

## HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AND EFFECTIVE CURRICULUM IMPLEMENTATION IN EBONYI STATE, NIGERIA

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**ABSTRACT:** This paper is on human resource management and effective curriculum implementation in senior secondary schools in Ebonyi State, Nigeria. It is a survey research which employed a descriptive design. The study sampled 113 teachers drawn from 1045 English language teachers using stratified random sampling which include the principals, vice principals and deans of studies in Ebonyi State. Questionnaire was used as the instrument. A trial test was carried out and ascertained the validity and reliability of the instrument and a value of 0.89 was obtained from the test. Responses from all the questionnaire indicated that adequate human resources such as teachers language laboratory operators and school administers, motivation of teachers and school location can improve English language curriculum implementation in senior secondary schools in Ebonyi State. The hypothesis indicated that there is no significant difference in the opinion of teachers in the urban and rural areas. Some of the recommendations given were that the government should embark on recruitment of qualified English language teachers, workshops be organized for teachers and allow them attend other workshops organized outside their schools. Wages of secondary school teachers should be reviewed and that teachers should show more commitment in discharging their duties.

**KEYWORDS:** Human Resource Management, Curriculum, English Language, Motivation, Implementation, Teacher

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## INTRODUCTION

Education is the bedrock of development in every society. The Federal Republic of Nigeria in the National Policy on Education (2004) articulated what the curriculum of the various levels of education in Nigeria should be. It is through education that countries all over the world compete favourably, socially and economically with one another. It is therefore a fertile ground on which laudable ventures such as a lasting culture of peace and care for planet earth can be achieved. Anikweze (2011) is of the view that education should serve as a vehicle for enthroning a culture of reform. Human resource management in secondary schools can never be disassociated from effective English curriculum implementation because it is a must for many nation's educational development. English language is an international language. In Nigeria, English is used as a second language. It is the language for social, political, educational as well as an expression used in a multi-ethnic and multi-racial country such as Nigeria. Nigeria is made up of 400 - 500 ethnic groups with different languages and dialects. English language is therefore the official language. The English language curriculum for senior secondary school includes the four language skills - reading, writing, listening and speaking English. The Federal

Republic of Nigeria in the National Curriculum for Senior Secondary School (2004:1) states that:

*The curriculum is designed to achieve a high level of proficiency in the Nigerian students' use of the English language, preparing students for tertiary and vocational education, for the world of work after leaving school.*

These expectations have not been fulfilled as students continue to perform very poorly in English which is taught as a subject and serves as language of instruction in schools. The West Africa Examination Council Chief Examiner's Report (2008) laments students' poor performance in English language and states that candidates proficiency in English for the past five years seems to be rapidly declining in the neighborhood of 70- 75% annually. Mass failure indicates that there is problem or weakness in the curriculum implementation. Effective curriculum implementation may be hampered by poor human resources such as inadequate and unqualified English language teachers, absence or incompetent laboratory technicians and lack of motivation, and uneven distribution of human resources in schools in urban and rural areas.

In Ebonyi State, it is a known fact that schools experience inadequate number and qualified teachers in English. Teachers are meagerly remunerated and schools in rural areas experience inadequate or complete lack of English language teachers. These problems persist and they seem to hinder effective implementation of the English language curriculum in secondary schools which negatively affect students' performance. Most schools lack adequate number and qualified teachers in English, as a result, schools resort to make do with one or two teachers who are not specialist in English to teach the subject at all levels in the schools. Teachers of English are saddled with enormous task, yet they are meagerly paid and in order to meet with harsh economic situation in the country, some or most resort to look for support to argument their meager resources and resort to engage in petty business such as trading, commercial cyclists, farming during working hours. Also, most schools in the rural areas experience lack or inadequate human resources. Most schools do not have English teachers at all, while those that have, find it difficult to cope with the large population of students and laboratory technicians are grossly inadequate. All these seem to make curriculum implementation in secondary schools in Ebonyi State very difficult. Availability of the variables may enhance effective implementation of the English language curriculum. The objective of this paper therefore, is to investigate if improved human resources management can be an effective means of English language curriculum implementation in the senior secondary schools in Ebonyi State. Based on this, this paper sought to find out:

1. Whether human resource management would improve English language curriculum implementation;
2. Whether motivation of teachers would improve English language curriculum implementation; and
3. The opinion of teachers on human resources distribution in schools located in urban and rural areas on English language curriculum implementation.

