisfactory. Change therefore, could be said to be an improvement or amendment of what is wrong, undesirable, or unsatisfactory or a gap in a system. "Policy" can be explained as a statement which expresses goals and the means of achieving them. It provides a road map for actions tailored towards meeting specific goals in education. Policies have been observed to change with changes in the political leadership of the country. The inconsistencies in educational policies have been argued to be responsible for the poor service delivery in the school system. Also, Uchedu (1979) identified the followings as problems associated with policy changes to include: inequality of access, rural-urban disparity, educational gap between ethnic groups and differences in curriculum.

Policy Changes and School Administration

Every organization, be it a school or industrial concern needs administration. In other words, administration simply means the act of getting things done in order to accomplish a defined objective. Akpotowoh as cited in Ezeani (2012) agreed that educational administration aims at using both human and materials resources within the educational system for the achievement of its objective. Also, Akinola as cited in Ezeani (2012) observed that the educational administrator irrespective of the place where he works (Primary, secondary or University) should have the primary task of enhancing the teaching and learning process. The school administrator initiates educational policies and programmes, procures and manages human and material resources, undertakes regular inspection and supervision of school activities, and finds out whether laid down standards are kept for effective implementation of school programmes. Miebodei (2014)stated further that policies are formulated and directed towards strengthening school administration and that administration-encompasses all areas of curriculum, teaching and learning methods, staff recruitment, finance mobilization and management of human and material resources. According to Ojo as cited in Ekundayo (2010), school administration involves managing, administering the curriculum and teaching, discipline, assessment, evaluation, resource allocation, staff appraisal, use of practical skills necessary for surviving the policies of the organization such as decision making.

The Federal Republic of Nigeria (2004) stated that the success of any system of education is hinged on proper planning framework, efficient administration and adequate financing. Principals are the heads of the schools and they oversee the general programmes of the institution. The school administrators need to keep pace with fast technological needs and to effectively achieve this, school administrators need to be trained and retrained regularly so that their administrative skills may not turn obsolete (Amuchie, Asotibe and Audu, 2013). Also, according to Odo as cited

in Amuchie, Asotibe and Audu (2013) that during planning, funds should be set aside for regular training, seminar, workshops and retraining of school administrators and not just based on appointment on the numbers of years in service so as to be effective in carrying out his duties professionally. They should also double their efforts at maintaining or ensuring that there is high level discipline in their domain. The importance of funding in education sector cannot be over emphasized because an organization cannot carry out its functions effectively without adequate financial resources at its disposal (Ige, 2013). In Nigeria and indeed Rivers State, secondary education derives its major funding from the annual allocation to the education sector but unfortunately, allocation to this sector on which secondary education depends has been consistently below to 26% annual budgetary allocations recommended by the United Nations Educational Scientific Organization (UNESCO) inspite of the strategic role of the sector in the training of manpower for the development of the economy. According to Ekundayo(2010), school administrators is the chief executive and accounting officer of the institution. The responsibility of providing teachers and other instructional staff with necessary resources for effective implementation of any of the policies lies in the hands of the school administrator.

