



# **Perceived Influence Of Socio-Political Considerations In The Provision Of Educational Facilities In Secondary Schools In Rivers State, Nigeria**

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## **ABSTRACT**

The study investigated the perceived influence of socio-political considerations in the provision of educational facilities in public secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria. Two research questions and two hypotheses guided this study. Descriptive survey design was adopted for the study. The study population comprised 516 public secondary schools with the total respondents of 516 principals. A sample of 258 principals was drawn from the three senatorial districts of the State representing 50% of the entire population, using the stratified random sampling technique. A self-designed instrument with 20 questionnaire items titled: “Socio-Political Considerations on Provision of Educational Facilities Questionnaire” (SPCPEFQ) was used for data collection. Cronbach alpha statistics was used to determine the reliability coefficient with a value of 0.77. Mean and standard deviation statistics were used to answer the research questions while the z-test statistics was employed to test the hypotheses at 0.05 alpha level. The findings revealed that socio-political considerations influence the provision of education facilities. No significant differences were found between male and female principals as well as principals in urban and rural areas on the perceived influence of socio-political considerations on provision of educational facilities in public secondary schools in Rivers State. It was therefore, recommended amongst others that government should focus more on social considerations in the provision of educational facilities as this emphasized the principle of justice and equity among secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria.

**Keywords:** Educational Facilities. Socio-Political Consideration, Secondary school

## **INTRODUCTION**

One of the most indispensable social services government render to the public is the provision and sustenance of educational services because it overtly and covertly affects the citizens and promotes national growth and development. Education produces too many benefits to the recipient. Education develops the individual and places him/her in an advantageous position to be useful to self and contribute to societal growth. It is imperative therefore, to state that the success of the educational system largely depends on the quality and quantity of the factors of production – human and physical resources available in the system. Educational facilities are provided to stimulate conducive and effective teaching and learning process for enhanced teachers’ productivity and students’ performance. Educational facilities play pivotal role in the actualization of education goals and objectives by satisfying the physical and emotional needs of staff and students of the school when adequately provided and fully utilized.

Ememe, Onwuchekwa and Onuigbo in Arinze (2019) define educational facilities as those instructional resources, devices, equipment and materials provided by the schools for the purpose of enhancing teaching and learning. They include the classrooms, staff rooms, administrative blocks and buildings, workshop facilities, dormitories, libraries, examination halls, assembly halls, laboratories, laboratories chemicals and tools, laboratory equipment, the school furniture, the chalk board, tools and machines, audio and audio visual aids, textbooks, and teachers' quarters, among others. Educational facilities are materials and or services that help to facilitate teaching and learning (Amanchukwu & Ololube, 2015).

Scholars like Adesina and Ogunsaju, Ndu, Ocho and Okeke, and Nworgu cited in Aka (2005) have described educational facilities as the human resource facilities, physical facilities and instructional materials and equipment. The human resource facilities include teachers, store attendants, librarians, library attendants and laboratory assistants to mention but a few. The physical facilities and equipment are seen as the location, the school buildings and other material resources provided in the school for the purpose of enhancing teaching and learning processes. The physical facilities and equipment also include the fixed and mobile structures and materials in the school.

In a more comprehensive view, Obasi and Asodike (2007) observed that school facilities generally refer to the building and the entire grounds or premises of an educational institution as well as other fixed or movable items of furniture which facilitate teaching and learning. These are materials such as spaces, buildings, items of equipments, softwares, infrastructural facilities, farms, the real life situations or objectives in the immediate community which offer learning experiences. They further stated that, school facilities include land, building, equipment, laboratories, library, school sports and game field, school farm land, classroom resources (Books, film, loops, maps, chalkboards, notice boards, magnetic boards, film strips etc). Others include programmed instructional texts and teaching machines, learning kits or packages, computer assisted instruction, calculator and opaque projects.