## LITERATURE

**Human Resource Management and the English Language Curriculum Implementation** Curriculum according to Akuma (2005:4) is "a systematically planned experience the learners are exposed under the guidance of the school". While Webtser (2010) defines implementation as "the act of making something that had been officially decided start to happen or be used". The various aspects of the English language pose problems to the students. For example, the way words are pronounced in most cases in English is not the way it is written. There are differences between the written language and the spoken language. Comprehension and summary, vocabulary development, oral English, structure of English etc each poses its inherent problem for the students. Most students find it difficult to understand and appreciate the different aspects of the English language and these affect students' performance. The learning of grammatical structures and functions of words and the way they are used is a problem to most students. The area of the English syntax that is, the structure of a sentence and sentence formation poses problems to the students (Baldeh 2004:34). These lead to students' poor performance and may have been as a result of inadequate and poor human resources management in most secondary schools. Students in most cases find it difficult to comprehend the various aspects involved in the English language curriculum, Okonkwo (2008: 4) observes that:

*In spite of the official and public emphasis on English, the schools do not seem to be producing adequate number of pupils who are sufficiently proficient in English. The performance of candidates in terminal examinations in English has never been satisfactory. Their understanding and use of English have not attained a standard considered reasonable by other users of English.*

There are inadequate numbers of qualified English language teachers in most secondary schools. Fafunwa (1993) states that the importance of qualified teachers is for the purpose of better academic performance and that among all educational problems that beset African countries today, none is as persistent as competent teachers. The implication is that there is need for recruitment of adequate qualified teachers in secondary schools. Omojuwa (2005) notes that most students fail English language not because they are incapable of learning but largely because of poor preparation of students. The teacher is the dispenser of knowledge, unfortunately, inadequate number of teachers persists in most secondary schools. Yankson (2000) observes that all educational problems in African countries today are related to the training of teachers and advices that teachers need to be trained to enable them face challenges of teaching.

Language laboratory technician and computer operators are conspicuously absent in secondary schools. Even when schools are provided with certain equipment that can aid teaching and learning in English such as computer, projectors etc, there are often no technicians to operate such equipment and such equipment lay waste where they were packed.

## Motivation and Human Resource Management

Motivation is any rational behaviour by which an individual seeks to satisfy the basic drive, perceived need or personal goal (Maduewesi and Ihebereme, 2009). Motivation is the driving forces that will make an individual to diligently do some tasks. It is what moves a person to make certain choices to engage in action and to persist in action (Fazal, Nabi and Adul, 2010). Teachers need to be motivated. The welfare of teachers should be paramount in any nation so as to make them to be more dedicated in their duty.

Ezeoba and Maduewesi (2010) view that when teachers are not well remunerated, wages and salaries are not paid as and when due, they become less committed to duties and show apathy and lack of interest in their job. People enter into work with the personal objective of making gains but when years roll and nothing tangible is forthcoming, they may begin to show signs of disappointments and lack of job satisfaction. Further, when a person's effort is reinforced positively, he appreciates the reward and adds more vigour to his performance and the reverse is the case where there is negative reinforcement (Dibia, 2013). These may have been the case of English language teachers in secondary schools which may have affected implementation of the English language curriculum negatively.