Supervision and inspection are viewed as phases of school administration that affect the achievement of its objectives of an educational programme. Ekundayo(2010) Stated that the functions of the school administrator as a supervisor include obtaining and making available for teachers all educational information, visiting classrooms often to observe his teachers teaching, inspecting teachers lesson notes, class registers, diaries and teaching aids and also offering professional advice for their improvement. The administrator owes it a duty to modify the attitudes of the staff and motivate them to put their best in achieving educational goals through effective teaching-learning process because motivation enhances job performance. The school administrator is the critical person in making change to occur when it comes to efforts to improve the quality of the school. According to Uyanga (2008) a school is known to be an instrument of reforms and changes in the society, with the administrator identified as the pivot of such reforms and changes. Emeh, Isangadegh, Asuquo, Kalu and Ogaboh (2011) have observed that the historical antecedence of curriculum development in Nigeria began with the Christian missions in 1842 and the missionary schools establishment. The Encyclopedia of Education Research (1969) defines curriculum as all the learning experiences a learner has at school under the guidance of the teacher and to him the teacher plays a vital role in transmitting curriculum. Similarly, the Dictionary of Education also defines curriculum as the total learning activities or educative experience offered by an institution through its total institutional programmes designed to achieve the prescribed objectives. Gbamanya as cited Orji (2011) recognized education as the tool for achieving desirable change and the curriculum as the instrument for the delivery of educational goals and objectives. The Federal Republic of Nigeria launched the new curriculum for all Senior Secondary Schools Education aimed at producing school graduates who are well prepared for higher education as well as having relevant functional trade and entrepreneurship skill needed for poverty eradication, job creation and wealth generation (Ochayi, 2011). Alibi (2014) opined that the introduction of the new senior secondary school curriculum (NSSSC) in the secondary schools in Nigeria is a fresh initiative which aims at ensuring that graduates from senior secondary schools possess relevant information and Communication Technology (ICT) skills that will equip them for challenges of labour market. To this end, all the students irrespective of their field of study are expected to study five main subjects namely: English Languages, General Mathematics. Civic Education, Computer Studies and one trade subject out of the thirty-three subjects. The aim is to ensure the attainment of the National Policy objectives of preparing the student for useful living within the society.

Omosewo and Akanmu (2013) found out that the senior secondary school curriculum (SSSC) design is broken down into, theme, topics, performance objectives contents, activities, teaching and learning materials and evaluation guide. He stated further that the curriculum is diversified in order to cater for the differences in talents, opportunities and future roles of individuals. It is also

designed to provide trained manpower in the applied sciences, technology and commerce. Adeyemi and Adeyemi (2014) attributed that the development of any nation is hinged on solid educational foundation for its citizens, and this also suggests that education is a means of effecting changes in the society in order to build a well-developed nation. Education objectives includes creativity, objectivity and intellectual adventure. Education also helps a child to develop physically, mentally, intellectually and emotionally. Thus, Nwagwu (1997) opined that students learning can be evaluated in many different ways in a developing nation like Nigeria, where about 40% of the population are illiterates; parents use the performance of their children in public examinations to pass judgement on the schools, teachers and school administrators. Also, Cru as cited in Amuche and Sarah (2013) observed that student's performance is related to school location and availability of physical facilities. Several other factors have also been attributed to the perceived effectiveness in terms of students' academic achievement among which are teacher's factors, economic factors, parental factors, social factors and principal leadership behaviour. Furthermore, Obe as cited in Adeyemi and Adeymi (2014) identified some factors of student mass falling in examination to include students weak background, low intelligence, lack of aptitude and poor interest for the subject, poor study habits, students weakness in comprehension and inability to express themselves, lack of parental motivation and support, teachers not dedicated to duties, poor school infrastructural facilities, poor learning environment, overcrowded classrooms, lack of good textbooks, libraries, laboratories, etc. This situation of students poor performance in academics is aggravated by inefficient and ineffective planning, organization and management of the available humans and material resources. Although, many parents acknowledged all these factors listed above, but they strongly believe that if their children performs badly in their examinations, the teachers and school administrators have not done their job well and should take most of the blames (Nwagwu, 1977).

Review of Empirical Studies

Miebodei (2004) carried out a study on educational policy changes and perceived implementation in public secondary schools in Bayelsa State: The descriptive survey was used and a sample size of 810. Four research questions and four hypotheses were formulated for the study. Questionnaire was used as instrument for data collection, mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions while t-test was used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The findings revealed that implementation of educational policy changes enhance teaching and learning. The study also revealed that education policy changes enhance school administrator's experience and the administration of public schools. The researcher concluded that there are certain benefits associated with implementation of educational policies in public secondary schools which include effective management of teachers and students information sharing, decision making in the recruitment of staff and proper supervisory role.

Furthermore, in a related study conducted by Mathew (2008) on strategies for effective implementation of educational policy in secondary schools in Rivers State. A descriptive survey research was carried out with a sample size of 199. The findings of the study showed the extent of the implementation of 3-3 system of secondary education structure is above average. The study stated further that the strategies adopted in educational policy implementation are funds for research, availability of materials in the libraries, employment of teaching staff, equipment for technical subjects, scholarship programmes and guidance counselors in schools.

