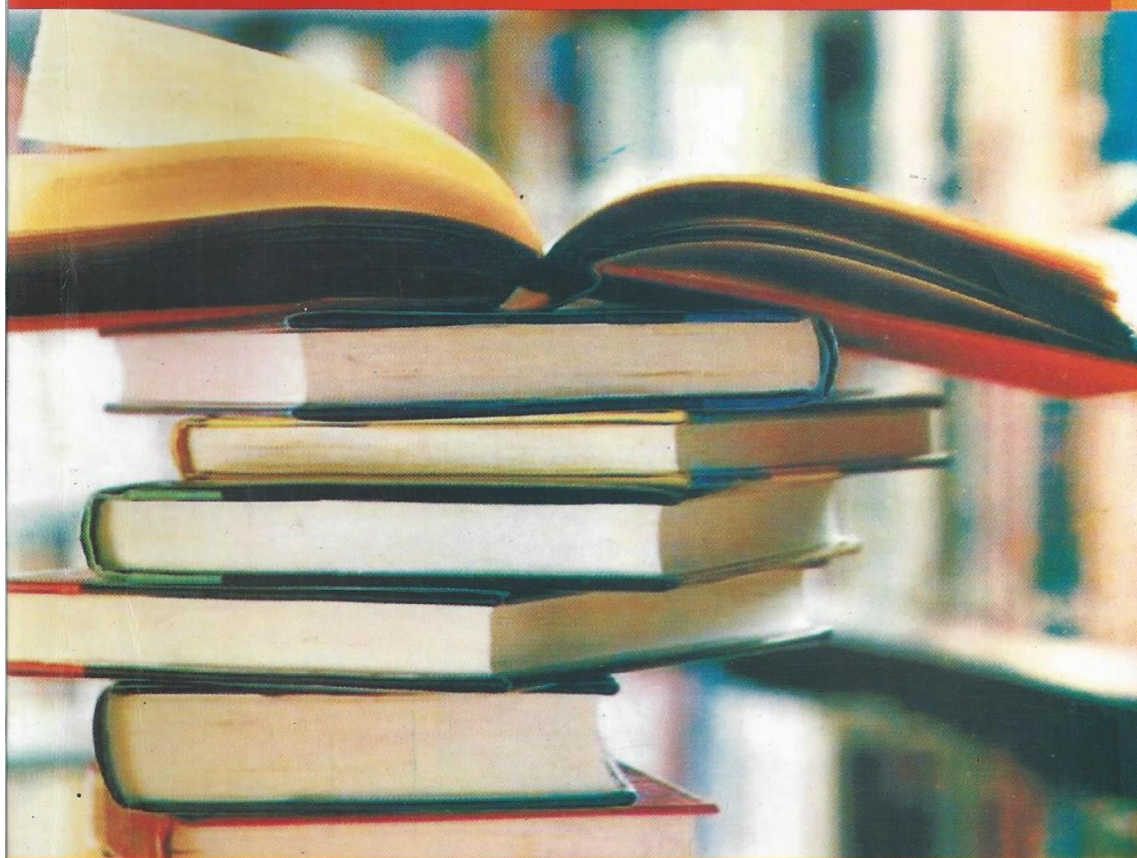


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STAKEHOLDERS' PERCEPTION OF PRINCIPALS' ACCOUNTABILITY IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN ILORIN METROPOLIS

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Abstract

This paper investigated the stakeholders' perception of principals' accountability in secondary schools in Ilorin metropolis. The research design adopted for the study was a descriptive type. The population for the study comprised all the public secondary schools in Ilorin metropolis. Random Sampling technique was used to select 20 public secondary schools in Ilorin metropolis. Thereafter, purposive sampling technique was used to select five teachers and five parents from each school during Parents-Teachers Association meeting making a total of 10 respondents in each school which gave a total of 200 respondents that took part in the study. A researcher-designed questionnaire tagged "Stakeholders' perception of Principals' Accountability Questionnaire (SPPAQ) was used to obtain the necessary information from the respondents. The reliability of the instrument was done by administering the questionnaire on 20 stakeholders that are not part of the selected schools. The reliability co-efficient was calculated to be 0.72. The data collected for the study was analyzed using mean and standard deviation before the responses were ranked. The result revealed that principals are held accountable by stakeholders when they fail to (i) adhere strictly to budget estimates (ii) renovate school and (iii) make school records available when needed. Recommendations to redress the situation were offered.