Motivation of teachers is further seen as a problem emanating from lack of encouragement of teachers which beset most secondary schools teachers. Most principals do not encourage teachers in their effort to implement the curriculum. Principals do not relate well with their teachers and most often, this, leads to non-challant attitude of most teachers in teaching and this may hinder effective English language curriculum implementation in senior secondary schools. Most principals in secondary schools adopt transactional leadership style. This leadership style affect teachers negatively as head teachers become too hard or become terrors for their teachers in the process of discharging their duty. This is in line with Nwite (2013) who states that heads of departments' leadership style correlates with lecturers' job performance. This hinders academic enhancement of their teachers, prevent them from attending workshops and seminars and they do not organize one for their staff. The strict and rigid nature of some principals' on their teachers may make the teachers unprogressive in their teaching profession. Aliyi (2002) observes that teachers require scaling several hurdles before they could stand a chance of executing their jobs efficiently and they need to be monitored and be assisted to grow in confidence while performing their duties. Omodaogba in Okonkwo(2008) notes that it is because of unprepared nature of many teachers that they fail to discharge their duties effectively.

Location of schools may constitute great hindrance in effective curriculum implementation. Differences exist in the schools that are located in the urban and the rural areas. There are differences in the distribution of resources. Schools in the urban areas are better placed. A good number of them have two or three English language teachers while most do not even have one English language teacher. The schools in the rural areas are mostly affected negatively in terms of human resources because most teachers desire to be in the urban areas where there are essential social amenities which are lacking in the rural areas. Based on the above literature, it is obvious that inadequate and unimproved human resource management, lack of motivation and school location may be responsible for ineffective implementation of the English language curriculum. The researcher therefore wishes to find out if improved human resource management, motivation and school location would

improve effective implementation of the English language curriculum in secondary schools in Ebonyi State.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions guided the work:

1. How would human resource management improve effective English language curriculum implementation?
2. How would motivation of teachers improve effective English language curriculum implementation?
3. What is the opinion of teachers on human resource management in schools located in urban and rural areas in implementation of the English language curriculum?

### **Hypothesis**

A null hypothesis was formulated to be tested at 0.05 alpha level of significance.

**HO:** There is no significant difference in the mean response of teachers on the human resource distribution in schools located in the urban and rural areas on the implementation of English language curriculum.

## **METHODOLOGY**

The design was a descriptive survey design.

### **Area of the Study**

The areas of the study constitute the three education zones - the Abakaliki, Onueke and Afikpo zones of Ebonyi State of Nigeria. This area is used because the curriculum adopted in Ebonyi is line with the National Curriculum for senior secondary schools in English in Nigeria.

### **Population of the Study**

It is assumed that what obtains in Ebonyi state is applicable to all other states. The population consists of (285) English teachers and 750 school administrators which included the principal, vice principal academic, vice principal administrators and deans of studies making it a total of 1045 teachers.

### **Sample and Sampling Technique**

The population was randomly selected from different secondary schools in the three zones to reflect urban and rural areas. A total of 113 (One hundred and thirteen) teachers were used, 42 from Abakaliki zone, 35 from Onueke zone and 36 from Afikpo zone.

### **Instrument for Data Collection**

Data were generated from questionnaire responses. The questionnaire was titled Human Resource Management on English Language Curriculum Implementation.

### **Validation of the Instrument**

The instrument was divided into three sections and each section contained a sub-title of the twenty (20) questionnaire items which were generated based on a 4 - point Likert scale - Strongly Agree (4), Agree (3), Disagree (2), and Strongly Disagree (1). The respondents were expected to mark (x) on the appropriate opinion. The instrument was subjected to face validation by experts in the field and a trial test was carried out. Based on the result, construct validation using factor analysis by experts was carried out and a total of twenty items were isolated while only two were extracted.

### **Reliability of the Instrument**

The instrument was further subjected to reliability test using crombach alpha method and a value of 0.87 was obtained as the reliability of the instrument.

### **Method of Data Collection**

113 questionnaires were taken to schools and distributed to teachers concerned. On the spot distribution and collection were adopted and the instrument were used in the data analysis.

