

Paper 1

Teachers Perception of Factors Responsible for the Proliferation of Private Nursery and Primary Schools in Afijio Local Government, Oyo State

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Abstract

The study investigated factors responsible for the proliferation of private nursery and primary schools in Afijio Local Government Area, Oyo State. The study adopted a descriptive research design and sought to answer three research questions. The targeted population for this study comprised all educated adults in the local government. Simple random sampling technique was used to select one hundred and fifty (150) respondents. A researcher-designed questionnaire titled Private Nursery and Primary Schools Questionnaire (PNPSQ) was used for data gathering. Frequency and percentage count was used to analyze respondents' demographic data, while descriptive statistics of percentage, range and mean were used to answer the research questions. The findings revealed that falling standard of education in the public schools, lack of the needed infrastructural facilities and equipment for teaching and learning in public schools, inadequate supervision in the public schools, higher discipline rate in private schools and higher performance of students in private schools than public schools were perceived as factors responsible for the proliferation of private nursery and primary schools in Afijio Local Government Area. Recommendations were made that Government should provide the facilities and equipment needed in public schools to improve pupils' performances; Government should ensure adequate and regular supervision of private and public schools to ensure quality assurance; and parents, pupils and teachers should work hand-in-hand with the government to achieve quality education.

Keywords: Private nursery and primary schools, Afijio Local Government, Oyo State.

Introduction

Education is generally viewed as the most viable tool for sustainable development human growth and development. It is practically indispensable tool for national growth and

development. Education forms the foundation of literacy, numeracy, self-development, skill acquisition, mechanization as well as the ability to harmonize the natural deposit of the state. Ehusani (2003) stated that education in the broad sense is the entire process of socialization by which men and women learn to adapt to and where necessary conquer their environment. He continued by saying education is the development of cognitive, affective, and psychomotor faculties of individuals in order to equip them with the knowledge and skills necessary to survive and make progress in human society. Education has been identified as a dynamic instrument of change, hence, developed and developing countries have adopted it as an instrument par excellence for effecting national development. It is against this backdrop that the Federal Government of Nigeria is committed to the integration of the individual into a sound and effective citizen and to the provision of equal educational opportunities for all citizens of the nation at the primary, secondary and tertiary levels, both inside and outside the formal school system (Imogie, 2000).

Education is a very potent instrument for growth and development of economic, political, social and human resources worldwide. Education is also regarded as a major indicator of a society's social wellbeing, standard of living and social justice (Abdullahi, 2005). Akinola (2004) defines nursery education as "the education given in an educational institution to children aged three to five plus prior to entering into primary school. Nursery schools are referred to as "institutions that offer educational programmes designed to meet the physical, social and emotional needs of two to five years old children. It is the earliest time a child is placed in the educational setting which invariably constitutes a stimulating environment for such child. In Nigeria, nursery school has been greatly misinterpreted as most often it is used interchangeably with kindergarten or Day-Care. It should be seen as a downward extension of the educational programmes in the regular elementary school.

Primary education as referred to in the National Policy on Education (NPE) is the education given in institutions for children aged 6-11 plus (FRN, 2012). It is the first stage and compulsory education. Primary education is preceded by pre-school or nursery education and followed by secondary education. The primary education is the first six years of the nine years of basic education using the Universal Basic Education (UBE) standard. This stage of education is often addressed as elementary education. In most countries of the world, primary education is compulsory for children to receive although it is permissible for parents to provide it. Children are usually placed in classes with a teacher who will be primarily responsible for

their education and welfare for that year. This teacher may be assisted to varying degrees by specialist teachers in certain subject area.

According to Edinyang, Ubi, and Adalikwu (2012), one of the important aims of education is to foster the full development of an individual to enable full contribution to the well-being of the society. In an ideal sense, education is an ultimate value and hence, through the provision of social service, it is an agent of change (Ogunwuyi, 2010). It is the responsibility of the educational system of any nation to bring to the light the transformation of the economic, political, scientific and technological recognition. The place of primary education is very paramount because it is the foundation of adults' contribution to developmental processes. In other words, basic education makes a child a better adult. Primary education is to the educational system; and the nation at large, what the mind is to the body. A faulty primary education which is the foundation of the entire education system can thwart the attainment of the intended outcome of the system.

