EFFECT OF PRIVATE SECONDARY SCHOOLS ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF OKIRIKA PEOPLE OF RIVERS STATE OF NIGERIA

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Abstract
The study investigated the private secondary schools and the effects on the development in Okrika Local Government Area of Rivers State. The objective of the study was to find out whether the private secondary school has any effect on the development in Okrika local government area. It is a survey study. For this study, the students of both private and public secondary schools were used; the teachers of the same level and the parents of both were also used. The instruments used for this study are the questionnaires. The questionnaires were administered to the students, teachers and parents of six selected private and public secondary schools in Okrika Local Government Area. Five research questions were employed to be answered and analyzed the responses. The method of analysis was based on simple percentage for the research questions. The study revealed that private secondary schools have great effect on the development of education in Okrika Local Government Area by improving on the standard of education in the area for study. Thus the recommendation that private secondary schools be allowed to operate alongside the public and the public and the private secondary schools should complement each other in order to ensure that qualitative education for all is attained in the possible shortest time.

Background to the Study
Education is no doubt a solid, important and indispensable tool of not only helping an individual to develop and profit from his inert potentials but also a tool for technology advancement of individual and the country at large. For quite sometimes, the government has carried the burden of financing education in Nigeria (Adenipekun, 2008). The rate at which the population is growing shows that the provision of education by the government should in reality be complemented by private partnership collaboration. Interestingly, the private sector participation in education and acquisition of skills and development has been noticed and should be sustained. It is against this background that the researcher examined the private secondary schools and its effects on the growth and development of education in Okrika Local Government Area of Rivers State. For quite sometimes before now the government has largely been responsible for the provision of education in Nigeria. In this case, the private sector had little or very minimal involvement. Public funding for education includes direct government expenditure mainly for teachers’ salaries as well as instructional materials. It also includes expenditure in direct forms.
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such as subsidies tax reduction, scholarship loan and grants. Payment from Education Trust Fund (ETF) is also a veritable source for capital development in education sector Bakari, 2007).

Research Questions
The following research questions will be answered in this study:
1) Are there differences between the standard of education in the public secondary and private secondary schools?
2) To what extent are necessary items for learning provided in private school?
3) What circumstances have led to the increases in the establishment of private secondary school

Design of the Study
The research design used for this study is the descriptive survey method. This design was selected in order to help the researcher collect data from a large sample drawn from a given population as regard the effects of private secondary schools on the development of education in Okrika Local Government Area.

Population of the Study
The population for the study consists of all senior secondary schools students of SS1–SS3 of both public and private secondary schools, their teachers and all the parents having their children or wards in both public and private secondary schools of the ten (10) private and public secondary schools in Okrika Local Government Area. As at the time of study, the population size comprised 1829 SS1–SS3 students, 123 teachers of same level and a marginal estimate of about 150 parents drawn from the ten (10) public and private secondary schools in the area given a total of 2102. (Source of the population size of the students and teachers is the various heads of the schools and the Zonal Ministry of Education). But that of the parents could not be gotten since no office keeps such statistics. These populations were selected in this research among other population for these reasons. The teachers and the students carried the heavy load of teaching and learning process while the parents bear the cost of education.

Sample and Sampling Techniques
There are five (5) privates and five (5) public secondary schools in the area under study. Three private and three public secondary schools will be drawn for the study using simple random sampling (balloting) bringing the total number of schools to be sample to six (6). The selection of these schools was based on the setting of the schools and the convenience of administration of questionnaires. Also the schools chosen have been presenting candidates for the Senior Secondary Schools Examination (SSCE) and National Examination Council (NECO). A sample size of forty-five (45) SS1–3 students will be randomly drawn from each of the public and private secondary schools constituted the first sample. Fifteen (15) teachers in each of the schools teaching at that level will also be drawn included as the second sample and about thirty (30) parents having their children or wards in both public and private secondary schools constitute the third sample. On the whole, ninety (90) SS1 – SS3 students, thirty teachers and thirty (30)
parents given a total of one hundred and fifty (150) will be drawn using the random selection procedure.

