

**COMMERCIALISATION OF SECONDARY EDUCATION AND
EFFECTIVE STAFF MANAGEMENT IN PRIVATE SECONDARY
SCHOOLS IN ABA EDUCATION SUB ZONE ABIA STATE**

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Abstract

This paper examined the commercialization of secondary education and effective staff management in private secondary schools in Aba Education Sub zone in Abia State. It was a descriptive research design. Total population was 4,350 teachers in 280 private Secondary School in Aba education sub zone which comprises Aba North, Aba south and Osioma Local Government Areas in Abia State. A sample size of 20 schools and 200 teachers selected through stratified and simple random sampling was drawn. Three research questions guided the study. A 26 item questionnaire which was developed by the researchers was used for collection of data. . The questionnaire was validated by two lecturers. Cronbach Alpha Statistics was used to test the reliability which yielded 0.86%. Data were collected and analyzed using mean ratings. The result of the study are that most private schools owners in the bid to make profit out of the school business do not employ qualified teachers and teachers are not adequately remunerated. It also revealed that the teachers are not adequately motivated which leads to low morale among the teachers. It was recommended among others that private school owners should employ professional teachers, remunerate and motivate them adequately for high morale in their work place. Government should inspect the private schools to see that they employ qualified teachers for better impartation of knowledge on the students.

Keywords: Commercialisation of Education, Effective staff management, private secondary schools.

The issue of commercialization of education in Nigeria cannot be over emphasized. The Government directed the introduction, adoption and implementation of commercialization of schools (secondary schools inclusive), but research

findings, scholarly propositions and comments from actors, clients and other stake holders in the education system point to the fact that all is not well with commercialization of education. Nkwoji (2015) pointed out that the increasing rate of private schools springing up from every corner of the streets by incompetent proprietors/proprietresss who see opening of schools as last resort to escaping the clutches of poverty have contributed to the downward trend in educational system. She also pointed out that lack of proper educational regulatory body to checkmate proliferation of private schools by unqualified owners in the sector is a problem. Unemployment which has been regarded as one of the socio – economic problems confronting the Nigeria nation, made successive Governments to introduce commercialization of one type of education or the other to fight unemployment.

Surprisingly, these reasons have not been able to find a lasting solution to the scourge as a result of some inadequacies that are linked to ineffective recruitment, remuneration and morals of staff of private secondary schools. With the absence of a holistic approach in fighting the above menace because of the trend in the labour market where jobs are in-existent proprietors have used the opportunity as stated by have used the opportunity as stated by kofoworola, Adegunle and Medinat (2013) that private schools cut coners and circumvent the rules guiding establishment of schools in order to make money and retain pupils. Furthermore, they pointed out the school

fees paid per term by parents do not match the quality of education expected by the parents due to poor performance of the children and also to brain-drain existing workers. These inadequacies have made the problem to become a monster which should be eliminated if private schools employers must operate a healthy economy for their staff in a dwindling economy. Zainabchopdawala (2006) defined commercialization of education liberally as a process of private ownership and management of educational institutions where by investments are made with the motive of earning profits. From this perspective, one can deduce that commercialization of education is a process of running something principally for financial gain. However, the management on which an organization is built can either destroy or enhance attainment of goals/objectives. The word ‘management’ is seen as the co-ordination of all the process of planning, organizing, directing and controlling in order to attain organizational objectives. Resser in Idoko (2005) opines that, management is the utilization of physical and human resources through cooperative efforts and it is accomplished by performing the function of planning, organizing, directing and controlling. Nwaoku in Ike etal (2006) postulates that management is the total system of organization –getting organizational personnels to accomplish their work so as to achieve organizational objectives.

