



Assessment of Admission Exercise and Political Interference at Secondary School Level of Education in Kebbi State

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Abstract

The paper Assessment of Admission Exercise and Political interference at secondary school level of Education: A case Study of Kebbi State, with one objective of the study as to examine the Admission Exercise and Political interference at secondary school level of Education in Kebbi State, and a research question as to how does political interference affect the students' admission exercise in government secondary schools in Kebbi State? as well a single null hypothesis was formulated to know whether there is difference in the opinion of the respondent and the title of the research. A case study survey research design was adopted for the study, being descriptive in nature, with a population of the study consists of 5177 comprising all government secondary schools education stakeholders in Kebbi State during the 20/20 academic session, a sample size of 376 stakeholders was used, which comprises of (18 principals, 327 teachers, 10 school based management committee members and 10 quality assurance officials), five points Likert questionnaire titled Assessment of Admission Exercise and Political Interference at Secondary School Level of education (AAPISSLE) was used as an instrument or collection of data collection, a reliability test of the instrument was conducted coefficient of 0.81 was obtained using Cronbach alpha reliability test.84,data was analysed using descriptive statistics such as frequency count, percentages, mean scores, tables and charts. ANOVA was used to test hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance for the study. At the end findings revealed that there is political interference in education in the admission exercise of government secondary schools in Kebbi State, it was concluded that politics interfere into educational system of the state, a recommendation was made that government should give the state ministry of education free hand to exercise its official mandate according to the law.

Keyword: Political, interference, student admission, secondary school.

Introduction

The civilian administration in Kebbi State made tremendous effort to develop educational sector through enhanced budgetary allocation to bring back the lost glory. Despite all the efforts, improvements of academic performance of secondary school education in the state are still low Haliru (2018). This could be due to improper leadership in the administration of state educational system, manifestation of this can be observed from the insufficient teaching and learning facilities, infrastructural conditions as well as distortion in the educational settings that were in existence since the time Kebbi State was under Sokoto State, one of which is closure of Science and Technical Education Board despite the fact that the Edict establishing it has not been amended by the state legislature, Report of the committee on the Improvement and Development of Education in Kebbi State (February 2013). Contract for the supply of educational facilities were awarded without consulting the real stakeholders: students, teachers, parents and community needs etc, Report of the committee on the Improvement and Development of Education in Kebbi State (February 2013). This is why most of the time resource allocation is not commensurate with school's requirement, posting of teacher is lopsided, as well as poor placement of students' admission, accordingly some schools are overstaffing while others were understaffed especially between rural and urban secondary schools in the state Haliru (2018). Secondary school in urban areas have more than 100 students per class as against the provision made by National Policy on Education (article 113 (a)) of not more than 35 to 40 students per class, Report of the committee on the Improvement and Development of Education in Kebbi State (February 2013). The criteria for student's



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admission were not strictly adhered to, because students are placed on request from their parents hence overcrowding of students in urban secondary schools Haliru (2018).

Admission of student into secondary school should be an exercise that supposed to be conducted by expert in the field of education, that will take into cognizance of so many factors such as socioeconomic background of the child, especially where the contribution of government is absent or become very minimal, the accessibility of schools (geographical location), consideration on ability/capacity of the child, which is normally identified after an evaluation by the experts, that will help them to identify whether or not a child could be good in science, art, social science and or technical, and above all there should be no biasness in all this activities Haliru (2018). Research conducted by Osuji (2011), reveals that there is disparities between urban and rural schools, between schools owned by the state government and the federal government and that of private agencies. There is also a serious gap in terms of enrolment between male and female as well as in the case of admission figures and resources available In Kebbi State because of nature of schools in the rural areas no qualified teachers, no conducive environment for teaching and learning parents normally refuse to take their children to the school admitted especially in the rural areas thereby moving them the urban area especially State Capital. Secondly, another factor is because of the involvement of politics in the education sector almost all the major villages in each of the 21 Local Governments has either two or more, Day or Boarding Secondary Schools. This is in line with what Muhammad (2013) as: the decision to locate a school is based on other consideration such as place of origin of the policy maker and the political strong hold of the policy maker and the political strong hold of the party in government, for instance it is quite common in Nigeria for a commissioner and other political office holder to go to a ceremony and announce the sitting of a new school in the locality without asking the educational planner to determine the viability of such as school. Because of the above reason many parent especially less privileged would want their ward to be at home because of two factors; to spend less in sending the child to school and to have some assistance for their personal issues. That brings about in balance in admission plan of the State Ministry of Education.