Educational facilities are therefore the totality of instructional facilities, recreational facilities, residential facilities, health facilities and general purpose made available in the school to motivate and enhance effective teaching and learning processes for the actualization of school goals and objectives.

However, in their observation, Dabo and Dashol (2011) stated that the success of public secondary school education is hinged on adequate funding. It is with funds that physical facilities are procured and maintained, manpower employed and maintained and goods and services provided. The Federal Republic of Nigeria (2013) supported this fact, when it states that education is an expensive social service that requires adequate financial provision from all tiers of government for a successful implementation of educational programmes in the country. Hence, financial resources have been identified as a major resource input in the development of the educational system. This explains the reasons, governments all over the world are required to allocate substantial amount of their annual budget to fund education.

In spite of the funds allocated to the education sector, things seem not to be working and expected result by stakeholders in terms of quality and standard are not forthcoming. Justifying this observation, Blaug in Akindutire, Ayodele and Osiki (2011) expressed worries because of the influence of political leadership in the allocation of resources as this determines who gets what out of the financial resources made available through budgetary appropriation. This implies that total public expenditure on education is determined by the political class and at the same time decides how it is being spent, which often times do not follow due process. These activities, most often resulted to what Akindutire, Ayodele and Osiki (2011) called adverse redistribution which arises when redistributive policies are determined by and in favour of constituencies of political leaders, usually with regional and ethnic undertones and thus, most often than not, result in polarization. Adverse redistribution also involves downright looting by political actors thus diminishing resources meant to provide social services including education.

The involvement of politicians in the management of the education sector seems to have encouraged the provision of sub-standard and inadequate educational facilities, and diversion of funds meant for the improvement and sustenance of quality education has been the order of the day. Education issue is being compromised by government officials mainly due to political reasons. These activities have established the bias or inequality in the provision of educational facilities, and has accounted for the insufficient availability of educational facilities and or over concentration of educational facilities

noticeable across public secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria. This action, however, to some extent may have affected teachers' productivity and students' performance as evidenced in the outcome of internal and external examinations over the years.

It is evident however, that available physical educational facilities can only be utilized optimally and efficiently when they are adequately provided and maintained. Studies have shown that the major obstacle to the maintenance of educational facilities in the school system is finance. Beside the financial constraints in the provision and maintenance of educational facilities, there is also lack of skilled manpower and qualified personnel trained for the utilization and maintenance of educational facilities. In providing solution to this unfortunate realities, Edem in Amanchukwu and Ololube (2015) opined that it is the duty of government through the Ministry of Education to make available furniture, equipment, books and expendable materials to schools that would enhance effective teaching and learning, as their inadequacy constitutes another source of frustration and disillusionment among teachers. He went further to state, that to ensure distribution of educational facilities among schools in the urban and rural areas, government should pursue the policy of equalization of inputs in schools. Buildings, qualification of teachers, teacher-pupil ratios, class size, and expenditure per pupil should be properly determined as to avoid any bias because, social justice demands that all schools be given equal treatment for the general good of the system.

In agreement, Akpan in Uchendu, Ekanem and Jonah (2013) pointed out that the general appearance of school facilities constitutes the basis upon which members of the public pass their judgement about the academic going on in the school. Jonah in Ezeugbor and Okorji (2014) pointed out that the current economic recession being experienced the world over and its attendant dearth of resource provision has made it absolutely necessary and imperative that the gospel of maintenance culture be preached extremely and very loudly in our educational system so as so preserve existing facilities to serve the purpose for which they were provided, since the provision of educational facilities to schools cannot be easily guaranteed.

#### **Statement of the Problem**

It is truism that the provision and sustenance of qualitative secondary education depend largely on the adequate provision of educational facilities that would enhance teachers' productivity and students' performance for the attainment of its goals and objectives. Regrettably, the absence of equitable distribution of educational facilities across public secondary schools in Rivers State as observed may have impacted negatively on the outcome of teachers' productivity and students' performance. This inequality in the distribution of educational facilities, diversion of funds earmarked for this purpose and undue interference by politicians among others have never gone down well with the education sector.