### **Method of Data Analysis**

Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions. Decision rule was based on the result of 2.5 and above as being high and anything below that as being low. The hypothesis generated was tested using t-test to identify if a significant different existed or not in the responses of teachers who are in the urban and rural areas on human resource management on English language curriculum implementation in senior secondary schools at 0.05 alpha level of significance.

### **Presentation of Data**

The data were presented based on the two research questions and hypothesis. Results were presented according to the individual responses on the research questions and the null hypothesis which guided this paper.

**Table 1: Teachers' Mean Rating on the Need for Improved Human Resource Management in Senior Secondary Schools**

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	X	S.D	Remark
1.	Adequate number of qualified teachers	73	32	3	6	3.6	0.64	Accept
2.	High number of specialized teachers	63	45	5	0	3.7	0.60	Accept
3	High number of improved English teachers	77	28	6	2	3.6	0.69	Accept
4.	Principals allow teachers to be train and be trained	59	46	7	1	3.4	0.62	Accept
5.	Most school authorities allow teachers to attend workshops	62	45	5	1	3.4	0.62	Accept
6.	Most school authorities organize workshops for teachers	26	53	26	8	3.1	0.85	Accept
7.	Most schools organize seminars for teachers	34	48	20	11	3.1	0.84	Accept
8.	Presence of language laboratory and equipment attendants in senior secondary schools	94	14	3	2	3.7	0.64	Accept
9.	Workshops are often organized for principals	62	13	26	12	3.1	0.84	Accept
10.	Most principals have good relationship with teachers	81	23	6	3	3.6	0.64	Accept
Grand Mean								3.4

Summary of result on Table 1 above reveals that adequate and improved human resources management in senior secondary schools will enhance effective English language curriculum implementation. Absences of this will undoubtedly lead to ineffective curriculum implementation which negatively affects students' performance in English.

**Table 2: Teachers Mean Rating on Effects of Motivation of Teachers on the English Language Curriculum Implementation in Senior Secondary Schools**

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	X	S.D	Remark
1.	When salaries of teachers are improved, it will affect their output	76	32	3	2	3.6	0.36	Accept
2.	When teachers' salaries are paid as and when due and it will affect teachers; output	70	35	6	2	3.7	0.55	Accept
3	When teachers annual leave allowances are always paid	64	34	5	10	3.35	0.6	Accept
4.	When teachers over-load allowances are paid, it will affect their output	68	35	5	5	3.6	0.62	Accept
5.	When teachers are remunerated for hard work	71	32	5	5	3.5	0.7	Accept
6.	Teachers are highly regarded in the society and this make them to put in their best	68	32	7	4	3.3	0.74	Accept
7.	When teachers are not intimidated	65	36	10	2	3.6	0.59	Accept
8.	When teachers are promoted as and when due	65	36	10	2	3.6	0.56	Accept
9.	Good welfare package will make teachers not to resort to petty trading	80	24	6	3	3.4	0.61	Accept
10.	When teachers give their best and this will enhance English language curriculum implementation	80	23	5	5	3.7	0.54	Accept
Grand Mean								3.9

Summary of result in Table 2 above shows that motivation of teachers will improve English language curriculum implementation. This can improve effective English curriculum implementation while neglect of teachers' motivation constitutes hindrance to effective English language curriculum.

**Table 3: T-test Statistics on Urban and Rural Schools on Human Resource Management in Effective English Curriculum Implementation**