**Instrumentation:**
The instrument used for data collection in this study is the questionnaire containing twenty structure items. While section one (1) sought response on personal data of the respondent section two (2) is designed to elicit responses on the private secondary schools effect on the development of Okrika Local Government Area. Questionnaires are administered and the respondents are provided with answers whether they strongly agreed, agreed, strongly disagreed, disagree, and undecided with the statement. They are expected to fill in the answers applicable to them. The researcher thereafter base his analysis of field data from the answer filled in the respondents. Also to ensure an effective study, the researcher will use documented literature, textbooks, journals, unpublished projects, newspapers, etc to source for relevant information on the research study.

**Research Question 1:** Are there differences between the standard of education in private and public secondary schools?

**Table 1: Percentage of respondents responding to differences between the standard of education in private and public secondary schools**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/ N</th>
<th>Questionnaire Item</th>
<th>Respondents Options</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>SA/A</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Extra hours put in educating students in private secondary schools are factors of good academic performance.</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Students received closer attention in</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The analysis on the item question one (1) in the table 1 above shows that 88% (132) of the sample population agreed that extra hours put in educating students in private secondary schools are factors of good academic performance but 11.3 % (17) disagreed to the above. While 0.7% (1) could not decide on the opinion. The result is that extra hours put in educating students in private secondary school are factors of good academics performance. In item two (2) on the same table 4.1, 10.7 % (16) positively agreed that students received closer attention in public secondary schools than private but 87.3% (131) respondents disagreed to the above opinion and 2% (3) could not say whether students in public secondary schools received closer attention in public secondary schools or not. The result is that students received closer attention in private secondary schools than publics. Also from the above table 4.1, the questionnaire item three (3) shows that 85.3% (128) agreed that students in private secondary schools performed better in academic work than their counterparts in publics. 10% (15) disagreed or responded negatively to the question posed before them while 4.7% (7) remain undecided. The result is that private secondary schools performed better in academics works than their
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counterparts in publics. Result obtained from the item four (4) relating to whether lack of funding is a factor to qualitative education, 92% (138) agreed while 6.7% (10) responded negatively or disagreed to the opinion. However, 1.3% (2) could not say whether lack of funding is a factor to qualitative education. The result is that lack of funding is a factor to qualitative education (Ajisegiri, 2008).

Research Question 2: to what extent are the necessary items for learning provided in private secondary schools?

Table 2: Percentage of respondents responding to the provision of necessary items provided for learning in private secondary schools.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/N</th>
<th>Questionnaire Item</th>
<th>Respondents Options</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>SA/A %</td>
<td>UD %</td>
<td>SD/D</td>
<td>%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Private Secondary school are better equipped (staff, lab equipment, computer etc)</td>
<td>100  66%</td>
<td>7 4.7%</td>
<td>43 28.7%</td>
<td>150</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>There are better infrastructural facilities and instructional materials in private secondary schools</td>
<td>109  72.7%</td>
<td>3 2%</td>
<td>38 25.3%</td>
<td>150</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>The emergences of private secondary school brought decency to teaching and learning activities</td>
<td>121  80.7%</td>
<td>11 7.3%</td>
<td>18 12%</td>
<td>150</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>There are more cases of students drop out in private secondary schools</td>
<td>41  27.3%</td>
<td>1 0.7%</td>
<td>108 72%</td>
<td>150</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Average responses</td>
<td>371  62%</td>
<td>22 3%</td>
<td>207 35%</td>
<td>600</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In item five (5) on table 2 above, It is found out that 66.0% (100) of the sampled population agreed or accepted that private secondary schools are better equipped in terms of staff, laboratory facilities, computers, desks etc than public secondary schools while 28.7% (43) disagreed and 4.7% (7) remain undecided. The result is that private secondary schools are better equipped than the public secondary schools. Showing the results obtained in item six (6) on the same table 4.2 relating to better infrastructural facilities
and instructional materials in private secondary schools 72.7% (109) agreed, 25.3% (38) disagreed to the opinion. While 2% (3) could not decide on the opinion. The result is that private secondary schools provide better infrastructural facilities and instructional materials. The analysis on the item questionnaire seven (7) on table 2, 80.7% (121) agreed, while 12% (18) disagreed that the emergency of private secondary schools bought decency to teaching and leaning activities. But 7.3% (11) could not decide on the opinion. The result is that the emergency of the private secondary schools bought decency to teaching and learning activities. Another question that followed in item eight (8) on table 2 above was whether there are more cases of students drop out in private secondary schools than public secondary schools. In this, 27.3% (41) agreed while 72% (108) disagreed but 0.7% (1) could not decide on the item. The result is that there are more cases of students drop out in public secondary schools than private secondary schools.

