STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT PRACTICES AS VERITABLE TOOLS FOR MAXIMUM SECURITY SYSTEM IN THE ADMINISTRATION OF SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN NIGERIA

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Abstract
The study assessed strategic management practices as veritable tools for maximum security systems in the administrationof secondary schools in Nigeria. The study of strategic management has drawn so much attention in organizations including academic organizations.Academic researchers for some time now have delved into the area of strategic management as a way to improve and sustain organizational performance. Strategic management practices are essential tools in the administration of secondary schools with regard achievement of their visions, missions, goals and objectives. The concepts of environmental analysis, strategy formulation, strategy implementation, strategy evaluation, management and strategic practices as well as security were explored and the relationship between them was expounded. This study concluded that maximum school security can be achieved through the collective efforts of all school personnel and other stakeholders headed by the school administrator. The study suggested among others that school administrators should adopt crime prevention strategies and integrate information communication technology (ICT) and detection devices in the overall security design of their schools to ensure maximum security.

Keywords: Secondary   school;   School   administrators;Strategic   management practices;Security.

Introduction
Secondary school education in Nigeria is the second level of education. This level of education was established to serve as a gap between primary education and tertiary education (Akpan, 2011). According to FRN (2013), it is the education that is received after primary education and before tertiary education and it is meant to provide requisite skills and knowledge to make their products ready and/or self-reliant for further studies. Secondary education in Nigeria is made up of junior basic and senior basic education which takes three years each to complete so both programs run for a period of six years. At each level, there is an administrator known as the school principal. Although, in private secondary schools, one administrator is usually in charge of both programs.

The school administrator holds a key position within the school which gives him/her a chance to inspire his/her workers as well as upgrade the level of academic

achievement of the school. The school administrator is deeply responsible for the academic attainment of their learners. He/she is charged with the task of managing human and material resources in their various schools. The school principal's administrative actions have an immense influence on the academic attainment of the learning institution (Wekesa, 2003). Hence, he/she has an onerous task of the academic and social life of the students withinthe school.

For effective performance of these tasks, the tasks must be well-planned ahead of time and properly managed in the phase of occurring changes and challenges within the school environment. As such, proper planning and management of strategies within the school becomes imperative so that schools or academic environments can meet their set goals and objectives. The administrator oversees every management plan. He/she also adjusts his/her structures and plans so as to meet objectives hence the need for strategic management in the school system.

Organizations including schools need strategies that meaningfully respond to the needs of the school. It is the mandate of the management team to ensure that a strategy is in place and well executed for organizations to perform (Ries, 2011). Strategy means sets of rules and guidelines for bringing about orderly and profitable growth. It connotes a programme of action or blueprint set out towards the attainment of comprehensive objectives.Strategic management is therefore, the ability of the school principal to harness these programmes of action to suit the school's objectives. It is the comprehensive collection of ongoing activities and processes that organizations use to systematically coordinate and align resources and actions with mission, vision and strategy throughout an organization(Olaitan, 2005). Strategic management is a concept that is concerned with making decisions and taking corrective actions to achieve long-term targets, objectives and goals of an organization(Uzuegbu-Wilson, 2017). Simply put, it is the implementation of the strategy.Firms, including schools,need to have a competitive advantage over others in the same industry by exploiting internal strength, and responding to environmental opportunities while at the same time combating external threats and avoiding internal weaknesses.

Strategic management therefore,ensures that these programmes of action are fully accomplished by constant practices. Strategic management practices of administrators inspire teachers to facilitate the knowledge and skills of academic learners. The concept of strategic management is very important in schools because school administrators are sometimes so preoccupied with immediate issues that they lose sight of the ultimate objectives. Some of the administrators' immediate issues include engaging teachers to draw the scheme of work from the curriculum, writing lesson plans and unit plans, assessment of students' progress, writing their termly and annual reports and so on. The administrator may as well assign other tasks to the teachers from time to time outside the classroom situation such as participation in staff meetings, conduction of morning devotion, counselling, participation in sports, games and club activities as well as sanitizing the school environment to remove obstacles that may constitute danger from the school ground in order to ensure that the school environment is safe and secured.Chukwuji and Agbowo (2021) in line with the above statement, assert that there isalso aneed to install solar-powered bulbs or security lights to illuminate the school compound at night times, mount video surveillance, perimeter fencing, regular fumigation and cutting of

grasses on regular basis among others, all geared towards establishinga safe environment for learning within the school. All these require adequate skills which must be factored in as part of strategic management practices in the school system. Strategic management practices transform the static plan into a working system that provides strategic performance and feedback to decision-making and enables the plan to evolve and grow as requirements and other circumstances change (Oyedele, Chikwature&Mhandu, 2016).

