



**International Journal of Economics,
Environmental Development and Society
(IJEEDS)**

ADMINISTRATIVE STRATEGIES FOR MANAGING STUDENTS' WASTAGE IN PUBLIC SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN IMO STATE

Samuel N. OWHONDAH

Department of Educational Management
Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, Nigeria
samuelowhondah@iaue.edu.ng

Kelechi Loretta NWOSU

Department of Social Science Education
University of Jos, Plateau State
kelechil@unijos.edu.ng

ABSTRACT

Students' wastage is a worldwide phenomenon. It occurs due to dropping out of students from educational institutions before completion of their programs of study and before their educational skills are properly honed. This study was designed to investigate the administrative strategies for managing students' wastage in public senior secondary schools in Imo State. The study was prompted by the recent challenges facing the public senior secondary schools that have consistently led to failures, repetition of classes and dropout. The study employed descriptive approach to identify some major causes of students' wastage and how it can be strategically managed. It was guided by two (2) research questions and two (2) corresponding null hypotheses. The population was 4,525 comprising 312 principals and 4,213 teachers in public senior secondary schools in Imo State. Stratified and simple random sampling techniques were used. An instrument "Administrative Strategies for Managing Student Wastage in Public Senior Secondary Schools Questionnaire (ASMSWPSSQ)" was patterned along the 4-point Likert Scale ranging from Very High Extent (VHE), High Extent (HE), Low Extent (LE) and Very Low Extent (VLE). Pearson Product Moment Correlation was used to obtain reliability co-efficient of .94. The research questions were answered using mean and standard deviation while hypotheses were tested using z-test statistic at .05 level of significance. It was revealed that lowering administrative cost of education and regular professional development for teachers served as strategies for managing student wastage in public senior secondary schools. It was recommended that government should make education system viable, functional and productive by supplying qualified teaching force and motivating school environment.

Keywords: Students' Wastage, repetition, dropout and cycle of education.

Reference to this paper should be made as follows:

Owhondah, S. N., & Nwosu, K. L. (2022). Administrative strategies for managing students' wastage in public senior secondary schools in Imo State. *International Journal of Economics, Environmental Development and Society*, 3(4), 411-428.

INTRODUCTION

Education is the most vital factor that significantly affects the life of an individual and empowers them to contribute to national development. As a form of investment made on people, education plays a pivotal role in human resource development. Investment in education is made with intent for better returns in the future.

According to Bishop (2012) an investment in education is an investment in the productivity of the population. Investment in formal education is considered as precondition to economic growth. The interaction between education, economic and social development has been broadly recognized and the education system of any country is meant to serve its development objectives. Economic analysis has consistently shown that investment in education brings higher rate of returns than investment in physical capital (Wale, 2015). This is reflected in the human capital theory and the central idea of this theory with regard to education is that formal education is highly instrumental and even necessary to improve the production capacity of population. The progression of students from admission in the first year of their study until their successful completion of the cycle of education in any level reflects the degree of efficiency in that level of education (UNESCO, 2012).

Hanushek (2013) defined wastage as careless consumption, spending, or loss of energy or vigor. It is a loss resulting from breakage, decay, leakage and shrinkage of goods or services. Student wastage is referred to as the unsuccessfulness of students in attaining the qualifications that they have been enrolled into. Wastage that arises from failure, repetition and dropout is a sign of internal inefficiency. When individuals leave educational institutions, before they have obtained the degree or even before their educational skills are honed, then it is wastage. In the present world, what is being wasted is human learning, school buildings, equipment and the labour of teachers. Wastage occurs, when the schools, communities or the nations are unable to achieve their educational objectives through effectual utilization of knowledge and information (Owhondah, 2020).

In an ideal situation, all students admitted in the first grade of the education level will reach the second grade in the following academic year and continue until they complete that level of education but in reality, failure, dropout and repetition obstructs this ideal scheme. The problems of failure, repetition (stagnation), attrition and dropout (withdrawal) are aspects of student wastage that reduces the efficiency of secondary education in Imo State. In addition, Alelign (2018) posited that failure and repetition raises the amount of time required to complete the educational cycle and demands for additional funds, which in turn reduces the intake capacity of the school. Repeating a grade also means utilizing more resources than allocated to a student and also increases the intake capacity of the class. Similarly, another aspect of wastage is attrition which usually occurs when students leave the school or a particular level without being replaced. It waste resources invested on the student, reduce the number of graduates and also makes the student year a waste.

Student wastage has brought many negative effects on public secondary schools in Imo State and its environment. Ediho (2011) stated that male student wastage in Nigeria as a whole has reached an alarming stage that banditry, rape, hooliganism, burglary, political thuggery, kidnapping, cyber-crime and suicide bombing have become the order of the day especially the recent political unrest by unknown men, 'Ebube Agu', and Fulani herdsmen in Imo state. It also produced unemployed, unskilled and lazy youths, who will end up in crime and death. Some other people may prefer to train their children at home due to fear, traditional, ethnic and

religious belief system. The major causes of student wastage in public secondary schools as observed by Duze (2013) are reflected in the following factors: School related factors, parental/ community, social/economic, government, religious belief and health/ miscellaneous related factors. Alelign (2018) added that teacher, student and socio cultural related factors can also cause student wastage.