Abort (2011) revealed in his study that students who attended private primary schools performed better in Mathematics and Science Subjects (at the junior secondary school) than those who attended public primary schools. He went further to conclude that his findings seemed to discredit the standard of education in public schools since their products could not compete favorably with the products of the private schools. In the same view, Agbada (2012) in his study of private schools serving the poor in low-income countries discovered that higher achievement is attained in private unaided than in government schools. Children in private unaided schools usually perform better in terms of raw scores than do children in government schools in three curriculum subjects, including mathematics and English. Moreover, private unaided schools achieve these results at between half and a quarter of the per pupil teacher cost. Although teachers are paid considerably less in private unaided schools, they are not any less satisfied than their government school counterparts.

Fasuba (2019) carried out a study on proliferation of unwholesome private primary and secondary schools and quality education in Nigeria. The study posited that proliferation of private schools in Nigeria is general across the states in Nigeria. Also the study reveals that most of the schools established were practically not up to standards, unapproved, mushroom and illegal. Similarly Ogbiji and Ogbiji (2014) also reveals that Oyo state schools practically lacked competent and qualified teachers, school facilities and personnel.

Following the astronomical rise in school enrolment on account of the UPE programme and the fall in standards of our public primary schools as a result of poor founding, government again deemed it necessary to involve private participation in education to stem the tide (Ogbiji & Ogbiji, 2014 and Mfaiga, 2018). Government welcomes the contributions of voluntary agencies, communities and private individuals in the establishment and management of primary schools alongside those provided by the state and local governments as long as they meet the minimum standards laid down by the Federal Government.

Apart from the fact that these two clauses seek the involvement of private participation in the establishment of nursery and primary schools in Nigeria, they also express the need for quality education in the system by the private sector through the expressions such as “minimum standards laid down” and “conditions to be met.” This study, therefore, sought to find out the factors responsible for proliferation of private nursery and primary schools in Afijio Local Government Area of Oyo State.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided this study:

1. What factors do teachers perceive as responsible for the proliferation of private nursery and primary schools in Afijio Local Government Area?
2. Does the proliferation of private nursery and primary schools have a positive impact on the quality of education in Afijio Local Government Area?
3. To what extent does the proliferation of private nursery and primary schools bring about quality education in Afijio Local Government Area?

Methodology

The research design adopted for this study is a descriptive survey design. According to Shields, and Rangarajan, (2013), descriptive research is used to describe the characteristics of a population or phenomenon being studied. It does not answer questions about how/when/why the characteristics occurred. Rather it addresses the "what" question (what are the characteristics of the population or situation being studied?). The population for this study consisted all private nursery and primary school teachers while the targeted population for this study comprised all nursery and primary schools in Afijio Local Government Area. Simple

random sampling techniques was used to select a total of one hundred and fifty (150) teachers from private nursery and primary schools in Afijio Local Government Area of Oyo State.

The instrument used for this study was a structured self-constructed questionnaire titled Private Nursery and Primary Schools Questionnaire (PNPSQ). This instrument was used because it suits the study and is convenient for both researcher and the respondents under the study. The instrument has two sections: Section A explored the demographic data of the respondents while section B addressed Factors responsible for the proliferation of private nursery and primary schools, noticeable changes since the proliferation of private nursery and primary schools, the extent to which the proliferation of private nursery and primary schools bring about quality education in Afijio Local Government Area.

A close-ended question of four likert scale response: SA-strongly agree, A-agree, D-disagree and SD-strongly disagree; O- Often, S-sometimes, R- rarely and N-never, were used to gather responses from the respondents. The content validity of the questionnaires was established through expert judgment in the area of Primary Education and Educational measurement. The reliability of the instrument was carried using Cronbach's alpha, after which a reliability coefficient 0.83 was obtained. Which indicate that the instrument is reliable for the study

The data gathered was analyzed using descriptive statistics. Specifically, section A was analyzed using frequency counts and percentages. While Section B was calculated using a percentile, mean, and standard deviation to answer the research questions.

Results

The three research questions raised in this study were answered one after the other. The results obtained are presented as follows.

Table 1

Distribution of Respondents Based on Gender

| Gender | Frequency | Percentage |
|---------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Male | 68 | 45.3 |
| Female | 82 | 54.7 |
| Total | 150 | 100.0 |

Table 1 shows the distribution of respondents based on gender. Out of the 140 respondents, 68 (45.3%) of the respondents were male while 82 (54.7%) of the respondents were female. From

the analysis above, it can be deduced that the majority of the respondents were female respondents.

