



IMPACT OF OLD STUDENTS' ASSOCIATIONS ON THE MANAGEMENT OF SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN ZONE B SENATORIAL DISTRICT OF BENUE STATE

BANKA, Scholastica N. & *BUA, Felix Terhile
Department of Educational Foundations,
Faculty of Education, Benue State University,
Makurdi- Benue State, Nigeria
**Email of Corresponding author: felixbua@yahoo.com*
08036356481

ABSTRACT

The study investigated the impact of Old Students' Association on the management of secondary schools in zone B Senatorial District of Benue State. In all, two research questions and two hypotheses guided the study. The literature review which was done under conceptual framework which identified impact of old students Associations' variables as a tool for effective school management in the area of recruitment and discipline. The descriptive survey design was adopted for the study. Thirty (30) principals and three hundred and seventy (370) teachers making the total of 400 respondents from 92 grants aided secondary schools constituted the sample of the study. A structured 10-item four point rating scale questionnaire titled impact of old students Association questionnaire (IOSAQ) was constructed by the researcher and used to collect data for the study. Data obtained for the study were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Mean and standard deviation were used to analyze the research questions while the chi-square (χ^2) test of goodness of fit was used to test the hypotheses. The null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance. The finding of the study revealed that Old Students Associations' contribution to school recruitment of teachers and maintenance of students' discipline significantly affect secondary school management in zone B Senatorial District of Benue State. Based on the findings of the study, it was recommended that government, private individuals and organizations especially Old Student Associations should be encouraged through policies to contribute to the provision of quality schools human resources and maintenance of discipline for the safety of the students, since they are beneficiaries from the products of education.

Keywords: Old Students' Associations, secondary schools, education, management

INTRODUCTION

In this present world of technological age, a fundamental function of formal education is to produce a knowledge based work-force for national development. In the same vein, if the goal of globalization is to be achieved, availability of quality human and material resources for increased productivity becomes critical. It is in the light of the above that educators are constantly seeking for ways of improving education to suit people and the world in general. Since the importance of education cannot be over-emphasized, there is need to constantly discuss and seek means or ways by which the survival of schools can be ensured through sound and efficient management.

Various governments in Nigeria give priority to education as indicated in their various policy statements, and since independence in 1960, various development plans have invariably accorded priority to education in national planning. This is understandable because education plays a dominant role in the economic and social transformation of the country, as well as the development of human resources. The importance attached to education in Nigeria is reflected in the 1979 constitution which provides that education is the birthright of every Nigerian. As a specific example, section 18 (3) of the constitution

provides that government shall strive to eradicate illiteracy and shall provide as, and when it is practicable, free, compulsory and universal primary education, free secondary education, free university education and free adult education.

It is against this background that government has made efforts to be responsible for the provision of education in Nigeria. Interestingly, an increasing number of people, children and adults need and demand education. The demand for education continues to increase and gradually education has emerged as the largest growing industry in Nigeria today. Based on the Nigerian experience, it has become clear that government alone cannot meet the demand for and supply of education hence the need for the participation by other stakeholders like the Old Students Associations in the management of secondary education.

Old Students Associations are former students of institution's who graduated and have come together to form a network for mutual benefit. In other words these are ex-students who pull resources together in order to support their alma-mata. Akpakwu (2008) defines school management as "the co-ordination of all the resources of an organization through the process of planning, organizing, directing and controlling in order to attain school objectives. Akpakwu adds that whatever the divergence of opinions on the term, management, educational management or school management can be defined as the ability of the educational manager or administrator to judiciously manipulate both human, material, financial and time resources towards achieving the goals or objective of educational institutions. Under this study the essence is to assess the impact of the Old Students Association on the management of the variable under investigation, that is, provision of funds, teachers, infrastructural facilities, instructional materials and discipline.