The major strategies for the reduction of student wastage in public secondary schools according to Duze (2013) are concentrating on quantitative improvement by a universal retention, quality improvement of students, use of qualified teachers, fresh admission, adequate and attractive school facilities and a maintained teacher-student ratio. Obanya (2010) proposed the opening of schools for the street children who could not attend school but this was not implemented. Parents are in the act of frustrating government's efforts in realizing the objectives of the Universal Basic Education (UBE), upon the introduction of free education, instead of sending children to school, many parents turned their back expressing that they prefer trading/hawking than schooling for their children, no matter the amount of fund that was already invested. This was as a result of the current economic downturn of the economy. However, the state of students' wastage in this dispensation is at alarming increase in public senior secondary schools in Imo State and something has to be done otherwise, in the nearest future, only very few of Imo State public secondary school students would complete their school programs successfully.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to:

- Find out the extent lowering administrative cost of education serve as a strategy for managing students' wastage in public senior secondary schools in Imo State.
- Examine the extent regular professional development programmes for teachers serve as a strategy for managing students' wastage in public senior secondary schools in Imo State.

Research Questions

The study was guided by the following research questions:

- To what extent does lowering administrative cost of education serve as a strategy for managing students' wastage in public senior secondary schools in Imo State.
- To what extent does regular professional development programmes for teachers serve as a strategy for managing students' wastage in public senior secondary schools in Imo State?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance:

- H_{01} : There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of public senior secondary school principals and teachers on the extent lowering administrative cost of

education serve as a strategy for managing students' wastage in public senior secondary schools in Imo State.

- Ho₂: There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of public senior secondary school principals and teachers on the extent regular professional development programmes for teachers serve as a strategy for managing students' wastage in public senior secondary school in Imo State.

The Academic Mediation Theory: Academic Mediation Theory by Vincent Tinto Led (1987) as cited in Okechukwu (2013) opines that academic mediation theory has shown that poor academic achievement is one of the strongest predictors of secondary school dropout. This theory examines how poor academic achievement interacts with and affects the relationship between high school dropout and other factors. The model for this theory was shown to statistically fit at an acceptable degree to dropout of school regardless of how well the students are doing in school. Academic risk factors to the student's performance are highly related to school problems (Izdiuv, 2012). These factors include absentees, grade retention, special education, poor performance, low grades and low education expectations. Poor academic achievement has a very strong relationship between increased likelihood of school dropout who have a history of absentees, grade retention, academic trouble and more to disengage from school.

This theory affects every other part of the public secondary school system but the most affected person is the student. This theory is also concerned with the student's academic fulfillment and successful secondary education completion. The theory presents that poor academic performance leads to failure, repetition and dropout of students and a student who fails academically is a product of wastage.

CONCEPTUALIZATION

Wastage: The resources invested have to be properly managed and utilized in order to promote efficiency in education. Failure to use the available resources efficiently to achieve educational objectives indicates wastage. The term wastage shows the resemblance between education and industry where gross materials are inserted into and disposable materials and are presented to the society after making the necessary changes. Wastage is used to describe things which have lost value. In human endeavors, wastage is the premature withdrawal of an individual before the completion of a given program in any organization. Waste in educational work is a process and schools should focus on the continual effective strategies of reducing it. Many of the process within any educational institution can be evaluated for waste affecting time, cost, and material (Almaze, 2011).

In public secondary in Imo State, wastage in education is the reason for mass student withdrawal from school for apprenticeship at various markets and other trade related jobs. Students that failed were compelled to repeat the given class and there are numerous students that prefer to dropout than continue in school and this increase the dangers of wastage in public secondary schools in Imo State to which there is need for finding the causes and strategies for managing it.

Student Wastage

The term student wastage refers to when a student withdraws prematurely from school or before educational skills is honed. It is when an individual is unable to make use of the education he has acquired for quality, excellence, superiority and employment. If an individual fails in school or leaves before obtaining the certificate, then the investment made does not give commensurate returns as both finances as well as human resources are wasted. The ultimate goal of every individual is to obtain employment. Well paid jobs require good education, hence, if a person is not educated and do not possess the degree, then he may experience problems in finding employment opportunities. Student wastage is the total number of years that are wasted due to these factors, failures, repetition (stagnation) and dropouts (withdrawal). It is the difference in quantity and quality of education an individual attains (Ugwuja, 2010). Quantity is easier to deliver thus it is concerned with numbers, getting many individuals to attend school is possible but quality education is how good or bad the products of learning are (Jacob, 2011).

Imo State like all other states in Nigeria observed that student wastage is failure or withdrawal of students from classes without being taken care of consequences that may result from dropping out of school. The delivery of secondary schools education on public secondary schools in Imo State has been marked by numerous challenges such as non-enrolment, late enrolment and repetition. Student who experience wastage suffer from low self-efficacy with regard to academic success, family economic hardship, low aspirations and lack of model. School dropout shows that uneducated parents maybe discouragement to their wards to stay in schools. Students may wish to work in order to support their families and end up becoming wasted product of education (Akpotu, 2018). Student wastage is a threat to Nigerian economic development where trained and qualified man-power is needed for educational and economic progress. This might lead to children acquiring negative attitudes towards school. Once a student drops out of school or repeat a grade level, the learner, is already marked as an educational wasted learner or student.

Out of 100 students who were enrolled into a given secondary schools in Imo State, only about 50 graduated successfully (David, 2010). It should be noted that the inputs and outputs which are commonly used in evaluating student wastage and efficiency may overlook some of the real performances of wastage in public secondary school in Imo State. Student wastage rates are even higher in the rural areas, especially among girls (Mmasi, 2011). Wastage in students who were not in school and did not graduate provides unqualified additions to the credit of illiteracy and increase of ignorant mothers and fathers of this modern generation (Brown, 2017). Student wastage destroys efficiency in schools and it is the efficiency that is referred to the relationships between the input into the system and output of the educational system. An activity is said to be efficient if maximum output is being obtained with the minimum possible inputs. When an individual is unable to achieve the desired grade and has to repeat the class, then ultimately it leads to wastage of finances, as he/she has to pay for the same program again.