From the above definitions, it can be deduced that management is a way of ensuring that the organizational goals and

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objectives are achieved. This can be made possible by careful planning and organization of the staff and their activities for maximum output. By implication, the extent to which the schools effectively manage their staff depends to a great extent on the achievement of set goals. This is so because the staff carry out an important responsibility in achieving the goals of the school in particular in spite of the dwindling economy. According to Obegbulum (2004) staff in secondary school include not only the teachers, but also the non-teaching staff, clerks, watchman, labourers, cooks, laboratory attendants and librarians. It has been observed that the staff of the private secondary schools are not being handled with extra care: The school programme can only be achieved through the effective management of staff by paying their salaries as at and when due and improving their services. Amadi (2003) pointed out that inefficient use of financial resources has always been a major cause of conflicts between staff and institutional administrators especially when salaries are delayed unnecessarily or not paid at all. The human element is very vital because it is the centre of all other activities and in this context, without effective management of staff; the school is bound to experience failure. Staff of a school should be a priority in their plan and decision making. Nduka G.C. (1998) pointed out that when teachers are involved in decision making, they develop sense of ownership of the school which leads to loyalty and concern with school goals. These will be greater

commitment to the school as an organization.

It is worthy to note that, the importance of teachers as staff of the school and the roles they play in the educative process can never be over emphasized. Ukeje (1983) stated that teachers are the hub of any educational system and as the wheel rotates round the hub, the educational system rotates around the teacher, indeed no educational system can be better than its teacher. Balogun (1988) pointed out that in advanced countries there may be close substitutes for teachers' role in the form of teaching machines with programmed instruction but in the third world countries like Nigeria, teachers undoubtedly remain the managers of knowledge. There is therefore need to manage and handle them very well. These staff have to be encouraged to stay on the job through prompt payment of allowances and promotion as at and when due. The teacher is the most important factor in the quest for a revolution in the secondary education and should be treated with due respect. It has been observed that no nation can rise beyond her teacher's. The teaching profession is very relevant in the life of all and sundry, and is one such job that involves one's inner working of the mind, one's time and one's personality in order to effectively discharge one's duties. In as much as the teacher is a moulder, a motivator and a creator of activities for the benefit of the child sufficient recognition has not been given to the great role the teacher has so far played in private secondary schools and the socio-economic setting of the society. The functions of the

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teachers in private secondary schools are indeed numerous to mention, that is why the school proprietors should endeavour to recruit and retain professionals, qualified, skilled, knowledgeable teachers to teach in their schools. In the other way round, achieving the above has been deviled by low incentives, lack of motivation, poor remuneration, and low quality in recruitment. Eneasator (1998) experiment that motivation is not a kind of behavior but it is something that affects behavior. It is a complex internal state of an individual which we cannot observe directly but indirectly, it affects behavior and it is an internal psychological process that is very difficult to see but one can observe its presence or absence as a worker performs his or her task. Vroom (1964) postulated that the effort one puts into work depends on the value one places on the expected reward and the likelihood that the reward actually will be received if the effort is made.

Recruitment is a means of sourcing of qualified applicants with concern for today and future needs of the education enterprise. Okeke and Uwazuruike(1997) refer to recruitment as sourcing of prospective teachers for projected openings in the various levels of the secondary school system. Oboegbulam (2004) views recruitment as being concerned with the selection of required people to be screened for job measuring their quality and attempting to predict their behavior. Secondary education is the education children receive after primary education and before the tertiary stage within the range of 12 to 18 years. Most

importantly, in Nigeria it is the level of education that the nation hopes to use to 'provide technical knowledge and vocational skills for agriculture, industrial, commercial and economic development (FRN 2004).' The realization of the above aims hinges on the effective management of staff of secondary schools who will make sure that those aims are identified and met for the purpose of effective teaching and learning. From the foregoing it shows that effective management of recruitment, remuneration, morale of staff and discipline are very important in the achievement of school objectives. Aina (2002) stated that private schools are schools owned by private individuals or groups called proprietors and as such are saddled with the responsibility of managing and administering their schools. In the light of the above, they are schools run by private individuals or groups that provide education for individuals who have completed their basic 1 to 6 education and are being prepared for higher education upon the completion of their secondary education and to become useful members of the society. Adesina (1980) in G.O. Eneastor, G.C Nduka (1998) defined discipline as readiness or ability to respect authority and observe conventional or established laws of the society or any organization. As a matter of fact because of penalties involved, staff are discipline in their responsibility in Private Secondary School. They are made to know that there are ways for ensuring adherence to the rules and regulations of the school to avoid suspension, termination, dismissal to demotion.

