

# Educational Change Strategies in Curriculum Development and Policies Formulations for Secondary Education Delivery in Rivers State

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**Abstract:** This study examined educational change strategies in curriculum development and policies formulations for secondary education delivery in Rivers state. Two research questions and hypotheses were formulated to guide the study. All principals from the 247 public secondary schools in Rivers State constituted the population and the sample size of 152 principals were randomly selected for the study and they constituted the study respondents. An instrument called educational change strategies in curriculum development and policies formulations for secondary education delivery Questionnaire (ECSCDPFSEDQ) was used for data collection and its reliability coefficient was computed at 0.73 and 0.73 respectively. Mean and standard deviation were used to analyze the research questions while z-test statistics was used to test the hypotheses. Findings of the study revealed that the educational change strategies in curriculum development is making available materials that will enable teachers cope with changes and ensuring that they are being abreast with the changes. Also ensuring that adequate planning on how it is going to be implemented, continuous follow up to ensure these policies are being implemented and practiced are educational change strategies in policies formulation. Some of the recommendations made were that the government should provide the necessary support that will enhance the implementation of educational change strategies and there should be continuous follow-up on the part of supervisors to ensure the change is being implemented properly for secondary education delivery in Rivers State.

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## Introduction

The educational enterprise has to do with the gradual growth of human intellect, technical training, character and effective citizenship. For the sake of improvement in quality secondary education delivery, applying the management of a quality system became necessary so as to attain a standard in the education sector. The education sector in Nigeria is changing on a daily basis and it is geared towards achieving specific goals like the Education for All (EFA) and the Nigeria vision by 2020 (Nwangwa and Omotere, 2013).

The different education goals will not be achieved if teaching and learning is not advanced by school principals through the implementation of performance based management. School management for a long time is being perceived by teachers to be the sole responsibility of the principal as he is left to oversee the overall management of the school.

Recently, there was change in the pattern of school management as it is now seen as a team work in which the Principal, Vice-Principals and Heads of Departments are all involved and are made to know their various roles which includes assessing teachers' attitudes and teaching outcomes so as to achieve the national goals. There have been changes in the Nigerian education system since 1999. These changes needs the managers of schools to study, implement, assess and develop strategies to manage these changes, teaching and learning outcomes, while at the same time, they send reports based on performance to the Ministry of Education. Prior to 1999 school managers were expected to play the role of managing school facilities, direct and supervise teachers and build positive school community relations (Imam, 2012). It is only when these changes are properly managed that quality education can be delivered.

Quality education provides students with the needed knowledge, skills, attitudes and creativity for problem solving both locally and globally and to actively contribute to the societies' sustainable and democratic development. Hence changes in the education sector were made. The changes therefore that have taken place in the secondary education can only be achieved with the help of these teachers hence the government have to come up with strategies for managing these changes.

The four pillars of learning which are learning to know, learning to do, learning to be and learning to live together cannot be excluded from the process of planning and implementation of the curriculum hence it should be given adequate attention because it will bring about functionality in the educational system and it will also help its recipients to be self-reliant.

Okebukola, (2015) opines that despite the fact that there are students 'with poor skill and knowledge acquisition in the four areas, there is virtually no subject on the secondary school curriculum where there are no topics which teachers find difficulty in teaching. Though, this problem may be due to poor teacher preparation or poor teaching-learning environment, the problem may be inherent in the curriculum itself hence teachers also are to be considered while planning the school curriculum contents for the students. The content of educational curriculum programmes are supposed to encourage the use of communicative and practical interactive teaching and learning strategies always and also indoctrinating people by inculcating in them the habit of working together as a group which also shows that the principal could implement the school curricular programmes or activities which includes teaching subjects and other programmes that would promote mutual love and understanding giving people the ability to imbibe a win-win attitude hence changes in educational curriculum has to be taken seriously.

According to Vicado (2013), the strategies to manage changes in educational curriculum includes teachers being abreast with the changes, training teachers to fit into the changes, making available materials that will enable them cope with changes in the curriculum and ensure that any changes to the curriculum are explicit in strategic, operational and development plans, provide a clear picture of how the changes will affect staff students and the institution as a whole and provide adequate resources based on realistic and achievable targets to make sure that the change actually happens.