The admission of student in Kebbi State into secondary schools is based on the following criteria by Directorate of Quality Assurance, Kebbi State Ministry of Education (2016).

1. Result of the student during BECE (Basic Education Certificate Examination) otherwise known as Junior Leaving Certificate Extermination result, which will determine which area a child understands better of sciences, commercial, art, social science and or technical that will give the committee saddled with the responsibility of admission idea as to which school a child should be admitted to. And for Junior Secondary School (JSS) Students are to be selected from various primary schools in the state, with regards to his/her performance at the Common Entrance Examination to any Day/Boarding Secondary School in the state.
2. The geographical proximity (where you Leave) of child to the school which he/she is to be admitted to, this is in consideration of socioeconomic background of the parent.
3. For Physically challenged children, because the State has only one School for the Special Needs and it's located in the state capital, parents who do not want their child to be far from them for special care and the special need does not include hearing and vision can be admitted in any nearby school in the state.
4. Parents need not to apply for the admission.

Globally secondary education denotes two processes. First, Access; This means universal provision of secondary schools and universal enrolment of children in the age group of 13 to 18 groups. All children in the age group of 13 to 18 should have access to secondary schools. There should not be any discrimination on grounds of sex, religion, place, or socio-economic status. Second Access: By simple providing access to secondary schools, we cannot claim that we have universalized secondary education. Along with access to schools we should make adequate provisions in the schools so that children can experience success in secondary education. Adequate number of trained teachers, qualitative learning and teaching materials, aids and equipment, classrooms, as well as a balanced admission of students etc. should be provided in each and every school to facilitate successful completion of secondary education. Success is to be determined in terms of attainment of Minimum Levels of Learning which means most of the students would acquire most of the competencies. Thus, political involvement in education, should not be a reason why a child should be denied proper placement in terms of admission based on the observed capacity, without which it will have its future consequences to the society Muhammad (2013). In view of the above, the researcher intends to find out if there is any research conducted in this research area, but was able to find a studies conducted by Muhammad in 1991 Educational Facilities and Needs of Secondary Schools in Sokoto State, which was before the creation of Kebbi State, secondly is the research conducted by Dada (2008) titled Influence of Politics in Administration of Secondary



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Schools in Kebbi State the third study conducted in the area related to this study is by Jega (2004) unpolished PhD thesis titled Influence of Politics in Administration of Secondary Schools in Kebbi State, study in School Mapping and Rationalization also a study by Haliru (2018) on school mapping politics in the activities of secondary schools in Kebbi State was also reviewed by the researcher. In all four studies it was realized that not a single one was directly focused on admission exercise in the area thereby giving the researcher an opportunity to conduct this study as Assessment of Admission Exercise and Political interference at secondary school level of Education: A case Study of Kebbi State, Nigeria.

Objectives of the study

Assess impact of political interference on admission exercise into government secondary schools in Kebbi state, Nigeria.

Research Questions

To what extent does political interference affect admission exercise into government secondary schools in Kebbi state, Nigeria.

