

Teaching Staff Strength (TSS) and Workload In Public Senior Secondary Schools In Ogba/Egbema/Ndoni Local Government Area of Rivers State, Nigeria

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Abstract *The attainment of effective education by the educatee is hinged on the balancing of the workload and the teaching staff strength (TSS) in schools. The interplay was the rallying point of this study which tried to ascertain the level of workload and teaching staff strength (TSS) in public senior secondary schools. Six (6) research questions were posed as guide with the questionnaire as a base instrument for data collection from the principals of the 18 public senior secondary schools in Onelga. Analysis of data on teacher-students ratio reveal that 11 schools representing 61% have a ratio above 1:40 and 7 schools representing 39% have a ratio below 1:40 as enshrined in the FRN (2004). The class size indicates that 7 schools have moderate class sizes whereas 11 schools have excess class sizes. Consequently the workload data analysis reveals that all the schools exceeded the 15 weekly periods per teaching staff with 17% having 18-23 while 83% having 24-30 per teacher per week. Female teachers occupied 21% and male teachers occupied 79% of the total population of 152. The implication is that excess workload will affect the output been churned into the tertiary institutions. Recommendation were made among others to improve the condition of service and track down the rate of attrition*

Keywords: *Teaching-staff, strength, workload, effectiveness and Public Senior Secondary Schools.*

Introduction

Presumably is the fact that the compulsory Basic Education Programme (BEP) of the Federal Government has stretched the senior secondary schools beyond their manpower carrying capacity resulting to over bearing workload for the teaching staff. This has further been catapulted by the indispensable roles education play in the socio-economic, political and cultural development of the people in this Knowledge Based Era. Maduagwu and Nwogu (2006) observing the invaluable roles of the teachers in Nation building, stated that the teachers possesses so much innate abilities that can be harnessed for positive economic and all round development of Nigeria Nation and as a matter of fact, education generally serve as an instrument par excellence for overall national development.

The Education For All (EFA) Declaration by African Countries by 2015 has prompted unprecedented demand for education across boardline of gender and country and has consequently elicited numerous educational challenges, notably inadequate teaching staff strength among others (Wegulo, 2008). Corroborating this view, Maduagwu and Nwogu (2006) asserts that the growing and escalating demand for education by every citizen of school age and the present drive for the universalization of education in Nigeria, Ogba/Egbema/Ndoni Local Government Area inclusive, has been wireguided by the UN declaration and has mounted undue pressure (workload) on the available teaching staff in public senior secondary schools. A gap therefore has been created between the teaching staff strength and the workload which this study seeks to examine.

This inadequacy of teaching staff strength and the over bearing workload potends great danger for the education system in ONELGA, Rivers State in the attainment of goals, that is, achievement of quality of products being churned out at the senior secondary level. To Okorie (2002) in Okorie and Uche (2005) quality in teaching and learning results from a healthy interplay among broad range of success factors such

as personnels (Teaching staff) in the right number for effective teacher performance and student's learning outcome. This presupposes that where the required number of teaching staff strength is not matched with the right number of students, there will be difficulty in the students achievement level or rate; which defeats the functional objectives of making the graduands useful in their society.

Nwaham, Chukwuma and Ajudeonu (2007) opined that Nigeria colleges are deficient in the quality of teaching manpower, such that students can not get the best and this inadequacy negates positive achievement of the education objectives in terms of school effectiveness. Although this study is not looking at quality of teachers perse, however, it wants to strike a marriage between TSS cum workload vis-à-vis effectiveness of senior secondary products. Taiwo (1980) in Obasi and Asodike (2006) agreed that effectiveness of any education system is a measure of the viability and numerical strength of the teachers.

Teacher supply is the total number of teachers that are willing and able to put in the required man hour in schools under the prevailing wage market condition (condition of service) within a given period of one school year called school session. Where the number of teaching staff strength in a school is small, it will lead to excess workload. Zwalchir and Buenyen (2009) opined that when workers are overloaded with work, it will be at the detriment of efficiency and effectiveness which syncopate the organizational goal of quality attainment. Consequently, the overriding functional and tenable secondary school aims of the National policy on education will be defeated. There is the need for education managers, the ministry and board to balance the demand and supply of teaching staff strength in ONELGA. This balancing will result in teaching staff strength equilibrium, which is the point at which the supply of teaching staff equals the workload with the statutory requirement of 1:40 teacher-students ratio as enshrined in the National policy on education. FRN (2004) stated that "there shall not be more than 40 pupils to a class. The above scenario makes it expedient to x-ray teaching staff strength and workload in public senior secondary schools in ONELGA Rivers State.