On the other hand, when individuals aspire to study and due to family issues or financial problems, they have to drop out of school, then they have to struggle to find appropriate employment opportunities (attrition). When individuals are well educated and they experience problems in obtaining good employment opportunities, then in most cases they remain unemployed for a considerable period of time. This makes them frustrated and depressed, hence, it is vital for the individuals to make use of education by getting engaged at least in some honorary work. In this way, they are able to make use of their educational skills and abilities in

some manner for the welfare of themselves and community. Individuals are required to experience many detrimental effects of wastage, these include, unemployment, less income earnings, increase in criminal and violent acts, public dependency and deprived health conditions (Hinchliffe, 2010). To dropout before completing senior secondary school or the final grade of a given level of education is considered wasteful, since some dropouts don't achieve the required cultural level and might be added to the credit illiteracy.

Dropout

Dropout is the untimely withdrawal from school. These students who withdraw from school prematurely end up not obtaining any certificate of graduation. The term "dropout" qualifies those students who could not complete their education programme at any level of education due to one reason or the other (Ayodele & Bada, 2017). This is most common in rural areas where there is abject poverty and ignorance and this children form a recognizable part of the family labour force. De Cos (2015) also stated that dropout is the ultimate withdrawal from school as student who withdraw from senior secondary school prematurely end up not obtaining any certificate of graduation. This evidence indicates that student dropout is one of the stumbling-blocks in the attempt to achieve educational goals in the developing countries. According to (Orwasa, 2018). Dropout is categorized into four groups:

-Quiet dropouts: These students are low achievers who have experienced continued failure through most of the time in their school. Their reaction to chronic failure is not overt. Their primary distinguishing characteristics is their stoicism.

-Low achievers: These students have experienced continued failure but are unlike group one thus, they react to failure in disruptive annoying ways, this group avoids failure by avoiding school through truancy. Paradoxically, they are punished for their bad behaviors while in school and if they also try to avoid school.

-Non-curricular: The causes of the problems of this group reside outside school. There may be problems of abuse, drugs, school, poverty, health and myriad others as to why the child doesn't learn and becomes truant and eventually quits school. The child cannot learn if he/she comes to school tired, hungry, and afraid.

-Persisting students: This group has poor performance but has compensatory behaviors to continue to attend school. These compensatory behaviours could include athletics, art, or cheating especially during examinations. Some students from this group may actually graduate but they are barely literate. Dropping out exact a terrible personnel toll on the student involved and absorb a large share of the limited resources available for education. Finding ways to minimize school wastage must play a central role in any serious effort to reach the goal of Education for All (Thompson, 2014).

Causes of Dropout

Research in the causes of school dropout has been well-established. Peer influence, poverty, ignorance, delinquency and the desires to become a millionaire within a day makes it difficult for majority of the students to concentrate on their studies thereby increasing the dropout rate (Fehintola & Olugbenga, 2014). It was identified and grouped into three clusters which are family, school and community related factors.

The factors identified under family cluster include; low family socioeconomic status, racial or ethnic groups, male/special education status, low family support for education, low parental education, residential mobility, low social conformity, low acceptance of adult authority, high level of social isolation, disruptive behaviour conduct, being held back in school, poor academic achievement, academic problems in early grades, not liking school, feelings of “not fitting in” and of not belonging, perceptions of unfair or harsh disciplines, feeling unsafe in school, not engaged in school, being suspended or expelled, conflicts between work and school, having to work and school, having to work or support family and pregnancy.

In community factors, the following factors were identified: living in a low income neighbourhood, having peers with low educational aspirations and having friends or siblings who are dropouts.

Under school related factors, the following were identified; low socioeconomic status of school population, high level of racial or ethnic segregation of students, high proportion of students in high school, high proportion of students enrolled in special education, location in central city, large school district, school safety and disciplinary policies and high-stakes testing. Most studies on dropout offer solutions to the problem that do not recognise the specific (and often different) issues faced by males and females as a result of gendered norms and values. In addition, most of the literature that addresses dropout from a gender standpoint tends to approach the subject in a way that equates gender with “women’s issues”. By neglecting how gender also affects males (Ciarrochi, 2012).

Management of Dropout

In many secondary education system the proportion of wastage due to dropout as compared to repetition differs for boys and girls. Dropout is a more significant factor for girls than boys in northern Nigeria. Effects of repetition largely outstrip the expected benefits. One study from the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement found no absolute relation between retention policies and overall student academic achievement. According to Akinsolu (2014) it was noted that states that have done away with repetition typically perform better than the national average on comparative examinations. Evaluation of student’s achievement should be continuous with the aim of detecting and compensating learning difficulties rather than selecting students for promotion. Some schools have taken a compromise position and permits repetition only at a certain strategic points in a child’s education. It is important to recognize that neither promotion nor retention policies by themselves can solve the problems of children who experience difficulty in learning. Students who move onto the next grade without having mastered materials at the previous levels are likely to have trouble learning the new subject matter. Students who fail to grasp materials presented in a particular manner and setting are not likely to have much more success by going through an identical experience a second time. In both cases, the more effective approach would be to provide specific teaching interventions that address the particular learning needs for each student.

To Arowolo (2016), combating the challenges of school dropout in order to reduce it to the barest minimum, all stakeholders involved in education industry must play their role:

- Parents who are the first stakeholder in this industry as well as the first teacher and role model to the children should show more concern in their children/ward’s interest in education and in financing their education.

- For those in the rural areas, they should be creative in thinking to find after-school work that will enable their children/wards to contribute to their family upkeep instead of sending them to the streets to hawk.
- Being saddled with leadership and governance of Nigerians, government at local, state and federal level should as a matter of urgency map out strategies to combat the issue of student dropout. Government should provide opportunity for teachers to be trained for effectiveness as more teachers should also be employed to improve efficiency in the schools.