Research Question 3: What circumstances have led to the increase in the establishment of more private secondary schools in the area?

Table 3: Percentage of the respondents responding to the circumstances leading to the increase in the establishment of private secondary schools.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/N</th>
<th>Questionnaire Item</th>
<th>Respondents Options</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>SA/A %</td>
<td>UD %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Private Secondary Schools turn out more for secondary admission than the public secondary</td>
<td>45 30%</td>
<td>19 12.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>The supervision of teachers and students by the principals is more thorough in</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>- -</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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11. Private secondary schools enforced discipline on their students than in public schools

| 11. Private secondary schools enforced discipline on their students than in public | 111 | 74% | 6 | 4% | 33 | 22% | 150 |
| Average responses | 291 | 65.8% | 25 | 5.2% | 13 | 29% | 450 |

The item nine (9) of the questionnaire on the table 3 indicated that 30% (45) agreed and 57.3% (86) disagreed that private secondary schools turn out more for secondary admission than the public secondary. However, 12.7% (19) could not decide on the opinion. The result is that public secondary schools turn out more for admission than private secondary schools. Another question item ten (10) on the same table 3 above was posed to know whether the supervision of teachers and students by the principals is more thorough in private secondary schools than in publics. 90% (135) of the respondents agreed while 10% (15) disagreed with the opinion. The result is that the supervision of the students and the teachers by the heads is more thorough in private secondary schools than in publics. In item eleven (11) shows that 74% (111) agreed or responded positively and 22% (33) disagreed that private secondary schools enforce discipline on their students than the public secondary schools. Only 4% (6) are not decided. The result is that private secondary schools enforce discipline on their children than the publics.

Summary of Major Findings:
The findings of the study are summarized below:
In table 1 above, 69% on the average population responded positively or agreed to the research question that there are differences in the standard of education between the public and the private secondary schools. 28.8% on the average responded negatively or disagreed with the opinion above while 2.2% on the average could not decide. The result is that there are differences in the standard of education between the privates and the public secondary schools. On the account of the provision of necessary items for learning in private secondary schools of the above research question on table 2 shows that 62% of the respondents responded positively or agreed to the above research question but 35% of the average population responded negatively or disagreed with same research question while 3% remain undecided. The result is that necessary items are provided in private secondary schools than in public secondary schools. It was also observed that the

average responses of the table 3 shows that 65.8% of the total respondents responded positively or agreed that thorough supervision by the heads and discipline are some of the circumstances that have led to the establishment of more private secondary schools in the area. 29% disagreed to the opinion. Only 5.2% could not decide on the opinion. The result is that thorough supervision by the heads and discipline is some of the circumstances that have led to the establishment of more private secondary schools in the area.