Summary of literature review

The authorities reviewed in this study agreed that educational policy changes aid secondary school administration to grow. The literature provided one theoretical framework and the study reviewed various educational policies. The policy document was revised to ensure that policies address the perceived needs of the government and also to provide direction, guides decision making and enable organization achieve its goals.

RESEARCH METHODS

Research Design

The study employed descriptive survey design. This design was chosen because the study used questionnaire to generate its data from the respondents.

In Table 4 the calculated Z-score of 0.03 is lower than the Z-critical of ±1.96. This reveals that the hypothesis is accepted. It shows that there is no significance difference between the mean scores of male and female principals on the effects of educational policy changes in the administration of senior secondary school in Rivers State

PRESENTATION OF RESULTS

Research Question 1: *What are the various educational policy changes that occurred in senior secondary schools in Rivers State?*

Table 1: Mean responses on male and female secondary schools principals on the educational policy changes in Rivers State

S/N	Items	Male Principal N = 185 $\overline{X}$	SD	Dec.	Female Principal N = 83 $\overline{X}$	SD	Dec.
1	The colonial government reformed 8-6-2-3 system to 6-5- 2-3 system	2.73	0.76	Agreed	3.30	0.89	Agreed
2.	The 6-5-4 system changed to 6-3-S-4 system to make education functionable	2.90	1.04	Agreed	3.35	0.89	Agreed
3.	The 6-3-3-4 system changed to UBE programme	3.05	1.27	Agreed	3.31	1.79	Agreed
4.	The third edition of national policy on education was updated to the 4th edition	2.97	0.98	Agreed	2.66	0.92	Agreed
5.	There were changes in educational policies in Secondary Schools in Rivers State	3.09	0.99	Agreed	3.89	1.17	Agreed
	Aggregate Means	**2.95**	**1.01**	**High**	**3.30**	**1.13**	**High**

From the data Table 1, the respondents agreed to the items with mean scores above the criterion of 2.50. The aggregate mean score of 2.95 and 3.30 are high and indicates that various changes in educational policies occurred.

Research Question 2: *How does an educational policy change affect administration of senior secondary schools in Rivers State?*

Table 2: Analysis of the mean score of male and female principals on how educational policy changes affect the administration of secondary schools

S/N	Items	Male Principal N = 185 $\overline{X}$	SD	Dec.	Female Principal N = 83 $\overline{X}$	SD	Dec.
6	Educational policy provides a guideline for actions towards meeting specific goals.	2.83	1.44	Agreed	3.25	0.90	Agreed
7.	The inconsistencies in educational policies are responsible for poor service delivery in the schools system.	3.07	0.96	Agreed	2.64	1.17	Agreed
8.	Changes in educational policy leads to changes in curriculum.	2.98	1.18	Agreed	2.75	1.30	Agreed
9.	Changes in educational policy enhance teaching and learning in secondary school.	3.06	0.95	Agreed	2.95	1.46	Agreed
10.	Educational policy changes affects secondary school administration	3.00	1.26	Agreed	2.98	0.93	Agreed
	Aggregate Means	**2.99**	**1.16**	**High**	**2.91**	**1.13**	**High**

Table 2 shows that the decisions were high in items 6-10. This indicates that the male and female principals agreed that changes in educational policies affect administration of Senior Secondary Schools in Rivers State.

Hypotheses I

There is no significance difference between the mean scores of male and female principals on the various educational policy changes in Senior Secondary Schools in Rivers State.

Table 3 Z-test analysis of the mean score of male and female principals on the various educational policy changes in Rivers State

Gender	N	$\overline{X}$	SD	DF	Cal/Z-Value	Critical Z-value	Decision Rule
Male	185	2.95	1.01	271	1.09	±1.96	H_{01}
Female	83	3.30	1.13				Accept

Data in Table 3 shows that the calculated z-score of 0.15 is less than the critical z-score of ±1.96 at 0.05 significance. The null hypotheses score of male and female principals on the various educational policy changes in Senior Secondary Schools in Rivers State is accepted.