Hypotheses

There is no significant difference between political interference on admission exercise into government secondary schools in Kebbi state, Nigeria

Methodology

A case study survey research design was adopted for the study, which is descriptive in nature and according to Ishaya in Haliru (2018) is appropriate for a study that involve large population of respondents. The aggregate total population of the study is 5177 which include 274 principals, 4538 teachers, 274 school based management committee members, 91 quality assurance officials. Sample size is 365 (7%) respondents which comprises of 18 principals, 327 teachers, 10 school based management committee members and 10 quality assurance officials, and this is based on research advisors (2006). Purposive sampling technique was adopted by the researcher which afforded the researcher a chance to select 2 educational zones which is (30%) out of the 6 educational zones the justification of the selection of these two zones is because of the preponderance of schools in the zones. Using random sampling technique 9 schools were randomly selected from each zone, 9 principals, 5 quality assurance officials, 5 SBMC members. Teachers were chosen based on population in the schools, 102 teachers from Argungu educational zone and 125 from Birnin Kebbi Educational zone. Research instrument for this study was titled Assessment of Admission Exercise and Political Interference at Secondary School Level of education (AAPISSLE) questionnaire with Likert five points scale option which include; strongly agree, agree undecided, disagree and strongly disagree. The questionnaire consists of section one personal data of the respondent section two 10 option statement for testing hypothesis. A reliability test of the instrument was conducted using Cronbach alpha .84. Data collected was analyzed using descriptive statistics such as frequency count, percentages, mean scores, tables and charts. Inferential statistics such as ANOVA was used to test hypothesis for the study. Since the instrument is structure along a modified five-point Likert scale, decision mean of the research is 3.0 which is term as weighted mean, it is to be used as decider as whether to accept or reject the research question. Thus, anything less than 3 the score is rejected and above is accepted. This is shown below. SA = 5 points, A= 4 points, UD= 3 points, D= 2 points, SD= 1 point $\frac{5+4+3+2+1}{5} = \frac{15}{5} = 3.0$

Results

Research Question

To what extent does political interference affect admission exercise into government secondary schools in Kebbi state, Nigeria.



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Table 1. Mean Score of Respondents on the Assessment of Admission Exercise and Political interference at secondary school level of Education: A case Study of Kebbi State

S/N	Item statement	Respondent	N	Mean
1	Age of a student is considered during admission exercise due to political interference in education in government secondary schools in Kebbi state	Principals	18	4.3
		Teachers	327	4.2
		SBMC	10	3.8
		Q/Assurance	10	4.4
2	Religion is considered in students' admission due to political interference in education in government secondary schools in Kebbi state	Principals	18	3.7
		Teachers	327	4.1
		SBMC	10	4.5
		Q/Assurance	10	3.4
3	Political interference in education affects student's entrance examination before admission into government secondary schools in the Kebbi state.	Principals	18	3.9
		Teachers	327	4.0
		SBMC	10	4.1
		Q/Assurance	10	3.7
4	There is ethnic consideration in the admission of students into government secondary schools in the state due to political interference in education.	Principals	18	3.5
		Teachers	327	4.1
		SBMC	10	5.0
		Q/Assurance	10	4.5
5	Urban secondary schools are over populated due to the political interference in education during admission of student into government secondary schools in the state	Principals	18	4.1
		Teachers	327	4.1
		SBMC	10	4.5
		Q/Assurance	10	3.8
6	Rural schools are less populated due to political interference in education during admission into government secondary schools in the state.	Principals	18	4.2
		Teachers	327	4.1
		SBMC	10	4.4
		Q/Assurance	10	4.4
7	There is admission imbalance as a result of political interference in education into government secondary school in the state.	Principals	18	3.2
		Teachers	327	3.8
		SBMC	10	4.2
		Q/Assurance	10	4.4
8	Geographical proximity is considered during admission due to political inference in education on government secondary schools in the state.	Principals	18	4.4
		Teachers	327	4.1
		SBMC	10	3.0
		Q/Assurance	10	3.6
9	Availability of space is considered during admission due to political inference in education in government secondary schools in the state.	Principals	18	4.3
		Teachers	327	4.1
		SBMC	10	5.0
		Q/Assurance	10	4.5
10	Unqualified students are offered admission due to the political interference in education in government secondary schools in the state.	Principals	18	3.8
		Teachers	327	4.1
		SBMC	10	4.7
		Q/Assurance	10	4.2

