



Influence of Politics on Students' Academic Performance of Public Senior Secondary Schools in Takum Local Government Area of Taraba State

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ABSTRACT

This study centered on the influence of politics on students' academic performance of public senior secondary school in Takum Local Government Area, Taraba State. Four purposes and research questions guided the study. Descriptive survey was adopted as research design. The population of the study was 150 teachers and 3687 students from 20 public secondary Schools in Takum LGA. A Sample of 72 teachers and 150 students were randomly selected for the Study. Influence of Politics on students' academic performance of public senior secondary schools in Takum Local Government Area of Taraba State index (IPSAP) was used as instrument for data collection. The reliability of the instrument was estimated to be 0.76 using Cronbach alpha correlation coefficient method. The responses were analyzed using mean Statistic and standard deviation. A mean of 2.5 was accepted while below 2.5 was rejected. Findings from the study revealed that the political system promote the attainment of educational goals in public senior secondary schools in Takum local Government Area of Taraba State. It was also revealed that politics created inequalities in our educational system and promotes the recruitment of teachers with low teaching qualification which lead to poor funding & infrastructures of public secondary schools in Takum Local Government Area. Based on these findings, the following recommendations were made: Government should allow full implementation of autonomy of education board. There should be strict adherence to stipulated guidelines for appointment, merit and competence should not be compromised. Government should reform their policies to support education in secondary school and should allocate human and financial resources among others for the teaching and learning of secondary school in Taraba state and Nigeria at large

Keywords: Influence, Politics, Education, Academic Performance, public Secondary School

INTRODUCTION

Education is a weapon for acquiring skills relevant knowledge and habits for the survival of the changing world. It is an area of major concern to the society because it helps to foster the national unity and transform the political, socio-political and religious aspect of the nation. Okeke (2004) and (2009) posits that education is a political battle ground through which political formation gets its power and budgetary allocation. Education is a key to national development because it unlocks the economic potentials of the people empowerment and equips individuals in the society to participate in and benefit from the national economy, facilitate economic development and provide the basis for transformation. In addition, Ajaye (2016), Aluede R.O.A, Okhiku, I.I, Esamah, I.O. and Ojemhenkele A. (2009) in their studied noted that poor planning, poor funding, inaccurate statistical record, poor awareness and mobilization campaign, insufficient number of qualified teacher in schools, embezzlement of the funds by administrators, poor school infrastructural facilities, poor provision of instructional materials, lack of adequate motivation of teachers, and politicization of secondary school education were the constraints to effective implementation of secondary school educational policies. In Nigeria, education is an instrument par excellence for affecting national development for it has become a political issue because the amended Nigeria constitution has put education under the concurrent list that's means that federal, state, and local government can control education as far as

their conduct does not breach constitutional guideline. Education system cannot survive outside the financial support and protection of the government for example; Nigeria education development has been guided by politics in the area of social demand from government. Politics involve the use and the regulation of power, influences and authority in the allocation of things which people want, therefore politics of education consist of the struggle among actors in education governance, it is concern with pattern of .interaction or conflicts over value, interest and goals relative to the perceive need of education and public authority. United Nation Development Programme (2011) defined politics as struggle over value, power and scarce resources in which the aim of the conflicting interest are to gain the desired value and resources at the expense of other rivals. Politics is also defined as who gets what, when, how, and where (Nwawu 2002).

Politics is failing education reform because it does not acknowledge or address two central realities: Nigeria remains corrosively inequitable, especially in terms of tribe, class and gender; and education tends to perpetuate those inequalities through commitments to tracking, testing and ranking. Politics cannot teach as Ogbonnaya, (2000) opines but educators and researchers can lead schools if they will commit themselves to genuine social reform that addresses poverty, and to education reform that allows teachers to do that which they know how to do.

In the foregoing discussion, it seems as if politics has taken much tolls on education via bureaucracy. It has been established that school is a formal organization that is made up of learners interacting together (within a community) to perform coordinated teaching, learning and knowledge-creating activities. The character of school as a bureaucratic organization within a society determines the nature of educational management. Max Weber (1946), the German sociologists, developed the principles of rational administrative organization based on rules, procedures, competence, contract agreements and objectivity so that bureaucrats could deal with stable and routine tasks which are the bases of organizational efficiency.

Statement of the Problem

The influence of politics in education in Nigeria is reflected both in the setting of educational institution of learning as well as the appointment of teachers and administrators in secondary school. Though politics and education are interconnected in that it is very difficult to separate them since the time of independence because most of the educational decision as relates to the appointment are connected with politics, but now it has gone even worse. This culture have affected the academic performance of students in secondary school because even teachers or principals who were not qualify are employed into secondary school leaving the qualified ones because they have no gods father or someone who cannot stand for them in politics, this can hinder individuals from performing at their best. Politicization of appointment has become a cankerworm, destroying our educational system. The problem is how the interplay between micro politics and macro politics constitute a challenge in the attainment of the educational goals.