In 1976, the government of Benue State took over all secondary schools from their former proprietors as was the case nation-wide. The consequences of this action were that the management of these schools fell solely in the hands of government. With government as sole proprietor and administrator, the task of properly financing secondary education became enormous, insurmountable and indeed formidable. This was the reason why allocation of resources to education began to suffer set-back. The result was poor structures and facilities, lack of school materials and transport and indiscipline in secondary schools. At some point in time, payment of staff salaries and allowances became a problem which led to incessant strikes by the teachers in secondary schools. The introduction of UPE and UBE did not help matters because proper planning was not done. Apart from the number of secondary school teachers being inadequate, there was also no training to help them effectively perform their primary function of teaching. The UPE/UBE also resulted into mass admission into schools without adequate structures and facilities. The pressure of managing schools became a major challenge to government. This scenario necessitated the involvement of the community or the Old Students Associations in the funding and management of secondary schools in order to meet the challenges of Education for all (EFA). It is against this background that this study intends to determine the impact of the contributions of the Old Students Associations on the management of secondary education in the Zone B Senatorial District of Benue State.

Statement of the Problem

Considering the fact that education is a large industry with the attendant problems of its maintenance and sustenance, government has continued to battle with the challenges of managing it. Some of the major challenges or problems being faced by educational institutions especially as they affect the effective management of secondary schools have become enormous. Such challenges include shortage of teaching and support staff, accommodation, inadequate facilities in terms of classrooms, offices, libraries and laboratories, lack of furniture, such as chairs and lockers, hostel accommodation; instructional materials in terms of textbooks and writing materials; lack of essential facilities like water, light, toilet, poor maintenance of school infrastructures and above all, poor financing.

It is against this background that the researcher is motivated to appraise or determine the impact of the Old Students Associations contribution in the provision of resources on the management of secondary schools in Zone B Senatorial district of Benue State.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to find out the impact of Old Students' Associations on the management of secondary schools in Zone B Senatorial District of Benue State. Specifically, the study will;

1. Determine the impact of Old Students' Associations' contribution to the recruitment of teachers in secondary schools.
2. Establish the impact of Old Students' Associations' contribution to the maintenance of students discipline in secondary schools.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

- 1) How does Old Students Associations' contribution to recruitment of teachers, impact on secondary school management?
- 2) How does Old Students Associations' contribution to the maintenance of students discipline impact on secondary school management?

Research Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were tested for the study at 0.05 level of significance.

- 1) Old Students Associations' contribution to the recruitment of teachers does not significantly impact on secondary school management.
- 2) Old Students Associations' contribution to the maintenance of students' discipline does not significantly impact on secondary school management

Review of Related Literature

Concept of Old Students' Association

Wikipedia (2008) defines Old Students Associations (or Alumni) as organizations reuniting former students of a college or university and can be found at many educational institutions around the world. The basic philosophy behind an alumni association is the development of a network for mutual support. In other words, Old Student associations are association of former students. These associations often organize social events and raise funds, for the organization. Many provide a variety of benefits and services that help the Old Student Association maintain connections to their educational institutions and fellow graduates. According to Tarsco Alumni Association (2006:1) and Jumpa (2003:6-8), generally the Old Students Association of schools seek to

- i) maintain the ethical and moral standards of its alma-mater
- ii) form an alliance with the teaching staff to maintain high educational standard.
- iii) invest in the educational progress of their alma-mata through provision of infrastructure, facilities and instructional materials.
- iv) partner with management to meet the general needs of the schools.
- v) participate in meaningful ventures that will positively contribute towards national development
- vi) develop and maintain business contact and also create job opportunities for members.

Concept of Management of Secondary Schools

Azege (2001) defines management as all the activities involved in co-ordinating the function of an organization to achieve organizational goals. While Knezevich in Udoh and Akpa (2001:30) defines educational management to mean "a social process concerned with creating, maintaining, stimulating, controlling and unifying formally and informally organized human and material energies within a unified system designed to accomplish pre-determined educational objectives. Akpakwu (2008) described management as the ability of the educational manager or administrator to judiciously handle human, material, financial and time resources towards achieving the goal and objectives of education.

Generally, formal or cooperate organizations exist to achieve specific objectives, and the task of management therefore is to plan strategies for their effective attainment. Edem (2003), asserts that these strategies include working out details of what needs to be done and the method of doing them. Secondly, the details so worked out will include the setting up of a formal structure which permits the hierarchal allocation of responsibilities and a communication flow. The structure also provides for decision making

and the division of labour according to specialization. Thirdly, the decisions often made by an administrator include planning and arranging possible courses of action, the procurement and allocation of human and material resources; the stimulation or motivation of workers to perform their duties with efficiency; the co-ordination, organization and periodic evaluation of progress made.