Source: Field survey (2022)

From table the result show that, item 1 revealed that principals having mean score of 4.3, teachers 4.2, SBMC officials 3.8 and Quality Assurance (Q A) 4.4. It indicated that the statement was accepted by the respondents. Item 2 indicated that principals have mean score of 3.7, teaches 4.1, SBMC 4.5 and QA 3.4, which implies acceptance. Item 3 was also accepted with the mean score for principals 3.9, teacher 4.0, SBMC 4.1 and QA 3.7. Item 4 was accepted by all the respondents with the mean score of 3.5, 4.1, 5.0 and 4.5 for principals, teachers, SBMC and QA representatively. Item 5 had mean score for principals 4.1, teachers 4.1, SBMC 4.5 and QA 3.8, which indicated acceptance. Item 6 showed that principals had mean score of 4.2, teachers 4.1, SBMC 4.4 and QA 4.4. Item 7 was accepted by principals, teachers, SBMC, and QA, with the respective mean



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scores of 3.2, 3.8, 4.2 and 4.4. Item 8 have the mean score of 4.4, 4.1, 3.0 and 3.6 for principals, teachers, SBMC and QA, accordingly. Item 9 have the means score of 4.3, 4.1, 5.0 and 4.5 for principals, teachers, SBMC and QA respectively and was accepted. Similarly, item 10 was accepted with the corresponding mean score of 3.8, 3.1, 4.7 and 4.2 for principals, teachers, SBMC and QA. It was revealed therefore that political interference in education has serious impact on students' admission exercise in government secondary schools in Kebbi State?

Hypothesis Testing

H0₁: There is no significant difference in the opinion of principals, teachers, quality assurance officials and SBMC representatives on the Assessment of Admission Exercise and Political interference at secondary school level of Education: A case Study of Kebbi State.

Table 2. ANOVA on the Assessment of Admission Exercise and Political interference at secondary school level of Education in Kebbi State

Admission exercise	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	2.447	3	0.816	0.871	0.456
Within Groups	337.945	361	0.936		
Total	340.392	364			

Source: Field survey 2022

Table shows the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference in the opinion of respondents on the political interference in education on students' admission exercise in government secondary schools in Kebbi State is retained. Reason for this is because the calculated significant value (p) of 0.456 is higher than 0.05 alpha level of significance set for the study. This implies that the responses of the respondents were in agreement.

Discussion of Findings

The findings further revealed that Assessment of Admission Exercise and Political interference at secondary school level of Education: A case Study of Kebbi State, Reasons being politics has influence over geographical proximity to schools, over population of urban secondary schools, as well as having less population in the rural schools, It was also reveal that politics influenced the availability of space for setting up secondary school. It further revealed that politics influence admission of unqualified students which is also as a result of influence of politics on the students' entrance examination before admission, age is also being influence by politics. These findings are in agreement with the opinion of Osuji (2011), which reveals that there is disparities between urban and rural schools, between schools owned by the state government and the federal government and that of private agencies. There is also a serious gap in terms of enrolment between male and female as well as in the case of admission figures and resources available

Conclusion

In conclusion, based the research conducted it was observed that the level at which politics interfere into educational system of the state is beyond imagination, in which in the real sense one may not expect, because education as a system if it's not allowed to function under a guiding principle, the danger or consequences of such action is going to manifest in the future which may not be in the interest of the society. This is because the findings observed that interference has reach the level at which, a politician asking the head of an organisation in charge of teachers' administration to force the head teacher of a school to accept his child on admission even if he did not qualify for the entrance examination, to be admitted in such institution else he will be sanction.

Recommendations

The research recommends that government should give the State Ministry of Education free hand to exercise the its mandate officially according to the law, given proper admission with consideration of factors associated with admission criteria.

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