Having considered so far the subtle and glaring interplays of education and politics, this study investigated the influence of politics on education and its impact on students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Takum local government area of Taraba State.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study is to investigate the influence of politics on students' academic performance of public secondary schools in Takum local government area of Taraba State. The specific objectives are;

- i. To determine how the political system promotes the attainment of educational goals in public secondary schools in Takum local government area of Taraba State.
- ii. To find out how politics have created inequalities in our educational system in public secondary schools in Takum local government area.
- iii. To find out how politics have contributed to the recruitment of teachers with low teaching qualification in public secondary schools in Takum local government area.
- iv. To determine if politics have led to poor funding of public secondary schools in Takum local government area.
- v. To find out if politics have led to provision of poor infrastructures in public secondary schools in Takum local government area of Taraba State.

Research Questions

This study is guided by the following research questions:

- i. What political system promotes the attainment of educational goals in public secondary schools in Takum local government area of Taraba State?
- ii. How does politics create inequalities in our educational system in Takum local government area of Taraba State
- iii. How does politics encourage the recruitment of teachers with low teaching qualification in Takum local government area of Taraba State
- iv. How does politics contribute to poor funding of public secondary schools in Takum local government area?
- v. How does politics contribute to provision of poor infrastructures in public secondary schools in Takum local government area of Taraba State?

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted the descriptive survey research design to elicit the opinion of respondent on the influence of politics on students’ academic performance of public secondary schools in Takum local government area of Taraba State. The study sample covered 5 public secondary school randomly selected out of a total of 20 public secondary schools in Takum local government area of Taraba State. A sample of 72 teachers was selected out of 150 teachers and 150 students were selected out of 3687 in the sampled schools using purposive sampling technique. The research instrument consisted of a researcher designed questionnaire titled influence of politics on students’ academic performance in public secondary schools in Takum local government area of Taraba State (IPSAP) was validated by colleagues in the department of Educational Foundations in Taraba state university Jalingo as trial tested using test retest method with a reliability of ‘r’ – 0.76. The structured questionnaire used four point likert type questionnaire with Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree options. The total of 222 copies of questionnaire was used to collect data from two different categories of respondents (Teachers and Students) in Takum LGA. The responses were analyzed using mean and standard deviation. A mean of 2.5 was accepted significant determinant while any mean below 2.5 was not significant and was rejected.

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINIDINGS

The purpose of this chapter is to analyze and interpret the data obtained through the research questions. The analysis of data is undertaken in line with the research objectives stated in chapter one. A total of 222 questionnaires were distributed to the Respondents.

Research question 1: *What political system promotes the attainment of educational goals in public secondary schools in Takum local government area of Taraba State?*

Table 1. Mean ratings of Respondents on Political system

	Statement	\bar{x}	SD	Decision
1	Public education is a political system for implementing political mandate	3.59	0.54	Accepted
2	Political system promotes the attainment of educational goals in public secondary schools	3.55	0.59	Accepted
3	Political system does not promote the attainment of educational goals in Takum Local Government Area	3.42	0.70	Accepted
4	The political system is poorly structured so as to enhance attainment of educational goals	3.40	0.58	Accepted
5	The political system is neutral in terms of attainment of educational goals	3.42	0.65	Accepted

Source: Field survey, 2019.

The result of data analysis presented on table 1 showed that each of the items on the table has a mean (range 3.59-3.40) which implies that respondents rated all the items as elements of political system that promote the attainment of educational goals in public secondary schools in Takum local government area of Taraba State. The standard deviations (range 0.54-0.70) indicated that responses of the respondents do not vary so widely.

Research question 2: *How does politics create inequalities in our educational system in Takum local government area of Taraba State?*

Table 2. Mean ratings of Respondents on political inequalities

S/N	STATEMENT	\bar{x}	SD	Decision
6	Politics have caused disparity in educational system	3.41	0.66	Accepted
7	Politics have created inequalities in the educational system	3.51	0.61	Accepted
8	Politics have created inequalities in curriculum development in educational system	3.42	0.65	Accepted
9	Politics have created inequalities in curriculum development in educational system	3.44	0.59	Accepted
10	Politics have created inequalities in gender access to education	3.41	0.73	Accepted

Source: Field survey, 2019

The result of data analysis presented on table 5 showed that each of the items on the table has a mean (range 3.51-3.41) which implies that respondents rated all the items as elements of political inequalities in our educational system in Takum local government area of Taraba State.

The standard deviations (range 0.59-0.73) indicated that responses of the respondents do not vary so widely.

Research question 3: *How does politics encourage the recruitment of teachers with low teaching qualification in Takum local government area of Taraba State?*

TABLE 3. Mean ratings of Respondents on political recruitment of teachers with low teaching qualification.

S/N	STATEMENT	\bar{x}	SD	Decision
11	Politics have led to recruitment of teachers with low qualification	3.46	0.66	Accepted
12	Politics have led to recruitment of teachers with low poor teaching experience	3.47	0.56	Accepted
13	Politics have led to recruitment of teachers without teaching certification	3.44	0.60	Accepted
14	Politics have led to recruitment of teachers with poor teaching methods	3.44	0.62	Accepted
15	Politics have led to recruitment of teachers without adequate skills in classroom management	3.49	0.61	Accepted

Source: Field survey, 2019.