Keywords: Stakeholders, Principal, Accountability Secondary schools

Introduction

Education lies at the heart of every society and its place in the development of a nation cannot be overstressed. No wonder its importance is stressed in the opening statement of the National Policy of Education (2013) where it is maintained that "education in Nigeria is an instrument 'par excellence' for effecting national development". The issue of accountability in Nigeria is a fundamental problem that is affecting every facet of our country and educational system from primary to tertiary level because of the high level corruption in all levels of government and people in position of authority in the country.

The National Policy of Education (2013) defined secondary education as the education the child receives after primary education and before the tertiary stage. At the head of every secondary school in Nigeria is the Principal, who is regarded as the Chief Executive and responsible for all that happens in the school (Oyedeji & Fasasi, 2006). Oyewole (2006) noted that the principal is the chief executive officer in the Nigerian secondary school system. The principal of a school is a planner, director, controller, coordinator, organiser, adviser and a problem-solver (Maduabum,

2002).

The roles of education stakeholders are inevitable in the school system secondary schools inclusive. Stakeholders in secondary schools include teacher, students, parents, parents-teachers association, school management committee, board of governors and Ministry of Education (Helle, Letshego & Marinda, 2011). Stakeholders in education influence programmes, products and services and ensure that principals of secondary schools who are entrusted with funds and resources are held accountable.

Since the secondary school principals are the chief executive of their respective schools, they are held accountable by stakeholders for whatever happens in the school. They are held accountable for the management, administration, planning, judicious utilization of funds and effective mobilization of resources entrusted in his/her care. Accountability is all about being answerable to those who have invested their trust, faith, and resources to you. The stakeholders ensure that the principal is required to account for cash he receives for the development of education in his school. This requirement is a factor that enables him to exercise utmost carefulness in the disbursement of public funds. They are held accountable for all physical facilities of the school in his possession. The use of such facilities as school buildings, vehicles, libraries, laboratories, personnel etc should be adequately accounted for by the principal. Furthermore, all actions and inactions of teaching and non-teaching staff of the school must be accounted for by the principal including his own actions.

The principal is the person on whose shoulders rest the entire administration, success or failure of the school and the overall realization of the objectives of secondary education in Nigeria. According to the Federal Republic of Nigeria National Policy of Education (2013), the broad aims of secondary education within our overall objective should be:

- Preparation for useful living within the society; and
- Preparation for higher education
- Section 4(18) of the National Policy on Education states that, in specific terms the secondary school should:
 - Provide an increasing number of primary school pupils with the opportunity for education of a higher quality. Irrespective of sex, or social religious and ethnic background;
 - Diversify its curriculum to cater for the differences in talents, opportunity and roles possessed by or open to students after their secondary school course;
 - Equip students to live effectively in our modern age of science and technology;
 - Develop and project Nigerian culture, art and language as well as the world's cultural heritage;
 - Raise a generation of people who can think for themselves, respect the views and feeling of others, respect the dignity of labour and appreciate those values specified under our broad national aims and live as good citizens.
 - Foster Nigerian unity with an emphasis on the common ties that unite us in our diversity. Inspire its students with a desire for achievement and self-improvement both at school and in later life.

Statement of the Problem

The issue of accountability in secondary school in Nigeria gives more concern to all and sundry in the educational industry. Secondary schools are confronted with enormous challenges as regards matter of accountability among which includes diversion, mismanagement and

misappropriation of school funds; poor record keeping; fraudulent practices owing to the existing poverty syndrome in the country; abuse and misuse of school property; wrong actions or deeds of staff in the school. It is based on the problems above that this study was carried out.