Impact of Old Students Associations' Recruitment of Teachers on Management of Secondary Schools

Okpaga and Ode (2006) profers that management cannot sufficiently achieve its aim without the mobilization of resources. Thus resource generation and proper utilization is an important aspect of management. These resources include those of human, capital or general socio-economic. They added that the ability to manage these resources effectively therefore, depends on their availability. Implicitly, if there are no sufficient resources, of all kind, the process of management would be difficult to undertake. If the resources are therefore available, management strategies must be designed for their effective utilization.

Resource management is not only material. The most important resource to be managed in any organization is the personnel or human resource. This is where the issue of personnel management comes to play. The important issues to worry about here are recruitment, welfare, and training. Okpaga et al (2006), postulate that the goals and objectives of any organization can only be achieved through action. The determining, initiating and carrying out of definite and purposeful action to achieve predetermined objective is the content of management. They added that the content is made up of a process involving fundamental functions as planning, organizing, activating, directing and controlling. The researcher would quickly add that all those are only achievable with a skillful sense of human resources management and the Old Student Association based on their experience and exposure can make greater impact here in their alma-mater's management if they choose to get involved, by organizing resource management courses for staff or sponsoring their principals to attend such programmes.

It is a well known fact that for any organization to achieve its goals, the welfare of its staff must be given due consideration. Mbiti (1994) agreed on this by stating that increased productivity on the part of worker occurs when basic human needs are given due consideration by the employer. Nwachukwu (1998) supported this when he wrote that employees should be seen as "vital machines". He compared workers to machines and pointed that if workers are looked after as machines are being greased and cleaned, the efforts in caring for them would be paid off by increased productivity. Toiletries or even grains and flour products with payments made over a period of time. These are some ways of enhancing Old Student Association participation in the welfare of staff.

In human resource management, recruitment and retention of staff is important, but training them is even more important. Getting, keeping and maintaining an excellent team of personnel is crucial to the success and progress of any organization. Asema (2010) stated that keeping the system staffed continuously with competent personnel help in the smooth running of the school. Akpakwu (2008) sees staff training as an important function of personnel management particularly in the area of professional growth. According to Ukeje et al (1992) economic development goes hand in hand with industrialization and industrialization goes hand in hand with efficiency of labour. While the education system of the world, especially those of the Third World talk about technical and commercial education, they are also required by the society to instill into the mind of the youth, the need for hard work, diligence and dedication to service, as these are some of the prerequisite for economic growth. The school, they added, must teach the youth that there is dignity in labour and also that there is pride in being an efficient worker. The Old Student Association can from time to time organize and facilitate workshop/seminars using their connections.

Still on staff training, Chike-Okoli (2006) profers that what is truly at stake therefore in the development effort of any nation is the development of it's human resources. It is inconceivable to plan a development programme without consideration being given to the trained manpower to execute it. In other words, secondary education is part of Nigeria's development programme and the teachers who are the facilitators must be trained to execute it. Emunemu (2008) suggest that the only way forward is to allow the private sectors provide some form of management expertise. The Old Student in partnership with the school management team can achieve this.

The United Nations (2008) stated that School Based Management Committees (SBMC) has been established as a policy requirement structure representing all key stakeholders of the community working with the school to improve the management and ensure improved teaching and learning for the children. They represent the participation of the community in school administration and have the potential to transform, sustain educate, and promote school governance at the grass root level. The SBMC involves the head teacher, teacher representatives, pupils/student representation (when appropriate, representatives of the PTA and other stake-holders from the community including religious and traditional leaders). Should this be fully implemented there can be no better way of enhancing the Old Student Association participation in the management of secondary education in the Zone B Senatorial District of Benue State.