A major aspect of educational wastage occurs when students leave the educational system prior to the termination of an educational cycle. Dropping out in this sense is not related to the existence or duration of compulsory schooling and therefore leaving school before the minimum age is not regarded as dropping out (Bekele, 2014). However, those who leave before the end of a cycle but who have satisfied the compulsory education laws by staying at school until they have reached the minimum age, would be regarded as dropouts and in places which do not have compulsory education, a child who left school before completion of the stage in which he had registered would be regarded as a dropout. This definition conflicts to some extent with more general notions of premature leaving, interpreted as leaving before the minimum age. The term may also be applied to students leaving at the end of the compulsory period when a further period is considered desirable even though not required.

Repetition

By repetition, it means a year is spent in the same grade and doing the same work as in previous year. It is assumed that students who do not reach the required level can be best rehabilitated by repeating the unsatisfactory years' work in entirety (Anderman, 2013). To repeat a class is regarded as a waste to the extent that it increases the class density and lessens the chance for new beginners to the educational level. Learners are divided into two groups; the student that failed and the students that passed. The students who passed will be promoted to the next grade while those who failed must stay back another year to raise their level of knowledge. Repetition leads to stagnation in education. The student of every state is expected to pass the examination after finishing the whole course but it has been that in general practice many students are not able to pass the examination in one class or in more than one class within the prescribed class (Owhondah, 2020). These failed students repeat the same class and study in the next class. This process has been called the process of stagnation. Thus, by stagnation it meant the stay of students in particular class for more than one year. When an individual experiences educational wastage, it leads to wastage of two important aspects, time and financial resources. Understanding this, therefore, helps us to clearly visualize the quality and quantity of education we are achieving in the educational objectives.

For this reason, it is believed that postulating a close link between academic failure and the quality of education enables us to determine whether the education systems are not doing what they were intended to do. Grade repetition requires students to spend additional academic year doing the same work in the same grade as in the previous year (Hare, 2011). He noted that high grade repetition rate frequently associate with rigid school systems that are not well adapted to young children. High repetition rates aggravate the problem of wide diversity of age, which make a single teaching method inappropriate. Repetition raises the cost of education to the individual and his/her family as well as to the school. It is associated with failure and

discourages both students and parents. Failing a grade in school is an important predictor of dropping out of high school, thus repeating a grade increases children's adjustment problems in school. Wastage occurs when students try to repeat grades in developing countries, this is often prelude to dropout. School systems around the world differ widely in their policies and students who fail to master the work appropriate to their particular grade level may fail. In majority countries both developed and developing, educators require such students to repeat the grade in order to give them additional time to learn materials they fail to master the first time.

Repetition is seen as a remedy for slow learners. Some schools believe that repetition creates more problems than it solves and therefore follow a policy of automatic promotion, accordingly, students proceed to the next class even when they have not mastered the previous grade. Some educators argue that students who did not learn something the first time are not likely to benefit from repeating the same academic year. Students should be provided with an additional assistance and should be allowed to proceed to the next grade with their peers. Incidence of repetition is largely determined by the attitude and practices of educators in different schools. Students have three paths in a particular academic year, there are, promotion, repetition and dropout. Repeating a grade means utilizing more resources than allocated to a student and leaving a school (dropout) before completing a particular cycle of education is also wastage of resources. Therefore, grade repetition and dropout rates are indicators of the level of inefficiency of the education system. Regardless of its pedagogical effects, repeating grades is inefficient thus, it increases the per student cost of schooling without increasing the number of graduates produced. Resources devoted to a repeater are resources that could have been used either to permit another child to enter school or to improve the quality of instruction for students already there.

Forms of Student Wastage

In analyzing this phenomenon in the developing countries today, it can be seen to take different forms as postulated by (Samuel, 2017)

-Dropout/push-out: This refers to students who do not complete their schooling in the prescribed number of years. It is a person who has abandoned a course of study or who has rejected conventional society to pursue an alternative lifestyle. A dropout is slightly different from a push-out. In dropout, the student largely influences the decision to leave school and in push-out, the student is forced out by the school situation or factors. The consequences of dropout is reflected in social stigma, fewer job opportunities, lower salaries and a higher probability of involvement with the criminal justice system.

-Repetition: This is the act of going through something or doing something over and over again. The effect is that it typically leads to better memory for the affected student. Repeating a grade is initiated either by the student's poor performance, parents, teachers or school administration in order for the student to improve examination grade. Grade repetition is the process of the student repeating a grade due to failing on the previous year (Cunningham, 2012). Repetition is costly and puts strain on the teacher and also increases the class size that may cost more money for the school to maintain.

-Lateness and absenteeism: These are common practice among students. Under this situation, they miss learning experiences that would probably be of great importance to their education and life in general. The effects of lateness and absenteeism are usually dropping-out or poor performance or achievers which are usually those who have not gained much out of their school experiences and the society is unlikely to engage such people in productive activities. Not only they wasted scholarship funds but also time. Neither the government nor individuals are prepared to invest further in the education of such people. Despite completing the school cycle, they fail to gain the intellectual, moral, social, cultural and ethical knowledge and skills that the school should provide. This is a significant wastage of resources especially where educational budget is already too high for the respective government to manage.

-Teachers attrition or turnover: This is another form of wastage in education. The government invests heavily in the production of qualified teachers. There is no guarantee that all these teachers will be engaged economically. Some of those in employment as teachers leave school for other more lucrative jobs. This to a certain extent is some form of brain-drain to the school and society. Teaching in school will be generally ineffective thus, they fail to address the entire syllabus. At least students leave school without adequate preparation thus, they have not gone through the learning package to achieve the educational goals.