Table 2

Frequency and Percentage Distribution Showing the Educational Qualification of the Respondents.

| Educational Qualification | Frequency | Percentage (%) |
|----------------------------------|------------------|-----------------------|
| WASSCE/NECO | 5 | 3.3 |
| ND/NCE | 27 | 18.0 |
| HND/BSC/BED | 106 | 70.7 |
| M.Ed./PhD | 12 | 8.0 |
| Total | 150 | 100 |

Table 2 showed that out of 150 respondents that participated in this study, 5 (33.0%) have WASSCE/NECO as their educational qualification, 27 (18.0%) have ND/NCE as educational qualification, 106 (70.7%) have HND/BSC/BED as educational qualification and 12 (8.0%) have M.Ed./PhD as educational qualification. From this, it can be deduced that the majority of the respondents have HND/BSC/BED as educational qualifications.

Research Question 1: What factors do teachers perceive as responsible for the proliferation of private nursery and primary schools in Afijio Local Government Area?

In answering this research question, the mean scores of respondents' choice on each item in the questionnaire that addressed the factors responsible for the proliferation of private nursery and primary schools in Afijio Local Government, was calculated using 2.5 as the cut-off.

Table 3

Perceived Factors Responsible for Proliferation of Nursery and Primary Schools in Afijio Local Government.

| S/N | Items | Mean | SD | Decision |
|------------|---|-------------|-----------|-----------------|
| 1. | Falling standards of education in the public schools | 3.18 | .857 | Accepted |
| 2. | Lack of the needed infrastructural facilities and equipment for teaching and learning in public schools | 2.96 | .764 | Accepted |
| 3. | There is no adequate supervision in the public schools | 2.50 | 1.150 | Accepted |
| 4. | Discipline rate in private schools is higher than public schools | 2.63 | 1.139 | Accepted |

| | | | |
|--|-------------|------|----------|
| 5. Performance of students in private schools supersede that of public schools | 2.95 | .880 | Accepted |
| Grand Mean | 2.84 | | |

From Table 3 above, it can be deduced that all the five mentioned factors are responsible for the proliferation of private nursery and primary schools. This assertion is justified with the mean value of all the items 1,2,4 and 5 in the table above are greater than 2.50 ($2.84 > 2.50$) while item 3 is equal to the cut off point. The grand mean value of 2.84 also indicates that all the five mentioned factors are responses to the proliferation of private nursery and primary schools in Afijio Local Government Area.

Research Question 2: Does the proliferation of private nursery and primary schools have a positive impact on the quality of education in Afijio Local Government Area?

The scores of each respondent on the factors responsible for the proliferation of private nursery and primary schools in Afijio Local Government were subjected to percentage analysis. Given that 5 items in the questionnaire were structured in a four-response-type, the minimum, maximum and range score of respondents were 15, 23 and 8 respectively. The range was therefore divided by two levels (positive and negative) and a cut-off of 8 was obtained. Thus, respondents whose scores fell within the score range 15 – 19 and 20 – 23 signified negative and positive respectively. The statistics of respondents’ scores are summarized and presented in Table 3.

Table 4

Impact of the Proliferation of Private Nursery and Primary Schools on the Quality of Education.

| Degree of Quality Education | Score Range | Frequency | Percentage |
|-----------------------------|-------------|------------|-------------|
| Negative | 15 – 19 | 91 | 60.7% |
| Positive | 20 – 23 | 59 | 39.3% |
| Total | | 150 | 100% |

Table 4 showed that the proliferation of private nursery and primary schools had positive impact on the quality of education in Afijio Local Government Area. Out of 150 (100%) respondents sampled for this study, 91 (60.7%) of the respondent chose that the proliferation of private nursery and primary schools has a positive impact on the quality of education; 59 (39.3%) of the respondent chose that the proliferation of private nursery and primary schools

has a negative impact on the quality education. This implies that the majority of the respondents agreed that the proliferation of private nursery and primary schools had a positive impact on the quality of education in Afijio Local Government Area.

Research Question 3: To what extent does the proliferation of private nursery and primary schools bring about quality education in Afijio Local Government Area?