On the other hand, the ultimate objective or goal of the school system is the output of the school. Karen (2014) opined that the heads of learning institutions are believed to implement a number of important roles which include, shaping the vision of academic achievement for all the learners, providing a conducive environment for teaching and learning, refining administrative skills in others, upscaling teaching methodologies, administering workers and data processes to further school improvement. Michael (2011) in a study explained several important responsibilities of school administrators which includes creating a friendly climate for teaching and learning while considering and ensuring cooperative spirit, security, and other fundamentals of fruitful relation.

Security within the school refers to all strategies put in place by school managers in order to ensure the protection of staff and students from internal and external dangers (Manga, Hakimi &Maihaja, 2013). Manga (2018) opined that school security is simply all measures applied to protect lives and properties within the school. Staff, students and school plants must be protected from harm, injuries and destruction. However, in most cases, there are loopholes in the measures put in place to secure lives and properties in secondary schools. Mlozi (2013) asserts that secondary schools are often confronted with security and safety issues such as drugs and social problems which require a concerted effort with all school stakeholders. These issues constitute threats to lives, especially the vulnerable students within the school. Unfortunately, some school administrators do not even have plans in this area as it seems not needful and therefore concentrate on the learning activities, when actually schools need enabling environment to impart learning. Amanchukwu (2012) affirms that it is the responsibility of school administrators as well as teachers and parents to protect students from unsafe situations or environments. Negligence of school administrators and teachers in this area has brought about insecurity which manifests in cases like drugs, substance abuse and cultism as issues that beset secondary schools in Nigeria. Discussions with some secondary school students, especially the boarding students, and research in this area reveal high involvement of students in drugs, substance abuse and cultism which go on unnoticed by school administrators within the school.Ekejiuba and Emetarom (2014) reported that from 2000 – 2015, there have been cases of death, missing students, teachers andother allied staff of schools across the country. Some of these cases are quite terrifying. The most recent is that ofSylvester Oromoni (jnr), a 12-year-old student of Dowen College, Lekki, Lagos who was said to have died in the hands of the cultists' students (premiumtimesng.com, January 7, 2022). Although, the reporter, Ibrabim Adeyemi, reported that his death was controversial, it is also obvious that the school's administrators did not manage the issue well. The level of security challenges in the educational sector will consequently prevent students from fulfilling their right to quality and safe education.Therefore, the need for strategic management practices among administrators in secondary schoolsarises. Again, it is not

clear how these practices have impacted the security of learners in Nigeria. This is what the researchers tend to bare in this study.

Concept of strategic management

Strategy is a detailed blueprint for any organization towards proper administration and achievement of success. As such, every organization including schools map out plans to enable it to succeed. When organizations do not plan well, such organization is bound to fail. Hence, there is a need for strategic management. Strategic management comprises the set of decisions and actions that result in the formulation andimplementation of plans designed to achieve a firm's objectives (Monday, Akinola, Ologbenla&Aladeraji,2015). It is the process of making decisions, planning, coordinating and taking someactions by management staff in school in order to achieve set goals and objectives. The management staff often take decisions at the top but these decisions are of little useunless they are acted upon. Schools must take the necessary actions to implement their strategies, in every area including the area of security. These actions involve long-term, future-oriented, complex decision-making and require aconsiderable measure of resources.Olaitan (2005) explained strategic planning as that part of corporate planning which involves the assessment of needs, the identification of desired outcomes and the assessment of various programmes, initiatives and resources towards the attainment of set objectives. Therefore, strategic planning is concerned with shaping the organization to the right path towards the achievement of goals or objectives. Effective strategies have clear, specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and time-bound objectives which are relevant to the needs of the organization.