Administrative Strategies for Managing Student Wastage in Public Senior Secondary Schools

In general, the education system in a developing country like Nigeria is suffering from a very low internal efficiency especially at first cycle of secondary education level (UNESCO, 2012). Various measures have been put into practice by both federal and state governments to lead to a decline in student wastage. In fact the reasons for failure and dropout will differ from one school to another and also among regions and individuals in Imo State. The realizations of these strategies need to be integrated among all the educational stakeholders. These strategies according to Bekele (2014) is as follows:

Regular Orientation Programmes for students

Orientation programme is a series of activities that gives new students information to help them adapt to the school and realize their responsibility towards it. It is often a programme held at the introduction stage. Orientation is a much needed programme that when planned correctly can aid all participants like new/old students, parents, teachers and administrators. Orientation is designed to answer questions before they are asked and to provide solutions before problems occur. It is also a chance for the school to start getting to know their students. A good orientation programme helps students to feel excited about starting college and smoothens the transition process to school life and the independence that comes with it. It can come in all shapes and sizes. Moreso, orientation provides the new student with concise and accurate information to make him/her more comfortable in the school. It encourages students' confidence and helps the new student adapt faster in the school environment.

It is a programme where newly admitted students are formally introduced into various programmes of the school. These included curricular and extra curricular programmes and the available school facilities like library, laboratories and classrooms (Odekunle, 2010). When all

groups are collectively supported by the school, it will sustain caring and supportive environment where students can thrive and achieve (Angina, 2011). This collaborative programmes and practices between the school and students ensure that students in the community do not drop out of school.

Lowering Administrative Cost of Education

Cost of education cannot be seen as lowered if there is no effective cost management in the educational system. Cost management is a process by which financial activities in the school are controlled to ensure optimal utilization of the available resources to achieve the goals of the school most efficiently. It is essentially directed at the achievement of cost effectiveness and efficiency in resource utilization (Agabi, 2019). There are different experiences that several schools have attempted to reduce direct costs of education especially for rural students living below the poverty line. Some of the measures include lowering or eliminating the tuition, providing free instructional materials and uniforms, offering free or standardized transportation and providing school feeding programs.

On the other hand, strategies to reduce indirect cost include reducing opportunity cost of students through the development of labour saving strategies such as timing of the school year (Adeoye, 2014). As it has been stated that marginalized, deprived and economically weaker sections of the society are unable to meet the educational needs and requirements of their children. Financial problems have been a matter of concern for them. Various measures have also proved effective in increasing enrolment such as waving or reducing school fees, supplying free textbooks, providing stipends for girls, building schools closer homes, providing separate sanitary facilities, offering flexible school hours and establishing childcare centers for younger children encourage parents to send their children to school. Persistent high rates of wastages impose enormous cost on education systems and also on the individuals and societies that they have (Nzeneri, 2016). Various measures have also proved effective such as reducing school fees for girls and offering flexible school hours. All these make education attractive and affordable and thus, reduces the rate of school dropout. (Okechukwu, 2013).

Regular Professional Development Programmes for Teachers

Teacher professional development is defined as teachers' learning. It is how they learn to learn and how they apply knowledge in practice to support students' learning. It refers to continuous process of reflection, learning and action to further a teacher's knowledge and skills leading to enhanced teaching practices that positively impact on students learning. It can be assessed and evaluated through communication, listening, collaborating, adaptability, empathy and patient skills. Lack of training for teachers is a key source to any dissatisfaction in the quality of their teaching to form competent students with the necessary knowledge and skills in different subject matters (Nzeneri, 2016).

It is possible to assume that students are more likely to be motivated to learn and develop good attitude towards learning if the curriculum and teaching methods are of high quality. By contrast, students who are bored and fail to see the connection between their personal lives and what they are taught in schools become candidates for academic failure and eventually dropouts (Cooper, 2017). Thus, there is much that can and must be done that will prove the quality of instruction through a concerned strategy to improve the curricula, training of teachers and the

reorganization of the school to promote learning. The most effective way to reduce the number of children who will ultimately dropout is to provide the best possible classroom instruction from the beginning of their experience through the all stages and levels (Ijaiye, 2010).

The students take pleasure in learning from the teachers who possess adequate knowledge of reorganizing the curriculum and instructional methods. Activities and creative actions are essential for the individual to get engaged into various kinds of activities and creative actions. These not only motivate them towards learning but also stimulates their mind-sets.

However, there is no universal set of solutions to the problems of student wastage. Educators and policy makers needs first to identify the predominant causes of dropout and repetition in their particular situation and then devise appropriate solutions which may need to target a particular set of students in their geographical areas, communities and disadvantaged groups. Such decision will be more soundly based when a suitable data collection system is in place, which can then provide feedback once the corrective measures are on the way. Any attempt to reduce student wastage must be comprehensive and systematic in order to deal with its multiple causes. (Akangbou, 2015).

METHODS

The study adopted the descriptive survey design which focused on describing and interpreting existing conditions, prevailing practices and the on-going process. The population of this study was four thousand five hundred and twenty five (4,525), consisting three hundred and twelve (312) principals and four thousand two hundred and thirteen (4,213) teachers in the three hundred and twelve (312) public senior secondary schools in Imo State. Stratified and simple random sampling technique was used to select the respondents for the study. The instrument “Principals and Teachers Administrative Strategies for Managing Students’ Wastage Questionnaire” (PTASMSWQ) was used to generate data for the study and a reliability coefficient of 0.94 was obtained through a test-re-test method which was considered adequate.