Research Question 2:

To examine how educational policy changes affect the administration of Senior Secondary Schools in Rivers State

Hypotheses 2:
There is no significance difference between the mean scores of male and female principals on how changes in educational policy affect administration in Rivers State.

Table 4Z-test analysis of the mean score of male and female principals on how changes in educational policy affect administration of senior secondary schools in Rivers State

Gender	N	$\bar{X}$	SD	DF	Cal/Z-Value	Critical Z-vstfue	Decision Rule
Male	185	2.99	1.16	271	0.03	±1.96	H_{02}
Female	83	2.91	1.15				Accepted

In Table 4 the calculated Z-score of 0.03 is lower than the Z-critical of ±1.96. This reveals that the hypothesis is accepted. It shows that there is no significance difference between the mean scores of male and female principals on the effects of educational policy changes in the administration of senior secondary school in Rivers State

Summary of Findings

The findings of this study are summarized as thus;

i. The colonial government reformed the 8-6-2-3 system to 6-5-2-3 system. The 6-5-4 systems also change to 6-3-3-4 system, which gave birth to the UBE system of 9-3-4. There were indeed changes in educational policies of secondary education in Rivers State
ii. Educational policy provides a guideline for actions toward meeting specific goals. These changes in policy lead to changes in curriculum innovations which also enhance learning, recruitment of staff, introduction of new subjects, and provision of facilities and equipment. In fact policy changes influence the administration of secondary schools.
iii. Changes in educational policy affects the subjects taught in schools. It also lead to the introduction of vocational subjects, ICT education, this also has an influence on school curriculum. Introduction of new subjects as a result of policy change arouses student interest recruitment of qualified teachers and provision of more infrastructural facilities in schools.
iv. Educational policy changes enable school administrators to function at the optimal level. The principals are exposed to different types of managerial skills to be able to cope with the new system which he/she will in-turn impact to his staff for efficient and effective school administration.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The findings of the study revealed that 6-5-4 system changed to 6-3-3-4 system. The UBE system also replaced the 6-3-3-4 system, this finding agreed with Ayeni and Dada (2011) when they opined that Federal Government of Nigeria after independence and in an attempt to find the type of education best suited to the nation's development identified 6-3-3-4 system. He further stated that the curriculum for 9-3-4 system is expected to be aligned to meet the millennium development goals (MDGS). The findings of this study also revealed that educational policy change provides for actions towards meeting specific goals. Changes in educational policies affect the administration of secondary schools. This finding is in line with Medinat, Florence and Laside as cited in Nwangwa and Omotere (2013) when they said that changes imply that the existing status -quo in the Nigeria Education Sector is unsatisfactory. This study agrees with the Federal Republic of Nigeria (2004) which stated that the success of any system of education is hinged on proper planning framework, efficient administration and adequate funding.

CONCLUSION

The Federal Ministry of Education is responsible for the determination, formulation and implementation of the national policy on education and educational policy changes. The

translation of the various policy changes into practices is of great importance to educational managers. Educational policy changes are associated with curriculum development, funding, provision of facilities, staff recruitment, effective teaching and learning which influences students' academic performance and administration of schools. The inability to effectively implement policies by the stakeholders can be a big disservice to humanity since no nation can be better and greater than its human resources which are influenced by the level of education. The frequent changes in policy on education have one way or the other had adverse effect in the development of education sector, and therefore functional and qualitative educational policy should not be changed or discontinued by successive government.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings the following recommendations were made:

Government at all levels especially the state governments should ensure that educational policy changes are accompanied with adequate physical and material resource to enhance teaching and learning.

The government as policy makers should make efforts to monitor school administrators to ensure that they are reflecting the changes in educational policy. Effective school management is the only viable approach to provide functional and qualitative education. There should be regular in-service training, workshops and seminars for secondary school principals and other staff to improve administrative efficiency.

School administrators should be fully involved in the implementation of education policy changes. They should not only dwell on the provision of facilities but also devise other strategies to secure an environment conducive for teaching and learning and to ensure that the curriculum is followed to improve students' academic achievement

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