A major organizational need among administrators is the need to grow. According to Sadler (2003), good strategies encourage workers to grow and be innovative and creative. The strategy must also concentrate on specific areas of improvement and focus as directed by the organization's vision. The flexibility of strategy enhances the possibility of relevant review and refocusing as the organization progresses (Ritson, 2008; Morden, 2007). All the departments within the school should work together in harmony and unity of purpose. To gain competitive advantage over competitors, the organization's strategy should be executed with speed, diligence and secrecy so as to outwit unprepared competitors and opponents. (Macmillan &Tampoe,2000).The diligence becomes effective in the face of a secure environment. Hence, the need for administrators to plan ahead of time on the security needs of the school, and implement and evaluate such plans to see whether or not they meet the set objectives.

Components of strategic management practices

The school system has well-defined mechanisms of measuringperformance which enables it to evaluate current and pastachievements relative to expected standards but the methodsused to measure performance are relative to the context inwhich the organization operates and the strategic objectivespursued (Akinyi, 2010). Organizational performance is a measure of theextent to which the organization's goals and objectives havebeen achieved. Such a measure of achievement informs all thestakeholders of the extent to which success isimminent. Based on their context, differentorganizations use different modes of performance. In the secondary school system for instance, the administrator may

apply the use of the four main components of strategic management practices as outlined by Mgbodile (2007):

       i.   environmental analysis
     ii.   strategy formulation
   iii.   strategy implementation
   iv.   strategy evaluation.

The environmental analysis enables the administrator to assess properly the internal and external school environment. It as well helps the administrator identify, prioritize and exploit opportunities open to him/her towards solving the problem. For instance, the issue of drugs, substance abuse and cultism can pose a security challenge for the administrator. According to Mgbodile (2007), problems can represent opportunities to improve situations. It helps to establish organizational direction. Therefore, the ability of the school administrators to identify and recognize the security problems facing the school will enable him/her to put the teachers in the right direction by making them formulate strategies towards solving the problem.

Strategy formulation involves identifying the school's strengths and weaknesses, opportunities and threats and how to allocate resources for improvement. It is at this point that objectives and plans are set, and means of achieving such are pointed out. As such, the school objectives and plans towards students' involvement in drug addiction, substance abuse and cultism are properly spelt out, and teachers formulate means of handling such. It could come in the form of taking strong security and safety measures by the staff of the school, engaging the guidance counsellor(s) and so on. Ugbor, Nweke, Uwakwe, Isiaku, Opara, Isilebo and Madu (2020) opined that one of the ways to create security measures for both staff and students in secondary schools in Nigeria is based on the school management strategy whereby the principal is expected to initiate plans and implement such plans as related to security matters. Such plans must be measurable, specific and time-bound. Again, alternative options for achieving the plans must be identified and then the best option that will yield the required result selected for the implementation of the strategy.

Strategy implementation involves establishing short-term goals, devising policies and executing them. This is the action stage as suggested strategies are put forward.Effective strategy implementation leads to maximum utilization of information systems and redirects administrative efforts. Implementation holds the key to the success of any plan as planners who forget to build the implementation strategies into plans are bound to fail (Mgbodile, 2007).

Strategy evaluation follows up strategy implementation. It involves the assessment of the various performance strategies, that is, the reviews of internal and external factors affecting the implementation of the strategies, measuring performance and taking corrective steps. It is the right way to determine how effective the strategies are, and whether the expected outcome measures what is identified in the set objectives.

The outcome of strategic management practices in secondary schools depends on whether the school undertakes these various components of strategic management practices as mentioned above. Therefore, a school that uses strategic management practices is expected to overcome most of its threats as well as minimize its weaknesses.Effective school administrators are effective strategic managers and they need to focus on

forecasting, synchronizing and supporting the workers without forgetting how the learners and the other workers relate with each other within the learning institution. Learninginstitutions are not just places where the success of the tutors and learning takes place, but a place where the safety of the students is ensured even while learning is taking place. Secondary school administrators take a lot of measures and they have to adoptstrategic management practicesto ensure the safety and security of students in the learning environment.