RESULTS

Presentation and Analysis of Data

Research Question One: To what extent does lowering administrative cost of education serve as a strategy for managing students’ wastage in public senior secondary schools in Imo State?

Table 1: Mean (\bar{x}) and standard deviation of respondents’ opinion on the extent lowering administrative cost of education serve as a strategy for managing students’ wastage in public senior secondary schools

| S/N | Questionnaire Items | Principals (N - 62) | | Teachers (N - 893) | | Mean Set | Rank order | Decision |
|-----|---|------------------------|-----------------|-----------------------|-----------------|-----------------------|-----------------|----------|
| | Lowering administrative cost of education strategy manage students wastage in public Secondary Schools | \bar{x}_1 | SD ₁ | \bar{x}_2 | SD ₂ | $\frac{x_1 + x_2}{2}$ | | |
| 1 | The school maintains free tuition to enhance students’ retention. | 3.4 | 0.61 | 3.3 | 0.61 | 3.35 | 4 th | VHE |

| | | | | | | | | |
|------------------|--|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-----------------|------------|
| 2 | The school lowers annual chargeable fees for school games/sports to enhance students' retention. | 3.2 | 0.69 | 3.6 | 0.67 | 3.40 | 3 rd | VHE |
| 3 | The school lowers chargeable fee for students files/badges/prospectus/exit and identity card for students | 3.5 | 0.66 | 3.5 | 0.70 | 3.50 | 1 st | VHE |
| 4 | The school lowers chargeable fees for uniform students (boy/girls) to enhance students' retention. | 3.4 | 0.79 | 3.4 | 0.61 | 3.38 | 5 th | VHE |
| 5 | The school lowers chargeable fees for cardigan/beret for students | 2.9 | 0.54 | 3.7 | 0.53 | 3.30 | 7 th | VHE |
| 6 | The school lowers chargeable fees for examination/ assessment to enhance students' retention. | 3.5 | 0.74 | 3.2 | 1.70 | 3.36 | 6 th | VHE |
| 7 | The school lowers chargeable fees for school based management committee/PTA and environmental activities to enhance students' retention. | 3.3 | 0.74 | 3.5 | 0.61 | 3.42 | 2 nd | VHE |
| Aggregate | | 3.31 | 0.68 | 3.46 | 0.78 | 3.39 | | VHE |

This table established that lowering administrative cost of education served as a strategy for managing students' wastage in public senior secondary schools in Imo State. Thus, the aggregate mean scores of 3.39 for principals and teachers were above the criterion mean of 2.5. However, this indicated that respondents agreed that lowering administrative cost of education will manage students' wastage in public senior secondary schools in Imo State.

Research Question Two: To what extent does regular professional development programmes for teachers serve as a strategy for managing students wastage in public senior secondary schools in Imo State?

Table 2: Mean (\bar{x}) and standard deviation of respondents' opinion on the extent regular professional development programmes for teachers serve as a strategy for managing students' wastage in public senior secondary schools

| S/N | Questionnaire Items | Principals (N - 62) | | Teachers (N - 893) | | Mean Set | Rank order | Decision |
|-----|--|------------------------|-----------------|-----------------------|-----------------|-----------------------|-----------------|----------|
| | Regular professional development programmes for teachers manage students wastage in public senior Secondary Schools | \bar{x}_1 | SD ₁ | \bar{x}_2 | SD ₂ | $\frac{x_1 + x_2}{2}$ | | |
| 8 | The school provides conducive work environment for teachers | 3.5 | 0.77 | 3.2 | 0.60 | 3.35 | 5 th | VHE |
| 9 | The school promotes teachers as and when due | 3.5 | 0.64 | 3.2 | 0.62 | 3.36 | 4 th | VHE |
| 10 | The school offers regular incentives for teachers | 3.1 | 0.71 | 3.6 | 0.60 | 3.37 | 3 rd | VHE |
| 11 | The school offers in-service training for teachers' advancement | 3.1 | 0.54 | 3.4 | 0.66 | 3.25 | 7 th | HE |
| 12 | School working conditions are good and regular | 3.4 | 0.66 | 3.4 | 0.60 | 3.42 | 2 nd | VHE |
| 13 | The school employ qualified teachers | 3.3 | 0.67 | 3.3 | 0.58 | 3.30 | 6 th | VHE |

| | | | | | | | | |
|------------------|---|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-----------------|------------|
| 14 | to encourage student progression The school provides healthcare services for students and teachers | 3.4 | 0.74 | 3.5 | 0.67 | 3.45 | 1 st | VHE |
| Aggregate | | 3.33 | 0.68 | 3.37 | 0.62 | 3.36 | | VHE |

Data in the table above with high mean scores pointed that regular professional development for teachers served as a strategy for managing students wastage in public senior secondary schools in Imo State thus, the above mean scores and the aggregate mean score of 3.36 for principals and teachers were above the criterion mean of 2.5. However, this indicated that respondents agreed that regular professional development programme for teachers will lower students' wastage in public senior secondary schools in Imo State.

Test of Hypotheses

H0₁: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of public senior secondary school principals and teachers on the extent lowering administrative cost of education serve as a strategy for managing students' wastage in public senior secondary schools in Imo State.

Table 3: Z-test difference on the mean ratings of principals and teachers on the extent lowering administrative cost of education serve as a strategy for managing students' wastage in public senior secondary schools in Imo State

| Status | N | \bar{x} | SD | Df | z-cal | z-critical | Decision |
|------------|-----|-----------|------|------|-------|------------|------------------------------|
| Principals | 62 | 3.31 | 0.68 | 1630 | .0442 | ±1.96 | H0 ₁ was rejected |
| Teachers | 893 | 3.46 | 0.78 | | | | |

Data on this table indicated the difference in the mean ratings of principals and teachers on the extent lowering administrative cost of education served as a strategy for managing students' wastage in public senior secondary schools in Imo State. The result showed that the calculated value of (0.0442) is less than the critical value of ±1.96 at 0.05 alpha significant levels and 1630 degree of freedom thus, the null hypothesis was rejected. This means that there is a significant difference in the mean ratings of principals and teachers on lowering administrative cost of education in managing students' wastage in public senior secondary schools in Imo State.