The Nigerian education establishment has failed to meet its state constitutional obligations and the goals in the National Development Plan (NDP) of the 1970s. The objectives of the NDP are to build (1) a free and democratic society, (2) a just and egalitarian society, (3) a united, strong and self-reliant nation, (4) a great and dynamic economy, (5) a land of bright and full opportunity for all citizens. This reform plan of the 1970s has guided the nation's educational policies through the 1980s, 1990s, and 2000s with little or no tangible results.

This has made education observers of Nigerian education to conclude that the major problem facing secondary education in Nigeria is not the absence of informed, rational, and thoughtful reform plan, but the lack of willingness on the part of policy makers charged with the responsibility of implementing educational policies. For instance, in 2006, the Federal Ministry of Education released a major report on education. The report, Education Reform and Intervention -Vision 2020: The Role of the Nigerian education sector lays out the rationale and agenda for the promotion and the implementation of the Private Public Partnership (PPP). The PPP allows the federal government to restructure the 105 federal secondary schools across the nation. But it allows the system to retain some of the vestiges of colonial education policies (Abdullahi, 2007). The present PPP reform programme according to Aluko (2007) violates both the economic and educational objectives of the fundamental objectives and directive principles of state policy enshrined in our present constitution.

The federal government also issued another significant reform initiative called the National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS). This reform plan has implications for education as the goal is to mobilize the resources of Nigeria to make a fundamental break with the failures of the past. The aim is to create a new Nigerian citizen who values hard work and who realizes that one cannot have something for nothing. It is expected that the economic and development agenda under NEEDS is complemented by other reform agendas, particularly the education agenda. As a result of these initiatives, the role of the federal government in education has drastically changed because the federal government has now moved from the management of education to an enabler and facilitator of the education system (Federal Ministry of Education, 2006).

School administration involves managing, administering the curriculum and teaching, pastoral care, discipline, assessment evaluation and examinations, resource allocation, costing and forward planning, staff appraisal relationship with the community, use of the practical skills necessary for surviving the policies of organization such as decision-making, negotiation, bargaining, communication, conflict handling, running meetings and so on (Okereke, 2008). All these tasks can be reduced to the following as planning, organizing, directing, supervising, and evaluating the school system. These activities are those of the school principal who must ensure they are all directed towards efficient and effective teaching and learning in the school so as to be able to produce quality outputs. By implication, the principal of a school is a planner, director, controller, coordinator, organizer, adviser and a problem-solver (Maduabum, 2002). The principal is the person on whose shoulders rest the entire administration, success or failure of the school. The principal identifies and set goals and objectives of the school, which of course, must be in line with the national objectives, analyses tasks and share responsibilities of the staff according to specialization and expertise (Uyanga, 2008).

Meanwhile, the level of implementation of educational policies goes a long way in determining the achievement of educational goals. In other words, when changes in policies occur, it can be managed through regular supervision of principals and teachers, continuous

follow up to ensure these policies are being implemented and practiced, there should be penalty for defaulters, continuous evaluation of the policy to know how effective it is, adequate planning on how it is going to be implemented, trained personnel that will understand and adopt these policies at ease (Peterson, 2011).

### Statement of Problem

Sustainable quality secondary education is a continuous process in the management and utilization of human and material resources, facilities, finance, and development of positive corporate culture and strategic supervision of teaching and learning activities so as to attain the stated goals. This can be achieved if everybody in the school contributes his/her quota to the quality process and it is all needed to ensure a complete well-rounded education so as to produce quality students with consistent improvement in the secondary school system. Various changes occur in the education sector such as changes in curriculum, policies, facilities, staff personnel and so on but to what extent are these changes being managed or implemented? Hence this study tends to look into the strategies for managing educational changes in curriculum and policies formulation for quality secondary education delivery in Rivers State?

### Research Questions

The following research questions were used to guide the study;

- 1) What are the educational change strategies in curriculum development for secondary education delivery in Rivers State?
- 2) What are the educational change strategies in policies formulations for secondary education delivery in Rivers State?

### Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated for this study:

**Ho1:** There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female principals on the educational change strategies in curriculum development for secondary education delivery in Rivers State.

**Ho2:** There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female principals on the educational change strategies in policies formulation for secondary education delivery in Rivers State.