S/N	Variable	Derision			X S.D at t-crit 1.98	Rural			Variable Decision			t-crit S.D at 1.98	T-cal for Urban & Rural schs	Alpha Remark
		Urban	N	Df		N	Df	X						
1.	Urban	57	111	3.6	0.064	Rural,	56	111	3.6	0.064	.852	Accepted		
2.	urban	57	111	3.7	0.065	Rural	56	111	3.5	0.056	.037	Accepted		
3.	urban	57	111	3.6	0.054	Rural	56	111	3.6	0.064	.006	Accepted		
4.	Urban	57	111	3.5	0.064	Rural	56	111	3.3	.058	.073	Accepted		
5.	Urban	57	111	3.4	.088	Rural	56	111	3.3	.053	.073	Accepted		
6.	Urban	57	111	3.1	.053	Rural	56	111	3.0	.053	.084	Accepted		
7.	Urban	57	111	3.1	.053	Rural	56	111	3.0	.053	.084	Accepted		
8.	Urban	57	111	3.7	.055	Rural	56	111	3.6	.059	.059	Accepted		
9.	Urban	57	111	3.1	.059	Rural	56	111	3.0	.053	.073	Accepted		
10.	Urban	57	111	3.6	.064	Rural	56	111	3.5	.062	.073	Accepted		
11.	Urban	57	111	3.6	.064	Rural	56	111	3.8	.056	.055	Accepted		
12.	Urban	57	111	3.7	.057	Rural	56	111	3.6	.064	.037	Accepted		
13.	Urban	57	111	3.5	.067	Rural	56	111	3.4	.058	.749	Accepted		
14.	Urban	57	111	3.6	.064	Rural	56	111	3.4	.078	.501	Accepted		
15.	Urban	57	111	3.5	.067	Rural	56	111	3.4	.078	.501	Accepted		
16.	Urban	57	ill	3.5	.067	Rural	56	111	3.4	.078	.028	Accepted		
17.	Urban	57	111	3.6	.064	Rural	56	111	3.5	.067	.601	Accepted		
18.	Urban	57	111	3.6	.064	Rural	56	111	3.5	.067	.601	Accepted		
19.	Urban	57	111	3.4	.088	Rural	56	111	3.3	.053	.078	Accepted		
20.	urban	57	111	3.7	.055	Rural	56	111	3.6	.064	.432	Accepted		

Data on table 3 shows that the t-calculated value in all the question items are less than the t-critical value. This shows that there is significant different in the mean rating of teachers who are in the urban and rural schools on human resource distribution.

## FINDINGS

The findings of the study were based on two research questions and a null hypothesis that guided this work. Results were discussed based on major themes of the study. The tables presented show clearly that improved human resource management in senior secondary schools in Ebonyi State will lead to effective curriculum implementation of English language. Motivation obviously will enhance the implementation of English language curriculum. Locations of schools also constitute hindrance to the implementation of the English language curriculum. Even distribution of human resources in urban and rural schools enhances English language curriculum implementation.

## DISCUSSION

Summary of data based on table one on adequate and improved human resources management had grand mean of 3.4 which include 3.6 for adequate number of teachers, 3.7 for specialized teachers, 3.6 improved English language teachers, for principals to allow teachers attend workshops, seminars, trained and retrained have 3.4, 3.4 and 3.0 respectively. School authorities organized workshops has 3.0. Presence of laboratory and equipment attendant have 3.7, workshop often organized for principals has 3.0 and good relationship of principals with teachers has 3.6. These to a great extent will enhance effective English language curriculum implementation in secondary schools. This finding is in line with Anyanwu (2002) and Baldeh (2004) who stated that apart from material resources that qualified English language teachers is the most important factor in students' achievement. This finding is also in line with Nwite (2013) who stated that teacher's output declines as those in authority provide materials for work which can motivate staff.

Table two above indicates that motivation of teachers is another factor that will leads to effective curriculum implementation of the English language in senior secondary schools in Ebonyi State. The table above indicates grand mean of 3.9 which include 3.6 for better salaries of teachers, 3.7 for prompt payment of teachers salaries, 3.5 for payment of leave allowances, 3.6 for payment of over load allowances, 3.5 for remuneration of hard work, 3.5 for high regard of teachers, 3.6 for teachers not being intimidated, 3.6 for promoted on time, 3.4 for teachers not resorting to petty trading and 3.7 for teachers giving their best. Presence of these, however, will highly enhance effective English language curriculum implementation. The implications of these are that negligence of teachers' welfare can go a long way to frustrate effective curriculum implementation. This finding is in line with Iheanacho (2007) who observed that teachers become more per functionary in their duty. Eya (2006) also observed that teachers refuse to attend classes while their students roam the streets as truants. He further stated that poor job satisfaction arising from government delay in payment of salaries and allowances lead to poor output by teachers. Again Shehu in Eya (2006) is in line with the findings of this work. He stated that poor welfare package of secondary school teachers had turned them into petty traders, farmers or commercial cyclists.