The result of data analysis presented on table 3 showed that each of the items on the table has a mean (range 3.49-3.44) which implies that respondents rated all the items as elements of political recruitment of teachers with low teaching qualification. The standard deviations (range 0.56-0.66) indicated that responses of the respondents do not significantly varied.

Research question 4: *How does politics contribute to poor funding of public secondary schools in Takum local government area.*

Table 4. Mean ratings of respondents on politics contribution to poor funding.

S/N	STATEMENT	\bar{x}	SD	Decision
16	Politics is the cause of poor funding of public secondary schools in Takum LGA	3.41	0.61	Accepted
17	Politics led to diversion of Fund meant for public secondary schools development to private pockets in Takum LGA	3.32	0.55	Accepted
18	Politics is the reason for non funding of public secondary schools as at when due	3.27	0.72	Accepted
19	Politics is the cause of paucity of funds for infrastructural development in Takum LGA	3.33	0.59	Accepted
20	Politics deprive public secondary schools the needed fund for recruitment of qualified teachers	3.27	0.85	Accepted

Source: Field survey, 2019

The result of data analysis presented in table 4 showed that each of the items on the table has a mean (range 3.41-3.27) which implies that respondents rated all the items as elements of politics contribution to poor funding. The standard deviations (range 0.55-0.85) indicated that responses of the respondents do not significantly varied on political contribution to poor funding of public secondary schools in Takum local government area.

Research question 5: *How does politics contribute to provision of poor infrastructures in public secondary schools in Takum local government area of Taraba State?*

Table 5. Mean ratings of Respondents on politics contribution to provision of poor infrastructures

S/N	STATEMENT	\bar{x}	SD	Decision
21	Politics have led to poor provision of classroom furniture	3.46	0.64	Accepted
22	Politics is the cause of poor provision of school laboratory equipments	3.38	0.72	Accepted
23	Politics is the cause of stocking of library with current books	3.34	0.77	Accepted
24	Politics is the reason of non provision of sporting facilities like standard football fields, lawn tennis court etc	3.42	0.73	Accepted
25	Politics led to non provision of chemicals and reagents in laboratories	3.41	0.68	Accepted

Source: Field survey, 2019

The result of data analysis presented in table 5 showed that each of the items on the table has a mean (range 3.46-3.34) which implies that respondents rated all the items as elements of political contribution to provision of poor infrastructures in public secondary schools in Takum local government area of Taraba State.

The standard deviations (range 0.64-0.77) indicated that responses of the respondents do not significantly varied on political contribution to the provision of poor infrastructures in public secondary schools in Takum local government area of Taraba State.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Discussions of the findings of the study are made by the researcher with regard to the major issues of the study.

Findings from this study revealed that public education is a political system for implementing political mandate and political system promotes the attainment of educational goals in public secondary schools. Political system does not promote the attainment of educational goals in Takum Local Government Area. The political system is poorly structured so as to enhance attainment of educational goals. The political system is neutral in terms of attainment of educational goals, this is in agreement with Okeke (2004) who posited that education is a political battle ground which is provided through political formation and gets its power and budgetary allocation from political system.

This study have shown that politics have caused disparity, inequalities in educational system, curriculum development in educational system and inequalities in gender access to education, this view is in support of United Nation Development Programme (2011) who states that politics have created inequalities in gender and struggle over value, power and scarce resources in which the aim of the conflicting interest are to gain the desired value and resources at the expense of other rivals.

Politics has led to recruitment of teachers with low qualification, poor teaching experience, without teaching certification, poor teaching methods, poor funding of public secondary school, teachers without adequate skills in the classroom, poor provision of classroom furniture, and non funding of public secondary schools among others, These agreed with the findings of Ajaye (2016) which stated that insufficient number of qualified teacher, poor school infrastructural facilities, poor funding of secondary school, insufficient number of qualified teacher in schools, lack of adequate motivation of teachers, and politicization of secondary school were some of the impact of politics on students' academic performance.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results, the study concluded that Politics has created inequalities, poor funding, poor infrastructures and teachers with low teaching qualification in our educational system which has also affected students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Takum local government area of Taraba State.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings from this study, the following recommendations are made:

1. Political system should promote the attainment of educational goals in Nigeria.
2. Government should discourage political leaders of their bias attitude towards education and make it equal to all communities irrespective of tribe and religion.
3. The retrogressive politics that encouraged the recruitment of teachers with low teaching qualification should be discouraged as it inimical to our educational system and standard.
4. Politics that promote poor funding of public schools should be discouraged as our educational system needs adequate funds to function properly.
5. Government should allow full implementation of autonomy of board. There should be strict adherence to stipulated guidelines for appointment, merit and competence should not be compromised
6. Government should reform their policies to be more supportive of education in secondary school.
7. Government should allocate human and financial resources for the teaching and learning in secondary school in the state and Nigeria at large

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