H0₂: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of public senior secondary school principals and teachers on the extent regular professional development for teachers serve as a strategy for managing students' wastage in public senior secondary schools in Imo State.

Table 4: Z-test difference on the mean ratings of principals and teachers on the extent regular professional development for teachers serve as a strategy for managing students' wastage in public senior secondary schools in Imo State

| Status | N | \bar{x} | SD | Df | z-cal | z-critical | Decision |
|------------|-----|-----------|------|------|-------|------------|------------------------------|
| Principals | 62 | 3.32 | 0.67 | 1630 | .0197 | ±1.96 | H0 ₂ was rejected |
| Teachers | 893 | 3.37 | 0.62 | | | | |

This table showed the difference in the mean ratings of principals and teachers on the extent regular professional development for teachers served as a strategy for managing students' wastage in public senior secondary schools in Imo State. The result presented that the calculated value of (0.0197) is less than the critical value of ± 1.96 at 0.05 alpha significant levels and 1630 degree of freedom hence the null hypothesis was rejected. Therefore there is a significant difference in the mean ratings of principals and teachers on regular professional development for teachers in managing students' wastage in public senior secondary schools in Imo State.

DISCUSSION

The findings that emanated from the study were discussed below:

Extent Lowering Administrative Cost of Education Served as Strategy for Managing Students' Wastage

Findings on research question one showed that to a very high extent, lowering administrative cost of education served as a strategy for managing students' wastage in public Senior Secondary Schools in Imo state. The test of its corresponding hypothesis discerned a significant difference thus, the hypothesis was rejected. This means that there was a significant difference between the mean ratings of principals and teachers on the extent lowering administrative cost of education served as strategy for managing students' wastage in public senior secondary schools in Imo State. The finding from the research question implied that low administrative cost of education will encourage the retention and successful completion of students in the school cycle.

Extent Regular Professional Development Programme for Teachers Served as Strategy for Managing Students' Wastage

Research question two reviewed that to a very high extent, regular professional development programme for teachers served as a strategy for managing students' wastage in public Senior Secondary Schools in Imo state. The test of its corresponding hypothesis discerned a significant difference therefore, the hypothesis was rejected. This means that there was a significant difference between regular professional development programme for teachers and Students' wastage. The finding from the research question implied that professional and qualified teachers will help students' academic progression and reduce repetition and dropout rates in public senior secondary schools in Imo State.

CONCLUSION

Education globally is seen as a tool for national and individual development. There are no universal solutions to the problems of student wastage. Educators and policy makers need first to identify the predominant factors of failure, repetition and dropout in their particular situation and then devise appropriate solutions which may need to target particular class, environment, geographical areas and communities. Such decisions will be more soundly based when a suitable data collection system is in place, which can then provide feedback once the corrective measures are taken. Any attempt to reduce student wastage must be comprehensive and systematic in order to deal with its multiple causes. Some aspects of student wastage, especially high repetition rates can be addressed through changes in school practices and policies that are largely under the

control of educational policy makers. Other components such as dropout and attrition are rooted mainly in administrative, economic and social conditions internal and external to the school. Addressing these challenges requires working with members of local communities as well as with political and other educational stakeholders. It is thus incumbent on principals and teachers to make parents and other education custodians aware of the cost of student failure and exclusion from school.

Reduced student wastage would reduce examination malpractice, incidence of cultism and as well engender discipline. Improve sound moral character and inculcate the right social norms in the student, hence sound and quality output will propel graduates to boost the manpower and productivity needs of the economy.

Recommendations

Improving standards and minimizing failure, repetition and dropout problems are possible only when students learning needs are met; thus, understanding the factors hindering the efficiency of learning is one of the important steps in the efforts to minimize wastage. In order to ameliorate these ills, the following recommendations were made:

- Government should increase school funding so as to enable school administrators acquire instructional materials for schools and conveniently take care of their school's demands.
- Quality teachers should be appointed into the public school system. This will create quality instruction for early intervention that will motivate students in the classroom to remain in school. This will as well enrich teaching competency and boost school efficiency.

REFERENCES

- Adeoye, Y. M., & Olumide, S. A. (2014). *Wastage of secondary education in Ekiti*. Maylinks Publishers.
- Agabi, C. O. (2019). *Principles and Theories in Educational Finance*. David Stones, Global Resource Publishers.
- Ajayi I. A. (2012). Resource factors as correlates of secondary school effectiveness in Ekiti State, Nigeria. *Journal of Counseling and Applied Psychology*, 1(1), 109- 115.
- Akangbou, S. D. (2015). *The Economics of Education Planning in Nigeria*. Vika Publishing House.
- Akinsolu, A. O. (2014). Result-based management: A sine qua non for total quality assurance of Nigeria's education sector. *African Journal of Educational Management*, 1(16), 162-171.
- Akpotu, P. N. (2018). Using classroom newsletters as a vehicle for examining home-school connections. *Journal of Education Practices*, 18(2), 167-178.
- Alealign, B. A. (2018). Factors Aggravating to Educational Wastages at Secondary Level. *Unpublished Thesis*. College of Education and Behaviora Studies, Addis Ababa.
- Almaze E. U. (2011). *Women in Ethiopia. Problems and Prospects*. A Paper Presented at the Seminar on Gender Issues in Ethiopia. Addis Ababa.
- Anderman, A. M. (2013). *Revitalizing Education in Africa*. Sterling Hornden publishers.
- Ananga J. L. (2011). School family/Community partnerships. Caring for the children we share. *Journal of Education and Resources*. 7(9), 701-712.