Failure to manage the staff well can influence the students' academic performance because when the staff is treated and handled well, the morale of the teacher will be very high to perform his/her duty well to produce the needed man power in the society. If the staff (teachers) are not prepared to teach the students to the best of their knowledge because of not being qualified, remuneration not taken care of, no motivation, and no discipline the students cannot be useful to the society because of half baked education and there is no way they can contribute to the development of the society. Going by the importance attached to private secondary schools in the education system and society in general, the researchers expected that its management should be smooth. It seems that this has not been so. This is the reason the researchers decided to examine the "commercialization of secondary education and effective staff management in private secondary schools in Aba Education sub zone in Abia State".

Statement of Problem

Education is a road map to the development of any nation. Secondary education is the bridge between the primary and tertiary education. It is the stage that prepares one for useful living in the society and for higher education. This level of education is supposed to be handled with care to achieve needed results. Commercialization of education has led to the opening of a lot of private secondary schools. It seems that most of these private schools are not handling staff

issues well in the area of recruitment and remuneration of staff. This is seen in the quality of teachers that teach in those schools and the degree of morale exhibited by them and its attendant effect on quality of teaching they give as observed by the researchers being participants in private secondary schools and based on interview conducted on some private secondary school teachers. It is against this backdrop that the researchers want to find out how commercialization has affected the staffing of private secondary schools in Aba Education sub zone Abia state.

Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study is to discuss the commercialization of education and effective staff management in private schools in Aba Education sub zone Abia State specifically it wants to:

1. Determine the influence of commercialization on staff recruitment in private secondary schools in Aba Education sub zone in Abia state.
2. To find out the effect of commercialization on staff remuneration in private schools in Aba Education sub Zone Abia State.
3. To determine the extent of staff morale as a result of the motivation given to them.
4. To determine the extent discipline is maintained among teachers in Private Secondary Schools In Aba Education sub zone.

Research Questions:

1. What is the influence of commercialization on staff recruitment in

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private secondary schools in Aba Education Zone?

2. What is the effect of commercialization on the remuneration of staff in private secondary schools in Aba Education sub Zone?

3. What is the extent of staff morale in the private secondary schools in Aba Education Zone?

4. What is the extent of discipline among teachers in private Secondary Schools in Aba Education Zone?

Methodology

The study is descriptive survey. It is descriptive because the groups were studied as they were without any manipulation. The population was made up of 4,350 teachers from 280 approved private secondary schools in Aba Education sub zone. Aba Education sub zone is made up of three local government areas namely Aba South, Aba North, and Osioma. Twenty (20) Private Secondary School were selected through stratified and simple random sampling and ten(10) each of the schools selected making a total of 200 hundred teachers. The instrument for data collection was a 26 – item questionnaire titled commercialization of Education and effective staffing in Private Secondary Schools Questionnaire (CEESPSS) was developed by the researchers. The first four items sought information on the teachers personal data while the other twenty-two sought information on staff (teachers) management. The questionnaire was structured along the modified liker's four point scale grading of strongly Agreed (4