Teaching Staff Strength and School Effectiveness

The Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme of the Federal Government calls for a proactive planning and implementation strategy in the face of emergent demand for education by all and sundry. It then means that an equilibrium based on students-teaching staff strength ratio is required in the supply of teaching manpower. This view was corroborated by Maduagwu and Nwogu (2006) when they posited that the quantity of educational resources demanded at any point in time is a determination of conscious forecasting and projection on factors necessitating the demand on those resources. These factors according to them, include the number of schools leaving age, class size, number of subjects taught in school, teaching methods and teacher workload. The demand for more teaching staff is further amplified in ONELGA by these factors such as: increased consciousness for education, the educational requirement for employment by oil companies operating in the area, the rate of migration into the area for greener pasture, the turnover rate from primary to secondary school, the establishment of more or new schools and the rate of attrition by teaching staff for a more lucrative company job.

Teaching staff (TS) refers to those who are professionally trained in the education faculty of any tertiary institution to transfer knowledge to another called the student in the prescribed manner in a school. Teaching staff strength (TSS) are the number of male and female with relevant skills, who are gainfully employed and posted by the state ministry of education to any public secondary school. Where the TSS is high, the workload per staff will be optimal resulting to high quality or effective education. To Taiwo (1980) in Obasi and Asodike (2006) the key to quality education is a correlate of the availability of a well trained and competent teaching staff. Whose effectiveness translates to performance of students in external examinations like WAEC, NECO, NTI, JAMB (Adebule, 2005 in Agbongiasede, 2008) without examination malpractice. Quality of Education at any level can be defined as the extent to which the end products of the system is able to take up higher education and is entrepreneurially viable to fit into the larger society. This viability can be zeroed when the required TSS to develop the students at their best are not provided to the

school. The effect of the educational crises in Nigeria due to inadequate supply of teaching staff to publicly owned secondary schools has been identified by Isyaku (2002) to include many parents withdrawing their children from public schools to private schools or even sending them to nearby countries like Ghana and South Africa etc. in search for quality education.

Concept of Workload in School

The management of workload in school is an important aspect that can make or mar the goals of education. This is because where these tasks or duties are not co-ordinated efficiently, expected result will be far from realization. The researchers define a teacher's workload as the totality of academic teaching work and committee workload assigned to a teacher for the attainment of the overall educational objectives in the school. This is in terms of lesson note preparation, test and assignment, examination, house mastership and any other routine work that may be assigned to a teaching staff by the principal. This view agrees with Sinclair (1992) and Usoro, Nnaessien and Saleh (2007).

A teacher therefore can be overloaded, that is, much task in terms of teaching units and committee assignment or under-loaded with work, that is, less teaching unit assigned (Zwalchir and Buenyen, 2009). The principal in the school is the sole administrator who assigns workload to the teaching staff and so must be proactive to avoid over utilization or under utilization of teaching staff for the purpose of goal getting and fruitful performance.

In this same vein, the principal has the duty to also check the class size taught by the teacher, as large class size constitute excess workload for the teacher. With the increasing enrolment rate in our schools, the teaching staff can be paid for excess workload as was done in Federal College of Education (Tech) Omoku main stream between year 2006 – 2007.

The distribution of workload by the principal is dependent on the teaching staff strength (TSS) of the school. Where this is small, the workload will be high per teacher and some work will be left undone. This is responsible for some subjects not being taught unless the principal engages the services of a "helping teacher" who may not be competent in the subject, hence quality or effectiveness is compromised. Arora (2009) said that quality is conformance to requirement or specification.

In this direction therefore, teaching staff productivity is directly related to the workload assigned to that staff. Productivity of a teaching staff is a measure of the extent of effectiveness and efficient execution of the workload within a stipulated time, culminating to achievement of school objectives. Usoro et al; (2007) agreed that productivity is measured in terms of how the students have appreciated and assimilated the lesson taught by the teacher. The class size can make or mar the rate of understanding. A large class will be difficult to be effectively controlled which contradicts the tenets of training on class room management. The class room management will be more effective if the 1:40 teacher-students ratio is maintained in the public senior secondary schools.

This ratio appears hard to come by because of the over admission in our schools which inversely varies with the number of teaching staff supplied. This have veered predominantly into all the schools in the Local Government Area.

Work Load After School

Teaching staff carry home their work after school period, to prepare them for the next day's activities. The teacher prepares his/her lesson note at home, mark and record examination score at home. Where the teaching staff handles more than one class, he/she prepares for the classes which is enormous task even after the normal school period. When others are having their rest at home, the teacher is still struggling with his workload at home. This stresses the teacher beyond their carrying capacity emotionally, physically, psychologically, financially and even spiritually.