- Angina, E.A. (2011). Aspect of school dropout programmes. Create Pathways to access research Monograph N0:56: 100-110. *Journal of Educational wastage, Acraa Press.*
- Arowolo. A. A., Arowolo. E. A., & Adaja, I. J. (2016). Trend analysis of student's dropout rate and the effects on the social and educational systems in Nigeria. *International Journal of Latest Research in Engineering and Technology*, 2(4), 08-16.
- Ayodele, C.S., & Bada, F.O. (2017). Causes of dropout in schools as perceived by secondary school students in Idanre Local Government. *The Journal of Social Sciences*, 2(3), 327-330.
- Bekele A. O. (2014). Factors Associated with Wastage in Secondary Education in Kefa and Shaka zones: *Unpublished Thesis*. University of Kong.
- Bishop, G. O. (2012). *Alternative Strategies for Education*. Macmillan Education Publishers.
- Brown, J. P. (2017) Educational wastage. Oxford University Press.
- Ciarrochi, J. M., Heaven, P. N., & Davies, F. L. (2012). The impact of hope, self-esteem, and Attributional style on adolescents' school grades and emotional well-being: A longitudinal study. *Journal of Research in Personality*, 8(41), 1161-1178.
- Cooper, S. M., & Guthrie, B. L. (2017). Ecological influences on health-promoting and health compromising behaviors. A socially embedded approach to urban African American girls' health. *Journal of Family & Community Health*, 9(30), 29-41.
- Cunningham, M., Hurley, M., Foney, D., & Hayes, D. (2012). Influence of perceived contextual stress on self-esteem and academic outcomes in African American adolescents. *Journal of Black Psychology*, 28, 215-233.
- David, S. S., & Jeffrey, S. P. (2010). California high school dropouts: Examining the fiscal consequences. <https://www.edchoices.org/education/2010>.
- De Cos, P. L. (2015). *High school dropouts, enrollment, and graduation rates in California*. California Research Bureau, California State Library
- Duze, C. O. (2012) Educational policies/ programmes effects on tuition rates in primary school in Nigeria. *International Journal of Education Administration and Policy Studies*, 4(2), 38-44.
- Ediho O. G. (2011). The Challenges affecting the implementation of universal basic education in Delta State, Nigeria. *Journal of Social Science*, 20(3), 183-187.
- Fehintola, J. O., & Olugbenga E. O. (2014). Construction and validation of students' dropout scale. *African Journal for the Psychological Study of Social Issues*, 17(2), 78-90.
- Hanushek W. U. (2013). A study of Drop-out in selected primary schools of the regions Federal Government Press.
- Hare, B. S. (2011). Self-perception and academic achievement: Variations in a desegregated setting. *Annual Progress in Child Psychiatry & Child Development*, 65, 198-212.
- Hinchliffe, K. M. (2010). Public expenditure on education in Nigeria. Issues, estimates and some implications. World Bank Press.
- Ijaiye, N. Y. (2010) A guide to Supervision of Instruction. My Grace Graphics Reprint Inter-Agency Commission, (1990) Meaning of Education Wastage: A compiled experiences. Udemu publishers. International Labour Organisation. (2019, 15th January). Educational Wastage. [http:// www.via.org](http://www.via.org).
- Izdiuv, V. B. (2012). Focus on Adult and Non Formal Education in Ethiopia. Unpublished thesis, Addis Ababa University.
- Jacob R. S. (2011). *Moral Development and Moral Education*. George Allin Publishers.

- Mmasi, T. M. (2011) Waste in Nigerian Schools. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 23(92), 568-582.
- Nzeneri, I. I. (2016) Educational Risk taking in Nigerian Education Education. Ibadan. Herineman publishers.
- Obanya, P.K. (2010). *Planning and managing access to education: The Nigeria experience*. Open Seminar Series. Center for International Education, DEPT of Education. University of Sussex.
- Odekunle, A.Y. (2010) *Educational wastage in a developing nation*. Mall House Publishers.
- Okechukwu, C.V, (2013). Educational Wastages in Secondary Schools in Anambra State: Cause and Strategies for Reduction. *Unpublished Thesis*, University of Nigeria Nsukka.
- Orwasa, B.G & Orodho, J. A. (2018). Wastage in Public Secondary Schools: Strategies to reduce effect of home-based variables. *Greener Journal of Educational Research*, 8(4), 76–84. <http://doi.org/10.15580/GJER.2018.4.060718078>.
- Owhondah, S. N. (2020). *Basic Issues in Educational Management*. Dabak Flamboyant Printing & Publishing.
- Samuel, S. A, Mulwa, D. L, Migosi, J. B., & Kaman, L. M. (2017). Influence of school-based factors on educational wastage in public secondary schools in Kano State, *International Journal of Social Science*, 7(1), 257–262.
- Thomas, J. K. (2015). *World problem in Education: Brief Analytical Survey Paris: UNESCO. Statistical year book*. UNESCO.
- Thompson, L. J. (2014). *The delima of education in Africa*. Sterling Worden Publishers.
- Ugwuja, I.O. (2010) Vocational Technical Education and Development Fortune. News Publishers.
- UNESCO, (2012). *Reaching the 2015 literacy target: Action plan in Nigeria*. UNESCO Institute of Statistics.
- Wale, C. B. (2015). Wastage in primary education: a comparative look at three developing countries. *Journal of Comparative Education*, 8(20), 75-84.