Purpose of Study

The main purpose of the study is to investigate the stakeholders' perception of principals' accountability in secondary schools in Ilorin metropolis.

Research Questions

The following questions were raised in the study:

- i. What is the stakeholders' perception of principals' accountability on school funds in secondary schools in Ilorin Metropolis?
- ii. What is the stakeholders' perception of principals' accountability on school facilities in secondary schools in Ilorin Metropolis?
- iii. What is the stakeholders' perception of principals' accountability on school records in secondary schools in Ilorin Metropolis?

Methodology

The research design adopted for the study was a descriptive type. Descriptive method describes, finds out and interprets event(s) and idea(s) the way they are without any external manipulation. The study involved all the public secondary schools in Ilorin metropolis of Kwara State. Random Sampling technique was used to select 20 public secondary schools that fall within these area in Ilorin metropolis Sawmill, Adeta, Baboko, Unity, Gaa Akanbi, Taiwo, Maraba, Oloje. Thereafter, purposive sampling technique was used to select the respondents used in this study which consists of teachers and parents. Five teachers and five parents were selected from each school during Parents-Teachers Association meeting making a total of 10 respondents in each school. The data for this study was gathered through the use of questionnaire. A researchers-designed questionnaire tagged "Stakeholders' perception of principals' accountability questionnaire" (SPPAQ) was used to collect data from the respondents. The instrument was based on the Likert 4 points rating scale of:

Strongly Agree	(SA)	-	4 points
Agree	(A)	-	3 points
Strongly Disagree	(SA)	-	2 points
Disagree	(D)	-	1 point

The reliability of instrument was done by administering the questionnaire on ten stakeholders that are not part of the selected schools. The reliability co-efficient was calculated to be 0.72.

Methods of Data Analysis

The analysis was in line with the research questions earlier raised. The research investigated the stakeholders' perception of principals' accountability in secondary schools in Ilorin metropolis. The data collected were analyzed using mean and standard deviation. Thereafter, the responses of the respondents were ranked.

Results and Discussion

Research Question 1: What is the stakeholders' perception of principals' accountability on school funds in secondary schools in Ilorin Metropolis?

Table 2: Stakeholders' perception of principals' accountability on school funds in Secondary schools in Ilorin Metropolis

	X	SD	Ranking
Stakeholders perception of principals accountability on school funds in secondary schools in Ilorin Metropolis. Principals are held accountable by stakeholders when they fail to:			
1. Allocate funds to school projects	2.81	1.72	1 st
2. Involve stakeholders in school budget preparation.	2.67	1.51	2 nd
3. Adherence to school budget estimates	2.52	1.44	3 rd
4. Receive invoices on money spent in the school on a regular basis	2.44	1.18	4 th
5. Provide for periodic school audits	2.31	1.17	5 th
6. Make entries in the school ledger accounts	2.20	0.94	6 th
7. Prepare financial statements for the school	2.11	0.91	7 th

Table 2 showed the mean, standard deviation and ranking of stakeholders' perception of principals' accountability on school funds in secondary schools in Ilorin Metropolis. Allocation of funds to school projects ranked 1st as the major area whereby stakeholders' hold principals' accountable in secondary schools in Ilorin metropolis with a mean score of 2.81. It was also evident from the table that stakeholders' hold principals' accountable when they fail to provide for periodic school audits and it was ranked 5th with a mean score of 2.31. It was further evident from the table that principals' of secondary schools are held accountable by stakeholders when they fail to Prepare financial statements for the school and was ranked 7th with a mean score of 2.11.

Research Question 2: What is the stakeholders' perception of principals' accountability on school facilities in secondary schools in Ilorin Metropolis?