Impact of Old Student Associations' in the Area of Discipline on the Management of Secondary Education

Peter's as cited by Gbenda (2008) proffers that the aim of any educational system whether traditional, non-formal or formal is to impart worthwhile knowledge for social order and development. Worthwhile knowledge, irrespective of whenever way it is impacted, is what individuals desire for improvement. This is why discipline is a very important aspect of human resource management. Discipline in a school is brought about by a number of factors including the community in which the school is situated, government policies, quality of staff, and the way the students are administered as well as the physical facilities of the school. Ojelabi (1981) describes staff discipline in a school to mean the way the school staff are organized in order to attain maximum efficiency in pursuit of its educational objectives. In staff discipline, the principal needs tact, but more importantly "common sense". Above all the principal himself must be disciplined because you cannot give what you do not have. Thus the participation of Old Students Association in the management of school will bring about discipline in the sense that their presence will be an avenue for mentoring the young ones coming up.

School managers also contend with students' discipline. Today the level of indiscipline among students has reached a pathetic height. Parents and students contend with students who are cultists, robber and even drunkards who do not pay attention to studies. The attendant results of all these has become examination malpractice. Gbenda (2008) states that all examinations are guided by a code of ethics, translated into rules and regulations. Thus, any unethical action leading to the flouting of these rules and regulations constitutes examination malpractice. It is an academic crime committed before, during or after an examination by means of deviant approach guiding principles of conduct of examinations. Today youths and even adults are deeply involved in examination malpractice because they lack the discipline to study hard. To arrest this ugly development, Jumpa (2003) appealed to Old Students to act as models and mentors by setting good examples through the means of supporting positive social behaviour as well as organizing guidance programmes for them. A sampled opinion revealed that Mount Saint Gabriel Old Students Association have started organizing programmes aimed at mentoring students by means of career guidance. McLeod (2009) observed that the benefits of such a program are much needed now more than ever before. Thus along with this program the team endeavoured to have an annual presence at the school as a form of home coming and or a career day. Simply put "the old must meet the young and pass on the legacy".

The fact is that a well disciplined school may come as a result of different policies put in place. Policies which according to Ojelabi treat discipline as a way of learning, which in turn help students develop an innate control which helps them to do the right thing even without watchful eyes. Management can do this by training and counselling teachers on methods of discipline. School managers can also achieve this by allowing teachers attend workshops organized by the Old Students Association.

Akpakwu (2008) postulated that some disciplinary cases are well above the control of the school management. Thus he proffered that in such situations the school head would need to seek the assistance and intervention of parents, or Old Student Association and people (chiefs) from the community where the school is located. The fact remain that cases such as theft, armed robbery and drug use as well as cultism have become so problematic to the effective management of schools. According to Odili (2004) cultism or secret cult means any organization, association, group or body of persons (whether or not listed in the schedule) whose membership, meeting and other activities are kept secret, and which promotes,

causes or engages in acts of violence, intimidation or harm in whatever manner, against the public or any member of the public. Some causes of cultism are erosion of educational standard, economic difficulties, adventurism and egotism, lack of integration, peer group influence and drug addiction, bad parenting and erosion of family values etc. The effects therein are destruction in lives and property, continual fallen standard of education, upsurge in crime due to arms proliferation, loss of prospective future leaders etc.

Quality education is one way through which discipline can be inculcated in our schools. It is for this reason that well meaning international organizations realize the importance of quality education for development, and recommended that in developing countries, up to 26% of annual budget should be devoted to education. Nigerian hardly ever allocates half of that percentage, and much of what is allocated is mopped up by corruption, Okeke (2009). Therefore, the intervention and assistance of the Old Students Association for effective solution becomes imperative and highly required.

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted the descriptive survey research design with a total population that consisted of 92 principals and 2,459 teachers in 92 secondary schools in zone B Senatorial District of Benue state. A sample of 30 secondary schools representing 33% of the schools and 30 principals and 370 teachers making a total of 400 or 16% of the population of the study were selected as samples for the study. The proportionate stratified random simple technique was used to select sample size. The main instrument adopted for data collection was a 10-item structured questionnaire called 'Old Students Association Questionnaire' (OSAQ). The questionnaire was validated by experts in Educational Management in the faculty of Education, Benue State University, Makurdi. The questionnaire was pilot tested using 5 principals and 25 teachers who were not part of the original sample for this study and it yielded a Cronbach Alpha coefficient of 0.73. This coefficient signified high internal consistency and reliability (Pallant, 2001). The data collected were analyzed using mean and standard deviation to answer research questions while chi-square goodness of fit was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance

RESULTS AND FINDINGS

Research Question one

Does Old Students Associations' contribution to recruitment of teachers' impact on Secondary School Management?