Problem of the Study

Teaching staff strength (TSS) and workload is on the front burner when it has to do with quality or effectiveness of education in as much as workload determines to a great extent the level of quality achievement in education. On a general perception there is hue and cry on the deteriorating level of quality of education as products of our education system, senior secondary school inclusive can not adequately prove their worth. The scenario is worsening with the insufficiency of TSS in schools with the resulting high workload on the available teaching staff. The study therefore is set out to know from prospective respondents the TSS in schools in ONELGA and the workload they carry, and to highlight the negative effects of inadequate supply of teaching staff in senior secondary schools in Onelga Rivers State.

Research Questions

This study examines teaching staff strength and workload in senior secondary schools in Onelga. The work was guided by the following research questions.

1. What is the teacher-students ratio in senior secondary schools
2. What is the class size in senior secondary school
3. What is the weekly period per teaching staff
4. What is the teaching staff strength in the school
5. How many subjects are lacking teachers in schools.
6. What is the workload per teaching staff

Research Question 1 & 2

What is the teacher-students ratio and class size in senior secondary schools?

Table 1: Teacher-students ratio and class size

s/n	Schools	No. of teachers	No. of student	Derived ratio	Class size
1	GCSS Obite	4	299	1:75	75
2	GSS Akabuka	8	250	1:31	31
3	CSS Ebogoro	6	385	1:64	64
4	CSS Amah	7	350	1:50	50
5	CSS Obrikom	10	308	1:31	31
6	EGSS Okwuzi	13	791	1:61	61
7	CSS Omoku	10	479	1:48	48
8	CSS Osiakpu	10	105	1:11	11
9	GSS Kreigani	8	118	1:15	15
10	MBSS Omoku	19	410	1:22	22
11	CSS Obigwe	11	246	1:22	22
12	ICHS Idu Obosiukwu	5	78	1:16	16
13	CSS Obagi	8	360	1:45	45
14	GSS Ndoni	8	326	1:41	41
15	CGSS Aggah	7	405	1:58	58
16	CSS Erema	6	352	1:59	59
17	CSS Oboburu	4	215	1:54	64
18	CGSS Omoku	8	366	1:46	46
	TOTAL	152	5483		

The table above indicates that of the sampled 18 senior secondary schools in Onelga, 11 schools had teacher-students ratio above 1:40 and 7 schools had a teacher-students ratio below 1:40, which shows that there is high workload in majority of the schools, on class size seven (7) schools has between 11-31 ie 39% of the total schools and 61% representing 11 schools has class size of 41 – 75. This indicator shows that more schools have excess class size.

Research Question 3, 4 & 5

What is the weekly period, teaching staff strength and workload for a teaching staff in senior secondary schools?

Table 2: Weekly Periods, TSS and Work load per Teaching Staff

s/n	Schools	Teaching staff strength		Actual put in period per teacher	Work load per teaching subject	School committee work load	Total work load
		Male	Female				
1	GCSS Obite	2	2	18	1x18 = 18	6	24
2	GSS Akabuka	6	2	21	1x21 = 21	4	25
3	CSS Ebogoro	5	1	18	1x18 = 18	6	24
4	CSS Amah	5	2	21	1x21 = 21	6	27
5	CSS Obrikom	8	2	24	1x24 = 24	3	27
6	EGSS Okwuzi	11	2	21	1x21 = 21	3	24
7	CSS Omoku	8	2	18	1x18 = 18	3	21
8	CSS Osiakpu	8	2	21	1x21 = 21	3	24
9	GSS Kreigani	7	1	24	1x24 = 24	3	27
10	MBSS Omoku	16	3	21	1x21 = 21	3	24
11	CSS Obigwe	9	2	21	1x15 = 15	3	28
12	ICHS Idu Obosiukwu	3	2	24	1 x 24= 24	6	30
13	CSS Obagi	7	2	18	1x18 = 18	5	23
14	GSS Ndoni	6	2	21	1x21 = 21	4	25
15	CGSS Aggah	6	1	24	1x24 = 24	4	28
16	CSS Erema	5	1	21	1x21 = 21	6	27
17	CSS Oboburu	3	1	21	1x21 = 21	5	26
18	CGSS Omoku	6	2	24	1x24 = 24	5	29

Table two shows that all the schools exceeded the 15 units weekly periods per teacher per subject. Those schools with high number of teaching staff have lesser periods and if a teacher teaches more than one subject, the weekly periods will double or triple as the case may be, this indicates more workload. It also indicates that female teachers occupies 21% while male teachers stands at 79% of the total teacher population. This shows that male teachers are higher than their female counterparts and that 17% of the schools have workload per teaching staff of 18–23 while the remaining 83% representing 15 schools have workload of 24-30 per teaching staff.