Table 3: Stakeholders' perception of principals' accountability on school facilities in Secondary schools in Ilorin Metropolis

	X	SD	Ranking
Stakeholders perception of principals accountability on school facilities in secondary schools in Ilorin Metropolis. Principals are held accountable by stakeholders when they fail to:			
1. Give report on the conditions of the school facilities	3.55	1.82	1 st
2. Ensure effective use of school facilities	3.14	1.64	2 nd
3. Set the rules guiding the usage of school facilities	2.72	1.60	3 rd
4. Take precaution in the usage of school facilities	2.67	1.51	4 th
5. Assess the purpose of school facilities utilization	2.52	1.44	5 th
6. Promptly renovate school facilities	2.44	1.18	6 th
7. Ensure the signing of undertaken by users of the school facilities	2.21	1.17	7 th

Table 2 showed the mean, standard deviation and ranking of stakeholders' perception of principals' accountability on school facilities in secondary schools in Ilorin Metropolis. Giving report on the conditions of the school facilities ranked 1st as the major area whereby stakeholders' hold principals' accountable in secondary schools in Ilorin metropolis in respect to school facilities with a mean score of 3.55. It was also revealed from the table that stakeholders hold principals' accountable when they fail to assess the purpose of school facilities utilization and it was ranked 5th with a mean score of 2.52. It was further revealed from the table that principals' of secondary schools are held accountable by stakeholders on school facilities when they fail to ensure the signing of undertaken by users of the school facilities and was ranked 7th with a mean score of 2.21.

Research Question 3: What is the stakeholders' perception of principals' accountability on school records in secondary schools in Ilorin Metropolis?

Table 3: Stakeholders' perception of principals' accountability on school records in Secondary schools in Ilorin Metropolis

S/N	Stakeholders perception of principals accountability on school records in secondary schools in Ilorin Metropolis. Principals are held accountable by stakeholders when they fail to:	X	SD	Ranking
1	Provide record for every school events	2.86	1.74	1st
2	Give detailed information on every record kept in the school	2.74	1.63	2nd
3	Update the school record	2.70	1.60	3rd
4	A custodian of every school record	2.62	1.56	4th
5	Supervise and monitor school records	2.48	1.48	5th
6	Ensure the authenticity of the information in the school record	2.42	1.42	6th
7	Make school records available when needed.	2.30	1.17	7th

Table 3 showed the mean, standard deviation and ranking of stakeholders' perception of principals' accountability on school records in secondary schools in Ilorin Metropolis. Providing record for every school events ranked 1st as the major area whereby stakeholders' hold principals' accountable in secondary schools in Ilorin metropolis in respect to school records with a mean score of 2.86. It was also revealed from the table that stakeholders' hold principals' accountable when they fail to supervise and monitor school records and it was ranked 5th with a mean score of 2.48. It was further revealed from the table that principals' of secondary schools are held accountable by stakeholders on school records when they fail to make school records available when needed and was ranked 7th with a mean score of 2.30.

Conclusion

The issue of accountability in education cannot be overemphasized particularly in Nigerian secondary schools. Stakeholders in education are people who have vested interest in the development of education at the different levels of education in Nigeria and constantly hold school managers accountable for whatever action they take with respect to school funds, school facilities and school records. The stakeholders in secondary education in Nigeria hold principals accountable for the resources used in education. Stakeholders ensure that school funds are

cautiously spent, facilities are well utilized and maintained and proper records are kept in the school. The school principal is required to account for cash he receives for the development of education in his school. This requirement is a factor that enables him to exercise utmost carefulness in the disbursement of public funds. The principal must ensure that all physical facilities of the school must be accounted for.

Recommendations

Based on the findings from this study, the following recommendations were put forward:

School principals should prepare financial statements of their school for the various stakeholders in the school business to know how the school funds are being spent.

School principals should constantly involve stakeholders in school budget preparation.

School principals should keep stakeholders abreast of the conditions of school facilities under review at regular intervals.

They should ensure effective and judicious usage of the school facilities.

Principals should ensure the authenticity of the information in the school record

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