### Methodology

The design for the study was the descriptive survey. Answers were sought to research questions and research hypotheses tested for results that were inferred on the population of the study. The population of the study comprised all the principals from the 247 public secondary schools in Rivers States. From which a stratified random sample of 152 principals was drawn. A 4-point instrument designed after a modified likert scale model, tagged educational change strategies in curriculum development and policies formulations for secondary education delivery Questionnaire (ECSCDPFSEDQ) was used for data collection. The reliability coefficient of the instrument using cronbach alpha method was 0.73 and 0.73 respectively. Mean scores and rank order were used to answer research questions and z-test statistic was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 alpha level.

### Research Question 1

- 1) What are the educational change strategies in curriculum development for secondary education delivery in Rivers State?

**Table 1. Mean scores of male and female principals on the educational change strategies in curriculum development for secondary education delivery in Rivers State**

S/N	Items	Male		Female		Rank	Remark	
		N	$\bar{x}$	n	$\bar{x}$			$\bar{xx}$
1.	Ensuring that teachers are abreast with the changes	70	2.73	82	2.68	2.71	2 <sup>nd</sup>	Agreed
2.	Training teachers to fit into the changes	70	2.47	82	2.58	2.53	5 <sup>th</sup>	Agreed
3.	Making available materials that will enable them cope with changes in the curriculum	70	2.80	82	3.06	2.93	1 <sup>st</sup>	Agreed
4.	Ensuring that any changes made in the curriculum are explicit	70	2.51	82	2.50	2.51	6 <sup>th</sup>	Agreed
5.	providing a clear picture of how the changes will affect staff students and the school in general	70	2.60	82	2.56	2.58	3 <sup>rd</sup>	Agreed
6.	Providing adequate resources, based on realistic and achievable targets to make sure that the change actually happens	70	2.00	82	3.11	2.56	4 <sup>th</sup>	Agreed
Aggregate mean = 2.48 and 2.81								

The result as revealed in Table 1 indicated that respondents agreed to the fact that the educational change strategies in curriculum development for secondary education delivery in Rivers State is by making available materials that will enable them cope with changes in the curriculum with mean scores of 2.80 and 3.06 ensuring that teachers are being abreast with the changes with mean scores of 2.73 for male and 2.68 for female principals; providing a clear picture of how the changes will affect staff students and the school in general with mean scores of 2.60 and 2.56, providing adequate resources, based on realistic and achievable targets to make sure that the change actually happens with mean scores of 2.00 and 3.11, training teachers to fit into the changes with mean scores of 2.47 and 2.58 and ensuring that any changes made in the curriculum are explicit in strategic, operational and development plans regularly with mean scores of 2.51 and 2.50 as the educational change strategies in curriculum development for secondary education delivery in Rivers State. However, the aggregate mean shows that female principals agree more to the educational change strategies in curriculum development for secondary education delivery than the male principals.

**Research Question 2**

2) What are the educational change strategies in policies formulations for secondary education delivery in Rivers State?

**Table 2. Mean scores of male and female principals on the educational change strategies in policies formulations for secondary education delivery in Rivers State**

S/N	Items	Male		Female		$\bar{xx}$	Rank	Remark
		N	$\bar{x}$	n	$\bar{x}$			
7.	regular supervision of principals and teachers	70	2.40	82	2.00	2.20	6 <sup>th</sup>	Disagreed
8.	Continuous follow up to ensure these policies are being implemented and practiced	70	2.89	82	3.00	2.95	2 <sup>nd</sup>	Agreed
9.	There should be penalty for defaulters	70	2.73	82	2.30	2.52	5 <sup>th</sup>	Agreed
10.	Continuous evaluation of the policy to know how effective it is	70	3.33	82	2.44	2.89	3 <sup>rd</sup>	Agreed
11.	Adequate planning on how it is going to be implemented	70	3.05	82	3.45	3.25	1 <sup>st</sup>	Agreed
12.	Train personnel that will understand and adopt these policies at ease	70	3.00	82	2.50	2.75	4 <sup>th</sup>	Agreed
Aggregate mean = 2.90 and 2.62								

The result as revealed in Table 2 indicated that respondents agreed to the fact that adequate planning on how it is going to be implemented with mean scores of 3.45 and 3.05, continuous follow up to ensure these policies are being implemented and practiced with mean scores of 2.89 and 3.00, continuous evaluation of the policy to know how effective it is with mean scores of 3.33 and 2.44, train personnel that will understand and adopt these policies at ease with mean scores of 3.00 and 3.50 and there should be penalty for defaulters with mean scores of 2.73 and 2.30. They also disagreed to the fact that regular supervision of principals and teachers with mean scores of 2.40 and 2.00 is the educational change strategies in policies formulations for secondary education delivery in Rivers State. However, the aggregate mean shows that male principals agreed to the educational change strategies in policies for secondary education delivery than the female principals.