Summary
The finding of this study revealed that private secondary schools are contributing significantly to educational development in Okrika Local Government Area. The revelation from the data analysis in this research shows that there is wide gab in the standard, staff, equipment and infrastructural facilities between the private and public secondary schools in Okrika Local Government Area. Among these revelations also is the issue of an uneven distribution of teachers in the private and public secondary schools system. For instance, whereas there is shortage of teachers in the public schools, there are more teachers in the private secondary schools. This finding or study also revealed that students who attended private secondary schools performed better in their academic work than those who attended public secondary schools especially in compulsory subjects like Mathematics and English. Their products can not compete favorably with products of the private secondary schools. An oral and written interview conducted with selected secondary schools from both private and public schools in the local government shows that some public secondary students today are hardly able to speak or write simple correct English and are unable to solve simple Mathematical problems. The standard of education acquired by public secondary schools students of today is unable to help them realize the national policy on secondary education. This is a tremendous short fall from what used to be the case pre-war days. The implication therefore is that the standard of education is astronomically falling couple with the introduction of the universal basic education (U.B.E) in 2006/2007 academic session by the ex-president chief Olusegun Obasanjo which abolish the First School Leaving Certificate and common entrance examination to secondary schools and its products to have their certificate examination at their JSS III which is now their terminal point. There is no doubt that the establishment of private secondary schools has a profound effect on the overall standard of secondary education in Okrika local government area. Private secondary schools like the King's College have produced more successful candidates in the West African examination Council (WASC) and the National Examination Council (NECO) than some of their public secondary schools counterparts and have represented the local government and the state in schools quiz competitions. All these are clear evidence of the effect of private secondary schools and its development on the overall standard of education in Okrika local government area. From the research findings we also discovered the major problems of the public secondary schools which make the private secondary schools to have edge over them. These are:
1. The incessant strike action by staff usually embarked upon by the public secondary schools.
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2. Strike actions by staff is completely strange to private secondary schools. Lack of staff, equipment, infrastructural facilities and discipline.

3. Poor funding

4. Lack of incentives, laissez-faire attitude to teaching and leaning and little or no supervision

5. Dilapidated structure resulting from poor maintenance culture makes the school environment un-conducive for the teaching learning activities to go on effectively (Aminigo, 2005).

The reaction of some parents and guardian contrary to assumption of the researcher feel that though it is expensive to sponsor their children in private secondary schools they are getting their money’s worth through the standard of such schools and so do not regret the stay of their children /wards there. This study has also revealed that better academic performance by students in private schools is a result of availability and usage of instructional materials and infrastructural facilities by the private secondary school teachers and also there is a low turn out for admission into private secondary schools due to the expensive nature of the school. As a result of the low turn out of students, it gives the teachers the opportunity to pay much attention to every student in the each class (Amaele, 2003).

Recommendations

Admittedly, every private enterprise aims at making profit. Financial gains should not be the ultimate goal of education industries. This is because education is a form of public goods that has to be enjoyed by every citizen in the nation. There is need therefore for closer monitoring and supervision by the government agencies. The Federal Ministry of Education as well as The State Ministry should have a separate department for private education in order to monitor these private institutions who are mainly for money-making. The department should be saddled with responsibility such as registration or certification of those that comply with the laid down regulations for the establishment of schools maintenance of minimum standard, student-teacher ratio, average class size, payment of minimum wage and allowances etc. The public and private sectors should complement each other in order to ensure that qualitative education for all is attained in the possible shortest time. There is however a need for a supportive frame works in the education that will provide an enabling environment for the private sectors. The private owned institutions should benefit from such education support fund like Education Trust Fund (ETF) as well as grant and supply of instructional materials by the government.

Limitations of the Study

This study is limited to Okrika Local Government Area of Rivers State due to lack of transportation and financial constraints. Most of the roads leading to some of these schools are bad and one has to trek some distance. The researcher was also confronted with the problem of getting materials from the educational unit of the local government. Time was another limitation. As time is no friend of anybody, I discovered that it will take a great deal of time to actually go round the places and cover the areas as planned with interviewing method. Hence I have to go sampling by visiting well known private secondary and public secondary schools.

Suggestion for Further Studies

Having highlighted some of the limitations that the researcher suffered in the course of this study, it is obvious that her findings are in exhaustive and can not be final. Further studies could therefore be directed to such area as

1) Carrying out the same study with larger sample size
2) The effect of proliferation of private secondary schools on the standard of education in the area
3) Investigating into the impacts of private secondary schools on the standard of education in the area.
4) Studying the prospect and problems of teachers working in the public schools

References


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