Worrisome enough is government persistent claim of expending so much funds on education for the purpose of enhance quality and standard of secondary schools in the state. But, in reality, the evidence on ground is not incongruent with government's claim. Little wonder, stakeholders are lamenting the decaying infrastructure in many parts of the state and alleging inequality in the distribution of educational facilities across board. They claim that secondary schools in the urban cities and semi-cities are more favoured to the detriment of schools in the rural areas as evidenced in the dilapidated building, lack of spacious, ventilated and conducive classroom, lack of furniture, shortage of qualified teachers, lack of decent convenience, lack of water and electricity plant, lack of well-equipped library and laboratory, lack of technical workshop among others.

It is this disturbing development that made the researcher to investigate the perceived influence of socio-political considerations on provision of educational facilities in public secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria.

#### **Aim and Objectives of the Study**

The aim of this study was to investigate the perceived influence of socio-political considerations on provision of educational facilities in public secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria. The study specifically sought to:

- 1). ascertain the influence of social consideration on provision of educational facilities as perceived by male and female principals in public secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria.
- 2). determine the influence of political consideration on provision of educational facilities as perceived by male and female principals in public secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions guided the study:

- 1). What is the influence of social consideration on provision of educational facilities as perceived by male and female principals in public secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria?
- 2). What is the influence of political consideration on provision of educational facilities as perceived by male and female principals in public secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria?

### **Hypotheses**

The following null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 alpha level:

- 1). There is no significant difference between the mean scores of male and female principals on the influence of social consideration on provision of educational facilities in public secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria.
- 2). There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of male and female principals on the influence of political consideration on provision of educational facilities in public secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria.

### **METHODOLOGY**

The descriptive survey design was adopted for the study. The study was conducted in junior and senior public secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria. The population of the study comprised all 516 principals in the 516 junior and senior public secondary schools in Rivers State. Simple random sampling technique was adopted in this study to select the sample size for the study. A sample size of 258 principals representing 50% of the population was used for the study. A well Self-constructed instrument titled "Socio-Political Considerations on Provision of Educational Facilities Questionnaire" (SPCPFQ) was used to collect data for this study. It consisted of 20 items structured after the modified four-point Likert type scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD). The questionnaire was divided into two sections A and B. Cronbach alpha statistics was used to determine the estimated reliability coefficient which was given as 0.77. Mean and standard deviation was used to answer the research questions while the hypotheses were tested using z-test at 0.05 alpha level.

### **RESULTS**

The results of the analysis are presented in tables according to the research questions and null hypotheses that guided the study.

#### **Research Question 1:**

*What is the influenced of social consideration in the provision of educational facilities as perceived by male and female principals in public secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria?*

**Table 1: Weighted mean and standard deviation scores of male and female principals on the influence of social consideration on the provision of educational facilities in public secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria.**

S/N O	ITEMS	Male Principals (143)		Remarks	Female Principals (115)		Remarks	
		$\bar{x}$	SD		$\bar{x}$	SD		
1.	School size influences government consideration for the provision of educational facilities	3.43	1.09		SA	3.62	0.95	SA
2.	Government considers location of schools in the provision of educational facilities	3.15	0.99	A		3.63	0.85	SA
3.	Government considers school performance in the provision of educational facilities	1.75	0.83	D		1.85	1.06	SD
4.	Government considers seriousness of principals request in providing educational facilities	2.13	1.13	D		1.56	0.98	D
5.	Schools whose staff are committed encourage government to provide educational facilities	3.03	1.31	A		3.29	1.14	A
6.	Government's consideration for equity influence the provision of educational facilities	3.36	1.18		SA	3.43	1.09	SA
7.	Government's plan to render quality educational service influences their provision of facilities	2.82	1.37	A		3.80	0.64	SA
8.	Government's commitment to promoting effective teaching/learning influences their provision of educational facilities	3.68	0.73	A		3.38	0.73	SA
9.	Reports from Inspectors of schools influences government consideration for provision of educational facilities	3.27	1.14	A		3.29	0.93	A
10.	Government's consideration for educationally disadvantage areas influence their provision of facilities	3.13	1.17	A		3.38	0.93	SA
		29.78	10.94			31.14	8.37	
		2.98	1.17			3.11	0.84	