point scale). Agree (3 point scale) Disagreed (2 point scale and strongly Disagreed (1 point scale). For research questions one and two and very High Extent (4 point scale), High Extent (3 Point Scale) low Extent (2 Point Scale) and very low Extent (1 Point Scale) for research question three and four. The instrument was validated by two senior lecturer from the department of Educational Management and psychology respectively of Harvard Wilson college of Education Aba, Abia State. The reliability test was carried out using the cronbach Alpha. The instrument was administered on 20 teachers outside the sampled teachers. The co-efficient stood at 0.86. Since the co-efficient was much higher than 0.50 the instrument was considered good for the study. Face to face method was used in administering the instrument to the respondents by the researchers and one assistant. Some of the instruments were collected on the spot while the remaining was later collected. A hundred percent rate was recorded. The data collected was analyzed using mean ratings. The likert's four point scale of strongly agreed/very high extent (4 point), agreed/high extent (3 point), Disagreed/low extent (2 point) and strongly Disagreed/very low Extent (1 point) was calculated to give 10 points. The points was divided by 4 to get the criterion mean of 2.50. Giving a criterion mean of 2.50, any item with mean score above 2.50 was acceptable while those below 2.50 were unacceptable.

Presentation and Analysis of Data recruitment in private secondary schools in
Research Question One: What is the influence of commercialization on staff
 Aba Education sub Zone?

Table 1: Mean Responses of Teachers on Influence of Commercialization on Staff Recruitment in Private Secondary Schools in Aba Education Sub Zone

S/N	ITEM	N	SA X4	A X3	D X2	SD X1	Total Rating	Mean	Decision
5	Proprietors recruit adequate number of teachers.		20	30	110	40	430	2.15	Disagree
6	Teachers are recruited as at and when needed.	200	30	28	98	44	444	2.22	Disagree
7	Recruitment is strictly on professional qualifications as a teacher.	200	34	30	86	40	438	2.19	Disagree
8	Subjects are assigned to teachers based strictly on area of specialization.	200	24	40	103	33	455	2.28	Disagree
9	Proprietors have helped alleviate unemployment by recruiting teachers.	200	52	82	60	46	620	3.10	Agree
	Aggregate mean.							2.39	Disagree

Table 1 shows the influence of commercialization on staff recruitment in private secondary schools. The teachers disagreed on 4 items with mean scores of 2.19, 2.15, 2.22 and 2.28. The criterion mean of 2.50 is higher than them all. These shows that commercialization has made private school owners not to recruit adequate number of teachers, not recruit as at and when due, not strictly recruiting professional teachers and not assigning subjects to teachers based on area of specialization. The recruitment process as can be deduced is carried out by those proprietors the way it is seen in the

responses above because they want to reduce a staff cost and make more profit. They agreed on item 9 that proprietors of private schools have helped to alleviate

unemployment by recruiting teachers. This has means score of 3.10.

Research Question Two: What is the effect of commercialization on staff recruitment in private secondary schools in Aba Education Sub Zone?

Table 2: Mean Responses of Teachers on the Influence of Commercialization on Remuneration of Staff

S/N	ITEM	N	SA X4	A X3	D X2	SD X1	Total Rating	Mean	Decision
10	Teachers are paid with government salary scale.	200	4	10	166	20	690	1.99	Disagree
11	Salaries are paid as at and when due.	200	30	42	108	20	482	2.41	Disagree
12	Salary increment is carried out annually.	200	15	30	125	30	430	2.15	Disagree
13	Teachers are promoted as scheduled accordingly.	200	10	20	143	27	413	2.07	Disagree
14	Remuneration given to teachers is commensurate with work load.	200	13	18	150	19	425	2.13	Disagree
15	Salaries paid are commensurate with funds raised by the school.	200	23	41	122	24	483	2.42	Disagree
	Aggregate mean							2.00	Disagree

Table 2 shows the mean scores on the influence of commercialization on remuneration of teachers. Teachers disagreed on all the 6 items which had mean scores of 1.97, 2.07, 2.13, 2.15, 2.41 and 2.42 respectively, with aggregate mean of 2.19 all below the criterion mean of 2.50. This therefore shows that commercialization of secondary education has made it that teachers in private secondary schools are not paid with government salary scale. Teachers are not promoted as at and when due,

remuneration given to teacher is not commensurate with work load; salary increment is not carried out annually and salaries paid are not commensurate with funds raised by the school.