Research Question 6

How Many Subjects Are Lacking Teachers In Schools?

Table 3: Number of Subjects Lacking

s/n	Schools	No. of subjects available	No. of subjects lacking
1	GCSS Obite	4	10
2	GSS Akabuka	8	8
3	CSS Ebogoro	6	8
4	CSS Amah	5	10
5	CSS Obrikom	9	6
6	EGSS Okwuzi	10	3
7	CSS Omoku	8	4
8	CSS Osiakpu	8	6
9	GSS Kreigani	7	7
10	MBSS Omoku	10	4
11	CSS Obigwe	9	4
12	ICHS Idu Obosiukwu	5	7
13	CSS Obagi	9	5
14	GSS Ndoni	8	6
15	CGSS Aggah	7	5
16	CSS Erema	6	6
17	CSS Oboburu	4	10
18	CGSS Omoku	8	6

From the table above 33.3% of schools lack between 3-5 subjects while the remaining 66.7% lack 6-10 subjects areas in school. All the schools lacks some subjects with majority of schools deficient in six(6) subjects and above.

Discussion of Findings

The findings were discussed relative to the research questions.

Teacher-Students Ratio: The analysis of data shows that a majority of the senior secondary schools in ONELGA have high teacher-students ratio above the 1:40 prescribed, which will not produce a healthy teaching-learning outcome. This may be one of the reasons why the standard of education is low in the area. FRN (2004) states that there shall not be more than 40 pupils in a class. This situation syncopates the stipulation of the policy on education.

Class Size: There is high enrolment rate into the school as a result of awareness created in the minds of children on the need for education as to fit into the oil companies operating therein and the desire to meet the challenges of the time which therefore agrees with the reason posited in Maduagwu and Nwogu (2006) for the escalating demand for education by every citizen. Irrespective of gender and ageline. This may be a major contributory reason for the 61.1% of schools with higher enrolment figure in ONELGA.

Period Per week: The period per teaching staff in a week shows that 17% of the schools put in between 18-23 periods of 40 minutes per period for a class and 83% puts in 24-30 periods depending on whether the

teacher takes one class or more. The period per week per teacher will increase, if the teacher takes more than one class. With the number of teaching staff supplied to the schools, it is evident that a teaching staff takes more than one class of three periods a day. This is above the supposed 15 periods per week per teaching staff. The study confirms that all the teaching staff put in 18-30 periods per class per week.

Teaching Staff Strength (TSS): The investigation reveals that 33.3% of schools in ONELGA have 10-19 teachers as their teaching staff strength whereas 66.7% of the schools have 4-8 teaching staff strength. The scenario indicates that there is inadequate teaching staff strength in senior secondary schools in ONELGA. The percentage of female teachers stand at 21.1% which may be as a result of the discrimination against women by employers for the fact that they increase workload during pregnancy, maternity leave and menstrual period when they do less of the job in office.

Workload per Teacher: workload in schools per teaching staff shows a high workload of 21-30 units per teaching staff, assuming that each school committee occupy one (1) unit of workload. There is generally excess workload in schools in ONELGA resulting from inadequate supply of teaching staff to schools or perhaps, high rate of attrition to lucrative jobs, which agrees with the position of Nwaham, et al (2007) that Nigerian Colleges are teaching manpower deficient.

Number of Subject Lacking: The investigation shows that 33.3% of schools in ONELGA have teaching staff inadequacy of between 3-5 subjects. While the remaining 66.7% of schools lacks between 6-10 teaching subjects which perhaps is due to transfer without replacement outside the Local Government Area. This assertion was also supported by Obasi and Asodike (2006).

Conclusion

The issue of teaching staff strength and workload is hinged on the increasing number of school enrolment and the inadequate number of teachers to carry the expansion tendency. From the study, it is obvious that the teaching staff strength is grossly inadequate to carry the challenges of school enrolment being observed in all the schools. It is also crystal clear that there is excess workload by the teaching staff in all the schools asserted with landable programmes like the Compulsory Basic Education Programme (CBEP) of the Federal Government which has blown the public schools tremendously. The study as well discussed the effectiveness of education based on the fact that teacher-students ratio in ONELGA violates the standard set by the National Policy on Education, number of periods by the teaching staff and committee per teaching staff which are all pointers to quality of education.

Recommendation

In view of the findings above, the following recommendations are made:

- 1) Government should post more qualified teachers to the schools.
- 2) There should be the conduct of regular in-service training for the teachers to update themselves and keep a breast with challenges of the time.
- 3) Teachers welfare should be improved to check the rate of attrition from the job.
- 4) School facilities should be improved to accommodate the upsurge in enrolment.
- 5) Government should make provision in the condition of service for excess workload in public schools.

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