Benefits of strategic management practices

Strategic management allows an organization to be more proactive than reactive in shaping its own future. It allows an organization to initiate and influence activities. According to David (2003), strategies which are implemented within an organization support the culture associated with the firm, if there is going to be success in ensuring enhanced performance in an organization. The proposed strategy should preserve, emphasize, and enhance the culture, in accordance with the culture supporting suchstrategy. Therefore, strategies to be implemented must be consistent with organizational culture to realize the desired organizational performance results.

Another benefit is the capacity it gives to organizations to motivate and empower the people who make up its human capital. In the school system, teachers are encouraged through strategic management practices to be hardworking and this help to improve their initiatives.

Strategic management is also useful to every organization because it provides long-term direction in planning (Kotler, 2003). It also helps the organization adapt to changes in its operating environment. Secondary schools that are quick to adapt to changes in ensuring a safe environment for their staff and students and maintain a competitive advantage over others that care less about such a secured learning environment.

The strategic management process helps the organization and its members establish its current status, mission and vision as well as objective. This process maps the organization's future development, specifying the range of strategies and action plans that lead to its success.Ababu (2007) found that formal strategic management significantly improves organizational performanceas it forces organizations to be aware of future opportunities and challenges. It further gives organizations a sense of direction.

Management and strategic planning

Management involves planning, organizing, staffing, coordinating and directing the affairs of education towards achieving educational objectives (Onyekaba& Bello, 2018). According to Zuckerman (2007) management especially in the school system, is a prerequisite for achieving instructional objectives and safeguarding the well-being of students for whom the teaching and learning activities are centred. Management is a core element of administration. The school administrator needs to harness all resources at his disposal using strategic planning towards the realization of organizational goals. As such, he can use different techniques or strategies in running the school. According to Ocham (2013), school administration techniques can differ extremely sometimes not depending on the official goals of the learning institution, the school heads use a range of methods in administering and inspiring tutors to upgrade their activities at work. A good school

administrator should be able to monitor the students' movement within the school or at least, delegate these duties to the teachers on duty. Hence, he is expected to take some of the responsibilities and roles of parents in ensuring the safety of the students under their care. As presiding officers responsible for the managerial and administrative duties required for the day-to-day running of the school, the school administrator remains the "defacto Chief Security Officer" of the school (Onyechere,2014).

The primary responsibility of the school administrators is to collaborate with the stakeholders notably the government and community leaders as well as parents and students to eliminate security risksin schools and their barriers to learning.Onyechere (2014) summarized the roles and responsibilities of administrators to include among others the development and maintenance of physical infrastructure that can assure the safety and security of staff and students; ensuring that school departments are knowledgeable about the best practices in safety, security and emergency preparedness and can comply with "emergency preparedness best practices; ensuring that an Emergency Response Team (ERT) are maintained;accurate records of staff and students and its update must be maintained and safely kept; regular safety and security awareness training should be maintained for staff and student on a regular basis. In addition to the above listed, administrators should devise a means of monitoring students who are in hideouts pretending to be reading. Observations overtime have shown that most of these hideouts are used for smoking weeds and other substances, or serve as meeting points for cultists. Effective management by the school administrators is needed to ensure that learners pass through the secondary education level fully secured and free from drug addiction, substance abuse and the like.

Impact of insecurity on secondary school education in Nigeria

Secondary schools in Nigeria frequently record incidences of insecurity. Some of the incidences of insecurity in our secondary schools in recent times include but are not limited to the following:

1. Attack of Nigeria Air Force School, Kano State leading to the killingof three Air Force staff and injury of many (Emetarom&Ekejiuba, 2014);
2. kidnapping of students - in April 2014 over 250 female students were kidnapped by terrorists and 219 of them were still being held by August 2015 (Anaenyeonu, et al, 2015);
3. kidnapping of 15 school children in a school bus on their way to school in Aba, Abia State in 2012 (Uzuegbu-Wilson, 2017);
4. herdsmen attack some secondary schools in Akwa-Ibom state between January, 2019 and September, 2020 which led to lots of human losses, displacements of persons and destruction of properties as reported by Otu, Akpabio &Ugwuoke (2021)

All these and many more have led to the disruption of effective learning, teaching, and administration as well as a decline in the quality of education due to the closure of schools, displacements and shortages of teachers. The unprecedented rate of dropouts in schools is as well a major impact of insecurity in secondary schools in Nigeria. Maximumsecurity therefore, becomes a mirage in a country where insecurity is the order of the day.