Research Question Three: What is the extent of staff motivation and attendant staff morale in the private secondary schools in Aba Education sub Zone?

Table 3: Mean Responses of Teachers on the Extent of Staff Motivation and Morale

S/N	ITEM	N	VHE X4	HE X3	LE X2	VLE X1	Total Rating	Mean	Decision
16	Teachers receive all the receive all the benefits due to them.	200	5	15	110	70	355	1.78	Very long extent
17	Teachers' welfare is dually taken care of.	200	20	35	90	55	420	2.10	Low extent
18	Recognition and reward for excellent performance in service is adequately carried out.	200	28	26	125	21	461	2.31	Low extent
19	Teachers are assigned excess work load.	200	48	82	42	38	560	2.80	High extent
20	Teachers participate fully in decision making.	200	24	38	106	32	454	2.27	Low extent
21	There is high teacher turnover in private secondary schools.	200	50	80	60	50	560	3.05	High extent
	Aggregate mean.							2.39	Low extent

Table 3 shows the means scores on the extent of staff motivation and the attendant staff morale. The teachers disagreed on four items and agreed on two items. They agreed that there is high turnover of teachers in private secondary schools and that teachers are assigned excess work load. These have means scores of 3.05 and 2.80 respectively. These are evidence of low motivation and low morale. The means scores of 1.78, 2.10, 2.27 and 2.31 respectively are all below Criterion mean of 2.50 which shows that as a result of commercialization of education teachers do not receive all benefits duly; teachers'

welfare is not taken care of, teachers do not participate fully in decision making and that recognition and reward for excellent performance in service is not adequately carried out. All these boil down to low motivation leading to low teacher morale.

Research Question Four:

What is the extent of discipline among teachers in Private Secondary School Education sub zone maintain discipline?

Table 4: Mean Responses on the Extent Discipline is Maintained among Teachers

S/N	Item	N	VHE X4	HE X3	LE X2	VLE X1	Total Rating	Mean	Decision
22	Teachers do come to school punctually.	200	49	82	41	38	562	2.81	High Extent
23	Teachers do come to school regularly.	200	50	82	58	50	606	3.03	High Extent
24	Teachers do carry out duties assigned to them.	200	52	85	61	42	627	3.14	High Extent
25	Teachers teach their lesson regularly.	200	51	83	62	44	621	3.11	High Extent
26	Teachers are disciplined for acts of insubordination.	200	47	83	64	46	611	3.06	High Extent
	Aggregate Mean.							3.03	High Extent

Table 4 highlights the extent discipline is maintained among teachers in private secondary schools in Aba Education sub zone. The mean scores of 2.81, 3.03, 3.14, 3.11 and 3.06 on the five items respectively with aggregate mean of 3.03 show that discipline is maintained among teachers in private schools to a high extent.

Discussion of Findings

From the responses to research question one, it is seen that owners of private secondary schools, do not recruit adequate number of teachers as at and when due. They do not recruit teachers based on professionalism and do not assign subjects to teachers based strictly on area of specialization. These schools only pride in intimidating-looking structures, but the ride on the backs of unqualified teachers. Anybody can be selected for any subject all in the bid to reduce cost. If this is the case, there is the tendency that these teachers may not

deliver quality lessons leading to students not receiving quality knowledge. So there is no quality assurance. It is worthy of note that if quality school programmes are to be developed and maintained, careful attention should be given to the recruitment and selection exercise. This is in line with opinion of Ukeje (1983) that no educational system can be better than its teachers. The essence of recruiting professional teachers is to give a touch of professionalism into the teaching learning process which will go a long way into imparting the right knowledge to the students. When unqualified teachers are recruited as is noted in the responses on the teachers personal data which indicated that most of the teachers do not have teaching qualification, quality of learning reduces. Again to make up for low quality, the school may begin to look for a way of making it up for the students especially during external examinations. This is

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detrimental to education for sustainable development.