The data presented on table 1 shows that, principals and teachers rated all the items from 6 to 10 in the cluster well above the cutoff point. Their ratings of items 1 to 5 are 2.89, 2.79, 2.69, 3.14 and 3.33 with corresponding standard deviations of 0.98, 0.93, 0.87, 0.83 and 2.24.

Based on the data, the respondents agreed that, old students use their positions to influence posting of more teachers to their former schools and also employ teachers in special disciplines. According to them, old students motivate and encourage teachers through training and retraining workshops and seminars. The respondents also agreed that the old students sometimes partnership with PTA to organize award and ensure that staff welfare is made a priority so as to enhance performance. The cluster mean was 2.97 and standard deviation 1.17 which indicates that they agreed that Old Students' contributions in the area of recruitment of teachers affects secondary schools management.

Table 1: Mean ratings and standard deviations of principals and teachers on Old Students Associations' contribution to recruitment of teachers'

S/N	Questionnaire items	SA	A	D	SD	Mean (X)	ST.D	Decision
1	Old Students use their positions to influence posting in their former schools.	185	171	31	13	2.89	0.98	Accepted
2	Old Students Association employs teachers in special disciplines eg. Fine Arts, French, Agricultural Science, etc.	191	166	13	30	2.79	0.93	Accepted
3	Old Students Association organizes training and retraining workshops and seminars for teachers to improve teaching and learning.	152	171	32	15	2.69	0.87	Accepted
4	Old Student Association in partnership with the Parent Teacher Association organizes Award ceremonies for teachers to motivate them in order to enhance teaching and learning.	144	202	34	20	3.14	0.83	Accepted
5	Old Student Association ensures that staff welfare is made a priority so as to enhance their performance.	189	168	28	15	3.33	2.24	Accepted
Cluster mean						2.97	1.17	Accepted

Research Question Two

How does Old Students Associations contribution to the maintenance of students discipline impact on the management of secondary schools?

Table 2 Mean ratings and standard deviations of principals and teachers on Old Students Association on the impact of students discipline on school management

S/N	Questionnaire items	SA	A	D	SD	Mean (X)	ST.D	Decision
6	For effective control of students' movements, Old Students Association builds fences (walls) around the school.	150	200	30	20	2.83	0.98	Accepted
7	To curb high cases of indiscipline Old Students Association organizes inspirational talks with students	150	150	50	50	3.95	1.30	Accepted
8	Old Student Association, during career Awareness sessions or in inter-house sports, and annual speech show-case their progress/achievements which has aided the management of discipline among students.	200	80	80	40	2.57	1.10	Accepted
9	In order to manage high level of indiscipline among students, Old Students Association develops a calculated avenue for mentoring students of their alma-mater by means of home-coming.	230	70	40	60	3.74	1.08	Accepted
10	In collaboration with the Parent Teachers Association, Old Students Association organizes seminars with students as a means of managing the high level of cultic activities in schools.	110	150	70	70	2.72	0.96	Accepted
Cluster mean						3.16	1.44	Accepted

The result on table 2 shows the respondents ratings of the Old Students' Association contribution in the maintenance of discipline in zone B senatorial district of Benue state. Their mean ratings of items 6 to 10 are 2.83, 3.95, 2.57, 3.74 and 2.72 with corresponding standard deviations of 98, 1.30, 1.10, 1.08 and 0.96 as acceptable.

This implies that for effective control of students, Old Students Association build fences around the school, also to curb high cases of indiscipline Old students Association organizes inspirational talk with students. The respondents also agreed that Old student Association during career awareness sessions or in inter-house sports and annual speech show-case their progress/achievements which has aided the management of discipline among students. In order to manage high level of indiscipline among students, Old Students Association develops a calculated avenue for mentoring students of their alma-mater by means of home coming. Finally the respondents agreed that in collaboration with the Parent Teachers Association, old students Association organizes seminars with students as a means of managing the high level of cultic activities in schools. The cluster mean was 3.16 and standard deviation of 1.44.