Table 1 revealed that the male principals had an aggregate mean score of 2.98 while the female principals had an aggregate mean score of 3.11. Therefore, social consideration has influence on the provision of educational facilities in public secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria,

**Research Question 2:**

*What is the influence of political consideration on provision of educational facilities as perceived by male and female principals in public secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria?*

**Table 2: Weighted mean rating of male and female principals on the influence of political consideration on the provision of educational in public secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria**

S/N	ITEMS	Male Principals		Remarks	Female Principals		Remarks	
		157			101			
O		$\bar{x}$	SD		$\bar{x}$	SD		
1.	Government's commitment to fulfill political promises motivate them to provide educational facilities	3.45	0.87		SA	3.54	0.95	SA
2.	Government provides educational facilities to favour those that sponsor their election	3.31	0.99		SA	3.53	1.01	SA
3.	Educational facilities are provided to schools to patronize party faithful	3.09	1.09	A		3.47	0.78	SA
4.	Government officials influences the provision of educational facilities to their home towns	3.22	0.91		SA	3.46	0.89	SA
5.	Government provides educational facilities to schools to compensate those that fund its campaigns/election	1.85	1.06	D		1.45	0.85	SD
6.	To compensate a particular tribe/community for their support influences government's consideration to provide educational facilities	1.85	1.24	D		1.28	0.74	SD
7.	Government provides educational facilities to selected schools to garner supports for next election	3.12	1.29	A		3.72	0.56	SA
8.	The fear of losing the people's confidence influence government to provide educational facilities to schools	1.61	1.09	D		1.89	1.15	D
9.	To score political point influences government to provide educational facilities to schools	3.58	0.99		SA	3.11	1.23	A
10.	To justify budgetary allocation to education influences government to provide facilities to schools	1.57	0.82	D		3.15	1.09	A
		26.75	10.35			28.60	9.25	
		2.68	1.04			2.86	0.93	

Table 2 revealed that the aggregate mean rating for male principals is 2.68 while the aggregate mean rating for female principals is 2.83. This shows that political consideration has influence on the provision of educational facilities in public secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria.

**Hypothesis 3**

There is no significant difference between the mean scores of male and female principals in the perceived influence of social consideration on provision of educational facilities in public secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria

**Table 3: Summary of z-test analysis of the difference between the mean scores of male and female principals in the perceived influence of social consideration on provision of educational facilities in public secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria**

Category	n	$\bar{x}$	SD	Df	z-cal	z-crit. Value	Level of Sign.	Remarks
Male Principals	143	2.98	1.17	256	1.08	1.96	0.05	Not
Female Principals	115	3.11	0.84					Rejected

Table 3 shows that with a degree of freedom of 256 at an alpha level of 0.05, the z-calculated value of 1.08 is less than the z-critical value of 1.96. Hence, the null hypothesis is not rejected. This implies that there is no significant difference between the mean scores of male and female principals in the perceived influence of social consideration on provision of educational facilities in public secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria.

**Hypothesis 4**

There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of principals in urban and rural in the perceived influence of political consideration on provision of educational facilities in Public secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria.

**Table 4: Summary of z-test analysis of the difference between the mean ratings of male and female principals on the perceived influence of political consideration on provision of educational facilities in public secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria**

Category	n	$\bar{x}$	SD	df	z-cal	z-crit. Value	Level of Sign.	Remarks
Male Principals	157	2.68	1.04	256	1.50	1.96	0.05	Not
Female Principals	101	2.86	0.93					Rejected

Table 4 shows that with a degree of freedom of 256 at an alpha level of 0.05, the z-calculated value of 1.50 is less than the z-critical value of 1.96. Hence, the null hypothesis is not rejected. This implies that there is no significant difference between the mean ratings of principals in urban and rural areas in the perceived influence of political consideration on provision of educational facilities in public secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria.

**DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS**

Findings from the study were very clear on the inequality in the provision of educational facilities among secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria. This however, would have promoted effective teaching and learning and thereby enhanced teachers’ productivity and students’ academic performance. Edem in Amanchukwu and Ololube (2015) supported this view when he argued that it is the duty of the Ministry of Education to make available furniture, equipment, books and expendable materials to schools as their inadequacy constitutes another source of frustration and disillusionment among teachers. He went further to state, that to ensure even distribution of educational facilities among schools in the urban and rural areas, government should pursue a policy of equalization of inputs in schools; such as buildings, qualification of teachers, teacher-pupil ratios, class-size and expenditure per pupil. These should be properly determined as to avoid any bias because social justice demands that all schools be given equal treatment for the general good of the system. This however, can be achieved when there is termly inventory taken by school principals or inspectors from the Ministry of Education per school and send to the Ministry of Education for their information and consideration. It would help in addressing any shortfall and encourage appropriate distribution of educational facilities, as only needed resource inputs will be distributed to various schools for the purpose of justice. In this arrangement, no school will be given more than it is required for effective teaching and learning process for the attainment of educational goals and objectives.

Findings also revealed the negative impact of political considerations in the provision of educational facilities, as this has distorted the equality and quality of educational delivery which seem to have slowed down the achievement of the education sector. It was this negative impact of political considerations that Akindutire, Ayodele and Osiki (2011) described as adverse redistribution which

arises when redistributive policies are determined by and favour the constituencies of respective political (government) leaders, usually with regional and ethnic undertones and thus, most often than not, result in polarization. Adverse redistribution, according to Akindutire, Ayodele and Osiki (2011) also involves downright looting by the political actors and thus diminished resources meant to provide social services including education. This is evidenced by the massive renovation and refurbishing of schools in urban cities while schools in rural areas are neglected to the peril of teachers and students, who teach and learn in dilapidated classrooms with no enough desks for students to sit and write on during teaching and learning process. Migration from rural schools to the urban schools is on the increase by teachers due to the deplorable state of the schools. Worrisome enough, is when funds meant for the purpose of renovating and refurbishing these schools in rural areas are in most cases diverted and if anything is done at all, it is of the lowest quality and grades that would not last for few years.

These by extension, explained why the z-calculated values of 1.08 and 1.50 respectively being than less than the z-critical value of 1.96 was therefore not rejected. Hence, there is no significant difference between the mean scores and mean ratings of male and female principals in the perceived influence of socio-political considerations on provision of educational facilities in public secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria.

### **Implications**

This study has implication on the rationality used in the provision of educational facilities in public secondary schools in Rivers State, due to the inequality observed in the distribution among schools in the urban and rural areas. Since the goals and objectives of secondary education are the same, justice demands that equal treatment be meted out to all public secondary schools during distribution of educational facilities and other incentive that will promote effective teaching and learning for optimal teachers' productivity and students' performance. Otherwise, the original intention of government and the expectation of the people from government would be defeated and remain a mirage.

### **CONCLUSION**

From the findings, it was then concluded that socio-political considerations have influence on the provision of educational facilities in public secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Based on the findings, the following recommendations were therefore made:

- 1). Government should focus more on social considerations in the provision of educational facilities as emphasized in the principle of justice and equity among secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria.
- 2). Government should de-emphasize political considerations in the provision of educational facilities in secondary schools in Rivers State as this action result to undue over-concentration of educational facilities in some schools to the detriment of others. The disparity in the distribution of educational facilities among schools and possible under-utilization of these same facilities amounts to wastage of resources.

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