**Presentation and Analysis of Data to Test Hypotheses**

**Ho1;** There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female principals on the educational change strategies in curriculum development for secondary education delivery in Rivers State.

**Table 3. z-test results for male and female principals on the educational change strategies in curriculum development for secondary education delivery in Rivers State**

S/N	Gender	N	Mean	SD	Df	z-cal	z-tab	Remark
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30.	Male	70	2.48	1.17	35	1.26	1.96	Accept Ho
31.	Female	82	2.81	1.19				

Table 3 shows the result of the statistical significant test on the responses of male and female principals on the educational change strategies in curriculum development for secondary education delivery in Rivers State. From the table, at 35 degrees of freedom, the z-cal value of 1.26 is less than the z-crit. value of 1.96, it means that there is no statistical significant difference between the opinion of male and female principals on the educational change strategies in curriculum development for secondary education delivery in Rivers State.

**Ho2:** There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female principals on the educational change strategies in policies formulation for secondary education delivery in Rivers State.

**Table 4. z-test results for male and female principals on the educational change strategies in policies formulation for secondary education delivery in Rivers State**

S/N	Gender	N	Mean	SD	Df	z-cal	z-tab	Remark
32	Male	70	2.90	0.97	35	1.98	1.96	Reject Ho
33	Female	82	2.62	1.15				

Table 4 shows the result of the statistical significant test on the responses of male and female principals on the educational change strategies in policies formulation for secondary education delivery in Rivers State. From the table, since the z-cal value of 1.98 is higher than the z-crit. value of 1.96, there is a statistical significant difference between the opinion of male and female principals on the educational change strategies in policies formulation for secondary education delivery in Rivers State.

**Discussion**

The findings revealed that respondents agreed to the fact that making available materials that will enable them cope with changes in the curriculum, ensuring that teachers are being abreast with the changes, providing a clear picture of how the changes will affect staff students and the school in general, providing adequate resources based on realistic and achievable targets to make sure that the change actually happens, training teachers to fit into the changes and ensuring that any change made in the curriculum are explicit in strategic, operational and development plans regularly as the educational change strategies in curriculum development for secondary education delivery in Rivers State. In support of this, Vicado (2013) opines that the educational change strategies in curriculum development includes teachers being abreast with the changes, training teachers to fit into the changes, making available materials that will enable them cope with changes in the curriculum and ensure that any changes to the curriculum are explicit in strategic, operational and development plans, provide a clear picture of how the changes will affect staff students and the institution as a whole and provide adequate resources based on realistic and achievable targets to make sure that the change actually happens.

From the findings, respondents agreed to the fact that ensuring adequate planning on how it is going to be implemented, continuous follow up to ensure these policies are being implemented and practiced, continuous evaluation of the policy to know how effective it is, training personnel that will understand and adopt these policies at ease and there should be penalty for defaulters are educational change strategies in policies formulation for secondary education delivery. They also disagreed to regular supervision of principals and teachers as educational change strategy in policies formulation for secondary education delivery. In

support of this, Peterson (2011) posits that when changes in policies occur, it can be managed through regular supervision of principals and teachers, continuous follow up to ensure these policies are being implemented and practiced, there should be penalty for defaulters, continuous evaluation of the policy to know how effective it is, adequate planning on how it is going to be implemented, trained personnel that will understand and adopt these policies at ease.

### Conclusion

From the findings, the study concluded that when education change strategies in curriculum development and policy formulation are properly managed, secondary education will be achieved in Rivers State.

### Recommendations

The following recommendations were highlighted based on the findings of the study.

- 1) The government should provide the necessary support that will enhance the implementation of educational changes.
- 2) There should be continuous follow-up on the part of supervisors to ensure the changes are implemented properly.

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