Table three shows that the even distribution of human resources in urban and rural schools improve English language curriculum implementation in the senior secondary. The implication is that location of schools affect implementation of the English language curriculum. Hence, all the items accepted the hypothesis which indicates that there is significant in the mean rating of teachers who are in the urban schools and those who are in the rural areas. Schools in the urban areas are better staffed than schools in the rural areas. In most urban schools, there are two or at least one English teacher. This is quite different from what are experienced in most rural schools where three or four teachers which include the principal, the vice principal and with or without the English teacher teach all the subjects including English language. This finding is in line with Lawal (2001) who stated that the physical and human environment on development are very important and the future of children whether urban or rural is invariable linked to the quality of his or her environment.

## IMPLICATIONS DERIVABLE FROM THE STUDY

The implications derivable from the study are that:

1. Qualified and adequate human resources is very vital to effective implementation of the English language curriculum in Ebonyi State. Unless human resource is given genuine attentions, training and retraining of English teachers and laboratory technicians and libraries etc, curriculum implementations would continue to be ineffective, which would continue to lead to students poor performance.
2. Motivation of teachers is very vital to effective English curriculum implementation. The result indicates that teachers deserve better packages and welfare to make them more dedicated to their duty. This is because teachers' commitment to duty is paramount in effective curriculum implementation which would lead to better teaching, better grooming of students and better performance of the students.
3. Even human resources distribution in schools in urban and rural areas is vital to effective English curriculum implementation. It is surprising that teachers in the urban areas agree that even distribution of human resources be made to both schools in urban and rural areas, yet, most teachers when posted to schools in rural areas quickly seek for transfer to the schools in urban areas. This is because rural areas lack essential amenities. The implication is that infrastructural facilities such as electricity, water, market, hospital, banks, etc should be extended to the rural areas so that when teachers are posted in the rural areas, they would like to live in such areas the schools are built instead of seeking transfer to the urban area. This surely will enhance effective implementation of the curriculum.

## CONCLUSION

It is obvious that the discussion of major findings suggest that adequate and improved human resources will enhance English language curriculum implementation in senior secondary schools in Ebonyi State. If the numbers of qualified English teachers who teach English are adequate, it will lead to better curriculum implementation. If those who are in service are allowed to improve themselves to keep abreast with new knowledge and new information delivery, English language curriculum implementation will be enhanced. Language laboratory and equipment technicians are employed; implementation of the English curriculum will be improved. If there is motivation of teachers combined with good relationship among workers they will lead to effective implementation of the English language curriculum in senior secondary schools in Ebonyi State.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings, the following recommendations were made:

1. Government should embark on employing more qualify human resources in English.
2. Government should embark on training and retaining of English teachers.
3. School authorities should as a matter of urgency be informed on the need to allow teachers to improve themselves academically or update their knowledge.
4. The government and school authorities should organize workshops and seminars for principals and teachers.

5. The government should review upwards the salaries of secondary school teachers and look into the general welfare of teachers.
6. Government should provide essential social amenities in the rural areas so that teachers transferred to rural areas can live there comfortably.
7. Incentive should be provided for very hard working teachers.
8. Teachers should be committed to duty and desist from turning themselves into petty traders, farmers and commercial cyclists during school hours.

## FURTHER RESEARCH

1. Extent of resources in implementation of the English language curriculum in secondary schools in Nigeria.
2. Examination of language curriculum implementation in private and public secondary schools and students' achievement.

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