In answering this research question, the mean scores of respondents' choice on each item in the questionnaire that addressed the extent to which the proliferation of private nursery and primary schools brings about quality education in Afijio Local Government, was calculated using 2.5 as the cut-off. The output of the analysis reveals thus:

Table 5

Data on the Influence of the Proliferation of Private Nursery and Primary Schools on Quality Education.

| S/N | Items | Mean | SD |
|-------------------|---|-------------|-------|
| 1. | The proliferation of private nursery and primary schools raises the standard of education in Afijio LGA | 2.57 | 1.119 |
| 2. | It makes available some scarce resources pupils are not opened to in public schools | 2.25 | 1.134 |
| 3. | It provides for adequate supervision and monitoring | 2.46 | 1.151 |
| 4. | It improves discipline in schools | 2.50 | 1.098 |
| 5. | It brings about better performance of pupils | 2.64 | 1.139 |
| Grand Mean | | 2.48 | |

Table 5 shows that the extent to which the proliferation of private nursery and primary schools brings about quality education in Afijio Local Government Area is low. This assertion is justified with the grand mean value of all the items on the table ($2.48 < 2.50$) which is less than the cut off mean.

Summary of the Findings

1. All the five mentioned factors are responsible for the proliferation of private nursery and primary schools.
2. The proliferation of private nursery and primary schools had positive impact on the quality of education in Afijio Local Government Area.

3. The extent to which the proliferation of private nursery and primary schools brought about quality education in Afijio Local Government Area was low.

Discussion of Findings

The finding of this study revealed that all the five mentioned perceived factors- Falling standards of education in the public schools, Infrastructural facilities, Supervision, Discipline, and Population, are parts of the factors responsible for the proliferation of private nursery and primary schools in Afijio Local Government Area. Emarievbe (2011) concluded that private schools had been playing prominent roles in the development of Nigerian education industry. As a result, they should be protected by law so that no government will decide in future to seize privately owned schools as it happened in the early 1970s.

Emarievbe (2011) further states that some private schools have facilities and amenities which surpass those found at many public colleges and universities. Some of them have libraries, laboratories and athletic facilities which are at par with those at public primary schools. Some private schools also offer academic and sports programs which make full use of all those resources. In the area of curriculum, private schools may generate their own curriculum and may offer more specialized courses, perhaps even taking students on extended field trips that cover one or more of the topics being focused on.

It was also reveal that the proliferation of private nursery and primary schools had positive impact on the quality of education in Afijio Local Government Area. Abort (2011) revealed in his study that students who attended private primary schools performed better in Mathematics and Science Subjects (at the junior secondary school) than those who attended public primary schools. He went further to conclude that his findings seemed to discredit the standard of education in public schools since their products could not compete favorably with the products of the private schools” (Adebayo, 2009).

Corroborating Agbada (2012) in his study of private schools serving the poor in low-income countries discovered that higher achievement is attained in private unaided than in government schools. Children in private unaided schools usually perform better in terms of raw scores than do children in government schools in three curriculum subjects, including mathematics and English. Moreover, private unaided schools achieve these results at between half and a quarter of the per pupil-teacher cost. Although teachers are paid considerably less in private unaided schools, they are not any less satisfied than their government school counterparts.

Moreover the finding shows that the extent to which the proliferation of private nursery and primary schools brought about quality education in Afijio Local Government Area was low. In a similar study entitled “Teachers’ perception of private schools’ contribution to educational development in Ijebu North Local Government Areas of Ogun State, Nigeria”, Edward (2009) discovered among other things that private schools were contributing significantly to educational development in the Local Government Areas. The performance could however be further enhanced if they are adequately monitored and supervised by the government. To him, private schools have an edge over public schools and that academic performance in private schools is better than that of public schools.

Conclusion

The study revealed that the all the five mentioned factors- Falling standards of education in the public schools, Infrastructural facilities, Supervision, Discipline, and Population, are parts of the factors responsible for the proliferation of private nursery and primary schools. So also, even though the proliferation of private nursery and primary schools impacted positively on quality education in Afijio Local Government Area, the impact was low.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are suggested:

1. Government should provide the facilities and equipment needed in public schools to improve pupils’ performances.
2. Government should ensure adequate and regular supervision of private and public schools to ensure quality assurance.
3. Parents, pupils and teachers should work hand-in-hand with the government to achieve quality education.

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