Security and strategic management practices.

Security is freedom from danger or threat. In the words of Ani &Onyebukwa, 2016), security is a condition of being free from danger, threat and criminal activities. Ogunsola and Babatunde (2017) opined that security is a state of protection against any attack and most importantly that of being an external invasion.In the school environment, security is referred to as a situation in which the teachers and learners feel at home, develop confidence, maintain a positive state of mind, and do not show any signs of withdrawal from the school, but work towards the achievement of their personal goals (Asodike&Nwabueze, 2017).

Schools need to develop strategies that focus on maximum school security of the environment. School administrators need to make efforts and develop strategies which are directed to keep the students secure. In a school environment, every student is entitled to safety from harm, safety from abuse (e.g. rape), safety from disease, safety from malnutrition, safety from hazardous activities, safety from road accidents, safety from drugs, safety from substance abuse and safety from cultists. A number of schools are developing plans and strategies to implement a safe school environment for quality productivity (Oragwu&Nwabueze, 2014). These strategieswill work best when both the administrators and other stakeholders in schools are involved. If the work of security in schools is only handled by the school administrators, it will lead to insecurity.

Insecurity sets in when the school system is beset with dangers, threats and criminal activities such as rape, substance abuse, cultism and the like. Insecurity in the school system is not only visible in physical areas but also evident within the management of students and teachers as regards discipline (Chukwuji&Agbawo, 2021).Insecurity also, is not only when there are reports of missing staff and students or cases of outright death or accident but as well cases that run underground and are shielded from the school administrators. Such cases as earlier mentioned include drugs, substance abuse and cultism. Most secondary schools in Nigeria have issues of such insecurity.School insecurity can lead to a disruptive and threatening environment, physical injury, and emotional stress, all of which are hindrances towards maximum security(Isiugo-Abanihe&Labo-Popoola, 2004). Educators have responded to the perceived threat of school violence by implementing programs designed to prevent, deter, and respond to the potential for violence in schools (Adebayo, 2001).The school administrators must as a matter of urgency, rise to such challenge and ensure that relevant acts on establishing safety policies are implemented to achieve desired results. Kipngeno and Kyalo (2009) opined that it is the responsibility of school administrators to ensure that the school environment is conducive to learning, and this can be achieved by establishing clear rules and policies through strategic management practices.

Therefore, security in secondary schools involves the protection and management of administrators, teachers, students and other visitors in an institution using relevant strategies. Successful security management in schools is necessary and essential for effective service delivery which in the long run can bring about maximum security.

Maximum security is overall security which is sustained overtime. Sustainable security is the type of security that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own security needs (Ugwuoke,

Ugwu&Adepoju, 2021). The goal of maximum security is to ensure the protection of our national, fundamental and enduring needs, lives and properties of the citizenry. Maximum security can only be sustained if there are laid down strategies by the school administrators to effectively manage the students in secondary schools (as in this study) to achieve the goals of education. When the school administrators applyand practice these strategies in the management of human and material resources, thestudent's academic and social needs are met through the provision of requisite skills and knowledge for self-reliance, and then the nation can boast of security in its economic and political system.

Conclusion
Strategic management practices are very important in school organizations. It determines the extent of administrators'task performance in the secondary school system which of course includes security management. It is not enough to map out plans without implementation and evaluation of such plans. Therefore, school security depends on the collective efforts of all school stakeholders headed by the school administrator.

Suggestions
In view of the apparent insecurity climate in secondary schools in Nigeria, the following recommendations are made:
1. School administrators should adopt crime prevention strategies and as well integrate information communication technology (ICT) and detection devices in the overall security design of their schools.
2. School administrators should monitor and educate teachers so that strategic management practices especially in areas of security awareness and orientation be put in place.
3. Administrators should take advantage of modern technology to supervise activities in their schools in order to ensurethe proper security of students, staff and properties.
4. Administrators' plans towards security consciousness and elimination of crime among students should not just be paper work butmust be implemented and evaluated so as to enhance their security system and help attain maximum security.
5. School administrators should partner with the community effectively to enhance security management within the school.

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