The findings of research question two indicated that teachers in private secondary schools are not paid using government salary scale, this is inline with Newton (2017) who stated that salaries of private school teachers are not fixed like that of public schools but depends in qualification, experience and type of school where the teacher teaches. Teachers are not promoted as at and when due, remuneration given to teachers is not commensurate with work load, salary increment is not carried out annually, salaries are not paid promptly and that salaries paid are not commensurate with funds raised by the schools. This also is in line with Toscana Academy (2013) that typically, Private School teachers' salaries are generated from pupils or students' tuition fee. Furthermore their pay is also meager but the proprietors or proprietress retains most of the profit made from the school. The amount they receive depends largely on the size of the school in terms of population largely on the size of the school in terms of population of students, location and level of sophistication. However, in the bid to make profit, most of the private secondary school owners recruit unqualified teachers and teachers with low certificates so that they will not spend much on their salaries. Increment and promotion are luxury for the teachers. When the work load and the fees the students pay are compared with the remuneration teachers receive, it will be noted that these teachers are merely exploited. What they earn is not even

enough to sustain them in our dwindling economy. This is just as Chopdawala (2016) defined commercialization of education as a process of private ownership and management of educational institutions whereby investments are made with the motive of earning profits.

The result of analysis for research question three showed that teachers in private secondary schools are not given all benefits due to them such as leave allowance, retirement benefits and others, their welfare is not taken care of; they do not participate fully in decision making and excellent performance is not duly rewarded. The result equally indicated that teachers are assigned excess work load and also that there is high teacher turn over in the private secondary schools. The high turnover and excess work also showed in the teachers' response to personal data where they were asked to state the subjects they teach and how many years they have taught in their various schools. In all, the result showed that the teachers are not adequately motivated which led to high teacher turnover which is an evidence of low morale among the teachers. This is in conformity with Vroom (1964) that the efforts one puts into work depends on the value one places on the expected reward and the likelihood that the reward actually will be received if the effort is made. The findings in Research question four showed that a high level of discipline is maintained among teachers in private secondary schools. This is because they come to school punctually and regularly, carry out duties assigned to them, teach their lessons regularly and are discipline for acts of

insubordination. This level of discipline shown among the teachers is what it should be among teachers in schools for effective teaching-learning process and students' upbringing. This is worthy of emulation by teachers. With this level of discipline, if the teachers are adequately remunerated and motivated, they will perform more than required.

The implication is that if private school owners continue with this method of recruitment and staff management generally because they want to make profit, education will lose quality and sustainability will be far from being achieved.

Conclusion

From the outcome of this study, private secondary school owners are not managing their staff effectively. The ineffectiveness is manifested in the way recruitment is carried out, the remuneration given and the extent of motivation which are not adequate. Also a close look at the private secondary schools in Aba Education sub – zone paints the picture of seriousness and steady academic improvement, their structures and facilities are continually improved upon to enhance the teaching learning situation but the ineffectiveness in the management of staff recruitment, remuneration and morale has greatly affected the teaching and learning process. Teachers teach subjects that are not in their area of specialization, salaries are not paid according to teacher level of qualification and are not paid as and when due, no adequate recognition and reward for excellence in service. These

factors definitely lead to low quality performance by the teachers. This is not healthy for the school system and the society in general.

Recommendations

Having gone through the findings of this study, it is recommended that:

1. Private school owners should revisit their mode of employment and ensure that they employ qualified teachers.
2. They should play down on profiting, and remunerate teachers adequately.
3. Government should go for regular and thorough inspection of private secondary schools to ensure that what they do are standard so as to ensure quality in education.

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