Hypotheses Testing

Research Hypothesis One

Old Students Associations' contribution to the Recruitment of Teachers does not significantly impact on secondary school management.

Table 3: Chi-square test on impact of Old Students' Association and Recruitment of Teachers

Opinions	Observed frequency	Expected Frequency	df	X ²	Sig	Decision
No impact	73(18.25%)	200	4	1725.14	0.0000	Significant
Impact	327(81.75%)	200				
Total	400 (100%)	400				

Value in parentheses are percentages (X² = 1725.14, df = 4, p = 0.05 > 0.0000)

On table 3, the inferential statistics were computed to examine the impact of Old students Associations' contribution to the recruitment of teachers on secondary school management. The result shows that 81.75% of the respondents agreed that adequate funding have positive impact on school performance as against 18.25% respondents who disagreed.

The chi-square was used to test the hypothesis and the result showed a significant impact (P=0.05 > 0.0000) of Old Students Associations' contribution to the recruitment of teachers in secondary school management. The null hypothesis was therefore rejected

Research Hypothesis Two

Old students Associations' contribution to the maintenance of students' discipline does not significantly impact on secondary school management.

Table 4: Chi-square test on impact of Old students' Association and maintenance students' discipline

Opinions	Observed frequency	Expected Frequency	df	X ²	Sig	Decision
No impact	129(32.25%)	200	4	1597.23	0.0000	Significant
Impact	271(67.75%)	200				
Total	400 (100%)	400				

Value in parentheses are percentages (X² = 1597.23, df = 4, p = 0.05 > 0.0000)

On table 4, the inferential statistics were computed to examine the impact of Old Students Associations' contribution to the maintenance of students' discipline on secondary school management. The result shows that 67.75% of the respondents agreed that Old Student Associations' contribution to the

maintenance of students' discipline on secondary school have positive impact on school management as against the 32.25% respondents who disagreed.

The chi-square was used to test the hypothesis and the result showed a significant impact ($P = 0.05 > 0.0000$) of Old Students Associations' contribution to the maintenance of students' discipline on secondary school management. The null hypothesis was therefore rejected.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The discussion of the findings of the research is organized around the research questions and hypotheses for ease of reading and comprehension.

The first finding of the study showed that, Old Students Associations' contribution to the recruitment of teachers significantly impact on secondary school management. The responses from the research questions showed that, to improve the quality of teaching and learning. Old students use their positions to influence posting of more teachers to their alma-mater. They also employ teachers in special disciplines such as agriculture, computer science, arts etc., they also organize training workshops, and they partner with P.T.A to employ teachers, and motivate them in order to enhance teaching and learning. This finding is in line with the opinions of the United Nations (2008) which posited that school based management committees has been established as a policy requirement structure representing all key stakeholders of the management and to ensure improved teaching and learning for the children. They represent the participation of the community, old students Association and P.T.A, school Administration and have the potentials to transform, sustain education, and promote school governance at the grass level.

The second finding of the study revealed that, old students' contribution to the maintenance of students discipline significantly impact on secondary school management. 80% of the respondents agreed that discipline affects the management of secondary schools while 20% of the respondents said otherwise. The finding of this hypothesis is in line with the views of Jumpa (2003), who appealed to Old Students Association to act as models and mentors by setting good examples through the means of supporting positive social behaviour as well as organizing guidance programmes for them. A sampled opinion revealed that Mount St Gabriel Old Students Association started organizing programmes aimed at mentoring students by means of career guidance. Akpakwu (2008), emphasizing on the role of Old Student Association in the promotion of discipline, reported that some disciplinary cases are well above the control of the school management. Thus, he proffered that in such situations, the school head would need to seek the assistance and intervention of parents, Old Students Association and people (chiefs) from the community where the school is located. Okeke (2004) also reported that the intervention and assistance of the old student association for effective solution is imperative and highly required.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of this study, it has been established that, Old Students Associations' contribution to school recruitment of teachers and maintenance of students' discipline significantly affect secondary school management in zone B Senatorial District of Benue State.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study, it was recommended that government, private individuals and organizations especially Old Student Associations should be encouraged through policies to contribute to the provision of quality schools human resources and maintenance of discipline for the safety of the students, since they are beneficiaries from the products of education.

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